

ORGANIZING THE GUIDANCE OF OUR YOUTH

There are more people incarcerated in the United States than in any other country. And if this trend continues, the children in the schools of today will fill the prisons of tomorrow. To prevent this from occurring, I believe that there should be an organization that addresses the issue of incarceration to all high school students. These young people are just not as aware as they should be about different things, such as conspiracy being a crime and the severity of sentences for all crimes. They would become much clearer on the consequences of criminal behavior if they were spoken to by ex-prisoners who have served lengthy sentences, police officers, probation officers, correctional officers, and victims of crime.

Learning the truth from people like these would help them understand the truth of a criminal justice system that is about much more than just the high profile cases they see on the news. We have to teach them the wisdom of learning from both our own and other people's mistakes. We have to show them that the rewards of committing crime are not what they seem and that the risks in seeking them are extremely high. They need to know that the odds are simply not in their favor.

I also believe that personal finance should be a requirement in high school, so that teenagers can learn how to live within their means. By teaching them the dangers of credit card debt and failing to save and invest even a small portion of their income, much of the financial insecurity they might have come to face could be averted. In this way, we can help steer them toward a life in which they will not be tempted to turn to crime in order to get by.

Being taught these things would have ensured that I did not commit the crime that put me in prison. We should prevent as many young people as possible from following so unnecessarily in my steps.

Thank you

Pedro R. Caraballo