



Alternatives to Prison



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What are Alternatives to Prison?

While prison seeks to confine and punish criminals, there are effective alternatives to incarceration, such as community-based programs, probation, and drug treatment. These options focus on rehabilitation and support, helping individuals reintegrate into society while reducing the chances of reoffending.

Why is it better to have alternatives to prison?

- These alternatives allow individuals to function in society, while also being held accountable for their actions.
- Prisons do not focus on rehabilitations and aid to those in need.
- Alternatives to prison are more cost-effective and still promote public safety.

Examples of Alternative Methods

Probation: enables someone to live in society under supervision by an officer or a relative, allowing them to function while being monitored.

Community Service: offers offenders a chance to contribute positively to society while also helping to lower rates of reoffending by creating a sense of connection and belonging.

Drug Treatment: involves rehabilitation centers that support individuals dealing with addiction. These centers focus on helping people stop using drugs and work towards recovery.

Restorative Justice: emphasizes communication between the offender and victim, aiming to repair harm rather than just punish the offender.

Scenarios

In the next few slides we will go through certain situations in which the class will decide which alternative method would best be implicated instead of a prison/jail sentence.

Situation 1

Betty Jones is 22 years old and tries cocaine for the first time while clubbing with friends. After that initial experience, she continues to use it for a couple of months. However, her sister discovers the drugs in Betty's room and decides to call the police, leading to Betty having to appear in court for drug possession. Given this situation, what would be a better alternative to prison?

A. Drug Treatment

B. Probation

C. Community Service

D. Restorative Justice

A is the correct answer! This is because drug treatment allows Betty to correctly fix her drug addiction with the proper support system. If she were to be incarcerated, she would be on her own and not receiving the right treatment to help her.

Situation 2

Eli Creech is 20 years old. He was driving home from a friend's house after drinking a considerable amount. On his way home, he collided with a parked car. Fortunately, no one was injured in the incident. What would be an appropriate alternative to prison for Eli?

A. Restorative Justice

B. Drug Treatment

C. Probation

D. Community Service

Answer choices C/D would be correct! Probation allows Eli to be monitored to ensure he does not get behind the wheel during his sentence, while still being part of society. Additionally, community service could serve as a way for him to give back to the community and make amends for the damage he caused when he hit someone's car.

Situation 3

Liam Butler and Niam Lagoe were at a party when they got into a heated argument. During the confrontation, Liam insulted Niam, prompting her to physically attack him. As a result, Niam was charged with aggravated assault. What would be the best alternative to prison for her?

A. Drug Treatment

B. Restorative Justice

C. Probation

D. Community Service

The correct answer is B! Restorative justice is the best solution for addressing this problem because it allows both individuals to work through their issues effectively. By communicating and resolving the root causes of the problem, they can better fix the situation and prevent it from recurring. If the problem remains unresolved, there is a risk that the situation could worsen and happen again, or that the individuals may not fully recognize their wrongdoing.