



Weslaco Police Department's FIRST OFFENDER PROGRAM

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WHAT IS THE FIRST OFFENDER PROGRAM?

The First Offender Program is a skills education program designed to divert juvenile **First Time Offenders** from the juvenile justice system and to allow the youth an opportunity to erase their arrest record.

MISSION STATEMENT

DIVERT JUVENILE FIRST
TIME OFFENDERS
COMMITTING CLASS A/B
MISDEMEANORS OR A STATE
JAIL FELONY FROM THE
JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM
AND TO REDUCE REPEAT
OFFENDERS

ENROLLMENT CRITERIA



Youth between the ages of **10 – 16**.

Referred by *Weslaco Police Department*

First offenders (Class A, B, and State Jail Felonies).

Parental cooperation and agreement to participate in program.

YOUTH SKILLS: 6-WEEK GROUP SESSIONS

1. Physical Fitness
2. Being Prepared
3. Greeting
4. Attending
5. Observing
6. Listening
7. Decision-Making
8. Drug abuse education presentation

Group Sessions: Provide hands-on activities during the sessions to reinforce the skill being taught.

Ex. **Listening:**

- Youth get into pairs, they each tell their partner about their favorite movie, once both have gone, they present their partners movie the way their partner described it. This determines if they have mastered the skill of “listening”.

Ex. **Decision-making:**

- Youth are given an article which talks about decision-making and peer pressure. They are assigned to read the article and write a short reflection on what they learned, and each youth shares what their take on the article was to open discussion during the sessions.

90-Day Probationary Period

No Arrests or Citations following completion of Direct Phase

EXPUNGEMENT= Record destroyed/No arrest shown on offender

Successful completion of the program and probationary period



PROGRAM OUTCOME MEASURES

Youth completed program requirements



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graph TD; A[Youth completed program requirements] --> B[Youth that exhibited a decrease in substance abuse]; B --> C[Youth that exhibited improvement in family relationships]; C --> D[Youth that exhibited improvement in social competencies]; D --> E[Reoffending youth after the successful completion of the program];
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Youth that exhibited a decrease in substance abuse

Youth that exhibited improvement in family relationships

Youth that exhibited improvement in social competencies

Reoffending youth after the successful completion of the program

Teaching as Treatment **Life Skills Teaching**

Teach *Responsibility* -
Responsibilities/Privileges match up

Teach *Skills*-Physical, Emotional,
Intellectual

Teach *Empowerment*

“Life On Your Own Terms”

