



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Lifer Parolee Recidivism Report. California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Jan. 2014. 11 p.

http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Adult_Research_Branch/Research_Documents/FINAL_06_07_Lifer_Parolee_Recidivism_1_14_13.pdf

"This report focuses on the recidivism of individuals who were released ... to parole after serving a sentence of life with the possibility of parole, hereafter referred to as 'lifer parolees' or 'lifers.' It provides an in-depth recidivism analysis of lifer parolees who were released during fiscal year 2006-07 and followed for a period of three years.... [L]ifer parolees receive fewer new convictions within three years of being released to parole (4.8 vs. 51.5% , respectively). They also have a markedly lower return to prison recidivism rate than non-lifer parolees (13.3 vs. 65.1%, respectively)."

ECONOMY

Trends in Tech-Based Economic Development: Local, State and Federal Action in 2013.

By Rhiannon Skipper. SSTI. Jan. 2014. 33 p.

<http://ssti.org/report-archive/trends2013.pdf>

“A slow yet stable national economic recovery gave rise to many new initiatives across states and regions with a shift toward targeted and refined investments in the high-tech economy for quicker returns—a continued trend from 2012.” The report provides an outline of trends in nine thematic areas: expanding research capacity and commercializing research; increasing access to capital; tax incentives; accelerators and tech hubs; higher education policy; university reorganization; investing in a skilled workforce; federal activity; and, transparency. Each entry includes a short description of the initiative with links to further information.

EDUCATION

Beyond the GED: Promising Models for Moving High School Dropouts to College.

By Elizabeth Zachry Rutschow, et al. MDRC. Jan. 2014. 126 p.

www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/Beyond_the_GED_FR_0.pdf

“Nearly 39 million adults in the United States do not have a high school diploma. Roughly two-thirds of them eventually obtain a high school equivalency credential like the General Educational Development (GED) certificate.... [B]ut fewer than 5% of GED recipients go on to enroll in college or other adult education programs.... [T]his literature review identifies the most promising approaches for increasing dropouts’ rate of attaining a GED certificate or other high school credential and making a successful transition to college.... [T]wo available studies suggest that programs that contextualize basic skills and GED instruction within specific career fields and that support students in their transition to college show promise in increasing the rate of students’ persistence, earning a high school credential, and entering and succeeding in college.”

EMPLOYMENT

The Long-term Unemployed in the Wake of the Great Recession. By Andrew Schaefer.

Carsey Institute. Jan. 2014. 8 p.

<http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/sites/carseyinstitute.unh.edu/files/publications/IB-Schaefer-Long-Term-Unemployment-web.pdf>

There are key differences in the demographic characteristics of the short- and long-term unemployed nationally. “The long-term unemployed are more likely than the short-term unemployed to live in urban areas.... The share of women among the long-term unemployed has grown significantly since 2007... The long-term unemployed are less likely to be non-Hispanic white ... or Hispanic ..., and they are more likely to be non-Hispanic black.... The long-term unemployed are more likely to have a college or advanced degree than the short-term unemployed—a relatively new phenomenon.”

ENERGY

Autonomous Vehicle Technology: A Guide for Policymakers. By James M. Anderson, et al. RAND. Jan. 14, 2014. 214 p.

http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR443-1.html

The automotive industry now appears close to substantial change, engendered by autonomous, or “self-driving,” vehicle technologies. This technology offers the possibility of significant benefits to social welfare—saving lives; reducing crashes, congestion, fuel consumption, and pollution; increasing mobility for the disabled; and ultimately improving land use. This report is intended as a guide for state and federal policymakers on the many issues that this technology raises.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

California Drought Declaration Will Weaken Credit Quality of Local Water Agencies.

By Julian Metcalf, et al. Moody’s Investors Service. Jan. 22, 2014. 5 p.

<http://media.navigatored.com/documents/CA+Drought.pdf>

“Agencies that still have low debt service coverage, primarily owing to the combined effects of the 2008 economic downturn and the 2007-09 drought, will experience the greatest negative effects from the drought declaration. The 20% [water] sales reduction would disproportionately impact their credit quality, while their recent operating histories suggest raising rates will be more difficult politically. The willingness of local water agencies to implement rate increases will continue to be a key determinant of their credit profile and the governor’s emergency declaration will only amplify that.”

HEALTH

Subjective Well-Being: Measuring Happiness, Suffering, and Other Dimensions of Experience.

Edited by Arthur A. Stone, et al. National Academies Press. 2013. 205 p.

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=18548 (Free registration required)

“Subjective well-being refers to how people experience and evaluate their lives and specific domains and activities in their lives. This information has already proven valuable to researchers, who have produced insights about the emotional states and experiences of people belonging to different groups, engaged in different activities, at different points in the life course, and involved in different family and community structures.... This report offers guidance about adopting subjective well-being measures in official government surveys to inform social and economic policies.”

HUMAN SERVICES

2014 California Children’s Report Card. Children Now. Jan. 7, 2014. 76 p.

http://www.childrennow.org/uploads/documents/2014_CA_Childrens_Report_Card.pdf

This report evaluates the current status of California’s children. “It covers the many education, health and child welfare issues—27 in all—that work together to determine children’s well-being. Each one is defined, measured and graded - from A to F - to benchmark the past year and outline a path forward. Despite some positive recent efforts, children in California are doing very poorly overall.” California received a C or D for most issues except health insurance (B+) and some other educational issues such as kindergarten transition (B-) and common core (B-).

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Medicaid Expansion 2014: States to Watch. The Pew Charitable Trusts. Jan. 2014.

<http://www.pewstates.org/research/data-visualizations/medicaid-expansion-2014-states-to-watch-85899531418>

This link provides a map that color-codes states based on their decision to expand Medicaid. It also provides information on the nine states that have not decided to expand Medicaid in 2014 or 2015. Florida, the largest undecided state, has 4.1 million uninsured individuals and Medicaid expansion would lead to an estimated new enrollment of about 25% of the uninsured.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Intelligent Transportation Systems: Vehicle-to-Vehicle Technologies Expected to Offer Safety Benefits, but a Variety of Deployment Challenges Exist. By Dave Wise, et al. Government Accountability Office. GAO-14-13. Nov. 2013. 58 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/658709.pdf>

“The development of vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) technologies has progressed to the point of real world testing, and if broadly deployed, they are anticipated to offer significant safety benefits.... According to DOT [Department of Transportation], if widely deployed, V2V technologies could provide warnings to drivers in as much as 76% of potential multi-vehicle collisions involving at least one light vehicle, such as a passenger car. Ultimately, however, the level of benefits realized will depend on the extent of the deployment of these technologies and the effectiveness of V2V warnings in eliciting appropriate driver responses. The continued progress of V2V technology development hinges on a decision that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) plans to make in late 2013 on how to proceed regarding these technologies.”

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