






# UTEC'S YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY SERIES



## VOTER EDUCATION GUIDE ON **PROVEN-RISK** YOUTH SERVICES

CANDIDATE	Create a task force to design new policies for proven-risk youth & an annual report card on outcomes?	Create a new funding source for community-based re-entry programs for proven-risk youth?	Fund the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI) at \$9.5M or higher to continue focus on Streetworkers?	Support the creation of a new Two Generational program for proven-risk youth and their children?	Candidates' other ideas to support proven-risk youth:
 <b>CHARLIE BAKER</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	<p>I have proposed a comprehensive Urban Agenda that outlines my priorities for ensuring we have safe, thriving communities in all our cities. My plan would promote economic development in urban neighborhoods, lift the cap on charter schools, increase the availability of affordable housing, and improve public safety in our communities. This plan will ultimately help proven at-risk youth because we will be improving the communities in which they live, drastically improving their well-being and giving them the chance to succeed. Additionally, I will promote greater relationships between law enforcement and the communities that they serve and prioritize the reduction of recidivism and alternatives to incarceration in our criminal justice system.</p>
 <b>MARTHA COAKLEY</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	<p>Our goal should be not only to establish a floor for proven-risk youth in the Commonwealth, but to give these young people the tools and the opportunity to build a better life for themselves and their families. This requires a holistic approach that includes education, training, job opportunities, and support services. I have talked about the importance of providing support counselors in schools, to help young people deal with the out of school challenges they face; I have talked about the importance of aligning curriculum in our public schools with the skills employers are looking for, and engaging those employers – working with them to expand summer and after school job opportunities and give young people hands on experiences.</p>
 <b>EVAN FALCHUCK</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	<p>There are complicated social and economic factors that lead to the prevalence of crime in communities across our Commonwealth. Decades of limited economic opportunity, racial disparities in education, housing and law enforcement, as well as an increasingly resilient underground economy. In order to get at the underlying causes of crime, improve public safety and positively transform our communities, we must confront these issues. Improving our system of education, including by providing services and support to help kids growing up in communities plagued by crime, providing job opportunities and job training and educational alternatives, such vocational programs are critical components of a reimaged approach to these societal problems.</p>
 <b>SCOTT LIVELY</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	<p>Due to family breakdown resulting from my father's mental illness I was teenage alcoholic and drug addict and a juvenile offender. Today, by the grace of God, I am an attorney and an inner-city missionary pastor. Rescuing young people from the downward spiral I once lived is a major priority for me. I am the only candidate for governor who knows this issue from the perspective of the street. I believe the root of most youth criminality is fatherlessness. The first line of attack must be an emphasis on restoring the marriage-based two-parent family as the priority of our social services. The #1 best protection for kids is a Mom and Dad who love them.</p>
 <b>JEFF MCCORMICK</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	<p>We need to first start with criminal justice reform. We need to be a leader in preventing at-risk youth entering into the system if we are to reduce recidivism and a life of violence. Our focus should be on providing access to services by making sure that providers and government agencies are communicating with each other to get the best outcomes for at-risk youth. The whole system, from the providers to the child to the family, should focus on providing results for at-risk youth. Creating jobs and providing summer programs for at-risk youth to show these kids at an early age that there are alternatives to a life of violence will be a top priority for me as Governor.</p>

All candidates running for Governor were posed the following questions regarding policies for addressing youth violence in the Commonwealth and for supporting proven-risk youth towards recidivism, education and employment. Differing from “at-risk” or “high risk” youth, UTEC defines “proven-risk youth” as those young people who **already have a history of serious criminal and gang involvement**, ages 16-24.

1. *If elected, would you support the creation of a commission, task force, or inter-departmental group (including community-based providers) to focus on both the development of new programs and policies for proven-risk youth, while also including the coordination of an annual report card for how Massachusetts is performing on outcomes specifically working with such young people.*

**Charlie Baker:** Yes. I believe that it is important that we promote a greater relationship between our public safety officials and the communities they serve and enlist those who have been successful in changing the lives of youth across the commonwealth to be part of the planning and public safety process. I will work with law enforcement officials and local community leaders to identify unique strategies tailor-made to each community that will help proven-risk youth. This includes ensuring access to quality schools, job training, comprehensive re-entry programs, and organizations that provide tangible job options for high school students outside of summer jobs. It is important that we have metrics for success and transparency around how we are performing on those metric.

**Martha Coakley:** Yes, I would support bringing together all stakeholders to identify and implement the most effective strategies to support and empower proven-risk youth.

**Evan Falchuck:** Yes

**Scott Lively:** Yes

**Jeff McCormick:** Yes. Throughout this campaign, I have heard from community-based providers across the Commonwealth that one of their constant frustrations is that agencies and departments are not talking to each other. As Governor, I will break down silos between agencies and include providers while developing policies and programs for at-risk youth. In addition, we need to increase communication between providers to service more at-risk youth and analyze outcomes statewide.

2. *Currently, there is no statewide, sustainable funding source for community-based re-entry programs to help proven-risk young people, ages 16-24, across the spectrum of juvenile and adult correctional facilities in the Commonwealth. If elected, would you support a new funding source for community-based re-entry programs aimed at reducing the Commonwealth's current recidivism rate (over 60%)? If so, are there specific criminal justice reform areas (i.e. pre-trial reform or other policy opportunities) that you would emphasize to allow for such increased funding. Please describe.*

**Charlie Baker:** Yes. Investing in re-entry programs in order to reduce recidivism is a sound investment in our young people and communities which will also save the state money in the long-term. Too many proven-risk youth are sent into our prison system for non-violent crimes, which studies have shown often times leads to more violent criminal behavior later in life. It is time that we consider alternatives for non-violent drug offenses and pursue innovative substance abuse treatment programs. I also believe that it is important to provide support to proven-risk youth returning to our communities from juvenile and adult correctional facilities. That is why I will support comprehensive re-entry programs which include job training and placement with local employers.

**Martha Coakley:** Yes, I support additional emphasis and investment in proven, community-base reentry programming, which is critical to breaking the cycle of violence. Throughout the campaign, I have talked about the importance of shifting funding from prison expansion, to focus on effective prevention measures, including effective reentry programs, behavioral health counseling, and substance abuse treatment. I will look to the expanded use of specialized courts to divert individuals struggling with mental illness and/or substance abuse from incarceration to treatment, thereby improving outcomes and reducing overall expenditures.

**Evan Falchuck:** Yes. Policies that reduce – and eliminate – the need to incarcerate so many people will reduce the extraordinary expense of incarceration, but also the lost opportunities each one of these young people represent. Yes, there are some people who need to be locked up for a long time, but I believe in our young people and their capacity to be redeemed and helped to find safe, productive paths for their lives. Specifically, we must reform our broken sentencing, parole, probation and bail systems, as well as come to a consensus on how to address all the social, economic and educational problems that lead to crime – and deal with them directly.

**Scott Lively:** Yes.

**Jeff McCormick:** Yes. I believe we need to overhaul our sentencing guidelines for non-violent drug offenders. Too many people are being put in prison for drug-related offenses when what they really need is treatment for addiction. The state must provide wraparound services to families in need and individuals for them to be contributing members of society. This is also an issue of poverty and access to opportunity. Judges need more discretion in sentencing and the State needs to provide the resources to prevent kids from entering into the system in the first place.

3. *Streetworker (street outreach) programs have been proven to reduce youth violence in cities across the country. As one of the only funding sources that emphasizes a Streetworker approach to working with proven-risk youth, would you support the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI) line item by fully funding it at \$9.5 million, or expanding it, to best serve the high-crime communities across our Commonwealth?*

**Charlie Baker:** Yes. I believe in proactively engaging proven-risk youth and enlisting those who have been successful in changing the lives of youth across the commonwealth to be part of the planning and public safety process. I will work with legislators and communities to ensure that the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI) continues to receive the adequate funding it needs to complete its mission in the Commonwealth.

**Martha Coakley:** Yes, I understand the importance of the street worker and interrupter model of addressing violence, and I will make greater funding for the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative a priority.

**Evan Falchuck:** Yes – and it should be expanded. Every young person deserves the best chance to get ahead, and these programs are a proven way to help them get off of a path that far too often leads to a tragic end.

**Scott Lively:** Yes.

**Jeff McCormick:** Yes. Funding needs to be increased and allocated to Streetworkers to do the important work that they do in the community. Riding along with UTEC workers for a day showed me how critical the work street workers do each day in helping at-risk youth avoid being part of the system. In addition, we need to look at the whole child, from education to jobs to healthcare, and reduce violence among our youth.

4. *Many proven-risk youth are parents themselves. The Aspen Institute released a report this month that calls for policy reforms to focus on a two-generation approach to best break the cycle of violence and poverty. Two-generation approaches address the needs of both vulnerable parents and their children. If elected, would you support a specific 2-generation program to provide comprehensive services for proven-risk youth while simultaneously offering early education programming for their children. For reference, the Aspen Institute Report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/luaaeod>*

**Charlie Baker:** Yes. This is a problem that I have spoken about with community leaders across the state. We need to take a comprehensive approach to tackling the problems of violence and poverty. It is important that state government see these problems as interconnected and that agencies and departments work together collaboratively to address them. In my administration, we will use comprehensive approaches such as 2-generation programs to improve the lives of proven-risk youth and their families.

**Martha Coakley:** Yes, through my experience as an Assistant District Attorney, District Attorney, and Attorney General, I have seen how the cycle of violence can affect multiple generations, and how critical parents can be in helping their children escape that cycle. I believe a framework that address both generations – supporting the parents while empowering the children – is something we should wholeheartedly embrace.

**Evan Falchuck:** Yes. Multi-generational poverty is a serious problem that, unfortunately, does not get the attention it needs – other than the tired old efforts to politicize the condition of people in these situations. People have the capacity to escape poverty, but only if we lower the cost of living and provide each and every person in need the services they require to live independent, productive lives.

**Scott Lively:** Yes.

**Jeff McCormick:** Yes. I have a comprehensive plan to provide early childhood education to all children in the Commonwealth, starting with four year olds. Studies have shown that providing comprehensive early childhood education to children results in kids more likely to graduate from high school, have higher test scores, and less likely to be incarcerated. In addition, we need to help parents by providing pathways to employment and access to healthcare and low-cost childcare.

5. *Please describe any other ideas or initiatives you may have that you plan to prioritize to best transform, in a systemic way, the well-being of our Commonwealth's most proven-risk youth.*

**Charlie Baker:** I have proposed a comprehensive Urban Agenda that outlines my priorities for ensuring we have safe, thriving communities in all our cities. My plan would promote economic development in urban neighborhoods, lift the cap on charter schools, increase the availability of affordable housing, and improve public safety in our communities. This plan will ultimately help proven at-risk youth because we will be improving the communities in which they live, drastically improving their well-being and giving them the chance to succeed. Additionally, I will promote greater relationships between law enforcement and the communities that they serve and prioritize the reduction of recidivism and alternatives to incarceration in our criminal justice system.

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**Evan Falchuck:** There are complicated social and economic factors that lead to the prevalence of crime in communities across our Commonwealth. Decades of limited economic opportunity, racial disparities in education, housing and law enforcement, as well as an increasingly resilient underground economy. In order to get at the underlying causes of crime, improve public safety and positively transform our communities, we must confront these issues. Improving our system of education, including by providing services and support to help kids growing up in communities plagued by crime, providing job opportunities and job training and educational alternatives, such vocational programs are critical components of a reimaged approach to these societal problems.

**Scott Lively:** Due to family breakdown resulting from my father's mental illness I was teenage alcoholic and drug addict and a juvenile offender. Today, by the grace of God, I am an attorney and an inner-city missionary pastor. Rescuing young people from the downward spiral I once lived is a major priority for me. I am the only candidate for governor who knows this issue from the perspective of the street. I believe the root of most youth criminality is fatherlessness. The first line of attack must be an emphasis on restoring the marriage-based two-parent family as the priority of our social services. The #1 best protection for kids is a Mom and Dad who love them. We must end the discrimination against fathers in social services that has produced an inner-city culture of fatherless homes and actively encourage and support natural marriage as the foundation of the family. Second, we must destroy the drug culture that breaks up so many homes and enslaves so many young people. It is nearly impossible to rehabilitate a young person who is substance abuser. I would initiate a graduated bounty program on drug dealers, and double the bounty on any public official involved in drug trafficking. I would mandate clean drug tests and random testing for all persons receiving government assistance, coupled with residential treatment homes for persons incapable of getting clean on their own. Third, I would revive and re-fund the Stephen L French Youth Forestry Camp on Cape Cod and establish additional similar sites to use the wilderness survival boot-camp approach to build self-esteem in young men, and coordinate with the National Guard and military to facilitate the recruitment process for those inclined to enter the service. I graduated from the Cape Cod facility in 1975? and was helped enormously by its rugged, masculinity-affirming program, which I believe is needed even more today than when I was a teenager.

**Jeff McCormick:** We need to first start with criminal justice reform. We need to be a leader in preventing at-risk youth entering into the system if we are to reduce recidivism and a life of violence. Our focus should be on providing access to services by making sure that providers and government agencies are communicating with each other to get the best outcomes for at-risk youth. The whole system, from the providers to the child to the family, should focus on providing results for at-risk youth. Creating jobs and providing summer programs for at-risk youth to show these kids at an early age that there are alternatives to a life a violence will be a top priority for me as Governor.

**YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY SERIES 2014 – UTEC Lowell, MA in Partnership with the SSYI Advocacy Coalition**

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