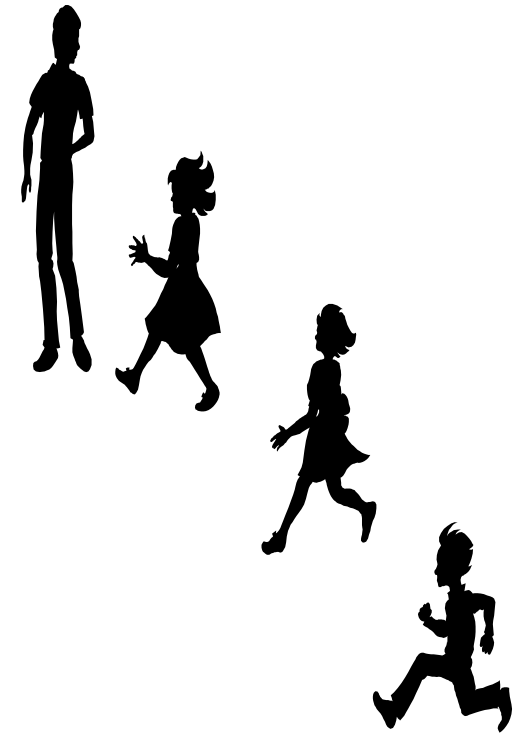


Cross System Information Sharing: A Matter of Life or Death for Criminal Clients



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Standardization for Quality in an Era of Competing Needs: A Dialog with Experts.

43rd Annual Southern Regional Conference on
Mental Health Statistics.

September 25, 2001

New Orleans, Louisiana

March 5, 1993



Well, as I sit here in this cold and ugly cell, I'm trying to think about how my life took such a bad turn for the worse. I get so tired of crying, but I can't help it when I think about all the people who have tried to help me, and how I repaid them by getting into this mess! I live at Louisiana State Penitentiary, on Death Row. Today is March 5, 1993, and a man named Robert Sawyer is to be executed by lethal injection. He is the first man to be put to death here at Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) in three years.

They say that dying by lethal injection is better than by the electric chair. I would think so too, considering how badly the electric chair burns you, and the smell it created from the burning flesh.

They've moved Robert Sawyer from Death Row to Camp F, the Death House, by now. From my cell, I can see the front gate, and all kinds of news people. They swarm out there like carrion eaters waiting on certain death, as they stand with their cameras, waiting for an interview with the Warden.

I'm tired, but can't sleep, as I wait to see what will happen to Robert. It all seems so surreal to me now, but at times, the reality is so tangible that I can feel it in the air I breathe. I'm scared to death, as is everyone here on Death Row. Everything is ominously quiet, and I wonder what everyone else is thinking? Probably the same things as me. Will they get a chance to do this to me also? My stomach is in knots, and my head hurts just from thinking about this tonight!

At 12:01 a.m., they will begin to put Robert to death. I really didn't know him that good. I had occasion to meet him, and talk to him once or twice in church, though. He seems to be very sorry for what they say he is to die for!

The iron door at the front of the tier just closed, and it made me jump. I think everyone's a little jumpy tonight. The guard is making his rounds to make sure that we are all still here, and that no one has killed himself.

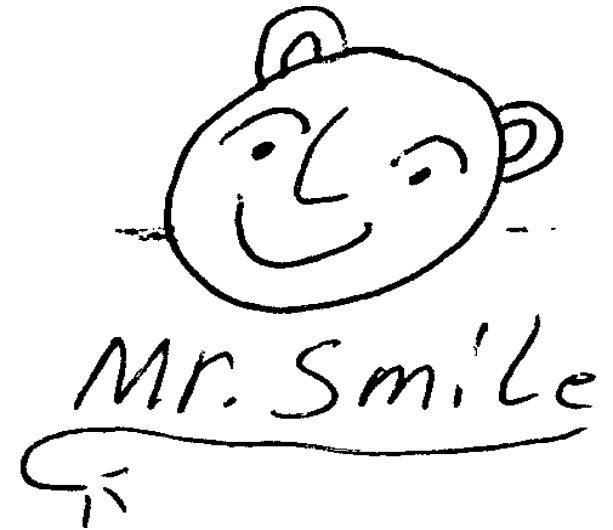
All of this is running through my mind now, and I can see that everyone outside is leaving so they must have carried out the execution as planned! I can't help but wonder if they'll be outside like that when my time comes, if it comes?



In his own words. . .

I have never before told my past in detail. And I'm not doing it now because I'm proud of how bad, how evil I was. I'm doing it because people are always speculating about why I am as I am. And to understand that about a person, why they do the things that they do, you have to know the whole story of their past. You have to know all their experiences, all the pain that's been a part of their life. Plus this book has a meaning for me. I would not spend one hour on this book if it didn't have some meaning.

— Feltus Taylor, Jr.
Waiting to Die (unpublished
manuscript)



How Children Enter Criminal Pathway

Medical / Physical Pathway

- Pre-natal / in utero / birth problems
- Malnutrition
- Mental, learning, and behavioral disabilities
- Retardation
- Head injuries
- Fetal alcohol syndrome

Social Pathway

- Child abuse / neglect → abandonment
- Developmental delays
Inappropriate school placement
- Disrupted family
- Disorganized neighborhoods
- Poverty

Almost all cases experience school failure and school problems



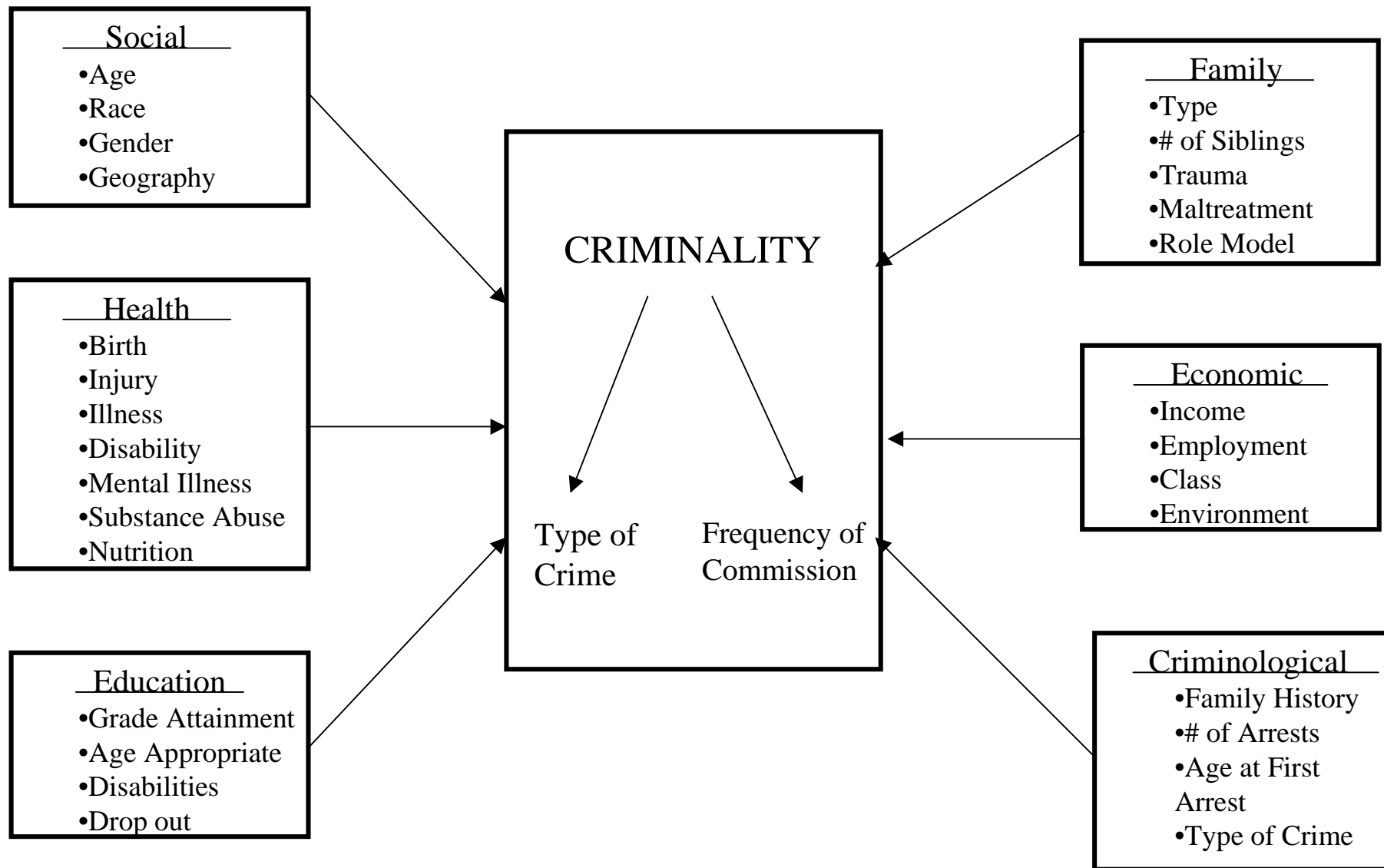
Developmental Trends for Troubled Children

Time Frame	Developmental Trends
<p>First Grade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter school with inappropriate behavioral skills • Often hungry and poorly clothed • Often intellectually deficient • Possibly abused and / or neglected • Often labeled as “trouble makers” or tend to be introverted and sit in class quietly
<p>Second Grade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior may escalate to acting out • Home problems may escalate • Evidence of cognitive inabilities begin to show up
<p>Continuing Early Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively unable to function in school • Behavioral acting out • Learning problems • Introversion • Depression • Mental illness • School becomes increasingly intolerant of child’s problems



Theoretical Framework

General Factors to Explore in Social History Development



Childhood Risk Factors for Eight LA Capital Cases

Community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Community poverty		X		X		X		
High rates of crime and violence		X		X				
High population density								
Physical deterioration				X			X	
Lack of surveillance in public places					X			
Low levels of attachment to the neighborhood		X						
Availability of firearms		X						
Transitions and mobility		X		X				
Extreme social deprivation		X		X			X	
Gang violence		X						

Family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Low SES		X		X		X		
Large family	X	X	X	X				
Parents: Antisocial personality								
Criminal parents or siblings					X			
Parental substance abuse	X		X		X			X
Parental disharmony			X		X			X
Parents: Low IQ and educational achievement				X		X		
Harsh or inconsistent discipline			X		X			
Lack of supervision		X		X	X	X		
Parental rejection								
Low involvement in child's activities		X			X	X		
Child maltreatment	X		X		X	X		
Separation from parents				X	X	X		
Early and consistent child misbehavior in the home						X		
Absent biological father	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Drug use during pregnancy	X							
Perinatal complications				X	X			



Risk Factors (cont.)

School	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Poor academic performance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
School failure		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Poor reading performance		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Low commitment to school		X		X	X	X	X	
School drop-out	X		X	X	X		X	

Peer Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Delinquent peer group		X				X		
Gang membership		X						

Individual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Fearless/uninhibited temperament			X					
Difficult temperament								
Impulsiveness		X			X			X
Cognitive impairments					X	X	X	
Low I.Q.	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Antisocial Personality Disorder	*	*						
Conduct Disorder	*	*		*	X	*		
Aggressive		X			X			X
Hyperactive	X	X			X			
Obsessive-Compulsive								
Drug Abuse	X		X		X	X		X
Deficits in social skills	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Inappropriate attribution of the meaning of social interactions/contexts		X						X
Deficits in social problem-solving	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

*=Symptoms present but no diagnosis



Client: R.S. - Life History Summary and Costs

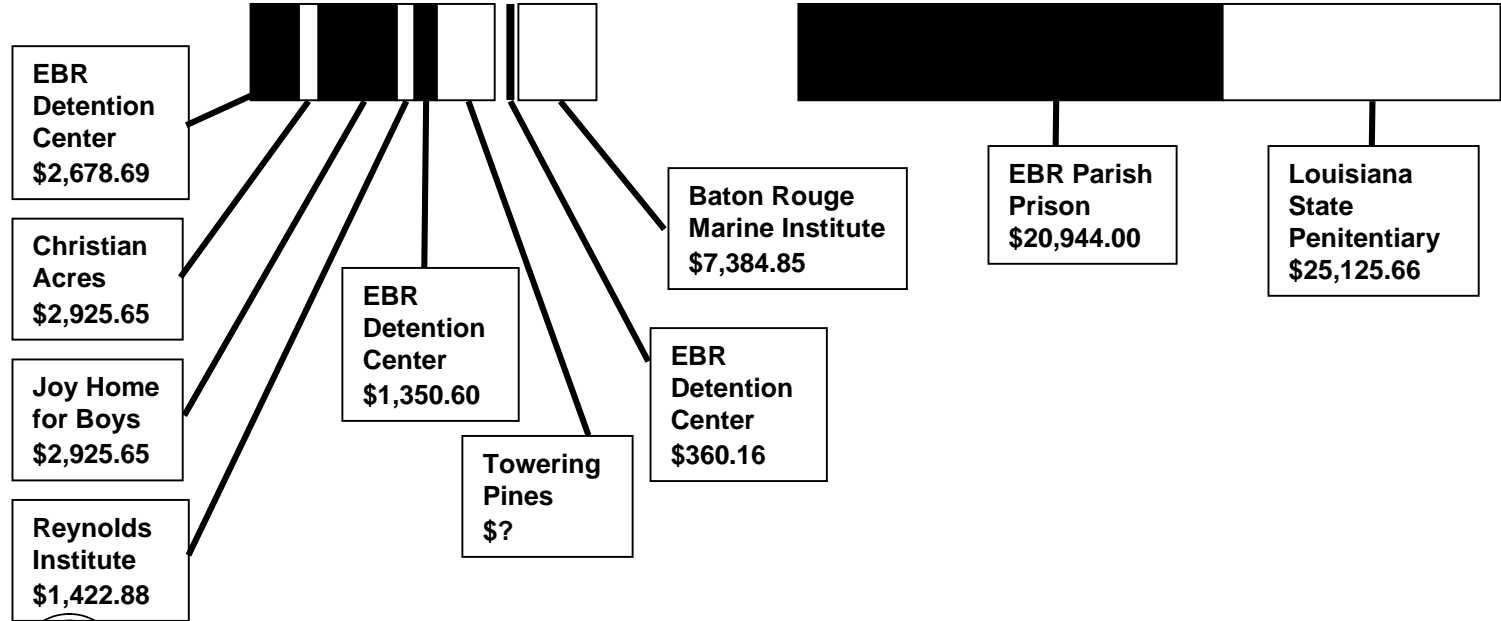
12 / 1976 - 1980 Birth - Age 4	1981 5	1982 6	1983 7	1984 8	1985 9	1986 10	1987 11	1988 12	1989 13
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- Born premature
- Mother: low educational attainment
- Father absent
- Large family
- Poverty
- Poor and deteriorating neighborhood

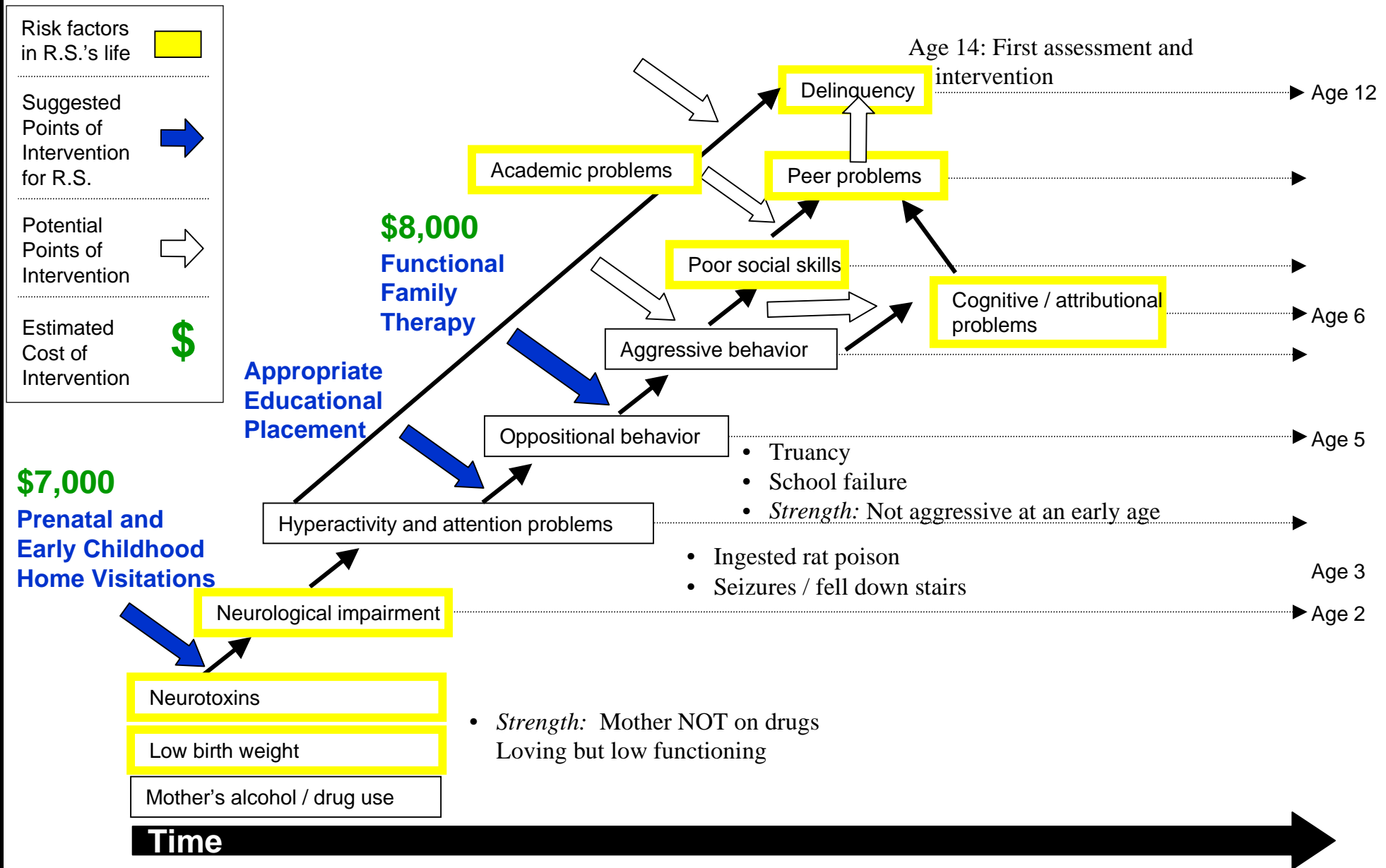
K Nicholson Elem. 32 absences	1 29 absences	1 La Belle Aire & Park Forest Elementary 34 absences	2 Park Forest & Clinton Elementary 43 absences	2 Clinton Elementary 6 absences	3 Clinton & Delmont Elementary 25 absences	4 Delmont Elementary 78 absences	6 Prescott Middle
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- Assessment**
- Mild mental retardation (IQ- 65)
 - Severe deficit in visual motor area

1990 14	1991 15	1992 16	1993 17	1994 18	1995 19	1996 20	1997 21	1998 22	1999 23	Future
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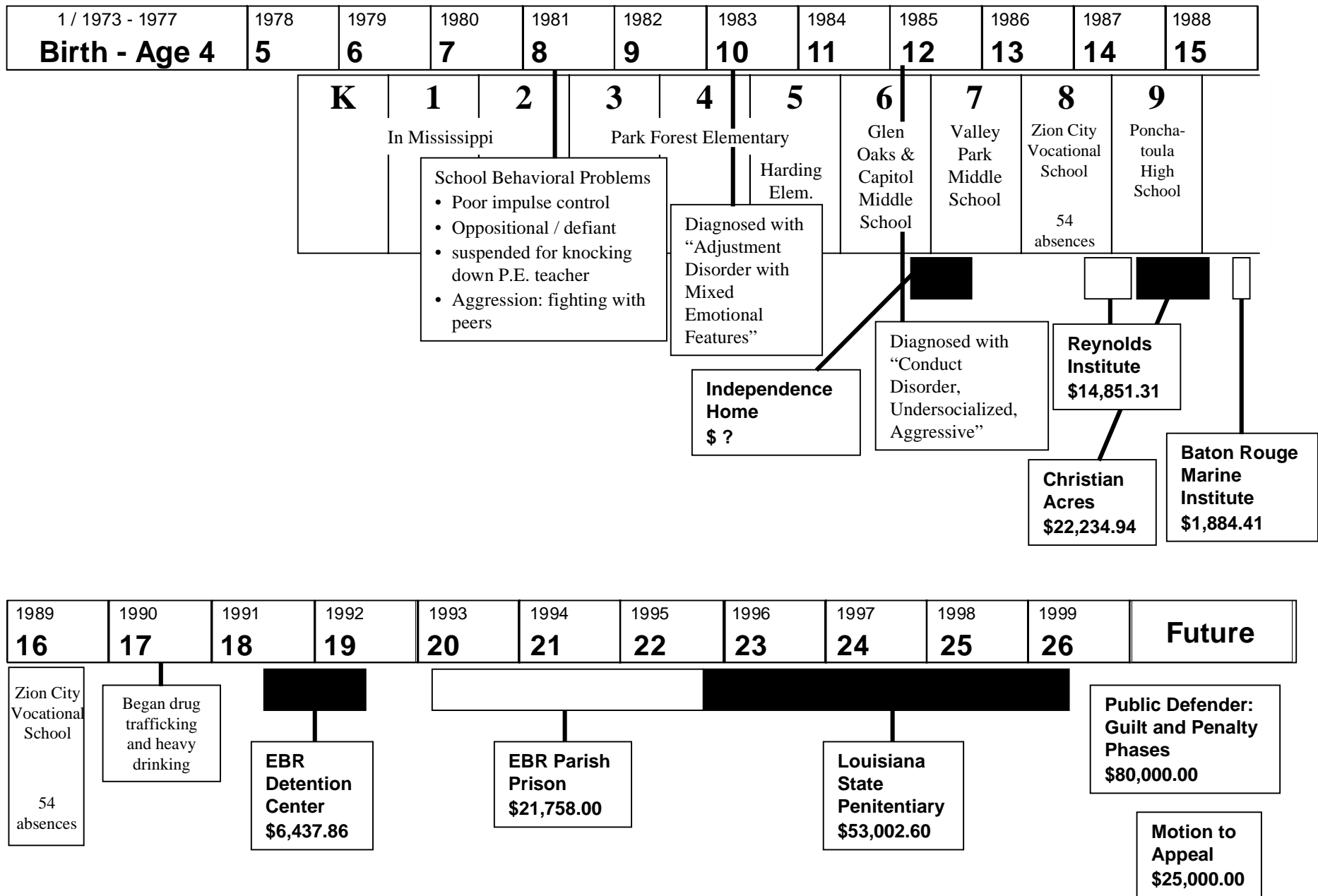
R.S.: Too Little Too Late



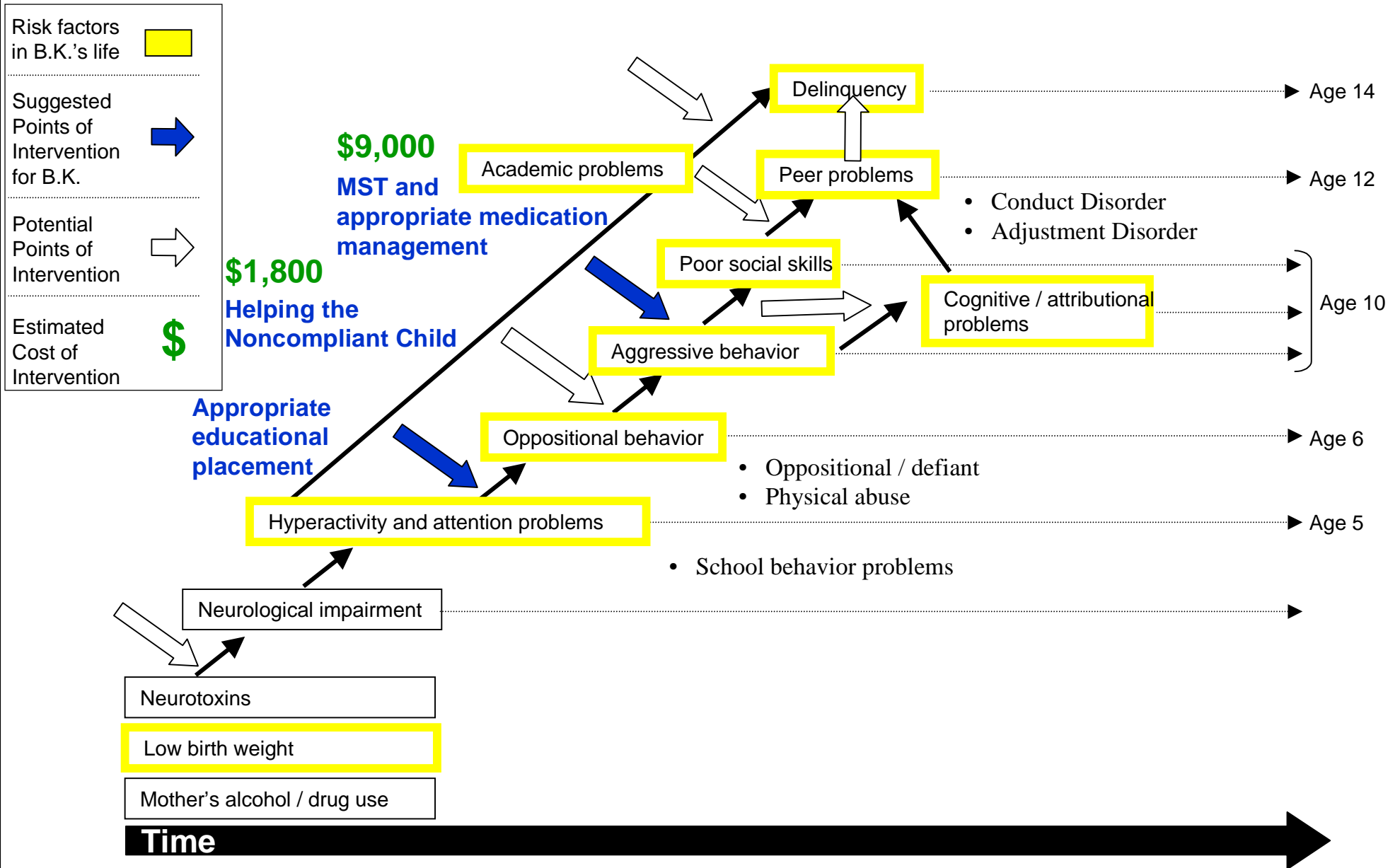
Source: "Development and Risk Factors of Juvenile Antisocial Behavior and Delinquency," R. Loeber, Clinical Psychology Review (10), 1-41



Client: B.K. – Life History Summary and Costs



B.K.: "I told you I was mad."



Source: "Development and Risk Factors of Juvenile Antisocial Behavior and Delinquency," R. Loeber, Clinical Psychology Review (10), 1-41



Feltus- Early Childhood



- Prenatal care (birth mother)
- Parent education
- Possibly, foster care services



Doctor or nurse refer family to community services / provide information on child development; home visitation program



1961
↓
March 17, 1961
Born in
New York

1962
↓
Abandoned by birth mother

1963
↓
Brought into Taylor family at the age of 2

Speech articulation disorder that lasted into his early teens

1964
↓
July 7, 1964
Adoption final

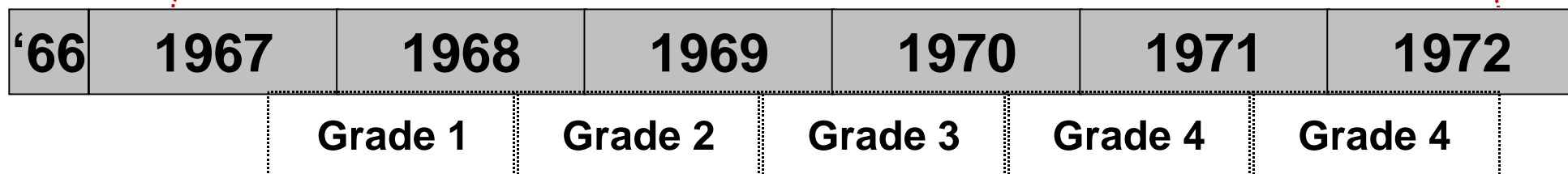
- Maternal grandmother reported that he was unable to walk or talk. Had nightmares in which he would flail his arms out and yell “Dop, dop, dop.”
- Father was an alcoholic
- Maternal grandfather was an alcoholic



Feltus- Late Childhood



- Enroll in speech therapy, special education
- Refer parents to community-based services, such as parent education
- FINS referral
- Family counseling



Entered school with obvious developmental delays

- Speech
- Socialization
- Learning
- Toilet training

Witnessed violent fight between parents

Parents separated; he felt responsible

July 1971
Parents divorced. Feltus was 10 years old.

Oct. 1971
Father married mistress

Stepmother accused him of stealing from her home

Caught stealing toy from store

Father having affair. Took Feltus along. Told him that the woman was his "aunt."

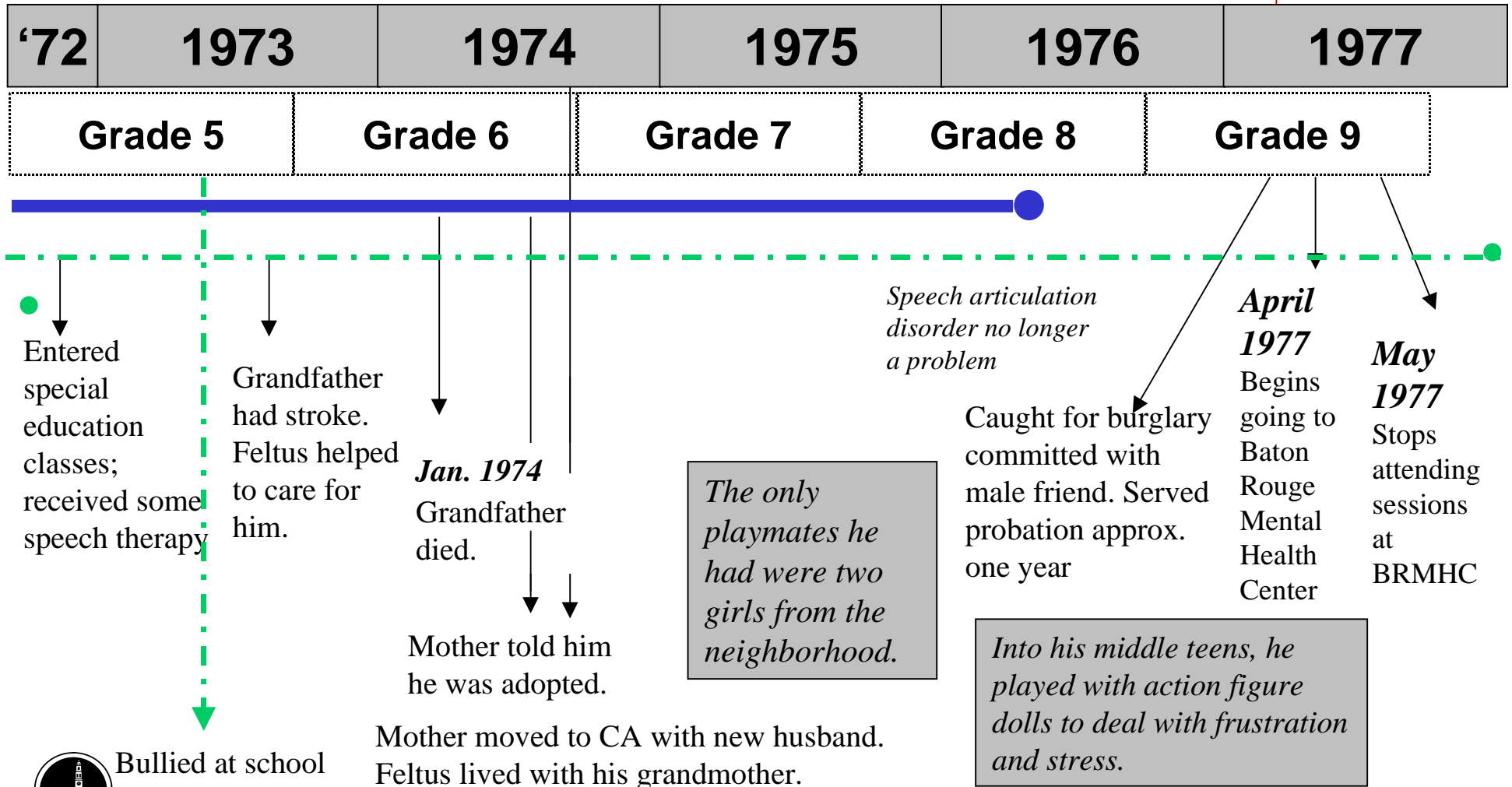
Feltus did not play with other children at school or in his neighborhood.



Feltus- Childhood through Early / Mid Adolescence



First serious contact with the law. Opportunity to refer youth to counseling; recreation programs; varying intensities of correctional supervision; continuum of care


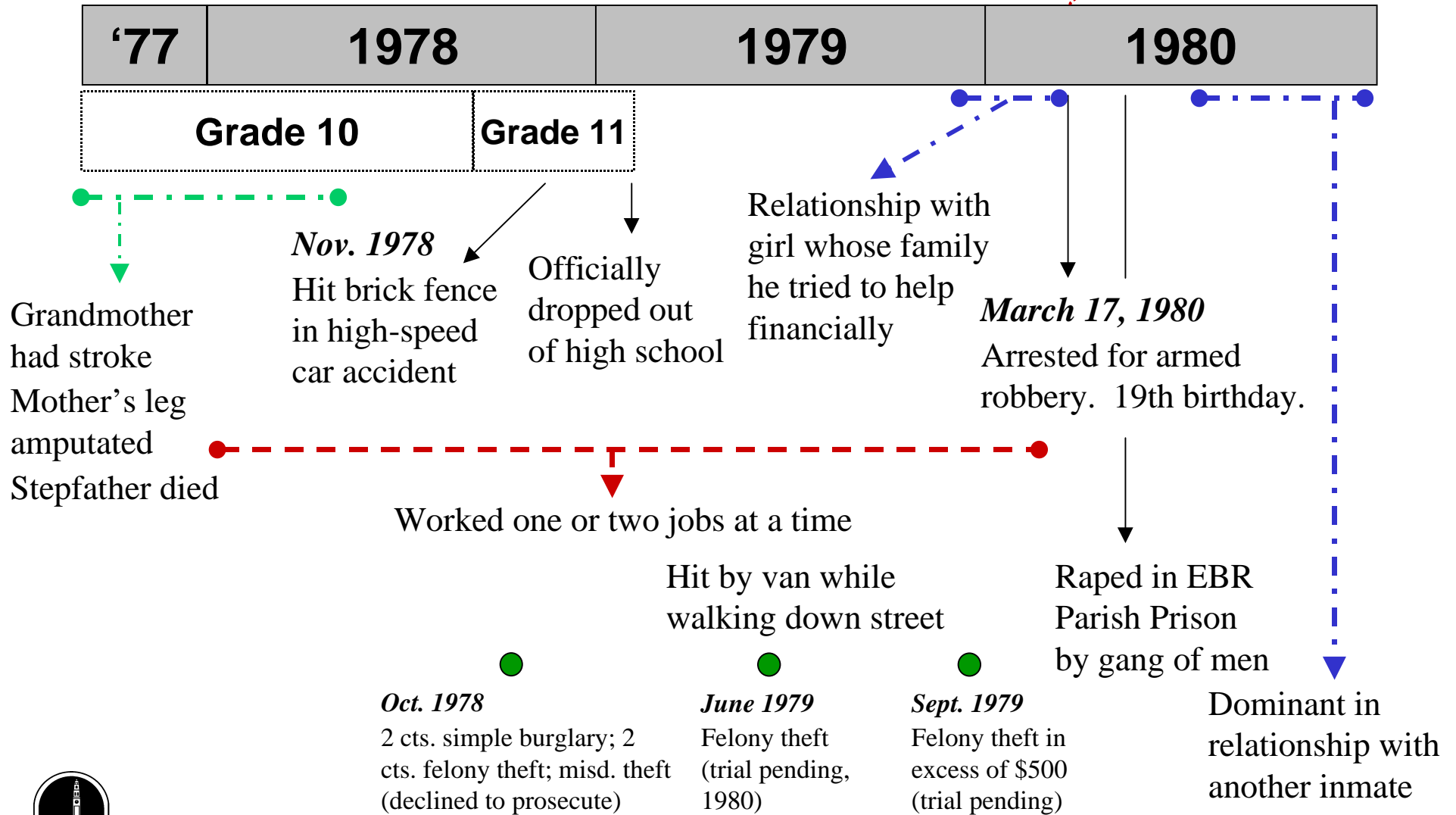


Feltus- Late Adolescence



School-based services

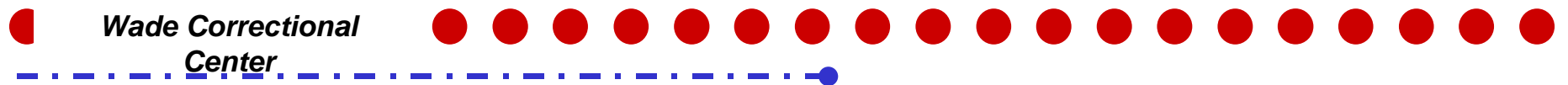
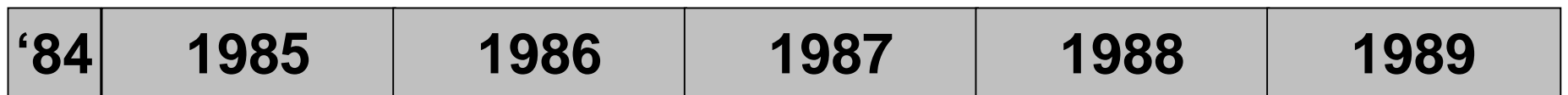
- Better protection in prison for young offenders
- Work
- Education
- Treatment

Feltus- Adulthood



Programs on life skills,
conflict resolution, anger
management



Dominant in relationship with another inmate



- *Smoked marijuana regularly, sold it in prison*
- *Occasional fights and write-ups for insubordination*



May 1985
Mother died.
(Feltus found out the day she was buried, almost a week later.)



March 1987
Father died.
(Was not allowed to attend funeral because father's family refused.)



Re-entered GED classes



Received diploma.
Had GED.



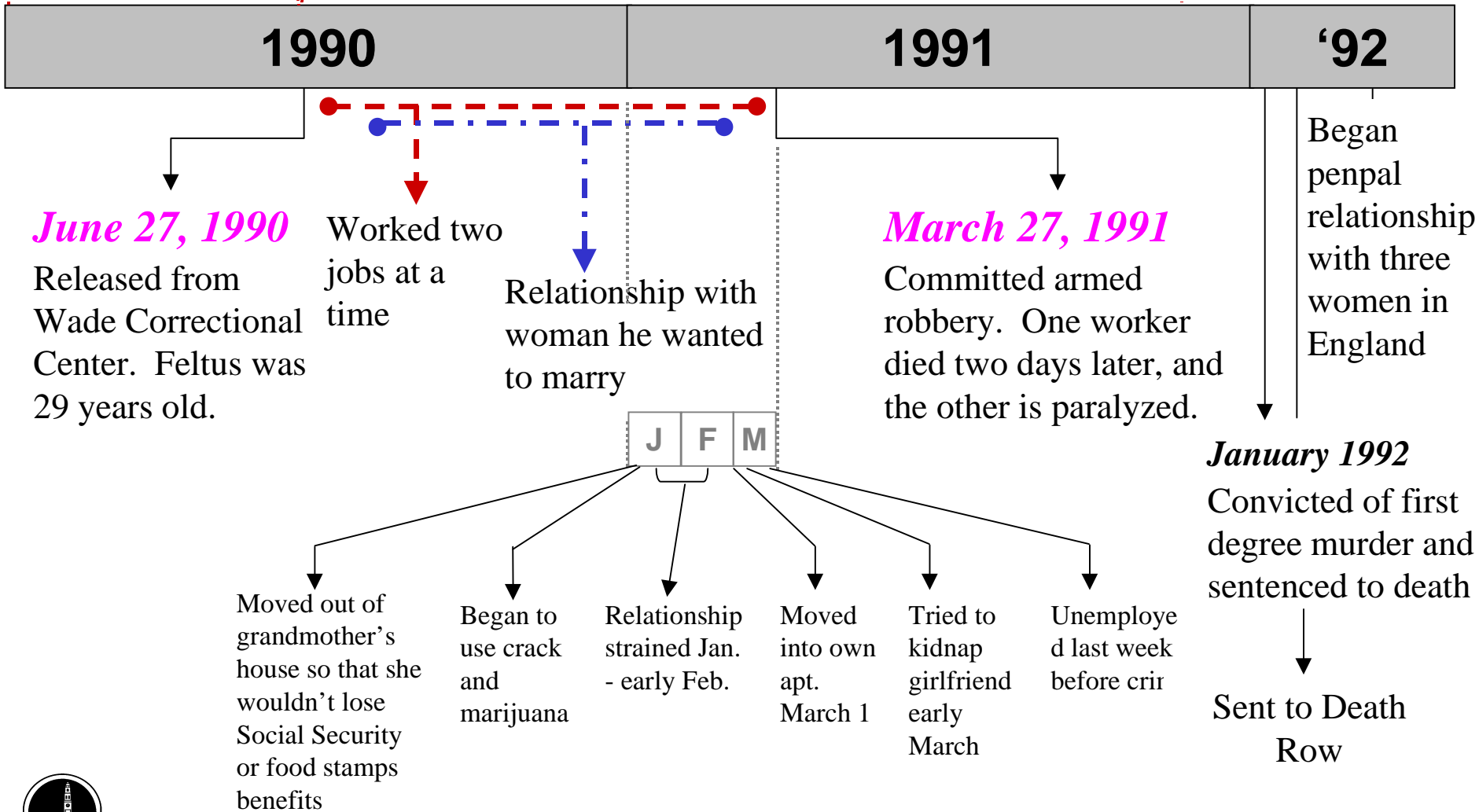
Feltus- Adulthood (Con't)



Pre-release planning

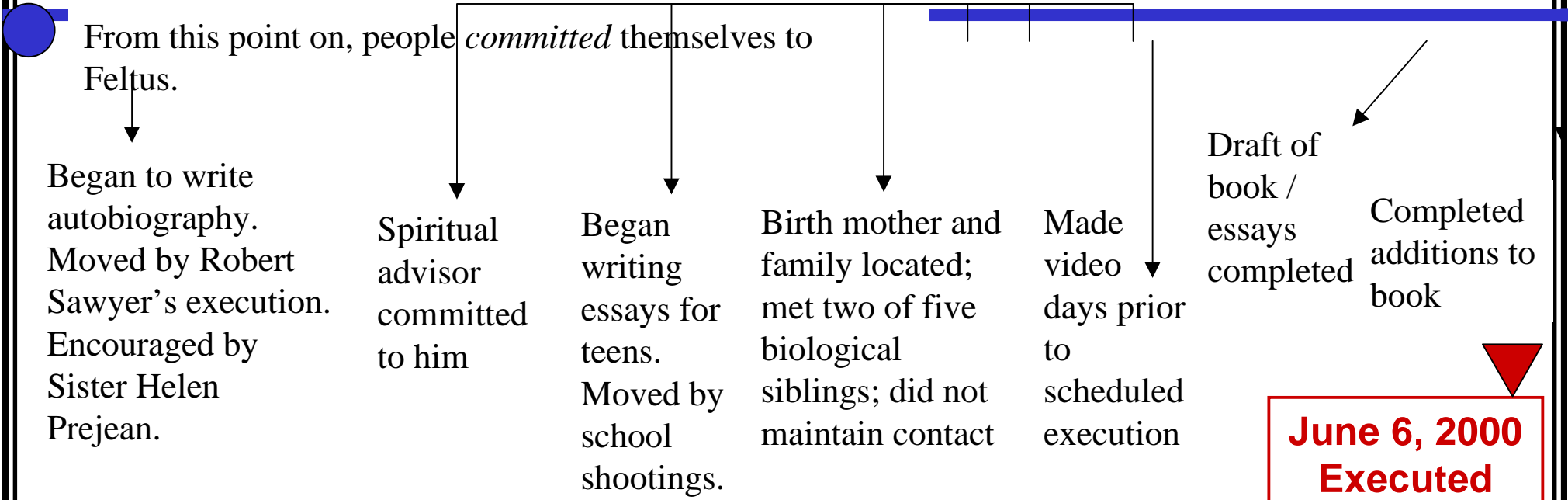


- Halfway house transition
- Assistance with job search and retention
- Help with money, decision-making, problem solving
- Mentoring



Feltus- Adulthood (Con't)

'92 **1993** **1994** **1995** **1996** **1997** **1998** **1999** 2000



Feltus' remorse for his crime was immediate. He turned to spirituality to deal with his feelings of guilt and self-loathing.

Execution Dates

- March 21, 1997**
- Oct. 17, 1997**
- May 22, 1998**
Granted stay two days before execution date
- Sept. 9, 1999**
Granted stay one hour before execution

March 5, 1993
Robert Sawyer executed

May 16, 1995
Thomas Lee Ward executed

March 1, 1996
Antonio James executed

April 24, 1997
John Ashley Brown, Jr. executed

Jan. 8, 1999
Dobie Gillis Williams executed



In this era of competing needs, children are losing. Children of color and children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable. They are not even getting to a point where they can compete to get their needs met. All we have to do is examine our prison population to see where our failures lie.

The only hope for children on a pathway to crime is through activities such as:

- Outcome measures to show the progress or failure of our interventions
- Process measures to show how we succeed or fail
- Getting the results out to the public and policymakers
- Advocate, Advocate, Advocate for early quality services for our children



Interrupting the Pathway

- Early identification
- Responsivity to the problem
- Family, community, school collaboration
- Timely intervention
- Evaluation of effort
- Accountability by school system to monitor change
- School personnel who never give up and demand intervention
- Communities that keep children in the community and out of secure care
- Public officials who support schools
- Legislators who ensure policy and law that support early protection of children
- Statewide leadership that is pro-active and determined to deal with the problems of children in Louisiana

