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Associated Press: Report praises Ohio's efforts to shrink juvenile prisons

COLUMBUS — A report is praising Ohio's approach to reducing its juvenile prison population by shifting more offenders into local community centers and out of state-run facilities.

The Department of Youth Services now houses fewer than 700 inmates, a third of what Ohio used to hold in juvenile detention centers.

The report filed Thursday in federal court in Columbus says two different programs for placing young offenders in community centers have produced impressive results.

The report by a court-appointed monitor says the transfers to local centers also have resulted in fewer children committing new crimes on release and has led to improvements in offenders' mental health.

The reports are part of a review system stemming from a 2004 lawsuit that alleged a culture of violence permeated the state's youth prisons.

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