

JUVENILE JUSTICE SERIES FEATURES LOCAL REPORTS

ABC-TV's "Nightline" begins a five-part series tonight on the condition of juvenile justice in the United States that features extensive reporting in California -- particularly Santa Clara County.

The series, anchored by Ted Koppel, comes at a time when many states are considering measures that would permit more serious juvenile offenders to be tried as adults.

In California, Proposition 21 on the March 7 ballot would allow district attorneys around the state to determine if children as young as 14 could be tried for various serious crimes, including murder.

"Nightline" can be seen locally at 11:35 p.m. on Channels 7 and 11.

According to ABC, the series will touch on the following topics:

- * Tonight -- An overview of the merits and pitfalls of trying youths as adults, focusing on the case of a Yuba City boy accused of murdering a convenience-store clerk.
- * Tuesday -- The juvenile system through the eyes of its decision-makers, featuring interviews with Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Leonard Edwards, Bridget Jones of the public defender's office, and Kurt Kumli of the district attorney's office.
- * Wednesday -- Rehabilitation of juvenile offenders convicted of less serious crimes, featuring a visit to Santa Clara County's Holden Youth Ranch.
- * Thursday -- Mental-health concerns among juvenile offenders, featuring footage inside California Youth Authority facilities and an interview with Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Eugene Hyman.
- * Friday -- The notion of rehabilitation among serious juvenile offenders, tracking the cases of three law-breakers through Santa Clara County's Juvenile Hall.