

**Report to the Legislature of the  
State of California**

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH CENTER  
VISITOR CENTER**

**FINAL REPORT**

**135909**

**State of California  
Department of the Youth Authority  
Research Division**

**January 1992**

# STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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By

**Teresa M. Isorena**

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**U.S. Department of Justice  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Summary.....	iii
Introduction .....	1
Program Description .....	2
Evaluation Methodology .....	3
Findings .....	7
Program Impact on Visiting.....	7
Program Impact on Parole Performance.....	14
Program Services Delivered .....	16
Discussion and Conclusions .....	18
References .....	21
Appendix A: Chapter 1269 (AB 2330, Filante and Johnston).....	23
Appendix B: Chapter 1350 (AB 588, Filante).....	25

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
TABLE 1: Monthly Average Number of Visits, Number of Visitors, and Average Daily Population.....	7
TABLE 2A: Monthly Visitation Rates at O.H. Close Based on Number of Visits.....	8
TABLE 3A: Monthly Visitation Rates at Karl Holton Based on Number of Visits.....	9
TABLE 3B: Monthly Visitation Rates at Karl Holton Based on Number of Visitors.....	10
TABLE 4A: Monthly Visitation Rates at Dewitt Nelson Based on Number of Visits.....	11
TABLE 4B: Monthly Visitation Rates at Dewitt Nelson Based on Number of Visitors.....	12
TABLE 5: Parole Violations for the Sample of Parole Releases During a 12-Month Follow-up.....	15
TABLE 6: Parole Violations for the Sample of Parole Releases During a 24-Month Follow-up.....	15
TABLE 7: Service Units Provided by Visitor Center October 1988 - June 1991.....	16

## SUMMARY

This report is the final evaluation of the Northern California Youth Center (NCYC) Visitor Center. This program was mandated initially by Statutes of 1987, Chapter 1269, Filante and Johnston, and Statutes of 1989, Chapter 1350, Filante, which authorized the Department of Youth Authority to fund and evaluate the NCYC Visitor Center. This legislation required the Youth Authority to report on the Visitor Center by January 1 each year, with a final report by January 1, 1992.

The Center was established in October 1988 to provide visitor services to ward families and wards housed at the three institutions of the NCYC complex--Karl Holton, O.H. Close, and Dewitt Nelson. The program's major services included: parent education classes for wards, outreach programs to wards' families; transportation for visitors between public transit terminals and NCYC; emergency clothing exchange for inappropriately dressed visitors; family counseling; information on visiting regulations and processes; and referral to other agencies and services.

This final report re-examines the program primarily in terms of the objectives of the authorizing legislation. Therefore, this report assesses the operation of the Center in terms of its impact on visiting and on parole performance and behavior. It also addresses the Center's role in the enhancement of visitor services at NCYC through a quantitative description of the program services used by the client population during the Center's years of operation.

The latest information on the Visitor Center showed that the program's major benefit was reflected by the extent to which the Center was able to enhance program services at NCYC. A summary of program services measured in service units (a unit of service is defined as the provision of a particular service to a single individual) indicates that the program appeared to have met its plan to provide the required services to wards and their families. As of June 30, 1991, 50,750 units of service have been provided to wards and visitors. But, like earlier findings, the Center had little apparent impact on the amount of visiting and on parole performance. Visitation rates in all three institutions increased with the establishment of the Visitor Center, but two of the three increases were statistically non-significant. (Karl Holton School did show a statistically significant increase.) Further, 12 and 24-month parole follow-up data on the sample of wards receiving visits showed that the number of visits did not appear to be related to ward parole performance.

# NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH CENTER VISITOR CENTER: FINAL REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

This report is the final evaluation of the Northern California Youth Center (NCYC) Visitor Center. The Center has been in operation since October 1, 1988. The program was made possible by Statutes of 1987, Chapter 1269, Filante and Johnston, and Statutes of 1989, Chapter 1350, Filante. For the past three years, the Center has been providing visitor services to families of wards housed at the three institutions of the NCYC complex--Karl Holton, O.H. Close, and Dewitt Nelson. With the opening of a new institution at NCYC in July 1991, visitor services from the Center became available to families of wards of a fourth institution--the Chaderjian School.

The purpose of this final report is to (1) assess the impact of the Center on visiting for a three-year period, and (2) present the results of a follow-up analysis of recidivism data for a larger study sample of wards who received visits and subsequently were placed on parole, and (3) describe the services rendered by the Center for its client population from October 1988 through July 1991. This evaluation covers the period October 1988 through July 1991. The report's analysis of parole performance includes a follow-up of wards released to parole prior to October 1, 1990.

This evaluation was preceded by an Interim Report for the period October 1, 1988, through July 31, 1989. (See References). The Interim Report issued in March 1991 evaluated the program primarily in terms of the objectives of the initial authorizing legislation, Statutes of 1987, Chapter 1269. Therefore, the interim evaluation assessed the operation of the Center in terms of its impact on visiting and on ward institutional and parole performance and behavior. At the time the interim report was completed, not enough time had elapsed to obtain adequate post-release outcome data. Consequently, the interim report included only limited information on recidivism based on a small study sample.

The interim evaluation suggested that the Visitor Center had little apparent impact on the number of visits and on institutional performance of wards. Moreover, DDMS (Disciplinary Decision-Making System) data on the sample of wards receiving visits demonstrated no consistent direct correlation between number of visits and number of disciplinary incidents. That is, an increased number of visits did not reduce the number of disciplinary incidents in the institutions. Rather, contrary to what was earlier predicted, increased visiting was associated with more disciplinary incidents. Whether the visits

triggered the incidents, or partly resulted from them, or whether there is any causal relationship between these variables, is unknown. Preliminary parole follow-up data on the sample of wards receiving visits also showed that the Visitor Center did not appear to have any effect on the parole performance of wards.

This final report, as mandated, re-examines the program impact on the number of visits and recidivism. The report also includes a description of services rendered by the Center for its client population from October 1, 1988, through June 30, 1991. The analysis of program impact on the number of visits covers a longer time period than that presented in the previous evaluation. Baseline information on visits is compared to post-program visits data for a three year period, that is, from October 1, 1988, through July 31, 1991. For program impact on parole performance, recidivism data from a larger study sample than the previous evaluation are examined. Twelve-month recidivism data for a sample of wards belonging to the subgroup with the most visits and the subgroup with the least visits between October 1, 1988, (program start) through October 1, 1990, are analyzed and compared.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A Visitor Center (called the Gateway Hospitality Visitor Center) was established in October 1988 to provide services to wards and visitor services for families of wards at the Northern California Youth Center (NCYC). The program operates through a contract with Centerforce, a private, non-profit organization established to support prison visiting in California State prisons. Only one Visitor Center services the needs of all Youth Authority institutions within the NCYC complex, including the new Chaderjian School which opened in July 1991.

The Center provides services to both wards and their families. Evening classroom instruction on Parenting Education and Family Living skills is conducted each week in the four institutions for interested wards. Parenting classes are three-hour sessions in 10-week modules while Life Skills classes are two-hour sessions in six-week modules. For ward families, the Center provides the following services: outreach program; free transportation between public transit terminals in the greater Stockton area and the Northern California Youth Center; emergency clothing exchange for inappropriately dressed visitors; family counseling; information on visiting regulations and processes of the four NCYC schools; referral to Stockton area businesses (affordable motels and restaurants ) for those visitors who will be remaining overnight; and referral to community social services agencies for those visitors in need of such assistance. During holidays and other times during the year,

program staff and volunteers coordinate special activities for visiting children. Crafts projects, snow-cone and popcorn parties, and face painting are some of the special projects that have been provided to children since the Visitor Center was established.

The Center is open to NCYC visitors during regular visiting days at the four institutions--Saturdays, Sundays, and certain holidays from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. The Center is housed in a modular unit with a lounging area and bathroom facilities. It provides visitors with a hospitable and comfortable place to wait before and after entering the institutions. The children's area of the Center is designed with low counter tables all around the room for children's activities. Refreshments for visiting families are also available. From October 1988 through August 1991, the Visitor Center was located close to the Northern California Institution for Women, a California Department of Corrections (CDC) facility adjacent to the NCYC complex. By September 1991, the unit was moved to a more strategic location within the NCYC complex grounds. The Center's new location just outside the NCYC gate makes the Center more accessible for ward families who use its facilities and services. During the past year, the Center averaged 88 visitors in a given month, or an estimated eleven visitors on a visiting day.

Currently, the Visitor Center has been providing its services under the operating budget of NCYC at an annual cost of \$55,000. There are three regular program staff members who are employed by Centerforce--the program director, the Parent Education instructor, and the van driver who provides transportation services. None of the program staff are Youth Authority employees. As in the past, the Center continues to use services provided by volunteers in the conduct of its program activities. The Center also accepts food and cash donations from service agencies in the Stockton community.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Interim Report outlined the methodology by which the legislatively-mandated objectives, as stated in Statutes of 1987, Chapter 1269, Filante and Johnston, translate into major outcome measures of program effectiveness. A more detailed description of the evaluation methodology for each objective in Statutes 1987, Chapter 1269, is discussed in the NCYC Visitor Center Interim Report (March 1991). Each objective is discussed as follows:

- (1) By the end of the final year of the contract, increase the number of wards receiving visits from their families in order to attain the visiting-area capacity-limits of each institution.

The program impact on the number of visits, as discussed in the Interim Report, covered data for a 10-month period, that is, from October 1988 through July 1989. Findings from the Interim Report showed that visitation rates in the three NCYC institutions of Karl Holton, O.H. Close, and Dewitt Nelson increased with the establishment of the Visitor Center; however, two of the increases were statistically non-significant. (Karl Holton School did show a statistically significant increase.) Interviews with administrators and institutional staff revealed that each institution had reached its visiting area capacity limits, beyond which it could not sustain the current level of institutional visiting services delivered.

The Final Report analyzes program impact on the number of visits at the three NCYC institutions by extending the post-program period to three years. Post-program visits data from October 1988 through July 1991 are examined and compared to baseline visits information from October 1987 through July 1988. Visitation rates in these institutions are examined for statistically significant increases during the three-year time-period.

- (2) Improving institutional ward-performance and behavior, resulting in reduced time spent by wards in institutions.

The Interim report analyzed institutional ward-performance by examining the aggregate DDMS (Disciplinary Decision-Making System) incident rate for a sample of wards receiving visits. The DDMS rate for the sample of wards in the highest and lowest subgroups from October 1987 through July 1988 was compared with that for the period October 1988 through July 1989. DDMS data on these wards showed no direct relationship between number of visits and the number of disciplinary incidents. Increased visiting did not appear to reduce the number of disciplinary incidents in the institutions. In fact, contrary to what was earlier predicted, increased visiting (as shown by wards belonging to the high visit subgroup with 20 or more visits) was associated with more disciplinary incidents.

The Final Report's original intent was to re-examine the post-period aggregate DDMS incident rate of this sample of wards by extending the post-period through 1991, that is, October 1988 through July 1991. This rate would then be compared with that for the pre-period starting October 1987, through July 1988. As it turned out, however, most wards included in this sample did not remain in the institutions for an extended period of time. Specifically, 85 percent of wards included in this sample were released to parole on or before October 31, 1990, leaving too few for an extended post-period follow-up. Therefore, the ward sample generally lacked the necessary extended institutional length-of-stay (LOS) information needed to conduct a re-evaluation of their post-period institutional

performance. Due to this data inadequacy, this objective is not addressed in the Final Report.

- (3) Improving ward parole performance and a reduction of recidivism of 10 percent a year.

The Interim Report compared the rates of parole revocations between the lowest and the highest visitor subgroups. The follow-up period was 12 months. Only the parole performance of the sample of the highest and lowest visitor subgroups was presented in the report. The sample was the same as that used for the evaluation of the program's second objective. Findings in the Interim Report showed that there was no significant difference in the violation rate of wards who received the most visits during the study period compared with that for wards who received the least visits. Increased visiting did not appear to be related to improved ward parole performance. Further, increased visiting did not indicate a reduction of recidivism of 10 percent a year.

The analysis of program impact on recidivism in the Interim Report was preliminary because more elapsed time was needed to obtain adequate post-release outcome data. Since the Interim Report was issued, enough time has elapsed to obtain adequate information on ward parole performance. This final report examines the rates of parole revocations for the sample of wards belonging to the subgroup with the most visits and the subgroup with the least visits. Only wards who were released to parole prior to October 1, 1990, are included in the follow-up. The follow-up periods are 12 and 24 months.

Statutes of 1987, Chapter 1269 was repealed on January 1, 1989, by related legislation, Chapter 1350, which is operative until January 1, 1992. Although most program goals were retained in Chapter 1350, an additional program objective was included. The objective, as stated in Chapter 1350, is as follows:

- (1) Enhance visitor services in order to provide wards with strong family support, which support can have a stabilizing influence on the institution and enhance the ward's parole performance.

To determine whether the Visitor Center enhanced visitor services at NCYC, a description of program services from October 1, 1988 (official opening date of the Visitor Center) through June 30, 1991, is provided. Program services are described in terms of service units. A "unit of service" is defined as the provision of a particular service to a single individual. The different categories of program services provided by the Visitor Center and the manner by which these service units were measured by Centerforce, are discussed as follows.

- (a) Outreach - off site. One service unit for each outreach contract.
- (b) Transportation - local. Three service units for each round trip between Stockton and NCYC.
- (c) Visitor child care - two service units for each child care request provided.
- (d) Crisis family counseling - three service units for each request met.
- (e) Visitor information - on site. One service unit for each visitor assisted.
- (f) Referral to other agencies and service - one service unit for each referral.
- (g) Parenting education - five service units for each class hour provided each ward.
- (h) Sheltered waiting - 100 service units for each Saturday, Sunday, and holiday period during which the service Center operation will be open 9:30 am to 5:00 pm.

## FINDINGS

### Program Impact on Visiting

Table 1 shows the overall monthly number of visits, monthly number of visitors, and average daily population for each institution during the pre-program period (October 1987-July 1988) and the three-year post-program period (October 1988-July 1991).

**TABLE 1**  
**Monthly Average Number of Visits, Number of Visitors**  
**and Average Daily Population**

Institution	Before Oct 87-Jul 88	After Oct 88-Jul 89	After Oct 89-Jul 90	After Oct 90-Jul 91
<u>O.H. Close</u>				
Monthly No. of Visits	514	543	511	504
Monthly No. of Visitors	NA	1,325	1,287	1,439
Average Daily Pop. (ADP)	544	541	456	438
<u>Karl Holton</u>				
Monthly No. of Visits	542	648	577	531
Monthly No. of Visitors	1,206	1,519	1,385	1,380
Average Daily Pop. (ADP)	541	534	498	484
<u>Dewitt Nelson</u>				
Monthly No. of Visits	493	509	538	524
Monthly No. of Visitors	1,103	1,080	1,153	1,164
Average Daily Pop. (ADP)	620	604	571	553

NA = Data not available.

Tables 2, 3, and 4 compare rates (per 100 wards) for the entire baseline population prior to the existence of the Visitor Center with rates for the entire study-population after the Center was established. Except for O.H. Close, which lacked complete visitor data, these tables present visitation rates based on (1) number of visits (Tables 2A, 3A, and 4A) and (2) number of visitors (Tables 3B and 4B). Pre-program rates reflect estimates for the period October 1987 through July 1988; post-program rates cover a three-year period from October 1988 through July 1991.

TABLE 2A

Monthly Visitation Rates at O. H. Close  
Based on Number of Visits  
(Rate per 100 Wards)

	Before Oct 87-Jul 88	After Oct 88-Jul 89	After Oct 89-Jul 90	After Oct 90-Jul 91
Oct	74	114	100	100
Nov	119	97	112	117
Dec	95	95	142	151
Jan	88	104	94	112
Mar	77	95	108	117
Apr	97	116	115	117
Jun	88	97	100	115
July	117	111	129	113
Overall Avg.	94	100	112	117

February and May 1988 data not available.

Chart 2A  
Monthly Visitation Rates at O.H. Close--  
Number of Visits

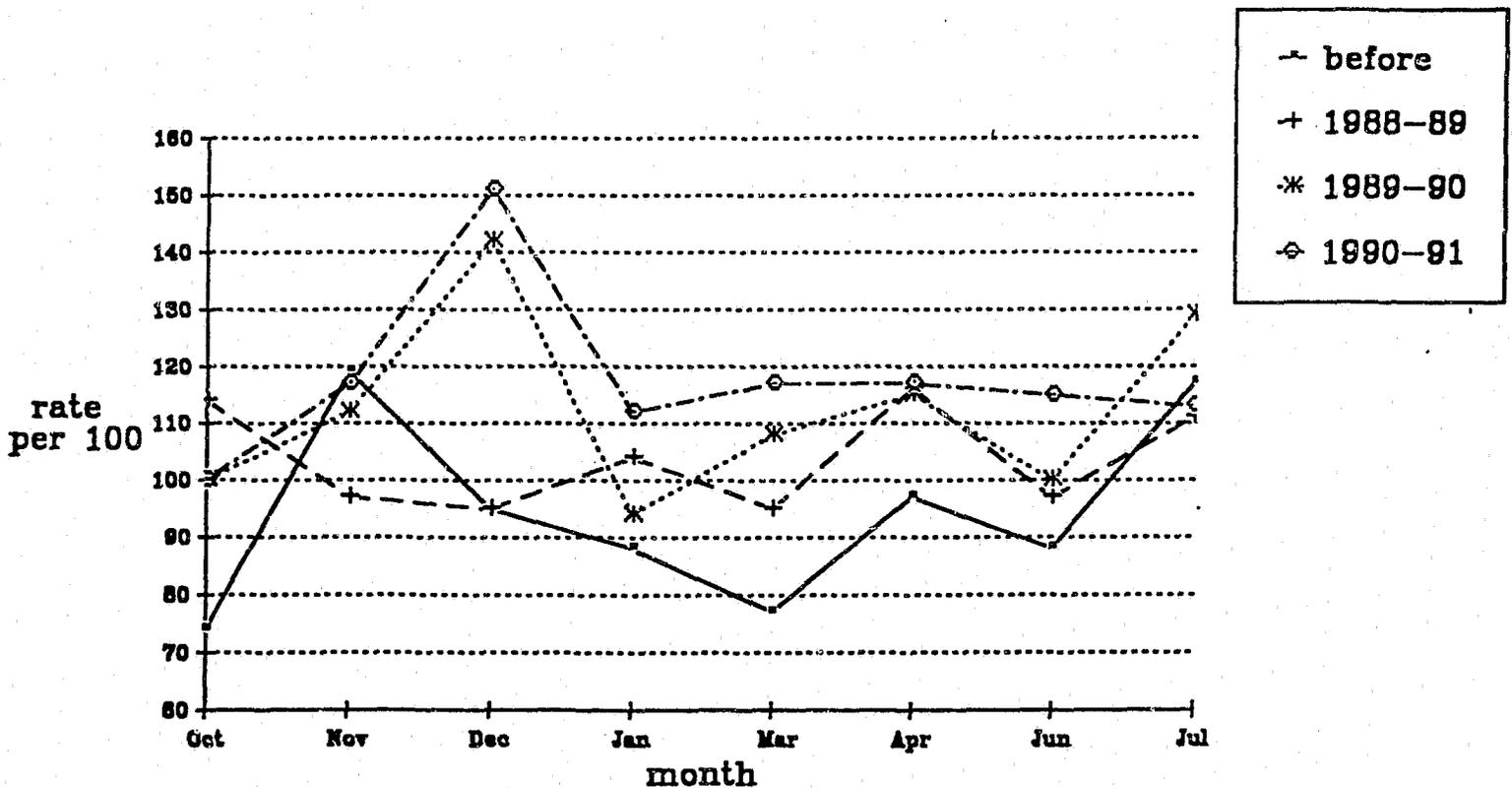


TABLE 3A

Monthly Visitation Rates at Karl Holton  
Based on Number of Visits  
(Rate per 100 Wards)

	Before Oct 87-Jul 88	After Oct 88-Jul 89	After Oct 89-Jul 90	After Oct 90-Jul 91
Oct	NA	134	133	96
Nov	103	123	111	111
Dec	123	125	133	149
Jan	97	128	93	95
Feb	94	108	118	95
Mar	80	113	113	126
Apr	82	121	134	98
May	82	104	122	100
Jun	104	111	107	113
Jul	138	145	127	114
Overall Avg.	100	121	119	110

NA = Data not available.

Chart 3A  
Monthly Visitation Rates at Karl Holton--  
Number of Visits

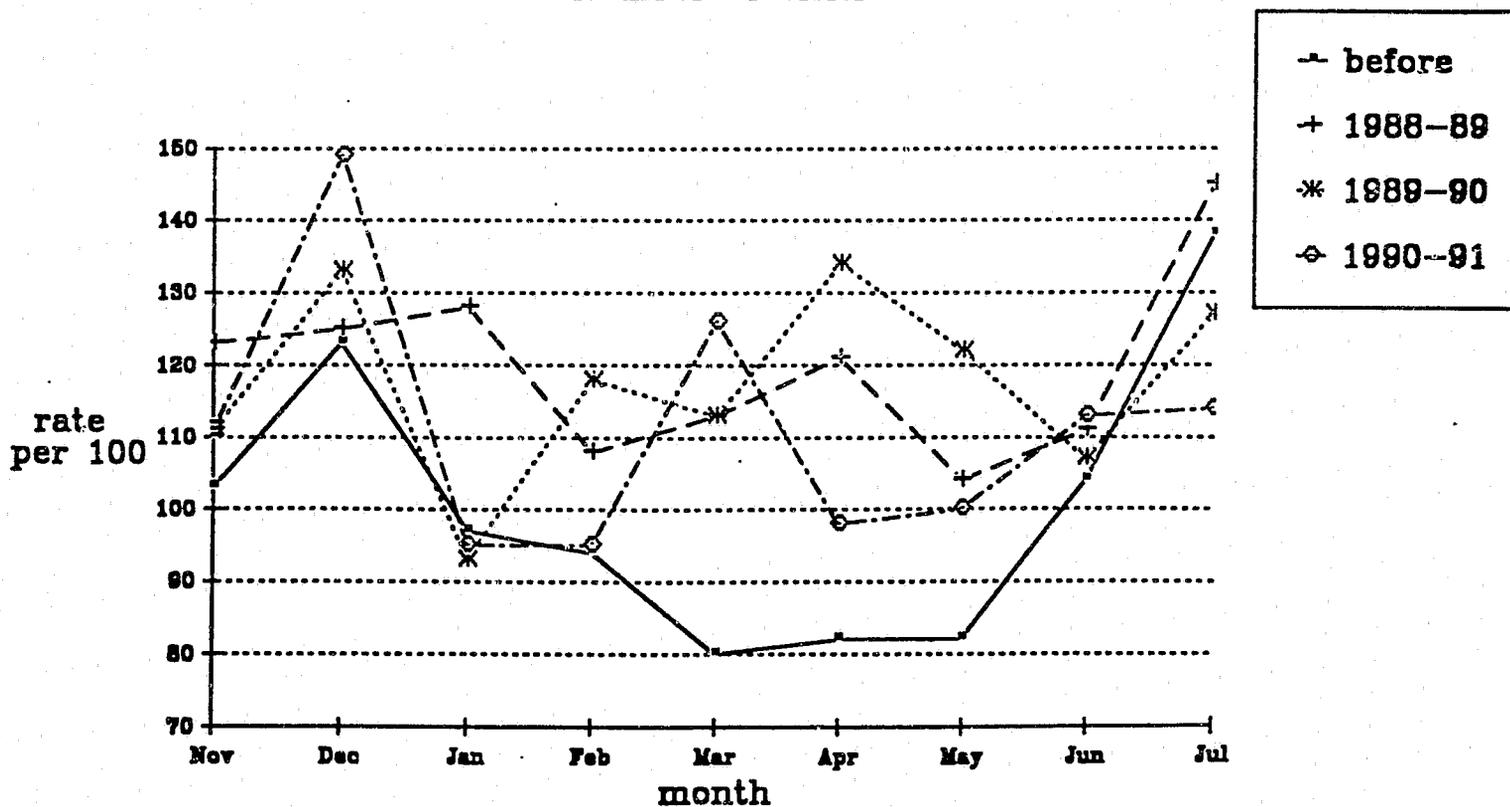


TABLE 3B

Monthly Visitation Rates at Karl Holton  
Based on Number of Visitors  
(Rate per 100 Wards)

	Before Oct 87-Jul 88	After Oct 88-Jul 89	After Oct 89-Jul 90	After Oct 90-Jul 91
Oct	NA	289	308	240
Nov	234	286	274	292
Dec	272	303	308	387
Jan	212	292	218	246
Feb	209	241	206	254
Mar	189	270	281	321
Apr	194	287	308	260
May	170	255	282	255
Jun	235	270	258	298
Jul	296	351	339	299
Overall Avg.	223*	285*	278**	285*

Rate Difference is statistically significant:

\*Chi-square = 6.0; p < .01

\*\*Chi-square = 7.6; p < .01

NA = Data not available.

Chart 3B  
Monthly Visitation Rates at Karl Holton--  
Number of Visitors

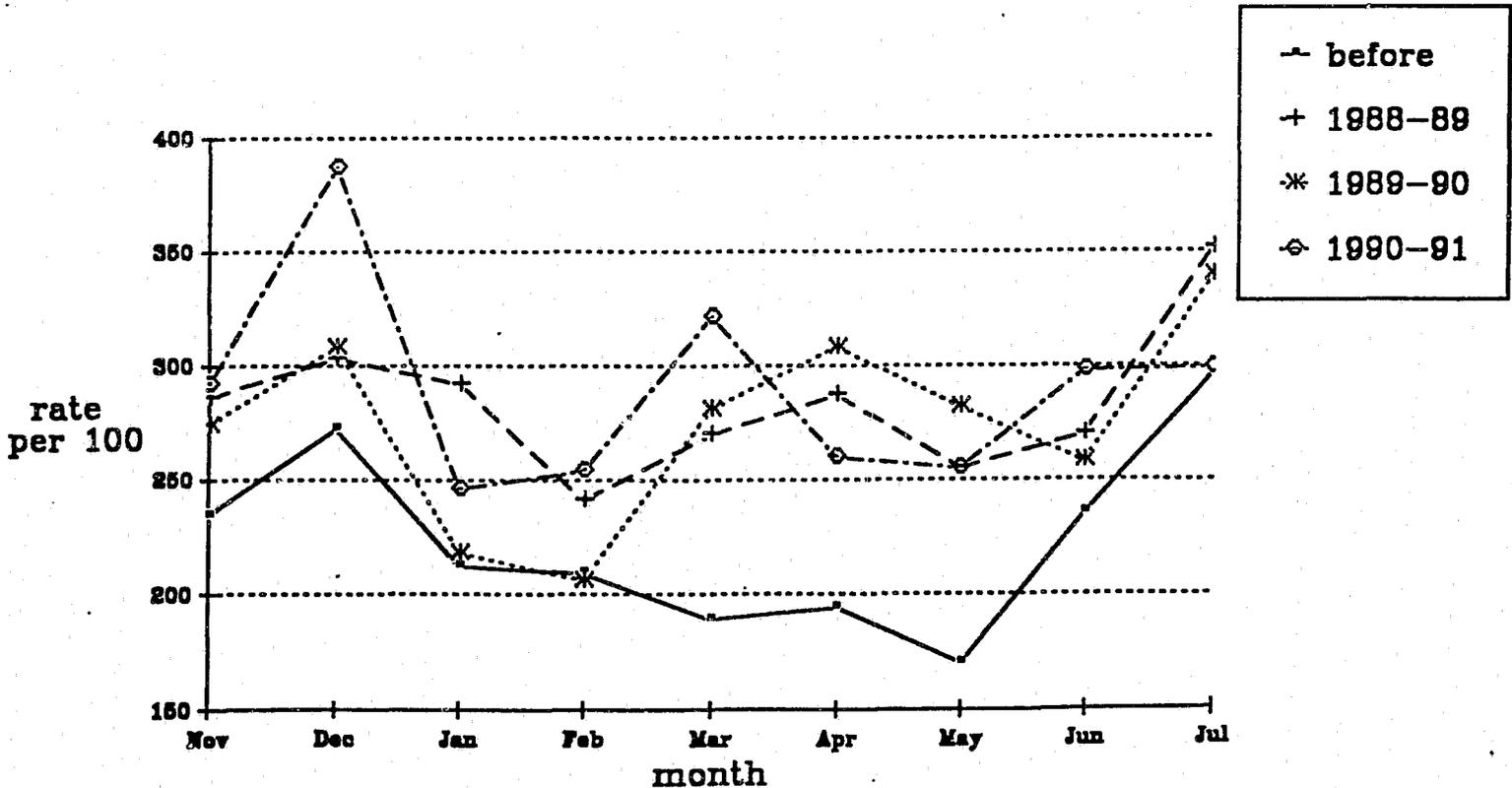


TABLE 4A

Monthly Visitation Rates at Dewitt Nelson  
Based on Number of Visits  
(Rate per 100 Wards)

	Before Oct 87-Jul 88	After Oct 88-Jul 89	After Oct 89-Jul 90	After Oct 90-Jul 91
Oct	72	112	83	85
Nov	66	83	107	99
Dec	75	79	127	117
Jan	77	87	76	82
Feb	64	75	82	87
Mar	69	77	97	103
Apr	81	96	86	86
May	99	70	86	87
Jun	86	72	93	100
Jul	114	91	104	115
Overall Avg.	80	84	94	96

Chart 4A  
Monthly Visitation Rates at Dewitt Nelson--  
Number of Visits

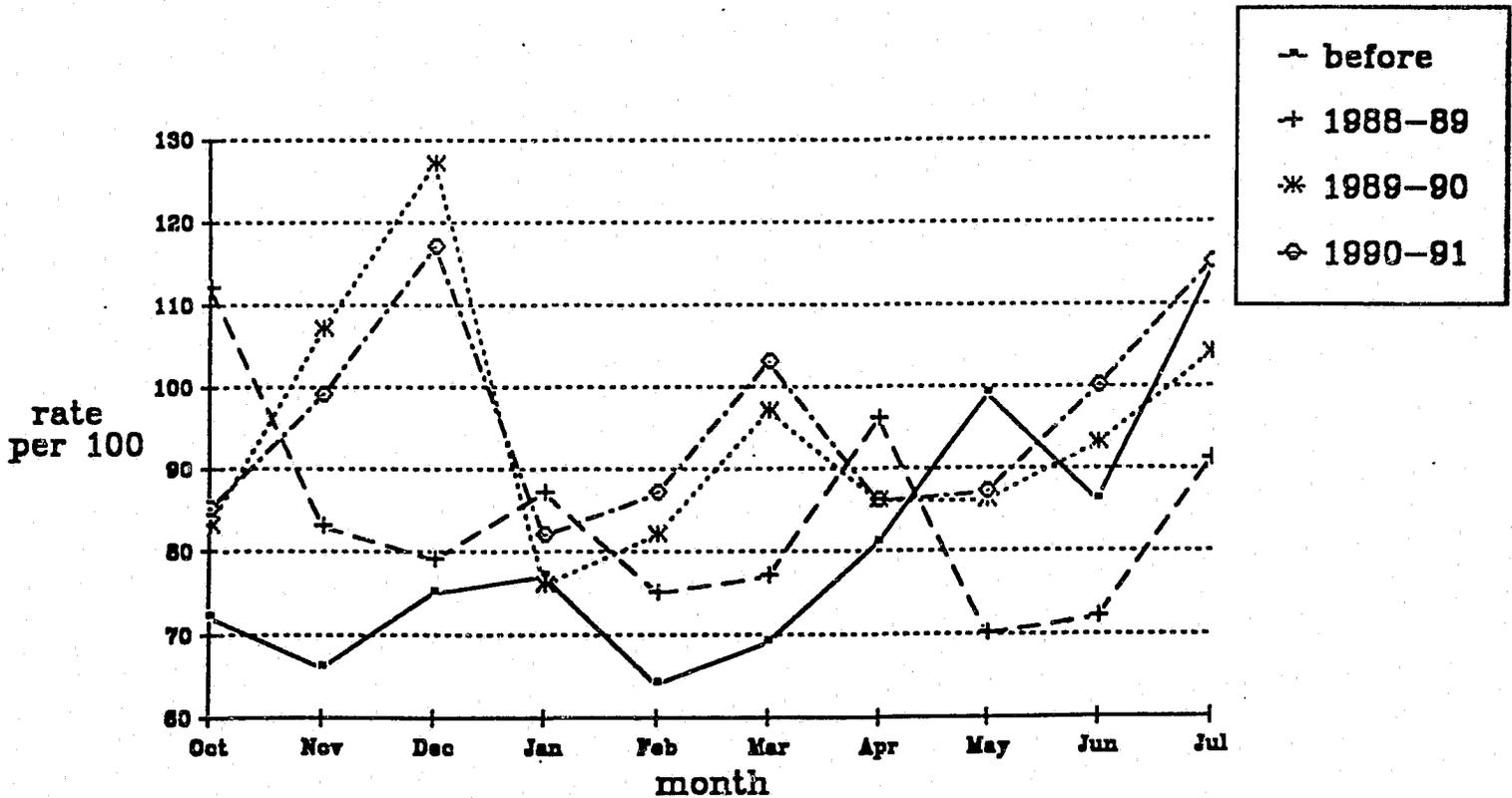
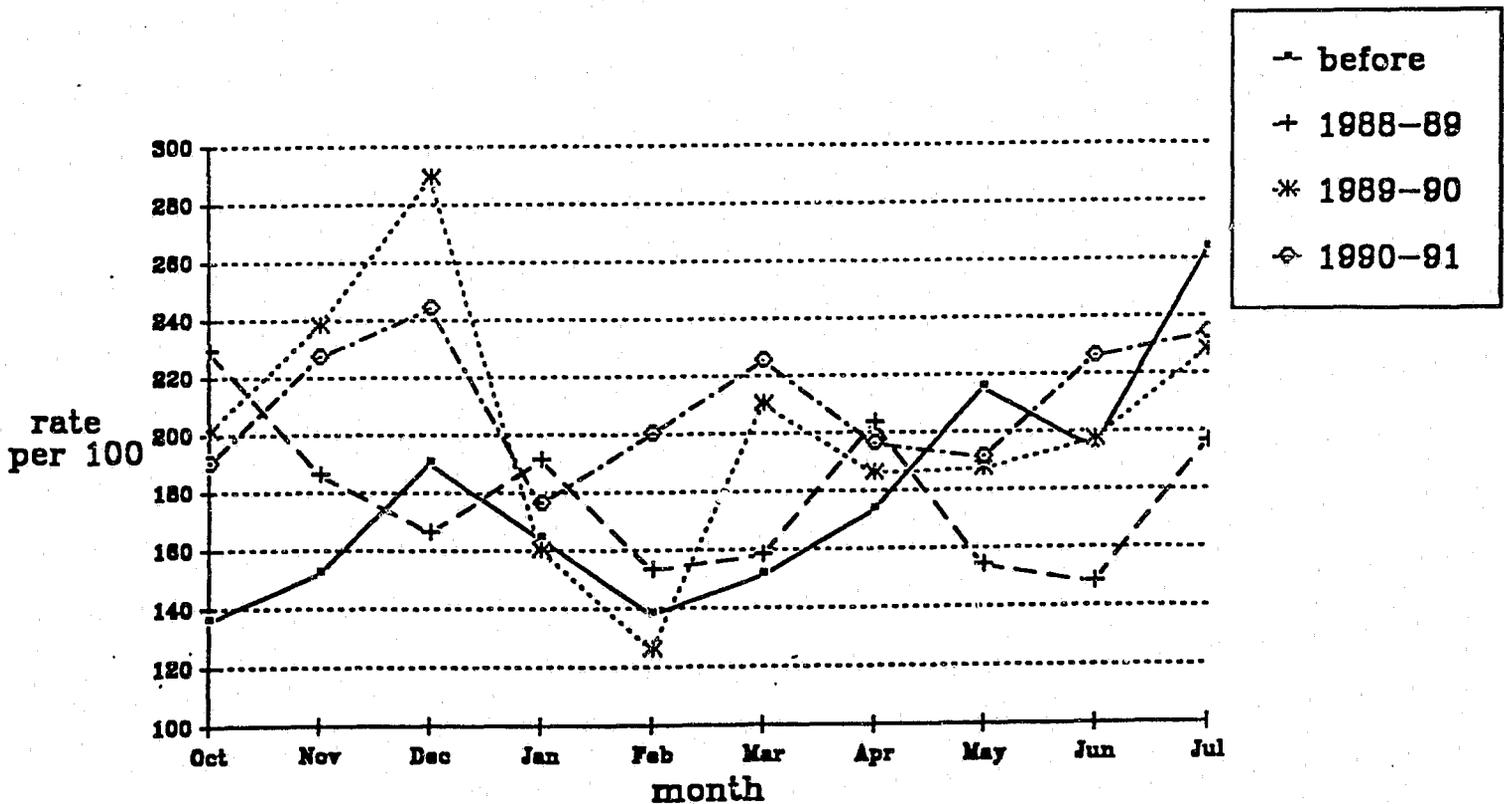


TABLE 4B

Monthly Visitation Rates at Dewitt Nelson  
Based on Number of Visitors  
(Rate per 100 Wards)

	Before Oct 87-Jul 88	After Oct 88-Jul 89	After Oct 89-Jul 90	After Oct 90-Jul 91
Oct	136	229	201	190
Nov	152	186	238	227
Dec	190	166	289	244
Jan	164	191	160	176
Feb	138	153	126	200
Mar	151	158	210	225
Apr	173	203	186	196
May	215	154	187	191
Jun	194	148	197	226
Jul	263	196	228	234
Overall Avg.	178	179	202	211

Chart 4B  
Monthly Visitation Rates at Dewitt Nelson--  
Number of Visitors



All five tables show that visitation rates in all three institutions increased over the past three years with the establishment of the Visitor Center. However, two of the three increases were statistically non-significant. (Karl Holton School did show a statistically significant increase.)

Table 3B shows that the rates of 285 visitors (October 1988-July 1989), 278 visitors (October 1989- July 1990), and 285 visitors (October 1990-July 1991) per 100 wards per month at Karl Holton after the establishment of the Visitor Center were all higher than the 223 before the program. These three differences were statistically significant at .01 probability level ( $p < .01$ ) based on a chi-square test. In other words, the observed visitation rate differences before and after the establishment of the Center would be expected to occur on a chance basis no more than 1 time out of 100. However, it is not known whether the Visitor Center, or some other unmeasurable explanatory factors not examined by this analysis, account for this observed difference in the visitation rates.

Past and follow-up interviews with the Chiefs of Security in the three institutions revealed that each institution reached its visiting area capacity limits, beyond which it could not sustain the current level of institutional visiting services delivered. The three institutions combined could collectively accommodate a maximum of 720 persons (wards and visitors) during any peak-period visiting day. The combined visiting area capacity of the three institutions has not changed over the three-year period since the Visitor Center was established. (The number of visiting days per year when the maximum visiting area capacity was reached by each institution is not known.)

The Chaderjian School has a maximum visiting capacity of 250 persons during any peak-period visiting day. In its fourth month of operation, the Chaderjian School had an institutional population below full capacity. As of October 24, 1991, the institutional population was 575 wards. This population could conceivably increase to 720 wards by the end of the fiscal year according to the Department's Population Management Services (PMS). But even at this start-up period, the Chief of Security at Chaderjian said that the institution has reached its visiting area capacity limits. (The number of visiting days when the maximum visiting area capacity was reached by Chaderjian School is not known.) Because of the heavy turn-out of visitors during visiting days, Chaderjian visiting regulations already include periods of split-visiting days. (During split-visiting days, wards whose last names start with certain letters [e.g., A through L] receive visits on specified week ends; the remaining wards [e.g., M through Z] receive visits on alternate weekends.)

### Program Impact on Parole Performance

The violation rates of wards in the lowest and the highest visit subgroups were examined to test the following hypothesis: The violation rate of wards who received the most visits during the study period will be 10 percent lower than that of wards who received the least visits.

The parole performance of a sample of wards belonging to the lowest and the highest visit subgroups who were available for a 12-month and 24-month follow-up was evaluated. The sample of wards for the parole follow-up was the same sample selected for the Interim Report's analysis of recidivism. Only wards in the lowest and the highest visit subgroup who were released to parole prior to October 1, 1990, were included in the 12-month follow-up. Wards were included in the 24-month follow-up if they were released to parole prior to October 1, 1989. Wards paroled on or after October 1, 1990, could not be included since they could not be followed for at least 12 months.

From the sample of wards in the lowest and the highest visit subgroups who were available for a 12-month follow-up, Table 5 compares the parole performance of the two subgroups. Of the 60 wards in the sample, 51 had enough parole follow-up time for analysis. Only nine wards in the sample were either (1) released to parole on or after October 1, 1990, (2) directly discharged from Youth Authority jurisdiction due to lack of confinement time, or (3) not yet released from a Youth Authority institution.

Among the parole releases, wards were non-violators if (1) they were still on parole at the end of 12 months, or (2) they had been discharged without a violation within 12 months of parole exposure. The wards were considered to be violators if (1) they had their parole revoked or they were recommitted within the 12 months, or (2) they were discharged for either criminal law violations or because of commitment to a non-YA institution.

Table 5 shows that for the lowest visit subgroup, 8 of the 25 parole releases, or 32.0 percent, violated parole during the 12 months after being paroled. At the same time, 8 out of the 26, or 30.8 percent, of parole releases for the highest visit subgroup were reported as parole violators. This 1.2 percentage point difference was not statistically significant.

**TABLE 5**

**Parole Violations for the Sample of Parole Releases  
During a 12-Month Follow-up**

Parole Releases and Status	Total Parole Releases		Low Number of Visits (1-9)		High Number of Visits (20+)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No. Released	51	100.0	25	100.0	26	100.0
Non-Violators/Good Discharge	35	68.6	17	68.0	18	69.2
Violators/Bad Discharge	16	31.4	8	32.0	8	30.8

From the sample of wards who were available for a 24-month follow-up, Table 6 compares the parole performance of the two subgroups. Parole outcome findings for the 24-month follow-up period also showed non-statistically significant differences in the violation rates of the lowest and the highest visit subgroup. The violation rate for the lowest visit subgroup was 61.5 percent. Of the 13 lowest visit subgroup wards included in the follow-up, 8 were revoked on parole. By comparison, the violation rate for the highest visit subgroup was 60 percent. Nine of the 15 highest visit subgroup wards included in the follow-up were revoked on parole.

**TABLE 6**

**Parole Violations for the Sample of Parole Releases  
During a 24-Month Follow-up**

Parole Releases and Status	Total Parole Releases		Low Number of Visits (1-9)		High Number of Visits (20+)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No. Released	28	100.0	13	100.0	15	100.0
Non-Violators/Good Discharge	11	39.3	5	38.5	6	40.0
Violators/Bad Discharge	17	60.7	8	61.5	9	60.0

The recidivism findings displayed in Table 5 and 6 findings are consistent with preliminary outcome data presented in the Interim Report. That is, contrary to the hypothesis, there is no significant difference in the violation rate of wards who received the

most visits during the three-year study period compared with that for wards who received the least visits. Increased visiting does not appear to be related to improved ward parole performance. Further, increased visiting does not indicate a reduction of recidivism of 10 percent a year. (The differences in violation rates between wards with most visits and those with the least visits were analyzed without controlling for variations in ward background characteristics and parole risk categories.)

**Program Services Delivered**

The Visitor Center was established primarily as a supplementary service to visitors. Over the past three years, the program enhanced visitor services at NCYC by providing the required services to wards and their families. As of June 30, 1991, after 2 years and 8 months of program operation, 50,750 units of service had been provided to wards and their families. Table 7 shows a service component breakdown of service units provided by the Center for this period. These services include 3,199 units of outreach services, 2,970 units of transportation, 79 units of child care, 129 units of crisis counseling, 3,569 units of information on visiting regulations and processes, 96 units of referral, 16,279 units of parenting and family life education, and 24,429 units of sheltered waiting.

TABLE 7  
Service Units Provided by Visitor Center  
October 1988 - June 1991

Type of Service	Number of Service Units Provided		
	Oct 88-Sep 89	Oct 89-Sep 90	Oct 90-Jun 91
Outreach	2,542	314	343
Transportation	924	1,572	474
Child Care	*	9	70
Crisis Counseling	36	74	19
Information	2,171	1,186	212
Referral	45	33	18
Parenting Education	1,964	5,135	9,180
Sheltered Waiting	7,929	8,600	7,900
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>15,611</b>	<b>16,923</b>	<b>18,216</b>

\*Inactive due to logistical problems in the location of the trailer.

Table 7 shows that, as expected, program staff provided most outreach and information services during the Center's initial year of operation, that is, from October 1988 through September 1989. At that time, the Visitor Center was a new program being introduced to a population of wards and visitors who were unaware of this enhanced visiting service. Program staff sent letters to families of wards informing them of the Visitor Center and its various services. In addition, the Program Director made visitor information presentations to wards at various living units in the institutions. By the second and third years of program operation (October 1989 through June 1991), outreach and information service units decreased significantly and most service units for this period reflected contacts only with families of new wards entering the institutions.

Parenting and family life education services were limited during the Center's initial year because classes were not fully operational until the summer of 1989. By July 1989, parent and family education expanded as wards continued to show interest in participating in these classes. This service was disrupted from January to June 1990 with the resignation of the class instructor and delays encountered in finding a replacement. Parenting classes resumed by July 1990 with the hiring of a new instructor.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Over the three-year period, visitation rates in all three institutions increased with the establishment of the Visitor Center. However, two of the three increases were statistically non-significant. (Karl Holton School did show a statistically significant increase.)

The three institutions combined could collectively accommodate a maximum of 720 persons (wards and visitors) during any peak-period visiting day. The combined visiting area capacity of the three institutions has not changed over the three-year period since the Visitor Center was established. Past and follow-up interviews with administrators and institutional staff revealed that each institution has reached its visiting area capacity limits, beyond which it cannot sustain the current level of institutional visiting services delivered.

The newly-opened Chaderjian School has a maximum visiting capacity of 250 persons during any peak-period visiting day. The Chaderjian School, in its fourth month of operation, had an institutional population below full-capacity. Even at this start-up stage, this institution had reached its visiting area capacity limits.

Twelve and 24-month parole follow-up data on the sample of wards receiving visits showed that the number of visits does not appear to be related to ward parole performance. There was no statistically significant difference in the parole violation rate of wards who received the most visits during the study period compared with that for wards who received the least visits. (The differences in violation rates between wards with the most visits and those with the least visits were analyzed without controlling for variations in selected ward background characteristics and parole risk categories.)

The Visitor program which was established primarily as a supplementary service to visitors appeared to have met its goal of enhancing visitor services by providing these services to wards and their families for the past three years.

In conclusion, the latest data on the Visitor Center showed that the major benefit provided by the program was reflected by the extent to which the Center was able to enhance program services at NCYC. In its three years of operation, the Center provided the following service units to visitors: 3,199 units of outreach services, 2,970 units of transportation, 79 units of child care, 129 units of crisis counseling, 3,569 units of information on visiting regulations and processes, 96 units of referral, 16,279 units of parenting and family life education, and 24,429 units of sheltered area and related services. However, like earlier findings in the Interim Report, the Center had little apparent impact on the amount of visiting. Further, without controlling for variations in background

**characteristics and parole risk categories, enhanced visitor services did not appear to have a relationship to the parole performance of wards.**



## REFERENCES

Holt, Norman & Miller, Donald (January 1972). Explorations in Inmate-Family Relationships. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Corrections.

Institutions and Camps Branch (January 1989). Northern California Youth Center Visitor Center: Progress Report, July 1, 1988 through December 15, 1988. California Department of Youth Authority.

Isorena, Teresa (March 1991). Northern California Youth Center Visitor Center Interim Report. California Department of Youth Authority.



## APPENDIX A

### CHAPTER 1269 (Assembly Bill No. 2330)

An act relating to the Department of the Youth Authority, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 1987. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 1987.]

I am deleting the \$55,000 appropriation contained in Section 2 of Assembly Bill No. 2330.

This bill would appropriate \$55,000 to the Department of the Youth Authority to establish a visitor center at the Northern California Youth Center in Stockton.

The demands placed on budget resources require all of us to set priorities. The budget enacted in July, 1987 appropriated nearly \$41 billion in state funds. This amount is more than adequate to provide the necessary essential services provided for by State Government. It is not necessary to put additional pressure on taxpayer funds for programs that fall beyond the priorities currently provided.

Thus, after reviewing this legislation, I have concluded that its merits do not sufficiently outweigh the need this year for funding top priority programs and continuing a prudent reserve for economic uncertainties.

I would, however, consider funding the provisions of this bill during the budget process for Fiscal Year 1988-89. It is appropriate to review the relative merits of this program in comparison to all other funding projects. The budget process enables us to weigh all demands on the state's revenues and direct our resources to programs, either new or existing, that have the most merit.

With this deletion, I approve Assembly Bill No. 2330.

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN, Governor

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2330, Filante. Northern California Youth Center: visitor center.

Existing law provides for the establishment of the Department of the Youth Authority and prescribes its duties.

This bill would appropriate \$55,000 from the General Fund to the Department of the Youth Authority for the purpose of entering into a contract with a private nonprofit agency to provide an onsite visitor center and related facilities and services at the Northern California Youth Center. It also would set forth certain legislative findings and declarations relating to visitor services and centers, enumerate specified services that a visitor's center shall provide, and require the department to submit to the Legislature a prescribed report on or before January 1, 1989.

The act would be operative until January 1, 1989.

Appropriation: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(1) Maintaining a ward's family ties has a positive effect on the recidivism rate for youthful offenders.

(2) Enhancing visitor services increases the frequency and quality of visits, thereby discouraging violent ward activity.

(3) Enhancing visitor services provides wards with strong family support, which can have a stabilizing influence on the institution, benefiting the wards, the staff, and the community.

(4) The location of the Northern California Youth Center and lack of services to assist visitors impedes visiting.

(b) A visitor center shall provide, at a minimum, each of the following services to visitors:

- (1) Outreach programs to wards' families.
- (2) Assistance to visitors with transportation between public transit terminals and the Northern California Youth Center.
- (3) Child care for visitor's children.
- (4) Family counseling.
- (5) Information on visiting regulations and processes.
- (6) Referral to other agencies and services.
- (7) Parent education.
- (8) A sheltered area, which is outside of the security perimeter, for visitors who are waiting before or after visits.

In addition, the center shall maintain working relations with the local community and institution.

(c) The Department of the Youth Authority shall, on or before January 1, 1989, submit to the Legislature a report which includes, but is not limited to, the following information:

- (1) A description of the barriers to visiting.
- (2) A quantitative and narrative description of the services which it rendered.
- (3) A description of the impact of the visitor center on visiting.
- (4) A description of the community resources which it utilized.
- (d) The goals of the nonprofit agency under contract with the Department of the Youth Authority to operate a visitor center shall be to achieve all of the following:
  - (1) Doubling the number of wards receiving visits from their families by the end of the final year of the contract, thus establishing positive family relationships.
  - (2) Improvement of ward institutional performance and behavior, resulting in reduced time spent by wards in institutions and concurrent savings in bed space.
  - (3) Improvement of ward parole performance, resulting in significant cost savings, as, in view of the current approximate twenty-eight thousand dollars (\$28,000) per year costs of institutional maintenance of a ward, a reduction of recidivism of 10 percent a year would produce substantial savings.

(e) For purposes of program evaluation, records shall be maintained of wards receiving visits and families receiving services. The wards shall be traced through their institutional and parole experiences. Their success and failure rate shall be compared to that of wards who did not receive visits or services.

**SEC. 2.** The sum of fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of the Youth Authority for the purpose of entering into a contract with a private, nonprofit agency, with prior experience in establishing and operating prison visitor centers in this state, in order to provide an onsite visitor center and related facilities and services at the Northern California Youth Center.

**SEC. 3.** This act shall be operative until January 1, 1989, and on that date is repealed.

## APPENDIX B

### CHAPTER 1350

(Assembly Bill No. 588)

An act relating to the Department of the Youth Authority.

[Approved by Governor October 2, 1989.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 588, Filante. Northern California Youth Center: visitor center.

Chapter 1269 of the Statutes of 1987, which was repealed by its terms on January 1, 1989, provided for the operation of an onsite visitor center and related facilities and services at the Northern California Youth Center.

This bill would reenact, in substantial part, the provisions pertaining to the onsite visitor center. The bill would also provide that the establishment of the onsite visitor center is subject to the availability of funds provided to the Department of the Youth Authority for purposes of the act through the annual Budget Act. The act would be operative until January 1, 1992.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

**SECTION 1.** (a) The Legislature finds and declares, based on adult correctional studies and experiences, the following:

(1) Maintaining a prisoner's family ties has a positive effect on the recidivism rate for offenders.

(2) Enhancing visitor services increases the frequency and quality of visits and, in the Department of Corrections, has demonstrated that violent behavior in institutions is thereby decreased.

(3) Enhancing visitor services provides prisoners with strong family support, which can have a stabilizing influence on the institution benefiting the prisoners, the staff, and the community.

(b) The Legislature further finds and declares that the location of the Northern California Youth Center and lack of services to assist visitors impedes visiting.

(c) The Department of the Youth Authority shall establish a visitor center at the Northern California Youth Center which visitor center shall provide, at a minimum, each of the following services to visitors, as needed:

(1) Outreach programs to wards' families.

(2) Assistance to visitors with transportation between public transit terminals in the Stockton area and the Northern California Youth Center.

(3) Crisis intervention.

(4) Information on visiting regulations and processes.

(5) Referral to other agencies and services.

(6) Parent education.

(7) A sheltered area for visitors who are waiting before or after visits.

In addition, the visitor center staff shall maintain working relations with the local community and institution.

(d) The visitor center may also provide child care services for the children of visitors.

(e) The goals of the Department of the Youth Authority in operating a visitor center shall be to achieve all of the following:

(1) Enhancing visitor services in order to provide wards with strong family support, which support can have a stabilizing influence on the institution and enhance the ward's parole performance.

(2) Improvement of ward institutional performance and behavior.

(f) For purposes of program evaluation, records shall be maintained of wards receiving visits and families receiving services. The wards shall be traced through their institutional and parole experiences. Their success and failure rate shall be compared to that of wards who did not receive visits or services.

(g) The department shall contract with a nonprofit agency to provide any of the services at the visitor center which the department is unable to provide.

(h) The department shall report by January 1, of each year, to the Legislature regarding the services the department has provided at the visitor center pursuant to this section, either directly or through contract, during the previous fiscal year.

(i) The establishment of a visitor center at the Northern California Youth Center is subject to the availability of funds provided to the department for purposes of this act through the annual Budget Act.

**SEC. 2.** This act shall be operative until January 1, 1992, and on that date is repealed.