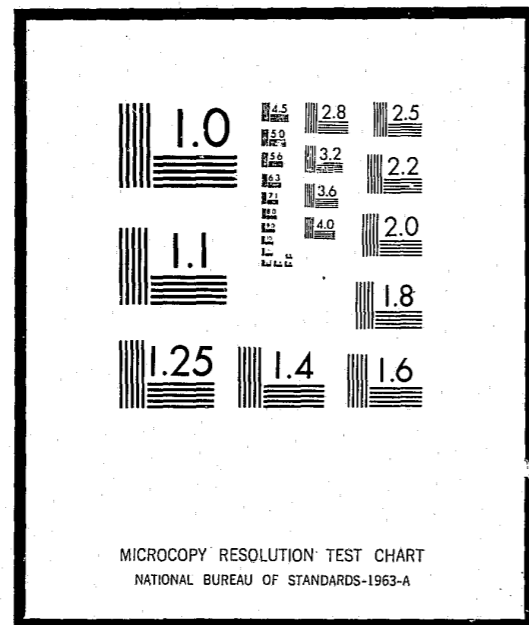


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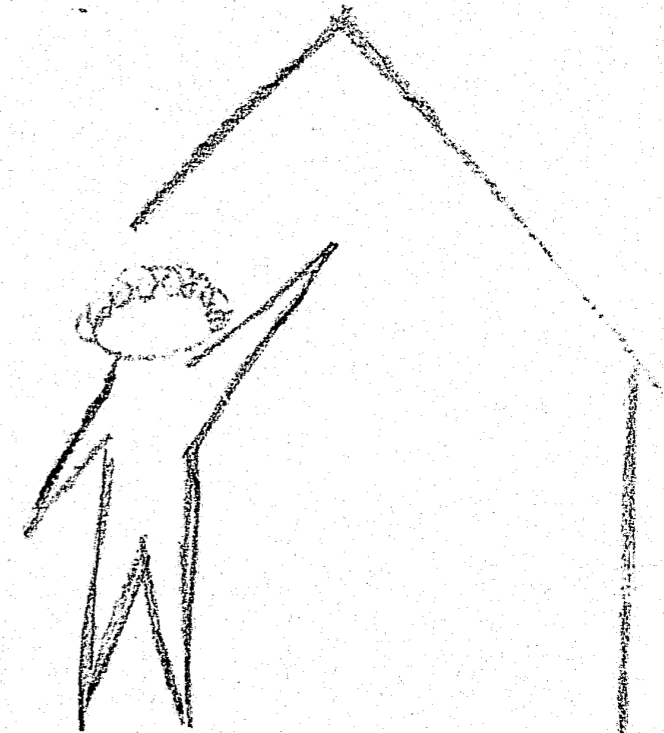
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StCLAIR COUNTY HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE A PROGRAM EVALUATION

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THE NATIONAL
COUNCIL ON
CRIME AND
DELINQUENCY
1973

ST. CLAIR COUNTY JUVENILE DELINQUENT

HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE PROGRAM

Project Director: David A. Daly

Program Supervisor: Vincent C. Gregory

1973

An Evaluation by:

SURVEY AND PLANNING CENTER
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
508 Littlefield Building
Austin, Texas, 78701



NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

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March 1973

Mr. David A. Daly, Director
Halfway-In-House Program
St. Clair County
East St. Louis, Illinois

Dear Mr. Daly:

NCCD submits herewith the report of an evaluation
of St. Clair County's Halfway-In-House.

Your program effort for delinquent children
addresses one of the most critical needs of con-
temporary criminal justice--an alternative to
institutionalization. We sincerely hope that our
analysis will be of value to you in strengthening
your program.

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency
appreciates the cooperation of your staff in com-
pleting this work. We look forward to the oppor-
tunity to be of further service.

Sincerely,

Milton G. Rector
President

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INTRODUCTION

The St. Clair County Juvenile Delinquent Halfway-In-House Program is made possible through an LEAA grant from the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission. For this 1972 operational year, federal participation amounts to \$51,592 with the remaining \$107,549 being provided by St. Clair County, for a total project cost of \$159,141.

For expenditure of these funds, the grant application describes this program as ". . . a planned short-term intensive treatment program for delinquent boys from the twentieth judicial circuit. This program provides a rehabilitative experience for a selected group of boys requiring more special attention than they would receive under normal conditions. The general objectives of this program are to provide intensive group counseling, remedial academic and vocational training for youth, relationship counseling for families."

Further, the grant application lists program goals and objectives as follows:

1. Minimize incarceration of delinquent boys by providing an effective alternative for the juvenile court judge.
2. Minimize the alienation of boys from their home and community situations.
3. Encourage each delinquent boy assigned to the program to develop a greater sense of self-esteem and self-worth.

4. Encourage delinquent boys to mobilize their capacity for a more successful social and economic adjustment.
5. Seek to raise the academic achievement, cultural, and vocational aspiration level of participants.
6. Help develop an individual and family sense of responsibility and involvement in community life.
7. Help members of a conflicted family group to communicate more effectively with each other and thus provide a more practical basis for mutual cooperation and more harmonious intrapersonal relationship.
8. Strengthen family ties and bring about sufficient improvement in family relationships and attitudes as to justify return to full-time community school or other community programs and the recommendation for dismissal of probation supervision.
9. Provide intensive probation supervision and counseling services to court wards and families required for successful rehabilitation and the prevention of future delinquent activities.
10. To offer the juvenile court a third alternative in lieu of incarceration and probation.

This juvenile Halfway-In-House has program components consisting of both residential and day care. Having begun operation in early 1970, this program has as its theoretical base (and organizational scheme) an adaptation of the Guided Group Interaction methods practiced currently at Red Wing, Minnesota. The daily Guided Group Interaction therapy sessions are augmented by academic instruction conducted on site by two special education instructors. To vary the day and as an interest-quickenng facet for the less academically inclined, a program of vocational/technical instruction is included. All program participants are involved in both academic and vocational activities. The juvenile Halfway-In-House is located at the St. Clair County Childrens Home on West Main Street at the point where the communities of

Belleville and East St. Louis blend together. The St. Clair County Childrens Home, operated since 1920, houses this Halfway-In-House on the first two floors and the third and fourth floors are consumed as the county's juvenile detention facility.

In the summer of 1972, program director, David A. Daly, contracted with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency to conduct an evaluation of the Halfway-In-House Program. Contractually, this evaluation is comprised of the following major components:

1. Evaluation of organizational system.
 - a. Authority and responsibility of director and supervisor.
 - b. Caseload and distribution of work.
 - c. Procedural memoranda.
 - d. Job descriptions.
 - e. Qualifications of personnel.
 - f. Selection of clients.
 - g. Relationships with other youth service organizations.
2. Evaluation of records.
 - a. Adequacy of statistical records for future statistical analysis.
 - b. Comprehensiveness of files.
 - c. Comparison of cost per client with other residential and out-service programs.
3. Determination, to extent possible, of whether or not the project is serving a community need in the area of juvenile justice; and, if so, identification factors that tend to document program impact.
4. Recommendations for program changes where indicated.
5. Recommendations for future funding if warranted.

All members of the project staff, including the special education instructors and houseparents, are to be strongly commended for the cooperation and courtesy shown this consultant during the field work phases of this evaluation. Without question, the juvenile Halfway-In-House Program is seeking to relieve youngsters in distress and to prevent repeat delinquencies. To this end, this consultant hopes that the evaluation experience will prove to be a positive, contributive exercise.

EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATION SYSTEM

Authority and Responsibility of Director and Supervisor

Project Director: David A. Daly has directed this project since its inception in February 1970. In addition to directing this project, Daly also is the Superintendent of Juvenile Detention for the St. Clair County Department of Court Services. As Director of the Halfway-In-House Program, he devotes a minimum of twenty-five percent of his time directly to the project and \$2,993 is contributed as matching funds, with no federal expenditure for this position.

The grant application lists the following duties for the Project Director:

1. Responsibility for project administration and staff supervision.
2. Responsibility for the overall direction of the program.
3. Responsibility for hiring staff and disciplinary action.

It was this consultant's observation that the Project Director discharges his responsibilities to the Halfway-In-House Program with diligence and competency. His ability to function as the Director of the Halfway-In-House Program and simultaneously to manage juvenile detention is enhanced by these two programs being physically located together. While he does not involve himself directly in the daily operational routine, he is indisputably in charge, with project staff operating within the parameters of

previously achieved decisions. He relates well with both the project staff and clientele and emits the expectations that project activities will be conducted with thoughtful and professional propriety.

An additional important factor is that as Project Director, Daly, in the interest of program success, lends the full impact of his prestige and credibility achieved over the years within St. Clair County's Juvenile Justice arena, i.e., he is respected by the Judiciary, the Director of Court Services, and the Juvenile Probation Department, with equal rapport observable in his dealings with police agencies.

Program Supervisor: Having previously worked in St. Clair County as a Juvenile Probation Officer, Vincent C. Gregory became the Program Supervisor in May 1970.

The grant application lists the following duties for the Program Supervisor:

1. Supervision of staff assigned to the program.
2. Director of daily operation program activities.
3. Planning and development of program.
4. Along with Project Director, plans specific training and educational experiences for staff counselors.
5. Liaison in court to Halfway-In-House enrollees or potential enrollees.

Gregory, in this consultant's opinion, is a highly charismatic and single-minded administrator who appears to be well-liked and respected by project staff and clientele, and court related officials important to the project. Gregory is a native of East St. Louis and possesses important insights into the multiple community problems existing there. All indications are that Gregory makes astute use of his knowledge of the community to the best interest of this project, which includes the delinquent youngsters served.

The relationship between the Project Director and Program Supervisor is enviable. Dave Daly, Project Director, functions more as a general overseer who has finely developed his ability to be involved and intimately aware of program circumstances, but he does not appear to interfere in the daily operational routine. The Program Supervisor, Vincent Gregory, is without question in charge of program operations. The mutual trust existing between these two has resulted in a clear delineation of administrative roles, a factor contributing to program operational smoothness.

Caseload and Distribution of Work

Group Counselors: This Halfway-In-House Program is staffed by three group counselors. The clientele is divided equally among the three counselors and part of the admissions process concerns group placement decisions. Care is taken to divide the workload

equitably among the counselors, with equal care given to the development of well-balanced groups, i.e., the more aggressive and vocal youngsters are shared among the three counselors in order to avoid all such youngsters collecting in one group. Equal care is given to dividing the less vocal youngsters among the groups. Group placement decisions are made with the personality of the youngster and counselor in mind, with these considerations made against equal distribution among the groups.

An exception to the above work division scheme occurs when a youngster is a participant in the resident component of the program. All youngsters in residence are kept in the same group. On the occasion of a commuter (the project vernacular for a youngster that lives in his own home and participates on a day-care basis) becoming a resident, the youngster is changed to the resident group. Resident capacity of the Halfway-In-House is eight, with full program capacity at thirty-two. Maximum group participation is set at ten, therefore it is unlikely that the resident group would swell to too large a size without expansion of bed capacity. No expansion of bed capacity is anticipated at this time.

The current LEAA grant application describes group counselor duties as follows:

1. Supervise boys' groups in daily program activities.

2. Lead daily group counseling (GGI and/or individual).
3. Take assignments from project supervisor.

Group counselors were observed to be functioning well within the three duty areas as described.

Houseparents: Closely adjacent to the County Childrens Home (and connected by basement tunnel) is a brick home which houses the resident component of the program. In addition to the group work conducted by the three group counselors, the houseparents conduct daily an additional group session with the resident youngsters. The houseparent group focuses on matters directly pertaining to living together and grant application shows houseparents duties as follows:

1. Counsel and supervise resident enrollees of Halfway-In-House during "after program" hours, evenings, nights, and weekends.
2. Provide planned recreational activities at least once weekly.
3. Responsible for general housecleaning duties.

The resident houseparents were observed to be interacting with the youngsters, demonstrating warmth, acceptance, and appropriate firmness in so doing. In this consultant's opinion there are no contraindications to duty fulfillment on the part of houseparents. Since the resident boys are fully involved in the day program, the houseparents, disallowing unusual circumstances, have contact with the resident boys from 4:30 p.m. until 8:30 a.m. the following morning and on weekends.

Psychologists: The Halfway-In-House Program has a psychologist devoting seventy-five percent of her time, sharing the remaining twenty-five percent with other court services (primarily Juvenile Probation Department). This psychologist is provided by the St. Clair County Mental Health Board. Since early June 1972, the Halfway-In-House has strengthened its intake control capabilities. Orders placing a boy in the program are so couched as to allow a two-week assessment period to determine the youngster's suitability. The following test battery is administered as an important admissions determinant:

1. Wechsler Intelligence Skill for Children (13 through 15 years) or Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (16 years and above)
2. Wide-Range Achievement Test
3. Benton Visual Retention Test
4. Rorschach Inkblots
5. Murray's Thematic Apperception Test
6. Loevinger's Sentence Completion Test for Men
7. Edward's Personal Preference Schedule

This full test battery was adopted in June 1972, coincident with the newly established intake policy. The staff psychologist is, in this consultant's opinion, exercising careful discretion in the use of this battery even to the point of retesting or substituting additional tests, where appropriate, in an effort to compile a reasonably accurate diagnostic assessment of the individual youngsters.

Official program memoranda instituting the revised intake policy describes the purpose of this psychological diagnostic screening battery: "to screen out those boys who are not acceptable to the group therapy process, thereby avoiding a waste of time for both staff and enrollees."

The June intake policy memoranda further described the testing process:

To see if the potential level of achievement is in the retarded range according to the performer's IQ, thus making the boy an unfit candidate for the Halfway-In-House.

To detect any psychological problems that might not have been detected with earlier testing, such as: psychopathic, neurotic, or psychotic tendencies.

To determine the achievement level of the applicant so that the teachers will know what point at which to begin.

To detect any major conflict within such areas as: family, school, or neighborhood relationships.

To aid in determining methods of resolving conflicts and defensive maneuvers if possible through group counseling.

Court Liaison Worker: The LEAA grant currently funding this Halfway-In-House calls for this position with the following duties:

1. Serve as the liaison between the Juvenile Probation Office and Halfway-In-House Program.
2. Perform relief duties for counselors.
3. To perform all other duties assigned by the Project Director.

In early September 1972 this position became vacant and has remained unfilled because the salary was provided by Emergency Employment funds coming from federal sources (non LEAA) to the county. Federal directives disallow refilling this position until early 1973.

In addition to the duties as described, the Liaison Officer had, before his resignation, these responsibilities:

1. Compiled social histories on resident youngsters on occasions when the probation office did not provide this information.
2. Conducted release follow-up work which included contact with youngsters on trial leave from the program for the purpose of making final recommendations as to graduation.

Academic and Vocational Instructors: Academic instruction is an important part of the total Halfway-In-House Program. As stated earlier, academic instruction is conducted on site by two special education instructors; one instructor is a specialist in reading, and the second is uniquely qualified as a math and science teacher. The two academic instructors are provided by "District 189", which this consultant understands to be the numerical designation of the East St. Louis Public School Special Education Division. This instruction is provided by the public schools at no cost to the Halfway-In-House.

The Vocational Shop Instructor is provided as a federal share project expense. On the initial visit by this consultant in mid-September 1972, the vocational instructor position was unfilled

and had been vacant approximately one month. Upon returning to the program in mid-October, this consultant found that a new vocational instructor had been hired and the shop was in full operation.

The youngsters, divided in three groups as described, move through the day with the morning and early afternoon expended in the academic and vocational shop program (all students participate in both). The day ends at approximately 4:30 p.m. and during the day all youngsters participate in group therapy sessions lasting approximately one hour and a half. Interviews with the academic instructors reveal that they are very supportive of the group program as practiced here, and that having no more than ten students at a time in a class allows them to give more individual attention to the youngsters than would normally be possible in a regular academic setting.

While the reaction of individual students to academic and vocational instruction, including individual attention, is always a complicated and inconsistent phenomenon student morale concerning the academic and vocational program appears to be quite good. Daily, each student is given feed-back as to his performance in class via a rating sheet, a simple instrument completed as follows: Plus (+) equals good, self-motivated; Zero (0) equals okay, cooperated; Minus (-) equals resistant, disruptive. Instructors convey this form (one for each student) to the group counselors,

and classroom performance then becomes a grist for the group counseling mill. This system of daily feed-back on classroom performance was observed to be a major medium for the blending of the instructional and counseling components.

Food Service Personnel: The Halfway-In-House Program provides the noon meal for all participants. Food service personnel are provided under the current operational grant in that one "Project Cook" is allowed. Food service is combined with the feeding arrangement for children in detention--detention and Halfway-In-House share the same kitchen and dining facilities. Personnel in this area consist of the following: (1) Project Cook; (2) E. O. C. provided foster grandmother; (3) One part-time relief cook; and (4) Detention child-care worker for girls also doubles as a cook when female population in detention allows.

While it is clear that the project cook and the foster grandmother perform the major tasks of food preparation and service, the work arrangement with the part-time relief cook and the detention child-care worker seemingly is satisfactorily established, with no particular problems noted. This consultant was impressed by the quality and quantity of food provided for the youngsters and also commends the food service staff for their congenial rapport with the residents.

Clerical Staff: A clerical staff of two provides support for this project. No federal share funds are expended in this category, for the county provides one secretary who works part-time with the project and serves mainly as the secretary for David Daly in his role as Superintendent of Detention. This secretary is charged with the responsibilities of the project's bookkeeping and personnel records.

The second secretarial position is provided by the county from Emergency Employment funds and dedicated to case records, general filing, and project typing.

The clerical staff was observed to have good rapport with the youngsters and the courtesies which they extend to visiting parents and public officials is a credit to the project.

Procedural Memoranda

The intimacy of this program, a relatively small staff working at one location, has minimized to date the need for establishing a formalized practice for the issuing and careful keeping of administrative directives. Word of mouth communication regarding procedural changes has been relied upon, augmented by the announcement of procedural and operational policy changes at the weekly staff meetings.

In addition to the in-house verbal communication of procedural changes, it was observed that staff is issued copies of written policies and agreements when another agency is affected.

To the Project Supervisor's credit, he follows the practice of obtaining the suggestions of affected staff members when procedural changes are imminent, i.e., procedural changes appear to be treated with thoughtful regard as opposed to capriciousness and impulsiveness.

Currently, the LEAA grant application and sundry letter communications with the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission comprise the most succinct statement of program policy. While it is indeed important to operate within the framework of these documents, for they constitute a broad framework within which the project must be conducted, it is important to have specific operational policy reduced to writing.

Consequently, this consultant strongly recommends that project administrative staff draft succinct statements of major policy for the project and that these policy statements be reviewed with the staff. After the major governing policies are designed, they should be distributed in writing to the staff with the expectation that the staff will systematically maintain these policy statements in a looseleaf binder, which binder will constitute a procedural manual. The intimacy of this project notwithstanding, important procedural policy should be reduced to writing to facilitate accurate communications to all staff. In addition to insuring clear and direct communication, the practice of reducing policy to writing serves the purpose of causing program practices to be carefully thought through and militates against ambiguity.

This suggested operational manual would be comprised of such items as policies regarding intake; job descriptions; employment and other personnel policies (vacation, sick leave, etc.); policies concerning the daily operational routine; policies relating specifically to the resident component of the program; and all major/routine practices relating to the treatment of project clientele, etc. Actually no categorical list of manual content can be suggested, for the operational manual should reflect the uniqueness of this project and be directly related to the operational routine.

In compiling a manual it is important to get "what the project does and what the project says it does" together. One method of accomplishing this is to fix responsibility for policy execution at the time the policy is issued. For instance, policies relating to laundry should state who is responsible for taking care of project laundry needs. Policies regarding admission to the program should clearly fix admission's responsibility and the same holds true for graduation. The importance of fixing operational responsibility cannot be overstated.

All agreements between the project and other community agencies, such as the court, the schools, and social services, should be reduced to writing to insure that accurate communication has occurred regarding the agreement. When these agreements are reduced to writing, they take on the nature of a contractual

agreement, mutually understood. It is, of course, not important that all staff have copies of all working agreements with other agencies; but it is important that these administrative/service agreements be carefully kept by project administrative staff for easy reference.

When policy is clearly communicated to staff, then the adherence to policy becomes a major supervision tool for administrators. Additionally, certainty of communication is facilitated with the project Advisory Board and the Department of Court Services.

Job Descriptions

Specific job descriptions are succinctly stated in the LEAA grant application. Staff duties are discussed on pages five through fifteen of this report.

Qualifications Of Personnel

As confirmed from project records, project professional staff is academically and experientially qualified, to wit:

Project Director - BA Degree in Psychology with seven years experience in juvenile probation and detention, with three years detention experience concurrent with experience as Halfway-In-House Director. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency professional standards that apply to this position call for a minimum of a

Master's Degree. Daly has completed the major portion of the work required for a Master's Degree in Counseling and Guidance from Southern Illinois University at Evansville. While this consultant would encourage Daly to complete the work remaining for this post baccalaureate degree, academic achievements to date when combined with his professional level work experience deem him qualified for his current position. Program Supervisor - Completed two years of college and two years experience in juvenile probation prior to assuming the responsibilities as Program Supervisor approximately two-and-a-half years ago.

NCCD professional personnel standards applying to this position call for at least a Master's Degree with no fewer than two years experience. While the Program Supervisor should be encouraged to continue his formal education in the interest of his own personal development, it is this consultant's opinion that his maturity and knowledge of the community, when combined with his demonstrated proficiency at administration, result in the present Program Supervisor being

uniquely qualified.

Group Counselors - Project records confirm counselor qualifications as follows: One counselor has completed three-and-a-half years of college; the second completed one year of college; and the third terminated his formal education in the eleventh grade. If the Halfway-In-House Program had qualified group counseling supervision available to these counselors, then NCCD personnel standards would call for a minimum of a Bachelors Degree for the group workers. Beginning professional competence and adroit supervision is important for these counselors as they perform the main therapeutic thrust of the project.

The three counselors, however, were all observed to possess the necessary sensitivity and talents required for effective functioning in a helping relationship with the youngsters and all are presumed by this consultant to possess the capacity for professional growth should special training be provided. Staff training needs will be amplified below.

Academic Instructors - Both instructors possess Master's Degrees, have had considerable experience as classroom teachers prior to project involvement, and possess the necessary personal countenance to facilitate meaningful interaction with project clientele.

Vocational Shop Instructor - Special qualifications of the shop instructor are unconfirmed at this writing, although the program supervisor expressed complete satisfaction with the new instructor since he began work in early October 1972.

Psychologist - MA Degree with one-and-a-half years experience prior to project involvement. The psychologist was observed to be quite proficient, with personal characteristics that enhance relationships with both staff and clientele.

Resident Houseparents - A couple, with the housefather having a Master's Degree in Administration of Criminal Justice (and currently attends the University of Missouri in pursuit of a Master's Degree in Accounting) and the housemother has a Master's Degree in

Community Health Services. It is this consultant's opinion that this project is quite fortunate to have this couple as resident houseparents, for their astute attention to the needs of the resident youngsters is obvious.

Selection Process For Clients

The Halfway-In-House Program serves as a community alternative to State Training School commitment for those male delinquents who have met with probation failure. From its beginning in early 1970 until mid-1972, the Halfway-In-House operated on a policy of dual responsibility with the Juvenile Probation Department, i.e., boys placed in the Halfway-In-House Program were continued on probation while directed by the court to participate in the Halfway-In-House Program. This arrangement, as reported by project administrative staff, was fraught with myriad administrative entanglement and confusion on the part of all concerned, including the clients. Then in June 1972, an agreement was achieved with the Department of Court Services allowing for the discontinuance of Probation Officer supervision for youngsters placed with the Halfway Program. This was an important development, in that the admissions criteria were sharpened and the therapeutic intent of the program was brought into clearer focus.

The first admission criterion is, naturally, concerned with space - the project is limited to thirty-two participants (only eight in residence at a time).

Should room be available, the proposed client must qualify with regard to psychological suitability as described on pages ten and eleven of this report. The clarification of this screening component, in this consultant's opinion, is an important development, for it is a statement of project limitation and resulted from a careful analysis of the project clientele over a two-and-a-half-year period. This is all to say that the Halfway-In-House Program does not claim to be all things to all youngsters in trouble in St. Clair County, rather, admission is restricted to those delinquents who appear to have the capacity to benefit from this combination educational/therapeutic experience. As a working agreement with the Juvenile Division of the Circuit Court, the Halfway-In-House Program is allowed two weeks in which to determine suitability for admission. The psychological testing process and battery is a major determining factor in the admissions decision and this process is described on pages ten and eleven of this report.

Relationships With Other Youth Service Agencies

The Halfway-In-House was observed to be firmly established as a creditable service to children in trouble in St. Clair County. Relationships with the Probation Department, as reported by project staff, have materially improved since June 1972, the time

of the better crystallized intake policy and the dispensing with dual supervision. Because of necessary close day-to-day working between the Halfway-In-House and Juvenile Probation, it is suggested that project staff not take the Juvenile Probation Department for granted, for good working relationships of this nature must be considered in a constant state of evolution. If thoughtfully managed, such relationships are constantly evolving toward better workability.

When matters of question and conflict arise, they should be resolved as quickly as possible. Failure to do so allows both parties to accumulate bad feelings toward one another, which ill feelings are often counter to the best interests of project clientele.

The importance of resolving conflict situations as such arise equally applies to all community agencies with which this project has contact.

Consultant interviews with the Judge of the Juvenile Division of the Circuit Court, East St. Louis Police, and Juvenile Probation staff revealed that these agencies have high expectations for the Halfway-In-House. The expectations expressed connote to this consultant that the Halfway-In-House staff has been aggressive in developing good working relationships with these agencies. That the East St. Louis schools provide two special education instructors at no cost to the project is indicative of good relationships and credibility, as is the county's investment of Emergency

Employment funds, which funds provide the Liaison Probation Officer and a clerical position.

The staff psychologist confirmed that the project has close working relationships with other social services, specifically the local family counseling agency.

EVALUATION OF RECORDS

Adequacy of Statistical Records for Future Statistical Analysis

Project statistical records are underdeveloped. A listing follows by categories contained on a brief report titled ". . . Statistical Analysis 1972" presented to this consultant on first arrival - September 11, 1972.

- I. Active (list of sixteen names - current program participants.)*
- II. Graduates (list of nine names having graduated in first eight months of 1972.)
- III. Releases
 - A. Pending Graduation (list of seven on "trial leave" attending regular school, awaiting fall graduation from Halfway-In-House Program. Staff reports waiting period to be anywhere from thirty days to six months.)
 - B. Removed by Probation Officer (list of three, all on dual status [probation simultaneously with Halfway Program] - removed, not released by Program.)
 - C. Removed for Medical or Mental Reasons (list of two.)
- IV. Re-Referrals
 - A. Other Programs (list of three.)
 - B. Referred back to Court (list of six - for removal decisions, as this consultant understands, and other placement.)
 - C. Commitments (list of two - it is understood that commitment was to the Illinois Department of Corrections.)
- V. Runaways (list of two that had absconded.)

The above population breakdown is important, for it provides a means of keeping track of program participants. As a statistical

* Parentheses comments are this writer's addition.

system for future analysis, though, this system is quite underdeveloped. Only the patently obvious is recorded and little in the way of internal program analysis is possible.

While contractually this evaluation did not call for a separate statistical analysis, a limited analysis was conducted and reported below.

The source for Table 1 is the daily attendance report kept in a grade book typically the tool of classroom teachers. All group leaders handle this record book daily - and the book's condition shows it. A more substantial record is needed.

TABLE 1
PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS BY MONTH, CATEGORY AND
AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE FOR FIRST
SEVEN MONTHS OF 1972

Month	Day Enrollment	Residence Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Avg. Daily Attendance
January	20	8	28	24.6
February	21	8	29	24.2
March	19	7	26	24.0
April	18	7	25	22.8
May	16	8	24	22.1
June	15	9	24	21.6
July	15	7	22	20.0

The attendance record is indeed one of the most important within the project; it confirms that the court's intention is being followed by the subject youngster. To prevent this record

from being lost, misplaced, or carried away, and in the interest of having uniform entries, one clerical person should be charged with the responsibility of recording attendance. The group-leaders should pass on a daily attendance sheet, a statement of those in attendance, to the designated clerical person for official central recording.

August 1972 enrollment totaled twenty-five, eight of which were in residence. Interestingly, eleven program participants were placed in detention in August resulting from theft and vandalism at the Halfway-In-House. Staff revealed the culprits to be a mixed group of day program and resident youngsters. This spontaneous group exercise (afterhours and, of course, unsupervised - involving the tossing of onions and potatoes [stolen from the facility's back porch] at passing autos at two locations) was embarrassing to staff. With almost half the enrollees involved, the incident can be considered a mutiny. Or, was it merely an occasion of adolescent collective excitement that, once begun, had to result in arrest and adult uproar? The point is not that the incident occurred, for such collective acting out is not uncommon. Rather, good statistical records can be surprisingly helpful in determining the pertinence of group misbehavior to program operations.

For instance, were the participants involved new enrollees? How was the group divided with reference to length of program

participation? The incident occurred not long after the new intake policy took effect. Were the participants reacting to no longer having the Probation Counselors to visit and be concerned with them? The dual involvement of Probation Counselors and Halfway-In-House staff played into the hands of skillfully manipulative youngsters (as reported by staff). Did the potato and onion throwing relate in any way to the removal of this opportunity to manipulate? To manipulate is one way to be actively (albeit negatively) involved in one's own destiny. Confrontation about, or removal of opportunity for, manipulation typically evokes fury from the manipulator - people become mad enough to throw things on these occasions.

It is a certainty that only the culprits can tell us what was happening with them at the time of the incident; their descriptions are more creditable when they are asked to speak only for themselves, copping out on no one. If staff is familiar with statistical similarities and has indepth awareness of the culprits as individuals, then staff is better prepared to hear what the participants are really saying on occasions of their misbehavior.

It appears that the August group misbehavior has been resolved to staff and court satisfaction. The above questions and comments are offered as an example of how carefully kept records can assist in continuous program scrutiny. Good records are vastly more than merely archives material.

During the first two weeks of September 1972, nineteen were enrolled, six of which were in residence. Five of the culprits from the August incident remained in detention.

Statistical Summary

This consultant acknowledges sincere appreciation to Mrs. Joan Townsend, Project Secretary, for compiling on request the raw data which yielded the interpretations below. Since the Halfway-In-House has yet to develop a complete statistical system, Mrs. Townsend assisted by going through project records and case files in collecting the requested information. The raw data was furnished via mail and telephone between and after consultant site visits; therefore, computation and interpretations are considered approximate rather than exact.

Considering the program beginning date as February 1, 1970, as of September 1, 1972, the program had consumed 723 operational days (the resident component became operational on August 1, 1971). Since beginning, and counting the resident population, data provided reveals that a total of 129 youngsters were involved during this period and a total of 21,873 child care days were rendered. (Twenty-five participants on any one day equals twenty-five child care days, etc.) Participants having fully completed the program, known as "Graduates," totaled 44; those released prior to full graduation for sundry reasons, usually referred to more appropriate services, totaled 45; commitments to Illinois Department of Corrections totaled 19.

Enrollee Factors on Selected Day

This consultant made a major request for data gathering by Mrs. Joan Townsend on September 21, 1972. Specifically requested was the raw data which yielded Tables 2 through 4. On making this request, this writer also asked for enrollee particulars active on September 21, 1972, which particulars comprise Table 5.

TABLE 2

AGE FACTOR ANALYSIS: AVERAGE AGE OF HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE
PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS BY CATEGORY AND RANGE
FEBRUARY 1, 1970 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 1972

Category	No.	Range of Age		
		Lowest	Highest	Average
All Admissions (Age at Admission)	129*	13 yrs.	17 yrs. 9 mos.	15 yrs. 3 mos.
Graduates (Age at Graduation)	44	13 yrs. 6 mos.	17 yrs. 9 mos.	16 yrs. 7 mos.
Releasees (Age at Release)	47	13 yrs.	17 yrs. 9 mos.	15 yrs. 8 mos.
Commitments to Dept. of Corrections (Age at Commitment)	19	13 yrs. 7 mos.	17 yrs.	16 yrs. 5 mos.

*Active enrollment of 19 on Sept. 1, 1972 not shown in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

TABLE 3
 MODAL DENSITY AGE RANGE BY CATEGORY OF
 HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
 FEB. 1, 1970 TO SEPT. 1, 1972

Category	Modal Range	Number in Range	Total
All Admissions	15 yrs. to 15 yrs. 10 mos.	38	129
Graduates	16 yrs. 5 mos. to 17 yrs.	22	44
Releasees	14 yrs 6 mos. to 15 yrs 5 mos. <u>and</u> 16 yrs 1 mo. to 17 yrs.	14 17	47
Commitment to	16 yrs. 7 mos. to 16 yrs. 8 mos.	6	19

TABLE 4
 HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE LENGTH OF PARTICIPATION FACTORS,
 QUANTIFIED IN DAYS BY CATEGORY
 FEBRUARY 1, 1970 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 1972

Category	Avg. Length of Participation	Range	Total Participants
All Participants	172 days	23-669 days	129
Graduates	218 days	34-669 days	44
Releasees	161 days	15-472 days	47
Commitments to Ill. Dept. Corrections	142 days	21-428 days	19

TABLE 5
PROFILE OF ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS
HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE PROGRAM
SEPTEMBER 21, 1972

Total Enrolled	17
Resident Population	8
Day Participants	9
Average Age	15 yrs. 3 mos.
Age Range	13 yrs. to 17 yrs. 1 mo.
Average Length of Participation to date	139 days
Range in Length of Participation	1 day to 314 days

Resident Program - A Minimal Analysis

As earlier reported, the Halfway-In-House has a Resident Program component which, with its eight-bed capacity, is available to approximately one-fourth of the participants. While the major thrust of this program is in the Day Care area, the Resident Care component was initiated on August 1, 1971, to serve those participants presenting a need for this type care for sundry reasons. The uniqueness and newness of this Residence Program seemingly warrants the minimal statistical analysis that follows.

TABLE 6
RELEASE FROM RESIDENTIAL CARE, HALFWAY-IN-HOUSE
PROGRAM BY CATEGORY AND PERCENT
AUG. 1, 1971 TO OCT. 1, 1972

Category	Number	Percent of Total
Graduation - Fully Complete Program	3	14 %
Conditionally Released Awaiting Graduation	4	18 %
Released to Continue in Day Program	2	9 %
Committed to State Dept. of Corrections	7	32 %
Dismissed as Unsuitable and Referred to Other (Non-Correctional) Agency	6	27 %
TOTAL	22	100 %

Other findings of interest concerning the twenty-two resident care youngsters described in Table 6 are:

1. Four youngsters (18 percent of total) ran away from residence, but are accounted for in either the referred or committed categories.
2. Seven (32 percent of total) were admitted to Residence after first participating in the Day Program - an administrative decision effected this change in status.
3. Eight (36 percent of total) were removed from Residence to Detention on occasions of law violative behavior (seven of these were committed to Department of Corrections).
4. Regardless of reason for release, average length of stay is 136 days; range in length of stay is from 23 days to 316 days.

5. As partially reflected on Table 6 several participants have been moved from Day Care to Residence and others have begun in Residence and then moved to Day Care. Considering this, the average length of total program involvement is 191 days, with a range from 23 days to 492 days.

6. Average age on entry to Residence is 15 years 7 months; Residence admittance age ranged from 13 years 9 months to 17 years 1 month.

As to the effectiveness of the Resident Program, these deductions are offered:

1. Two-thirds of the resident youngsters have been moved to a more positive statistical category upon release from residence (for this writing, dismissal and referral to a non-correctional agency - a status short of the glory of graduation - is considered positive; six youngsters have been so referred).

2. That only three participants had achieved full graduation by October 1, 1972, is attributed to the policy of conditional release prior to granting full graduate status; to impugn resident effectiveness by simply comparing three graduates against seven commitments is an exercise in incomplete assessment.

3. That resident placement addresses a variety of participant needs, ranging from transportation difficulty (one of the original rationales for resident development), to providing greater controls for the more delinquency-prone youngsters. The latter was confirmed through interviews with the staff and Juvenile Judge; residence provides an additional community alternative to commitment in bothersome, more aggravated cases.

4. That it is imperative for program staff and resident houseparents to consciously guard against developing negative, punitive attitudes toward youngsters in residence, for negativism would foster a separatist mentality about residence among all participants, i.e., "all the bad guys live in," etc. The surfacing of a negative elite could spell resident program demise, or foster circumstances in which residence becomes generative

of delinquency. In short, living in presents more opportunity for "getting caught" and "to get caught" can become vogue, self-destructiveness notwithstanding. For maximum contribution to the total Halfway-In-House Program, the resident component must constantly strive to become a setting in which maturation and growth can occur. Should residence become simply a setting for the repetitious reenactment of Berne's "Cops and Robbers Game"* then this component should be discontinued.

In addition to the above, on November 21, 1972, there were eight youngsters in residence. Their average age on admission was 15 years 4 months, two months younger than those reflected on Table 6.

Comprehensiveness of Case Files

In mid-September, 1972, case files were perused on thirteen of the nineteen boys enrolled. All thirteen files contained the following contents:

1. Court Order placing the child in the Halfway-In-House Program.
2. File "Face Sheet" listing contents.
3. Letter from Program Supervisor to Parents explaining the Court's placement of their son in this program.
4. Statement of program rules and regulations signed by the subject youngster.
5. Sundry information from other community agencies, including standard information sheet showing public school achievement.

* Eric Berne, Games People Play, (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

6. Standard progress reports completed by the group leaders on each youngster biweekly.

7. Three separate instruments redundantly recording primarily the same information:

- A. Social History
- B. Initial Information
- C. Social Attitude Questionnaire.

Recommendations on Case Files

Diligence is exerted by staff in case file keeping. The below recommendations are offered in hopes of causing the case files to become more useful as a program tool on behalf of the participants.

(1) Case files presently have the appearance and character of correspondence folders - contents loosely filed in no set order. This record can, and should, be a major tool for the Program Supervisor in monitoring the work of the three Group Leaders. It is recommended that the case files on both interior sides be equipped with folding metal clasps (available from most office supply dealers) and that file contents be affixed in the file folder. Used as a supervision tool, the case file is handled routinely - claspings contents into the file folder militates against loss of file material.

(2) A policy governing the keeping of case files should be devised as a statement concerning the order in which information is affixed in the file. For example:

- A. Face Sheet - the existing "Face Sheet" should be discontinued for it is only a list of file contents - standardized file content keeping negates the need for listing. A new Face Sheet form should be devised for the uniform recording of all identifying information, i. e., name; date of birth; address; parent and sibling names; date of program entry; prior inclusive dates of probation involvement; name of person to be contacted in cases of emergency; program status (resident or day program); group leader assigned, etc.

This new Face Sheet should be affixed to the left interior side of the file folder, always on top for convenience. Less frequently referred to contents are to be compiled for keeping under the Face Sheet.

B. Social Histories; psychological test results (if it is decided to keep test results in case files - presently the Psychologist keeps test results separately); copy of Court Order; are examples of file contents that can be kept on the left interior side, under the Face Sheet.

C. On the right interior side, progress reports should be affixed. By compiling these reports in sequence, the most recent reporting always on top of older reports, etc., the youngster's progress can be determined at a glance, or carefully chartered by a sequential reading from bottom to top.

D. Correspondence can be placed sequentially with progress reports.

(3) The Social Study Questionnaire adopted for program use in June 1972, combined with the above recommended Face Sheet, should replace the three redundant instruments listed in #7 above. This new Social Study Questionnaire is specially suited to provide uniformly compiled background information on all program participants.

(4) All existing forms should be reviewed and redundant recording of identifying information eliminated. The youngster's name and date of birth should be sufficient identifiers if a well-designed Face Sheet is affixed in the file.

(5) In compiling case files, care should be taken to fully complete each standard form required by program policy. There is a frequency of partially complete forms on file. Well-designed forms require only important information and should be completed. This promotes the compiling of comparable information on all program youngsters - case files then become a rich source for statistical information and program interpretation.

Card File System: Complementing the suggested case file arrangement should be a card file system. Such a card system would constitute an index to the case records and make conveniently available all identifying and status information regarding all youngsters associated at anytime with the program. The cards should record information similar to the case record Face Sheet.

Comparison of Cost per Client with Other Residential and Out-Service Programs

Total cost, according to the 1972 LEAA approved budget, is \$159,141. The Halfway-In-House Program has a capacity for thirty participants. If the program had been at full capacity for the entire year (1972) the program would have expended 10,800 child care days. By simply dividing total program cost by total child care days, the cost per day per child would be \$14.00; or, \$420 monthly per child; annually per child \$5,040.

For the first seven months of 1972, the average daily attendance was twenty-three. Considering this as the average daily attendance for the entire year, the program would expend 8,280 child care days, which divided into total program allowance reveals a cost per child per day of \$19; or, a monthly total per child of \$570; and annually a cost of \$6,840 per child.

For this expenditure the participants receive:

1. Academic instruction in classrooms limited to ten participants.
2. Vocational shop instruction.

3. Daily group therapy, eight to ten in each group.
4. One out of three received from the resident program lodging, meals, clothing, medical care, and a weekly spending allowance.
5. Two out of three received the equivalent of two meals daily.
6. Family counseling in situational emergency.
7. A minimum of seven hours daily adult supervision.
8. Summer recreational program consisting of team sports, individual athletic skills training, and arts and crafts.
9. Excursion outings to points of interest (at least quarterly - more often when possible) throughout Illinois and Missouri.
10. A complete battery of psychological tests.
11. And, foremost, avoidance of being removed from their home communities, even though they have been adjudicated delinquent and failed on probation.

The above list is limited to the most obvious. To purchase comparable services from private sources would be considerably more expensive. For example, private schools, excluding vocational instruction, for twenty-three youngsters would cost for tuition only a minimum of \$2,000 each or \$46,000 annually living cost for private school attendance is beyond the estimating ability of

this writer). Daily group therapy at \$10 each (8 to a group, 3 groups) would cost \$62,400 annually (\$240/day x 260 days). Comparable psychological testing for 23 children would cost \$9,200.* The total of these three categories of service purchased from private sources is \$117,600, a lion's share of current program cost. While it is difficult to conjure realistic estimates of comparable costs of services in the remaining eight categories listed above, it is safe to assume that the aggregate cost would far exceed \$41,541.

LEAA funds (\$51,592) interpreted in cost per child, using average daily attendance of twenty-three, reveals the following:

1. \$6.23 cost per child per day.
2. \$186.90 cost per child per month.
3. \$2,242.80 cost per child for a full year.

The Director of Juvenile Field Services of the Illinois Department of Corrections disclosed this cost information on inquiry by this writer:

1. \$76.20 - cost per month per child living in his own home while on parole. No special services provided other than routine parole supervision.
2. \$3,750 - cost per child per year in "down state" group home. Cost includes only the basic essentials of residential care.

*\$400 each.

Figure #1 is based on an average monthly parole caseload of 3,460. Figure #2 is based on an annual standard contract cost of \$30,000 for group home in southern Illinois serving eight children at a time. Contracts cover basic residential costs; counseling, cost not shown here, is provided by Juvenile Parole and other special services are procured as needed, which services are often provided on agreements with other state agencies - cost variance defies estimation with accuracy.

In comparing state Juvenile Field Services cost with cost of Halfway-In-House Program, one must consider the variance of services provided. Considering the totality of Halfway-In-House services, financially, in this consultant's opinion, this St. Clair County Program is a bargain.

IDENTIFICATION OF FACTORS THAT DOCUMENT
PROGRAM IMPACT

Page Two of the current (1972) LEAA Grant Application makes this claim concerning project effectiveness:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Delinquency Petitions Filed</u>	<u>Percent Decrease</u>	<u>Commitments to State</u>	<u>Percent Decrease</u>
1969	160		80	
1970	314	96 %	50	38 %
1971	366	17 %	29	42 %

Juvenile Probation Department reports that from January 1 to August 31, 1972 child related petitions (all categories) presented to the court totaled 377; of these, 159 alleged delinquency - and these delinquency petitions included those heard for revocation of probation. Ten of the delinquency petitions were disposed of by commitment to the Department of Corrections. It appears that total delinquency petitions during 1972 will be fewer than in 1971, but the commitments to the state will show a 1972 decrease, also.

While the filing of delinquency petitions is the province of police and the State's Attorney (if the writer's understanding of St. Clair County Juvenile Process is correct) adjudication of delinquency and dispositional commitment to the State is the sole province of the Judge of the Juvenile Division of the Circuit Court. The increased filing of petitions probably relates more to policy change on the part of the State's Attorney than to an upsurge in the true incidence of juvenile crime in the county.

CONTINUED

1 OF 2

The revealing factor here is that in spite of increased petitions, there has been a marked decrease in commitments. The existence of the Halfway-In-House is credited by Police, Probation Department, and the Court, as the prime reason for commitment decrease.

Another factor, in this consultant's opinion, accounting for commitment decrease is the availability of excellent legal services provided by the Public Defender attorney. All juveniles appearing in Court are represented by either retained Counsel or Court-appointed Counsel via the Public Defender. The Public Defender attorney is an aggressive advocate for the rights of children and notably skilled in Courtroom arts. The net result, as observed during this consultant's one morning in Court, is that by the time this Public Defender attorney completes testimony, so many mitigating factors have been surfaced that the subject youngster appears manageable, the substantiated fact of delinquency notwithstanding. The Court responds confidently by referring youngsters to the intake process of the Halfway-In-House, if not to Probation.

Though not confirmed of record, the frequency of probation dispositions has undoubtedly increased continuously since 1970, another factor militating against commitment. It is also significant that Halfway-In-House placement, since June 1972, has been increasingly availed to probation failures. This latter development reveals that the Halfway-In-House is clearly a community alternative to State commitment.

An additional impact factor, intangible but nevertheless observable, is that the successful evolution to date of the Halfway-In-House has fostered a spirit of tolerance and hope concerning juvenile offenders. This more positive attitude is observable within the juvenile justice arena (from Police through the Court), and there are indications that considerable community pride is vested in the project: professional community hopefulness is revealed in the provision of a psychologist and teachers at no project cost; community groups sponsor the Halfway-In-House baseball team; civic groups have been receptive to program presentations by staff; graduates revisit the program and are welcome; and media coverage has been positive.

All of the above is to say that it is this writer's considered opinion that the Halfway-In-House Program addresses a unique need within the gamut of services to troubling youngsters in St. Clair County. To drive from East St. Louis up the hill and into the community of Belleville is to experience stark contrast. Belleville hums with the selfsufficiency of middle-America. East St. Louis, a scene of industrial exodus, smolders and wonders what will happen next. Most of the Halfway youngsters come from East St. Louis.

The Halfway-In-House Program provides attentive secondary academics for the participants, a group that typically has found school to be a useless endeavor. The group work strives to present

liveable options to lawlessness. If this kind of community program is justified anywhere, it is justified in St. Clair County.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM CHANGE
WHERE INDICATED

A redundant listing of earlier recommendations will be excluded here. Rather, this section will address program areas which need strengthening, specifically the daily group therapy sessions.

The Guided Group Interaction now being attempted has obviously been a major maturation factor for this program. As described by staff, the project floundered until GGI was introduced with consultant's help - results: therapeutic intent and focus sharpened; generally, the project assumed a more purposeful character; the task to be done was defined along with a way to get through the day; and the project began to develop its own vernacular - a subculture surfaced. Nothing that follows should be construed as criticism of the positive evolutionary direction that this project has maintained for the past two years. It appears, however, that the project has reached a plateau, a place to become stymied - bogged down and perhaps punitive if forward momentum is not resumed.

First of all, it was observed that staff had incorporated a rather superficial perception of GGI, a natural occurrence considering their limited exposure to the broad sociopsychological theoretical foundations undergirding GGI or any other therapeutic frame of reference. Lacking depth in the human sciences, the staff appears to have accepted their perception of GGI as a belief

system, as dogma. The strength of this project is in the sheer level-headed humanness of the staff and their ability to relate with and emit hopefulness to the youngsters. This commitment to naively perceive dogma was observed to impede, rather than facilitate, the group leaders' effective utilization of their most potent therapeutic tool — themselves.

And this dogma is acted out complete with rituals.

The youngsters file into the group meeting room, laughing, talking, hasseling one another, taking seats in a u-shaped arrangement in front of the group leader who gets the group going by saying something like, "Okay group, what's happening?" Silence, a pause — followed by a group member (usually the one closest to the group leader) opening with a recitation of the problems he has had during the day. This recalling of problems fits the classic GGI model — but as the problems are verbalized, the observer becomes aware that the youngster is recounting the sequential events of his day. The group leader observes this passage from problems to events in silence (or, does the leader see this?).

Following the recitation comes rapid-fire, monotone questions from the group:

Group Member, "Did you steal anything?" Subject Youngster answers with similar monotoned rapidity, "No." Question - Did you use any drugs?; Answer - No. Question - Were you tempted to steal anything?; Answer - No. Question - Did you break any Program Rules?; Answer - No. Question - Are you sure?; Answer - Yes.

This kind of questioning continues, and the group leader remains silent and after awhile the questioning stops. Silence — pause — and then the next youngster begins his recitation of the problems he has had that day. The recitation of problems, again, blends with a sequential description of his day, which, like the first, is followed by the same rapid, monotoned questions. The group leader remains silent and each group member takes his turn reciting and answering the questions.

Departing for the moment from this description of the group meetings, a curious use of the work "problem" occurs in the group meetings. A youngster may say, "I had a problem giggling Leroy in the ass at the pencil sharpener today." Or, "I had a problem not finishing my seat work in Math." Translated, the first quote says, in this writer's opinion, that he created a problem for at least two other people — the guy that was gigged and the teacher; his problem (he got into trouble) came with the reaction to the giggling. The second quote means that the youngster did not complete a class assignment within the allotted time. The point is that this unusual use of the word "problem" occurs when the youngster is confessing that he has done something wrong — usually he has created a problem — not "had a problem". The "problem" phenomenon is perhaps accounted for in that classic GGI theory holds it to be helpful to encourage group participants to describe their troubling behavior as a "problem" indicating

that this is to be recognized and changed. This writer is not in disagreement with this theoretical intent, but rather suggests that the curious use of the work "problem" is a property of group jargon unique to this project. Further, the group leaders hear this jargon (typically continuing in silence) and appear self-assured that the group is doing "okay" because they are talking about problems. By remaining silent, the group leader misses excellent opportunities to cause the youngsters to understand that specific acts of disruptive or maladaptive behavior usually are expressions (or acting out) of underlying intra-psychic distress (problems). The full therapeutic impact is lessened when these opportunities are missed and the jargon (words when you want to appear "with it") goes on and on.

The perpetuation of the group meeting ritual is jargon-like in that the groups are said by staff to be "open-ended". New enrollees join the group as other participants leave (mainly via trial leave or graduation) and the group goes on. New enrollees, as a natural process of adaptation, pick up the jargon and sequential rituals. Perpetuation is assured.

Continuing now with the description of the group meetings, after the recitations have occurred, the group members decide which member will be the subject of the remaining part of the session. To be selected is spoken of as being on the "hot seat".

The other group members get on his case, so to speak, and only a full-blown masochist would enjoy being hot-seated. The ritual of making the hot seat really sizzle is another occasion of lost opportunity for the group to provide real therapeutic impact.

The group questions the hot-seat youngster and the rules of the game seem to be that the group accepts nothing that the hot-seat youngster says, but continues to apply pressurized questions. The questions are typically couched negatively in hostile, accusing tones. An acceptable answer is not listened for by the group. The defensiveness of the hot-seat youngster is quickened and his response is typically an attempt at self-justification, the counterforce to the force applied by the group.

In this phase, the group meeting resembles (on a verbal level) a football practice drill known as "Bull-In-The-Ring" — in which the player in the center fights desperately to stay on his feet while blockers come at him from all directions. In the football drill, the player in the center at least receives some satisfaction by scoring a solid lick occasionally on a charging blocker — momentary victory and relief. But in the group meetings, the hot-seat youngster hits back verbally and nobody hears him — frustration mounts and defenses stiffen (if he is a reasonably normal lad).

The hot-seat drill continues until the group leader, who has remained silent most of the time, points out that group meeting time is nearing an end and the meeting moves to its final ritualistic phase in two parts.

Part I consists of the hot-seat youngster remaining silent (if he plays by the rules - most do) while the group members give him advice. Part II consists of the hot-seat youngster (often through clinched teeth) telling the group how he is going to make use of this advice.

The danger of continued adherence to naively perceived dogma, rituals and jargon in the name of group theory is that the process is apt to become the end, not a means to an end. The sought-after goal (end) is a youngster that is better able to master his impulses and to live responsibly within the law. As observed, the group leaders are limited in their present ability to effectively facilitate the maturation of the program participants via group therapy. Additional training for the group leaders is considered imperative, which training should address at least the following more obvious areas of need:

1. Increased understanding of psychological test results on each youngster (oddly, this writer understands that test results are not shared with the group leaders.) A solid case for insisting that the group leaders remain ignorant of information already at project disposal is difficult to make. The sharing of this information and simultaneously expecting the group leaders to manage the information with professional propriety will contribute to heightened professionalism on the part of the group leaders.

2. The group leader's stoic silence in the groups must be addressed - presently the Guided has been removed from Guided Group Interaction in St. Clair County. Training should equip the group leaders with the skill to appropriately involve themselves verbally (and non-verbally) without distracting from the work of the group.
3. Training should equip the group leaders to offer a more effective/helpful alternative to advice. The groups observed acted out the typical proclivity to give advice to the youngster subject for the moment of their concern. The cliché in working with delinquents is "Hell, these kids don't need advice, they've had plenty of it." Advice is helpful when a person with a reasonably well-ordered personality asks for it - and the person giving advice really listens to the circumstances evoking the request. In the Halfway-In-House groups, advice is not requested and the circumstances described by the subject youngster are not really listened to. The groups respond with advice on "what he should do," no thought is given as to how he is going to do it. The subject youngster is expected to respond as to how he is going to use the group's advice, a response coming ritualistically at

- the end of the group session - a time when the youngster is more than ready to yield the hot seat.
4. Quite like #3, the groups when giving advice sound like a collection of parents or school teachers, authority figures with whom we can safely presume the subject youngster has had difficulty in the past. It is reasonable to presume that heavily parental advice will be ultimately rejected by the subject youngster, that the advice comes from his peers notwithstanding. Training can equip the group leaders to foster in the group members internally motivated responsible behavior and concomitantly reduce the reliance on externally applied limits.
 5. Training for improved group process and therapeutic skills can equip the group leaders to recognize and interrupt the meaningless jargon that typified the current group sessions. When this occurs the groups can become a more effective facilitating factor in the maturation of the participants.
 6. Training can equip the group leaders with the capacity for appropriate self-criticism, the kind of self-awareness and self-readjusting required of all professionals. This is the basis for continuing professional growth and improvement in therapeutic skills.

The above critical analysis is intended to encourage the Halfway-In-House staff to aggressively expand their professional horizon. This consultant is firmly convinced that staff quality is such that this program need not be satisfied with operations that are less than staff's capacity to deliver.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE FUNDING
IF WARRANTED

This consultant considers the Juvenile Halfway-In-House Program to be a creditable service to troubled and troubling young people in St. Clair County and the surrounding area. The project record is one of continuing growth and self-conscious refinement.

Full refunding is strongly recommended.

END