

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

ALLAN COLLAUTT ASSOCIATES, INC.

**DESIGNING A JUVENILE JUSTICE
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:**

Statement of Recommendations

154904

Submitted by

**Philip W. Harris, Ph.D.
Allan M. Collautt, Ph.D.
Duane A. Harris, M.P.A.**

FINAL REPORT: October 4, 1994

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**U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study occurred as the result of efforts that preceded its planning, and we wish to acknowledge the leadership of Jesse Williams, Deputy Commissioner of Human Services, Division of Juvenile Justice Services, who has spearheaded development of system-wide information system development. We also wish to thank the members of our MIS Work Group who met monthly and struggled with the many adaptations to existing information systems that have developed over time and now stand as obstacles to information system development: Jim Anderson, Jim Boyle, John Buggy, John Delaney, Len Hacking, Jack McCann, Jim Randolph, Daljit Ranajee, David Rosen, Jesse Williams, . Their work will continue for some time to come.

We are also deeply indebted to our two research assistants, Jim Leflar and Mimi Singh, who conducted the lion's share of the data collection. Their tireless efforts to develop thorough statements of needs and to organize their endless pages of interview notes are very much appreciated.

We also wish to recognize the importance of the support given us during the writing of this report by Judge Esther Sylvester, Administrative Judge of the Family Court. The centrality of the juvenile court to a system-wide information system became clear to us through our data analysis and we found in Judge Sylvester a leader who was prepared to explore the development of such a system.

Finally, our thanks to Tamryn Etten, Rob Petrone and Don Gottfredson for agreeing to allow us to add their (Etten and Petrone's) paper on information sharing as an appendix to this report. Issues of confidentiality and access are critical to this enterprise, and their document will be invaluable to further discussions of information sharing among the agencies of the juvenile justice system.

**DESIGNING A JUVENILE JUSTICE
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Philip W. Harris, Ph.D., Department of Criminal Justice, Temple University
Allan M. Collaunt, Ph.D., Allan Collaunt Associates, Inc.
Duane A. Harris, M.P.A., Allan Collaunt Associates, Inc.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the results of a study conducted jointly by Temple University's Department of Criminal Justice and Allan Collaunt Associates, Inc. at the request of a group of Philadelphia juvenile justice policy makers. Its overall aim is to facilitate the development of a system for creating, assembling and making available in a timely manner information that satisfies the goals and needs of juvenile justice decision makers. This study constitutes an interim step in this system's development. Importantly, it addresses specifically ways to share information across agency boundaries.

1.1 Project Objectives

In 1990, the Juvenile Justice Operations Coordination Group, then called the Juvenile Justice Policy Group, issued a mandate to Jesse Williams, Deputy Director of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services, Department of Human Services, to develop an automated information system that would permit timely access to policy relevant information. Moreover, since it was recognized that the agencies of the juvenile justice system are interdependent with respect to decisions made about individual cases, and that policy changes in one agency can affect other agencies, it was seen as desirable that the information system provide for information sharing across agencies and analyses of data from different agencies.

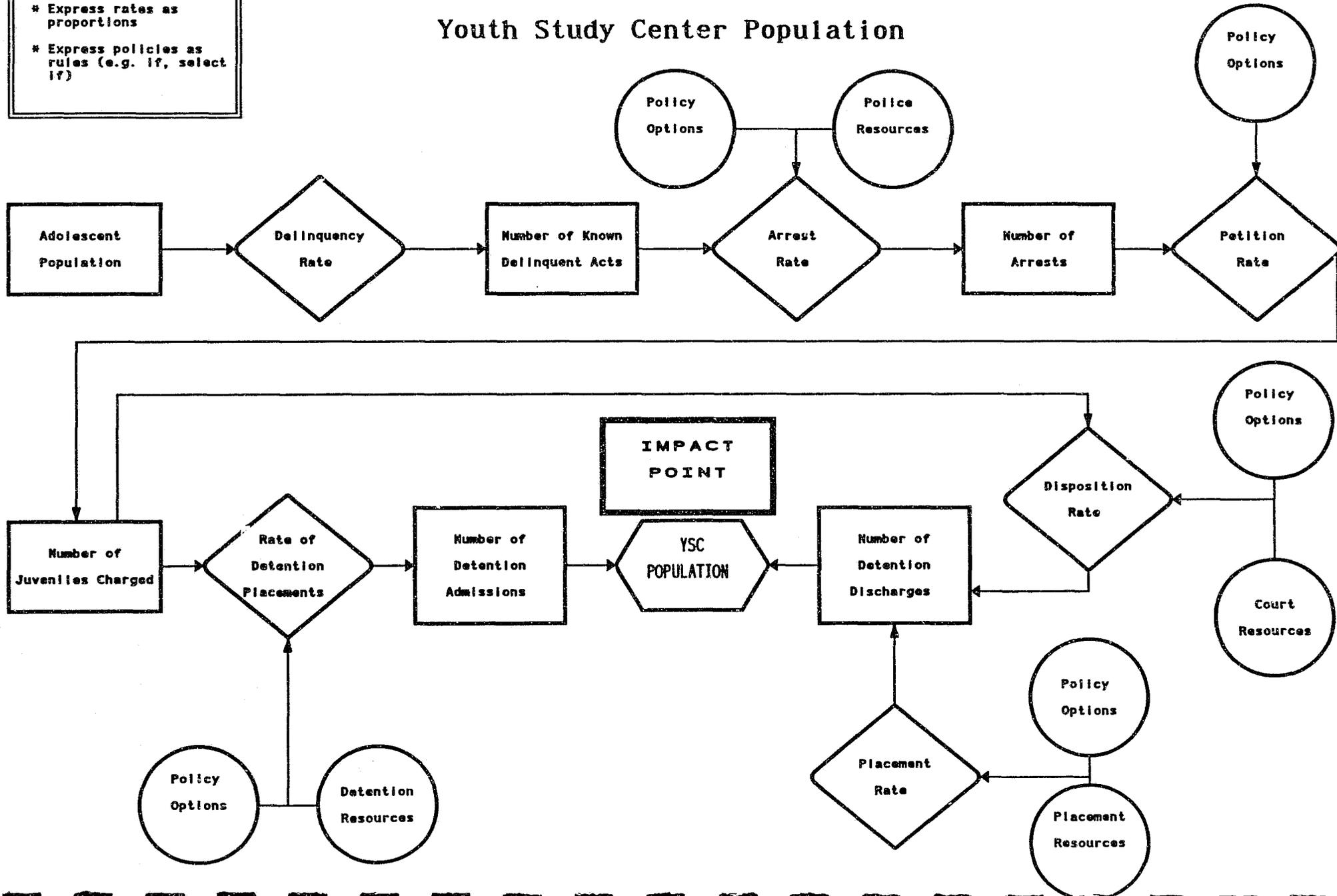
Initiation of this effort stemmed from a formal agreement among the agencies of the juvenile justice system in response to recent (Castille) and earlier (Santiago) litigation regarding overcrowding and conditions of the Youth Study Center (YSC). Because the YSC does not control its own intake and discharge, it was necessary that population control efforts involve the other agencies.

Figure 1 illustrates the dynamics of the Youth Study Center from a systems perspective, focusing only on the number of cases being processed through the courts. The number of juveniles arrested is determined by interactions among actual delinquency rates, police policy (e.g. the change from centralized to decentralized, community policing), and police resources (e.g. the number of police officers available to respond to calls). Next, charging decisions produce a charging rate (number of cases charged relative to number of arrests). These decisions, too, are affected by policies that include the option of diverting some cases to the Youth Aid Panel program. Charging rates then produce a number of cases

Figure 1

Systems Dynamics of Youth Study Center Population

- * Express items in boxes as numbers
- * Express resources as numbers
- * Express rates as proportions
- * Express policies as rules (e.g. if, select if)



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charged. These cases are then handled by the Court Intake Unit, which, by means of applying policies pertaining to detention placement, decide which cases are to be placed at the Youth Study Center (approval of this decision by the Family Court Master or a Judge is necessary within a fixed period of time), producing a detention rate (number of cases detained relative to the number of cases charged). This detention rate produces the number of cases forwarded to the YSC for detention.

Once placed in the YSC, removal is determined by both a disposition (judicial) decision and administrative actions to move the youth to another location, either in a juvenile program or back home. As with Court Intake Unit decisions, dispositions are affected by the number of youths charged with delinquent offenses. Since the number of youths who have disposition hearings is likely to be the same as the number of youths charged, the disposition rate should be near or at 100%. Consequently, it would appear that, given consistency in court resources (i.e. the number of judges available to hear cases), the number of youths charged is more critical as a cause of shifts in the YSC than the number of cases disposed.

An additional factor determining discharges from the YSC is the availability of placements for those juveniles committed by a judge. If available places exist in the programs to which youths are committed, then youths can be discharged from the Youth Study Center in a reasonable period of time.

Sparrow,¹ in an article on information systems in policing, observes the following:

Organizational strategy no longer can be separated from information technology strategy, for the organizational effects of information systems no longer are limited to efficiency gains. In information-intensive business (for example, the provision of medical services of insurance), information systems can make or break an executive's strategy and thus help or hinder the process of change.

It is our view that the policy issues that drove initiation of this project cannot be separated from the design of new information systems. Although the design recommendations we make serve a variety of needs, the technical solutions proposed must be relevant to the control of the Youth Study Center population.

This brief analysis focuses on numbers of youths. A similar analysis can be done on the time it takes to process cases at each of these stages, but the point would be the same: the population of the Youth Study Center is determined by interactions among decisions, policies and resources of each agency of the juvenile justice system. It should come as no surprise then that this project began with the assumption that the information system under discussion would make possible policy-relevant analyses that cut across agency boundaries.

¹M.K. Sparrow (1993) "Information Systems and Development of Policing." Perspectives on Policing, No. 16. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.

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Mr. Williams began the process of exploring information system development in 1990 by assembling a group of representatives from the public agencies that make up the juvenile justice system. Monthly meetings over a period of 10 months revealed a general interest in developing a new information system, but a lack of funding for conducting even a needs assessment served to dampen interests. Late in 1991, an opportunity to obtain a needs assessment at no cost emerged. Rutgers University and the National Center for Juvenile Justice had obtained a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to develop a model juvenile justice information system. Philadelphia became the pilot site for development of the Rutgers/NCJJ data collection instruments, and in return received a needs assessment. This preliminary assessment was superficial and frequently off the mark, but it served as the basis for further planning. The Rutgers research team carefully revised its report based on feedback from the MIS Work Group in order that it reflect accurately the perceptions of system participants.

In October of 1992, the MIS Work Group expressed the following goals for development of an information system:

Division of Juvenile Justice Services

- Enhance the level and quality of services which may be provided to clients. As inefficiencies are eliminated, workers may assign more time to developing and monitoring individualized service plans;
- Provide quicker access to information regarding vacancies in residential and non-residential programs which will reduce the length of time which juveniles must spend waiting to receive appropriate and court-mandated services;
- Improve the Planning capabilities of each department, thereby allowing for a more targeted approach to each client;
- Reduce the need for crisis management which so often distorts the routine operations of juvenile justice agencies, resulting in ineffective services to the clients;
- Provide accurate data to the agencies of the system, reducing the need for estimates and guesswork which may lead to ineffective decision-making regarding client services.

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Defenders Association

- Produce a significant financial savings within the system;
- Develop significant data comparing the effectiveness of residential placement versus home placement;
- Develop better and more accurate feedback which may be useful in presentations to judges;

Department of Human Services

- Assist in the automation of CBES billing
- Facilitate the client tracking system
- Allow for the routine filing of parental support forms
- Provide central resource tracking, especially the State-mandated information of the CY-28 form.

Juvenile Aid Division

- Assist in their departmental and division-level planning
- Improve access to information to assist in their investigations
- Expedite the processing of juveniles
- Assist in projecting staff levels and resource allocation
- Identify significant trends in juvenile arrests
- Assist in the development of plans to prevent delinquency

District Attorney

- Include the photo number of offenders to assist in accurate record keeping
- Provide accurate custody history and current status information

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- Maintain information on restitution and payment histories
- Provide rearrest notices to probation officers
- Note the name and office phone number of the current probation officers for juveniles
- Provide data which will allow various types of placement options to be compared

Department of Public Welfare

- Interface with DPW's system for the other 66 counties
- Provide accurate demographic profiles of clients in the system
- Provide information about the location of juvenile referrals so that programs may be targeted in specific problem areas
- Provide information about delinquent clients who may have previous contacts in the dependency system, information which may assist in developing risk assessments for potential delinquents

Family Court

- Enhance their ability to track committed youths
- Provide feedback as to the success of various treatment modalities
- Increase coordination between juvenile justice agencies
- Alert probation officers as to the availability of vacancies in programs in a more expeditious manner

Additionally, the MIS Work Group stated its concern that the system protect the confidentiality of client records, allow for the expungement of juvenile files, and provide follow-up on discharged juveniles to determine whether or not they return to the system.

In 1992, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency agreed to fund the development of a design of an integrated information system for Philadelphia's juvenile justice system. The contract was awarded to Dr. Philip W. Harris of Temple University's Department of Criminal Justice. A subcontract was secured with Allan Collaunt

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Associates, Inc. (ACA), an information systems design corporation, to provide technical support to the project.

Our aims were to:

1. Specify the information needs of key actors at every decision point in the system
2. Assess current information systems within each agency, including automated and manual systems
3. Facilitate development of a clear vision of an information system that will meet individual agency information needs as well as provide for inter-agency information sharing
4. Develop an understanding of constraints on information sharing
5. Develop recommendations regarding a structure for integrating existing and future automated information systems
6. Develop recommendations regarding the management and control of mechanisms that are designed to link agency-level information systems

1.2 Structure of Project

Temple was responsible for developing information regarding information needs, case processing, key decisions, existing information systems, images of a future information system, and recommendations pertaining to information system enhancements. ACA provided technical advice to the data collection effort, development of a method for integrating different agency information systems, and separate analyses of interview and record data. Both Temple and ACA were responsible for formulating recommendations regarding an integrated information system.

In addition, Temple and ACA met monthly throughout the project with an MIS Work Group. Regular participants in this group's meetings included:

Jesse Williams	Division of Juvenile Justice Services, DHS
Jim Anthony	Division of Juvenile Justice Services, DHS
Jim Boyle	Juvenile Aid Division, Police Department

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John Buggy	Juvenile Court Probation
John Delaney	DA's Family Court Unit
Len Hacking	Court Administrator's Office
Jack McCann	Family Court
Daljit Ranajee	Department of Human Services
Jim Randolph	Division of Juvenile Justice Services, DHS
David Rosen	Defenders Association

1.3 Methods

In order to satisfy the objectives of the Project, the process of information finding, definition of requirements, and development of recommendations was not limited in scope to only those solutions that appeared to be feasible, "comfortable," and economical within the framework of the existing systems and operations. It would have been a mistake to discard certain known requirements as "utopian" or to predetermine certain results of the interviews by advising the interviewee in advance as to "taboo" subjects and/or issues labeled as "not worth discussing."

By measuring the success of the Project through the ability of its recommendations to deliver benefits to the consumer population serviced by the System, the Project team ensured that interests of individual participants were treated secondary to the interests and requirements of the System as a whole. Additionally, the Project addressed the needs "generic" in nature (affecting the System as an administrative and management structure), as well as the needs unique to individual participants.

Recognizing the requirement of compatibility between the goals of the System and the objectives of its individual participants and their operating units and personnel, as well as the associated third party jurisdictions (School Board, the Commonwealth, etc.) and organizations (e.g. providers), the project team conducted the interviews and other data gathering activities using the approach of "balanced pyramid," a simplified version of which is known as a "management triangle." Under the concept of the "balanced pyramid," the process of interviewing on each of its phases encompasses two adjacent levels of the pyramid, with the general downward motion from the top to the foundation. Thus, the first phase addressed the needs and perceptions of the officials representing the interests of the System as a whole.

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The second phase of interviewing addressed the identified needs of the System and the needs and perceptions of the management of individual offices and organizations, balanced against the previously recognized objectives of the System. Finally, the third phase of interviewing involved operational (unit) management and designated operating personnel, with the subsequent balancing of their formalized needs.

Consistent with the approach and methodology detailed above, the process of interviewing (data gathering) began with an orientation by the Temple interviewer, followed by the interviews with the persons listed in Appendix A. Successive meetings were held with the management of the participating agencies. The results were summarized and analyzed with probation and Youth Study Center personnel, subsequent to which another series of interviews took place, involving supervisory personnel in these two agencies, and designated operational personnel.

Recognizing the fact that, in the past, the staff of individual offices and organizations participated in numerous studies and environment evaluations, the project team attempted to limit, to a reasonable minimum, its direct exposure to the personnel of these offices and organizations, thereby reducing as much as possible disruptions to routine daily operations that would have been caused by interviews and avoiding the infamous "Oh, please! Not again"! from those personnel who have been "questioned" on the same subject more than one time by more than one consultant.

The success of the data gathering phase can be attributed to the following major factors:

- Commitment by the representatives of the System and its MIS Work Group to the Project.
- Adjustments made to the "standard" process of interviewing by the members of the project team, that manifested themselves in the emphasis on:
 - ◆ thorough analysis of the applicable existing documentation; extensive analysis of interim findings between each two adjacent cycles of the face-to-face interviews;
 - ◆ restructuring of the agenda of most of the interviews with concentration on planning for improvement rather than on the reevaluation of past problems;
 - ◆ on-going participation and input by the members of the MIS Work Group.
- Open-mindedness and candor of the interviewees.
- Willing and creative cooperation of individual participating offices and organizations.

1.4 INFORMATION GATHERING TECHNIQUES

In order to satisfy the requirements of completeness, trustworthiness, and ease of interpretation of the gathered information, the project team focused on the following major human factors and elements:

- ◆ **Administrative Personnel** - to recognize needs and perceptions of the decision and policy makers.
- ◆ **Service Management Personnel** - to recognize needs and perceptions of those who are ultimately responsible for the planning and monitoring of the delivery of services to the consumer population or for its legal representation.
- ◆ **Direct Service Staff** - to recognize needs and perceptions of those who interface (or should interface) with application systems on an ongoing basis.
- ◆ **MIS Staff** - to recognize needs and perceptions of those whose responsibility it is to support the end user community within the framework (fiscal, organizational, and operational) defined by the administrative personnel.
- ◆ **Other Participants** - to understand the environment of data origination, data interchange, responsibilities to providers, County, Commonwealth, etc.

It must be noted that one and the same individual may represent the opinion of more than one of the human element classifications, which is given proper consideration at the time of the tabulation of the results of the data gathering phase. The association of an individual interviewee with one or more of the aforementioned groups was analyzed based on the criteria provided by Temple University.

Interviews were conducted by the Temple staff beginning in October 1992 through August 1993. Within the Youth Study Center and the Probation Department, focus groups, rather than individual interviews were used to collect data from line staff. A list of those persons interviewed can be found in Appendix A.

1.4 Summary of Report

This report summarizes our analysis of data pertaining to information needs and interagency sharing of information and provides recommendations for information system integration and individual agency system development. Additionally, we raise several policy issues that must be resolved in order to move forward in meeting the needs articulated by members of the various juvenile justice agencies.

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Principally, we found unevenness in the development of information systems across the participating juvenile justice agencies. Automation of information is increasingly common, but aside from DHS, where a process of information system development is underway, and Juvenile Court, where an automated case processing system has been in place since the early 1970's, we found that a number of PC-based systems had been developed to address very specific, narrowly-defined purposes. No coordination of information system development has been considered.

The Juvenile Court System is a real time, on-line case tracking system which captures information on a juvenile, the family and all petitions, both delinquent and dependent. This system resides on a mainframe computer which is maintained by the Court of Common Pleas. There is a link between this mainframe and the mainframe maintained by the City of Philadelphia, thus enabling the sharing of information between the Juvenile Court, the Department of Human Services, the Police Department and the Philadelphia Prisons. This system produces reports daily that are used by various actors in the juvenile justice system, and produces regular statistical reports that facilitate management of the Court.

Irrespective of this resource, at the level of interagency information sharing, needs are significant but no mechanism exists for their identification or for meeting them. Clearly there are legal and administrative constraints that will require exploration, but unless a forum is created for developing methods for information exchange, the extent to which these constraints impede access to information will not be known. Many decision-makers expressed the opinion that they operate without necessary information or with information that is of questionable reliability and validity.

Contained in this expressed desire for information is a **policy theme** that will require attention. It is a theme that reaches to the center of juvenile justice philosophy. *Both police and prosecutor personnel expressed the desire to have access to social, family and educational information on juveniles who are being processed prior to court involvement.* Their justification for access to this information is their respective role in screening out cases for diversionary responses or for recommending release of a juvenile to his or her home pending an adjudicatory hearing in juvenile court.

There are no simple solutions to developing a means for electronically sharing data across agency boundaries. The technical means are available, but administrative, legal and political obstacles are natural in an environment in which the players belong to different political entities, represent different branches of government, and have over time developed communication protocols that are central to the culture of this juvenile justice system. We found that there were two major dividing lines in this system. First, if we look at the system in terms of case processing, the clearest division is between DHS and the other agencies. The role of DHS is to develop and provide services to youths determined by the court to be in need of out-of-home placement. Except for the Youth Study Center, all of these services are purchased from private providers. The other agencies, can be distinguished in that they are involved in the decisions as to whether or

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not the juvenile is a delinquent and, if found to be a delinquent, what kind of response will be ordered by the court. The matching of youths to services is, then, done by a Court work group that includes the judge, probation staff, prosecutors, and defenders; while the provision and evaluation of services is done by DHS or the Commonwealth's Department of Public Welfare (DPW). An exception to this division of labor is the Disposition Planning Unit (DPU), a joint venture of the Family Court and DHS created to facilitate the efficient location of services for exceptional or difficult cases.

The second dividing line can be drawn between Family Court and the other agencies. First, of these agencies, only Family Court is a division of the Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District. Thus its ties to the City of Philadelphia are not as comprehensive as is the case with other juvenile justice agencies. Second, judges maintain a status in the social hierarchy of these agencies that is not easily matched. Typically, we are dealing with participants that are not of the same organizational or political status, thus making communication difficult. Third, the Juvenile Court Act gives the court control over all cases and clients of the juvenile justice system until a judge orders final discharge from the system. While other players in the system make important decisions regarding the fate of juvenile offenders, once the court has accepted a case, all of these other decisions are subject to the approval of the court. From the perspective of information flow and case responsibility, then, we have concluded that the court sits as a decision-making hub around which all other agencies revolve. This statement must be qualified, however, by the observation that the other agencies must develop their own policies for case processing and management, as well as manage themselves as organizations.

We have concluded that the juvenile justice system can best share information by means of a clearinghouse, a computer system that is linked to each participating agency and that controls access to information. Moreover, both for legal and political reasons, we recommend placement in and control over this clearinghouse by Family Court. We recommend development of an information system director and an oversight committee of policy makers who will support development of this system. This oversight committee must consist of representatives of each agency that participates in processing juvenile cases and each representative must have the authority to make policy with respect to case processing and information sharing.

At the level of intra-agency information system development, we have developed several recommendations, taking into account developmental steps currently underway. Primary among developmental needs are automated information systems for the DJJS/DHS, principally with regard to management of the Youth Study Center Population, and for Juvenile Probation. Currently, DJJS/DHS is supported by a small PC-based system designed to provide population reports. Juvenile Probation is fully manual. The scope of information used and the life-affecting nature of decisions made by these two agencies cannot be overstated. We recommend that both agencies hire consultants to construct the software and facilitate purchase of hardware for these systems.

2. DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT SYSTEM: ROLES, MAJOR DECISIONS AND CASE PROCESSING

Philadelphia's juvenile justice system has no exact boundaries. Since youths under Family Court jurisdiction may be found in privately-operated placement facilities as far away as Colorado and Arizona, one could reasonably argue that the city's juvenile justice system extends to these locations. We have chosen, however, to include only Philadelphia's public agencies in our discussion of an information system. These are, the Family Court; Juvenile Probation; the Division of Juvenile Justice Services, Department of Human Services; the Juvenile Aid Division of the Philadelphia Police Department; the Family Court Unit of the District Attorney's Office; and the Family Court Division of the Defender's Association. The latter organization, the Defender's Association, is actually a private organization whose members function as public defenders. In the sections that follow, we briefly describe the major organizational units that make up the juvenile justice system and the key decisions associated with members of these units.

2.1 Major Organizational Units

2.1.1 Family Court

The Family Court is a division of the Court of Common Pleas (Judiciary Law, 42Pa.C.S.A. Sec 951(a)). Within the Juvenile Branch of the Family Court are several administrative units, the Juvenile Probation Department, Dependent Court and the Delinquent Court.

2.1.2 Juvenile Court

The Delinquent Court is responsible for detention, pretrial, certification, adjudication, disposition, and review hearings. Additionally, JC judges are responsible for overseeing and reviewing dispositions they impose, probation violation hearings, modifications of their disposition orders, and final discharges of cases.

2.1.3 Juvenile Probation

Juvenile Probation (JP) is a service unit of the Juvenile Branch. Its roles are to provide judges with information necessary to their decisions and to carry out the orders of the court. During the pre-disposition phases, probation develops client and family information in the form of a Social Inquiry that serves as the basis for disposition planning. The Dispositional Planning Unit (DFPU) is administered jointly with DJJS and locates services for hard-to-place youths.

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The Court Intake Unit (Intake), a unit of the Juvenile Probation Department, is responsible for the initial detention decision and for managing initial case processing. The Intake Unit also authorizes and monitors movement of juveniles from the Youth Study Center to external placements.

2.1.4 Division of Juvenile Justice Services

The Division of Juvenile Justice Services (DJJS) is a primary unit of the City's Department of Human Services. Formed in 1989, DJJS is responsible for all city contracts with private providers that serve delinquent youths, for monitoring the quality of those services, and for initiating the development of additional services. Additionally, DJJS administers the Youth Study Center (secure detention) and Community Based Detention Services.

2.1.5 Youth Study Center

The Youth Study Center is a secure detention facility designed to hold juveniles who are awaiting court processing or placement in another facility and who are judged to be a danger to themselves or others, or who have a record of absconding. Typically, pre-disposition cases are held for 12 to 14 days. The center provides educational, recreational and social services.

2.1.6 Community Based Detention Services

Some youths whose cases are being processed by the Family Court are judged to not be in need of secure care but a judgment is made that out-of-home placement is required. These youths are placed in nonsecure residential facilities pending the outcome of their cases. Community Based Detention Services, a unit of DJJS, manages these programs through contracts with private providers.

2.1.7 Police: Juvenile Aid Division

The police are the first representatives of the juvenile justice system. Their decisions are most critical to the processing of cases, since if they decide to not proceed, it is unlikely that any of the other decision makers in the system will have access to the case. They are, then, the primary case initiators of the system. The Juvenile Aid Division (JAD) of the police department is a unit located in Operations Command. It is comprised of an investigative unit, a sex crimes unit, and a preventive patrol unit. Recently, the investigative unit was decentralized to the district level and JAD officers now report to their respective local commander.

As is implied by its name, investigative unit officers investigate complaints involving juveniles and take into custody youths apprehended by uniformed police. The officer will investigate allegations and prepare paperwork pertaining to the instant offense,

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determine the nature of the offense, and conduct an identification, including, in felony cases, fingerprinting and photographing.

The Sex Crimes Unit investigates complaints involving juveniles either as victims or offenders. The unit's purpose is to improve the quality of handling of sensitive cases and to coordinate their investigations with the district attorney's office in order that a sound case can be developed. In many situations, the Sex Crimes Unit must decide whether or not a juvenile victim can be safely released to his or her home.

2.1.8 District Attorney: Family Court Unit

The Family Court Unit of the District Attorney's Office is headed by a Deputy District Attorney. This unit is responsible for charging juveniles with delinquent offenses, prosecuting delinquency cases and cases certified to the adult system.

2.1.9 Defender Association: Family Court Division

The Defender Association is a private, non-profit organization that provides counsel to indigent defendants. Its Family Court Division represents juveniles charged with delinquent offenses. The Defender Association is appointed by the Family Court to provide counsel to all juveniles except in cases where there is conflict between co-defendants or where private counsel is secured.

The Social Services Department of the Defender Association will become involved in juvenile cases in which psychological problems are apparent, drug involvement is likely, or the youth is involved in a sex offense. This department will conduct a social investigation and in some cases will prepare a plan designed to meet the needs of the youth. This plan is presented to the judge at the point of disposition.

2.2 Key Decision Points and How Cases are Processed

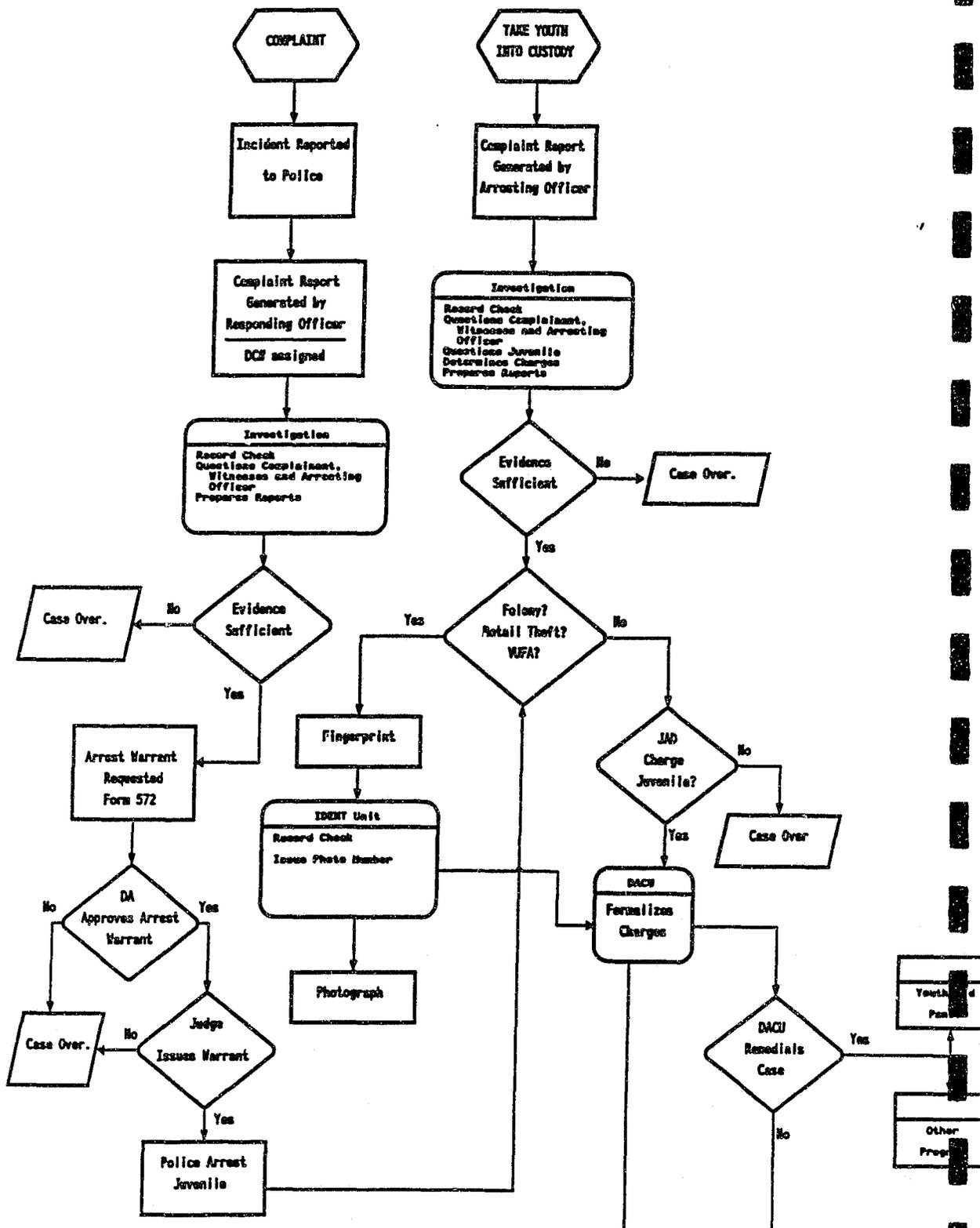
Case processing consists primarily of information collection, reporting, and decision making. We are particularly interested in decision making, since the utilization of information should drive both data collection and reporting.

Figures 2a, 2b and 2c are flow charts illustrating the stages of case processing in the juvenile justice system. These flow charts reflect the complexity of the system and the ways in which different decision makers interact around decision points.

SECTION 2. DESCRIPTION of CURRENT SYSTEM

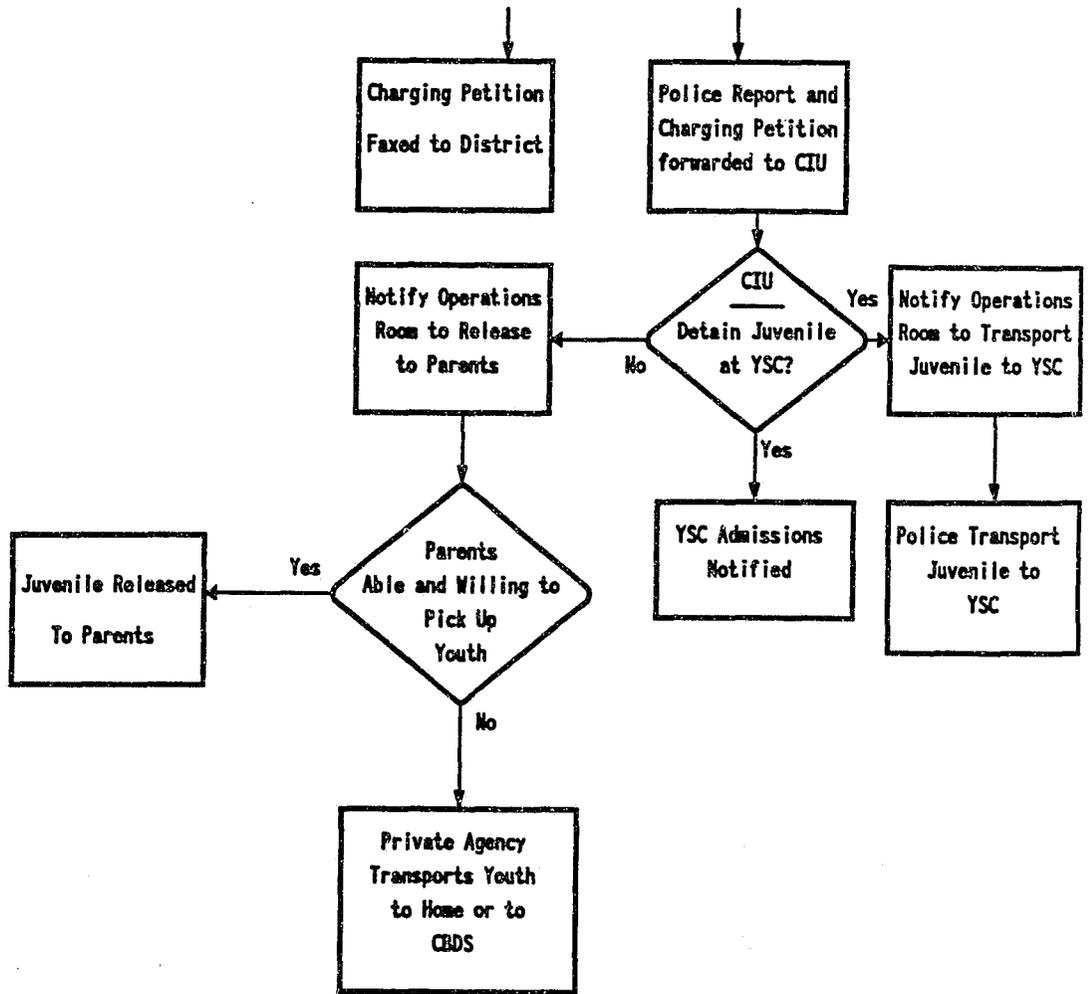
Figure 2a

POLICE MODULE



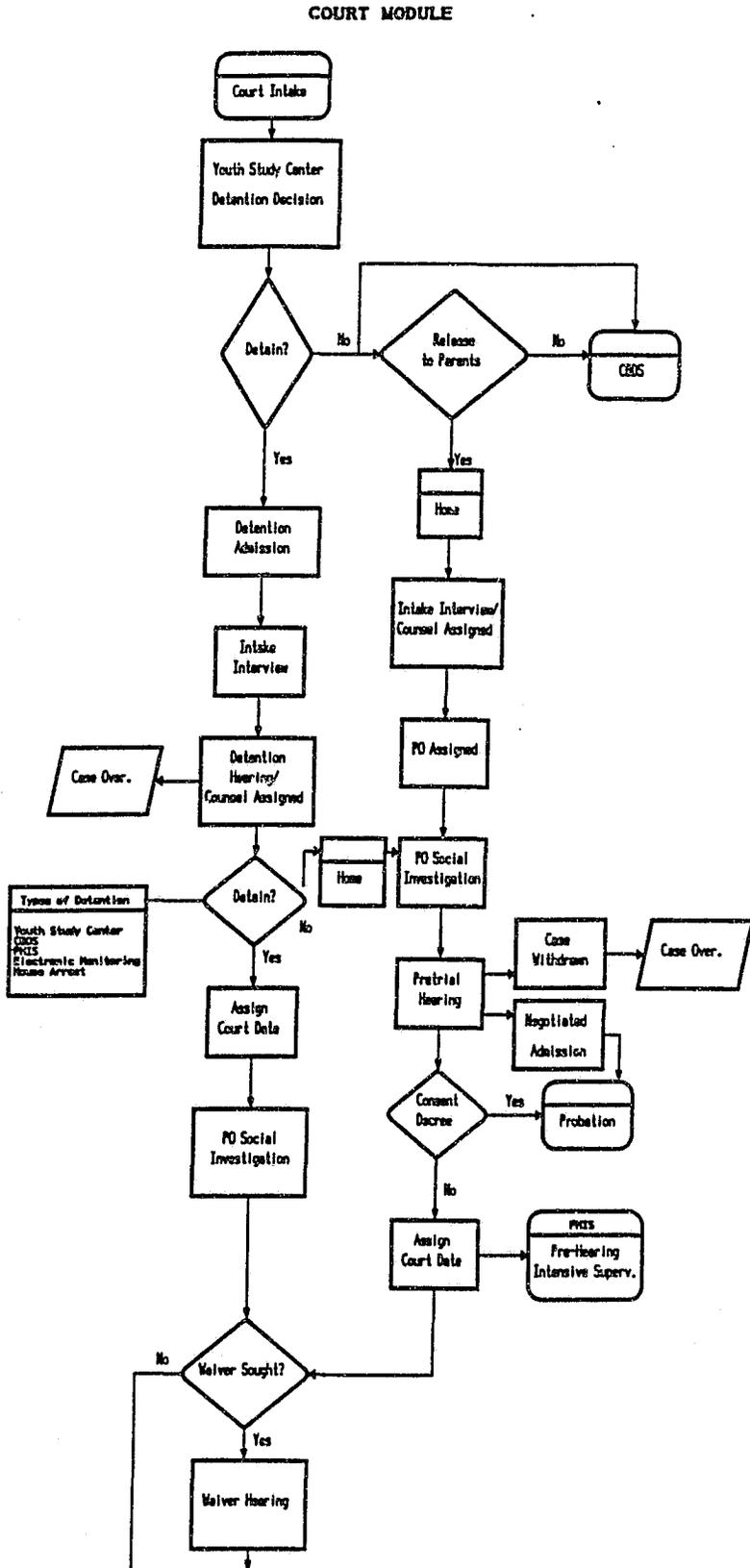
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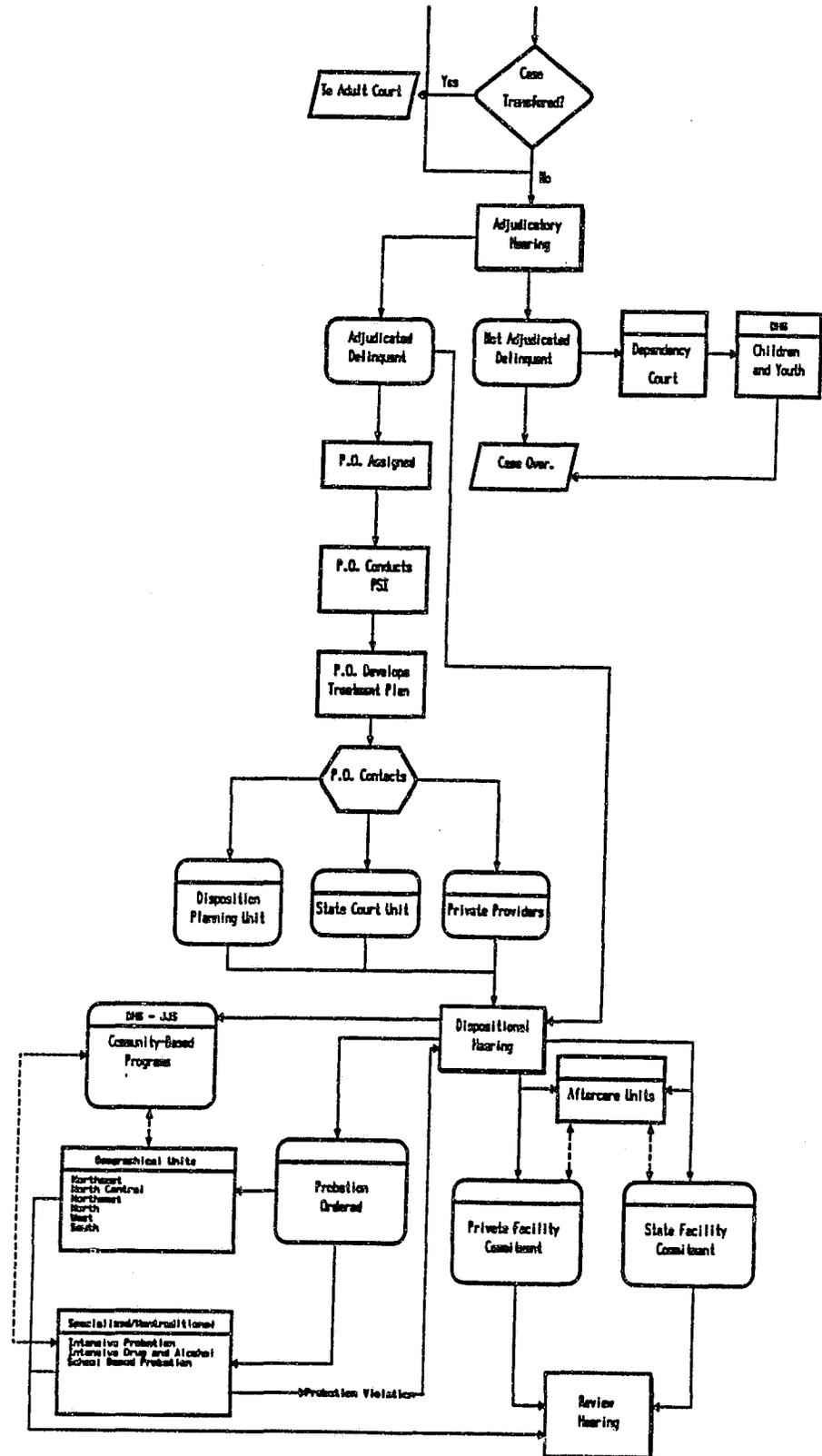
SECTION 2. DESCRIPTION of CURRENT SYSTEM

Figure 2b



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Figure 2b continued



SECTION 2. DESCRIPTION of CURRENT SYSTEM

Figure 2c

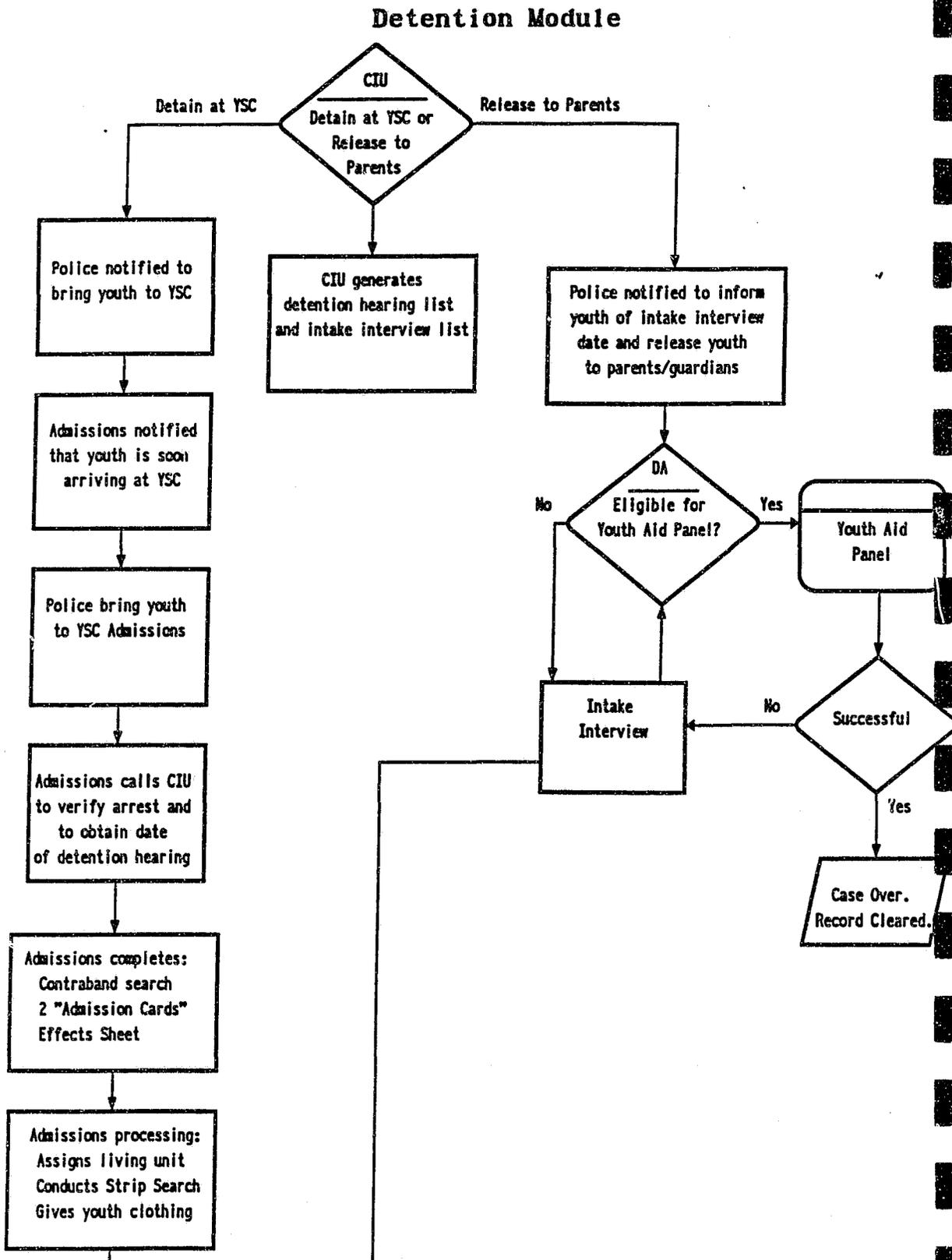
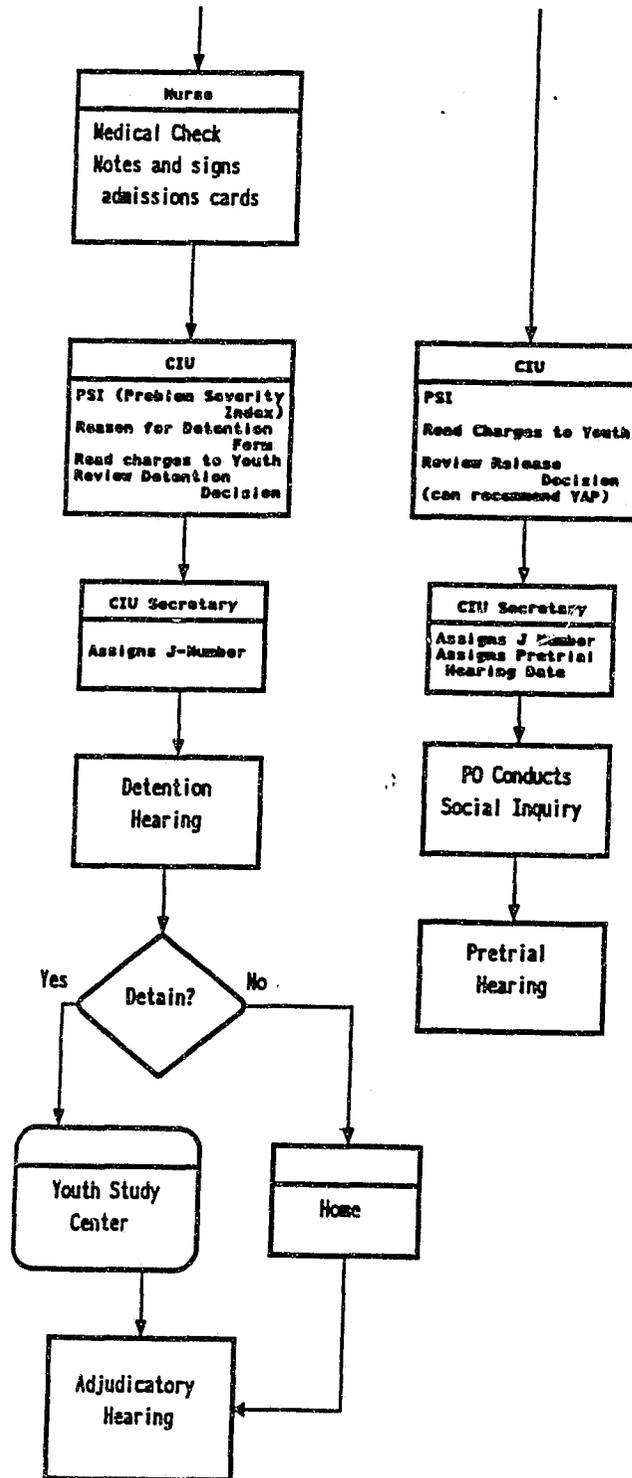


Figure 2c continued



SECTION 2. DESCRIPTION of CURRENT SYSTEM

2.2.1 TAKE INTO CUSTODY -- REMEDIAL ACTION -- ARREST -- RECOMMEND CHARGE

Looking at a case sequentially, we find that the police are the first actors who make case decisions. They decide whether or not to take a youth into custody, whether or not to arrest the youth, whether or not remedial action is called for, and what charges are to be recommended to the DA. Decisions to arrest and to recommend specific charges are made with anticipation of the likely response of the DA and the judge to the facts of the case. The decision maker's emphasis at this stage is on the instant offense.

2.2.2 REMEDIATION -- CHARGING

The DA's Charging Unit next decides whether or not to petition the case to court, what the charges are justified by the evidence, whether or not a remedial action is called for, and whether to recommend secure detention. Here too, the instant offense is critical. Offense histories, too, are also likely to affect decisions of seriousness.

2.2.3 DETENTION

Decisions to place youths in secure and non-secure detention involve a number of agencies. The Court Intake Unit (Intake) is responsible for the initial detention decision, but keeping a youth in secure detention requires a judicial decision, made by a Master in Philadelphia. Intake also makes referrals on possible diversion cases, decides on eligibility for a public defender, and controls movement to and from the Youth Study Center.

The administration of the Youth Study Center (YSC) monitors the YSC population in order to develop responses to situations in which the population exceeds capacity. Additionally, the administration monitors incident reports, investigates escape and attempted escapes, suicides and attempted suicides, and allegations of abuse. The YSC administration also attempts to influence the Court's judgment as to a reduction in security for individual cases.

Staff of the YSC are responsible for informing the probation department about bench warrant admissions, informing the court regarding the behavior of the youth while in detention, and to control access to the youth. Admission staff inform probation regarding the admission of bench warrant cases, decide which residential unit is appropriate for a given youth, and control transportation to and from the Center. Child Care staff, in addition to providing direct services to the youth in the unit, inform the court through Resident Adjustment Summaries about the behavior of each youth in the Center.

Social Work staff provide professional services to the Center, including service plans, referrals to drug/alcohol services, medical services, and mental health services, and keep the probation officer informed of the status of a case. The Social Work staff also maintain histories of youths placed in detention over time.

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CBDS locates non-secure detention placements for youths during the pretrial stage. CBDS staff are responsible for securing the placement, transporting the youth to and from court and other services, and monitoring the quality of care provided by the placement agency.

2.2.4 REMEDIATION -- CERTIFICATION -- PLEA BARGAINING -- INFORMAL ADJUSTMENT -- CONSENT DECREE -- ADJUDICATION -- DISPOSITION -- REVIEW OF COMMITMENT -- REVOCATION OF PROBATION

The District Attorney's Family Court Unit then must act on the case, keeping in mind that his or her primary goal is to serve the interest of the general public. Decisions continue to be made with respect to remediation, but now actions that involve the court and defense counsel are paramount. Decisions are made regarding certification motions, whether or not to support an informal adjustment or consent decree, plea bargaining, arguments and evidence to use at adjudication, which witnesses to subpoena, and recommendations for disposition. At later points in time, the DA may become involved in supporting or opposing changes to the disposition order or in taking a position on revocation of probation.

The role of defense counsel is to protect the interests of his or her client. It is the defender's responsibility to present information and arguments that will influence the court's response to the case, at each of the decision points mentioned in the previous paragraph, but in a way deemed favorable to the defendant.

From the perspective of case processing, the judge is the hub of the system at the case level. Judges are responsible for making the following decisions: detention, appointment of counsel, continuation of a case, adjudication, disposition, placement, certification, change of placement or case status, revocation of probation, and discharge from supervision. The centrality of these decisions and the role that the judge plays in making them are integral to the design of an integrated information system. The mission of the juvenile justice system and the role of the judge are legally and structurally joined.

2.2.5 CASE PLANNING, DIRECT SERVICES TO THE JUVENILE AND CASE REVIEWS

Both the geographic and specialized units of the probation department are responsible for planning for cases on the basis of court orders. Probation officers are also responsible for making recommendations to the court regarding changes of status, including revocation of probation and discharge, as well as providing the court with case review information on a regular basis.

The DPU operates as a special service to the court and to probation. It is responsible for locating placements and services for hard-to-place youths. A primary

SECTION 2. DESCRIPTION of CURRENT SYSTEM

resource to this unit is PLANET, an automated system of information on placements in the private sector managed by the Pennsylvania Council of Children's Services. Because of inadequacies in the PLANET system, DPU workers tend to use telephone contacts to obtain needed information. DPU workers also arrange for transportation for the cases they handle.

Plans for the DPU include development of a client specific planning function. Client specific planning is a method for creating individualized intensive plans for youths that enable the court to choose community services when institutionalization might otherwise be necessary.

The CRIP unit provides case management services to youths committed to residential placements. CRIP officers collaborate with facility staff in developing service plans. Additionally, these officers provide the court with written progress/status reports at the time of review hearings and make recommendations to the court regarding discharge from placement.

2.3 Conclusion

Each of the agencies and actors that make up the case processing system of the juvenile court affect the flow of cases as well as the outcomes reflected at the end of the process. At some decision points, a single actor controls the decision. At other points, different actors interact to produce a decision, following procedures that allow different interests and goals to compete. In the latter instances, it is typically the judge that is the final authority.

Clearly, in order for these decisions to be made rationally, information critical to decision goals needs to be present at the time that the decision is made. The presence of different actors representing different constituents may allow points of view to compete, but without sufficient information, the outcome of the decision is likely to be misdirected. An information system's primary goal, then, is to supply decision makers with all of the information relevant to their goals and roles. As cases proceed, the kinds of information needed change, becoming increasingly complex as public safety and rehabilitation goals mix to shape perceptions of the information provided.

3. EXISTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND PLANS FOR CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT

In order to meet the demands of maintaining accurate information about the thousands and thousands of clients, offenses, families, programs, and services that interface with a typical major metropolitan juvenile justice system, all the participants have developed and operate some form of an information management system. With the exception of several computer-based case maintenance and tracking systems, the juvenile justice system in Philadelphia relies on a manual system of paper files and folders, developed over time to meet the immediate operational needs of the individual agencies, but which contribute little to the overall efficiency of the system, or support the larger managerial and planning needs of the individual agencies or the system as a whole.

This discussion of the state of the current management information systems operating in the Juvenile Justice System will focus on information needs that pertain to clients in general. Other information needs, such as employment records, physical plant maintenance, food service, etc., while important, are not included in this report. Rather, our objective is to focus attention on the needs of participants to efficiently manage the information on clients and services, to the ultimate benefit of those clients and their families.

Two major computerized systems and one manual system form the core of the information system as a whole: the Family Court Information System, FACTS (the Children and Youth Division System) and the manual J-file, which contain the family level information maintained by the Juvenile Probation Department.

Table 3a summarizes the entire set of information systems within the Juvenile Justice System; a full description of each system can be found in Appendix C

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Table 3a - 2: EXISTING JUVENILE JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

	YSC ADMISSIONS	YSC CHILD CARE	YSC SOCIAL WORK	CBDS	DPU	DHS	DHS
NAME OF SYSTEM						FACTS	PHILCLIFF
INFORMATION STORAGE	Manual system of cards and forms; PC system for stats	Manual system of cards and logs	Manual system of client files	Manual system of client files and logs	Manual system of client files	Mainframe	Mainframe
AUTOMATED: CAPACITY # OF RECORDS # OF DATA ENTRY STAFF DIRECT ACCESS IDENTIFIER CODE CASE/DEFENDANT FILE	PC 640K 5059 (6/13/93) One One staff Sequential # Case					IBM 3081 320 Mb 1.9 million 20 Security level Auto PIN Client	Being replaced by FACTS
MANUAL: # OF RECORDS # DATA ENTRY STAFF DIRECT ACCESS IDENTIFIER CODE CASE/DEFENDANT FILE	16,000 Staff Staff Name Case	16,000 Staff Staff Name Case	Unknown Staff Staff Name Client	19,161 (4/21/93) Staff Staff Name; CBDS # Client			
ACCESS TO OTHER SYSTEMS	Statistician has access to Family Court Computer	None	None	Family Court Computer	Family Court Computer PLANet J-File	State Health System State Medical Assistance System Family Court Computer	

SECTION 3. EXISTING INFORMATION SYSTEM

Table 3a: EXISTING JUVENILE JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEMS

	FAMILY COURT	FAMILY COURT	COURT INTAKE UNIT	STATE INTENSIVE AFTERCARE	DA -- HABITUAL OFFENDER	DEFENDER ASSOC.	POLICE: JAD
NAME OF SYSTEM	Family Court Computer	J-File	Family Court Computer	Commitment Tracking Program	Habitual Offender Unit Data Base	Case Files	.Contact Report .Control # Journal .Juvenile Sequence# .Missing Persons .Habitual Offenders .Sex Crimes
INFORMATION STORAGE	Mainframe IBM 4381	File folder: family-based	Mainframe Manual File	PC In-house program	PC In-house program	Client based case files	Case Files Journals Personal Computer Mainframe
AUTOMATED: CAPACITY # OF RECORDS # OF DATA ENTRY STAFF DIRECT ACCESS IDENTIFIER CODE CASE/DEFENDANT FILE	Mainframe Unknown Court Liaison Officers Court staff;DHS DA;Def,JAD J-file; name Case,Juvenile	Juvenile	Mainframe Unknown One All staff J-File # Case	640K PC 1000 One System Manager J-File # Case	640K PC 1100 One Law Clerk Def's Last Name/ Case		Mainframe; PC Unknown Unknown Investigators Operations Room Supervisor
MANUAL: # OF RECORDS # OF DATA ENTRY STAFF DIRECT ACCESS IDENTIFIER CODE CASE/DEFENDANT FILE		100,000+ Stenographic Unit Need to Know				100,000 + Staff-several Staff only Petition # Case	Unknown Operations Room Supervisor Investigator Sequence Number Case
ACCESS TO OTHER SYSTEMS	FACTS	Information is placed in J-file from many sources	Family Court Computer J-File	Family Court Computer J-File	Family Court Computer J-File	Family Court Computer J-file	Family Court Computer

SECTION 3. EXISTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

3.1 Children and Youth Division - Department of Human Services

The Children and Youth Division of the Department of Human Services possesses the most advanced and sophisticated computerized information system of all the participants in the Juvenile Justice System. The Family and Child Tracking System (FACTS) is designed to replace the old PHILCLIF system, and provides an automated mechanism to track, store, and retrieve information about the children and families receiving services from the Children and Youth Division. Designed and programmed by Departmental MIS staff to support the operations of the children and youth services, the system is currently undergoing implementation in incremental stages. It resides on the City of Philadelphia's mainframe computer, and can be accessed by any designated terminal linked to FACTS through this mainframe.

The system consists of four subsystems. Subsystem 1 tracks data associated with the initial contact and Intake data through the completion of the investigation process and the generation of a CY48 form. It also provides a tickler system and statistics on activities related to this phase of the system. Subsystem 2 is the case management system and captures information related to service planning. Subsystem 3 is the placement subsystem, and contains information about providers, level of placement services, and MA eligibility. Still under development, subsystem 4 will address certain "independent" segments of the system, such as risk assessment, adoption, etc..

As with any competent computerized MIS, the FACTS system provides a number of on-line reports that reflect activity in all four modules, and which appear to be most relevant on an operational level. The CY-48 report is inputted directly into the system, and the report is printed out in a format suitable for submission to Childline. In addition, a report may be generated which indicates which investigations have surpassed the deadline for submission of the CY48. End users have the ability to search the database for possible clients using a variety of search parameters, such as name, case number, social security number, etc.. The placement system reports on placement histories, providers, and MA eligibility. Various miscellaneous reports include caseworker information, unit management, and system security.

FACTS currently has the processing and storage capacity to process approximately 1.9 million records comprising 15,000 families, 30,000 children and a total of 120,000 cases both open and closed. Information gets entered into the system via batch processing by the information processing room and record room staff of approximately 20.

Depending on their level of security, anyone in the Children and Youth Division has at least inquiry level access to the system. The main menu provides a number of inquiry functions, such as case inquiry, which allows workers to access current and historical case related data.

In addition to the ability to enter and maintain information related to intakes, cases and caseloads, and placements, FACTS also captures various management level data such as worker/personnel, which allows users to manage data on both social service staff and general DHS employees. Worker numbers, social security numbers, date of hire, and transfers/promotions can all be maintained using this module.

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Generally speaking, the FACTS system provides the Children and Youth Division with a very competent system for tracking intakes and investigations, generating associated reports, capturing and maintaining case related data, and providing operational level reports in these areas. Lacking in this application is any interface in support of the fiscal activities of the organization. For instance, there is no capability to enter and maintain information related to specific programs and the costs associated with those programs. Use of a contract file that maintains information about programs and the rates charged for those programs would allow for the tracking of the aggregate costs of providing specific services.

3.2 Family Court

Along with the Children and Youth Division of DHS, Family Court currently possesses a sophisticated and relatively advanced real time, on-line case tracking system within the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice system. Residing on the Court of Common Pleas' mainframe computer, the Juvenile Court system consists of a simple database of juvenile offenders, with the ability to cross-reference them by juvenile's name, alias name, mother's name, family number, juvenile number, petition number and District Complaint Number. Each case starts with the filing of a petition and continues with the posting of results for each court hearing until the final disposition of the case. Each file contains a history of their offenses, past and current petitions, and a brief description of their dispositions. The system functions very well in maintaining a calendar for the Family Court, providing on-line inquiry on the schedules of hearings by date and courtroom.

The system also provides several operational level reports. One such report uses the petition number to access a screen on the associated offender related to that particular petition only. The report contains basic demographic information such as name, date of birth, sex, race, school, etc., along with the most current information concerning the offense and hearing activity. Other reports include court lists, juvenile histories, witness subpoenas, room control summaries for scheduling purposes, alphabetic lists of juveniles scheduled for court, check-in lists for attorneys and witnesses, custody status sheets and notification lists for the such agencies as the Probation districts, District Attorney, Public Defender, Department of Human Services and the Board of Education. In addition to these daily reports, there are numerous activity reports, management reports and statistical reports which are run on a weekly, monthly quarterly and yearly basis, as well as reports produced in response to special requests. A semi-annual tape of dispositions is run for the state.

Access to the database for this system is available from a number of points throughout the juvenile justice system, and is protected by a system of security codes that are given to personnel that have had training in the use of the computer. The Court of Common Pleas mainframe is linked to the mainframe maintained by the City of Philadelphia, thus enabling the sharing of information between the Juvenile Court, the Department of Human Services, the Police Department and the Philadelphia Prisons. With the exception of the District Attorney's office, agencies outside of the Family Court may not enter data into the system. Consequently, the bulk of the information concerning the activities of the Family Court compiled by agencies that interact with the Court must transfer that information in a manual paper format. Current utilization of the computer

SECTION 3. EXISTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

system is below expectations, although utilization is increasing.

3.3 Juvenile Probation Department

Other than what has just been described, the "Family Court System" has no capacity to support either the operational or managerial needs of the Probation Department, the primary service division of the Family Court. Virtually all of the child and family related data beyond that related to the charging petition must be maintained on a manual system. The core record keeping mechanism in this manual system is the J-File, a file folder containing the pertinent information about a child's involvement with the Juvenile Court. The J-File number, which is assigned at the time of Intake, becomes the unique identifier which a child carries with him or her throughout the life of the child's involvement with the system. Each family receives its own J-File number and members of the same family are kept together in the same J-File folder. Each family member is assigned a unique extension of the J-File number.

Access to the J-File is very limited and highly restricted. Files are stored in the Records Room of the Family Court building, and is accessible only to authorized participants in the juvenile justice system. Files may be signed out by authorized court personnel, who carry them from courtroom to courtroom, or they can be viewed by other persons, authorized to have access, in the confines of the Legal Liaison Office. Access to information from the J-File by authorized persons external to the system may only be granted upon receipt of a signed release.

The J-File is kept in the Records Room until a period of 30 years of non-use has passed, after which the record is destroyed. As an example of how difficult it is to aggregate data within the J-File system, there exists no exact count of the number of files, even though it is estimated to be over 100,000.

Some of the more important units of the Juvenile Probation Department and their methods of handling the information flow are described as follows:

3.3.1 Intake

Within the Probation Department, the Intake unit is a major user of the Family Court Computer, as it both accesses and enters information about offenders, offenses, and the data associated with managing courtrooms and court time. It is at intake that a J-file number is first assigned to a client.

3.3.2 Ongoing Case Management

The burden of capturing and maintaining the tremendous information load associated with probation and placement of clients, opening and closing services, programs, court order compliance, home and school activity, etc., falls on a continuation of the existing manual system of file folders and reports. The Family Court System provides little support to the operations of the units that provide case management.

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3.3.3 Placement Tracking System

The Placement Tracking System of the Juvenile Probation Department enjoys a relatively high level of data processing benefits by virtue of a tracking program conceived and developed by in-house staff using a relational database software product called Clipper. The system tracks arrival dates, release dates, as well as transfers and commitments to the system. It also possesses the necessary logic to calculate the number of days in care, providing that the data can be entered in a timely fashion, which continues to be a nagging problem. A true count may be off by as much as 20% at any particular time. While this system provides the unit with some useful information on a purely operational level, it stands entirely alone in its processing capabilities and, consequently, provides no information of a strategic nature to the larger organization as a whole.

3.3.4 Disposition Planning Unit

This department is jointly operated by the Family Court and the Division of Juvenile Justice Services to prepare disposition reports for cases designated by probation staff as difficult to place. As such it requires a wide range of information, not only on the offenders and their history of prior court involvement, but also on the variety of available treatment programs upon which to base a disposition recommendation. Although the unit has access via computer with the PLANET system, a statewide database of private providers that includes data on space availability, it must rely on the information supplied by other participants through their manual systems or by means of direct telephone contact with programs.

3.4 Juvenile Justice Services

The Division of Juvenile Justice Services of the Department of Human Services is responsible for developing and securing residential, community, and in-home services for youth that have been adjudicated delinquent. Juvenile Justice Services also administers pre-trial detention services, and monitors the performance of agencies that contract for services to delinquent children.

The Division itself operates using a manual management information system, with statistical information on various programs that were assembled by hand delivered to the office. The two major organizations that operate under the supervision of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services, along with a brief discussion of their information processing strategies are as follows:

3.4.1 Youth Study Center

The YSC is the secure detention facility for the juvenile justice system in the city of Philadelphia. As such it provides room, board and clothing, as well as educational, social, medical, and psychological services to a constantly changing population of 250 adolescents, all within a very high security environment. Over time a very sophisticated, albeit manual, information management system has developed to assure that each child is accounted for, provided all services if and when necessary, and delivered to the proper courtroom on the proper day and time. The system is largely made up of an elaborate web of admission cards, check lists, activity lists, control sheets, log books, house lists, and release sheets, among others. These forms are

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eventually catalogued and filed, with certain cards and reports being used to develop aggregate data about the operations of the organization. To aid in their attempt to maintain accurate statistics on the population of the Center, a staff member has access to an IBM compatible 386 PC on which runs an internally developed Paradox database application. By gleaning information from the admission cards and entering them into the computer, the statistician is able to maintain a running count of the center population in addition to generating useful information such as population broken down by age, race, charge, length of stay, number of previous admissions, etc.

3.4.2 Community Based Detention Services

Since the Community Based Detention Services program provides much the same program as the Youth Study Center, except that it operates in a non-secure community-based setting, the informational needs and resulting system are very much alike. Desk logs, intake sheets, court orders, and rolodex cards form the basis of the information base used to manage this operation.

3.5 Defender's Association

The current management information system for the Defender's Association is a manual approach utilizing two sets of file folders: red files contain information on juveniles currently held in detention, and white files are for those clients who are released from detention. The department does have a link with a computer system, in that several terminals connected to the Family Court computer resides in the office, giving them rather limited client information on an inquiry basis only. Data are collected manually and kept in a manila folder that is passed around from worker to worker. Information on the nature and scope of reports or aggregate data used for operational or managerial analysis are currently not available.

3.6 District Attorney

Like so many of the participants in the juvenile justice system for the City of Philadelphia, the District Attorney's office utilizes a manual system for creating files and tracking clients, with an assist in some specialized areas from a home-grown database product that resides on a stand-alone PC. Manual files are kept on each case that comes into the office. Information on offenders that qualify for the habitual offenders unit will have data entered into a Q&A based automated database that currently contains about 1100 records. The data entered into this system must be gleaned from the hard files. No evidence exists that these records function to provide any strategic analysis to the DA's office or to the juvenile justice system in general.

3.7 Police: Juvenile Aid Division

For police activities that impact on the Juvenile Justice system, the JAD division operates a number of specific databases, maintained for the most part with a manual system of files and reports. Most if not all of the normal paperwork associated with processing a case is stored in manual folders and kept on file for a period of ten years. More specialized information, especially that pertaining to habitual offenders and offenders involved in sex crimes, is stored on automated systems for use within those specialized units. The missing persons unit is another division that

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enjoys the benefits of an automated system of data storage and retrieval, but like the other systems within the police department, is designed to serve a very specialized need within the department, and contributes little to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the juvenile justice system.

3.8 Plans for Future Development

Plans are already underway for several of the participants in the juvenile justice system to initiate new development, or expand upon existing automated management information systems. The Children and Youth Services Division is undertaking the expansion of the FACTS system to accommodate further processing of child welfare-related data to include risk assessments, and adoptions. The FACTS system is also to undergo further development in order to accommodate the information needs of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services, particularly with regard to child and service tracking for the Youth Study Center program.

Juvenile Probation has also expressed its desire to implement a more comprehensive case tracking system in order to assist probation officers in their daily decision making responsibilities, and to develop a comprehensive data base for use in managerial planning and policy making.

Family Court is scheduled to move its current automated information system from the current mainframe to the Family Court's own mainframe (an ES/9000, model 311), and create an automated file system to replace the J-file. Additionally, this system will incorporate a wide area network operated by the Court Administrator for First Judicial District. Priority will be given to domestic relations information, with delinquency court information to be added at a later date.

4. AUTOMATION and INTEGRATION ISSUES and PRINCIPLES

4.1 PURPOSES of AUTOMATION

Information systems generally serve three purposes:

1. Day-to-day operations, transactions and reports
2. Addressing semi-structured problems relating to management of resources and activities
3. Unstructured policy issues concerning the direction of the agency or system¹

From our interviews with juvenile justice system participants, we found many examples of where automation would benefit agencies with respect to day-to-day operations. For example, access to FACTS, the DHS information system, was seen as desirable by both the police and DA to support the decision to remedial a case. Day-to-day reporting requirements would also be improved by an automated system. The Youth Study Center, for example, must make available to its administrators, DJJS, and the Court Intake Unit daily population information, including location and planned movement. The Family Court System, in fact, demonstrates already the benefits of automation by providing automated petitions and daily court lists, subpoenas and notification lists.

Information systems also aggregate information in ways that enable managers to perform tasks associated with fiscal and personnel management, the monitoring of compliance with policy, and the monitoring of service activities in terms of service designs. Vacation and sick days, training and overtime are some of the personnel items that managers need to monitor in a way that is efficient and allows for timely planning. Probation service activities also need to be monitored both in terms of the cost of services and compliance with service standards.

Regarding policy information, the ongoing struggle to control the population of the Youth Study Center stands tall. After all, this was the problem that initiated the process that resulted in this project. Trends and patterns in data collected across cases and time permit analyses that can expose the reasons for unexpected changes in the YSC population. Moreover, trend analyses enable policy makers to predict short term needs for resources or for restructuring case processing procedures and policies. Recent increases in the number of arrests, for example, may be an anomaly or may be the beginning of a trend. Since the size of the 13-19 age group is again growing and is projected to grow for at least the next 15 years, trend analyses are critical to planning

4.2 IMPACT of AUTOMATION on ORGANIZATIONS

Automation is more than the mere computerization of existing information. It is the *production* of

¹Patricia M. Torbet (1991) Design Principles for Juvenile Court Information Systems. Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice. pp. 28-34.

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information. That is, data elements previously too complex to summarize manually become information readily available to the decision maker. Additionally, information can easily be aggregated and analyzed to produce new information about patterns and trends. This new information can be unsettling. *It forces rationality upon decisions that have been made based on hunches, clinical expertise, or consensus. It also makes decisions more visible, forcing accountability on decision makers that have enjoyed greater autonomy in earlier times.*

This new capacity means that information systems must be designed. We cannot merely automate manual filing systems. Those systems were designed to serve a particular technology. Computerization requires that every data element be assessed for its value to the agency and its potential use. After all, there is a cost attached to collecting, storing, managing and using each item of data. But in addition to cost is the need to consider the nature of information itself. It is our intent that the information that is collected and stored will be used. Such is not always the case with manual files. Additionally, the data that are stored will be queried and assembled in ways unlike the handling of manual data. Thus, *usage considerations must drive decisions about the nature of the data to be included in the system.*

Information serves particular purposes. Don and Michael Gottfredson have demonstrated that *rational decision making is best served if goals of decisions are specified and information relevant to those goals is made available to the decision maker.*² Information irrelevant to the goals of the decision merely introduce unnecessary and often distracting noise.

Although automation facilitates greater efficiency, it creates different types of work, new roles, and shifts in the distribution of power. Data entry, data management, data analysis, report production, information system management and information system policy making are roles that must be developed in an automated environment. Information systems must be managed, and those *persons who control information systems, particularly those with high levels of technical expertise, become more central to the business of an agency.* It is critical that their roles not be separated from the business of policy making.

Automation is no panacea. It does not by itself improve efficiency, decision making or policy making. First, it is not always the case that the most important information is contained in the automated information system. As computers spit out reports, there is a tendency to become dependent on the information they provide. For example, an automated system linked to the disposition decision may provide up-to-date, accurate information on bed space, *per diem* cost and target populations of several programs, but may not contain information on performance with different types of youths, AWOL rates, and staff turnover. These latter pieces of information may be very relevant to the disposition decision but may not be readily available. Thus *decisions may be driven by convenience rather than goals.*

Second, *the system may be designed in such a way that some items of information are emphasized*

²Donald M. Gottfredson and Michael R. Gottfredson (1988) Decision Making in Criminal Justice: Toward a Rational Exercise of Discretion. New York: Plenum Press.

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over others. If a case report produces fifteen items of information on offense behavior, but only two items on educational performance, and if the offense information is very complete and detailed, but the educational information is superficial, then it is likely that decisions based on these data will be more influenced by the offense information, irrespective of the purposes of the decisions.

4.3 PRINCIPLES of INFORMATION SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

A number of issues confront an organization when information systems are designed. In this chapter, we discuss four issues that were addressed by the MIS Work Group and the researchers. These were:

1. Mission of juvenile justice system: public safety, family preservation, rehabilitation.
2. Purposes of information system design: development of policy relevant information regarding caseloads and case processing.
3. Access to client information: confidentiality constraints and organizational boundaries.
4. Control of information system: An information system that permits the sharing of data across agency boundaries must be controlled in such a way that IS policies and procedures can be developed and implemented on an ongoing basis and that maintenance of the system is ensured.

4.3.1 Mission

Organizational purposes and IS purposes cannot be separated. We take the view, in fact, that an IS must support the strategy that an organization chooses to follow its mission. In the case of the juvenile justice system, the mission of the system and the missions of each participating agency need to be specified in order that development of an IS is consistent with and supportive of those missions.

Current decision making patterns and information systems suggest that front-end decisions -- arrest, charging, detention, certification -- are driven by instant and past offense behavior, and yet, most participants we spoke to place emphasis on family, school and neighborhood as areas of important information. It would appear from our interviews and group discussions that the mission of the juvenile justice system, in practice, has not been agreed to, in spite of the presence of The Juvenile Court Act, which emphasizes both rehabilitation and family preservation.

In the case of this project, the MIS Work Group was not the group of individuals to formulate a system-wide mission. First, it was too small and represented only a few of the views found in the system. Second, not all members of the group were policy makers. Some occupied support staff positions in their agencies that were relevant to information system development at a technical level. Etten and Petrone (1993) suggest that a mission-specification group should include school, medical, funding agency and legislative personnel, as well as parents. Clearly such a view must be considered carefully, and no doubt some readers of this document will perceive a risk in such an inclusive strategy. Nevertheless, the development of a mission statement is critical to the ongoing development and planning of an agency, and in this case a system of agencies.

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4.3.2 Purposes of IS Development

This project began as a response to a need felt by key policy makers of the juvenile justice system, namely the Juvenile Justice Policy Group. The juvenile justice system as a whole lacked the capacity to monitor case flows at several points in the system, understand changes in case flow, and predict changes in case flow. Resource demands, specifically on the Youth Study Center and institutional places of confinement, had not been anticipated, leading to overcrowding at the Youth Study Center and in State facilities, and backups in the flow of cases to State facilities. It was this need for policy relevant information that initiated the development of an information system.

Researchers who discussed this need with Jesse Williams and other policy makers underscored the need for integrating information across agency lines in order to develop an understanding of changes in case flow patterns. This matter was discussed in Chapter 1. It was this need for an information system that could produce analyses of case processing across the agencies of the juvenile justice system, then, that defines the mission of the project.

As has been pointed out in other literature, however, information systems should address needs at the operational, management and policy level (Torbet, 1991). The same data can meet all of these needs; it is merely a matter of how the data are stored and analyzed that determines what needs are met. In other words, the transformation of data into information determines the type of need that can be met. Operational needs include case processing transactions (charging, detention, notifying witnesses, adjudication, disposition, etc.), detailed case data (demographic, family, school, attorney name, etc.), and products (face sheets, summons, petitions, court orders, etc.) (Torbet, 1991).

Management purposes are served by analyzing these same case level data in terms of processing time, unit performance, costs and trends. This implies the need to aggregate case level data and ask questions of the data, such as "Has there been an increase or decrease in the number of cases eligible for secure detention?" "Are arrests rates changing?" "If so, in what ways?" As Torbet (1991) states, management questions are characterized by "How many....," "How much....," "How effective...?"³

A policy focus raises the level of information to a level where understanding is critical. Policy makers are interested in knowing why changes are taking place in the arrest rate or the use of secure detention, what would be the impact of increasing non-secure detention resources, what impact has community policing had on arrest rates, are there demographic changes taking place in Philadelphia that are likely to affect demands on system resources? Answers to these questions require statistical manipulation of case level data, and these data must be quantitative in structure.

³Torbet, p. 30.

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The latter of these purposes best fits the motivations of those individuals who initiated development of an information system. Meeting other needs at the same time, however, is desirable for two reasons: 1) those persons who would be responsible for producing policy-relevant information are more likely to support an IS if their needs are also being met, and 2) since other information needs exist, efficiency interests mandate simultaneous development of information processing capacities that use the same data.

4.3.3 Access to Information

Access to information produced and held by another agency is constrained by federal and state case law, federal and state statutory law and agency policy, but it is most common that access problems arise from a lack of familiarity, communication and trust among these agencies. In some cases, the cost of collecting, summarizing and reporting information is prohibitive, thus leading to refusals. These issues are summarized by Etten and Petrone (see Appendix C). In Philadelphia, we found that, except for Family Court, little effort had been made to change access practices. During meetings of the MIS Work Group, participants would occasionally "discover" information needs and make access arrangements on the spot. These discussions were rewarding for participants and added to the value of the project.

The literature on juvenile justice information systems suggests that the sharing of information across agency boundaries is desirable but rare.⁴ In Philadelphia, Judge Esther Sylvester, Administrative Judge of the Family Court, has made access to the Juvenile Court Information System a priority. Under her leadership, direct access has been provided to the police, the Police Department's Juvenile Aid Division and the Department of Human Services. No automated access to any other information system in Philadelphia's juvenile justice system, however, is possible.⁵

Recently, discussions have taken place among the Family Court, JJS and the School Board regarding access to an automated student profile. The plan is to provide the Court with direct access to these profiles. Action on agreements made is pending.

Four factors make the sharing of information by agencies of the juvenile justice system essential:

- 1) The goals of each agency overlap, thus implying the existence of common information needs.
- 2) The quality of service provided by any one agency is diminished by being denied access to information that can affect the quality of this service.

⁴Torbet, p. pp. 17-20; James A. Rapp, Ronald D. Stephens and Donna Clontz (1985) The Need to Know: Juvenile Record Sharing; SEARCH Group, Inc. (1988) Juvenile Records and Recordkeeping Systems. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

⁵Since the time that we began writing this report, limited access to FACTS has been provided to Family Court.

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- 3) Limiting interagency access to information often results in duplication of data collection, resulting in lost case processing time and fiscal resources.
- 4) The accuracy of data held by one agency is not easily verified unless access to these data is possible. Since errors in data are likely, the existence of multiple sources of data and ongoing data verification and evaluation can reduce error.

4.3.4 Control of Information System

Assuming that some degree of data integration is needed in order to conduct policy level analyses, the mechanism selected for integration must be controlled and managed. This is a very sensitive issue, due to the nature of the juvenile justice system, that served a major stumbling block for this project.

Soler and Shauffer have suggested the need for system-wide information systems for the purpose of assessing the needs of the juvenile and providing appropriate services.⁶ Moreover, such a system should be able to provide information on system effectiveness, cost of services, and the extent to which services meet minimal standards of care. This system should also inform the police and prosecutors about the results of cases in which they have been involved.

4.4 METHODS of ASSESSING IS QUALITY

Because consumer satisfaction is a poor means of assessing the quality of an information system, steps need to be taken at the front end of the design process to develop mechanisms for evaluating information system options. Rochleau recommends three methods for testing whether or not an information is sufficient to meet the needs that we have identified.⁷

- 4.4.1 Attach yourself to a complex case and follow it all the way through the entire process.

This method enables the observer to assess weak spots in the system, points at which information needs are not being addressed, points at which information is available but not in a timely manner, points where available information is supporting a strategy or policy other than the one believed to be governing the decision, and points at which available information is equivocal, producing random interpretation.

⁶Mark Soler and Carole Shauffer (1990) "Fighting Fragmentation: Coordination of Services for Children and Families." Nebraska Law Review, volume 69, pp. 278-297.

⁷Rochleau, Bruce (1993) "Evaluating Public Sector Information Systems: Satisfaction Versus Impact." Evaluation and Program Planning, volume 16, pp. 119-129.

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- 4.4.2 Ask a complex policy question and see how long it takes to get an answer that satisfies your needs and what the cost is of getting that answer.**

Often assumptions are made during the construction of an information system about the nature of the data that will satisfy information needs. For example, a court information system needs to be able to count cases, persons and decisions and relate these different counts to each other. An individual youth may represent at any one time several cases, and the court may produce dispositions on only a portion of the cases that youth represents. Furthermore, the nature of the data collected and stored must fit the types of analyses that will be required. If statistical manipulation is needed on a frequent basis, then information will need to be coded numerically and the codes must be complex enough to produce meaningful information. Cost, the last component of this test, typically pertains to the amount of time and work required to produce an answer. If the response to a request for information is, "Well, we'll need to write a program to get it," or "I should be able to get it to you in a week", the cost in terms of time is too high, and the financial cost is likely to be in the thousands of dollars.

- 4.4.3 Link the goals of major decisions to information specifically relevant to those goals.**

All decisions have goals, but those goals may not be clear to the designers of an information system. Assumptions are made that if the decision pertains to delinquency, then certain offense information is relevant. The decision maker, however, may have goals beyond those that are offense related. For example, an objective of placing heavy drug users in drug treatment programs necessitates production of information relevant to drug use for all cases.

We strongly recommend that those decision makers responsible for development of new information systems for the juvenile justice system adopt these assessment tools.

4.5 SYSTEM BOUNDARY

Because this project has focused on the sharing of information among agencies that comprise the juvenile justice system, as well as agencies that are outside that system (the School and DHS, Children and Youth), the possibility existed to conceptualize an information system that followed persons from birth to adulthood and which had at its aim to keep people outside the juvenile justice system. Prevention of delinquency and recidivism, after the point of discharge, could be seen as aims of such a system. We discovered, however, that participants of the MIS Work Group saw the information system as serving more tightly defined purposes. Thus the boundary of the information system would be set by the roles of the police, at the front end, and the Juvenile Court, from the petition forward to the point of discharge.

At the same time, we recognize that a focus on delinquency prevention might expand the boundary of the information system at some time in the future. Thus, the system we recommend must be flexible

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enough to adapt to changing views on the boundary of juvenile justice.

In Chapter 5, we outline in detail the visions of those individuals who participated in this study, and highlight those elements of these visions that define the boundary of a future automated information system.

4.6 CONCEPT of INTEGRATION

In order to satisfy the objectives of the Juvenile Justice System, as a whole, and to deliver requisite information management solutions to its participants, the integration must be viewed as a concept, and not as a data processing or non-data processing project. As a concept, integration brings together a wide variety of issues and addresses such areas as:

- Data integration;
- Systems integration;
- Integration of policies and procedures;
- Integration/unification of data codes and data coding techniques;
- Integration and standardization of data representation and data interpretation.

All too often, the result of integration is perceived to be some kind of an all encompassing software application that looks and acts in, basically, the same way, regardless of the identity of an end user. The proponents of such an approach take the word *integration* literally, implying that *to integrate* means *to make or form into a whole; unify or to combine (parts) into a whole*. As recent as a few years ago, the notion of integration was often associated with a "super duper mainframe" capable of supporting hundreds or even thousands of users concurrently accessing a commonly used application.

The independent operational profiles of the participants of the Juvenile Justice System, the specificity of their environments, the foci of their activities, the lack of uniformity and compatibility of their existing computer systems, and many other factors make the aforementioned approach to integration not only impractical and inappropriate but outright impossible. The integration, in this regard, must be understood as the ability of independent members of the system to share pertinent information, rather than the ability of the System to absorb its individual participating IS into a unified whole.

In order to satisfy the need for integration within the framework of the Juvenile Justice System, it is important to recognize the existence of three major classes of information maintained by different System participants. These classes depicted in Figure 4-1 are as follows:

- Participant specific information represents the outer ring or layer in Figure 4-1. This information serves the needs of individual participants consistent with the primary objectives of their agencies and/or organizations. The data management systems operating upon this information are not compatible with one another reflecting different technologies, design philosophies, approaches to implementation, support methodologies, etc. More importantly, the data used by one participant are of little or no value to another participant and the need for

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exchange of these data is practically negligible.

- Shared or exchangeable information represents the second ring or layer in Figure 4-1. While this information is generated and/or collected by one participant of the Juvenile Justice System to satisfy its programmatic, operational, and managerial requirements, it is of certain interest to other participant or participants. The original content and/or form of presentation of shared information may not be satisfactory to all interested parties and too often the fact of the existence of this information is obscured from the view of many or all participants except the originator.
- Common or core information represents the inner layer in Figure 4-1. This information is common to all or almost all participants and is, more often than not, maintained and interpreted in a standard manner, regardless of a data system of residence.

The approach to data and systems integration responsive to the information classes present in the Juvenile Justice System may be summarized as follows:

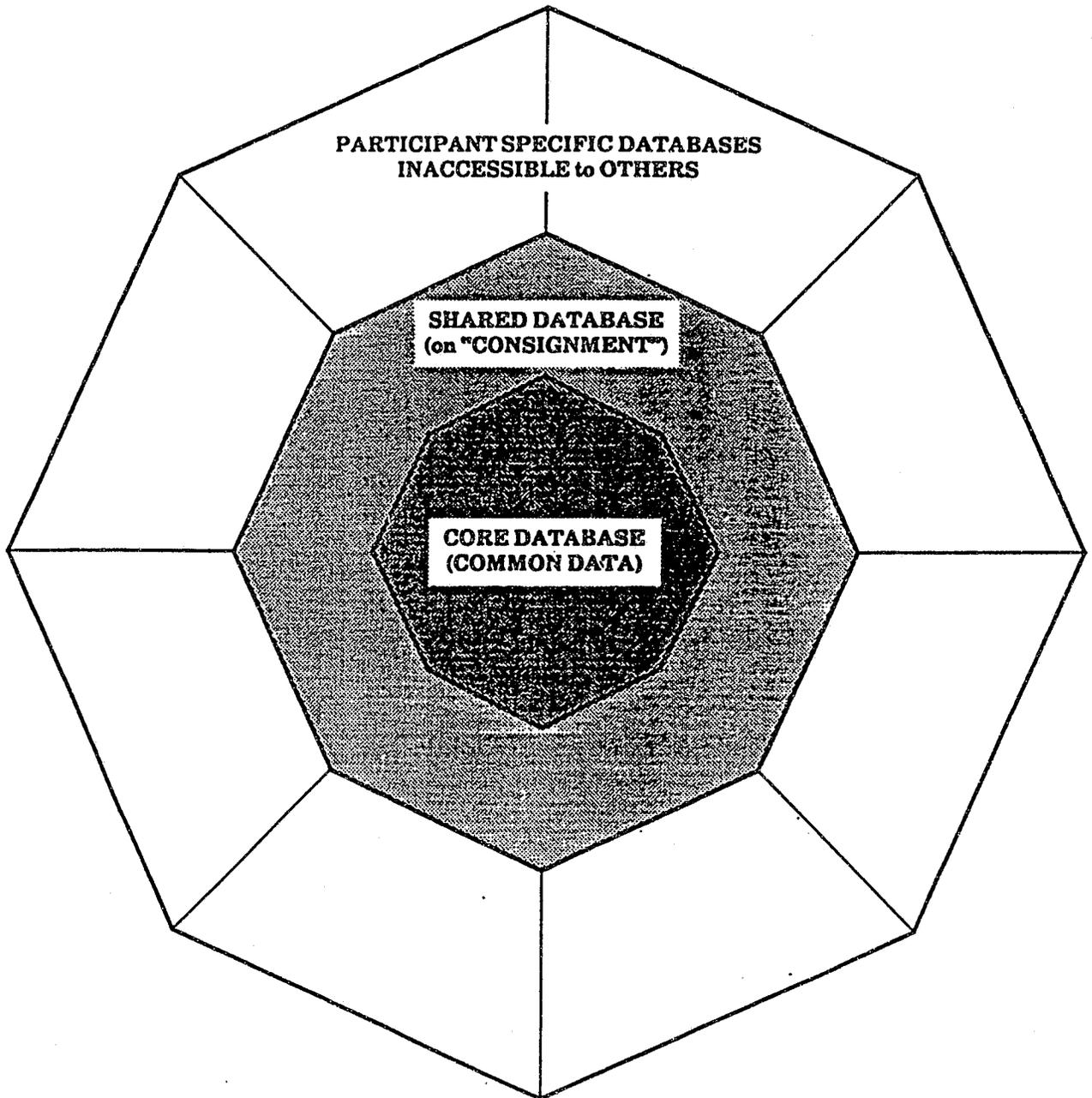
- Consistent with the basic purpose and scope of the information system under development, the designer determines which data elements and their groups are common to all participants by content, form, presentation, and interpretation, and which data elements and their groups play different roles (as to their significance, frequency of access and update, depth of details, etc.) within individual agencies and organizations.
- The designer develops and implements a procedure to ensure that all common data elements have unique and uniform presentation throughout the Juvenile Justice System and that appropriate modifications to any of these data become available to all participants within, practically, the same timeframe. These common data elements constitute the core of the integrated IS upon which each of the participants can build what is of local (agency, office, or organization specific) interest and according to uniform design considerations.
- The remaining data elements (those that play different roles within individual agencies) are recognized as to their place of origin and their relevance to the participants. The knowledge as to the existence and the availability of these data elements is spread throughout the Juvenile Justice System, so that the information other than common could be easily obtained from its "guardian" on the *need to know* and *right to know* basis.

4.7 INTEGRATED SYSTEM as a CENTRAL REGISTRY

It is recommended that the requisite data integration within the Juvenile Justice System be achieved through the design and implementation of a Central Registry representing a data management solution created specifically to consolidate, standardize, and make easily accessible the information relevant to the processing of juvenile offense cases.

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Figure IV-1. PROPOSED CONCEPT of INFORMATION SHARING / INTEGRATION



Developed by Allan Collaunt Associates, Inc.

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The concept of Central Registry recommended herein leads to the development of an extremely flexible and versatile mechanism for the collection of data that originate in other, participant operated, systems that have certain ability to interface (directly or indirectly) with the Registry. This presupposes that there exists a number of data systems (automated or manual) capable of generating and making available to the Registry the pertinent case and juvenile related information of interest to JJS, as a whole, and/or of interest to more than one JJS participant. By interfacing the Registry with a specific "production" or transaction oriented application, JJS gains the ability to further improve the identification of and the information on the juvenile population, the assessed and/or perceived needs of this population, the existing trends in service planning and service delivery, the comparative advantages and shortcomings of various interventions, etc.

The comparison of the Registry with a participant specific transaction oriented system is provided in Figure 4-2. It is imperative to recognize that the Registry should not and cannot be successfully constructed as an adjunct to or as an extension of an existing file or system. Such an approach would not only fail to produce an effective uniform data collection tool but might also create numerous and serious problems for the file or system to which the Registry is being attached. The Registry must be implemented as a software product designed to satisfy its unique specific goal and must be developed to be operationally independent from any participating system in a way that the Registry does not force changes on these systems, while remaining unaffected by the modifications that these systems have discretion to install in their own environments. The interfaces between the Registry and the individual participating systems are conceptualized in Figures 7-3 and 7-4.

The proposed independent nature of the Registry will not only facilitate its implementation and increase its technological soundness, but also will simplify the resolution of certain legal issues associated with the confidentiality of information on juveniles.

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Figure 4-2. Central Registry in Comparison to a Function Specific System

FEATURE or CHARACTERISTIC	CENTRAL REGISTRY	PROGRAM/FUNCTION SPECIFIC SYSTEM
FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile case and offender • Overall quality of services and/or interventions measured through its impact on juvenile • Overall cost effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program/function objective • Quality of specific service and/or intervention delivered by the function/program and measured through its comparison to other similar services • Cost effectiveness of the program (with little or no consideration given to the impact that the program may have on the cost effectiveness of the System as a whole or on the cost effectiveness of other programs)
SCOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile Justice System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program/function
MAJOR OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture and maintain case and case history information to ensure effective and expedited processing of juvenile cases • Capture and maintain juvenile and juvenile history information to ensure the ability of the system to satisfy the requirements of the continuity of care and dispositional planning, responsiveness to the needs of the juveniles, etc. • Provide the System with the ability to perform in-depth analyses of offenses and their associated dispositions, intervention planning, service delivery patterns by type of service, provider, program, segments of juvenile population, its geography, funding source, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the processing of juvenile and case specific transactions to ensure timely delivery of service and/or intervention • Allow the agency, office, or organization to perform analyses of its consumer juvenile population • Allow the agency, office, or organization to perform analyses of its service delivery and/or intervention patterns • Maintain the history of rendered services and interventions in order to facilitate juvenile need recognition procedures and to support the process of determination of the array of most applicable services and/or interventions (dispositions)

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<p>MAJOR OBJECTIVES (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide various participants in the System with adequately secured access to juvenile data for the purpose of case, case status, offender and offender status recognition • Substantiate and further improve resource allocation decisions and interaction among participants of the System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure timeliness and accuracy of administrative and fiscal activities, in general, and at the case level, in particular
<p>PRIMARY USER and BENEFACTOR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile Justice System, as a whole through its numerous participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program/function provider (responsible office or organization)
<p>APPLICATION DESIGN PHILOSOPHY (consistent with the major objectives of the system)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice System, as a whole, and improved interaction amount its participants <i>Ability to satisfy the needs of the Juvenile Justice System without creating excessive volumes of extra work and without imposing inconveniences for the individual participants of the System</i> • Ability to accumulate data received from numerous and often incompatible sources <i>Ability to capture and maintain large volumes of information through its receipt from outside sources, as opposed to its direct (manual) entry</i> • Extensive use of cross reference facilities and multiplicity of data access patterns required to satisfy the needs of various participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of program / function <i>Ability to satisfy the needs of the program/function, while remaining unaffected by and mostly indifferent to the needs of other programs and the System as a whole, with exception of satisfying the needs of the System as they relate to the submission or exchange of mandatory data (e.g., disposition planning data) and reports</i> • Ability to accumulate data independently from any outside sources <i>Ability to efficiently support direct (manual) data entry operations often at the expense of electronic data interchange</i> • Uniformity of data access patterns required to ensure high application performance in transaction processing mode

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<p>APPLICATION DESIGN PHILOSOPHY (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness in the environment that includes numerous participants and the ability to increase this effectiveness with the growth of the number of outside contacts <i>Ability to recognize and to support multiplicity, diversity and flexibility of data interrelationships, as well as multiplicity of data definitions</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness in a standalone environment and the ability to resist changes imposed by outside contacts for as long as these changes are not unconditionally enforced by the Juvenile Justice System, as a whole <i>Ability to ensure uniqueness and standardization of data definitions and their uniform representation among all system functions specific to the program</i>
<p>INTEGRATION CAPABILITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor to Fair
<p>PRIORITY PROCESSES and FUNCTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and remote accesses for the purpose of exchange of case related information • Local and remote accesses for the purpose of juvenile recognition (predominantly interactive) • Electronic data interchange (batch) • Maintenance of local databases (common data and "knowledge of content and location data") • Case status inquiry and case data analysis • Juvenile offender data analysis (interactive and batch) • Service/interaction and disposition data analysis (interactive and batch) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transaction processing activities, including juvenile recognition, case management and tracking, data editing and validation, etc. (interactive and batch) • Data summarization activities for the purpose of mandatory reporting • Internal data analysis and reporting activities
<p>DATA ANALYSIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely high depth and sophistication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low to average depth and sophistication
<p>STATISTICAL TOOLS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory or highly desirable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low priority or not essential
<p>NETWORKING CAPABILITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional

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MAJOR TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS and REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High system reliability• Efficiency of input/output operations focused on large volumes of data as well as on single data records (e.g., case or juvenile)• Diversified communications capabilities• Extensive mass storage facility and performance acceleration of I/O devices• Ability to support various peripheral devices (open architecture)• Ability to expand end user support through the addition of user clusters rather than individual users• Ease of maintenance and support• Availability and use of a true relational database management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High system reliability• Efficiency of input/output operations focused on single data records (i.e., juvenile)• Ability to support continued expansion of the original processor• Adequate mass storage facility and its ability to grow in a cost efficient manner• Uniformity of peripheral devices to reduce costs of maintenance/support• Ability to expand end user support through the expansion of system terminal capacity• Ease of maintenance and support
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5. ENVISIONING AN AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM: AN END USER PERSPECTIVE

As part of our data collection, we asked key actors in participating agencies to identify the kinds of output reports that they believed to be essential to their work. In some cases we produced sample screens and asked participants to review and edit them in order that they approximate the kinds of output they envisioned. Our purpose in asking these questions was to begin the process of designing system outputs that fit the needs and preferences of those individuals who would become users of the system. That is, we incorporated implementation planning into the design phase in order to facilitate design of a useful system and a system that would attract a high level of use. In this chapter, we summarize the kinds of output reports that an automated information system will need to produce. We have limited this summary to information that pertains to juveniles and case management and have not included personnel, fiscal or physical plant management.

Our work in this area is incomplete. We were not able in the time of the project to work with every staff position to a point where sample output was fully visualized. In this section, we report on the work completed to this point. Furthermore, because of the extreme level of need we found, and the centrality of two agencies, the Youth Study Center and Juvenile Probation, to the juvenile justice system as a whole, we have reported on the information system visions of these two agencies in more detail than we did with other agencies.

The material in this chapter and the next may appear overly detailed and complex to the reader. Our aim here is to provide as much detail as is necessary to support further system design. Within each agency or agency unit, the information provided will undoubtedly be clear and reasonably complete, but at the larger interagency level, where the sharing of information is the most critical issue, information needs are indeed complex. We address this issue in Chapter 7.

It should also be noted that the sample screens contained in this chapter may reflect existing paper reports. In most cases, some form of report exists that is similar to this screen, but in other cases we used interview data to construct a sample screen in order to help user groups begin to envision what they wanted from a future system.

5.1 Juvenile Probation

Juvenile Probation is an agency within Family Court that provides direct services to adjudicated juveniles, case tracking for juveniles during and following institutional placements, pretrial services for the Juvenile Court, and Court Intake

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services. Our discussion of probation's vision of an automated information system will focus on the following categories of output:

- Management
- Intake
- Pretrial Services
- Case Management
- Direct Services

5.1.1 Management

Probation management is largely concerned with accountability and resources. Probation work is structured in terms of individual caseloads and is dependent upon the professional skills and commitment of each probation officer. Consequently, the primary management role is to measure the activity of probation units and their individual officers and act if the numbers of activities deviate from the norm or from expectations. Three types of files are needed that can be accessed as on-line screens or printed as reports:

1. With regard to individual probation officers, managers desire the following:
 - A probation officer data file that contains address, phone absences, vacations, training, disciplinary action, promotion recommendations and promotions. We have illustrated a portion of this information on **SAMPLE SCREEN 1**.
 - A probation officer activity report that included caseload type and size, numbers of social inquiries, numbers of juveniles seen, numbers of parents seen, numbers of juveniles not seen, numbers of bench warrants on caseload, and reasons for bench warrants. This information is illustrated on **SCREEN 2**.

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SCREEN 1		JUVENILE PROBATION PROBATION OFFICER RECORD AS OF - - - -			
NAME	SEX	DOB	- -	ADDRESS	PHONE
DATE EMPLD UNIT	DATE UNIT	PRIOR UNIT			DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
- - -	- - -	- - -			
NAME	SEX	DOB	- -	ADDRESS	PHONE
DATE EMPLD UNIT	DATE UNIT	PRIOR UNIT			DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
- - -	- - -	- - -			
NAME	SEX	DOB	- -	ADDRESS	PHONE
DATE EMPLD UNIT	DATE UNIT	PRIOR UNIT			DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
- - -	- - -	- - -			

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SCREEN 2: Juvenile Probation

MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT: OFFICER SUMMARY

JUVENILE PROBATION
MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT FOR ____ - ____
OFFICER SUMMARY

UNIT: _____

NAME	AVG	AVG	SEX		W	WH	RACE				NBR SOCIAL INQUIRIES	NBR CLIENTS SEEN	NBR PARENTS SEEN	NBR BENCH WARRANTS
	CLD	AGE	M	F			B	BH	AI	AS				

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2. At the unit level, managers, especially the Chief Probation Officer, envision a system that provides the following:
 - Unit summaries that facilitate monitoring with regard to number of PO's, caseloads, activities and bench warrants. This information is illustrated in SCREEN 3.
3. Finally, with regard to individual clients of the department, Chief Probation Officer expressed the desire to be able to monitor at any time:
 - The Youth Study Center population, including time in the center and planned actions, illustrated in SCREEN 4, and
 - A list of active bench warrants, as shown in SCREEN 5.

5.1.2 Intake

The Intake Unit is responsible for two key decisions: 1) determining whether or not the case requires immediate supervision, and 2) determining whether or not the youth should be held in detention. Intake workers now make good use of existing technology: petitions are faxed to Intake, and the Family Court Computer is queried for prior offense information. Intake's primary vision pertains to interaction with an improved Juvenile Court Computer System. Identification of youths is not well supported by the existing system, although procedures are in place. In fact, personnel costs attached to identification are extremely high across the juvenile justice system. It is also the case that the Juvenile Court System may not have correct information on the location of a youth since space limitations often result in changes in detention placements. Communicating accurate location information to the Juvenile Court System would better support other parts of the system.

Intake Officers' visions of an information system were also captured on sample screens. SCREENS 6, 7 and 8 illustrate the kind of automated files that intake officers would like to be maintained and available on cases in process. These screens provide information on individual juveniles as well as an ongoing list of cases in process with information indicated the status of each case. In addition, Intake must also control movement of youths from detention and home to court. An on-line list of Court In and Court Out cases headed for court would be maintained and monitored on a daily basis (SCREEN 8).

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SCREEN 4

DHS-DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
YOUTH STUDY CENTER
CASE STATUS REPORT:*

CASE#	NAME	UNIT	ADM DATE	LAST ACTION (date)	NEXT ACTION (date)	TYPE OF ACTION	PO NAME/PHONE	DEF NAME	DEF PHONE
-------	------	------	-------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------	---------------	----------	-----------

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SCREEN 5

JUVENILE PROBATION
BENCH WARRANT LIST FOR - - -

NAME	J-FILE NBR	DATE ISSUED	REASON	STATUS
------	------------	----------------	--------	--------

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SCREEN 6: Court Intake Unit
INTAKE FORM

COURT INTAKE FORM

Date: - - Officer: _____
(last) (first) (MI)

Juvenile's Name: _____ DOB: - - -
Sex: _____
(last) (first) (MI)

J-File: _____ DC#: _____ Photo#: _____
SSN: _____

Aliases: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Phone: () _____
(last) (first) (MI)

Mother's Address: _____

Juvenile's Address: _____
Phone: () _____

Juvenile lives with: _____ Relationship: _____

Current Charges: _____

Description: _____

Offense _____

Codes: _____

hospitalized: _____ VUFA: _____ If gun, was it loaded: _____ Victim

Currently AWOL: _____ Date: - - -
Place: _____

Number of outstanding Bench Warrants: _____

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SCREEN 7

JUVENILE PROBATION
DAILY INTAKE STATUS REPORT FOR _ - _

NAME	CASE#	AGE	DAYS IN YSC	LAST ACTION DATE	NEXT ACTION DATE
------	-------	-----	----------------	------------------	------------------

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5.1.3 Pretrial Services

Officers in the Geographical Units also play the role of pretrial services officers. In addition to carrying their own caseloads, they generate for the court data and recommendations for treatment and placement to support the disposition decision. These officers see the need for the following kinds of system outputs:

- A social history, including behavioral, health and mental health information
- A family history
- A summary of the incident surrounding the instant offense
- The delinquent history of the juvenile, including adjudications and dispositions
- A past placement history
- Information on restitution orders and compliance with these orders
- Court schedules

In order to develop these system outputs, however, the envisioned system would include on-line access to the DHS information system and to the School Board's student information system.

5.1.4 Case Management

The Aftercare Unit supervises cases in residential and institutional facilities throughout the state. Unit members work with these placement services and keep the court apprised of the status of each case. In order to conduct their work well, knowledge about the juvenile is needed, much of which has been identified as outputs for other probation units, namely:

- A social history, including behavioral, health and mental health information
- A family history
- The criminal history of the juvenile, including adjudications and dispositions

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- A past placement history, including type of discharge and any relevant events
- Information on restitution orders and compliance with these orders
- A schedule of court hearings

But due to the nature of their role as case managers, they are also in need of the following outputs:

- A report based on school data summarizing behavioral and performance information, demographic and identification data, and medical history information
- A mental health assessment report
- A health assessment report, including immunization records
- A placement progress status report on youths in the placement process
- A list of probation officers assigned to a specific facility
- An on-line program report that includes target population, program description, current space availability, and cost

5.1.5 Direct Services

Both the Geographic Units and the Specialized Units have responsibility for direct case supervision. The bulk of their needs for information appear at the beginning of a case when case planning occurs. What is needed is quick access to information that would support this planning process. Clearly, the fastest system would incorporate on-line access to historical information in the following areas: social, family, offense, school, medical, mental health, placement and restitution. Ideally, there should be a central source for accessing all of this information.

5.2 Disposition Planning Unit

The Disposition Planning Unit (DPU) is administered jointly by a Director from the Family Court and a Director from DJJS. Cases are referred to this unit by probation staff due to the difficulty the case presents for finding an appropriate placement. Under an automated information system, the Directors of the DPU envision receiving monthly reports listing:

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- Number of cases planned for
- Number of cases by reason for referral
- Number of cases by length of time between referral and commitment

DPU also envisions an information that produces program outcome information as well as up-to-the-minute information on bed availability, modifications in services provided by any agency, and types of youths targeted by the program.

In support of the placement decisions that DPU staff make regarding individual cases, staff members envision access to an on-line client file that emphasizes special needs, and that includes a criminal history and a placement history. In order to complete a match between client and program, however, the worker would have access to detailed program **descriptions** and program **outcome** data for similar clients. For example, the system would provide outcome and cost comparisons of clients in community-based programs with similar youths placed in institutions.

The DPU Directors envisions two program inquiry screens. The first is descriptive and includes up-to-date information on:

- Screening criteria
- Risk score range of target population
- Per diem cost and other costs
- Designed length of stay
- Program components
- Program objectives and measures of success
- Coordination mechanisms with probation and school
- Links with outside agencies
- Mechanisms for linking with families
- Nutrition policies
- Qualifications of staff

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For purposes of ongoing monitoring and evaluation, another type of screen containing information on individual clients is envisioned that would include:

- Attendance in the program
- Participation in specific activities
- Activities planned for a specific day
- Performance indicators

In the case of a foster home, another set of data are desired:

- Type of home
- Incentives provided to foster parents
- Qualifications of foster parents
- Type of supervision provided to foster parents
- Resources of foster family
- Types of agency backup provided to foster family
- Coordination with other agencies

Institutional placements require additional information. The DPU Directors envision on-line access to information provided by institutions on the following:

- Description of physical plant
- Conditions of confinement (living arrangements, safety measures, use of isolation)
- Staff-client ratios
- Staff qualifications
- Specialized program components, including special education
- Family involvement
- Average length of stay

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- Per diem cost
- Private funding

DPU's case management function would also benefit from an automated information system. One component of this function would involve **case tracking**, the objective of which would be to insure that required actions occur at appropriate times. Second, the system would enable DPU to interact rapidly with the YSC around movement of youths in and out of the Center, and with DHS-FACTS regarding relevant **dependent** information.

The DPU Directors and workers envision an information system that provides **outcome** information. That is, the system should be able to feed back to them the performance of a youth during the first six to twelve months following discharge from a program. Since aftercare services are likely to play a central role in shaping behavior during this period of re-integration, comparisons of aftercare services would also be a capacity of the new information system.

5.3 Juvenile Justice Services

5.3.1 DJJS Central

The central office of DJJS is largely concerned with managing the system of private provider contracts and detention services. As such, trends in arrests, adjudications and dispositions play a major role in the planning process. **Trend analyses** and **future projections** are types of analyses the envisioned information system would be capable of producing.

Included in this type of trend analysis would be analyses of arrest trends, including variation in offense type, geographical area, demographic characteristics, and remediations. Another type of analysis would focus on disposition decisions. Analyses are needed of numbers of clients by program, needs of clients by program, recidivism rates of programs, and other program outcomes that permit assessments of each program's effectiveness.

At a more analytic level, the new system would provide for analyses of admissions to the Youth Study Center by type of client. Thus admission decisions could be crosstabulated with demographic and offense variables to determine patterns in the types of demands being placed on the Center's programs. Also important to this office is to investigate relationships that exist between detention decisions and later placement decisions in order that inappropriate uses of detention can be monitored and forestalled.

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An additional data base is envisioned regarding staff training, a critical issue among human service providers. The system should provide ongoing tracking of staff that have received specific training, as well as the training needs of specific staff.

5.3.2 Youth Study Center

The Division of Juvenile Justice Services of the Department of Human Services convened the MIS Work Group with the intent of developing an information system that would serve all of the public agencies of the juvenile justice system through a case tracking system. At minimum, its expectations were that the information system would:

1. Provide for client intake and assessment;
2. Maintain a comprehensive file on each client including basic demographics, family history, education, medical records, and court history;
3. Maintain data on placement site, date of placement, and date of departure which will allow for recidivism studies;
4. Perform administrative tasks (e.g. budget, personnel, inventory, word processing, etc.)
5. Provide trend analyses to assist agencies in anticipating future levels of services;
6. Serve as a central resource;
7. Provide information which may be used for research and evaluation of the juvenile justice system. (Division of Juvenile Justice Services, October 27, 1992)

Central to the business of the MIS Work Group was the need to develop a system that would support population control of the Youth Study Center and programs within the Center. After all, problems with overcrowding in the Youth Study Center were the catalyst for information system development.

From an information flow perspective, the Youth Study Center can be most usefully subdivided into the following organizational sections:

- Administration
- Admissions

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- Center Control
- Child Care
- Social Services
- Support Services

The MIS Work Group decided to eliminate from our efforts any decisions that did not impact directly on system clients. Consequently, we specifically do not address support services, such as maintenance and food services.

a. Administration

In addition to physical plant, personnel and budget, administrators of the YSC and of DJJS envision an information system that provides timely, accurate and complete information on the YSC population and the Center's programs. Currently, the Center operates a PC-based information system that generates a daily house list, daily summary population reports, a monthly population report, and an annual population report. Information provided in these reports includes demographic characteristics, prior and current offenses, bench warrant information, releases, police referrals, police district, and court referrals. Given the completeness of input into the design of this small system, it is envisioned that a larger system would provide the same output. SCREEN 9 illustrates a "Weekly Operations Report" that contains the information envisioned for this type of on line report.

In addition to this information, however, a more comprehensive automated system would provide a capacity to analyze these data and produce trend and "what if" output, thereby supporting policy making. Moreover, aggregating data across cases or clients would enable management to produce data relevant to different types of questions that are commonly asked about the population of the YSC. For example, population data are frequently reported in terms of offense, age, gender, race/ethnicity and length of stay. Aggregated reports by these categories should be produced weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually, and one-day snapshots of the Center should be available instantly. Moreover, managers need analyses of these data for planning purposes. The system should provide trend analyses on the Center population; demographic, diagnostic and offense categories; as well as on length of stay and events in the Center such as incidents of violence, suicide attempts and escape attempts. These same data support efforts to step down the level of security of a detention placement. Our discussions with managers at the YSC produced a picture of the information needed for population management, and we have illustrated this information in sample SCREEN 10.

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SCREEN 9	DHS-DIV OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES YOUTH STUDY CENTER OPERATIONS REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING ____-____-____									
AVG DAILY POP _____	NBR REPEATS _____	NBR MALE _____	NBR FEMALE _____							
AVG ADMITS _____	AVG DISCH _____	REFERS TO HOSP _____	REFERS TO CH GUID _____							
#SUPERV CHKLSTS COMPLTD _____	#MISSING _____	#TOURS BELOW REQUIRED COVERAGE _____								
CONFISCATIONS BY UNIT:										
ITEM	1	2	3	4	UNIT 5	6	7	8	9	10
DRUG										
WEAPON										
OTHER										
RISK LEVEL BY UNIT:										
RISK LEVEL	1	2	3	4	UNIT 5	6	7	8	9	10
4										
3										
2										
1										
INCIDENTS BY UNIT:										
INCIDENT TYPE	1	2	3	4	UNIT 5	6	7	8	9	10
FIGHT										
QUARREL										
DISRESPECT										
THEFT										
HORSEPLAY										
ESCAPE ATT										
ESCAPE										
SUICIDE ATT										
SUICIDE										
CHILD ABUS										
TOTAL										
RESIDENT ADJUSTMENT SUMMARIES BY UNIT:										
SUMMARIES	1	2	3	4	UNIT 5	6	7	8	9	10
POSITIVE										
NEGATIVE										
TOTAL										

SECTION 5. ENVISIONING an AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM

SCREEN 10

DHS-DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
 YOUTH STUDY CENTER
 POPULATION MANAGEMENT: ____*____*

POPULATION

TOTAL: _____ ADMIT: _____ DISCHD: _____ PRETRIAL: _____ AP-DHS: _____ AP-STATE: _____

MALE: _____ FEMALE: _____ B: _____ BH: _____ W: _____ WH: _____ AI: _____ AS: _____

AGE LESS THAN 12

NAME	DOB	UNIT	MOST SERIOUS CHARGE
------	-----	------	---------------------

STEP DOWN CONSIDERATION

NAME	UNIT	BENCH WNT ONLY	NEW RESIDENT	RESIDENT 20+ DAYS
------	------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------

STEP DOWN ORDERED

NAME	UNIT	BENCH WNT ONLY	NEW RESIDENT	RESIDENT 20+ DAYS	DATE OF ORDER
------	------	-------------------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

TRANSPORTATION LIST

NAME	UNIT	DEPART DATE	DESTINATION	RESPONSIBLE
------	------	-------------	-------------	-------------

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One primary responsibility of the YSC is to provide the court with a report on the behavior of each youth during his or her detention placement. This report, the Resident Adjustment Summary, reports on several categories of misbehavior, including fighting, quarreling, disrespect (including cursing), theft and horseplay. Aside from informing the judge about a youth's behavior, this information could become useful for analyzing the appropriateness of unit assignments, made on the basis of the Orientation and Classification Form (OCF). The OCF is developed on the basis of a social history, derived from an interview with the youth. To assess the OCF's adequacy, information would be stored for purposes of analysis on the following items:

- Demographic characteristics
- Court history
- Family history
- School history
- Medical history
- Peer group
- Placement history
- Mental health status
- Suicide risk
- Escape risk

Thus, automation of this information would serve at least two purposes:

1. to produce efficiently the Residential Adjustment Summary, as envisioned in SCREEN 11, which combines this discharge summary information with historical information on case activities during the time the youth was detained.
2. to produce a monthly report of behavioral incidents by unit that would serve to evaluate the appropriateness of unit assignments made according to the OCF.

Senior Administrators should be able to have on-line access to the Center census, including length of stay, case status and hearings pending.

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b. Admissions

The focus of the admissions process is to classify youths in terms of appropriate unit assignments, alert staff of conditions that require attention, and to open a record on the cases. Unit assignments are made on the basis of the OCF, with particular attention to:

- Escape risk (derived from calls to prior placement agencies)
- Probation status
- Bench warrant status
- Offense history
- Has youth been charged with sexual abuse?
- Has youth been sexually abused?
- Is youth a drug user?
- Is youth a drug seller?
- Part of city in which offenses were committed

An important consideration is the need to alert unit staff of conditions that all staff need to know. These conditions include:

- medical problems
- suicide precaution
- isolation
- escape risk
- special mental health problems
- CBDS committed youth
- 30 days or more

Under an automated system, some information collected by Admissions staff would contribute to information subfiles that are shared and used by others. For example, medical information would be collected and entered into a medical data

SECTION 5. ENVISIONING an AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM

subfile by these staff, and added to at other points in time by child care and social service staff and by Probation Officers. A client file, therefore, would contain a medical subfile in which staff would find information on medical conditions, medication, doctor's name and phone number and an emergency contact person would be found. Additionally, medical events would be added during the juvenile's time in the YSC, including illnesses and actions taken, a log of medication disbursements, and contacts with the juvenile's doctor. On-line access to this information would be required for child care, social service and administrative staff, and relevant reports produced for Probation and for commitment agencies.

Finally, a client information face sheet would be available on line that contains demographic information, admission and discharge data, prior offense and current charge data, family addresses and phone numbers, and identification of the arresting police officer. A preliminary sample screen has been provided in SCREEN 12 that demonstrates the kind of information YSC personnel would like to see available in an automated system.

c. Center Control

Center Control is an information hub that provides ongoing case tracking and control over the movement of clients. All information on a youth's movement, release, discharge and security is maintained by the individual on Center Control duty.

Under an automated system, Center Control would access electronically census reports from each unit and produce a list of youths who are scheduled for court or neuro-psychiatric studies, and an "Entry and Release List." The system would have the capacity to produce these lists automatically when commanded to do so. Moreover, census and movement data would be added to each client file producing a log of location and movement. Location and movement information could then be accessed at any time by client identifier, date or unit.

Like any unit that has case responsibility, the YSC, through Center Control, maintains a case file that includes demographic information, social worker name and phone number, emergency contact person and phone number, charges, medical information, court information, and a brief psycho-social assessment. Most of this information is produced by the Admissions Unit. Also, based on Admissions information, each file is coded with a color tab in terms of the following conditions:

- medical problems
- suicide precaution
- isolation

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- escape risk
- special mental health problems
- CBDS committed youth 30 days or more

Much of the work of Center Control requires communication with other parts of the system. Court lists are generated by the Social Service secretary that enable Center Control to arrange for movement of the Youth. Similarly, the Court Intake Unit provides a list of youths who are ordered to undergo neuro-psychiatric studies; the Nurse provides a list of clients with medical problems (information which, by the way, is needed by placement agencies); Child Guidance provides a list of youths to whom it is providing counseling, and Social Services provides and authorized visitors list for each youth. Under an automated system, this information can be transmitted and stored electronically, producing lists and ticklers. More importantly, these data can be linked to other data for purposes of monitoring services and related costs, asking questions regarding the types of youths who receive specific services and predicting service demands

Center Control also collects information on staff movement, including sick days and leaves. The envisioned system would have the capacity to transfer these data electronically from Center Control to Personnel, automatically or on demand.

d. Child Care

Unit Child Care staff at the YSC are responsible for day-to-day care of each detainee. From an information system perspective, these staff are most often generators of information as opposed to users of information. A daily census is conducted by YDC I's for each unit and forwarded to Center Control. Logs are maintained in each unit, and reports are written when incidents occur. Because of the size of the manual logs, analyses of information they contain is difficult, thus prohibiting their use as learning tools.

Under an automated system, unit census reports would be created each day and fed electronically to Center Control. Additionally, these data would be added to a data base that would serve other management purposes, including length of stay analyses. To replace manual logs, on-screen checklists would be created that would produce standard data for later analysis. Moreover, incident reports could be produced, analyzed and transmitted electronically to appropriate decision makers. The data from these reports would be added to a central client data base that would serve to support generation of the Resident Adjustment Summary and analyses of unit assignment decisions.

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SCREEN 12: Youth Study Center
CLIENT INTAKE RECORD

DHS-DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
YOUTH STUDY CENTER
CLIENT INTAKE DATA - YSC NBR
DC NUMBER: _____ FAMILY NBR _____

NAME _____ DOB _____ SEX _____ RAC _____ ETH _____ REL _____

ALIAS: _____ HGT: _____ FT _____ IN WGT: _____ LBS ABUSE HIST (Y/N) PRIOR YSC (Y/N)

ADMISN DATE - - - ADMSN TIME _____ POLICE OR CRT REFL _____ POLICE DISTRICT _____

PROBATION OFFICER: _____ PHONE: _____

LAWYER: _____ PHONE: _____

DHS SOCIAL WORKER: _____ PHONE: _____

NBR PRIOR ADJ _____ NBR PRIOR VIOLENT ADJ _____ NBR PRIOR INSTIT _____

ON MEDS (Y/N) UNDER PSYCH CARE (Y/N) LD (Y/N) SIGNIF HEALTH PROBLEM (Y/N)

CURRENT OFFENSE # _____ NBR CHARGES _____ BENCH WNT (Y/N)

COURT DATE AND TIME _____ CERTIFIED AS ADULT? (Y/N) ACTIVE DHS? (Y/N)

PRIOR PLACEMENTS:

PLACE	TYPE	ADJUST	SEXUAL OFF	LENGTH OF STAY

PRIOR ADJUSTMENT HISTORY:

NBR MH REFERRALS _____	NBR SUICIDE ATTEMPTS _____
NBR ABSCONDENCES _____	NBR TRUANCIES _____
NBR DRUG INCIDENTS _____	NBR BEHAVIORAL INCIDENTS _____

MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS:

DATE	REASON	OUTCOME

RELEASE DATE - - - RELEASED TO _____

COURT ORDERED PLACEMENT TO : _____

PERIOD _____ TO _____

DISPOSITION: _____

STATEMENT of RECOMMENDATIONS

SCREEN 12, Cont'd

INTAKE CONTINUED:

RESIDENT'S NAME: _____ YSC NBR _____

MOTHER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

FATHER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

STEPMOTHER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

STEPFATHER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

FAMILY CONTACT/GUARDIAN: NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____
RELATIONSHIP TO YOUTH: _____

LIVING WITH: NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____
RELATIONSHIP TO YOUTH: _____

INCASE OF EMERGENCY, NOTIFY: _____ PHONE _____

Residents of the YSC are required to attend school, participate in recreational activities, and have medical checkups. Additionally, they receive visits from relatives and their defenders. All of these activities must be monitored and recorded. For purposes of generating management reports and alerting supervisors of problems, an automated system is ideal. The existing activity sheets are valuable, but if entered into an automated system, managers can ask questions of the data, measure the cost of different service activities, and conduct evaluations of individual units in terms of gaps between activity standards and actual performance.

e. Social Service

One of the first responsibilities of a social service worker is to conduct an orientation of a new admission. In preparation for the orientation, the SSW attempts to become familiar with the client through record data. Existing information on clients is fragmented, however, requiring social service staff to go to several sources to put together information on a single case. An automated system would enable creation of a single, hierarchical client file, permitting the accumulation of information across different stays at the Center and making information retrieval more efficient. Several sources of this information exist that would be useful for this assessment, including the FCC, J-files, FACTS (DHS), JAD, and the School Board.

From this assessment, the information system would produce a client face sheet that contains basic social and case information. The Social Worker would record on the client file a Service Plan with times and types of planned activities (see SCREEN 13). The system would provide reminders to Social Service Workers of scheduled activities and would provide the Social Services Supervisor with a monitoring capability. Upon discharge, data pertaining to release would be added to the file.

Social Service Workers currently maintain manual Individual Case Management Activity Records (ICMAR) on which two categories of activities -- worker contact on behalf of resident and resident-worker office contact -- are cross-referenced with the dates of those activities. Although little would need to be done to modify the ICMAR form for automation, automation would permit aggregating this information for purposes of workload evaluation, service activity policy analysis, and evaluation of service effectiveness. Moreover, access to these records by management for purposes of accountability can occur rapidly at any time. For the ICMAR, then, we envision an on-line file (see SCREEN 14), available to social services staff and management, as well as aggregate service activity reports (SAR) (see SCREEN 15). Social Workers are required to see their clients within 24-48 hours of arrival, conduct an orientation within 24 hours and see each client at least

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once every 10 days. Under an automated system, a supervisor could be alerted automatically if these standards are not complied with.

Weekly, the Social Services Supervisor prepares a report on difficult cases: children in custody more than 30 days, children exhibiting behavioral problems, children with special needs and children with mental health problems. Because data on these youths is isolated from other sources of data in other agencies, data that might be of use to those attempting to see that a youth's needs are met, a system is envisioned in which data from other sources might be merged with the in-house data and produce better information.

Social Service staff also maintain a record of every court transaction for each YSC client, as well as court date, Center orientation date, and dates of neuropsychiatric studies and other medical or mental health studies. This manual transaction file contains information relevant both to the status of the YSC population and to decisions made about the individual child. Thus, an automated case status subfile would produce event ticklers to remind staff of events such as hearings, medical studies and excessive times in custody, as well as provide administrators and policy makers with time-in-custody data that can be analyzed quickly in response to questions regarding the YSC population. An example of the kind of on-line information envisioned is contained in sample SCREEN 11, the "Resident Detention Status and Discharge Summary." This screen provides a continuous list of court decisions on the individual case.

5.3.3 Community Based Detention Services

Related closely to the YSC is CBDS, or non-secure detention. CBDS is comprised of a number of programs that include in-home detention and institutional facilities. Of particular interest to CBDS are maintaining accurate case tracking, developing information relevant to stepping down cases, analyzing cases that are rejected by CBDS vendors, and analyzing the flow of cases among the CBDS programs, the YSC and the placement system.

Admissions to and discharges from CBDS often occur without information flowing to the CBDS Supervisor in a reasonable amount of time. These administrators envision having on-line access to the Master's court, Juvenile Court, and Juvenile Probation in order that decisions to commit to or discharge a youth from a CBDS are communicated within a time frame that permits the CBDS Supervisor to plan.

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SCREEN 13: Youth Study Center
SERVICE PLAN

DHS-DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
YOUTH STUDY CENTER
SERVICE PLAN: - - -

NAME: _____ DOB: - - - SEX: _____ RACE: _____ RELIG: _____

SSN: - - - IV-E ELIG: (Y/N) MED ELIG: (Y/N) SW: _____ TEL: _____

ADM DATE: - - - CHARGE: _____ DRUG/ALCH USE: _____ HEALTH PROB: _____

REASON FOR PLACEMENT: _____ NUMBER OF PRIOR ADMISSIONS: _____

DURING PRIOR YSC PLACEMENTS -- SUICIDE ATT: (Y/N) DRUGS: (Y/N) VIOLENCE: (Y/N)

PRIOR ADMISSIONS:

DATE	REASON

FAMILY INFORMATION

MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS: _____

LIVING WITH: _____

SIBLINGS IN THE HOME:

	NAME	AGE

SIBLINGS OUTSIDE HOME:

	NAME	AGE

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOL: _____ GRADE: _____

ATTITUDE ABOUT SCHOOL: _____ FAVORITE SUBJECT: _____

DAYS ATTENDED LAST THREE MONTHS: _____ OF _____ FAILING _____

LD? (Y/N) CURRENTLY ON SUSPENSION? (Y/N) CURRENTLY EXPELLED? (Y/N)

STATEMENT of RECOMMENDATIONS

SCREEN 13, Cont'd

SERVICE PLAN CONTINUED DATE: ____-____-____

NAME OF RESIDENT: _____ NAME OF SW: _____

GOALS: _____

INTEREST/HOBBIES: _____

CAREER/JOB INTERESTS: _____

NBR CONTACTS PLANNED WITH RESIDENT PER WEEK: _____ INDIV: _____ GROUP: _____

NBR PLANNED CONTACTS WITH:

CHILD CARE: _____ EDUCATORS: _____

MEDICAL: _____ RECREATION: _____

OUTSIDE CONTACTS PLANNED -- NBR PER WEEK:

DEFENSE ATTORNEY: _____ FAMILY: _____ MEDICAL: _____

CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY: _____ MENTAL HEALTH: _____

FAMILY CONTACT: _____ PHONE: _____

DHS SOCIAL WORKER: _____ PHONE: _____

PROBATION OFFICER: _____ PHONE: _____

LAWYER: _____ PHONE: _____

ADMISSION DATE: ____-____-____ ORIENTATION DATE: ____-____-____ RELEASE DATE: ____-____-____

RELEASED TO: _____

COURT ORDERED PLACEMENT: _____ PERIOD: _____

DISPOSITION: _____ JUDGE: _____

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SCREEN 14: Youth Study Center
Case Management Activity

DHS-DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
YOUTH STUDY CENTER
INDIVIDUAL CASE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY RECORD: ____-____-____

RESIDENT: _____ ADMISSION DATE: ____-____-____ DISCHARGE DATE: ____-____-____ REASON FOR
DETENTION: _____

RESIDENT -- WORKER OFFICE CONTACT

WORKER CONTACT ON BEHALF OF RESIDENT CASE REVIEW COUNSELING RESIDENT TELEPHONING ORIENTIN

DATE SW UNIT CCS SCHL DHS FAM PO ATTY OTH POST-CT PRE-CT IND GP FAM PO FAM ATTY FRND UPDT INITL

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SCREEN 15: Youth Study Center
 SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITY REPORT

DHS-DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
 YOUTH STUDY CENTER
 SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITY REPORT: ____-____-____
 SOCIAL WORKER: _____

CASE#	NAME	UNIT	ADM DATE	DISCH DATE	FIRST CONTACT	DATE OF ORIENTN	SUBSEQUENT CONTACT DATES							
							2	3	4	5	6	7		

SECTION 5. ENVISIONING an AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM

The administrator of CBDS envisions a monthly monitoring report that contains the following data:

- Number of youths served
- Number of absconds
- Percentage of AWOLS by provider
- Rejections by reason for rejection by provider
- Admissions by shift and day of week
- Staffing levels for each CBDS program
- Admissions by age, sex and race
- Number of step downs
- IV-E eligible clients processed and accepted

A primary interest of the CBDS administrator is to reduce the level of security of any detention placement to the least reasonable level. To facilitate a step down decisions, several items of information would be produced by the information system:

- demographics
- charge and offense history
- placement history
- suicide attempt history
- history of absconding
- availability of a home
- whether or not parents want youth at home
- abuse and neglect history

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While the last two of these items would need to be developed internally, the first four require access to court records (J-files), and, ideally, to an electronic court record of the client.

Within CBDS is a Court Liaison person. The individual playing this role reports AWOL's to the court, investigates cases held in CBDS for more than 30 days, procures emergency mental health services, and responds to judges and probation officers about the adjustments of youths to CBDS placements. Each of these functions can be supported through an automated system. AWOL reports can be transmitted electronically to the court, thus reducing the time it takes for this task. The ideal system would provide a tickler file for 30-day cases and provide a summary face sheet that would contain relevant case information. It would also produce a Form 304 that contains demographic, family and mental health information if an emergency health response is needed. Finally, **program adjustment reports** could be transmitted by CBDS placements to the Court Liaison person, who can pass these reports on to the court and analyze these reports for patterns and trends.

5.3.4 Court and Community Services

DJJS contracts with over fifty private programs to provide services to delinquent youths. These programs range from institutions to in-home services and include foster care, group homes, specialized placements, and day treatment centers. Several questions are central to the monitoring of these programs by Court and Community Services:

- What is the basis for rejection of a youth for placement?
- What is the level of abscondences and failures to complete the program?
- What reasons are given for requesting the court to review a commitment order?
- Have the goals of placement been met?
- Are there trends that indicate the need to develop new services or reduce existing ones?
- Are there breakdowns in the current system of services?
- How are we spending our money?

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In order to answer these questions the information system will provide information on the following:

- Utilization rates by program
- Number of admissions by agency
- Number of rejections by agency
- Number of rejections by reason for rejection by agency
- Number of discharges by agency
- Number of premature discharges by reasons for discharge by agency
- For in-home services, attendance and absences by program
- Number of placements within city, within region, within state, out of state
- Number of successful placements by placement goal by agency

Production of program outcome information is currently a priority for DJJS and is a category of information of interest to judges, probation officers, prosecutors and defenders. The information system here envisioned would produce information on program effectiveness, both in terms of placement goals and recidivism. Output would differentiate both program type and type of client, thus facilitating the appropriate matching of clients to programs and, simultaneously, highlighting types of clients whose needs are not met by the current repertoire of services. Such a system is currently being implemented by DJJS and Family Court.¹

5.4 Juvenile Aid Division

In addition to making arrest decisions, the police are instrumental in decisions to remedial cases. While remediation was more common at one time, it is actually rare at this point in time. The police envision an information system that provides access to family, prior placement and school data, information that is essential to the decision to remediate a case. They argue that the availability of this information would increase the number of youths who are remediated.

¹Philip W. Harris and Peter R. Jones have developed and are operating currently an information system designed to provide a continuous flow of outcome information to programs, DJJS, Juvenile Probation and the Juvenile Court. This system is being operated by the Crime and Justice Research Institute (Philadelphia) and is funded entirely by the Department of Human Services.

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Within the Juvenile Aid Division, the Sex Crimes Unit has special needs that have led them to develop their own vision of an automated information system. For these officers, 24 hour a day access to the Family Court computer is needed to be able to establish the custody of a child and stipulations on protection orders. Additionally, access to the FACTS system would provide information on prior abuse complaints. Our discussions with officers of this unit indicated that their concern with protecting the child victim of sexual abuse was paramount. As can be seen in SCREEN 16, the child information desired in their envisioned information system includes information that could only be obtained through timely access to the information systems of the Family Court and DHS.

Additionally, this investigative unit seeks to develop information that would support preventive strategies. Pattern analyses that would facilitate the pinpointing of dangerous areas or trends would be more effective if supported by automation. SCREEN 17 illustrates the kinds of output that would enable these investigators to respond to changes in the numbers and kinds of offenses being committed.

5.5 District Attorney

Assistant District Attorneys play significant roles at a number of decision points, ranging from remediation of a case to disposition. Although offense information, both instant and prior is central to their decisions, other information is also important. They are, in fact, concerned about the advisability of leaving a youth at home, and look at this decision primarily from a public safety perspective. Critical, then, are questions regarding the adequacy of existing mechanisms of social control in the life of a particular juvenile and needs that should be met by a programmatic response. These decision makers envision access to school records and family histories, the first contained in the automated information system controlled by the school board, and the second contained in the FACTS system.

Additionally, more complete information on offense and prior placement histories would facilitate more informed positions taken by prosecutors. Although some of this information is now in the Family Court computer, ADA's would like to see the system provide information that informs them about the performance of youths in placement and the risk of re-offending.

5.6 Defenders Association

Our information suggests no clear vision of an information system from the perspective of the Defenders Association. In many ways, this agency is isolated from other juvenile justice agencies in that it represents defendants exclusively. All of the other agencies of this system include among their clients the public, the family and the victim. The clearest statement that we can make about an

SECTION 5. ENVISIONING an AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM

envisioned information system is that it would provide access to information on individual clients that could be used to protect the interests of the client. These information sources would include the School Board information system, FACTS, and the Family Court computer.

STATEMENT of RECOMMENDATIONS

SCREEN 16: Juvenile Aid Division -- Sex Crimes
CHILD INFORMATION

PHILADELPHIA POLICE DEPARTMENT
JUVENILE AID DIVISION -- SEX CRIMES UNIT
CHILD INFORMATION

NAME: _____ DOB: ____-____-____ SEX: ____ RACE: ____ ALIAS: _____

ADDRESS: _____

GUARDIAN (RELATIONSHIP): _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

MOTHER: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

FATHER: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

LIVING WITH: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PROBATION OFFICER: _____ PHONE: _____

PRIOR ABUSE/COMPLAINTS? (Y/N) PROTECTION ORDER? (Y/N)

IF PROTECT ORDER, STIPULATIONS: _____

WELFARE PAYMENTS? (Y/N) CHECK PICKUP LOCATION: _____

PERPETRATOR DATA:

NAME: _____ DOB: ____-____-____ SEX: ____ RACE: ____ HGT: ____ WT: ____

ADDRESS: _____

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: _____

SECTION 5. ENVISIONING an AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM

SCREEN 17: Juvenile Aid Division – Sex Crimes
SEX OFFENSE PATTERN ANALYSIS

PHILADELPHIA POLICE DEPARTMENT JUVENILE AID DIVISION -- SEX CRIMES UNIT PATTERN ANALYSIS ----- TO -----						
OFFENSE	NUMBER	DISTRICT	CLEARED			
RAPE						
ASSAULT						
INDECENT SEXUAL INTERCOURSE						
EXPOSURE						
ENDANGER WELFARE OF MINOR						
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY						
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY ANALYSIS						
CASE#	DISTRIGNUMBER	COMPLAINANT				
ARRESTS						
					OFFENSE	
OFFICER	SQUAD	RAPE	ASSLT	ISI	EXP	EWC CHP

TOTALS	1					
	2					
	3					
	4					
	5					

6. INFORMATION NEEDS WITHIN AND BETWEEN AGENCIES

6.1 Common Information Needs

Not all information is of equal priority. Looking at the data we have collected, we can identify five types of information that are of high priority for more than one agency:

1. Information on short-term trends in numbers of arrests, types of offenses for which juvenile are being arrested, use of diversion services, use of detention services, court processing and use of placement services in order to facilitate understanding and prediction of changes that impact negatively specific parts of the system.
2. Information that supports decisions to divert cases at the arrest and charging stages of the case process, including family and school data.
3. Reliable and efficient sources of information on the identification, residence and telephone number of each juvenile who enters the system and his or her guardian.
4. Information that supports the matching of juveniles and their families to appropriate services, including program outcome information (i.e. information that helps to answer the question, "What works?").
5. Management information pertaining to case management, personnel, training and budgets.

6.2 Agency-level Information Needs

Discussions among members of the MIS Work Group, as well as interviews with system actors across agencies and positions (listed in Appendix A), produced considerable information regarding information needs. We began our interviews by asking participants to describe their roles, identify the decisions common those roles, specify the goals of those decisions, and then list items of information they believed that they would need in order to achieve those decision goals. For some items of information, the interviewee was the primary data collector. No other source of information existed within government, and other agency actors were likely to look to these individuals as the sources of this information. For other items of information, the source was within the control of the interviewee's agency. A probation officer, for example, would read a youth's J-file to obtain prior placement information. Still other information is contained in the information systems of other agencies. This information is often difficult to obtain, if not impossible. In some cases, access is not a problem; no effort has been made to gain access.

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

6.2.1 Juvenile Probation

Probation is an information-dependent business. It is the central research and planning agency at the case level for the juvenile justice system. Much of the information used by probation staff is generated internally or has been accumulated over time in a youth's J-file. Other information identified as necessary to support decision making within probation, however, is best obtained from external sources.

As is shown in Table 6a, judges and probation staff are dependent on external sources for the following categories of information:

1. Department of Human Services involvement with a youth and/or the youth's family, including case status, worker, child abuse information, and domestic abuse/disturbance information.
2. School information, including grade, performance, attendance, disciplinary actions, psychological data, and immunization records.
3. From the police, offense information, including type of offense, use of weapons, drug/alcohol involvement, injuries to victim, prior remedials and, importantly, accurate identifying information, especially name, date of birth, home address and home phone number.
4. Information on decisions made by the DA's office, especially charges and prior successes/failures in the Youth Aid Panel program.
5. Information on special needs of the youth, including IQ, mental health status, and health status. This information may be held by probation, DHS or the School Board.

It is often the case that probation staff are frustrated by their inability to obtain information that would enable them to better achieve the goals of their decisions. Among those items of information needed from internal and external sources, probation staff have identified the following items of information as unmet, high priority needs (see Table 6a):

1. Reports from DHS on dependency placements
2. Detailed disposition information from Juvenile Court
3. Social Security and DPA numbers from DPA
4. Correct parent/guardian identification, client birth dates, addresses, and phone numbers from DHS, DPA, and the School Board
5. Police photo numbers and complete arrest information, including a description of the incident, location, time, co-defendants, and arresting officer

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Table 6a: UNMET INFORMATION NEEDS

Agency	Information	Purpose	Source of Information	When Needed
Probation	DHS sequence Number Protection from abuse orders Domestic abuse information Defendant custody status Prior DHS involvement: - type of involvement - time period - outcome - DHS worker's names & phone numbers Type of current involvement	Placement recommendation Disposition recommendation Case planning	DHS	Prior to intake interview
Probation	School ID Number Grade in school # of Credits to graduate Special Ed participation Learning disabilities Psychological assessments Recent attendance # of suspensions # of expulsions Mental health assessments Medication history Immunization history	To link information Placement recommendation Case planning Identify client needs	School School DHS	Prior to intake interview Prior to intake interview
Probation	Accurate identification of youth, including: - name - date of birth - home address - home phone number - name of mother - name of guardian Police remedial YAP involvement/success	Linking information from different sources Enable system to relocate youth following release Reduce time spent acting on inaccurate data Disposition recommendation	Police Youth Study Center School DHS Police DA	Prior to release from custody Prior to intake interview

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

Table 6a continued: UNMET INFORMATION NEEDS

Agency	Information	Purpose	Source of Information	When Needed
Probation	Personnel assigned to court room Court dates for all hearings Detailed disposition information	Scheduling	Family Court	Ongoing - weekly
		Case planning	Family Court	Immediately after disposition
Probation Special- ized Units	Same school, family data as geographical units Social security number DPA number Immunization history Special Education status Psychological assessment Medical history Domestic relations court History of neglect/abuse	Same	Same	Following disposition
		Treatment Planning	DPA DPA School School or DHS Family Court DHS	Following disposition Following disposition
DA	School ID number School attendance Truancy history Suspension history Expulsion history Special Education Needs Mental health assessments Psychological assessments Treatment history: - psychological - mental - behavioral High risk behavior: - arson - drugs -suicide History of sexual abuse: - victim or offender	Disposition recommendation Disciplinary history Remediation decision	School board Probation	Prior to adjudication hearing
		Certification recommendation Disposition recommendation	School board Probation J-file	Prior to adjudication hearing

STATEMENT of RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 6a continued: UNMET INFORMATION NEEDS

Agency	Information	Purpose	Source of Information	When Needed
DA	Social Security Number Living conditions Family composition Siblings in delinquency placements or on probation arrest Parents in custody, under arrest or charged with crimes Contacts of dependent, siblings or parents with criminal justice systems outside the city or state	Link to family data Remediation decision Disposition recommendation Disposition recommendation	School Probation Probation Family Court J-file Adult court computer Unknown	Prior to petitioning the court
DA	DHS ID Number DHS case worker name/phone DHS custody status Prior DHS involvement: - types - time periods Type of current DHS involvement Prior protection from abuse orders Substance abuse of family members Accurate name, AKA address and phone # for all family members	Remediation decisions Placement recommendation	DHS DHS DHS DHS J-file, DHS DHS Probation DHS, J-file Probation	Prior to petitioning the court
DA	Success of prior placements or probation Program information: - recidivism rate - charges in program - bed availability Case information: - number of co-defendants - dispositions of co-defendants - dates of co-defendants arrests and cases	Placement recommendation Placement recommendation Disposition recommendation	 DHS Family Court	Prior to disposition Prior to disposition Prior to Disposition

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

Table 6a continued: UNMET INFORMATION NEEDS

Agency	Information	Purpose	Sources of Information	When Needed
Youth Study Center	Substance abuse by parents	Planning home visits/parent visits/stepdown	J-file DHS	At admission
	Mental health history	Prevention/obtain needed services	J-file DHS	At admission
	Medical history	Prevention/obtain needed services	J-file DHS	At admission
Police-JAD, Sex Crimes	Name/phone of DHS worker	Assess safety of home situation	DHS	Prior to release
	Protection from abuse order	Assess safety of home situation		Prior to release
	Domestic abuse data	Assess safety of home situation		Prior to release
	Custody status	Needs of client	School	Prior to release
	Learning disabilities	Needs of client	School	Prior to release
	Psychological assessments	Establish current residence	DPA	Prior to release
	DPA records	Establish current residence		Prior to release
	Current placement information	Possible return to placement	Probation DHS	Prior to release Prior to release
	Medical Release	Liability issue	Medical Record	Prior to release
	Full criminal history for: - mother - father - guardian - siblings	Assess safety of home situation	Family Court/ Common Pleas	Prior to release
	Known associates	Safety of community	J-file	Prior to release
Probation officer	Case responsibility	Probation	Prior to release	
Coordination of probation	Case responsibility	Probation	Prior to release	
Dependency status	Case responsibility	DHS	Prior to release	
Treatment history	Referral	School Medical Records		

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6. Domestic Relations Court information to verify information elicited from clients and family members
7. Criminal backgrounds of the parents of clients from the adult probation computer

Information that is both high priority and difficult to obtain includes the following:

1. Family information from DHS, including type and outcome of prior and current DHS involvement and histories of neglect or abuse,
2. School information from the School Board, including school ID number, performance, attendance, disciplinary actions, psychological assessments, and special needs,
3. Court dates and personnel assigned to court rooms from Family Court.

A primary difficulty facing probation staff during the pre-trial phase of the delinquency case process is obtaining accurate names, addresses and phone numbers. Identification problems result in lost time and inaccurate assessments of prior delinquent behavior. As is the case for police investigators, juveniles in the Intake process often use aliases or give false information, thus costing Intake and probation officers considerable amounts of time following false leads or seeking to locate valid sources of identification.

Because of the time required for assembling complete and valid information on a case, information provided to the court is often incomplete. In such cases, the court is not always well-informed at the time a disposition decision is made, in part because the information needed is not available and because the time needed to accumulate and make sense out of the information is insufficient. Probation officers readily admit that they sometimes make recommendations to judges without confidence in the appropriateness of their recommendations. Because of the political nature of the court work group, however, they sometimes feel compelled to feign confidence. The result is likely to be that some placements are less than ideal and, in some cases, inappropriate.

Treatment planning is also a focus of probation work, both in preparation for and following disposition of a case. Of particular importance is coordinating efforts with existing DHS involvement with the youth or youth's family or learning from DHS of past services, problems or relevant social history information. This information-sharing need is currently not being met.

Ironically, information sharing is also needed internally. It is often the case that more than one officer will be assigned to juveniles from the same family, or that several officers will be serving clients who live in the same block. Automating caseload information would enable the agency to increase efficiency by distributing cases with greater attention to geographical and family location.

At present, there are no measures of the quality of services provided, either by probation or by placement agencies. In the case of probation, service is evaluated in terms of contacts and time, rather than in terms of the content of contacts or the outcomes of services. Probation managers feel that this type of evaluation is superficial and unresponsive to their mission. They believe that service content measures are needed that would support the process of learning about what kinds of

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

interventions are most effective. At minimum, the current probation activity sheets should be automated in order to provide more timely monitoring of the use of probation resources.

Probation officers and the court produce a large proportion of the total amount of data on any juvenile case. Currently these data are recorded and stored manually in the J-file. Every member of the probation department expressed the strong desire to have an automated case file, both to speed up access to data and the production of case reports, and to enable the agency to conduct analyses of these data in a timely manner.

6.2.2 Juvenile Court

In addition to the needs identified in the previous section, judges require accurate and complete information on the performance of youths under their jurisdiction. This needed information includes behavior in a program, compliance with court requirements, school performance, family adjustment, and future plans. There is a presumption in placement reviews, however, that the services rendered are those that were expected. In reality, judges know very little about many of the programs in which their wards are placed and even less about the quality of services an individual youth has received. Under such circumstances, program success and failure are likely to be attributed to the program to which a youth is committed, even when unwarranted.

6.2.3 Court Intake Unit

Correct identification and accurate offense information are crucial to Intake decisions. Intake officers specified the following items of information as of high priority:

1. From the police, case identification numbers , including DC Numbers and Police Photo Numbers.
2. Important, too, is the completeness of offense information provided by the police, especially with regard to the extent of harm done to a victim.

Detention decisions are also affected by information pertaining to a juvenile's prior involvement with the justice system. Information regarding prior offenses, prior detention placements, prior abscondings and outstanding bench warrants, all of which should be available from a Family Court information system is needed within minutes of notification from the DA's charging unit of a new case.

6.2.4 Disposition Planning Unit

Ostensibly, the Disposition Planning Unit (DPU) is a placement specialist resource with the capacity to find placements for hard-to-place youths and a potential capacity to develop and advocate for tailor-made dispositions (unique packages of services designed to meet the specific needs of a client). Currently, the DPU has been limited to the narrower role of locating placements for youths for whom the normal referral mechanisms of the probation department have failed. Ideally, DPU workers would have access to an automated system that provides program descriptions and up-to-date information on space availability. In practice, the program information

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available through the PLANET system is insufficient and is rarely up-to-date. They, therefore, depend on direct calls to programs to keep current regarding space availability.

The task of finding appropriate placements for hard-to-place juveniles is one that requires complete and valid information on both the youth and the program. DPU staff emphasized the need for information about programs, implying that information about cases was less problematic.

With regard to cases, information needs are similar to those of probation staff who plan for case disposition. Because of the specialized caseloads of DPU, however, a fully-developed needs assessment, including behavioral, educational, family, social, health and mental health data is needed. This information is summarized in the Section 5 of this document.

6.2.5 Division of Juvenile Justice Services

The administration of DJJS is primarily in need of aggregate information that will serve its planning function. Because this unit is both a contracting authority for private sector services to delinquent youths and a service planning agency for the juvenile justice system, it needs to maintain accurate and timely information on trends affecting resource needs. These kinds of information include arrest rates and trends, disposition rates and trends, information on individual cases to track service delivery, usage trends and costs.

Specific information needs identified by DJJS administrators were:

- From the Police, aggregate arrest statistics by age, sex, race, and police district on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis, as well as comparative trends;
- From the Police, information on individual cases, including, previous arrests, prior remedials, prior Youth Aid Panel involvement, and Photo Number;
- From the DA, quarterly aggregated information on prosecutions and dismissals by demographic characteristics and offenses, as well as comparative trends;
- From the DA, information on individual cases, including charges pending, previous offense history (cases prosecuted), outstanding bench warrants, and identification of repeat, violent offenders;
- From the Defender, aggregated quarterly information on number of cases defended by demographic characteristics, offense and disposition, as well as comparative trends;
- From the Defender, information on individual cases, including service plans and dispositional recommendations;
- From Family Court, aggregated information – weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually – on dispositions by age, sex, race, police district, and offense, as well as comparative trends;

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

- From Family Court, individual case information, including previous court appearances, dispositions, family history (Family Service Plans, PSI), Aliases, mental health assessment, medical assessment;
- From Children and Youth, aggregated information on numbers of DJJS youths who had previously received CYD services, numbers and identities of active cases, number and identities of active families;
- From Children and Youth, individual case information, including previous dependent placements, Title IV-E eligibility, AFDC eligibility, family history.

6.2.6 Youth Study Center

Because the Youth Study Center staff work directly with youths in their care for brief but intense periods of time, and because they govern access to these youths, we found that the staff expressed a need for information relevant to the youth's physical and mental condition, and family dynamics if destructive. Knowledge of drug or alcohol abuse among parents or guardians alerts staff to exercise care around family visits. Medical and mental health information can facilitate preventative measures and timely responses in cases of emergency.

Data gathering must occur rapidly in this short-term custody environment. Aside from basic information, staff need case scheduling information in order to predict and plan for movement of the youth. They need from Family Court (probably through the CIU) current and prior offense information to assist in making appropriate unit assignments. School grade and performance information is needed to facilitate placement in the Center's school. Finally, health, mental health and other information pertaining to immediate needs is required in order that YSC staff can respond appropriately to those needs.

Even more basic was the need for all levels of the organization to be aware of every resident in the facility. Because case decisions are being made rapidly and because of the segmented design of the Center's organization, knowledge about a youth's presence in the Center guarantees that time requirements are met. Given the existence of a Center Control function, the addition of an automated information system to this function would add to its capacity to fulfill its role.

Managers in the YSC also expressed a need for the capacity to track cases, monitor length of stay, maintain schedules of program activities, and monitor client movement. This information would be generated internally, but when aggregated would enable managers to target resource and procedural problems.

6.2.7 Community Based Detention Services

Three categories of information were high on the list for CBDS personnel: 1) accurate identifying information, including names, addresses, telephone numbers, birth dates and social security numbers, 2) information on individual youths that would support the goal of securing an appropriate placement, and 3) decisions made by court and probation personnel to either commit a youth to CBDS or discharge a youth from CBDS. Much like other work groups in the juvenile

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justice system, identification is a difficult, frustrating and time-consuming task for CBDS administrators. Juveniles and their parents frequently lie about these identifying data, thus frustrating attempts by agents of the system to process cases.

The second set of data needs, those pertaining to the youth, are similar to those mentioned by other system agents responsible for case dispositions (including remediation, detention and commitment). They include the following data that relate specifically to matching youths to programs:

- Mental health history
Prior treatment and diagnoses
Prior hospitalizations
Family mental health problems
Substance abuse

- School performance and behavior
Attendance
Retentions
Suspensions
Ever arrested from school

- Prior offenses
Charge history
Use of violence
Use of weapons

- Prior placements
Where placed
Length of placements
Escapes

- Social sexual history
Communicable diseases
HIV positive

- Family information
Guardian, address, phone number
Parent, address, phone number

- Medical information
"Free of contagion" certified
Physical conditions
Medication

- Adjustment history
AWOL's
Suicide attempts
Other incidents

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

From a management perspective, the third information category appears more within the control of the system. The problem is not one of information availability; rather, it is one of information access. Currently the time it takes for the information to arrive at the location of the CBDS supervisor is too great to meet those needs associated with his or her ongoing planning function.

6.2.8 Police: Juvenile Aid Division

The role of JAD is largely investigative and preventive. Decisions are made regarding whether to take a youth into custody, to make an arrest, what charge to recommend to the DA, and whether or not remediation is appropriate. One of the first problems faced by JAD officers is to determine the correct identity of a youth and guardian, their addresses, and their telephone numbers. Given the propensity of many youths to give false information, the police would like access to school and DHS information systems to seek timely verification of this information.

The police typically process cases with little information on the involvement of a youth with other parts of the juvenile justice system. For example, there is no capacity presently to learn whether or not a youth is on probation, and if the youth is on probation, what the terms of probation are and who the probation officer is. In cases involving non-serious offense behavior of a youth currently on probation, the police would like to have the option to defer cases to probation officers.

School data are also seen as relevant if remediation is possible. The police would like access to information on school performance, disciplinary actions and victimization by other youths. These data are available only from the school board.

Because youths are frequently returned to their homes, the police believe that they should know whether or not there is a history of recent abuse in the family. Also relevant to this decision is a history of running away from home.

In some cases, youths have absconded from placements in the past. If recent, the police would like prompt access to information relevant to the likelihood of an escape attempt. Moreover, if a youth has absconded from a placement and is now wanted, the police need to know the name of the placement as well as the date of escape.

At a management level, JAD administrators need the capacity to measure their work loads, manage court schedules, monitor whether or not reports are submitted on time, measure how many truancy cases were dealt with and how they were handled, and develop a base of information on gangs, including their names, sizes, activities, and locations.

6.2.9 Police: Sex Crimes Unit

The police departments Sex Crimes Unit handles victims of sex crimes and seeks to make arrests of perpetrators. Their information needs center around avoiding further damage to victims. Thus they need information pertaining to previous abuse cases, whether or not DHS is involved with the victim already, and if there is information held by DHS that would be relevant to identifying and charging the perpetrator.

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It is the view of the officers in this unit that two types of information would be useful in helping them to formulate appropriate responses to victims. Since they are often dealing with youths in crisis situation, the more information they have about conditions surrounding the events of the case, the better able these officers would be to respond appropriately. In particular, they are interested in having access to medical and psychological assessments and information on learning disabilities in order to evaluate the information they are collecting and respond appropriately. Moreover, it may be the case that other social service agencies are working with the youth or the youth's family at the time of the investigation. Connecting the youth with his or her Probation Officer or DHS worker, for instance, would permit greater continuity of services.

In some cases, youths coming to the attention of the Sex Crimes Unit have run from a program for delinquent youths and would be best served by that system. Having the capacity to contact the placement agency and to have the youth returned would in most cases be in the best interest of the youth and the juvenile justice system as a whole. Access to this information should include the name and phone number of the responsible probation officer. Clearly, 24 hour a day access to a Family Court information system that contained this information would benefit the police and persons who they need to protect.

Alternately, the Sex Crimes Unit must also make decisions about releasing a youth to his or her parents. Typically, little is known about the family situation, including criminal behavior of the parents that may directly impact on the decision about to be made. Information on prior abuse complaints, as well as stipulations and protection orders would enable the officers of this unit to avoid placing victims in dangerous situations. This kind of information is most likely to be found in the DHS FACTS system as well as in the FCC.

For planning purposes, the administrator of the Sex Crimes Unit needs to keep track of trends in different types of offenses and their locations. Trend data produce patterns useful for developing a *modus operandi* integral to investigative work, but they also provide data relevant to resource planning.

Clearly, several policy decisions would need to be made with regard to information sharing and confidentiality of information before these needs can be met.

6.2.10 District Attorney

Some information needs of DA unit members flow from their role in the system. In Philadelphia, the DA's office is the system's intake authority as well as prosecutor. Additionally, the DA's office operates the city's major diversion program, the Youth Aid Panel program. Members of this unit define themselves as representing the interests of the community.

From the police, the DA needs case related facts, demographic data, evidence, and correct identifying information. These data support the decision whether or not to petition the case to court, whether or not a remedial action is appropriate, and what prosecution strategy will be used. Additionally, the DA is interested in trends relating to offenses, spatial distributions of offense behavior, and police manpower. This latter group of information is in keeping with the political role played by the DA in arguing for resources to support the current crime control strategy of the agency.

SECTION 6. AGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

Prosecutors typically think beyond the current offense to the youth as a whole person. Positions that they take regarding remediation and disposition are affected by their knowledge the following:

- Prior offenses, prior placements and abscondings
- School attendance, school disciplinary actions
- Family problems, child abuse
- Family stability, deviant behavior of other family members

Prior offense information is most likely to be obtained from Family Court, as may be information on child abuse and deviant behavior of other family members. School information is only available from the school board, and access agreements have not been completed. Family information, including abuse, deviant behavior and stability may also be available from DHS, if a DHS referral has occurred in the past.

Although we typically think of prosecutors as interested only in offense information, we found that the DA's office also needs information on types of services for youths, the quality of those services, and their costs. The DA's office defines its role in such a way as to include recommending and advocating specific programs at the point of disposition. This interest in dispositional decisions extends to information on program content, space availability at placement facilities, caseloads of probation officers, and results of mental health testing. In addition to information relevant to delinquency, the DA's office would like access to information on whether or not a case is active with DHS as a non-delinquency case. This information provides a more comprehensive picture of the case and the family that is useful both for disposition arguments and diversion decisions. Program outcome information, either in the aggregate or for an individual youth will not be available for at least another year. As was mentioned previously, DJJS and Family Court are developing this capacity with the support of the Crime and Justice Research Institute.

The Deputy District Attorney who heads the Family Court Unit identified the following needs:

- From the Police, aggregated information on geographical trends, offense trends, and changes in manpower or strategy;
- From the Police, on individual cases, demographic information beyond name and address, verified identification information, complete lab reports;
- From the Defender, reciprocal discovery;
- From Family Court, the cost of each service category and source, and space availability;
- From Family Court, information on program effectiveness;
- From Family Court, information on decisions made by judges at the time they occur;

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- From Probation, results of diagnostic examinations -- mental health, health, PSI;
- From Probation, extent of compliance with court orders;
- From DJJS, information on programmatic approaches and their effectiveness;
- From DJJS, information on the cost and outcome of CBDS
- From DHS/Children and Youth, on individual cases, juvenile's background, sibling status, arrests in household, family history, dependency status, outcomes of interventions

In addition to all of this case and offense-related information, aggregated information is needed to support the management responsibilities of the Deputy DA. His role requires that he monitor caseloads, and keep a record of numbers of youths remediated and characteristics of remediated cases. Specifically with regard to Youth Aid Panels, he would like to automate the following data for purposes of policy analysis: numbers of youths, types of cases, dispositions, outcomes and district. Additionally, he would like access to cost data for all services used by Family Court and DHS in delinquency cases, names and phone numbers of PO's, and names and phone numbers of DHS Workers. He expects that he, in turn, would provide to others the names and phone numbers of prosecutors and lists of youths handled non-judicially.

6.2.11 Defenders Association

The Defenders Association also sees itself as concerned for the whole child. On one hand, they are concerned that they have difficulty in obtaining complete offense information, such as a complete summary of the incident, information regarding the use of weapons, damages done and injuries to victims. On the other hand, dependency system data are also useful to defenders; they provide data relevant to formulating plans and arguments regarding disposition. Specific information needs are as follows:

- From the School Board, grades and attendance information to support their planning for placement;
- From the Police, accurate and complete information on offenses, especially regarding the use of weapons and injuries to victims;
- From DHS, dependency information, including child abuse, neglect, and running away from home
- From DJJS, the Resident Adjustment Summary produced by the Youth Study Center, which is provided to the judge, but to no other agency.

6.3 Inter-agency Information Needs

As can be seen from Tables 6a, 6b and 6c, there is considerable knowledge about the location of much of the data needed by individual decision-makers throughout the system. In some cases,

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policies exist that preclude transfer of information or policies have not yet been developed with regard to the sharing of information. In other cases, the information is stored in such a form that obtaining the information would be extremely costly, especially if the information is needed under a tight time constraint.

As a side benefit of this project we found that some interagency needs can be met immediately. As the MIS Work Group met, different agency representatives discovered unstated needs of others that required minor adjustments to meet. For example, the police found that the DA's office needed Police Photo Numbers and was frustrated by their absence on arrest reports. This matter was solved by an administrative decision. These small successes added considerable energy to the work of the group.

6.4 Integration Problems

Interagency information needs present five primary integration problems:

1. Almost every agency of the juvenile justice systems depends on school attendance and performance information, as well as tests of individual learning capacity, in assessing a case. Access to this school information at the beginning of the project was limited to a) oral reports by a School Liaison person present in the courtroom, who provided information, if available, to the judge, and b) informal releases of information by school personnel to agents of the juvenile justice system. During the course of the project, negotiations occurred between Family Court personnel and School Board personnel to establish electronic access to a summary of a student's file. Access to this information is still under discussion and decisions regarding access to agencies other than the court has not been decided.
2. Many clients of the juvenile justice system have at one time or another been a client of the Department of Human Services. Many would argue that information relevant to understanding and predicting delinquent behavior and to assessing the quality of family life is contained in the files of DHS workers. In the minds of the police, prosecutors, defenders, probation officers, and judges, the information possessed by DHS is directly relevant to many of the decisions that they must make. Moreover, by merging juvenile justice and dependency data, we can develop more comprehensive data for planning purposes. At present, access to the new DHS information system, FACTS, is limited. This is likely to change, but planning for interagency sharing has not been driven by a strategic plan. Rather, access has been a matter of dealing with individual agency needs and requests.
3. Information provided by the police to the DA, the defender, probation and the court is typically concise and cursory. Decision-makers frequently need more information than simply the official title of the offense, the UCR code and the results of an identification check, primarily because they regard the juvenile justice system as one that focuses most of its efforts on saving kids, not putting them away. They want a detailed description of the incident leading to the arrest, whether or not a weapon was used, if it was drug related, the identification of co-defendants, extent of injuries to any victims and identification of the arresting officer. Assessing the seriousness of an offense and the appropriate level of intervention parallels the conceptual difference between a delinquent and a criminal: the

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former includes individual-level characteristics, while the mere presence of law breaking is sufficient in the latter.

4. All non-court agencies are heavily dependent on the court for information, and a large proportion of all information produced by these agencies has as its ultimate purpose the influencing of court decisions. Several information sharing problems exist, however, that impact negatively on the system as a whole. First, most court information that is of clinical relevance is currently in manual files and is, therefore, not easily accessible. Second, information within the court system, either in manual files or in Domestic Relations Court records, that would facilitate the time-consuming and bothersome task of verifying information obtained from clients, is not readily accessible. Third, from both an information system perspective and a case responsibility perspective, the Family Court is the hub of the Juvenile Justice System, and yet, no capacity exists for other parts of the system to transmit information to the court electronically. Finally, the current FCC is not designed to produce policy-relevant analyses of the data stored within it. Even simple management questions require the expense of writing a new program to analyze the data and report findings of the analysis.
5. The juvenile justice system as a whole lacks the capacity to provide itself with feedback on performance, relevant data on trends, cost-benefit analyses, and program effectiveness. The cost of any one of these kinds of analyses on an ad hoc basis is cost-prohibitive. Since each of the agencies included in this project process the same cases, it follows that integration of data across cases would permit systems analyses that could facilitate planning, reduce costs, identify problems, and facilitate problem solving.

6.5 Conclusions

In previous sections, we have identified the major players in the proposed information system, as well as their roles and visions. Three major areas of information needs can be seen in the data. Primary needs center around a mismatch between the goals of the system and information availability. Decision makers view their roles as deciding or supporting decisions to keep youths at home, removing them from home, or removing them from the community. Those decisions, in their view, need to take into account the offense and prior contact with the juvenile justice system, but also should include consideration of the quality of care and control present in the youth's home and school, the two primary institutions of social control in the community. To the extent that normal systems of social control are working reasonably well, removal from the home may not be necessary. The problem is that these decision makers do not have access to this information and, therefore, cannot afford to take risks in cases in which the delinquent behavior is serious or other information (physical appearance, time of day, influence of alcohol or drugs) suggests that external control is needed.

The result of this social information void is that many youths are processed further into the system than is necessary according to our decision maker group. Given the limited resources of the juvenile justice system and the preference in law and in administrative policy to allow and encourage normal systems of social control to respond to the delinquent behavior of children, better and more timely information is necessary to support the goals of decisions being made and the goals of the juvenile justice system as a whole.

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A second set of needs, also at the case level, involves the accurate identification of youths. Probably no area of information generation produces more frustration and wastes more resources than the many attempts to determine the correct name, address and phone number of a youth and his or her guardian. Police and probation officers spend countless hours following false or inaccurate information. We recommend that a single repository of identifying information be developed that pools and validates data from police, court and school data sources.

Finally, many agencies need semi-structured management information on a regular basis. Typically this information informs agency administrators about caseloads, resource demands, and trends in different types of cases for purposes of planning and identification of exceptions to policy. For example, stays in the Youth Study Center beyond thirty days are identified as exceptions to policy that should require an inquiry. All of these needs for aggregate data require the collection of individual case data and the capacity to create hierarchical case files that can be analyzed from a client perspective. That is, both case- and client-level analyses are needed.

Many of these management needs are intra-agency. That is, an agency manager requires performance or resource use information for internal planning or for reporting out to another agency to which the former is accountable. Within the YSC, for example, Social Service Workers are expected to conduct orientations with new residents within 24 hours of admission, insure that youths attend school regularly, and enforce the policy that youths are visited by only approved members of the family. Monitoring of compliance with these policies is an internal matter. Furthermore, each agency has internal information needs pertaining to personnel, training, and work loads. The YSC has a physical plant to maintain. These are all areas of internal information that would benefit greatly from automation.

Inter-agency information needs are also considerable. Case processing, case loads and performance information are needed across agencies. For example, both the DA and DJJS need to know arrest trends by district, changes in police manpower and changes in the deployment of police resources in order to understand the flow of cases they experience and better predict future case loads. Access to these data, however, is difficult if not impossible.

While access to some information about juvenile offenders is possible, particularly through the Family Court's information system, no systematic planning has taken place to ensure that available information is consistent with the needs of decision makers. Of course, denial of access does not preclude access: there are many informal routes to data. For example, probation officers may not have access to school data through the school board, but may develop relationships with teachers and administrators at a particular school and be given access to information that serves the objectives of school personnel. At the same time, access does not guarantee use. Social history information may be desired by police investigators and prosecutors, but their decisions may be made on the basis of current and past offense and placement data.

An information system as a whole should reflect the vision of a system as a whole. The vision of our participants, although not clearly articulated and shared is reflected in the commonly felt need for better social information on youths who enter the system. Our interviewees implied through their comments that they saw the juvenile justice system as a multi-faceted resource, among several, to the community. Moreover, they saw the system in which they work as a resource of last resort.

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The concerns and issues that served as the impetus for this project suggest that data stored in a new information system must be available to respond efficiently and quickly to important policy questions. To do so means that the data must be structured and stored in a manner that lend themselves to statistical manipulation. As we witnessed in a demonstration of New Jersey's FACTS system(which bears no resemblance to the DHS information that shares the same acronym), a user-driven information system may be easy to implement, but may also be useless for policy development. Because New Jersey's system captures data in narrative form, and even numerical data are not stored in an easily-read data base, many policy questions cannot be answered. Even simple statistical tasks costs anywhere from \$2,000 to \$3,000 for each request. So much for efficiently meeting system needs.

This example underscores the danger of merely automating existing manual files and reports, as has been discussed with regard to J-files. J-files are not constructed for any purpose other than retrieval of individual client information, and no priorities have been specified for differentiating among data contained in these files. Both information priorities and information uses need to be clarified first, before decisions are made as to the structure of automated client files. Moreover, we see no reason to maintain files that are family-based, given the capacity of automated systems to combine data in a variety of ways.

**7. DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS for MEETING
INTERAGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS**

The central issue of need and concern addressed in this Section is the integration of data within the Juvenile Justice System (JJS), as it relates to the support of all applicable actions and procedures associated with a singular case. The case, in this regard, is defined as *all relevant activities by the participants of the Juvenile Justice System, including its service providers, that take place starting from the time when a juvenile is brought to the attention of the JJS and terminating when the authority of this system over the juvenile is no longer in effect*. In other words, the case spans the period of time from the original complaint (usually in the form of an arrest) through either acceptable rehabilitation, change of jurisdiction responsible for the corrective action (e.g., long term imprisonment), or inapplicability of further involvement of JJS (relocation, death, etc.).

Two primary factors contribute to the overwhelming complexity of the issue of systems and data integration as it relates to juvenile justice. The first factor is the desire of the society to protect itself and its individual members from any violation of the freedoms granted to the citizens of our country and its guests by the Constitution. The second factor is that of social conscience reflecting the desire of the society to give its members all and every opportunity for rehabilitation, especially when it concerns children and adolescents. The first factor demands protection of the victim, full restitution, and punishment of the offender. The second calls for tolerance and sympathy towards a juvenile and for the understanding of and the consideration to various socioeconomic criteria that brought the juvenile into the contact with the legal system. The first factor focuses on the event of injustice, on the efficiency of case processing methods and procedures, and on limiting to a practical minimum the time of this processing translated into the commitment of public resources. The second implies long term interest and person-centered approach. The first factor is reactive by nature. The second is proactive, promoting preventative involvement. The first factor tends to use the existing mechanism of JJS. The second necessitates community participation attempting to avoid the contact between the juvenile and the courts.

In designing an information management system, one must choose whether to build the system around cases (responding to the first of the two primary factors described above) or around clients (responding to the second primary factor). The necessity to make a choice is dictated by the fact that an information management system, as any other organized system, should have one and only one primary objective that takes precedence whenever there is a conflict of interests between this objective and any other. If our intent is to monitor an individual's needs and provide services for many years to come, if cases are viewed in their succession and only as one of sources of information about the client, and if the client remains the focus of information management activities regardless of the nature, status, and disposition of a case, then a client-based information system is appropriate. If, however, our system of decision points is designed to intervene in an individual's life for a short period of time and to terminate involvement with that individual once the service delivery cycle is completed, then a case-based system is appropriate. It is

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important to recognize that the supremacy of one factor over the other does not imply adversity in their relationship and that the design of the IMS should protect rather than jeopardize the integrity, guiding philosophy, and values of the JJS that it is built to support.

7.1 PRIMARY OBJECTIVE and SCOPE of the INTERAGENCY IMS

We have concluded that the juvenile justice system is designed in terms of the following assumptions: 1) its interventions are coercive and are limited by constitutional rights, local law and administrative policy, 2) the pre-trial decisions serve to screen out cases headed for court and either dismiss them outright or adjust them informally, and 3) that case termination is not contingent upon successful achievement of goals but upon a relationship between time and offense behavior (past and current). Although it is true that a rehabilitation philosophy dominates the nature of correctional interventions imposed on juvenile offenders, the structure surrounding implementation of this philosophy is very clearly based on public safety concerns and individual rights. With this in mind, it is assumed that the primary objective of the Juvenile Justice IMS (JJIMS), conceptualized and presented in this Statement of Recommendation, is to further improve and facilitate the processing of cases by the Juvenile Justice System.

Conceptually, in a case-based information system, the individual client is a component of a case. The case has a specific opening point and a specific closing point. Moreover, there must be an alleged offense in order to open a case, and information regarding the alleged offense, including the victim's identity and degree to which the victim was harmed, dominates the initial entries. During the time that the case is open, information is continually added to the case, including information about the family, school performance, health and mental health and prior involvement with the justice system are added to the case. As decision purposes shift and information is added, the decision making task becomes increasingly complex, and the inadequacies of the information system can affect dramatically the outcomes of those decisions.

Consistent with the definition of the *case* given at the beginning of Section 7, the scope of the JJIMS encompasses all case related data management operations that have a potential of affecting more than one participant of JJS. As implied by the schematics in Figures 7-1 and 7-2, the *case* necessitates the participation of various numerous jurisdictions, agencies, and individuals. In this regard, JJIMS should deliver to the independent members of the juvenile justice system the ability to share pertinent information in a manner that facilitates data interchange in the environment of common understanding and without imposition on the operations of individual participants. The project, therefore, must formulate and resolve such principal issues as:

- What information should be considered pertinent to all or almost all of the JJS participants?

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- What are the most effective and practical means of information sharing?
- Who, and under what auspice, should assume the responsibility of organizing, maintaining, and safeguarding the shared database?
- Recognizing the potential impact of data integration on policy, administrative, organizational, and other non-data processing issues, who, and under what auspice, should assume the responsibility of anticipating and analyzing this impact, as well as advising the JJS participants as to the ramifications of data integration and making recommendations as to appropriate courses of action?
- What practical and effective incentives and penalties should be offered to the JJS participants to ensure an uninterrupted flow of information into the newly created integrated database? Who, under what auspice, should deliver these incentives and administer these penalties?

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Figure 7-1. Major Case Processing Phases and Events

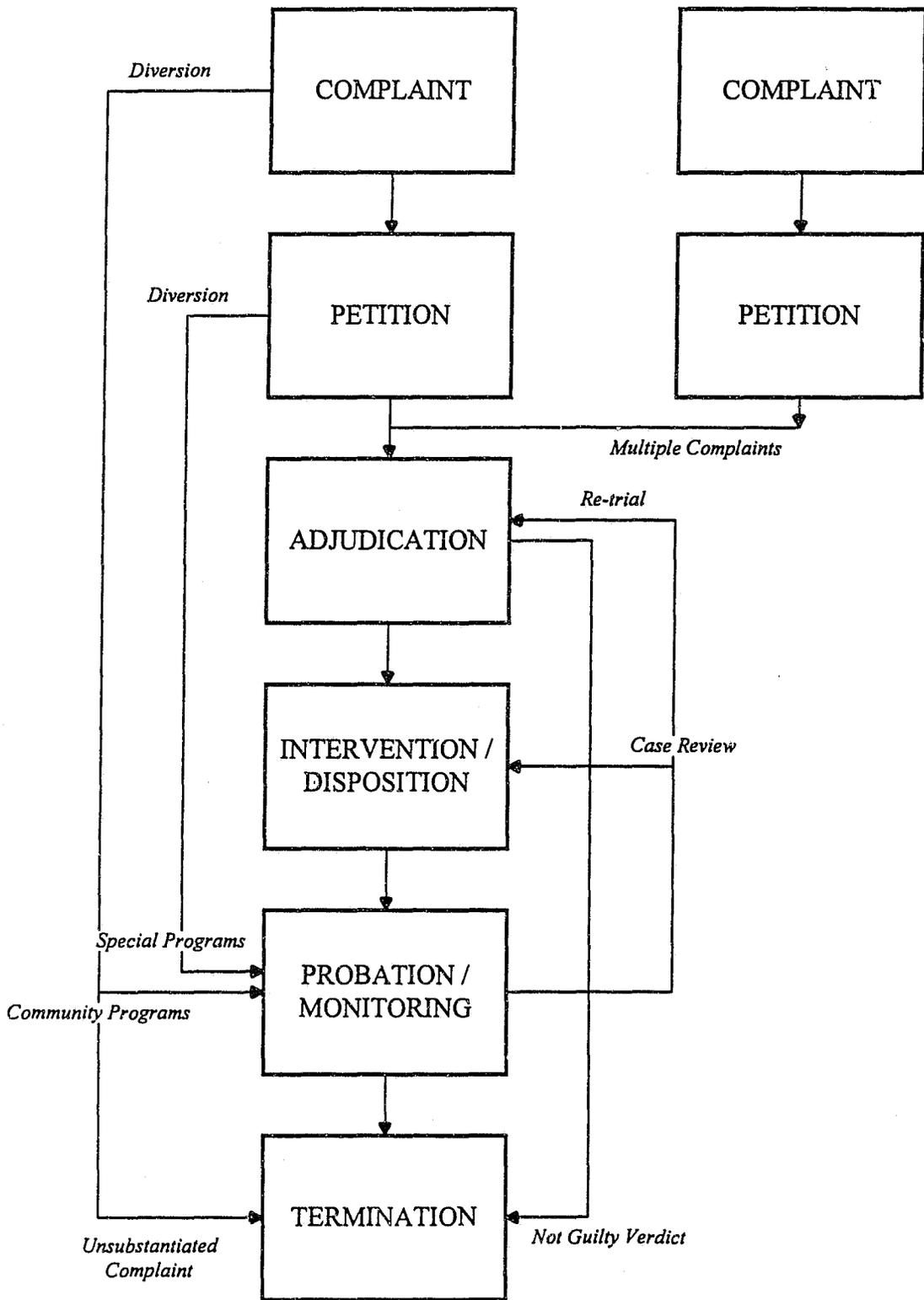
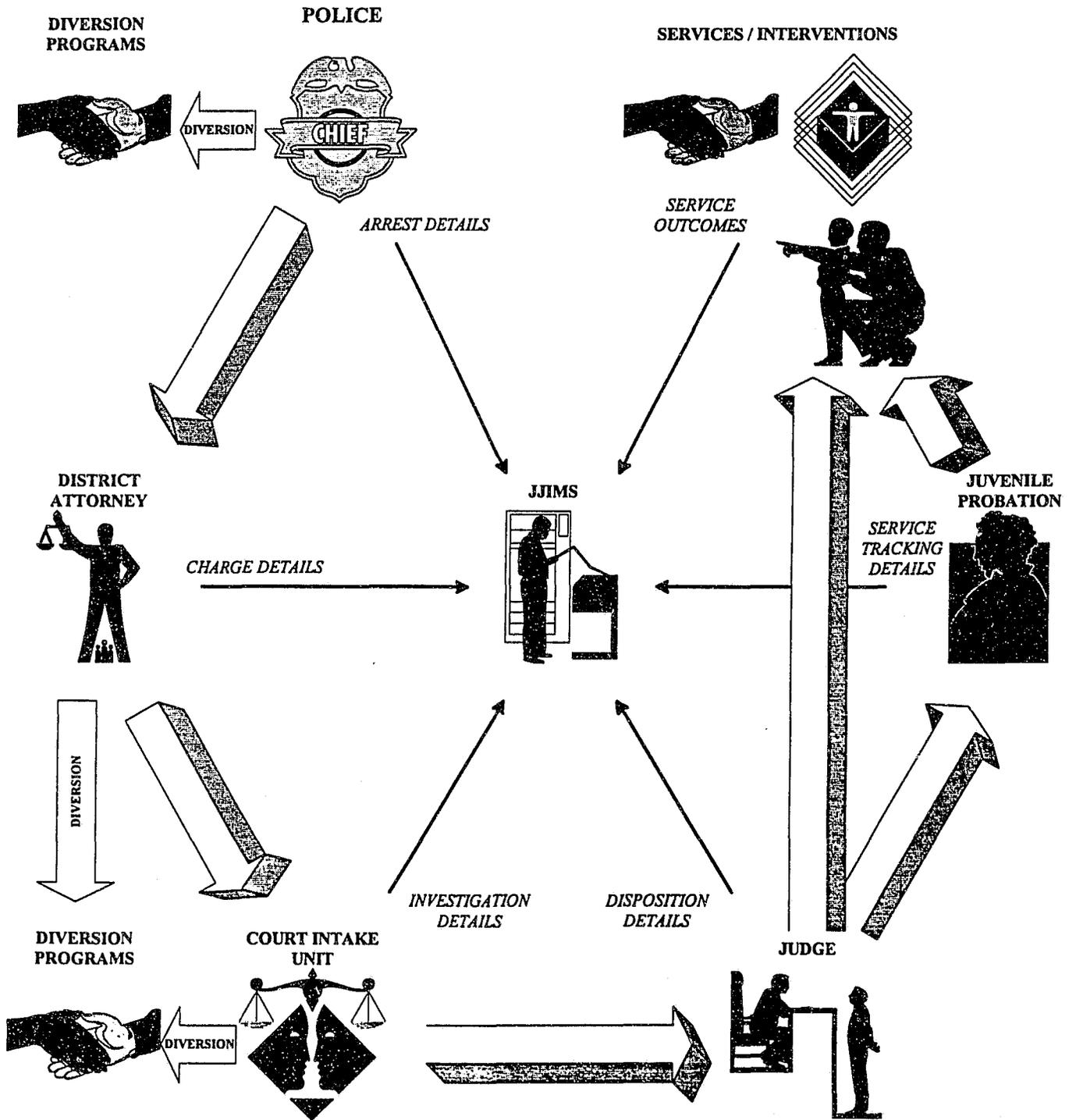


Figure 7-2. Case Processing Cycle



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7.1.1. Focus of the Integration Effort

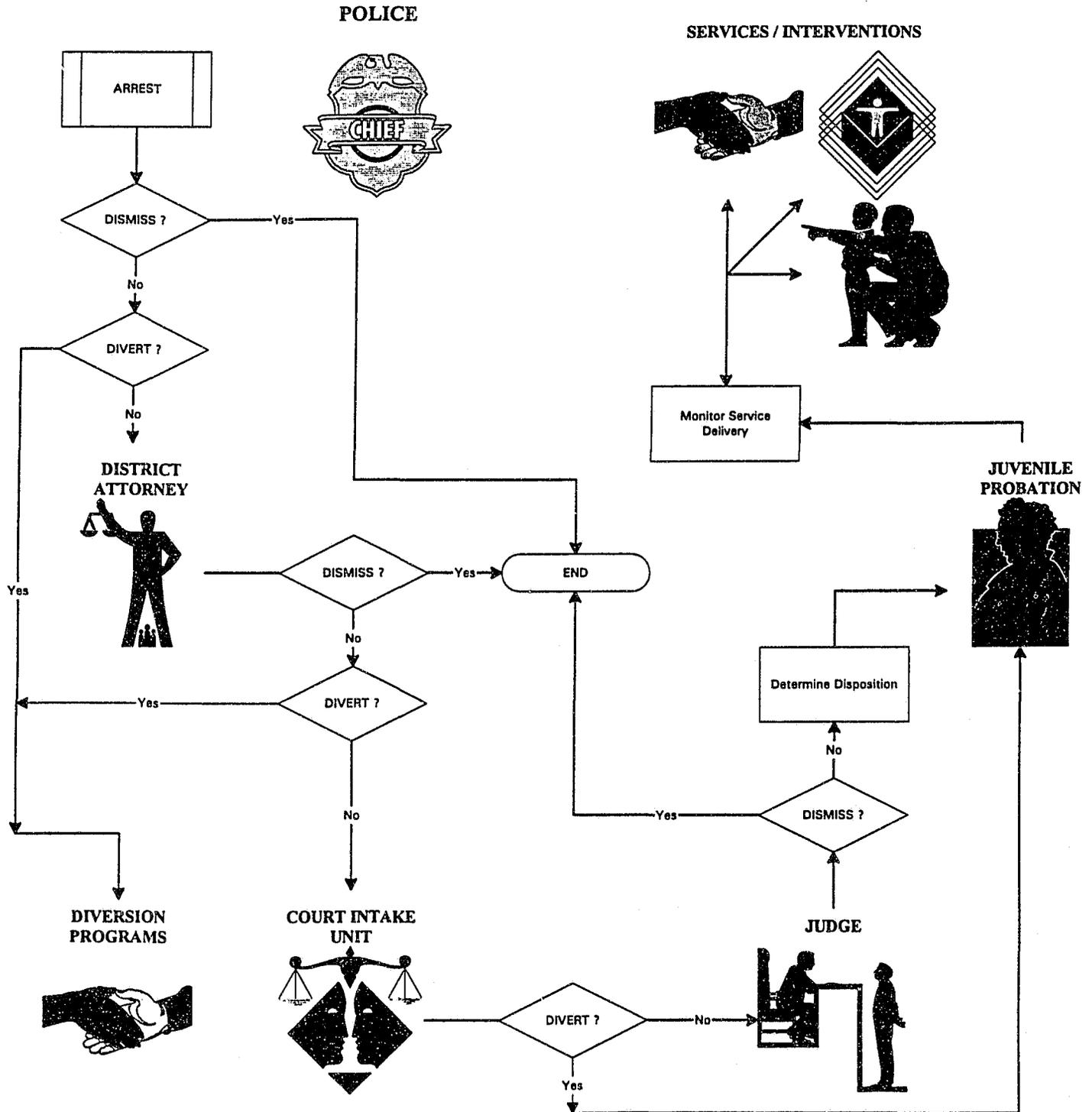
In order to fully satisfy the primary objective of JJIMS, the integration effort must focus on the information on the case, from the time of the original complaint through the time of case termination. The structure, content, and form of storage and presentation of this information must be appropriate and sufficient to support decision making processes on various phases of case development and by various JJS participants. This implies the ability of the JJIMS to rapidly identify and collect various data that may have relevance to the case, especially the data about the (alleged) juvenile offender, his/her socio-economic environment, previous interaction with the justice system, history of dependency, relations, school performance, etc.

It is important to recognize that, in the environment of insufficient and/or incomplete information, the case is usually decided favoring the victim and heavily relying upon the personal experience and understanding of the decision maker. The knowledge of both the case and the juvenile offender is the best and usually the most effective means to influence the decision maker.

Since we have found that the juvenile court functions as a case decision focal point and as the location of ultimate case responsibility, an important structural consideration is the manner in which the components of the juvenile justice system outside of the juvenile court, operate independently of the court or work to keep cases out of court (see Figures 7-3 and 7-4). First, the police officer who comes into contact with a youth accused of an offense makes a critical choice as to whether or not to make an arrest. Assuming that the officer is convinced of the youth's guilt, a case disposition occurs in which the officer assesses the seriousness of the case, the likelihood of further offending and the victim's need for a formal response. This critical screening decision prevents thousands of cases from coming to court.

The District Attorney's Family Court Division also screens out cases, either on the basis of jurisdictional issues and evidentiary insufficiency, or on the basis of offense seriousness. The latter issue is most critical in choosing cases for the Youth Aid Panel program, a diversionary program operated by the DA. These cases are adjudicated by a non-judicial body and services are rendered without juvenile court involvement. Other cases also receive informal adjustments in which probation services are attached to the case without judicial involvement. One aim of this system, then, is to avoid juvenile court unless the facts of the case make it necessary for a judge to exercise his/her authority.

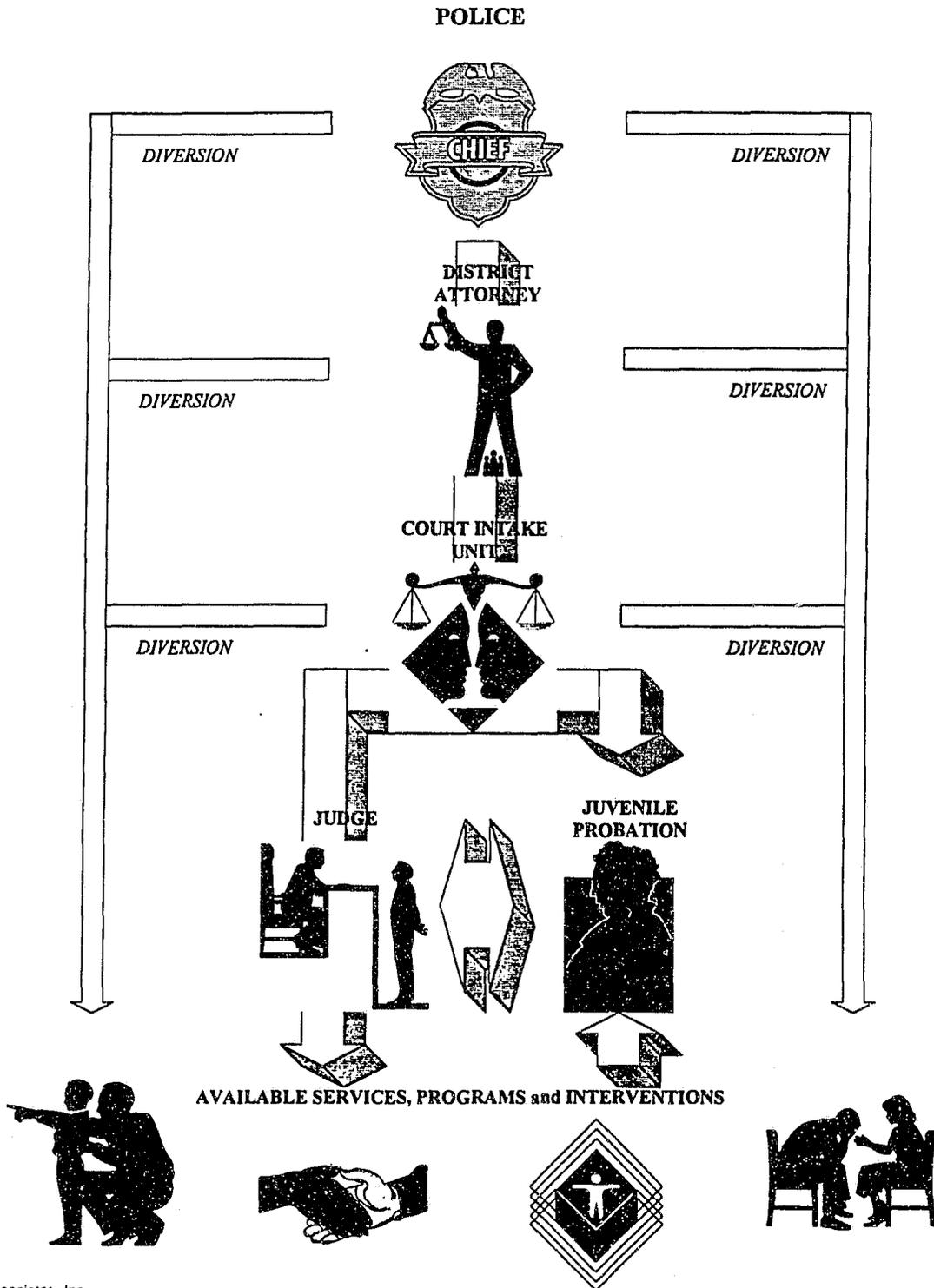
Figure 7-3. Sequence of Basic Case Related Decisions



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Figure 7-4. Case Screening and Diversion



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The JJS participants fully recognize the need for comprehensive, meaningful, timely, and trustworthy information that they usually describe as juvenile and/or juvenile history related data. These data exist, in part or in full, as pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that have been passed to numerous offices and organizations, sometimes duplicating one another, while the box with the picture of a completed puzzle has been inadvertently removed. Continuing this analogy, one could further say that credit should be given to the JJS participants for their laborious and sometimes ingenious attempts to obtain the appropriate missing pieces or to singlehandedly recreate them. Taking into consideration customary lack of time, funds, and resources, one should not be surprised to see thousands of partially completed puzzles (individual cases) that, at times, hardly remind the "design of the maker".

A quick analysis of the data elements comprising the juvenile case information needs reveals a general consensus centering around requests for basic identifying information and confirmation of same, arrest history and subsequent history of court involvement, history of dispositions, history of interventions and program participation, school information (both as an indicator of performance and as a verifier of identity), etc. The fact that an offence information is both relatively complete and readily available, while the information on the juvenile is often inaccurate, unaccessible, or simply nonexistent creates the appearance of a central need for a diversified "juvenile profile".

A deceptively simplistic solution of a "uniform juvenile data sheet" containing all pertinent juvenile offender information that could be shared equally by the JJS participants lacks practicality, depth, and applicability once one takes into consideration the diversity of general and case specific objectives and approaches characteristic of individual participants. Of major significance is the fact that while various JJS agencies and organizations share the common goal of removing the circumstances contributing to delinquency, some of them also share the direct responsibility to protect the community from delinquency, in general, and from certain juveniles, in particular. For the Police and the District Attorney's Office this last responsibility is actually paramount to considerations arising from the best interests of the juvenile. Yet, irrespective of the existing differences in objectives and approaches, all JJS participants have a common primary goal of serving justice and ensuring fair and expedient resolution of each juvenile case. The "juvenile profile" therefore is central to JJIMS only as far as it serves the primary objective and satisfies the requirements of integrated case processing activities.

7.1.2 Means of Information Sharing

In order to satisfy the requirement of continued independence of JJS participants while delivering the anticipated benefits of shared access to the unified data, JJIMS must have the ability to maintain an extremely delicate balance between the information that it physically captures, interprets, and confidentially disseminates

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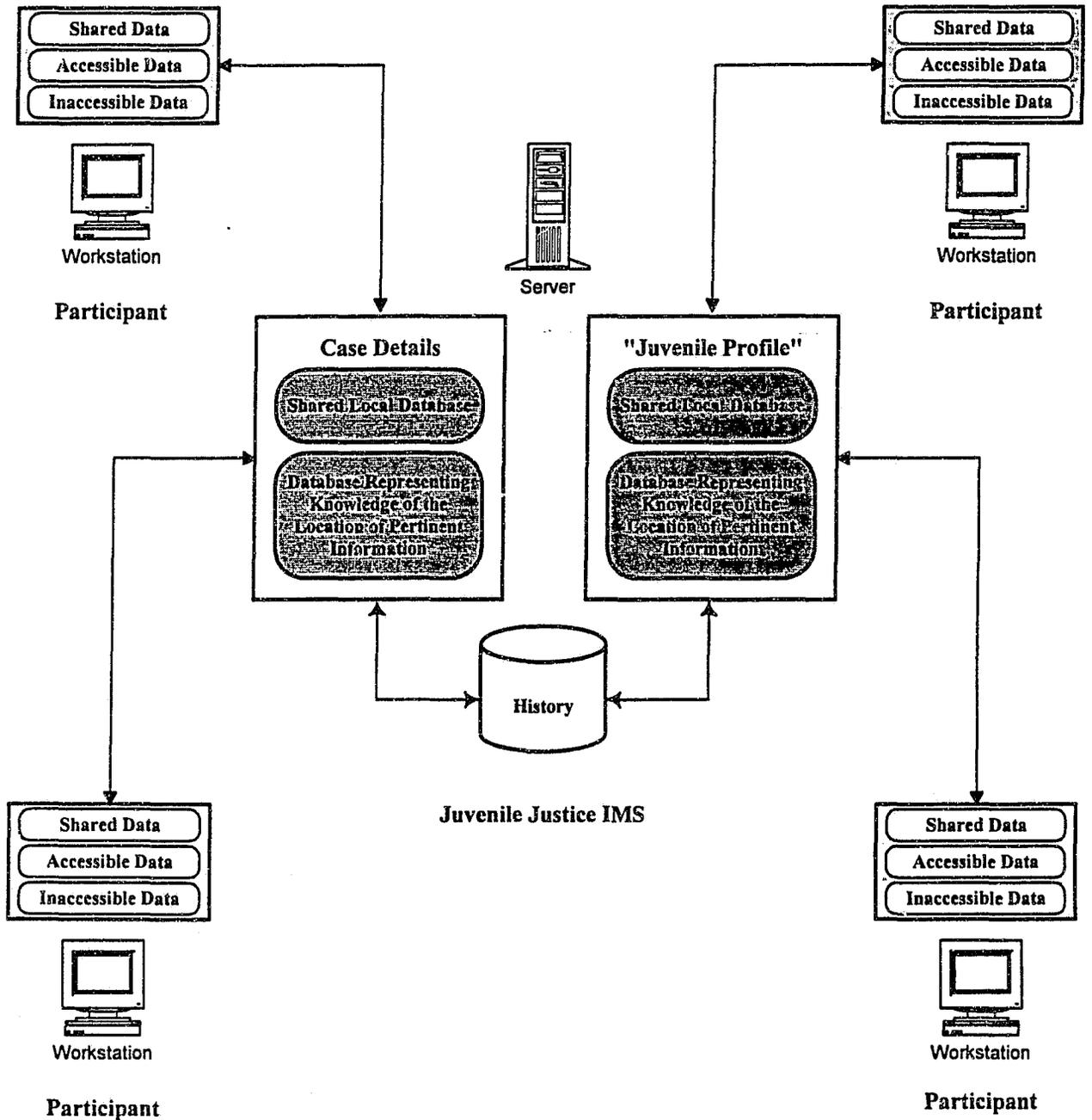
and the information that it has the knowledge of and the secured access to but which it does not possess within the confines of its database. This approach, graphically depicted in Figure 7-5 and consistent with the discussion as to the concept of integration in Section 4.6, fully utilizes the benefits of a central registry while keeping inviolate the operational and structural independence of individual participating MIS.

As can be seen from Figure 7-5, it is recommended that JJIMS capture and maintain two major classes of information: (i) a limited volume of pertinent case and juvenile data that retains its structure, format, and content throughout JJS, and (ii) a much greater volume of data representing the knowledge base of the location, structure, format, and content of case and juvenile information maintained by individual JJS participants in a manner responsive to their unique objectives and needs. Figure 7-6 depicts the process of data delivery by a participating system to JJIMS, while Figure 7-7 illustrates the capability of JJIMS to satisfy requests of JJS participants in shared information and information maintained outside of JJIMS proper.

The recommended approach to data capturing and dissemination also offers the users of JJIMS the following additional opportunities and capabilities:

- The ability to access the appropriate information outside of the boundaries of its own database allows JJIMS to deliver to its users considerably increased volumes of pertinent data without a "heavy payment" usually associated with data redundancy;
- The JJIMS database proper is maintained within practical and economical limits which ordinarily means greater flexibility, friendliness, and performance;
- The relatively small volume of the information contained in the JJIMS database prevents JJIMS from "overtaking" the processes and operations of the participating MIS which ensures a healthy psychological climate throughout the data processing environment of JJS;
- The practical scope of JJIMS makes its implementation economical and not excessively time and effort consuming. This is an important (and maybe even crucial) consideration in the existing conditions of limited budgets and cost containment.

Figure 7-5. Information Sharing in the JJS Environment



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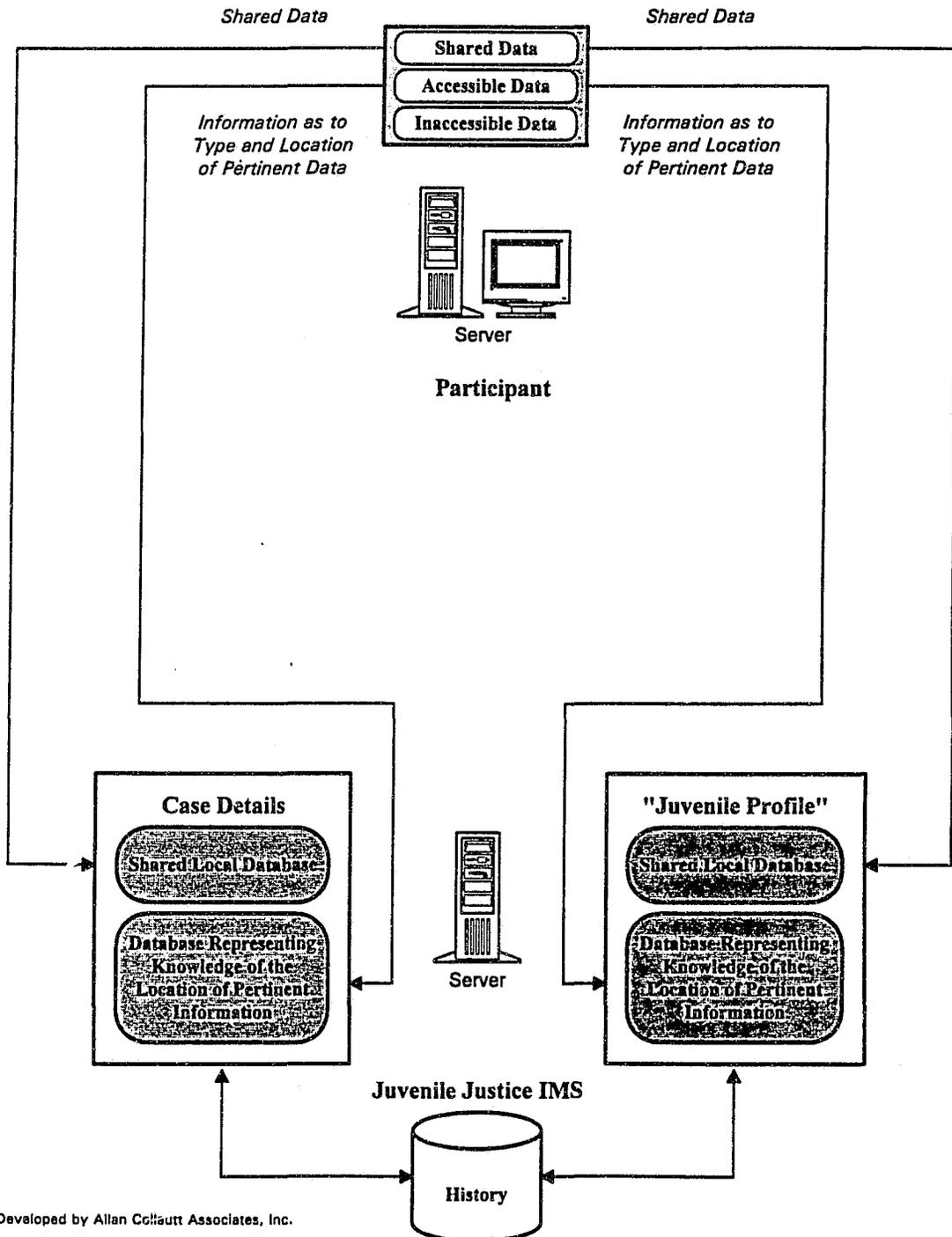
7.1.3 Responsibility for JJIMS Operations

An information management system requires for its successful operations the existence and coordination of three major components, namely: human factor (operators and/or end users), data processing facility (hardware, operating system, database management utilities, application programs, documentation, etc.), and appropriate policies and procedures. It is quite clear that the aforementioned components must be a part of an established agency that has the responsibility for operating the system and the right to enjoy the primary benefits of its operation.

The discussion in this Statement of Recommendations indicates that JJIMS cannot be viewed as a replacement or an extension/enhancement of any existing juvenile justice data system. Even the jurisdiction of the court does not encompass all juvenile cases when one considers numerous decision points in the Juvenile Justice System, the variety of diversion programs and interventions, and the "screening out" mechanism employed by JJS.

While recognizing the independent nature of JJIMS, one must also recognize the central role and the importance of the court in processing of juvenile cases and the responsibility of the court as to the case disposition and its monitoring through its final termination. As shown in Figure 7-8, all cases reaching the point of adjudication presume the flow of information from each of the Juvenile Justice System participants to the judge with the objective to influence his/her disposition decision. Additionally, the case and case related JJIMS data, by structure and content, are expected to be much closer to the data currently captured by the Family Court MIS than by any other participating data system. **It is, therefore recommended that Family Court exercise overall control and management over the Juvenile Justice IMS and its operations.** The development of JJIMS and its individual functions, features, and capabilities should be supervised by a court liaison and coordinated with the designated representatives of other JJS participants.

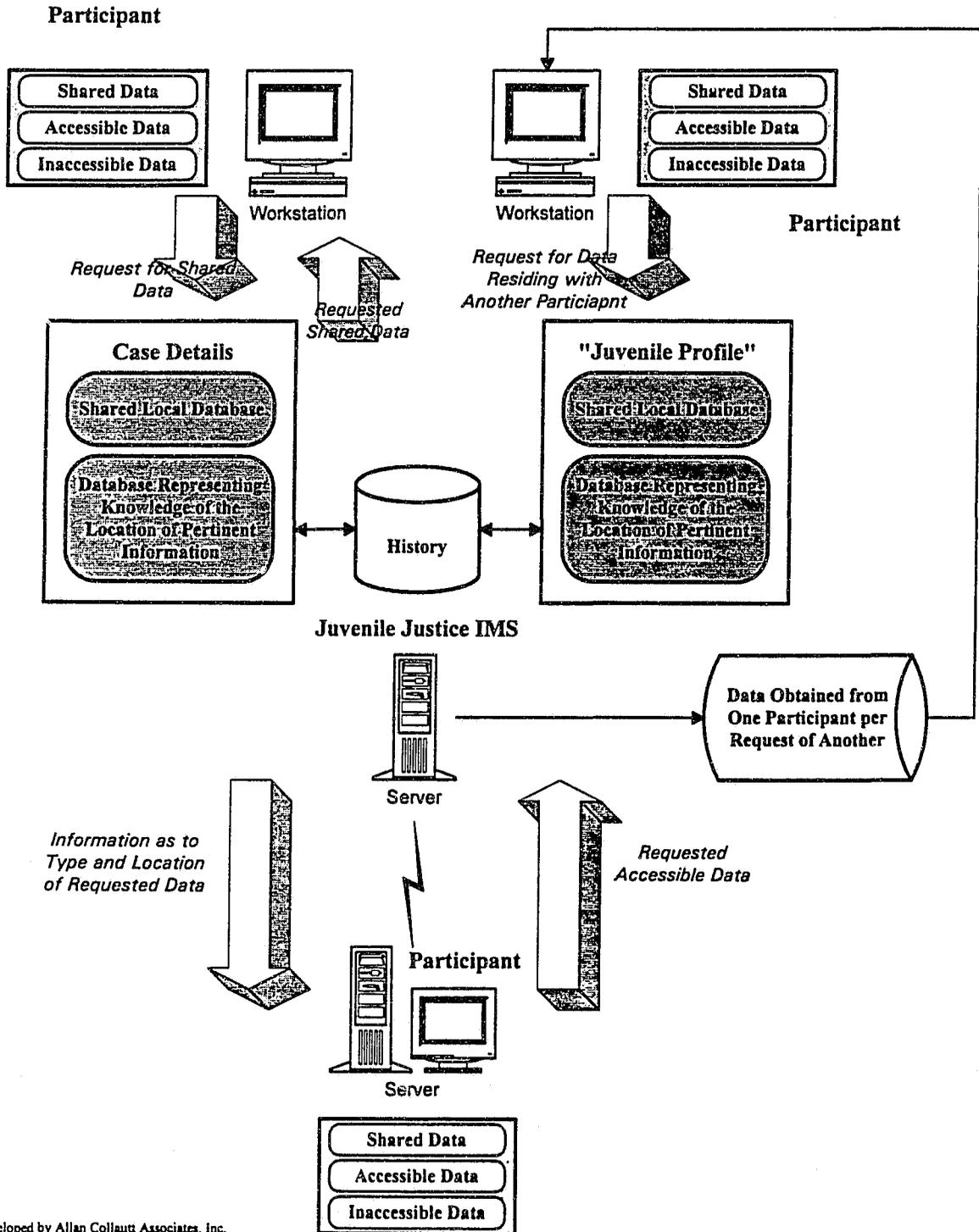
Figure 7-6. Process of Data Delivery to JJIMS



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Figure 7-7. JJIMS Response to Data Request by JJS Participants



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7.2 CENTRALIZED and DISTRIBUTED PROCESSING

The multitude of systems and installations supporting the data processing environment of the Juvenile Justice System and the requirement to reorganize this environment in order to increase its efficiency and its responsiveness (and, thereby, its benefits) to the end user community, demand that consideration be given to the issue of centralized versus distributed ("decentralized") processing.

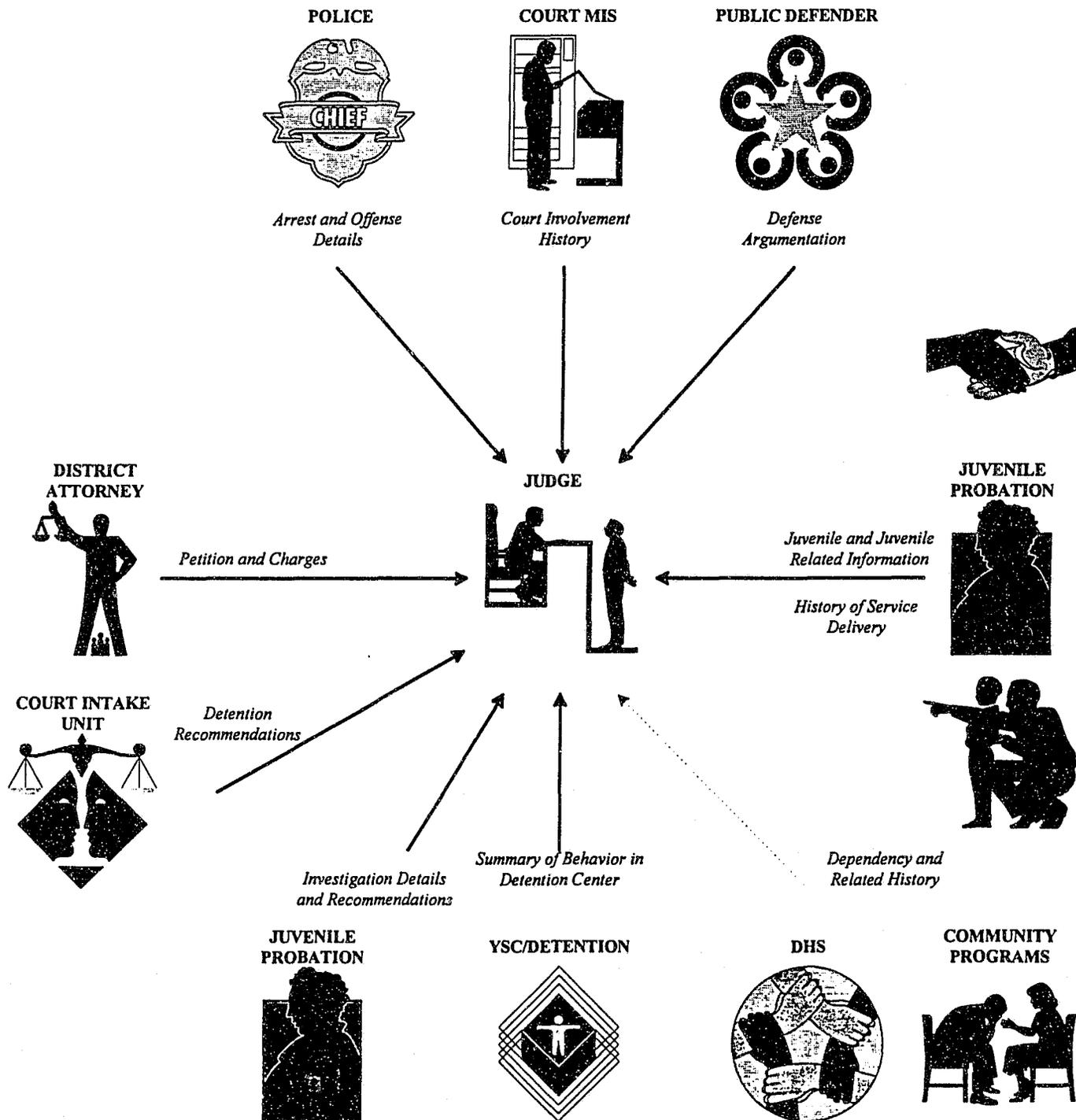
When analyzing the issue of centralization, one must address its three separate but closely related aspects:

- Centralization/decentralization of control, that determines the focus of decision making activities in the system or organization;
- Centralization/decentralization of physical location of sites and facilities; and
- Centralization/decentralization of function, that determines the responsibility for a specific activity within the structure of the system or organization.

It is imperative to note that relative independence of the three aspects justifies the existence of mixed strategies where the centralization (or decentralization) of one aspect does not necessarily imply the centralization (or decentralization) of another. Additionally, the level of centralization (or decentralization) is a factor capable of exhibiting considerable variance.

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Figure 7-8. Central Role of the Judge in Case Disposition



7.2.1 Centralization of Control

Centralization of control promotes continuity in organizational operations, but separates the makers of decisions from their environment.

Decentralization places the responsibility for decision making on lower level managers and encourages them to exploit innovative opportunities. This, nevertheless, can create problems if the lower level managers lack required competence, if they are not held accountable for their decisions, or if their decisions interfere with the overall goals of the organization.

The multifaceted nature of the environment of JJS and jurisdictional and operational independence of its participants complicate the issue of the centralization / decentralization of control. The structure of JJS, as well as the structure of its participating offices and organizations, with the multitude of operational units, number of programs and targeted consumer populations, and variety of available services and interventions further complicated by the fiscal aspects of service budgeting and service delivery, implies decentralization of control to ensure required independence of individual units. On the opposite side, large volumes and complex interrelationships of the maintained (or required but not effectively captured) information call for or, at least, imply centralization of databases and data processing tools and techniques.

Unique characteristics of JJS participants and potential conflicts of interests of these participants as they relate to service delivery and/or representation of consumers and their populations demand that the respective offices and organizations be sufficiently independent to ensure their flexibility and their responsiveness to the needs of the serviced consumer groups. At the same time, the leading role of the Family Court in case processing and existing interfaces between the participants and their interrelationships and interdependencies coupled with the emerging requirements of the continuity of care and/or intervention demand high level of data integration and uniform methods and techniques of data presentation and interpretation. The focus of JJIMS on the juvenile case justifies the centralization of control, with the Family Court playing the central role in major JJIMS decisions.

JJIMS and its processing environment should follow the overall management and administrative case processing patterns remaining reasonably independent from the data processing applications of individual offices and organizations to ensure the flexibility and the ability to respond timely and efficiently to the needs of its users. Obviously, such independence does not preclude the existence of the ongoing effective data interchange between JJIMS operated by the Court and other JJS participants, especially as it relates to various issues of case management, tracking, and control.

The pattern of the centralization of control should be supported through paying

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special attention within JJIMS on those issues that are essential to all or almost all participants of JJS, and specifically on the issues associated with consumer (juvenile) history and integrated case management.

7.2.2 Centralization of Physical Location

Centralization of physical location capitalizes on the economies of scale and preserves organizational integrity of operations. However, these advantages can be outweighed by costs of communications and maintaining close ties with the end users. In special cases, the requirement of rapid response to in-house or outside users may dictate the need and provide the justification for physical decentralization.

The geography of JJS participants, independence of its provider community, sufficiently large territory covered by its consumer base, and, last but not least, the diversity and the number of the existing standalone data processing systems make virtually impossible the existence of a centralized physical location. The needs of the JJIMS environment can, thereby, be supported either through an "add-on" to an existing MIS or through the creation of an independent application capable of offering its users systemwide access and interfaces. In any event, the data processing capacity of JJS, as a whole, will continue being represented by a physically decentralized topology and configuration.

7.2.3 Centralization of Function

Centralization of function enforces the implementation of accepted protocols, policies, procedures and standards, increases the productivity and specialization of involved personnel, and enhances monitoring of function related activities and associated costs. Decentralization of function is advantageous when the function being performed requires close cooperation with the end user community and when regular interaction with those responsible for the function would necessitate too much traffic from a centralized unit to user organizations and/or vice versa.

The relatively limited focus of integration (applicable case details and juvenile case history), the administrative, operational, and organizational independence of JJS participants, the independence of individual application systems, and the office and/or organization specific needs and approaches in data management and representation necessitate the existence of a centralized function with the responsibility to ensure uninterrupted flow of appropriate information among the participants within the confines of consumer data confidentiality regulations.

The centralized function and profile of JJS application maintenance and support activities is also determined by the need of constant and close interaction with the user community representing numerous offices and sites. Additionally, the multiplicity, diversity, and volatile nature of the existing MIS demand that the

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support staff be sufficiently knowledgeable of the environment of the JJS participants, both in terms of their information needs and their technical requirements.

The issue of the centralization of the function of technical (hardware, communications, and systems software) support does not require the understanding of the specific nature of the Juvenile Justice environment but demands pure data processing and MIS operations management background. This centralization should prove economically and organizationally beneficial to JJS responding to such factors as: implementation of accepted protocols, policies, procedures and standards, increase in the productivity and specialization of involved personnel, and enhanced ability of monitoring of function related activities and associated costs.

7.2.4 Conclusions

Taking into consideration the discussion above, one comes to recognize the fact that with regard to the issue of centralization / decentralization, a data processing environment should be developed under a mixed strategy that would combine centralization of control and function with decentralization of physical location. This strategy will provide JJS with the following features and capabilities:

- Facilitate information exchange among the existing MIS while retaining the flexibility and independence of these applications from one another and from the new installation targeted to support the needs of JJS, as a whole, defined, in most cases, by the Family Court with consideration given to the goals of other JJS participants;
- Establish and maintain a close relationship with the participating Data Processing organizations to ensure the implementation of systemwide solutions and the accessibility of the new integrated databases centrally controlled by a Court liaison;
- Continue housing the DP equipment of individual offices and organizations at their present locations or (in the event of any changes in the geography of JJS users) at the location of highest user concentration;
- Maintain the in-depth knowledge of a new JJIMS unit as it relates to the unique characteristics of the Juvenile Justice environment to ensure the ability of the unit to render adequate support to its end user community;
- Consider the implementation of the solutions to increase the level of standardization of the technical function, thereby creating the foundation for further data integration at the JJS level.

SECTION 7. INTERAGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

7.3 CLEARINGHOUSE CONCEPT

The clearinghouse concept has been developed by ACA in response to the requirements of various public system and government jurisdiction environments characterized by the multiplicity of participants acting independently or semi-independently in assessing the need and the status of a common consumer population, and in providing this consumer population with applicable services and/or interventions. In many cases, the interaction among said participants encompasses a wide variety of service/intervention related activities, including, without limitation, disposition planning, service/intervention planning, development and enhancement of the arrays of available services, service/intervention monitoring, funding and fiscal accountability, administrative, legal, and policy decisions.

The applicability of the clearinghouse concept to the environment of the Juvenile Justice System may be shown through the analysis of the following major characteristics of the information environment of the System detailed elsewhere in this document:

- Numerous participants of the System collect and have a great need for the maintenance and analysis of the information related to the case and the juvenile offender, who is an integral common element of all participating MIS.
- The participants of the System operate mostly independently and often pursue objectives incompatible with or contradictory to one another. Nevertheless, all Participants are bound by the common goal of reducing the overall frequency and severity of juvenile offenses and to protect the general public from the juvenile offenders.
- The case information, compiled independently by various participants of the System, addresses immediate goals of these participants with little or no consideration given to the potential value of information to other members of the System. Such an attitude is customary in large-scale environments with limited resources (both labor and fiscal) and diversity of requirements, some of which are highly specific to individual offices and organizations.
- The participants of the System recognize and respect each others *need to know* and *right to know* and are willing and interested in exchanging appropriate case and juvenile related information for as long as such an exchange is timely, trustworthy, uninterrupted, technically sound, practical, and economical.
- The participants of the System operate numerous information management systems varied in major objectives, scope and level of sophistication, topology, technical parameters and characteristics, philosophy of end user support, communication capabilities, security of access, etc. In this environment, the resolution of the data exchange policy and procedure matters by itself would not yield a satisfactory MIS, until technical issues are addressed and resolved in a manner consistent with policy decisions.

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- The maturity of the existing data systems, their independent original design, and, at times, the parochial attitudes of their "owners" considerably complicate information sharing and exchange in an environment characterized by a lack of standardization and uniformity in data presentation and interpretation. It is too often that under the same data element label, individual end users or their groups carry different, and potentially, contradictory meanings.

The above summary clearly indicates the need for a "universal" storage and translation mechanism that, without intrusion into the private matters of the individual participating MIS, would have the ability to normalize data presentation and interpretation while facilitating data exchange at a more technical hardware/software level. Technically again, such a mechanism is similar to the popular idea of the electronic data interchange which proves its feasibility and can be used as a measure of its anticipated benefits.

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Under the proposed clearinghouse concept, Juvenile Justice System participants will be submitting all required common information to a central facility ("Central Site") that will have the responsibility of:

- Receiving, editing, interpreting, and evaluating the incoming information for content, form, and completeness;
- Interfacing with the personnel of participating offices and organizations if and when submitted information does not pass editing and/or validation (i.e., when dispositions are reported against unknown juveniles, when submitted codes fail to be uniquely interpreted, etc.);
- Encoding accepted information to eliminate any generally recognizable juvenile identification criteria (e.g., social security number) satisfying, thereby, data confidentiality requirements;
- Storing all newly received information in a manner that would facilitate the dissemination of this information to its ultimate recipients within the Juvenile Justice System (end users);
- Identifying the end users of the information submitted by the participants and making the appropriate data available to these end users in a form "natural" (satisfactory) for the end user datasets;
- Receiving data requests from its users and forwarding applicable responses to the requesters, thereby ensuring requisite "feedback" and information interchange;
- Maintaining the "knowledge base" associated with the case and juvenile information "put on consignment" with individual participating MIS.

As can be seen, the clearinghouse software application (hereinafter "Clearinghouse") is viewed as a highly sophisticated "interpreter" whose interests are subservient to the interests of the parties it serves (various datasets and databases within the Juvenile Justice System). It is our recommendation to implement the Clearinghouse with the least imposition on the aforementioned parties while acting as a mediator and an arbitrator in those cases when interests of individual parties are inconsistent or contradictory.

In order to perform its role as an "interpreter", the Clearinghouse must be "taught" the languages of the parties it serves. In other words, it must know the content, the format, and the coding structures of the DP systems supplying the information and of the end user datasets that eventually receive the validated, interpreted, and encoded data. In this regard, the major challenge of the Clearinghouse implementation effort is to develop a method of "teaching" the system the "languages" of its served parties in a manner that is both efficient and practical in terms of time and associated cost.

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In general, the Clearinghouse is conceived as a combination of qualified personnel, computer hardware and software, and appropriate consensual policies and procedures, all under the centralized management of the Family Court acting on behalf of itself and other participants of the Juvenile Justice System (see Section 7.2.4). To a degree, the Clearinghouse is an entity unto itself, a type of a "black box" that has all the required means to perform its role of interpreter, mediator, and facilitator. The Clearinghouse, therefore, becomes an effective tool in the establishment and maintenance of uniform information management procedures while also serving as a buffer to protect participants from the direct impact of changing regulations upon individual data processing installations and datasets.

In order to effectively function as the "interpreter" detailed above, the Clearinghouse must successfully integrate the following major components:

- Flexible data receipt mechanism capable of accepting, storing, editing, "normalizing", and representing in a uniform manner the juvenile, disposition, service/intervention, and related information provided by the participants. The term "normalization" is used herein to designate the process which brings compatibility into the environment of multiple representations of identical data elements. In other words, if one participant does not make a distinction between *White Hispanic*, and *Black Hispanic*, coding all of them as *Hispanic*, while another participant does, the process of "normalization" will bring the ethnicity designators submitted by both participants to a consensual common denominator;
- Efficient data "cleaning" mechanism capable of affording the Juvenile Justice System the ability to "suspend" the processing of those information clusters (records, files, etc.) that could not pass the consensual editing and validation. Said data "cleaning" mechanism should allow the Clearinghouse, upon its interaction with the participants that submitted "dirty" data, to either recall and correct the "suspended" information clusters or to replace them (in part or in full) by repeating the submission-receipt cycle with individual participants;
- Data recording/registration mechanism to ensure full accountability of both the System, as a whole, and its participants with respect to the submission-receipt cycle;
- Data encoding mechanism to adequately protect the confidentiality of case and juvenile information while satisfying the needs of the end users as to their ability to recognize the received information at the case or individual level;
- Data storage and retrieval mechanism to substantiate the various processes and functions of the Clearinghouse, including, without limitation, the aforementioned data editing and validation, juvenile recognition, participant recognition, etc.;

SECTION 7. INTERAGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

- Data dissemination mechanism that will allow the System to satisfy the needs of the existing and future datasets (end users) as they relate to the information management needs;
- Facility to receive and interpret data content and location information that describes the data "on consignment" with the participating MIS.

Additionally, the Clearinghouse, complemented by and residing on the foundation of the Central Registry (see Section 4.7), is envisioned to become a sophisticated analytical tool that would address the needs of the Juvenile Justice System, as a whole, as well as the needs of its participants.

Benefits of the Clearinghouse as a Solution for Interagency Information Sharing

1. **Increases access to information:** Because the location of information is known and because access is easy and fast, use of information most relevant to decisions is maximized.
2. **Reduces the time it takes to retrieve information:** Because the Clearinghouse can access information electronically, with no guidance from the user, access time is minimized.
3. **Reduces the need for staff training:** Since access to the Clearinghouse is all that is necessary to access other information systems, and because the syntaxes of each system are programmed into the Clearinghouse, little knowledge is needed by the user to obtain needed information. Moreover, access to the Clearinghouse is programmed into screens prepared for each agency; users will be guided by user-friendly menus and will require appropriate passwords.
4. **Perhaps most importantly, the process of developing the Clearinghouse will necessitate the structuring of relationships among the agencies comprising the juvenile justice system.** This process will open up discussion about how each agency does business and facilitate choices about the need for changes in case processing, information development, intra-agency communication and inter-agency transfer of information.

Envisioning Use of the Clearinghouse

From the users perspective, the Clearinghouse can be thought of as an easy, quick single source of information that is actually contained in several discreet information systems. The user is not required to know how to access any of the several information systems from which information is imported; the Clearinghouse does the work. That is, the Clearinghouse, a computerized system of information transfer and translation, does the work for the user. All the user needs is a means for accessing the Clearinghouse and appropriate passwords.

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All of the work of accessing different information systems is done by means of programs written into the Clearinghouse. For example, for any piece of data that the user wishes, the Clearinghouse contains information on the location of that data, the protocols for accessing the information system that contains the data, the capacity to locate the file that contains the information as well as the portion of the file needed, the language in which the data are written, and the form in which to return the information to the user.

Queries forwarded to the Clearinghouse need not be complex exercises. Each user can have the capacity to ask for specific pieces of information on particular clients, but in most cases queries will be performed by means of standard screens created for the user. Behind each field on the screen, and invisible to the user, are commands regarding the location of that piece of information, the file to look for, the location of the data in the file, and so on. To the user, it will appear that the Clearinghouse is merely filling in the blank fields on the screen.

In some cases, the Clearinghouse will itself have the information needed. Assuming that the Clearinghouse contains a Central Repository of basic information, such as demographic information, case status, the official currently responsible for the case, and so on, the search will be brief. In other cases, the Clearinghouse will be programmed with information as to the location of the information. It will then commence to search those locations for the data. In some cases, a password window will pop up on the screen asking the user for a password, without which the search will terminate.

Let us try an example of how the Clearinghouse might work in the Court Intake Unit of Pretrial Services.

Imagine that an Intake Unit Officer is deciding on whether or not secure detention is needed in a specific case. Currently this decision depends heavily on offense characteristics, prior offense data, existing bench warrants and whether or not the youth has absconded from a placement. But it may be the case that this decision should be informed by information on the family situation of the youth and whether or not the youth is attending school regularly. Moreover, since identification of youths and accuracy of addresses and phone numbers is such a significant problem for the Intake Unit, verification of this information would be desirable. Intake decisions must be made quickly, since the police are prohibited from holding youths in police lockups for more than six hours. Therefore, locating this information, especially in the middle of the night is currently impossible. Moreover, only the school board's information system contains attendance data and much of the relevant family information is contained in the FACTS system operated by DHS.

With the Clearinghouse in operation, the Intake worker would call up on a PC a screen that contained fields for each of the needed pieces of information. This PC would be wired to the Clearinghouse or would be connected to the Clearinghouse by means of a modem. It may also be part of a local area network (LAN). The Intake Officer would

SECTION 7. INTERAGENCY INFORMATION NEEDS

enter a few identifiers, and with the push of a button, a program residing behind the screen would begin sending queries to the Clearinghouse to locate and transfer the desired information to the Intake Officer's screen. The Clearinghouse, having been programmed with the knowledge of the location of each item of information and the protocols necessary to access and transfer this information, would begin its work, accessing the school board's MIS to locate attendance data for this juvenile for a specific period of time, accessing FACTS for information regarding DHS involvement with the family, accessing the Juvenile Court Computer for a prior offense and disposition history, and so on. At certain points in the process, the Clearinghouse would ask the Officer to enter a password in order that access could be gained to a specific information system.

Note that the Officer is not being given access to any whole information system. The Clearinghouse asks only for specific information on specific individuals; no other access is permitted. Moreover, knowledge about how to access other information systems directly can be controlled by not sharing this information with the user. The Clearinghouse may be programmed to instruct the Officer to enter the reason why access is being requested. The response becomes data for management of the system.

Operation of the Clearinghouse

The Clearinghouse is not a data entry point. If fully implemented, it is not a source of human assistance, except for help with identifying and solving access problems. The Clearinghouse, fully implemented, is a machine -- a programmed computer system that communicates with other computers of various kinds. Readers who have used Internet have, in fact, used a Clearinghouse.

Obviously, the Clearinghouse will require some personnel to manage the system. Any change in any one of the connected information systems will require changing related information in the Clearinghouse. Problems will arise that will need to be addressed rapidly, whether they be with the hardware, the software or the programs within the Clearinghouse. Denial of access to data may need to be explained; incorrect information will necessitate follow-up to correct the problem.

A critical determinant of personnel needs is the level of automation across the participating agencies; the greater the capacity of each agency to transfer information electronically, the fewer persons will be needed to operate the Clearinghouse. Implementation of the Clearinghouse can be conceptualized in terms of levels, ranging from fully automated to partially automated. Under a partially automated version, some of the automated capacity of the system is replaced by manual systems. For example, if a needed item of information is located in a computer that has no file transfer capability, then the information must be read off the system and re-entered manually into the Clearinghouse for transfer to the user's PC. This method is similar to that now used with the Juvenile Court Computer. In the most extreme case, a person monitoring the Clearinghouse would use a telephone to access someone who could retrieve the information from a manual file. Data entry might then occur at the location of the Clearinghouse. Our interviews with users for this study

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indicate that the telephone and manual files are now the norm for information transfer across the juvenile justice system.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS for MIS DEVELOPMENT

8.1 CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Certain developments in the area of information systems are already underway.

1. DHS has agreed to extend the FACTS system into the Youth Study Center.
2. The Family Court is participating in the incremental development of a Wide Area Network, under the leadership of the Court Administrator for the First Judicial District.
4. Family Court and the School Board have reached an agreement that enables Court personnel to access directly the school system's automated educational files on individual juveniles.
3. DJJS (DHS) is developing, through the Crime and Justice Research Institute and with the active involvement of Family Court, a program information and evaluation system (*ProDES*) that will support individual program development, DJJS program evaluation, and disposition planning.
4. The Presley Ridge Research Center and PCCS are developing an outcome-based information system for private providers of services to delinquent and dependent youths.
5. The Juvenile Court Judges Commission is developing a statewide probation information system that will support probation departments in small counties that lack the capacity to develop their own automated information systems.
6. The Crime and Justice Research Institute is conducting a population analysis of the Youth Study Center to facilitate better population management.
7. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania are developing a tracking system to follow clients across service systems.

The first and third of these efforts have benefited directly from the research done for the project that is the subject of this report.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL AGENCY MIS DEVELOPMENT

Our first two recommendations pertain to development at the level of the individual agency.

SECTION 8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MIS DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation 1: We recommend that priority be given to developing automated client files within the Family Court.

The current J-File structure is inadequate to serve the many decisions made about juvenile cases. Moreover, because existing information is so difficult to retrieve, offense information dominates many decisions in which decision makers clearly need social history, family history, school and other similar information. Case management and supervision of caseloads are also made difficult by the cumbersomeness of the existing manual system.

This process should avoid the mere automation of the existing J-Files, which were designed for a manual system. Instead information needs should be re-assessed and an information system designed around usage, maximizing the potential of available technologies.

We have provided detailed needs assessments and detailed vision information in Sections 5 and 6 of this report that should be consulted as the case information system is developed.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that efforts be made as quickly as possible to fully automate the operation of the Youth Study Center.

No agency of the juvenile justice system presents more problems to policy and decision makers than the YSC. The system is unable to control the Center's population, and resources necessary to run a safe, humane program are severely lacking. Without better and more timely information, these problems are likely to persist, despite the tremendous strides that have been made in improving the management of this facility.

As with the J-files, we have provided detailed needs assessments and detailed vision information in Sections 5 and 6 of this report that are relevant to this area of development.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYSTEM-WIDE MIS DEVELOPMENT

The following recommendations are directed at the juvenile justice system as a whole, recognizing the fact that the agencies that make up this system share a the same clients and exist to respond to the problem of juvenile delinquency.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that an interagency policy group be established for the following purposes:

- a. **develop a common vision of the juvenile justice system, including the roles and responsibilities of each juvenile justice agency**
- b. **determine access to child and family information across agency lines**

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- c. **develop interagency information sharing agreements**
- d. **establish a mechanism for future information system policy making**

At present, there is no policy group that is working to develop the juvenile justice system. Knowledge about information needs and information system capacities is rarely shared among the agencies of this system. Consequently, decisions about individual cases are made without needed information, significant gaps have formed between ideal and actual goals, and interagency relations are often unnecessarily strained.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that the all public juvenile justice agencies and the Defenders Association, under the leadership of the Family Court, join in developing an information system that will make possible timely access to the information system identified in this report. Further, we recommend that this developmental task be guided by the Central Registry and Clearinghouse models presented in Section 7 of this report.

The process of developing a system wide information system is not one that can be left to technicians. The information system must fit the strategies, structures and political realities of this system, and only senior policy makers are in the position to define these. Therefore, this process must involve directly the senior policy makers of each juvenile justice agency.

At the same time, users of the information system, including line staff, must participate in shaping the specific elements of the system, including the data itself, mechanisms for data entry, mechanisms for retrieval of information, routine reports, and inquiry capabilities.

The structural recommendations in Section 4 and 7, with respect to the use of a Central Registry and Clearinghouse are particularly appropriate for the interagency exchange of case-related data and for the development of system-wide analyses of trends and patterns. We have identified specific case information that is needed by every agency that has case responsibility. It stands to reason that the capacity to share those bits of this information captured by each of these agencies at a time when access to this information can best serve decision making would benefit the system as a whole, including the youths whose cases are being processed.

The existence of a clearinghouse system would enable each agency to benefit from the information systems of all other participating agencies. Access and confidentiality policies will need to be developed to facilitate this electronic interchange of data, but these issues are manageable, and are well documented in Appendix E to this report.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that the MIS Work Group continue to serve as the interagency mechanism for interagency information system planning.

SECTION 8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MIS DEVELOPMENT

The MIS Work Group has worked together off and on for three years on the concept of an interagency information system. Its experience and commitment cannot easily be replaced. Moreover, any interagency planning group would undoubtedly contain most, if not all, of the same people.

Recommendation 6: We recommend that an individual be appointed within Family Court to the position of JJIMS Director and that this individual be assigned the task of coordinating and leading the development of a system-wide information system.

The position of JJIMS Director should be seen as a senior policy level position, within Family Court. Information is the backbone of the system, and the flow of information will determine the capacities of each participating agency and the system as a whole to carry out those strategies selected for achieving their goals.

Efficient development depends upon strategic thinking. Since systems cannot think and often interfere with thinking, it is critical that an individual, whose role is dedicated to MIS development, drive the developmental process. To put this responsibility in the hands of an interagency committee, such as the MIS Work Group, without appointment of a leader, would inhibit drastically the process of development. Further, the MIS Director should chair the MIS Work Group or the committee formed to develop the JJIMS.

Appendix A

INTERVIEWEE LIST

LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

DJJS:

INTERVIEWED

- 1 Pat Russell
- 2 Jim Anthony
- 3 Jesse Williams
- 4 Barry Weisberg (Administrative)
- 5 Daljit Ranajee (DHS, Systems)
- 6 Steven Oakman (PCCD Monitor)
- 7 Jim Walker (Training)
8. Martha Poller (DHS, Court Reps)
9. Paul Bottalo (DHS, Court Reps.)

FAMILY COURT:

INTERVIEWED

- 1 Naomi Post
- 2 Mike Gavaghan
- 3 Joseph Razzano
- 4 Gerald Schrass
- 5 Bill Joyner/Mary Jackson
- 6 Ken Hale
- 7 Marie Stank
- 8 Joseph Wulko
- 9 Susan McFadden
10. Frank Davis,
11. Bruce Berger
12. Caesar Williams,
13. John Maynes
14. Bill McCoy
15. Thomas Quinn
16. Bernadette Jones
17. James King
18. Debbie Crump
19. Bill Padden
20. Joe Lynn
21. Lesley Lee
22. Amy Birenbaum
23. Barb Richardson
24. Vince Stankiewicz
25. Ted Shearer
26. Frank Muse
27. Adrienne Zarello
28. John Irvine
29. Carol Fenney
30. Ervin Davis
31. George Eckhardt
32. Lynn Roman
33. Richard Jones
34. Herman Walker

- 23 Booker T Poole (Statistician)
24. Johnny Smith (Transportation)

Court And Community:-

- 1 Gus Kierans
- 2 J Randolph (CBDS Administrator)
- 3 A Hedgpath (CBDS Supervisor)
- 4 G Allen (CBDS Supervisor)
- 5 Joan Adams (CBDS Court Liaison)
- 6 Mr Mackey (SW II)
- 7 John Bates (SW II)
- 8 Delores Robertson (CBDS In Home Detention SW)
- 9 Verdell Ganges (DPU Supervisor)
- 10 DPU Workers
- 11 Cleora Levettters (SCOP Director)
- 12 SCOP Supervisors (2)
- 13 SCOP Monitors (3)
- 14 M Cottellese (SCM Supervisor)
- 15 Shared Case Management Workers (2)

School District:-

Dec 3, 10:00

35. Sam Jenkins
36. Mr. Mascantonio

DA - FAMILY COURT:

INTERVIEWED

- 1 John Delaney
- 2 Carol Weiner
- 3 Steve Marino
- 4 Ken Zylstra
- 5 Mike Cleary

DEFENDER'S ASSN.:

INTERVIEWED

- 1 Dave Rosen

POLICE - JAD:

INTERVIEWED

- 1 Jim Boyle
- 2 Eileen Bonner
- 3 Ofcr. Dunlap (East Division)
- 4 Ofcr. Ray Crespo (JAD Gang)
- 5 Ofcr. Bob Ratchel (JAD Gang)
- 6 Dennis Cullen
- 7 Ofcr. Cosden (East Division)

YSC:-

INTERVIEWED

- 1 Vanessa Williams-Cain
2. Curtis Ingram
3. Ed Jones
4. Denise Clayton
5. Clarence Holmes
6. Mr Battle (Counseling Supervisor)
7. Mr Riddick (Counseling Supervisor)
8. Mr Crawford (YDC II)
9. Mr Vernon Price (YDC II)
- 10 Ms Gauthney (YDC II)
- 11 Mr James Evans (YDC II)
12. Tom Quick (Maintenance)
- 13 Jerome Wilkerson (Maintenance)
- 14 Ben Sharp (YDC I)
- 15 Jack Stevenson (YDC I)
- 16 Lynn Collins (YDC I)
- 17 Barry Hammond (YDC I)
- 18 Ms Bailey (Center Control)
- 19 Mr Jordan (Admissions)
- 20 Mr J Walker (Processing)
- 21 Solomon Gathers (Social Work Supervisor)
- 22 Social Workers

Appendix B

DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Family Court

Person interviewed: Jack McCann

How is information stored?

The Family Court Computer system contains limited information, through a series of menus, on scheduling, cases, hearing results, juvenile history, and name searches. The information is protected by security codes which prevent unauthorized access to the system.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N)

YES

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

There are various forms/reports that are available through the computer.

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

The Family Court computer is a mainframe system with terminals located throughout the courthouse and remote locations, such as police districts and the Defender's Assn. building. Since this is a mainframe system, the hardware allows for considerable memory storage and expanded applications of the system are definite possibilities.

How many records currently?

Unknown

Who does data entry?

Secretarial assistance is used in the entry of data.

Who assigns identifier codes?

Unknown

Who has direct access?

Court personnel have access to the system through the use of their employment number and security ID number. The aforementioned external agencies now have access to the system through remote terminals located in their respective buildings and use a similar security procedure for access.

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these records stored?

When archived? Where? By whom?

How many records currently?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

PROBATION COURT INTAKE UNIT

Person interviewed: S. Masciantonio

How is information stored?

Probation Intake is a part of the Family Court's computer system. It also has a manual data system of forms, logs, and lists.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) Yes

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

Carla from clerical enters DA's Charging Petition for the pre-trial cases. The petition for detention cases is entered by the clerk in Court Room 1.

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?
Unknown

How many records currently?

As of 6/23/93 the j-number assigned was 320,514. Carla reports on the total number of cases twice a month to Research and Planning at Family Court.

Who does data entry?

Carla

Who assigns identifier codes?

After checking for previous record by the juvenile's name and by the mother's name, Carla assigns the juvenile with a j-number.

Who has direct access?

All the staff (supervisors, intake interviews, clerks)

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

FORMS:

1. DA's charging petition
2. Facts Sheet from the police
3. Printout of criminal history on family court system
4. PSI or Problem Severity Index (Pages 1-3)
5. Appointment of defender form
6. Reason for Detention Form or Recommendation Form
7. Notice to juvenile and parent form
8. Referral for CBDS form
9. Official Release Form (Control movement out of Youth Study Center for routine assessments, emergencies, and release from detention.)

LISTS:

1. Preliminary List - Lists of arrests from the day before
2. Detention List - List of youth for detention hearings
3. Pre-trial List - List of youth released to parents and here for pre-trial hearings

LOGS:

A running daily list of arrests and action taken i.e. released or detained. There is a log for males and one for females.

FILES:

A file is complete once it has forms 1-5 for each youth and forms 6 and 8 if detained. If the youth is released to the parent's custody then form 7 is required. This file is present for court hearings, all except the Facts Sheet.

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these record stored? When archived? Where? By whom?

Probation Intake keeps a copy of these forms for a year and then discards them. The logs are kept for 2 years. PSIs are transported to Family Court.

How many records currently?

Unknown

Who assigns identifier codes?

The j-number is the identifier for this manual system. This j-number gets assigned by Carla for those youth who do not have a number and who's family also does not have a record.

Who has direct access?

All the staff (supervisors, intake interviews, clerks)

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

DA to Court Intake Unit

The DACU sends a charging petition which gets printed out at Intake.

The DA's office also faxes over JAD's Facts Sheet or Report of Arrest.

Court Intake Unit to JAD/ Police

CIU intake interviewers make a decision whether to hold the youth or release to parents. They call the Operations Room and inform them of their decision. For those youth released to parent's custody, CIU notifies the date of intake interview. For those that are to be detained, CIU asks that the youth be transported to the YSC.

Court Intake Unit to YSC

CIU lets Admissions know who to expect. Admissions calls CIU to verify admission of bench warrant cases and out-of-county arrests. Admissions completed forms that update CIU of demographic information of bench warrant arrests and out-of-county arrests.

Court Intake Unit to CBDS

For cases where youth are released to parents but no one claims the youth, CIU completes forms recommending detention at CBDS or alternate agencies.

Court Intake Unit to Family Court

Family Court/ Probation receives the PSIs.

Family Court, Juv. Probation, State Intensive Aftercare

Person interviewed: Joe Tollen

How is information stored?

This specific unit within the Juvenile Probation Dept. maintains a system wide commitment tracking program for days in care of juveniles in the delinquent court side of Family Court. The program tracks arrival dates, release dates and monitors transfers and recommits. There is a basic problem with this program and it is caused by a lag time from date of event to the posting date in the computer. It takes a certain amount of time for an arrival or release notification to be generated and entered into the computer. There is another program that Tollen used in the past (it is no longer used) and it dealt with monitoring contacts on a unit level. The basic information used was the Probation Officer's name, the institution, and the arrival/release dates with respect to the number of days in care.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N)

YES, refer to the above description.

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

There are no forms that are computerized.

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

Tollen uses a 286 IBM personal computer and his own personal 386-20 IBM lap-top. The program that Tollen uses is called CLIPPER and is D Base compatible. However, he is moving into Windows because it is easier to use.

How many records currently?

Currently there are 1300 records, but there are about 300 that should not be in that count. The error is caused by the lag time problem addressed above.

Who does data entry?

The only person who works on this system is Tollen. He knows the program, the correct way to input the data and the Family Court process.

Who assigns identifier codes?

Tollen uses the J - File number with an attached sequential commitment number that he assigns as it comes into the office.

Who has direct access?

Tollen is the only person who really has direct access.

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these record stored?

When archived? Where? By whom?

How many records currently?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

YOUTH STUDY CENTER: ADMISSIONS, PROCESSING

Person interviewed: Mr. Jordan, Mr. Walker

How is information stored?

Admission workers fill out two blue cards on each youth and initiate paper work on the Clothes and Effects Sheet. They also maintain a log of what valuables are found on the youth and placed in the safe. For youth arrested outside Philadelphia and youth brought in because of bench warrants, they complete a form for Probation Intake updating demographic information. Their manual system comprises the admission cards, Clothes and Effects Sheet, forms for probation intake, and a log of effects for the safe. The Processing workers complete the Clothes and Effects Sheet and retain all copies after giving the youth her copy.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) No

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

How many records currently?

Who does data entry?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)
admission cards
Clothes and Effects Sheet
forms for probation intake
log of effects for the safe.

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these records stored?

Admission Cards go up to medical. Once nurse signs off on these two cards, one goes to the residential unit and one stays at Center Control, the hub of information. The Clothes and Effects Sheet goes up to processing where it is completed and stored. These sheets are stored at Processing by sequence number as well as name. Both the cards come back down to Admissions if the youth needs to leave the YSC for any reason. These cards move back to Center Control and the unit once the youth returns. Once the youth leaves YSC the blue admission cards go to the record room where they are stored in the youth's file for 5 years from the date of last arrest. Records get expunged after the youth comes of age or for 5 years from date of last arrest. Family Court is to be informed before records get expunged.

When archived? Where? By whom?

The cards join the other social history records generated by social workers and get stored in the record room located near Center Control and the statistician's office.

How many records currently?

Information from admissions cards started getting automated from July 1, 1992. From July 1, 1992 till July 13, 1993 there have been 5059 cases. For 1989 approximately 4999 cases, 5000 for 1990, and 4700 for 1991. So there approximately 16000 cases. Each visit to the YSC constitutes a separate case.

Who assigns identifier codes?

The youth's name (last name, first) is generally the identifier. The Clothes and Effects sequence number is one of two identifiers at Processing and gets assigned at Admissions in a sequential fashion.

Who has direct access?

Admission workers, Processing workers, child care staff on units, the statistician Mr. Poole, Center Control.

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

AUTOMATED SYSTEM NOT DIRECTLY ACCESSIBLE TO ADMISSIONS:

Mr. Booker T. Poole, the acting statistician, has access to family court's computer system. He has a system which he uses to generate statistics.

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

A running log sheet extracts information from the admission cards and admission log and gets entered into Paradox program. One copy is kept on file and one gets sent to Marcella Szumanski at Juvenile Training Department at Shippensburg. She is concerned with monitoring that no dependent youth enter the Youth study Center.

This information is used to generate statistics on cases on a daily, monthly, quarterly, and annually basis. This includes statistics such as average daily count at the YSC, numbers broken down by race, charges, gender, length of stay, referrals (arrests, courts) etc.

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?
Updated 286 with 640K and 16 MHz IBM compatible;
Software:- PARADOX

How many records currently?

Since July 1, 1992 there are 5059 cases to date (7/13/93) These are case based records for each time the youth came into the YSC.

Who does data entry?

Mr. Poole, the statistician.

Who assigns identifier codes?

The name serves as the identifier.

Who has direct access?

Mr. Poole, the statistician.

MEDICAL RECORDS NOT DIRECTLY ACCESSIBLE TO YSC STAFF:

Medical records are maintained on youth by the contracted agency but are not accessible to staff of the YSC.

YOUTH STUDY CENTER, CHILD CARE

How is information stored?

Child care has a manual system with logs, forms, and lists.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) No

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

How many records currently?

Who does data entry?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

FORMS:

Blue Admission Card (prepared by Admissions)

Incident Report

Security and Contraband Inspection Report

Census Sheets

YDC II Check List

Child Care Staff Assignments

Supervisory Tour Check List

Daily Living Unit Activity

Memo for approval of overtime expenditures

Child Care Overtime Expenditures Sheet

Overtime Control Sheet

Resident Adjustment Summary

LOGS:

Unit Log Book

Admission Logs

LISTS:

Daily House List

Drop Sheet

Release Sheet

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these record stored? When archived? Where? By whom?

Starting from 1989 all forms and logs are kept on file.

Incident Reports are catalogued by month/year and kept for 5 years and/or till the youth turns 18. The census reports and admission cards get sent to Center Control to be used for statistical purposes and the latter is to be filed in social records. All other forms and logs are catalogued by date and archived from 1989 onwards. No forms or logs have been tossed out. These forms are stored in the Assistant Operation Directors office.

How many records currently?

Unknown

Who assigns identifier codes?

Notes on residents is maintained in the Unit Log Book and the resident's name serves as the identifier. BMS (Behavior Management System) points are assigned by name and the Resident Adjustment Summary is made out for each resident based on points earned in the BMS system.

Who has direct access?

Need to find out

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored. The Youth Detention Counselors write the Resident Adjustment Summaries filled out for each youth held at the Youth Study Center. These summaries are placed in the folder that accompanies the youth to court and is available to the judge. One copy gets placed in the Social Records Folder in the record room. These folders are arranged by name.

The Unit Log Book can be subpoenaed by the court.

YOUTH STUDY CENTER: SOCIAL WORKERS

How is information stored?

Social Workers provide youth with an orientation to the Youth Study Center, develop service plans and maintain list of all youth's contacts while at YSC. The information system is a manual one consisting of forms and logs.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) No

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

A social record folder on the detained youth includes:
Resident Face Record
Assessment Data/Service Plan
Case Narrative Sheet
ICAR (Individual Case Management Activity Record)
Detention Status and Discharge Summary

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these record stored? When archived? Where? By whom?

The folder is catalogued by name and kept in cabinets for active cases. Once youth leave the YSC, the folders are maintained in the record room. If a youth returns, the folder is retrieved and updated for recent visit. These social record folders also will contain the admission cards and Resident Adjustment Summaries.

How many records currently?

Unknown

Who assigns identifier codes?

The youth's record are maintained by last name, first name.

Who has direct access?

Staff

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

The social workers can contribute to the Resident Adjustment Summaries filled out for each youth held at the Youth Study Center. These summaries are placed in the folder that accompanies the youth to court and is available to the judge.

COMMUNITY BASED DETENTION SERVICES (CBDS)

Person interviewed: Nelson Igunjobi

How is information stored?

CBDS has access to family court's computer system via a terminal centrally located in their work area. Their information system is a manual one of forms, logs, cards and lists.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) No

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

How many records currently?

Who does data entry?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

CARDS:

Rolodex name cards with CBDS #

FORMS:

1. CY-61 or Eligibility Determination Form
2. 85-29 or Agency bill
3. Medical Form or Free of Contagion Form
4. Intake Sheet or Face Sheet
5. Narrative Sheet
6. Release Form (If detained at YSC)
7. Court Commit
8. Investigation Report
9. Notice of abscondence
10. Memo to probation intake reporting abscondence

FILE:

A CBDS youth file is complete when forms numbered 1 through 7 and, if needed, 8 through 10 are present. If youth has been to CBDS before, they get the same CBDS# and the file gets updated with more current forms.

LOGS:

1. DESK LOG is a daily activity log where names of youth entering CBDS, youth leaving for placement, names of those making court appointments, and any incident reports get logged.
2. RED BOOK is a dairy for court liaison Ms. Adams where staff note incidents and AWOLs for Ms. Adams to report.
3. NUMBERS LOG is a running list of numbers assigned to CBDS youth by last name, first name, date of birth.

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these record stored? When archived? Where? By whom?
Files are stored by CBDS# in file cabinets in the main CBDS office area.

How many records currently?
As of 4/21/93 there are 19,161 clients.

Who assigns identifier codes?
Any staff member can do so.

Who has direct access?
Only CBDS staff

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

CBDS Placement Agencies

Forms 2 through 7 comprise a complete package that CBDS provides the placement agency.

The agency provides CBDS with the following:

1. Adjustment Reports
2. Incident Reports
3. AWOL Reports

Court Clerk

Sometimes if there are any questions about what the court commit says, CBDS will contact the court clerk.

Court Intake Unit

CBDS checks with probation intake if the court commit is same as CIU's copy. If a CBDS youth is not in-house, then CIU is asked about youth's whereabouts. CIU also completes an official release form for each youth committed to CBDS and held temporarily at the Youth Study Center.

Youth Study Center

Medical provides a "Free of Contagion" form on youth committed to CBDS.

DHS SYSTEMS

Person interviewed: Daljit Ranajee

How is information stored?

Automated only - LAN and Mainframe.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N)

Yes

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

LAN IBM TOKEN All of DHS

Mainframe PhilCliff, FACTS in Parallel

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

LAN=imp, Lotus 1-2-3, Dbase IV

FACTS=no limit, 320 mb now available; database in ETABASE,

Language is NATURAL, IBM 3081 going to 3090

How many records currently?

FACTS has 1.9 million records, [15,000 families, 30,000 children, 120,000 (open and closed)]

Who does data entry?

Information processing room and record room with total staff of 20.

Who assigns identifier codes?

Pin automatically generated for each person by the system.

Who has direct access?

Depending on security level, anybody in C&Y has inquiry level access. This also includes the DHS Law Department, Health Department, and MH/MR.

DHS Finance Department does placement IVE billing and has on-line access to the state medic system i.e. CIS.

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these record stored?

When archived? Where? By whom?

How many records currently?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

DA's Office, Juvenile Division, Habitual Offender Unit

Person interviewed: John Delaney

How is information stored?

Information is stored in two formats in this office based on the type of case. Manual files are kept on each defendant/case and a personal computer is only used to store information about habitual offenders.

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) YES

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

There are no forms that are computerized at this time.

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

A 640K Wang personal computer with Q & A software is used by the Habitual Offender Unit to store their automated files.

How many records currently?

There are approximately 1100 records.

Who does data entry?

Joe Danella, the Habitual Offender Unit law clerk does all of the data entry. He must go through hard files to obtain the data that is entered into the computer.

Who assigns identifier codes?

The defendant's last name is the identifier for a record. Therefore, no one person creates the identifier for a record.

Who has direct access?

The only people permitted access to the files are the secretaries, ADAs and the law clerk.

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)

The trial files for all cases are kept on paper.

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these records stored?

These files are kept in boxes in the Juvenile Division office, Family Court Bldg., for five years.

When archived? Where? By whom?

The files are supposed to be archived after five years and sent to a city contracted storage company, but because of the costs involved the files are being kept at the Juvenile Division office for longer than five years.

How many records currently?

There are approximately 1500 files for the last three years, with an unknown total number of files.

Who assigns identifier codes?

The defendant's last name is used as the identifier code.

Who has direct access?

The office staff are the only ones to have direct access to the files.

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

Defender's Assn.

Person interviewed: Dave Rosen

How is information stored?

Files are kept on clients based on two formats: red files are for those juveniles held in detention (any detention facility) and white files are for those juveniles who were released (not held in detention).

AUTOMATED DATA SYSTEM:-

Do you have an automated system? (Y/N) NO, however, they do have access to the Family Court computer.

IF YES:-

What forms are computerized? (Attach copies)

What capacity? Memory? Software/ hardware configurations?

How many records currently?

Who does data entry?

Who assigns identifier codes?

Who has direct access?

MANUAL DATA SYSTEM:-

What files/ forms/ logs are kept on paper? (Attach copies)
Confidential files are kept on each client based on the aforementioned file format.

Where/ how are they stored? How long are these records stored?

Files are kept for three years in the office.

When archived? Where? By whom?

After three years files are moved to a private storage company to be archived.

How many records currently?

There are over 100,000 records

Who assigns identifier codes?

The petition number is used for identifiers.

Who has direct access?

The only people who have direct access to information are Defender Assn. personnel.

Does any form/ log/ piece of information get shared with any other agency? Investigate how that information gets stored.

Appendix C

**SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION IN JUVENILE JUSTICE:
LEGAL, ETHICAL, AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

By Tamryn J. Etten and Robert F. Petrone

April 1994

**SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION IN JUVENILE JUSTICE:
LEGAL, ETHICAL, AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Abstract

Decision makers in juvenile justice systems often complain they can not get information they need from other juvenile justice agencies to make decisions. This can lead to resentment between juvenile justice agency workers, duplication of data collections efforts, and a breakdown in communication and functioning of the juvenile justice system. This paper reviews the legal, ethical, and practical barriers to information sharing among juvenile justice agencies and suggests practical steps to overcome these barriers. This report reviews documents by private and/or public organizations with an interest in information sharing, state and federal Supreme Court decisions, state and federal statutes, government documents, and law review and journal articles.

The report indicates there are few legal barriers to information sharing between parties with "legitimate interests," there are ethical issues to both sharing and withholding information, and that practical constraints are the primary reasons why agencies within many jurisdictions don't share information. Namely, information territorialism most often is rooted in habit and long-standing practice, and/or a lack of established policies and procedures regarding information sharing. The paper concludes with a 20 step prescription which could assist a jurisdiction in developing an integrated information system built on information sharing.

This research was conducted under contract with the National Center for Juvenile Justice of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges for their project funded by a cooperative agreement with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the United States Department of Justice. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or endorsement of the National Center, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, or any other agency or person.

**SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION IN JUVENILE JUSTICE:
LEGAL, ETHICAL, AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

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SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION IN JUVENILE JUSTICE: LEGAL, ETHICAL, AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Confidentiality of Juvenile Records

Historically, the creation of a separate justice system for youths, which began with the start of the Juvenile Court in Chicago in 1899, was designed to spare juveniles from harsh proceedings in adult court, punitive and unseemly conditions of adult jails and penitentiaries, and the stigma of being branded "criminal" (McGarrell, 1988; Platt, 1969). Influenced by Social Darwinism and positive criminology's emphasis on external "causes" of crime, the juvenile justice system embraced the philosophy that juvenile misconduct was not a product of the juvenile's choosing, but was caused by his or her environment or heredity. Thus, this justice system adopted a less punitive, more therapeutic attitude than the adult criminal justice system, and along with it, a notion that the inculpable juvenile's records should be sealed (Altman, 1974; President's Commission, 1968).

While many original juvenile court acts did not provide for the confidentiality of juvenile court proceedings or records, confidentiality was practiced by most courts which deemed it unfair to brand a juvenile as criminal and an impediment to the youth's rehabilitation (Altman, 1974; Kfoury, 1983; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). This rehabilitation could take an indeterminate amount of time, and juveniles were released from treatment when they were "well."

Following a trend in the adult criminal justice system in the late 1960s, the principles of juvenile non-culpability and rehabilitation were called into question. The criticism was that the application of these principles was not reducing juvenile crime and that juveniles who committed similar offenses were not being treated equally (President's Commission, 1968; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a; 1988a). In addition, civil libertarians began constitutionally challenging the informal proceedings and indeterminate sentencing practices of many juvenile courts. Through several cases, the U.S. Supreme Court mandated juvenile courts to provide juveniles with most of the same due process rights as adults [see *Kent v. United States*, 383 U.S. 541, 86 S. Ct. 1045 (1966); *In re Gault*, 387 U.S. 1, 87 S.Ct. 1428 (1967)]. A juvenile adjudication of delinquency was now being closely paralleled with an adult determination of guilt, at least in the reasoning of the Court (National Center for Juvenile Justice, 1991; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a).

This trend coincided with the growing public perception of a juvenile crime wave in the 1970s, which translated into a perception of increased juvenile gang activity in the 1980s (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). This was coupled with a call from critics that, for the safety of the public, confidentiality practices be relaxed (Kfoury, 1983). While many states relaxed their policies regarding juvenile offenders tried as adults, those over a certain age, with prior records, and/or charged with crimes that would be considered felonies in the adult system, most have continued to adhere to the practice of keeping juvenile records confidential (Matthew Bender, 1992; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982b).

Confidentiality Defined and Practiced

Juvenile records collected in most jurisdictions involve two parts: a legal history of alleged and adjudicated delinquent acts and a social history which describes the juvenile's social

environment, however defined (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). Either or both parts of juvenile records may be collected and maintained by any of a number of agencies that come into contact with the juvenile: police, courts, prosecution and defense counsel, service providers, and the state (Hobbs, 1991a). In addition, social history records may be maintained by schools the juvenile attends and child welfare agencies that provide services to the youth.

Legal records, which consist of the charge, petition, motions, court findings and orders, are often created "automatically" and what is collected is usually not up to a juvenile court judge's discretion (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a and 1982b). Social records include information about the juvenile and his/her family background, such as parent's name, address, and phone; living environment; school attendance; academic records; drug or alcohol abuse history by the juvenile or family members; dependency or abuse history; and other items. These records are often compiled by probation departments. What information is sought and collected is often a function of what the juvenile court judge has asked for and/or standing policies of the agencies who collect them.

Most juvenile justice and child welfare agencies have found it necessary to maintain client files to document and monitor the progress of clients; plan and manage client services; document communication between program staff and service providers; protect the legal interests of clients, programs, and staff; and provide data for research (Hobbs, 1991a). Most state statutes protect the confidentiality of these records and dictate that they be unavailable to anyone other than the agency and client, except under specific conditions (Hobbs, 1991a).

Jurisdictions practice confidentially by not releasing individual records to "outsiders," such as the public, the media, researchers, or academics (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1993). Some jurisdictions will release information, for instance, for research purposes, but no juvenile identifiers, such as his/her name or parents' names, are released (Hobbs, 1991a). In a few states, this identifying information can be released (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982b).

In practice, though not necessarily in stated policy or legal code, juvenile records in many jurisdictions are also kept confidential from "insiders" -- other juvenile justice agencies -- even though other agencies may request information, as well as a promise to uphold confidentiality (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). Among workers in the system, there is a commonly expressed perception that keeping juvenile records confidential means that only employees of that agency can have access to the information collected by that agency (Etten et al., 1993; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a). This practice is what has been called "information territorialism" (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985).

This belief and common practice of information territorialism by juvenile justice agencies will be the focus of this paper. Specifically, this report will discuss the necessity of information sharing among juvenile justice and child welfare agencies, the current legal, practical, and ethical constraints to sharing juvenile records information, and the possible remedies to these constraints. It will not discuss collection and maintenance of juvenile justice system files, which most courts have upheld as a necessity for providing services to a juvenile (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a), or the sharing of juvenile records information with the adult criminal justice system, since that raises many additional issues. It also will not address disclosure of sealed juvenile court records or issues surrounding expungement.

A Need to Share Information: Meeting Goals

While they vary among jurisdictions and change over time, the goals of juvenile justice system agencies in the U.S. involve the treatment and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders, protection of the community, prevention of juvenile crime, providing of services to juveniles and their families, and in some jurisdictions, the punishment of juvenile offenders (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1993; President's Commission, 1968). In addition, each agency within the system may have agency-specific goals, such as a police department's goal to minimize police officer fatalities.

Most agencies within a juvenile justice system compete for and are dependent upon the fiscal and administrative resources provided by local, state, and federal funding sources (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). In recent years, funding agencies have allocated more resources to those agencies that can justify their funding needs and demonstrate their effectiveness at meeting goals. In return, many juvenile justice agencies have implemented management techniques practiced in the private sector to effectively plan for and administer policies and procedures that assist the agency in meeting its goals (Hobbs, 1991a; Hudzik and Cordner, 1983). In order to meet organizational goals, managers and employees must have knowledge of these goals and attempt to make decisions which maximize them (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1988). This implies that workers must have a range of alternatives to choose from and useful information which assists them in making the better choice. For example, a detention officer needs information about the juvenile's risk of harming himself or another person, or fleeing from a jurisdiction before deciding whether a juvenile should be detained prior to trial. A probation officer needs to know a juvenile's history and the relative success of programs where a juvenile can be placed before he or she can make an informed and rational recommendation to a judge regarding that juvenile's placement. A state correction worker needs information about a juvenile's progress in a particular program before he or she can decide whether the juvenile is ready to be discharged from that program.

Ideally in a world of limited resources, detention facilities that can show a reduction in escapes and pre-trial crimes, probation departments that can demonstrate the reduced recidivism of its probationers, and state correction agencies that can show a reduction in post-release juvenile misconduct would be rewarded by funding agencies for meeting their goals.

Thus, in order to meet organizational goals and receive continued funding, juvenile justice agencies need information specific to their goals (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1988; Joining Forces et al., 1992; Phillips, 1990; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). As mentioned earlier, this includes information about the juvenile's social history and contacts with the legal system, and in some cases, information about the juvenile's progress in any program in which the juvenile participates.

Because of the overlapping goals of juvenile justice agencies, there are overlapping information needs among these agencies. As expected, with little or no information sharing between agencies in many jurisdictions, several agencies collect the same data (Etten et al., 1993; Gottfredson et al., 1994; Joining Forces et al., 1992; Soler and Shauffer, 1990). Such duplication could be reduced or eliminated if agencies began sharing information with each other.

In many juvenile justice systems, courts undertake the primary data collection efforts because they are usually the only agency statutorily mandated to collect the information and have the most resources to put toward these efforts (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). Other less-funded

agencies may need the same or similar information, but do not have the resources to collect it. In jurisdictions where there is little or no information sharing, these agencies may simply go without the information and make decisions on juvenile cases with the limited information they are able to collect themselves (Etten et al., 1993; Gottfredson et al., 1994; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). "Information territorialism" in these instances impedes these agencies from taking appropriate actions to meet the needs of the juvenile and ensure public safety (Joining Forces et al., 1992; President's Commission, 1968; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985).

Information territorialism, which is one symptom of a lack of coordination of juvenile justice services, threatens the viability of the system as a whole in meeting system-wide goals (President's Commission, 1968; Soler and Shauffer, 1990). If one agency along the juvenile justice continuum (from police to corrections) makes an uninformed, improper decision regarding a juvenile, the system as a whole fails in meeting its goals. For instance, if a state corrections agency releases a juvenile from its custody early and the juvenile subsequently commits a serious (and highly publicized) crime, the system is faulted for that mistake. Therefore, each agency within the system has a stake in the decisions made by other agencies, and likewise, should have a stake in the amount of and accuracy of the information obtained by other agencies (Hobbs, 1991a; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985).

However, because of narrow statute interpretations, long standing practice, lack of understanding of other agencies' duties and/or policies, and lack of trust of other agencies, some agencies refuse to share their information with others in the system, despite evidence that sharing will contribute to the achievement of system-wide goals of rehabilitating juveniles and protecting the public (Joining Forces et al., 1992; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). The actual and perceived barriers to information sharing, and suggestions for overcoming them will be discussed below.

Legal Barriers to Information Sharing

The legal rules that dictate the confidentiality of juvenile records are complex. Most agencies that collect data on juveniles must follow federal, state, and local statutes, ordinances, resolutions, regulations, court orders, and legal opinions (Hobbs, 1991a). Below is an outline of U.S. Supreme Court, appellate court, and state supreme court decisions that have discussed confidentiality of juvenile records, as well as federal and state statutes that address the issue.

U.S. Supreme Court and Federal Appellate Cases

In addition to questioning and revising juvenile justice system procedures starting in the 1960s, the Supreme Court, while acknowledging the importance of confidentiality, also mandated revisions in some confidentiality practices of the juvenile justice system. The Court, however, has never held that there is a constitutional right to confidentiality for an adjudicated delinquent (Kfoury, 1983). In fact, in every challenge brought in the last 25 years, the Court has ruled that when confidentiality abuts the constitutional right of another, it must be disregarded (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a; Walton, 1990).

Kent v. United States (1966) -- The Supreme Court ruled that the counsel of a juvenile offender is entitled to access all records involved in a waiver to adult court, including a written statement by the judge of the reasons for the waiver.

In re Gault (1967) -- The Court expressed "considerable cynicism about the reality, if not the wisdom of confidentiality" (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a, p. 20). The court noted that information was being collected under the guise of paternalism and that in effect, such a guise probably afforded agencies with the capability to extract more information from juveniles than would be extracted in an adversarial setting. The Court implied that juvenile courts therefore have an obligation to insure the confidentiality of such sensitive information, so that the information could not "come back to haunt them" (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). The concern was that sometime in the future, someone would come upon this information in some unforeseen way, and use the information inappropriately. The obligation about which the Court spoke is to insure that none of these unforeseen circumstances arise. In addition, while the Court did not rule on a juvenile's right to a transcript of the proceedings, it encouraged the states to provide this right.

Davis v. Alaska (1974) -- In this case, an adult defendant challenged the constitutionality of his grand larceny and burglary convictions on grounds that juvenile court confidentiality rules kept him from his right to be confronted by a juvenile witness. A lower court protective order prevented the defendant from cross examining the juvenile, who was on probation. The order was issued on the grounds that the juvenile's probation status would have been revealed during cross examination, which in turn, could harm the witness' credibility. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that the defendant's rights had been violated and concluded that the State's interest in keeping a juvenile record sealed was not compelling enough to prevent the defendant from receiving a fair trial.

Pennsylvania v. Ritchie (1987) -- The United States Supreme Court affirmed the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's ruling that a defendant is entitled to know whether information relevant to his cross-examination of a juvenile witness exists in statutorily privileged dependency records. The Court held that relevant information in dependency records should be determined by the trial court in an *in camera* review and selectively disclosed to the defendant if material to the defense. An absolute prohibition on disclosure violates the Sixth Amendment's guarantee of compulsory process. The Confrontation Clause, the Court held, encompasses only the opportunity to cross-examine, not the effectiveness of the opportunity.

Oklahoma Publishing Company v. District Court (1977) and Smith v. Daily Mail Publishing Company (1979) -- In the first case, the Supreme Court ruled that a court order prohibiting the press from reporting the name and photograph of a youth involved in a juvenile court proceeding that it legally obtained elsewhere was an unconstitutional infringement on the Freedom of the Press. In the second case, the court ruled that a state law prohibiting the same thing was also unconstitutional. Although neither decision held

that the press should have access to juvenile court files, they did hold that "once information is lawfully obtained by the media, the First Amendment interest in a free press must prevail over the interest in preserving the anonymity of juvenile defendants" (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a).

Cuevas v. Leary (1970) -- A federal district court in New York held that the informality of the juvenile justice system led to inconsistencies and inaccuracies in data collection effort, which in turn led the court to order restrictions on New York Police Department's dissemination and use of its juvenile records. Attorneys had charged that police officers listed charges and investigations in juvenile's files with little or no verification that the juvenile had done anything wrong.

Tabron v. United States (1979) -- The Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia ruled that the due process clause of the 5th Amendment may require disclosure of a juvenile adjudication, even if it merely relates to general credibility of the witness as opposed to suggesting that the witness may be biased. Further, the court explained that if there are prior juvenile records of prosecution witnesses which would facilitate cross-examination and impeachment of those witnesses for a distinct line of bias, failure to require prosecution to investigate whether such records existed may require reversal on grounds of violation of Sixth Amendment right to confront government witnesses. 410 A.2d at 212-13.

State Cases

The general rule among state courts is that protecting the confidentiality of juvenile records to preserve the juvenile offender's anonymity is not absolute, but rather is subject to the constitutional rights of others. The disclosure of confidential information relevant to a specific proceeding for good cause is consistent with this general rule. A court is generally justified in releasing court and social agency records relating to juveniles only when it has reviewed the records *in camera* and has determined that the need for confidentiality is outweighed by the exigencies of the circumstances. For instance, the Vermont Supreme Court held that information about a juvenile can be release to assist the court in making an informed assessment of the best interests of a child (In re R.D., Ver. 1990). Cases such as State v. Carr (La. 1993) and State v. Jere S. (Wisc. 1993) are examples of this typical case law. Examples of variations and specifications by other jurisdictions are included below.

T.N.G. v. Superior Court of City and County of San Francisco (Ca. 1971) -- The California Supreme Court, which is traditionally sensitive to privacy concerns, rejected a request to purge juvenile records, ruling that records should be made available to probation officers and to the juvenile court so that this information can be used in determining what is in the best interests of the juvenile.

In the matter of A.S. (Ala. 1990) - A school board has a legitimate interest in assuring safety of its attendants and in governing the behavior of its students, and is

entitled to a court order requiring the police department to release records to it relating to the discovery of the juvenile, apparently unconscious, in the front seat of a vehicle parked outside a school function.

In re Sheldon G. (Conn. 1990) - The Connecticut juvenile records statute contains a strong presumption that juvenile records should remain confidential after a juvenile turns 16, subject to certain mandatory exceptions for purposes of adult sentencing, regardless of the juvenile's subsequent criminal activity. However, the statute affords discretion to the trial court to disclose information in circumstances neither enumerated in statutory exceptions nor mandated by constitutional due process. This discretion is limited insofar as the request for disclosure relates to an inquiry that directly implicates one of the statutory exceptions.

Commonwealth v. Bembury (Mass. 1989) - A defendant is not entitled to suggest bias on the part of a prosecution witness by disclosing the witness' juvenile record to the jury.

State v. Belcher (Mo. 1993) - Disallowing otherwise admissible testimony of a defense witness is an extreme remedy that should be used with great caution; improper exclusion of testimony may violate due process. Despite the Missouri statute, the defendant was permitted to introduce statements by an expert witness regarding the abuse of a juvenile.

Hickey v. Eighth Judicial Dist. Ct. (Nev. 1989) - The district court did not exceed its jurisdiction by ordering discovery of a boy's juvenile court records in an action alleging that his father negligently left the boy home alone with access to a gun with which the son's friend killed himself. The records were potentially directly relevant to the negligence claim and the order was narrowly tailored to safeguard confidentiality of records.

Stamps v. State (Nev. 1991) - Where the interest claimed by an accused involves the right of actual cross-examination, and the interest of the State in preserving confidentiality is weakened by trial publicity, the right to cross-examine outweighs the State's interest of confidentiality.

State in the Interest of L.P. (N.J. 1991) - The right of confrontation, the right to obtain witnesses, information or evidence to prepare defense of criminal prosecution, is paramount to the State's policy of protecting a juvenile offender through confidentiality provisions.

State v. Lukens (Oh. 1990) - The State's policy of juvenile record confidentiality may not impinge upon the right of a defendant in a criminal case to present all available, relevant and probative evidence which is pertinent to a specific and material aspect of the defense.

State v. Wounded Head (S.D. 1981) - The use of juvenile records to impeach a minor witness for the State is neither absolutely permitted nor absolutely forbidden; the trial court may always limit cross-examination to prevent repetitive and unduly harassing interrogation.

Lavinder v. Commonwealth (Va. 1990) - An accused's right to cross-examine may outweigh the State's interest in preserving the juvenile offender's anonymity, but the cross-examination may be limited by disallowing cross-examination of a witness' juvenile court adjudications.

In re R.D. (Ver. 1990) - A trial court must, in the interest of the juvenile, have access to all the facts to make an informed assessment of whether a particular defendant will benefit from the protections afforded to juveniles. Therefore, the trial court acted appropriately in allowing the State's use of the defendant's juvenile records to block transfer of the defendant to juvenile court where the trial court took measures to insulate the defendant's juvenile record from public scrutiny by reviewing the juvenile records *in camera* and striking all references to the record from the State's memorandum.

Nelson v. Ferguson (W.V., 1990) - Mental health records of a juvenile are confidential and may be disclosed pursuant to court order only if the court finds that the information sought is sufficiently relevant to the proceeding to outweigh the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

State v. Schmidt (Wisc. 1974) - A juvenile's constitutional right of inspection of records prohibited a statute, relating to confidentiality of juvenile records, from preventing the juvenile from inspecting a hearing examiner's report in an administrative hearing concerning the revocation of the juvenile's "after care" supervision.

State v. Carol S. (Wisc. 1992) - When the State seeks information from a juvenile case, the State must describe the information as specifically as possible, the basis for its belief that the information is in the juvenile court files, the relevance of the information, the probable admissibility of the information, the efforts the State has made to attain the information elsewhere, and the hardship the State would incur should the information not be attained. The court must determine whether the State's need for that information outweighs society's interest in protecting its confidentiality, and must tailor any order appropriately.

Federal Statutes

The federal government has made provisions regarding the openness and confidentiality of records kept by federal agencies and those receiving federal funding. For the most part, juvenile records are exempt from openness requirements and the government has been relatively silent on this issue of information sharing (Hobbs 1991a; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). The

government has, however, established some regulations regarding the general release of highly sensitive information about juveniles, such as results of drug tests (American Probation and Parole Association, 1992). These are discussed below.

Freedom of Information Act of 1966 -- This act, which applies to all U.S. Department of Health and Human Services records, requires agencies to make all agency records available to citizens for inspection and copying on request of any person unless one or more of nine exemptions apply. Records which are required for "good cause" to be confidential are exempt. Except where case precedent stands, such as in the U.S. Supreme Court Cases cited above, juvenile records fall under this exemption.

Privacy Act of 1974 -- This act, which applies to records about individuals collected by all federal agencies which are stored in a system of records, recognized the right of law abiding citizens to privacy in order to be free from undue intrusions into their personal lives which could affect their ability to obtain credit, employment, and other things. It prohibits any federal agency from disclosing individually identifiable records maintained on a records system which can be retrieved by the person's name or identification number unless the person consents, and provides for a means to have individuals gain access to and correct or amend fallacious records. It allows disclosures without consent of the subject for routine use, to a few named federal agencies such as Congress, to another government agencies for civil or criminal law enforcement purposes, in instances where the health or safety of the person are endangered, or under order of the court. Under this rule, however, a parent or guardian of a minor is not authorized to give consent to disclosure of a minor's medical record.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 -- This act, also known as "FERPA" or the Buckley Amendment, allows for disclosure to certain research studies which develop, validate, or administer predictive test, administer aid programs, and improve instruction (Joining Forces et al., 1992). FERPA assures students the right to inspect records they believe to be inaccurate, to challenge those records if necessary, and prevent disclosure of personally identifiable information. Students may also file complaints with the FERPA Office pursuant to the act and must be informed of these rights (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985).

Records can be released without parental consent under the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act to school officials with "legitimate educational interests," to officials of another school or school system in which the student seeks to enroll, to parents of dependent children, to eligible students, to comply with a court order or subpoena, and in an emergency, if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or another person. As of 1985, no court cases have emerged nationally charging inappropriate information sharing of juvenile records under this act (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985).

Crime Control Act of 1973 -- This act assures that (adult) criminal history record information collected, stored, or disseminated by agencies that receive federal funds is done so in a manner to insure the completeness, integrity, accuracy and security of that information and to protect individual privacy.

Youth Corrections Act of 1977 -- This act requires that records of juvenile delinquency proceedings in federal district courts be safeguarded from disclosure to unauthorized persons except when inquiries are made from another court of law, agencies preparing presentence reports, investigative law enforcement agencies, treatment agencies assigned by court, agencies investigating for employment or matters of national security, and inquires by victim regarding disposition.

Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988 -- This provision mandates that no computer record can be disclosed to a recipient agency or non-federal agency in a computer matching program except pursuant to a written agreement specifying the purpose for collection of the information and procedures of ensuring its security. In addition, it prohibits recipient agencies from taking adverse action against an individual as a result of information provided in a record until an agency representative verifies the accuracy of the information.

Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act (1970) and Drug Abuse and Treatment Act (1972) -- These two laws affirm the confidentiality rights of persons receiving alcohol and drug services from federal agencies or those that receive federal funds. Specifically these laws forbid disclosure of information that would identify a youth as a substance abuser and therefore deter the youth from participating in such programs. But, as in instances with other information, such information can be shared with family members, counsel, or criminal justice agency workers with consent, or without consent in medical emergencies, for purposes of research, audit, or evaluation (without identifying the patient), in child abuse reports, or by court order with showing of good cause. Records can not be disclosed to help initiate a criminal investigation or bring criminal charges, except with a court order.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform Act (1977) -- Protects the confidentiality of children's records listed in Child Protective Services files of agencies that want to remain eligible for federal funds. This act mandates that the right to confidentiality of a client must be balanced with the need to insure the accuracy and currency of the information. The National Center for Child Abuse and Neglect suggests that states wanting to comply with this regulation should draft a law, based on its Model Child Protection Act, which provides records access to local child protective services, law enforcement officers investigating reports of abuse or neglect, physicians, persons legally authorized to place children in protective custody, parents, guardians or supervisory agencies, courts limited to an *in camera* inspections, and grand juries.

In sum, federal agencies or those receiving federal funds are authorized, under most conditions, to release juvenile records to legitimate interests, such as representatives from treatment agencies, law enforcement representatives, defense counsel and other courts (Hobbs, 1991a and 1991b; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). Federal open record statutes generally do not apply to juvenile records, nor do statutes which mandate the release of adult criminal records to the public. Information collected by the Department of Health and Human Services is to remain "private," for the most part, but the Privacy Act of 1974 allows disclosures without consent of the subject to agencies conducting civil or criminal law enforcement and to assure the health or safety of citizens. School records may be disclosed without parental consent pursuant to FERPA to school officials with legitimate educational interests. Eligible students, parents of dependent juveniles, and officials of another school in which the student seeks to enroll may also receive disclosure of student records in accordance with FERPA. Student records may also be disclosed to comply with a court order or subpoena, or in an emergency involving the health and safety of a person. Other exceptions include audits, student financial aid programs, educational studies, and disclosures to accrediting organizations (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). Child abuse and drug/alcohol information are subject to somewhat stricter federal regulation than juvenile court records, generally, but such items can be shared with client consent or court order stating cause.

State Statutes, Generally

Each state has its own statutes which discuss the collection, use, and dissemination of juvenile records by juvenile justice and ancillary agencies (Krasnow, 1966; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). For the most part, the almost universal directive in all state provisions regarding the release of confidential juvenile records information is a prohibition against "publishing a list" (Hobbs, 1991a). Agencies are generally not permitted to print a list of files of people receiving services from that agency. Release of information is only permitted for an individual. An agency cannot print a list unless, for each individual on the list, there is proper authority by virtue of a release form or some legal exception. Most state codes do not address procedures for verbal exchanges of information and for the most part, recognize the right of service providers to share confidential information (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). Most codes also provide procedures to protect against the subsequent misdirected use and/or unauthorized rerelease of information given in confidence (Hobbs, 1991a). The discussion below is a composite of what most state codes allow, and does not discuss individual provisions because each state is different.¹

Most states have statutes mandating that juvenile courts create and maintain records according to detailed regulations (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a). Most statutes distinguish between legal and social records, discussed earlier, and describe the records in detail (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982b). Most state statutes regard social records as the most sensitive and are the most strict on confidentiality of these, although statutes most often do not restrict the nature or amount of personal information that can be collected (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a and 1982b).

¹ Jurisdictions wanting to share information among juvenile justice or ancillary agencies need to consult their specific state statute for regulations. A list of statutes is appended to this review, and is reprinted with permission from Confidentiality of Juvenile Records, by Linda Szymanski, 1991, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, National Center for Juvenile Justice Automated Juvenile Law Archive.

The more "invasive" the information, generally, the more statutory regulation the information may receive, although sharing of even the most sensitive information may be allowed under certain circumstances.² For instance, in most instances, information can be shared with consent of the client and in medical emergencies.

Even states with some restriction on access by the general public often allow schools, parents, attorneys, law enforcement officials, parole and probation departments, rehabilitative agencies, institutions to which the juvenile is committed, military recruiters, national security authorities and court personnel to inspect and copy records without juvenile consent (Barton, 1990; Matthew Bender, 1992). Some statutes allow agencies to develop their own procedures for release of information.

With regard to specific provisions, some states have mimicked federal laws and enacted protections relative to student records in addition to their expressed or implied adoption of FERPA protections (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). Some states' public record statutes exempt personally identifiable juvenile and student records from public inspection. In addition, there are some federal regulations which need state statutes or court orders to allow dissemination of records. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's Criminal Justice Information System Regulation is one such law. This regulation, which applies to all state and local agencies funded by LEAA, prohibits the dissemination of juvenile records to non-criminal justice agencies without a statute or court order.

With regard to juvenile court records, even without specific statutory authority, courts have inherent authority to control their own juvenile records (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a, 1982b; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). In most states juvenile courts may access any unsealed juvenile records for any purpose; many state codes even allow access for sentencing purposes. Nearly all state juvenile codes permit juvenile courts to order disclosure of juvenile records to parties with a "legitimate interest," which includes juvenile rehabilitation agencies (Hobbs 1991a; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1982a, 1982b). Many state codes provide that certain types of juvenile court records are public records.

Most states do not expressly authorize the use of juvenile court records in subsequent juvenile court proceedings because such authority is inferred from the juvenile court's charter (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). A few jurisdictions don't allow judges to access prior records during the adjudication phase of juvenile proceedings, but may allow the judge to review social records during this stage (SEARCH Group Inc., 1982a). Many courts also do not allow judges to access social history information at the adjudication phase of a child's proceedings.

Confidential requirements and exceptions usually parallel those concerning juvenile court records. Dissemination and access to unsealed juvenile law enforcement records are governed less frequently by statute than are juvenile court records (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a). Federal and most state law is silent about disclosure of law enforcement juvenile records to law enforcement agencies.

Every state has enacted legislation or regulations regarding child abuse, neglect and welfare records, usually requiring that such information be kept confidential, although the

² For instance, if medical, psychiatric, and/or drug history information is collected by a court and kept as part of social history records, confidentiality regarding these pieces of information may differ somewhat from other information kept in a juvenile's file, depending upon the specific content of the information and/or the jurisdiction involved.

definition of "confidential" varies between jurisdictions and may not involve inter-agency sharing to protect the best interests of the child (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). Mental health and medical records are usually subject to some sort of confidentiality requirements, although the youth or his/her parents may sign a consent form for release of such information (Hobbs, 1991a; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). Despite existence of psychotherapist-patient privileges in most jurisdictions, therapist records can often be disclosed to juvenile courts for the purpose of diagnosis or treatment (Guernsey, 1981). Many states provide that there can be a sufficient state interest in disclosing mental health records which outweighs the patient's right to privacy, although this state intrusion is most often narrowly circumscribed (Guernsey, 1981).

Regarding medical information, many states have not created statutory physician-patient privilege, but physicians may want authorization to release information to avoid litigation (Sterchi and Sheppard, 1984). In states where a physician-patient privilege does exist, privileged information is only that which a doctor acquires in a professional capacity. In these instances, the nature of the communication and status of the relationship may determine whether the physician-patient privilege exists (Sterchi and Sheppard, 1984).

As mentioned in the federal statutes section, Child Protective Services (CPS) Agencies wishing to receive federal funds must comply with federal confidentiality requirements. Some states, such as Pennsylvania, have interpreted these requirements to mean that all information obtained through CPS is absolutely confidential and cannot be released to anyone not involved in child abuse investigations or anyone outside the child protective agency (Besharov, 1978; Walsh, 1977). Some authors suggest that these stringent requirements are necessary because CPS files are "notorious repositories of opinion, hearsay, and gossip" and are not immune to bias and subjectivity on the part of agency workers who compile them (Levine, 1976). Other states, however, allow disclosure to designated professionals who make emergency decisions about protective custody, such as law enforcement officials, physicians, and other parties; to treatment agencies to provide them with a family history to assist them in developing and implementing effective treatment strategies; to courts after an *in camera* review; and to grand juries (Besharov, 1978). Some states allow workers to share the information with other appropriate agencies and professionals who are involved in developing a cooperative treatment plan. The remainder of the states authorize the responsible state agency to issue regulations allowing some persons access (Besharov, 1978).

In summary, juvenile records maintained by juvenile justice or ancillary agencies are not confidential unless it they are "private." The right to privacy is not an absolute right to be left alone (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). This right protects against intrusion by the release of information that might result in actual harm, damage, or shame, or might reveal one's private life. Most agency can decide to release records by balancing the public interest purpose of disclosure with the potential invasion of individual privacy.

Practical Barriers to Information Sharing

In a recent study conducted in California, the most common reasons cited for juvenile justice and child welfare agencies seeking access to confidential records collected by other agencies were to: provide collaborative case work services; carry out planning, research and evaluation responsibilities; and identify common clients or verify case information collected or required by two or more agencies to facilitate coordination (Hobbs, 1991a). The practical

barriers to this access are divided into three categories below: inter-agency barriers, intra-agency barriers, and general systems barriers. Inter-agency barriers refer to those barriers which occur among agencies when information is sought. Intra-agency barriers occur within a single agency. General systems barriers occur systemwide and would be present in the development of information management systems.

Inter-Agency Constraints

Two recent studies conducted on the issue of information sharing in the juvenile justice system noted several reasons agencies refuse to share information with each other. One of the primary reasons cited in the study was that many agencies do not know what other agencies really do with children (Joining Forces, Inc., 1992; Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985). In addition, "it also is common for few, if any, of these agencies to know which other agencies are concerned about the juvenile and the juvenile's family and are devoting staff time and resources to them" (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985, p. 35). Finally, few agencies are apprised of what other agencies may be handling a particular client they are also handling (Hobbs, 1991a).

Because of a lack of understanding about the mission and responsibilities of other agencies, a sense of mistrust may develop between them (Joining Forces et al., 1992). Mistrust can also be based on bad prior experience, such as a poor decision made by that agency, or any number of factors. This mistrust can be transferred into the arena of information sharing. Agencies may simply not know what a requesting agency intends to use the requested information for and may simply mistrust that the agency will use the information properly (see ethical section for a discussion of this) (Christie, 1993). One of the disseminating agency's main concerns is that the agency may be sued or face other adverse legal consequences as a result of the recipient agency's misuse of the data.

Sometimes agencies may not ask other agencies to share information because they are unaware of that agencies formal policies and procedures (Maricopa County Steering Committee, 1993; Phillips, 1990). In one jurisdiction in Arizona, an assistant police chief complained to an interviewer that the prosecutor's office would not share information about juveniles arrested by the police department. When the interviewer asked the assistant chief whether he formally made the information request he said he had not, because he assumed it was against the prosecutor's policy (Maricopa County Steering Committee, 1993). The police chief then contacted a prosecutor who told him that it was not against office policy to share the information and that the prosecutor's office would be glad to do so.

Information sharing enhances the risk that other agencies may "misuse" the data given them (see ethical section). Another agency may use the data for a purpose for which it was never intended (Joining Forces et al, 1992). This misuse could fundamentally impede the capability of the agency to obtain information freely from respondents (Krasnow, 1966). Respondents may refuse to cooperate out of retaliation or because they feel they have been betrayed. In addition, clients may retaliate against an agency in other ways, such as through litigation.

Intra-Agency Constraints

Most agencies as a general rule fail to anticipate problems and opportunities in basic daily program operations relative to proper control and management of confidential information and thus can get "stung" the first time around (Hobbs, 1991a). If an agency does not anticipate that another agency will use information shared with it in a particular way, this can cause the lending agency to adopt an attitude of "once bitten, twice shy." If an agency can have forethought about what other agencies may do with information, it can develop standard questions to ask the borrowing agency.

Many agencies continue to exercise their own discretion in releasing juvenile data even in the face of federal or state regulations or of the utility behind sharing information (Joining Forces et al., 1992; SEARCH, 1982b). Agencies often lack an established policy of information sharing within their own agency and simply decline requests out of habit because they always have. Some agencies have simply interpreted their state and local statutes to forbid them from information sharing, ignoring the exemptions to confidentiality that most statutes have (Hobbs, 1991a). As many agencies may see it, this safely keeps them from being sued if the information is later misused (see ethical section).

If agencies collect a lot of unnecessary data, they may be unable to sort through what is relevant in order to honor an information sharing request due to the mere volume of records (Hobbs, 1991a). Many agencies within jurisdictions do not have automated case files, or do not have a simple means of extracting automated information because their systems are written in archaic and difficult programming languages (Etten et al., 1993; Hobbs, 1991a). Without easy extraction of data, agencies must devote staff resources to handling other agencies' data requests, which may be impractical with limited resources. Regardless of information processing ease, some agencies may simply be without the staff resources to devote to other agencies' information requests (Etten et al., 1993).

Agencies may simply not have enough data on a particular juvenile or group of individuals or unreliable, incomplete, inadequate, or invalid data on juveniles that may not be worth sharing (Hobbs, 1991a). In addition, reports may be "uneven" in their descriptions and analyses of the juveniles' problem and/or situation (Altman, 1974). Data that are inaccurate or collected only haphazardly provide little use to requesting agencies who seek to increase the rationality of the decisions they make by having more useful information on which to base their decisions.

In an adversarial system of juvenile justice, one agency may view sharing certain information to be in the juvenile's best interest or favorable to the welfare of the community, whereas another agency may see the disclosure of that same information as "hurtful" to the juvenile (Maricopa County Steering Committee, 1993). For instance, a public defender may not want to disclose to the court that the juvenile has an alcohol problem for fear of additional punishment or some unfavorable disposition. Caseworkers may simply resent disclosing information they have obtained in confidence, or disclosing their diagnostic work for fear of their judgment being questioned (Krasnow, 1966).

General System Constraints

Several jurisdictions have found that in order to resolve the problem of information territorialism, representatives from agencies must come together to discuss the problem and

potential solutions. Those assigned to such a task must take time away from agency duties to do so. Agencies with limited staff might find this a bit difficult to do.

Agencies may request that information be given to them in an automated fashion. If between agencies there is not a common client identifier for all cases (for instance, two agencies can't make a match on a juvenile's name because they have it recorded differently), it may be difficult to make a match. Another problem with automated information exchange is that agencies may use different coding procedures and have systems written in incompatible program languages (Etten et al., 1993). Agencies may define variables using different classification methods; certain factors must be made comparable so codes are compatible. In the alternative, different agencies must adopt similar program languages so that each agency's computer system can interpret the data (Hemenway, 1993).

Agencies who attempt to share information may find that they have the same data collected on a juvenile but that the information about that data item is different. Which agencies' information should be considered right? Which agencies' data should be changed?

In some jurisdictions, agencies will communicate with each other so infrequently that the system as a whole does not develop uniform terminology in its day-to-day functions (Phillips, 1990). For instance, "detention" in one agency of a jurisdiction may be considered to be any juvenile custody prior to a trial, while another agency may simply believe detention is any custody regardless of the juvenile's trial status. Without uniform terminology, information sharing between agencies is impeded.

Finally, data may mean different things to different people. In an individual case, a case worker who is given data from another agency may misinterpret this data and make a decision about a child that is unwarranted and/or unfair to the juvenile (Maricopa County Steering Committee, 1993). It is important that information be used for the same or similar purpose for which it was gathered, and this may be difficult in jurisdictions with limited communication (President's Commission, 1968).

Ethical Barriers to Information Sharing

Ethical issues can arise if data are flawed, incomplete, or changed within the sharing process. According to a recent study, the data quality of juvenile records in most jurisdictions is very poor and, in most cases, is worse than adult records (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a). Measures that could be taken to clean the data are not. For instance, very few juvenile justice agencies conduct regular audits of the accuracy of their juvenile records or have any quality control policies in place (SEARCH Inc., 1988a). In addition, very few states have statutory procedures which permit an individual to review his/her own record and correct inaccuracies (Krasnow, 1966; Levine, 1976; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a; Waterman, 1966).³

When an agency requests data from another, it is in the best interest of the child that the data be accurate. Sharing inaccurate and misleading information may pose ethical problems for juvenile justice agencies. In addition, some types of errors may be substantially amplified by the fact that there are many more persons with access and the system response speed may exceed error detection and correction speed (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970).

³Agencies need to consider that workers who know their files will be reviewed and/or shared may take more caution in preparing them or ensuring their accuracy (Krasnow, 1966).

One fear among many agencies is that if they share information electronically, a representative from the requesting agency may intentionally or unintentionally alter or modify the information in those records. That risk is increased in proportion to the file centralization of the system (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970). In addition, court disposition information is frequently lacking in juvenile history records and rarely is disposition information shared with agencies who come into contact with the juvenile prior to disposition (such as police and detention workers) (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1984; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a). This may be due largely to the fact that juveniles are infrequently fingerprinted, because the practice is against state and federal law in most cases, and therefore it is difficult to continue to trace a juvenile as he/she progresses through the system. Many agencies may believe it is misleading or harmful to release information that does not include the juvenile's disposition on a pending charge, simply because the juvenile has yet to be adjudicated delinquent on that charge. Given this, a few states require that juvenile records that are disclosed include this information (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a).

Ethical issues can arise if the data are misused. This misuse includes the risk of release to the adult system and/or to the wrong parties, such as the media (Barton, 1990). Misuse can increase the number of unauthorized users or the number of unauthorized uses. This achieved in one of three ways: (1) direct access is given to unauthorized users or agencies, (2) the data are stored in a place where unauthorized users can obtain it, (3) a disseminating agency provides the information to a recipient agency without the same caveats of confidentiality which were placed on the disseminating agency. This risk of misuse increases as the number of users and ease of access increases unless controls are implemented (Czajkowski, 1974; Phillips, 1990; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970).

If data are misused, the juvenile can be denied benefits and opportunities, and can suffer an unwarranted invasion of privacy and/or undergo repercussions of negative public attitudes or stigmatization (Czajkowski, 1974, Krasnow, 1966; Joining Forces et al., 1992; President's Commission, 1968; Snyder, 1990; Waterman, 1966). For instance, some suggest this could involve differential treatment in a classroom or on the job, loss of employment, loss of self-confidence, psychological damage, or inability to gain access to employment. On the other hand, there is no empirical evidence to suggest that publicity traumatizes the juvenile making him or her less susceptible to rehabilitation, that it makes it more difficult for the juvenile to gain employment or other valued statuses, or that publicity negatively affects a juvenile's self-concept (President's Commission, 1968; SEARCH, 1982b). But publicity may be deemed unfair and as part of punishment in a system that by law does not consider the juvenile responsible for his or her actions. However, non-approved release by another agency may help society identify dangerous offenders and makes juveniles take responsibility for their actions (SEARCH, 1982b).

Misuse may also force the original data holder to act as an agent of law enforcement instead of rehabilitation (Joining Forces et al., 1982), which can damage its reputation. Data misuse violates the trust between client and serving agency, often in cases where clients shared information in a state of vulnerability. As mentioned earlier, a client may feel betrayed by the serving agency and may retaliate by refusing to cooperate in the future (Krasnow, 1966; Maricopa County Steering Committee, 1993).

On the other hand, however, information territorialism raises ethical issues of its own. In an earlier example, a public defender refused to disclose information about a client's alcohol

problems for fear of exposing the juvenile to further punishment. However, this refusal to share information may be an ethical violation by the public defender because it may deny the juvenile access to programs designed to treat alcohol addiction--programs designed with the juvenile's welfare in mind. In addition, when an agency intentionally avoids information sharing, that agency is avoiding, in turn, data reliability and validity checks by the recipient agency which may result from their use of the data.

Overcoming the Barriers

As this report demonstrates, there are very few legal barriers to information sharing among juvenile justice agencies, but instead the barriers are often a product of long-standing agency practice and mistrust among agencies. As stated in one study on this issue:

"Confidentiality...is *not* a blanket prohibition against service providers and [agency] staff talking together to coordinate services. It is simply a protection against sharing information that does not serve a specific purpose that is in a child's or family's interest" (Joining Forces, et al., 1992, p. 6).

As this paper has noted, information territorialism is commonplace, but it is also common that agencies within a juvenile justice system are not fully apprised of what other agencies are actually involved in the provision of services to youth, or in particular, what agencies may be handling a juvenile they are also handling (Joining Forces et al., 1992). Additionally, law enforcement officers, judges, probation officers, and other critical decision makers in the juvenile justice system often lack background information regarding the juveniles. Consequently, juveniles in need of educational, psychological, or social counseling may not receive the treatment they need because the critical decision maker did not receive the appropriate records (Rapp, Stephens, and Clontz, 1985).

While there are ethical and practical barriers, these can be overcome if a system effectively plans for and systematically executes information sharing procedures. This can be accomplished through improved automated file design and more supportive administrative policies and practices (Hobbs, 1991a). It is the position of this paper and several others who have conducted research on this topic that an effective and practical system of information exchange is possible to develop on a wide scale, while still respecting a juvenile's right to privacy (Joining Forces, et al., 1992; National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1993).

Information sharing can be obtained by developing a comprehensive, system-wide management information system which measures effectiveness, maintains financial accountability, and cumulative data for reporting purposes (Soler and Shauffer, 1990).⁴ This system would provide ready access to information to juvenile justice and ancillary agencies so they can quickly evaluate the juvenile's needs and apply for appropriate services. The management information system should be able to measure the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system, inducing statistics on programs, dollars saved in providing services, quality of services, quality of coordination, and quality of life for workers and clients (Soler and Shauffer, 1990). And it should provide feedback information to law enforcement agencies and agencies early on the justice continuum about the legal charge and disposition of juveniles processed through their agencies (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1984). Direct on-line access should be

⁴This authors of this report recognize that development of the system proposed here may be costly and therefore not within the immediate reach of many juvenile justice jurisdictions. Agencies in some jurisdictions could also choose to undertake development of a non-automated or non-"full fledged" system, instead, while still enhancing information sharing in their jurisdiction.

given to police, prosecution and defense, the court, probation and parole services, agencies which collect and provide information to the system, and on an limited basis, social welfare and social service agencies and schools.

The following issues need to be considered prior to the development of such a system: the type of data contained in the computerized files, persons to receive data, purposes for which data will be used, relationship between the system and the people whose records are in the data bank (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970). Sharing agencies should have a "Qualified Service Organization Agreement," similar to those in the mental health sector, which discusses these issues. This would allow petitioning agencies to become "qualified" to communicate freely with the main record keeping agency. Agencies entering into this agreement would acknowledge that the receiving, storing, and processing of client information is bound by confidentiality regulations and that the agency will resist any efforts to obtain information that is not permitted the agreement. What needs to be done in advance is to "anticipate the impact of confidential record policy decisions in advance and plan solutions to any negatives impacts prior to implementation" (Hobbs, 1991a).

In order to diminish ethical problems, information should be recorded and entered by an employee directly concerned with the best interests of the child and thus by someone who has a stake in its accuracy (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970; Snyder, 1990). Information found to be inaccurate, unverifiable, outdated should be eliminated. Programs should be established to execute periodic and regular audits of the accuracy information contained in records (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988). Plus, if information is used more frequently, that can increase the quality of the record (SEARCH Group, Inc., 1988a). Input, modification, cancellation, and retrieval of information should be limited to authorized agency terminals (Joining Forces et al., 1992; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970). The content of the central information index should be limited to what is relevant and necessary to accomplish agency functions (Hobbs, 1991a; Joining Forces et al., 1992; National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1984; SEARCH Group, Inc., 1970), for instance it should not include subjective evaluations made by personnel or unsubstantiated reports or conjectures. This may be achieved by limiting access to social records (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1984). Information should be limited to that which is relevant and necessary to serve the child and family effectively to ensure that open communication does not intrude on the child's or family's privacy (Joining Forces et al., 1992). Most importantly, the system should contain an electronic security system which only allows access by authorized personnel (Christie, 1993; Joining Forces et al., 1992; Snyder, 1990).

Prescription for Comprehensive System Development

The authors of this report recommend the following steps to be taken to create this comprehensive information system⁵:

1. Appoint an Information Management (Interagency Steering) Committee.

The committee should be comprised of representatives from every agency in the juvenile justice system, as well as schools, parents, funding agency officials, legislative staff, management information system experts, community representatives, and child welfare agencies. The group should be no larger than necessary, to prevent becoming unwieldy, but should involve all those

⁵ See also recommendations by the National School Safety Center, Joining Forces et al., Search Group Inc., and Hobbs.

who are potential stakeholders or who could make a significant contribution to the group (Joining Forces, et al., 1992).

2. Determine the information currently collected and maintained by all the agencies.

Interviews should be conducted with key personnel who have access to the data base each agency uses as well as managers of any current data system (e.g., data management staff). Through these interviews, determine the data elements included in each agency's data base and how they are collected. In addition to interviews, codebooks, reports, data element tables, and other supporting documents should be collected.

3. Evaluate information needs.

Interviews should be conducted with critical decision makers in the juvenile justice system to determine what information they lack or feel they need for decision making. Questions should also probe why they need it and where they could, if they could, get the information currently.

4. Evaluate overlapping agency goals.

Many agencies share philosophies, goals and objectives. Through interviews and polling Interagency Steering Committee members, determine mutual goals in terms of management and individual case decision making.

5. Determine the mission of the juvenile justice system (overall system goals).

Synthesize responses to questions on goals and objectives from respondents and ask Interagency Steering Committee members to develop a comprehensive mission statement from these data.

6. Clarify reasons to share information.

The Interagency Steering Committee should determine what reasons each agency gives for disseminating information and for receiving information and identify overlapping objectives for information sharing. Then it should develop a policy statement about why information should be shared in light of system goals and obstacles to meeting those goals within each agency because of the lack of information for decision making.

7. Identify specific elements to be shared and who needs access to each item.

Most agencies will not expect broad access to the data of other agencies, but rather will only require certain information relevant to the specific goals to be achieved. Once agencies are aware of each other's narrow information needs and specifically who will be handling this information, agencies will not be so fearful or suspicious, and barriers to information sharing can be lessened.

8. Determine record statutes requirements about information collection and dissemination mandated by federal, state, and local governments.

Information sharing is not only restricted by agency policies, but also government statutes and regulations. It is important to recognize these restrictions to avoid legal repercussions. This level of review must be conducted for one's own jurisdiction since state and local regulations differ.

9. Determine exceptions to statutory requirements.

There are often as many exceptions to government regulations as there are regulations. Subjects of record searches may often fall into an obscure category which allows for information sharing free of certain restrictions which would not otherwise apply. This level of review must be conducted for one's own jurisdiction since each state and local government has its own exceptions.

10. Draft an Inter-agency agreement (Qualified Service Organization Agreement.

Lay out appropriate records use policies and/or code of ethics. Only agencies that sign this agreement can have access to information. This agreement can also contain a uniform means of obtaining a properly executed signed authorization for information sharing form that would be signed by the juvenile and/or his parents (Hobbs, 1991a). This document can be drafted using the principles of informed consent (Joining Forces et al, 1992). This agreement can be based on a reasonable person test in which "participating agencies make a determination that a reasonable person in the group about which the data is to be exchanged would not object to having data transmitted without further permission" (Joining Forces et al., 1992).

11. Fund the system.

Costs for building the system must be determined. Apply for funding or necessary resources to build such a system. Agency resources can be pooled to meet this end.

12. Designate Information Management liaisons or gatekeepers in each agency.

These persons will maintain a library of information management materials, present in-service training programs for employees regarding confidentiality requirements, make requests for information from other agencies, respond to other-agency information requests, maintain records of information requests, and suggest changes in information management practices when necessary.

13. Build the system.

The information system must be designed to meet overall system needs as determined by evaluations of the interviews with decision makers in the juvenile justice system.

14. Prepare and/or revise policies and procedures.

Prepare written policies and procedures that will assist in the training of staff about confidentiality and information sharing procedures.

15. Train staff.

Prepare and train staff about new information sharing policies and procedures of yours and other agencies.

16. Supervise confidentiality needs.

Provide daily management direction and supervision to staff on basic confidentiality management operational issues.

17. Review policies regularly.

Have periodic Interagency Steering Committee meetings at which the members review the information management policies and provide for regular audits of information accuracy.

18. Review needs regularly.

Periodically review and provide for regular evaluations of system needs. The juvenile justice system is constantly evolving, and new needs arise. As disseminating agencies review and amend policies of information sharing, the needs of requesting agencies may be affected.

19. Revise system as necessary based on audits and system needs.

With the guidance of the Interagency Steering Committee, the information system must be revised based on the periodic reviews of system needs. Revisions to the information system must meet new system needs.

20. Repeat steps 14 through 19.

The study of information needs may be conducted repeatedly on small levels to achieve regular review and revision of the system to conform to changing needs and policies.

Benefits of A Comprehensive System

If a jurisdiction were to choose to implement a comprehensive system-wide management information system, the benefits could be enormous. Among them: a reduction in clerical burden by reducing the amount of redundant data entry as cases move among agencies, a reduction in frustration experienced by clients and their families who are repeatedly asked or are requested to complete several forms which ask for the same information, an improvement in data accuracy and timeliness by allowing sister agencies to edit and correct shared information so that data will reflect the most recent contact, the protection of staff and client's lives through the due process or mutual agreement of various justice agencies to share information about armed or otherwise dangerous individuals, an enhanced capability to meet the needs of a juvenile, especially one who has mental or educational disabilities that may be known to only one agency, the development of more uniform terminology within a juvenile justice system, and the enhanced capability of individuals and policy makers to more efficiently and effectively deploy resources, identify problems, and improve general operations (Phillips, 1990).

At the same time, however, it must be recognized that any management information system is only as good as the information which goes into it and as rational as the humans who use it (Albrecht, 1976). As was pointed out in a critique of computer systems over 20 years ago, computer assisted systems do not automatically guarantee the quality of decision making (Czajkowski, 1974). Rational decision making is still reliant on decision makers who not only have information, but can use this information to pick from among a set of decision alternatives to maximize agency goals and objectives (Albrecht, 1976; Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1988). Systems absent alternatives, goals, or decision makers who think, will be no better off with information sharing than without it.

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