

MFL

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FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

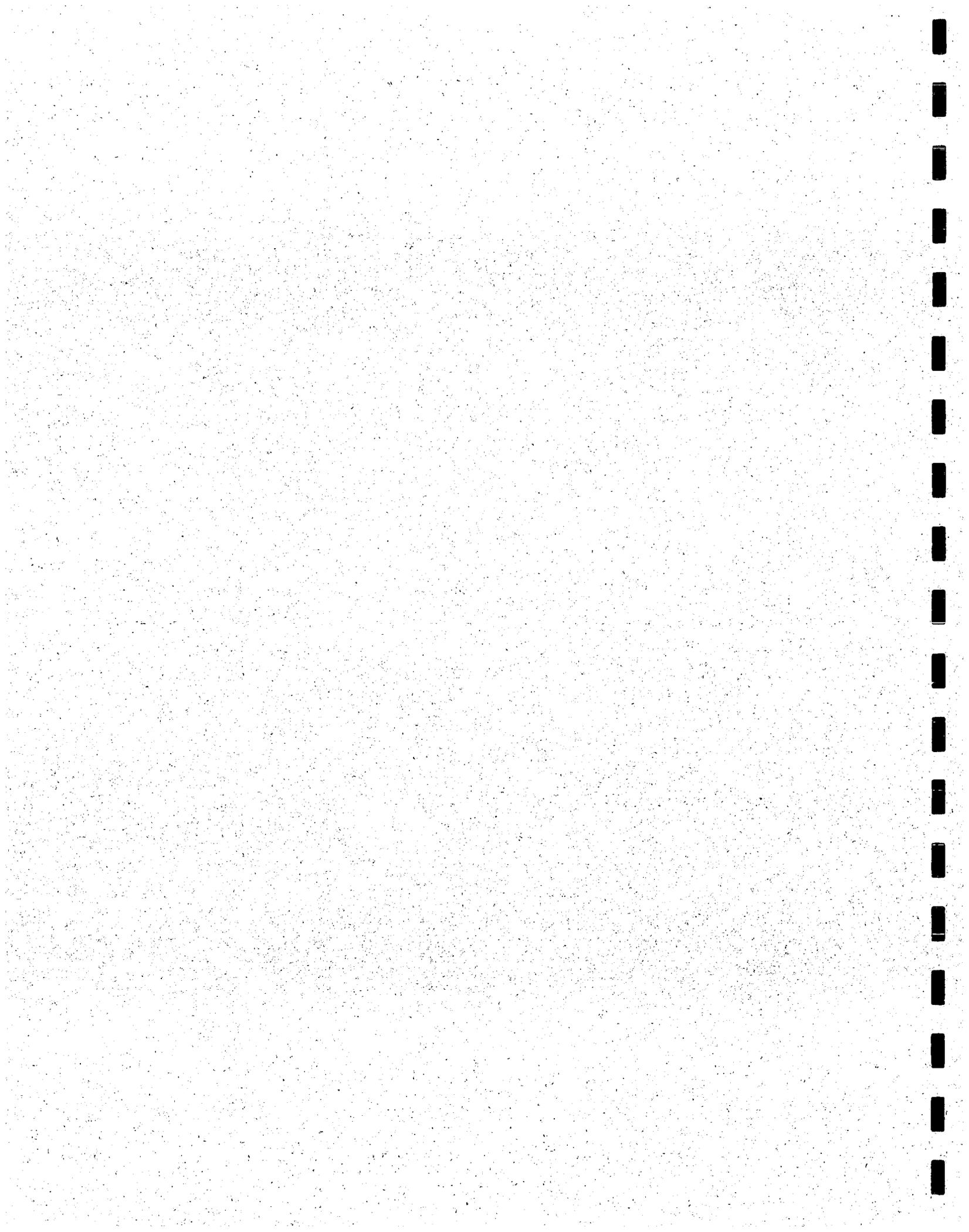
A program of the Juvenile First Offenders & Families Project, Athens, Georgia

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National Institute of Justice

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Family Solutions Program

A Family Intervention for Juvenile Offenders and Their Families

NCJRS

FEB 1 1996

ACQUISITIONS



1995

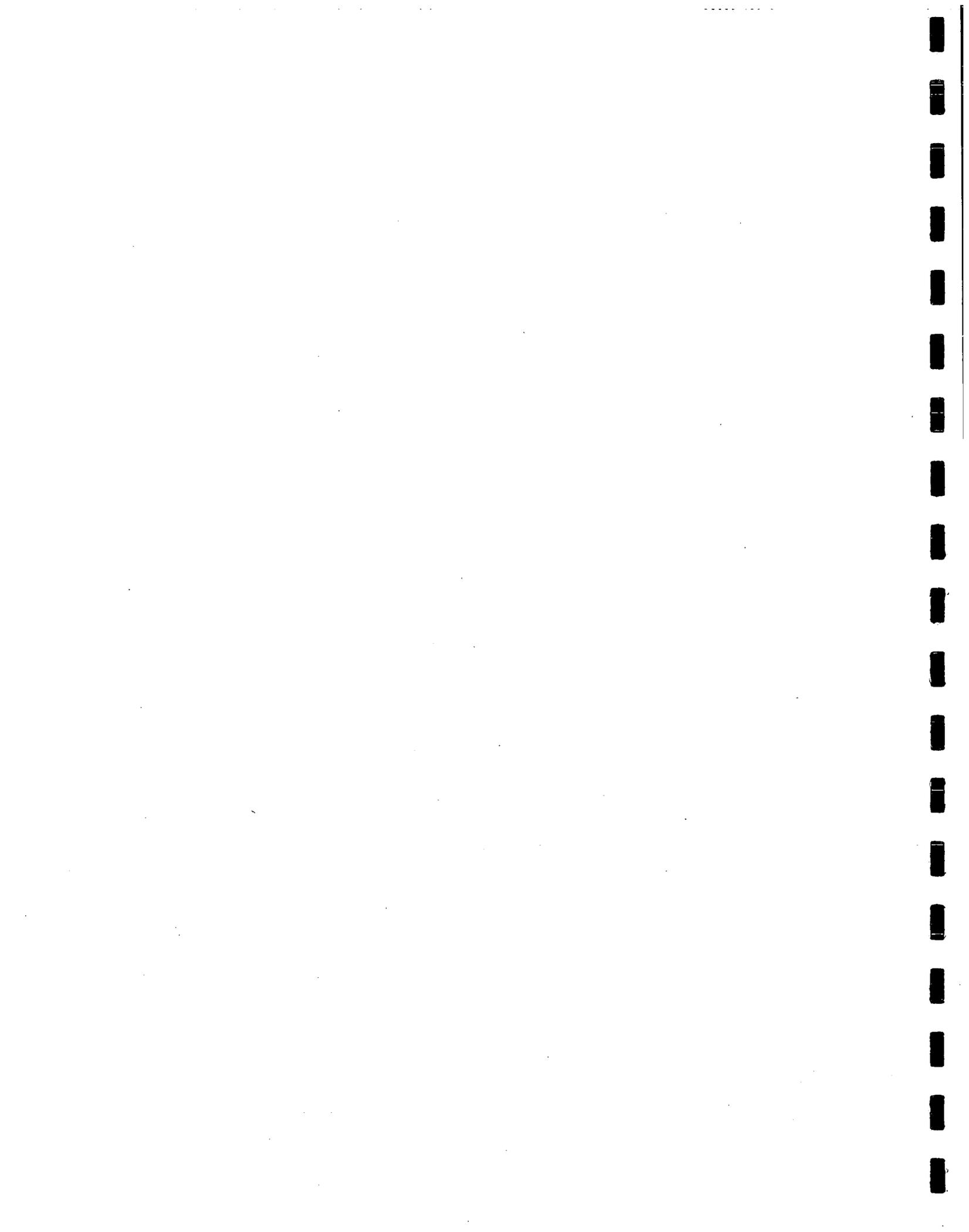


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135 families graduated since 1992
families helping each other
accessing personal/family strengths
building commitment/family efficacy
family-driven topics/issues
graduation and celebration

FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA

The Family Solutions Program(FSP)

(FSP) is an approach that involves juvenile first offenders and their families. The FSP adopts the philosophy that the best way in working with youth is by working with their families and the larger community.

The purpose of the FSP is to help youth who appear before Juvenile Court and their families find solutions that could prevent repeat criminal offenses. We believe that:

- * Families must be included in resolving problems of youth.
- * Solutions that promote improved functioning exist within the family.
- * Families do better when they can express their ideas to others in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere.
- * Families and individuals do best when they feel they are part of their local community.
- * Families can learn from other families.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The FSP meets one evening each week for 10 weeks. The objectives of the program include:

- * Learning skills to promote educational success.
- * Discovering better ways to communicate in the family.
- * Helping parents learn parenting skills.
- * Helping youth learn coping and life skills.
- * Helping families discover resources in the community and how to utilize them to help the family.

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

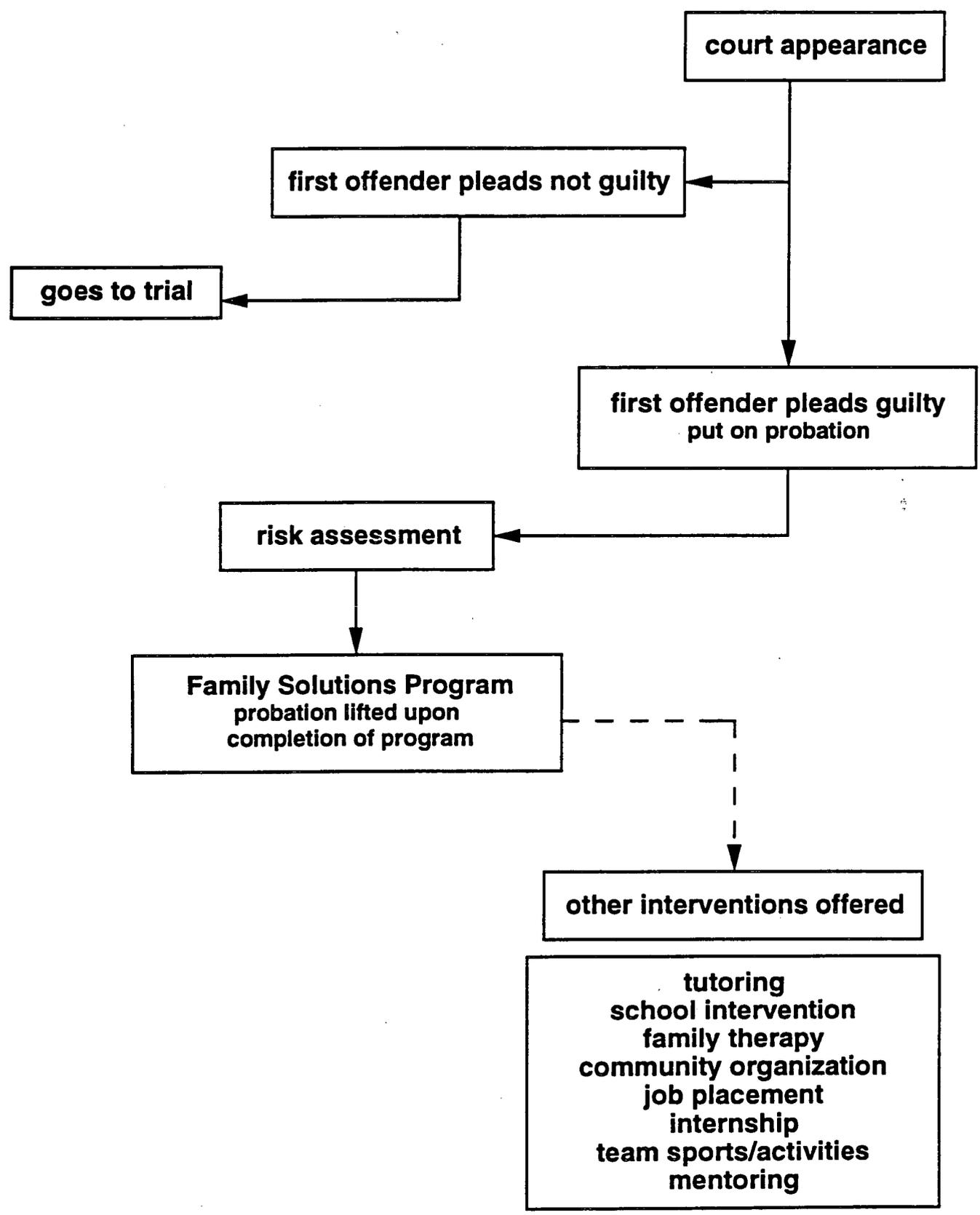
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(706) 542-2650

**PROJECT FUNDED BY
THE GEORGIA CHILDREN AND
YOUTH COORDINATING COUNCIL**

First Offender Program Flow Chart



Family Solutions Risk Assessment

Demographic items

Sample items: age, race, gender, income, education, who lives in the home

Relations with family members

Sample item: Describe how well you get along with your mother. (well, fairly well, poorly)

Offense

Sample item: How many times have you been to juvenile court?

Parental supervision

Sample item: What time is the child's curfew on school nights?
before 6pm
between 6 and 8pm
after 8pm but before 10pm
after 10pm but before midnight
no curfew

Peer group

Sample item: How many same sex friends are involved in the juvenile court system?
no friends are involved in system
1 friend is involved in system
2 friends are involved in system
3 or more friends are involved in system

Activities

Sample item: Do you regularly participate in church activities?

School functioning

Sample item: How many times have you been on in-school detention this year?

Significant persons/events

Sample item: Have you lost someone who is important to you within the last year?

Family alcohol and drug use

Sample item: Do you ever worry because of your mother's drinking or drug use?

Family's criminal involvement

Sample item: Are any members of your family/household involved with the court system?

no family members involved

a close family member has committed minor offenses

a distant relative is heavily involved in the system

a close family member has been imprisoned

more than one member of the family has been involved

Summary Sheet of Ancillary Questionnaires

Parenting Measure

Schaefer, E. S. (1965). Children's reports of parental behavior: An inventory. Child Development, 36, 413-424.

Subscales: acceptance & acceptance of individuation

Sample item: Makes me feel better after talking over my worried with her. (like my mother, somewhat like my mother, not like my mother)

Family Functioning

Smilkstein, G. (1978). The family APGAR: A proposal for a family function test and its use by physicians. The Journal of Family Practice, 6, 1231-1239.

Sample item: I can turn to my family for help when something is troubling me. (almost always, some of the time, hardly ever)

Family Communication

Bienvenu, M. J. (1969). Measurement of parent-adolescent communication. Family Coordinator, 18, 117-121.

Sample item: Is family conversation easy and pleasant during mealtimes? (yes, usually; no, seldom; sometimes)

Family Coping

McCubbin, H. I., Olson, D. H., & Larsen, A. S. (1991). F-copes family crisis oriented personal evaluation scales. In H. I. McCubbin & A. I. Thompson (Eds.), Family assessment inventories for research and practice (pp 203-216). Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin.

Sample item: When we face problems or difficulties in our family, we respond by sharing our difficulties with relatives. (strongly disagree, moderately disagree, neither agree nor disagree, moderately agree, strongly agree)

Children's Coping

Ayers, T. S., Sandler, I. N., West, S. G., & Roosa, M. W. (1990, August). Assessment of children's coping behaviors: Testing alternative models of coping. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Boston, MA.

Sample item: When I have a problem, I listen to music to help me forget. (never, sometimes, often, most of the time)

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Demographics, Family/Community Relations	Mean	Percent
<u>Race:</u>		
African American		90
Caucasian		10
<u>Income:</u>		
Less than \$5,000		19
Between \$5,001 and \$10,000		40
Between \$10,001 and \$20,000		31
\$20,001 or greater		10
<u>Source of Income:</u>		
Wages for work		54
Public assistance		40
Unemployment/workman's comp		1
From other sources		5
<u>Mother's Education:</u>		
Less than 8th grade		6
Some high school		39
High school graduate		43
Some college		12
<u>Parents in the Home:</u>		
Live with 1 parent		53
Live with 2 parents		15
Live with 1 parent & 1 or more adults		32
<u>Gender of Youth:</u>		
Male		63
Female		37
<u>Age:</u>		
Mother's age	37	
Child's age	13	
<u>Siblings:</u>		
Number of siblings in the home	1.76	

Table 1 cont.

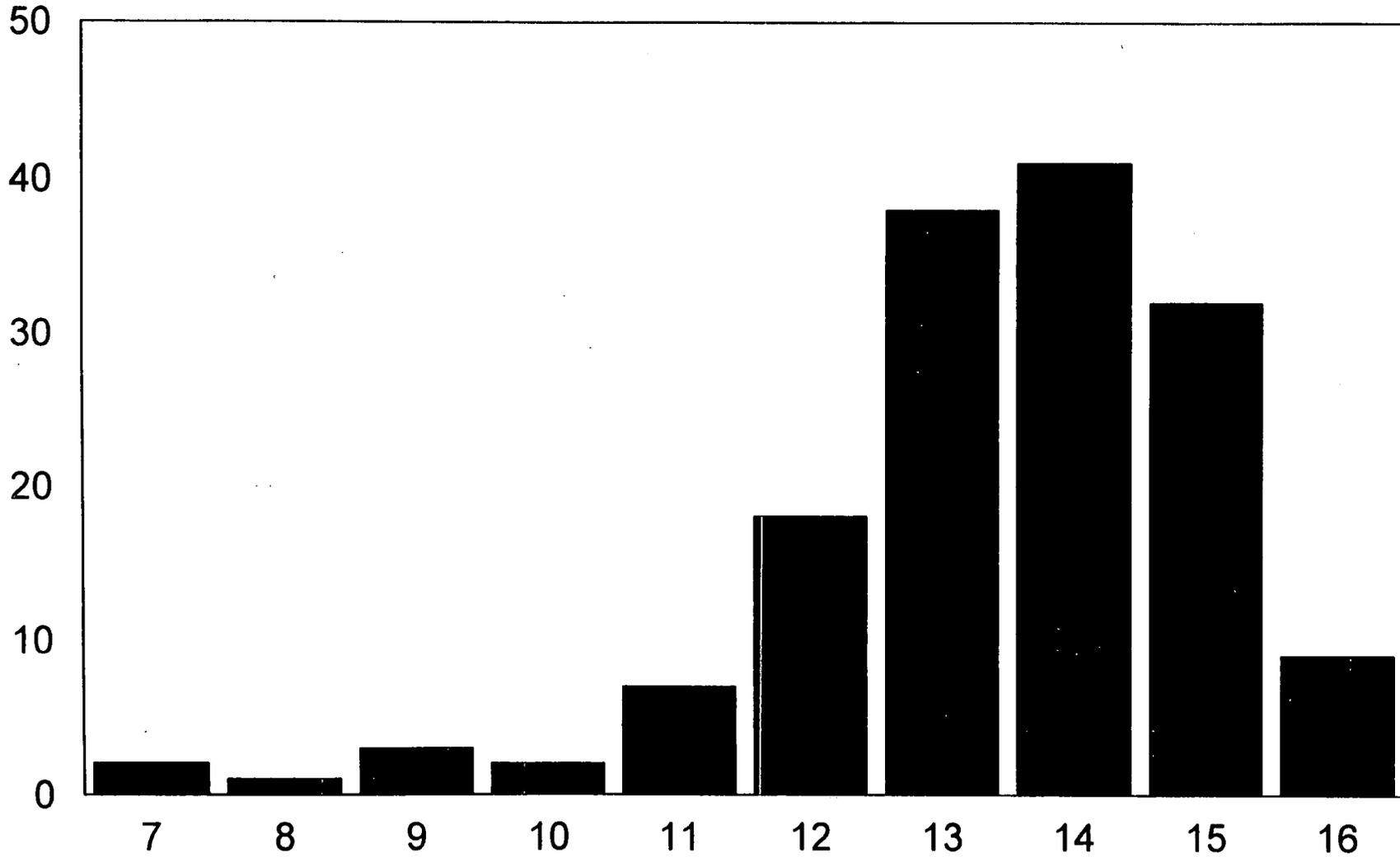
Demographics, Family/Community Relations	Mean	Percent
<u>Community Involvement</u>		
Church Activities		42
Community Activities		32
School Activities		25
<u>Educational Information</u>		
Failures		58
Suspensions		54
Detentions		49
<u>Loss</u>		
Juveniles lost someone important		54
<u>Peer Involvement in Criminal Justice System</u>		
No friends involved		44
1 friend involved		33
2 friends involved		6
3 or more friends involved		16
<u>Family Involvement in Criminal Justice System</u>		
No family involved		56
Close member/minor involvement		21
Distant member/heavily involved		2
Close member/imprisoned		18
More than one member involved		2
<u>Time Arrive Home on School Nights</u>		
Before 6pm		28
Between 6pm & 8pm		40
After 8pm/before 10pm		25
After 10pm/before 12am		7
After midnight		<1

Family Characteristics

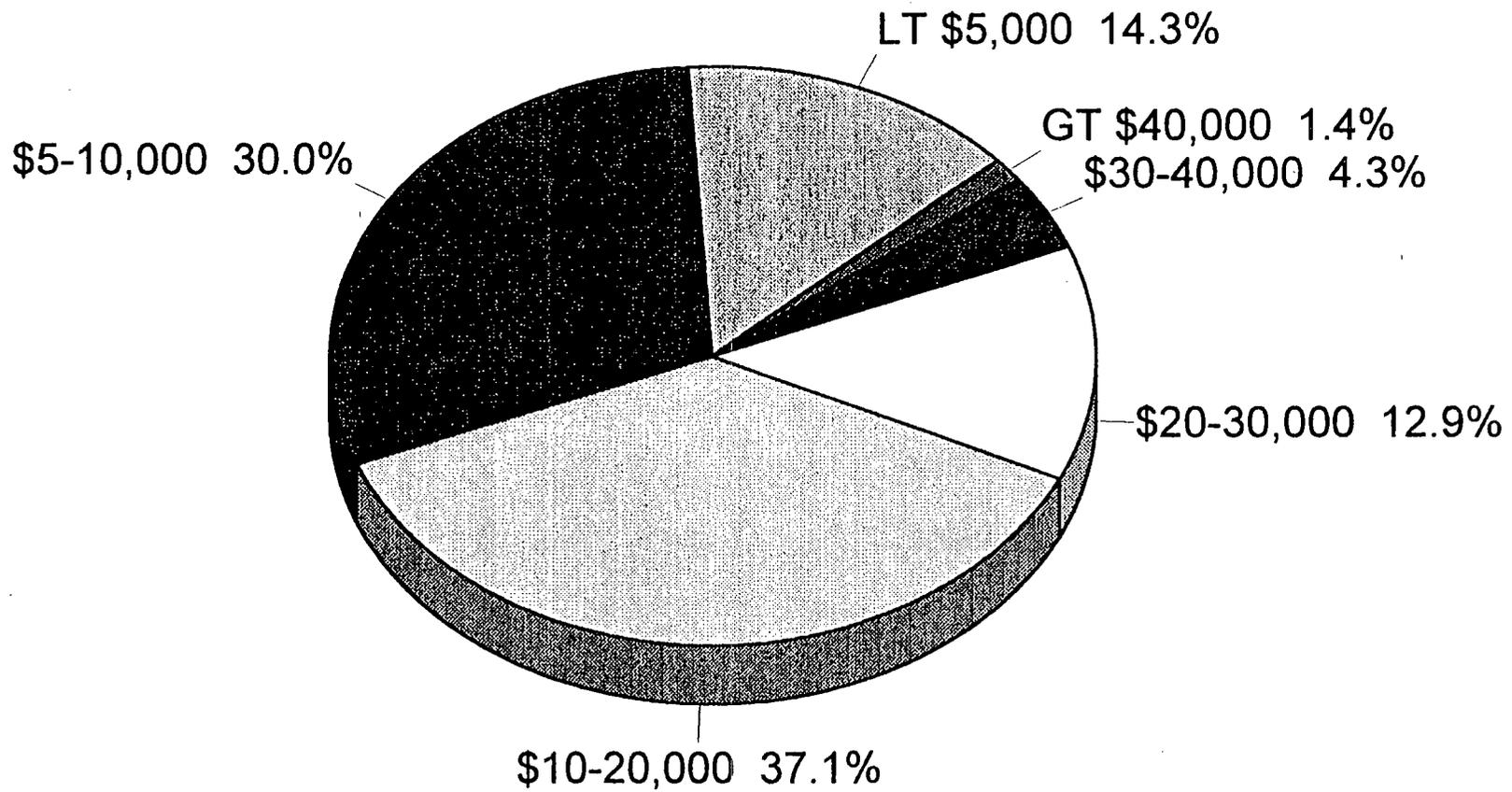
- 83% African Americans
- 60% live in one parent homes
- 83% of parents have no more than high school diploma
- 85% make less than \$20,000 per year
- 62% of juveniles have been suspended from school

Youths Age

Frequencies



Family Income



FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM
School Grades
Tuesday Nights
Cycle 5 1994

S	Participant	M	E	SC	SS	Sat	S	IH	A	T
----- (Doesn't attend. 9th last grade)										
MC										
CM		70	69	69	65		2		8	3
CM		65	55	55	55		1	2	6	
CM		70	65	55	55			1	4	7
CM		80	71	55	85				2	
CC		C	F	F	U		1	2		
CC		B	F	B	C	5		3	3	14

FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM
School Grades
Monday Nights
Cycle 6 1994

S	Participants	M	E	SC	SS	Sat	S	IH	AB	T
BHL			60	75	68		2	3	8	
HE			86	83	93			1	3	1
CM		77	I	55	I				12	1
CM		68	55	55	70				14	10
CM		78	71	66	67		1	1	1	
CM		75	I	55	60		1		5	4
CM		68	80		70					
CM		70	70	85	85				4	
CS		C	F	F	C				1	3
CS		B	C	B	C				5	1
CS		F	F	F	F		3	1	14	4
CM		85	83	89	63				1	1

Schools

CM - Clarke Middle
CS - Cedar Shoals
BHL- Burney Harris Lyons
HE - Hillsman Elementary
CC - Clarke Central High
MC - Madison Co. High

M - Math
E - Eng./Lang. Art/Reading
SC- Sciences
SS- Social Studies/History
Sat Saturday School
S - Suspension
IH- In-house suspension
AB- Absences
T - Tardies

October 10, 1994

Dear _____,

We have been informed by the Athens-Clarke County Juvenile Court that your family has been referred to the Juvenile First Offender Family Solutions Program to satisfy the conditions of probation. The Juvenile First Offender Family Solutions Program is a nine week program that meets one evening per week. Attendance is required for the youth involved with the Juvenile Court and his or her parents.

The first meeting of the Juvenile First Offender Family Solutions Program is Monday, October 17, 1994 at 6:30pm, at the McPhaul Child Care Center on the University of Georgia campus. Again, parents and youth are required to attend.

If you have any questions, please call William Quinn or Jerry Gale at (706)542-2650.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Marcia Michaels, M.S.
Family Solutions Program Staff

FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

- Session 1: BUILDING GROUP TRUST AND COHESION**
Setting the ground rules (punctuality, attendance, participation)
Establish group identity - ice breaker(s)
 Name game - introducing self with adjective
 Knots game
Facilitators role play expressions of parent/youth about being here
- Session 2: DECISION MAKING**
Video - The Morning After
Group activity/ discussion on how decisions affect one's life
- Session 3 PARENTING**
Parents and youth meet separately to tell their stories
Skits: Want ad for parent, child
Family Auction - bid on values and achievements
- Session 4 FAMILY INTERACTION**
Discuss the necessity of rules and when/how to change them
Pair two families in one room with facilitators - problem-solve a current issue
- Session 5 GOAL SETTING**
Discuss how and why we set goals
Speaker provides testimonial of importance of goal setting
Complete worksheet on individual goal setting
- Session 6 VIOLENCE AND GANGS/NEGATIVE PEER INVOLVEMENT**
Video on consequences of violence
Demonstrate conflict resolution skills
Parental monitoring
- Session 7 EDUCATION**
Discuss the importance of education, monitoring school progress/behavior
Promote skill building for family school conferences, conducive home environment for learning
Discuss educational goals
- Session 8 TOPIC SELECTED BY GROUP**
Merchants discuss shoplifting, enforcement and consequences
School official discusses role of family, school objectives
Juvenile court judge discusses role of juvenile court, legal resolution to delinquency
- Session 9 PERSONAL CHANGES AND FUTURE PLANS**
Each group member reports to the group a change that one has made in his/her life, and a specific objective/aim for a future change (i.e., school behavior, job, career plan, behavior at home)
- Session 10 GRADUATION**
Pot luck dinner
Commendations and presentations of diplomas
Inspirational Speaker
Fishbowl exercise

FAMILY SOLUTIONS ACTIVITIES

Guests/Speakers

Merchants

Personal Testimonials

The Life of Malcolm X

Juvenile Court Judge - Probation Officers

Representatives from Various Occupations

School Representatives

Group Activities

Cooperation (Human Knot, Traffic Jam, Build Structures)

Family Values Auction

Family Budgeting

Personal/Family Goal Contracts

Ad for Ideal Parent/Child

Role Play

Setting up Family Rules

Mystery Bag - Decision Making

Videos

The Morning After

Stop the Violence

Michael Thurman 'Second Chance' Talk

Field Trips

County Jail

VALUES AUCTION

You have \$450.00 to use on bidding. You can use it all on one bid, or try to get various items for lesser amounts.

ITEMS FOR AUCTION

- _____ 1. Family Health (everyone in family will have good health)
- _____ 2. Youth will graduate from college
- _____ 3. One good paying job (one member of the family will have a high paying job)
- _____ 4. Good family communication (all family members will get along well and have good, open communication)
- _____ 5. Job security (one member of the family will have a job that is very secure, i.e. will not be fired or laid off)
- _____ 6. Strong family loyalty and love for each other
- _____ 7. Everyone in the family will have strong religious values
- _____ 8. Win the lottery for \$250,000
- _____ 9. You will have safe neighborhoods and can walk out at night without fear of violence
- _____ 10. No one in the family will become involved with drugs or alcohol
- _____ 11. Youth's future family will be intact (i.e. no divorce or separation)
- _____ 12. Youth will get a scholarship to college
- _____ 13. Youth will not commit another crime nor will he/she be arrested again
- _____ 14. Youth will be one of the top ten academic students in his/her school
- _____ 15. Most of youth's friends will graduate from high school
- _____ 16. Youth will get a graduate degree
- _____ 17. Youth will have good teachers

ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

Decision-Making Guide

Step 1: Name the choices or alternatives involved in your decision.

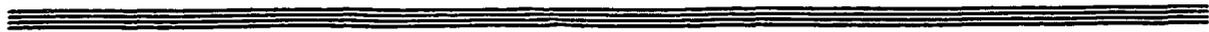
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Step 2: Gather information about the decision. (Consider your personal values, your goals, and what facts you need to know.)

Step 3: List the advantages and disadvantages of each choice.

- a. Alternative #1: _____
Advantages _____
Disadvantages _____
- b. Alternative #2: _____
Advantages _____
Disadvantages _____
- c. Alternative #3: _____
Advantages _____
Disadvantages _____

Step 4: Make your decision and list your reasons for this choice.



ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

Making A Dream Come True

Think of a goal -- something you have dreamed of accomplishing in your future. It can be any type of goal: educational, personal, or financial.

WRITE THE GOAL: Be very specific.

A TARGET DATE: When do you want to accomplish this goal?

EXPECTED BENEFITS: What are the ways that reaching this goal will help you?

PLANS: What are the steps that you need to take to reach your goal?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

DIFFICULTIES AND ROADBLOCKS: What are the things that might keep you from achieving your goals?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

SOLUTIONS: What actions can you take to overcome these difficulties?

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
-
-

ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

Short-Term Goals: My Contract

I, _____ being of healthy mind and body, do
(Name)

hereby declare my intention to achieve the following short-term goal on
or before _____
(date)

My goal is to

To achieve my goal, I will complete the following objectives:

- 1. _____

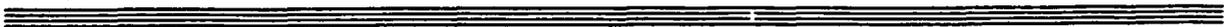
- 2. _____

- 3. _____

Signed _____

Witnessed by _____

Date _____



II-C



Encouragement Profile

We all have abilities, talents and qualities which are useful and which are learned. Think about these qualities in your own family and write some of them below, filling in the name of your teen or teens as you go.

_____ does well at _____.

I do well at _____.

_____ helps me _____.

Something _____ is learning: _____.

Something I am learning: _____.

A strength _____ has is _____.

One of my strengths is _____.

_____ can _____.

I can _____.

_____ learned how to _____.

What I like best about _____ is _____.

What I like best about me is _____.

NOTE: The more you look for your teen's positive traits, the easier it becomes.

**FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO OUR SIXTH
AWARDS CEREMONY**

**June 24, 1993
6:00 pm until 8:30 pm
227 N. Finley Street**

**(no jeans or t-shirts please)
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED**

Certificate of Completion

This is to certify that

*satisfactorily completed
with perfect attendance
the Family Solutions Program*

August 23, 1994

*Jerry Gale
Co-Director*

*William Quinn
Co-Director*

Evaluation of the Family Solutions Program

In our evaluation of the effectiveness of the Family Solutions Program we have included 89 youth and families who have graduated from the FSP. While we have graduated a total of 121 families, we did not include in the analysis families who recently completed the program because the challenge of repeat offending behavior is yet to come. These 89 represent youth and families who graduated as far back as April of 1992, and all those since that time up to November of 1994. Of these 89, 61 (68.5%) youth have NOT presented in the juvenile court again with a new offense, while 28 (31.5%) have re-offended. There were 74 first time offenders and their families who were processed in the juvenile court during this same time who did not have any treatment or intervention. Of these, 31 (41.9%) have not presented in the juvenile court again with a new offense, but 43 (58.1%) have re-offended. These comparisons not only show obvious differences in the rates of re-offending behavior between graduates and non-graduates of FSP, this difference is statistically significant. It was also found that among re-offenders, FSP Graduates had HALF as many repeat offenses than youth who had no intervention. This difference was also statistically significant.

COMPARISON OF RECIDIVISM RATES FOR FSP GRADUATES AND NON-GRADUATES

FSP Graduates	No Intervention
Did Re-offend	
28 (31.5%)	43 (58.1%)
Did Not Re-offend	
60 (68.2%)	31 (41.9%)

p < .02

Comparisons were made between the groups of graduates and non-graduates on measures of family functioning, peer relationships, parenting attitudes, income, demographic differences such as number of single parent families, and school grades and behavior. There were NO differences between these groups on income, family functioning peer relationships, parenting attitudes, demographic differences like number of single parent families. There was a DIFFERENCE between the two groups on school status and grades. The non-graduate group was far more likely to have been suspended from school several times during the academic year. Also, they were more likely to have been failing at least once course. And, non-graduates were less likely to have been participating in school activities like athletics or clubs. It appears that school-related variables are very influential in re-offending behavior.

Many parent and youth comments about the Family Solutions Program generated from interviews and focus groups can be found in the FSP newsletters.

Family Therapy News

The AAMFT actively seeks to be enriched through the strength, power and wisdom of diversity.

Volume 26 Number 1 February 1994

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Alternatives to Incarceration for Criminal Offenders

by Joan Rachel Goldberg

Families enmeshed in the criminal justice system are in the midst of crises that may represent therapeutic opportunities. Arrest, sentencing, imprisonment and release are obviously more than individual traumas. How families respond to these crises is of critical importance to the offenders' futures. The services that local and state governments make available are also crucial. Is a first offense the gateway to a life of further crime? Or can arrest lead offenders to rehabilitation...and family healing? In Utah, Connecticut, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Pennsylvania and Ohio, marriage and family therapists (MFTs) are on the forefront, seeking answers to these questions.

PUNISHMENT VS. REHABILITATION

The scales of American justice have traditionally tipped closer to punishment than to rehabilitation. In March 1993, newly appointed U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno suggested a new shift toward rehabilitation. Less than nine months later, however, the U.S. Senate gave birth to an omnibus crime bill, delivered seemingly without benefit of Reno or U.S. Justice Department midwifery. Instead of increased funding for drug treatment centers or family support and adolescent services, the bill promises such innovations as ten-year sentences for those who persuade others to join gangs and those who use guns in any street crime. (The bill's



Illustration by Mark Long

provisions awaited debate by a House-Senate conference committee at presstime.) In a society terrified by violent crime, stiff measures gather congressional votes as dead bodies attract flies.

Yet, other indicators suggest an administration interested in enlightened approaches to crime. (See "Prevention: Has its Time Come?" below.) In December 1993, U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Lee Brown spoke approvingly of the "drug court concept," which originated in Miami and has been replicated in Washington, DC, Oakland, California, and elsewhere. "It uses the authority of the criminal justice system to get people who are first-time offenders for possession of drugs into a treatment program, and it keeps them there through the treatment process," Brown told Katie Couric on the NBC Today show (December 2, 1993). "That holds great promise. We're going to support that," he added. But what kind of a treatment program? Research demon-

strates the superior value of family therapy-based programs for adolescent drug abusers, in particular. Will Brown's office study the impact of family-focused treatment vs. individual treatment? (See article, p. 3.)

Research has not often guided the U.S. criminal justice system. For example, where are the data to support the impact of criminalization and incarceration? And if they haven't worked for adults, why should mandatory sentences be extended to juveniles? When the recidivism rate for juvenile and adult offenders alike continues to climb, hasn't the time come for effective alternative treatments?

Juvenile offenders attract the lion's share of attention because of their demographics. More than 30 percent of all persons arrested in the U.S. in 1990 were under 21, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Those under 18 accounted for 17.5 percent. In 1990, the average annual "operating expenditure" for adult

(Continued on page 8)

Prevention: Has its Time Come?

At presstime, U.S. President Clinton was rumored to be readying a federal government-wide effort to coordinate a major violence prevention program. Spearheaded by U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services officials, the program is expected to push strongly for early intervention, working with children and adolescents, families, schools and social agencies, and to stiffen sentences for chronically antisocial offenders.

"Our progress in dealing with chronically antisocial, delinquent adolescents

has been very, very meager," John E. Richters, MD, concludes. Richters is director of the Child and Adolescent Disorders Research Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Preventing the development of chronic offenders is clearly critical. What is almost revolutionary in the U.S. is that prevention, not punishment, is considered the way to go now.

"It's certainly the first time in recent history that the Justice Department sounds at times like a department of social services," comments Richters. "This is a real departure. Historically, the Justice Department spent much of its energy and resources on everything from bullet-proof vests to making prisons more escape-proof. This is a real enlightened Administration

with respect to prevention.

"The relative lack of success of the criminal justice system in stemming crime has been around for decades," Richters notes. "It's finally given rise to this enlightened view that prevention is the way to go."

"There is a proliferation of programs out there," University of Utah professor James Alexander, PhD, observes. The challenge is demonstrating and replicating the efficacy of empirically based programs. Richters agrees that many violence prevention programs exist, but not many undergo scientific evaluation. Demonstrating results is necessary to secure additional funding for replication, he emphasizes.

3



Family Systems Approaches in Chemical Dependency Treatment

by Daniel R. Valentine, MA

9



Serving Families, God and Country: MFT Chaplains

by Jennifer Daw

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Federal Update



by Mingyew Leung, MPP

23



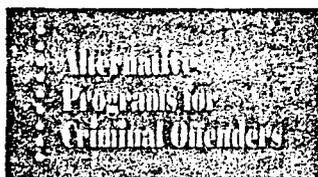
When Fire Follows Floods, Quakes and Riots, MFTs Can Help

by Joan Rachel Goldberg

MAILING LABEL

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(Continued from page 1)

incarceration in state prisons was \$15,496, reports the U.S. Department of Justice. It cost almost \$40,000 a year in 1991 to incarcerate a juvenile in a public facility. That could pay for a lot of marriage and family therapy (MFT). But is MFT the answer?

SPEAKING FOREIGN TONGUES

The criminal justice system speaks the language of control and punishment. MFTs speak of dialogue, solutions, empowerment and healing. The criminal justice system is foreign territory, and it may appear impenetrable at first sight. Therapeutic interventions may seem difficult to fit into a correctional model. Terryann Reed, MS, executive director of Family ReEntry, Inc., who has been working with criminal offenders since 1984, found that her MFT training in structural therapy and Bowenian theory left her ill-equipped to help this population. The MFT approaches she had studied were too problem-focused. Bowenian approaches were too "shaming" and "cerebral" for the incarcerated and their families. Families were too fragmented. Minuchin's approach "assumed that the families were mostly enmeshed and needed restructuring," Reed says. "In truth, most had fallen apart long ago." Reed turned to strategic, brief and solution-oriented family therapy.

Prisons, community jails, juvenile detention centers and even rehabilitation centers and halfway houses may not issue local MFTs personal invitations, but they may welcome MFTs' efforts wholeheartedly. Reed, for one, began her work in a prison halfway house in Bridgeport, Connecticut. In a state where recidivism hit 83 percent, corrections officials were hot on the trail of alternative programs. The Connecticut Department of Corrections funded Family ReEntry's start-up. And New York City has recently approached Reed about bringing her program to "holding pens" (where inmates are held pre-sentencing) there.

Reed is far from the only MFT working in the criminal justice system. James Alexander, PhD, a professor in the department of psychology of the University of Utah, pioneered a highly evaluated treatment for working with delinquent youth more than 20 years ago. His Functional Family Therapy (FFT) Model (Alexander & Parsons, 1973; Klein, Alexander & Parsons, 1977) has been replicated successfully (Barton, Alexander, Waldron, Turner & Warburton, 1985) and characterized as "the most important series of studies of family therapy with juvenile delinquents and their families." (Gurman, Kniskern & Pinsol, 1986) Since 1990, Alexander has been working with José Szapocznik, PhD, and Howard Liddle, EdD (see "The Drug Connection" at right), on approaches for substance abusing, delinquent adolescents. MFTs Richard Wampler, PhD, and colleagues, and William H. Quinn, PhD, and colleagues are also making their marks in the field. In addition, Stephen Gavazzi, PhD, at the Ohio State MFT program, is in the early stages of a program involving the Ohio State Department of Youth Services.

MFTs have been joined by other mental health professionals with a strong family focus. Scott W. Henggeler, PhD, of the Medical University of South Carolina's department of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, a developmental psychologist, has developed a family preservation model using Multisystemic Therapy (MST) for serious juvenile offenders (Henggeler, Melton & Smith, 1992; Henggeler & Borduin, 1990, in press). This model has been evaluated as a promising treatment (Culbertson, 1990; Miller & Prinz, 1990), and outcome studies have supported its effectiveness with juvenile offenders. In an article in press (Henggeler, Melton, et al.), long-term follow-up of 84 serious juvenile offenders found that an average 13-week Multisystemic Treatment resulted in a mean time for rearrest of 56.2 weeks. The control group who received "traditional services" had a mean time of 31.7 weeks. At 120 weeks post-referral, 39 percent of the MST group had not been rearrested, compared with 20 percent of the controls.

MFTs, with their expertise in marshaling family and larger system resources to

mental illness and histories of child, sexual and domestic abuse — have begun to shake the system's allegiance to punishment.

Whether the invitation comes from the corrections or judicial system, or whether MFTs introduce themselves first, as volunteers or consultants for hire, the partnership cannot proceed without an understanding of the population and how services will be funded.

UNDERSTANDING THE POPULATION

While juvenile delinquents have long been studied, understanding what leads to delinquency and what may prevent it has been slow in coming. Are they "deprived" on account of being "deprived," as Steven Sondheim's West Side Story lyrics proclaimed? But deprived of what? A stable or "normal" home? Two parents? Effective parenting? Adequate schooling? Henggeler has developed a multidimensional causal model of delinquency which links delinquency to family and school difficulties, including parental discipline and affective relations problems and involvement with delinquent

peers (Henggeler, Melton & Smith, 1992).

A 1993 American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Annual Conference poster session by William H. Quinn, PhD, Richard Sutphen, PhD, Marcia Michaels, MS, and Jerry Gale, PhD (in press, *Journal of Addiction and Offender Counseling*), examined the many risk factors believed associ-

ated with juvenile delinquency in 197 youthful first offenders and their families in Georgia. The two goals in studying this population: examining the combination of environmental influences and their relationship to delinquency, and developing "high impact intervention driven by the data collected...."

In a three-year study funded by the Georgia Coordinating Council on Children and Youth and aimed at reducing delinquency, Quinn's team assessed youth ranging from seven to 16. (Quinn is director of the MFT program at The University of Georgia at Athens.) Eighty-four percent were black, 15 percent white, and one percent Hispanic. Males constituted 66.6 percent of the study sample, while 33.5 percent were females. (Female delinquency has been rising dramatically in the U.S.) Only one in four offenders came from a two-parent household.

In the Georgia group, 55 percent were aged 14 to 16 at the time of their first court referral, while 18 percent were aged 13, and 27 percent were 12 or younger. Several studies have found that when a youth's history of antisocial behavior begins between six and nine, and features an increasing severity of offenses, subsequent delinquent behavior can be predicted with significant accuracy. In the Georgia study, however, age at first



Photo courtesy of Family ReEntry, Inc.

Terryann Reed working with clients at Family ReEntry in Norwalk, Connecticut.

empower their clients (see p. 7), may be uniquely qualified to help in the criminal justice system. First, however, they must speak the language. MFTs can't talk about raising self-esteem or empowerment, Reed cautions. They must talk about behavioral change, responsibility, productive responses to frustration and better parenting skills. This approach, "because it develops behavioral competency, develops self-esteem," Reed explains.

OPENING THE DOOR

Judge Clinton Deveaux in Atlanta has pioneered "sentencing" families to family therapy in lieu of correctional facility imprisonment for offenders. MFT Susan Adams, MEd, has worked with Deveaux and offenders to guide them to accountability for their past and responsibility for their future. But the criminal justice system in general has tended to give therapeutic approaches a lukewarm reception.

Prison administrators, guards and parole officers may consider therapists naive and risky. They may worry about rules being broken, security being compromised, and prisoners being "coddled." But the burgeoning population of delinquent youth, the overcrowded prison system, unconscionable recidivism, and epidemic proportions of seemingly intractable problems — substance abuse,

The Drug Connection

For many MFTs, substance abuse — or a range of problem behavior that includes substance abuse — has been the key characteristic under study or treatment, rather than involvement with the criminal justice system. Yet the populations may converge. Often, it is arrest itself that clarifies the existence of substance abuse (through a mandatory urinalysis). José Szapocznik, PhD, observes, "With drug abusing adolescents, there is typically some delinquent activity." (The current caseload of adolescents seen at the University of Miami's Center for Family Studies, which Szapocznik directs, is not court-referred.) A new program in Miami, however, will involve mostly court-referred African-American and Hispanic drug abusing adolescents.

These adolescents will be referred by the Miami juvenile court in February 1994 as part of a three-year program funded by the U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. The \$1.9 million grant will finance a range of family-focused services to 270 families annually. These families will be compared to a control group of 270 families who receive only assessment and referral.

"The experimental treatment is something we call 'human ecology' treatment," Szapocznik explains. "We're really trying to think multisystems." The services provided include social services, vocational training, job placement, family therapy and case management. "These youth live in a very disrupted context," Szapocznik says. "First we must repair the context, which is a little more than doing family therapy."

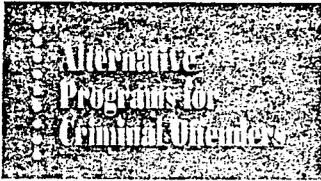
Other MFTs involved in large family-focused research studies of delinquent, drug abusing adolescents, funded by the U.S. government, include Howard Liddle, EdD, of Temple University, and James Alexander, PhD, of the University of Utah. (For more on Liddle's Multidimensional Family Therapy model, see *Family Therapy News*, April 1993, p. 7.) Both Liddle's and Alexander's recent work, along with other research in the area by Szapocznik, have been funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). In fact, the three share a large NIDA grant, now in its third year, which involves process research and treatment models for specific cultural populations. —JRG



offense was not significantly correlated with other factors.

The literature strongly relates poor parental supervision/monitoring and the absence of clear rules at home to delinquency. However, the Georgia study found that adequate supervision characterized 71 percent of the cases. In 21 percent of the cases, there was little supervision, and in eight percent, vil-

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ally none. Not surprisingly, parental supervision was significantly related to peer group inadequacy and overall risk factor. It also was associated with a history of criminal involvement in the family.

Peer group affiliation proved more influential in the Georgia group. While 28 percent were involved with an "appropriate" peer group, 43 percent were associated with "inappropriate" peer groups, and 29 percent with "a significant negative peer network." The data suggested that negative peer relations and overall risk score tend to be associated with more serious offenses.

School functioning proved an even more robust measure. Only 12 percent experienced no school problems. Fifty-eight percent experienced recent grade and behavior problems, while 28 percent suffered chronic school problems. Two percent were school dropouts.

Alcohol and drug use "is an emergent phenomenon that has substantial predictive value" for delinquency, the poster presenters noted. The rates assessed in the Georgia study, however, were "very conservative" because "self-report and family report data are notoriously suspect in assessment of this variable." The researchers found substantial use in only eight percent of cases, experimental or occasional use in 26 percent, and no use in 66 percent.

The last measure — of criminal involvement in the family — found that in 29 percent of the cases, serious criminal involvement had occurred.

Given that "parental supervision adequacy, family functioning, peer group relations, and, to some extent, school functioning are intertwined with each other and strongly associate with overall risk," the researchers felt that family intervention for juvenile delinquency is "valid."

FAMILY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

The Family Solutions Program (FSP) was the model developed by the Georgia team for families at high risk for juvenile delinquency. The model brings together families in a group setting for ten weeks. They meet one evening weekly for short, formal presentations followed by small group discussion and/or role plays.

The program incorporates the premise of solution-focused therapy that "solutions exist within the family," and the idea that "families do better when they can voice their ideas to others in a collaborative fashion." As suggested by both Matthew Selekman, MA, and Steve de Shazer, MSSW, the context is celebratory. Facilitators come from the community.

Family therapy is also provided to families who request or require it, or to help stabilize changes that have occurred because of the FSP. The MFTs are flexible about therapy sites and schedules, providing home-based therapy and evening or weekend therapy as needed.

Follow-up of the youth who went through the program found a recidivism rate of 34.8 percent approximately six months to two years later. The recidivism rate for the control group? Almost ten points higher: 44.3 percent.

FSP LESSONS

Quinn and colleagues note that establishing and maintaining a community-based program for juvenile first offenders requires:

- (1) performing a community needs assessment,
- (2) obtaining community support, cooperation and participation,
- (3) establishing a program for cooperating with court staff,
- (4) working with churches or synagogues to obtain space, volunteers and facilitators and to legitimize the program,
- (5) continually adapting the program based on feedback, and
- (6) continual evaluation.

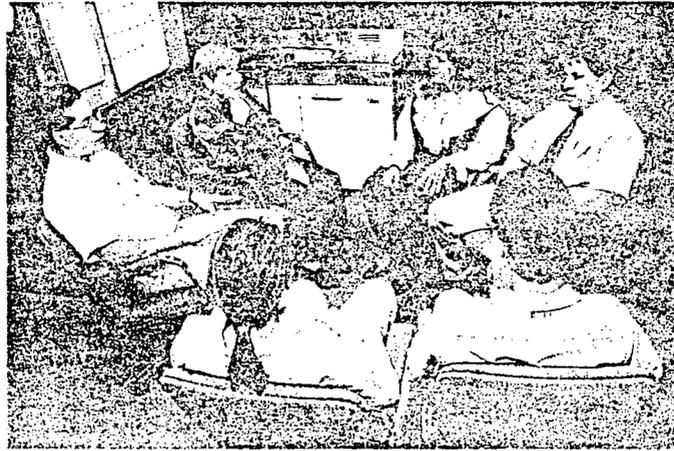


Photo courtesy PEP, Texas Tech University

Parent Empowerment Project (PEP) team members, Greg Cruz (left, juvenile probation officer) and Dana Roush (second from left, family therapist) meet with probation officers, Judy Lara and Chris Hernandez (right), to prepare juvenile offenders (foreground) for entry into the PEP program.

To develop into a community-based rather than academic program, the university must continue to provide resources while relinquishing responsibility and decreasing levels of student/faculty participation. At the same time, the developers must gain the investment and participation of community leaders.

FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY

Alexander and Parsons' 1973 "short-term behavioral intervention" with delinquent "families" focused on assessing the family behaviors that maintain delinquent behavior; modifying the family communication patterns for greater clarity, precision, increased reciprocity and presentation of alternative solutions; and contracting with the family to modify the maladaptive patterns and institute more adaptive behaviors. The initial demonstration project involved 99 families referred by the Salt Lake County Juvenile Court. Offenses ranged from running away to truancy, shoplifting and substance possession. Offenders were 13- to 16-year-old males and females. Approximately half of the families served as a control group.

The researchers evaluated recidivism in outcome measures and communication variables in process measures. Behavioral family intervention slashed recidivism almost in half when compared to the no-treatment controls, to 26 percent instead of the 51 percent county-wide rate. It was also far more successful than compared treatments of client-centered family groups ("a basically didactic group discussion context focusing on

attitudes and feelings") and psychodynamic family programs (12-15 sessions aimed at promoting insight to produce therapeutic change).

In 1977, Alexander, Parsons and Nancy C. Klein examined the data on the original families to assess long-term effects of the treatment on offenders and their siblings (see References). After two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half years, recidivism for offenders remained at 26 percent, while sibling court involvement was 20 percent. This was a rate one-third to one-half lower than the sibling delinquency rates in the comparison groups.

Functional Family Therapy (FFT), as Alexander and colleagues now call their approach, has since been applied suc-

cessfully to problem adolescents by other researchers, and the treatment effects have been replicated by Alexander and colleagues in three replication studies (Barton *et al.*, 1985). Alexander and colleagues have also extended their work by examining the impact of therapist gender, relationship and structuring skills, and manipulation of family members' attributions.

FAMILY REENTRY, INC.

Family ReEntry, Inc., in Norwalk, Connecticut, has tested six different "family-empowering" demonstration models to help over 300 offenders and their families each year. Follow-up research reports that Family ReEntry approaches more than halve offenders' chances of future crime: The nonprofit organization's programs range from the New Haven-based residential program for 60 clients at a prison halfway house to the TAP program that works weekly with ten clients considered probation risks. While the first program ensures weekly participation because furloughs are dependent on participation, the latter suffers from irregular attendance. Still, the six-month program has resulted in only three rearrests for a population of 65.

Family ReEntry has also begun a demonstration project in Stamford, paid for by the state, to offer community-based therapy. Lastly, Reed has worked with the Norwalk school system, which is funding a small pilot project that mandates that "criminogenic" families (a criminal justice term, according to Reed, and one sure to roil many MFTs and family members) receive family therapy at home, and eventually at the school.

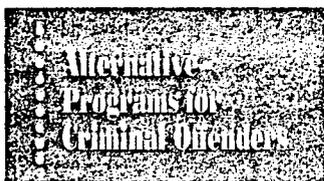
With a 1993 budget of only \$67,000, Reed has done a lot with a little. She receives a minimum of administrative support and relies on MFTs in training and fundraising efforts to keep afloat. Academic-based MFT programs often face a smoother entry into the criminal justice system. An academic affiliation, research track record, impressive outcome studies, and a good history as a federal grant recipient can offer immediate legitimacy. Moreover, an initial offer of free therapy in return for a well supervised training and research opportunity for graduate students and professors is often too good a deal to reject. In this way, Texas Tech University extended its MFT research and training opportunities. (Over time, Texas Tech charged and steadily increased its fees, to demonstrate the value of MFT and to ensure the program's continuation.)

TEXAS TECH

At the 1993 AAMFT Annual Conference, Richard Wampler, PhD, director of clinical training of the marriage and family therapy program at the Texas Tech College of Human Sciences, and colleagues, presented a workshop on their work in two Texas correctional facilities. Co-presenters included Kary Reid, PhD, Krista Winn, PhD, Robert Burr, MS, and Gary Schreiner, PhD.

The Brownfield Regional Court Residential Treatment Center is a 45-bed residential unit that primarily serves young adult male offenders whose offenses involve drug and/or alcohol abuse. The Brownfield center is an alternative to state prison, and remaining in the program is a condition of probation. The major treatment model is a 12-step program. Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings are held on-site. The professional treatment staff are largely addiction counselors. Texas Tech

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began its affiliation with the center in 1990, providing eight to ten hours of therapy services and two to four hours of consultation weekly. The providers are doctoral students supervised by Wampler.

The therapists have conducted groups, parenting classes, men's consciousness-raising groups, marital communication classes and family and couple therapy sessions when possible. Issues include surviving childhood sexual abuse, perpetrating sexual abuse of children, domestic violence, HIV infection and depression. All therapists serve as consultants to supervisory staff and counselors, providing training on family systems theory, stress management, etc.

Another Texas Tech program began with student volunteers at the Lubbock County Youth Center (LCYC). LCYC, a residential facility for juvenile offenders aged 11 to 16, is about half the size of the Brownfield Center. Besides involving a younger age group, the LCYC also includes females. The population, like that at Brownfield, is largely Mexican American (58 percent). Nineteen percent are African American and 23 percent are Anglo American. The well received volunteer family group work at LCYC, and Texas Tech's reputation at the Brownfield center, led to an invitation to bid to provide clinical services at LCYC.

At LCYC, the MFT graduate students replaced weekly groups that followed an Adlerian model with a combination of weekly group therapy and biweekly individual or family sessions. Therapists concentrated on psychoeducational and cognitive-behavioral approaches in the male groups. The mixed sex group focused on personal responsibility, making choices, and drug and alcohol abuse prevention. In the female group, however, therapists focus on interpersonal relationships and recovery from sexual abuse. All of the female residents had a history of sexual abuse, Wampler notes.

INFLUENCING LARGER SYSTEMS

Besides working directly with residents and their families, Texas Tech took a systemic approach by trying to influence the larger system. MFT students offered training for detention officers, residential probation officers and community probation officers. They also offered consultation and parent education.

"Despite progress in therapy in LCYC, a return to the community returned the juvenile to her/his old friendship networks and a family environment that allowed delinquent behaviors," Wampler explains. Texas Tech proposed providing home-based family therapy for adolescents released from LCYC. Adolescents placed on "intensive supervision probation" and others deemed at high risk for recidivism would also be accepted. Up to nine sessions of family therapy were provided, following a solution-focused model. Twenty families went through the program in 1993.



Photo courtesy PEP, Texas Tech University

The PEP Project Team: (seated l-r) LeAnne Carnes, juvenile probation officer; Richard Wampler, program director; Dona Roush, family therapist; (standing l-r) Sterling Shumway, program coordinator/parent educator; Steve Humphries, family therapist; Greg Cruz, juvenile probation officer.

"We found that the logistics of the home-based program were almost impossible to handle," Wampler acknowledged. Yet the team didn't want to give up on helping after release. "Therefore, we redesigned the program with a great focus on giving the parents support, knowledge and experience in dealing with their delinquent adolescents." Funding came from the Innovative Program funds of the Texas Juvenile Probation

Commission. Along with training parents in effective skills to deal with non-compliance and defiance, the therapists are training both probation officers and therapists to work with parents. The therapists will be available to help the parents deal with larger systems (schools, child protection services, etc.) and to conduct home-based family therapy sessions at least every three weeks. Families will be assessed after three months, with service continued for up to three more months. Wampler hopes to add parent support groups, a network of parent consultants and a peer support network to provide after-school and weekend activities.

A ROLE FOR MFTS

The criminal justice system needs alternative approaches to incarceration, and MFTs appear to be leading the way toward effective, empirically based programs.

"I think there is a tremendous future for MFTs in programs like these," Alexander concludes. "Acting out youth seems to be keeping very stable and very powerful, and family therapy approaches have had a particularly strong — and sometimes the only — demonstrable efficacy.... MFTs might do well to orient their training toward the kinds of populations that are going to (a) always be there, and (b) most reasonably, have already demonstrated that family-based approaches are very effective."

Joan Rachel Goldberg is editor of Family Therapy News.

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When Fire Follows Floods, Quakes and Riots, MFTs Can Help (Continued from page 23)

less prepared for disaster may suffer more, some may find it an empowering experience. There is often an outpouring of help from others, leading many to conclude that what are important in life are family and community, not possessions. Disasters, like other crises, do offer families an opportunity to reframe their lives and expand their potential.

PREPARING FOR DISASTER

While the bulk of Brown's practice is general psychotherapy work, it is the disaster relief work that offers a particular challenge and excitement. Whether helping a family after a single-house fire or debriefing Red Cross staff after an earthquake, Brown generally sees the impact quickly.

Brown is a CISM consultant for the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Urban Search and Rescue Division, and the Army Corps of Engineers Earthquake Preparedness Division, along with his Red Cross work and private practice.

He warns other therapists, though, not to do as he did in the eighties when an earthquake hit California: "self-activate" during a disaster, offering "curbside counseling." Now that the training exists, you should really get that," Brown concludes. Being prepared for disaster can be seen as a natural extension of MFT training. A family systems background is particularly useful, Albert adds. Training in group dynamics and multicultural issues is necessary to effective disaster work.

Brown recommended that the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) formalize an agreement with the American Red Cross. "That will soon be concluded thanks to the efforts of [AAMFT Executive Director] Michael Bowers, MA, and divisional liaison Kate Lynch."

Joan Rachel Goldberg is editor of Family Therapy News.

Accreditation Actions

The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) took the following actions at its November 1993 meeting:

- Awarded initial accreditation for five years to the marriage and family therapy program at Antioch New England Graduate School (master's), Keene, NH. Program Director: David Watts, EdD.

- Awarded renewal of accreditation for five years to the marriage and family therapy program at Provident Counseling, Inc. (post-graduate), St. Louis, MO. Program Director: Doris Diamond, MSW.

- The marriage and family therapy program at Kantor Family Institute (post-graduate), Cambridge, MA, was denied renewal of accreditation, effective June 22, 1993.

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FAMILY SOLUTIONS

A newsletter for families concerned about youth offenders in the Athens Area.

You may be asking yourself - what is the Family Solutions Program? The purpose of the Family Solutions program is to help youth who appear before juvenile court and their families find solutions that could prevent repeat criminal offenses.

Background

The beginnings to this project date back to 1991 when it became clear that juvenile delinquency was a community problem that transcended the boundaries of current funding support and the mission of the court. National data suggest that many delinquents will likely re-offend. It is the premise of the Family Solutions Program that families of troubled youth need to be involved in the search for solutions to their problems that result in criminal offenses. We believe that:

- * families must be involved in resolving problems of youth
- * solutions that promote improved functioning exist within the family
- * families do better when they express their ideas to others in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere
- * families and individuals do best when they feel they are part of their local community
- * families can learn from other families

A small group of professionals shared these beliefs and began discussing how these beliefs could help organize an effective program for juvenile first offenders.

With the encouragement and guidance of Juvenile Court Judge James McDonald, a group including Richard Sutphen, Ed Risler, William Quinn, and Jerry Gale built an intervention model and located funding to make it possible. We are grateful for the funding support of the Georgia Children and Youth Coordinating Council and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at UGA since January, 1992. We are also appreciative of the work of many others in the Athens/Clarke County community who lent their support to the project and expressed a vision that they shared with us.

.....
We have just completed another successful Fall session for the year 1993! While this most recent cycle with youth and families was conducted at the McPhaul Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic at UGA, previous programs have been held at First A.M.E., Ebenezer Baptist, and First United Methodist Churches. We would like to briefly share with you some of the highlights of this session to help you become more informed of the program.

Week 1: A getting to know your group session. This session also explained the program to it's participants so they were aware of it's purpose, goals, and overall benefits. Large group presentations and small group interactions were combined.

Week 2: A video was presented regarding how families decisions have an impact on one's future. Afterwards, the

small group discussion focused on how certain decisions in the participants lives have brought them where they are now.

Week 3: David Barnett, one of the group facilitators who is employed as a veterinarian at Seaboard Farms spoke on his youthful goal of becoming a professional football player and how he was forced to go in another direction. Small group discussions were on how and why we set goals.

Week 4: Dr. Jerry Gale, Family Solutions Program Co-Director, spoke on family budgets and family values. Small group discussions were on what it's like to be a parent.

Week 5: The topic was how to establish and maintain rules in the family successfully.

Week 6: The youth went to the Clarke County jail while the parents had an open discussion on issues parents are having to face in the '90's.

Week 7: Johnny Holiday gave an uplifting talk to everyone about what Malcolm X really stood for, and emphasized the importance of education and self-esteem.

Week 8: A discussion on the value of education and the importance it has on choices one is able to make in life.

Week 9: GRADUATION!!! Ten families were handed a diploma after a wonderful feast donated by Wilson's Soul Food. Michael Thurmond gave an inspirational speech to send the families home on a positive note. Facilitators and family members shared various talents in the large group.

.....

We hope this short summary has helped you become more aware of what the Family Solutions Program is doing for the community.

Staff of the Juvenile First Offenders and Families Project

William Quinn
Project Director

Jerry Gale
Co-Director

Rick Dunn
Co-Leader, FSP

Mellinda Craig
Co-Leader, FSP and
Juvenile Court Liaison

Marcia Michaels
Assessment Coordinator and
FSP Facilitator

Family Solutions Program
Facilitators in 1993

David Barnette
Geraldine Dupree
Denise Black
Damond Dotson
Marcia Michaels
Johnny Holiday

We also express our gratitude to six UGA student interns who helped support the program.

What Are Parents and Youth Saying?

Analysis of Program Effectiveness

Some illustrations of parental and youth comments about their experiences in the Family Solutions Program are as follows:

A = Adolescents

1. It ain't worth it getting in trouble.
2. I learned a lot. You taught me a lot. You helped me a lot.
3. It changed me a lot.
4. I learned a lot.
5. It helped inspire me. All the talking stuff the group talking made me want to grow up to be something, you know.
6. Judge McDonald, thank you because you see you could have sent me somewhere else, but you didn't. And I like, I enjoyed the first, last 12, 14 weeks and this certificate. My goal of accomplishment was to bring my grades up in school and I did and I know I am going to pass my grade.
7. I wanted to make better grades and I did. I will play football and basketball next spring and fall. My goal was to do my best to help her bring her grades up and she did bring one F up to a C - a high C. And she's working on it. My goal was for my son and I to communicate more. I still have to speak first, but he answers. He had a friend over this weekend and to get him to wear slacks instead of jeans, I did a favor for him. So, he did a favor for me. He wore the jeans, but not jean jeans. He's thanked me for stuff. He knows he's to bring his grades up and he's not doing that until he has too. I know he can do that. I just wish he would.

8. My goal was to keep from arguing with my dad. And other than the one argument, I did.

At the beginning of the program - that first night, I thought it was going to be a long 7 weeks. The 2nd week I began enjoying myself and learning a lot of new things. And my goal was for me and (son's name) to communicate better and for him to stop lying so much. And he has done that too. He has shown me a lot of progress. We communicate better and everything.

9. My goal was to get back in school and I'm in school. But it's kind of weird. Me and my mom communicate better and I don't have the urge to skip school like I use to. And I don't have any peer pressure. So I'm glad I came to this program and I don't plan to get involved in the system again.

10. My goal was to get a new girl friend and I did and we broke up. I guess to get my grades back up.

P = Parents

1. It's been a help to this young man.
2. We got a lot out of this and it pulled us closer together. It helped our whole family.
3. I am glad I am here. I've enjoyed it. I hope you don't have any more kids that have to come to this program. I hope they learn it before they come. Thanks for giving her another chance other than the juvenile hall.
4. "You have all made a difference in our life".
5. Like his goals were to do better with his grades in school and he did better with

them. I had a counsel meeting with all his teachers and I was very pleased. Matter of fact, I was a little overwhelmed, at what happened. I was looking for a disappointment, but I received a lot of grace in more ways than one. I've accomplished a lot in and out of class. I feel it is a good class that every parent should go to. I learned some things that I didn't really know. My goals were to get a little closer to my son and to start my own business in the near future. I accomplished that.

6. I've enjoyed it. I've seen a lot of accomplishments. I hope it continues and get better. And I did get a grade higher..... My goal is to keep on climbing.

HOW MANY RE-OFFEND?

A recent preliminary data analysis indicates the promise of the FSP with first offender youth and families. Of 224 first offender youths and families who have had a risk assessment since January 1992, 66 have completed the Family Solutions Program. Of these 66, 43 have not had a repeat criminal offense while 23 have exhibited an offender behavior. Thus, 65.2% of the FSP graduates have not recidivated. Of the 158 youth and families who have not graduated from the FSP, 70 have repeat offended while 88 have not exhibited a repeat offense. Thus, 55.7% have not exhibited a repeat offense. Overall, there is a 9-10% drop in recidivism rate for those youth who participate with their families in the Family Solutions Program.

Table 1

Comparison of Family Solutions Program (FSP) Graduates and Recidivism

	Repeat Offense		
	<u>NO</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>Percent Recidivated</u>
FSP Graduate	43	23	34.8
ASP Non-Graduate	88	70	44.3

~ DATES TO REMEMBER ~

Risk Assessment Staff Meets - January 7, 1994

FSP begins (cycle 9) - January 11, 1994

Last Week of Program - March 15, 1994

To find out more about the Family Solutions Program contact:

William Quinn or Jerry Gale at 542-2650

The Family Solutions Program is a project funded by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and the Georgia Children and Youth Coordinating Council.

Family Solutions Program
Department of Child and Family Development
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

FAMILY SOLUTIONS

A newsletter of the Family Solutions Program for those concerned about youth offenders and families in the Athens Area.

FSP for 1994

Thus far this year three cycles of the Family Solutions Program have occurred. Five families graduated on March 15, 1994 after ten weeks of participation beginning January 11, 1994. On May 31, 1994 ten families completed the FSP, and on July 5, 1994 up to 8 families will be eligible to graduate. It is gratifying that since January, 1992, eleven cycles of the 10 week multiple family intervention program have been completed, and overall close to 100 families have graduated!

What happens in the FSP?

We have just completed successful Winter and Spring 1994 sessions of the FSP! While these most recent cycles with youth and families were conducted at the McPhaul Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic at UGA, previous programs have been held at First A.M.E., Ebenezer Baptist, and First United Methodist Churches. We would like to briefly share with you some of the highlights of these sessions to help you become more informed of the program.

Week 1: Establishing a group identity was achieved through an ice breaker known as "The Name Game". Purpose, rules, and benefits of the program were explained to the participants. We discussed the importance of respect, expectations and shared responsibility in the family.

Week 2: Participants watched a video. During a small group discussion they explained why they are in the program, and associated feelings.

Week 3: "The Morning After", a video exploring the decision making process was shown. A group activity and discussion illustrated how decisions affect one's life. Small group activities included following a decision-making scenario and its impact on future plans.

Week 4: Small groups made lists of what the perfect parent/child would be. Skits were devised and acted out in large group.

Week 5: Jerry Gale, Family Solutions Program Co-Director, gave a presentation on family budgeting. Group let out early to view a television program geared at stopping the violence in schools.

Week 6: A video on violence and gangs in the community was presented. Discussion followed regarding the participants views on ways to stop the violence.

Week 7: Youth visited the Clarke County jail while parents discussed issues on parenting.

Week 8: Guest lecturer, Steve Jones, of the UGA basketball team spoke on the value of an education and goals. Small groups discussed how to successfully achieve their goals.

Week 9: Johnny Holiday spoke

on Malcolm X. Issues included living up to your potential, the importance of knowledge, and to search for the truth.

Week 10: A wrap-up discussion was followed by an evaluation of the program. Families were asked to participate in candid group interviews about feelings after completing the program.

Week 11: Graduation! Ten families successfully completed the program. Each was recognized and given a certificate. A talent show including families and facilitators followed.

We hope this short summary has helped you become more aware of what the Family Solutions Program is doing for the community.

Who are the families in FSP?

You may be asking yourself - what is the Family Solutions Program? The purpose of the Family Solutions program is to help youth who appear before juvenile court and their families find solutions that could prevent repeat criminal offenses. The following description is for those persons not acquainted with the Family Solutions Program.

Approximately 250 juveniles and their families have been referred to the First Offenders Program since its inception in 1992. Of those families, 132 have been referred to Family Solutions, our ten week, community based, educational program. Many people ask us what kinds of families we work with so we thought we would describe them for you.

The families involved in the program are primarily low

income, female-headed households with several children in the home. Eighty-five percent are African-American families. The typical family has had only minor involvement with the criminal justice system.

Most of the mothers are in their 30's. Forty-seven percent have not graduated from high school, and only 57% work for wages. The remainder of the families receive some form of public assistance. While these mothers make sure there is adult supervision in the home, their children sometimes seem to be lacking the necessary guidance to keep them out of trouble and doing well in school.

The juveniles referred to the program range in age from 7 to 17 years. Sixty-three percent of these youth are males. Typically their crimes fall in the categories of status offenses (i.e., unruly), crimes against persons (i.e., simple battery), and property crimes (i.e., shop-lifting). Sixty-one percent of the youth have discipline problems at school and 56% are failing one or more classes. Well over half of these juveniles do not regularly attend church, participate in school activities, or other community activities.

Staff of the Juvenile First
Offenders and Families Project

William Quinn
Project Director

Jerry Gale
Co-Director

Rick Dunn
Co-Leader, FSP

Mellinda Craig
Co-Leader, FSP and
Juvenile Court Liaison

Marcia Michaels
Assessment Coordinator and
FSP Facilitator

Family Solutions Program
Facilitators in 1994

David Barnette
Geraldine Dupree
John Lawless
Marcia Michaels
Johnny Holiday
Frank McCrary
Doreen Peschio

We also express our gratitude
to six UGA student interns who
helped support the program,
Lisa Lagerberg, Katie Barber,
Sonya Flagger, Lisa Stein,
Parkie Mason, Lisa Hoffman,
and Michelle Stough, Julie
Palmer, Tracy Biebel, Laura
Katz.

HOW MANY RE-OFFEND?

A recent preliminary data
analysis indicates the promise
of the FSP with first offender
youth and families. Of 249
first offender youths and
families who have had a risk
assessment since January 1992,
75 have completed the Family
Solutions Program through
1993. Of these, 43 have not
had a repeat criminal offense
while 23 have exhibited an
offender behavior. Thus,
57.2% of the FSP graduates
have not recidivated. Of the
174 youth and families who did
not graduate from the FSP, 88
have repeat offended while 86
have not exhibited a repeat
offense. Thus, 49% have not
exhibited a repeat offense.
Overall, there is an 8% drop
in recidivism rate for those
youth who participate with
their families in the Family
Solutions Program. In the
nation well over 50% of first
time juvenile offenders
exhibit a repeat offense.
Thus, the FSP rate of 43%
appears promising as an
intervention to curb juvenile
delinquency in the
Athens/Clarke County
community.

Table 1

Comparison of Family Solutions
Program (FSP) Graduates and
Recidivism

	Repeat Offense		<u>Percent</u> <u>Recidivated</u>
	<u>NO</u>	<u>YES</u>	
FSP Graduate	43	32	43
FSP Non-Graduate	86	88	51

What Are Our Interns Saying?

Analysis of Program Effectiveness

In the last newsletter we shared some comments from parents and youth about the FSP.

Some illustrations of how our UGA undergraduate interns describe their experiences in the Family Solutions Program are as follows:

The group identity was firmly established during the first two meetings. The facilitators work well together in making the family's feel at ease. The ice breaker was a terrific way to teach the group everyone's name. I even noticed that throughout the session people were often referred to with an adjective before their name, for example, Jazzy Jheri.

Group discussion was robust on the topic of what to do about the violence in Athens. Possible suggestions were parents becoming more involved in the schools and more community programming for summers and also after school.

Several weeks later Steve Jones, a University of Georgia basketball player, spoke on the importance of goals.

I think that the youth agreed that two of the most important things in accomplishing their goals were staying in school and not getting in trouble with the law. Johnny Holiday's discussion at the Georgia Center was excellent following the discussions of goals and of the importance of an education. The parents had earlier expressed a concern about their kids not wanting an education because to be educated was to be white. I think that Johnny's expression "the educated man" was very applicable to the situation.

My favorite part of the program was being able to sit in with the small groups. As the group broke down in size the conversation became more focused. The youth seemed relieved to be able to let the rest of the group know why they were in the program. After that session the facilitator made it clear that as far as she was concerned they could forget about the past and concentrate on the present.

At one point the parents were

talking together about what type of skit to perform, during this time they talked about not being able to pay bills because of the shoes they "had" to buy their children, about their youth "acting a fool" in school, and the difficulty in keeping control of their children's whereabouts. It was very interesting to me because I cannot imagine my parents buying me shoes, but not paying the light bill. I always knew that if I were in trouble at school it would be "twice as bad" when I got home, and that (even today when I am twenty-two) my parents would be very upset if they did not know my general whereabouts.

As I reflect back on my experience as a facilitator for the Family Solutions Program this quarter, I realize that I have obtained much knowledge and training about community service. I have really enjoyed this opportunity to work with a diverse group of people. My involvement in this program has inspired me to seriously consider acquiring a career in either Juvenile Justice or some other area of Social Services.

It was interesting to note that the parents collectively believed that their children were totally to blame for having to participate in this program. They saw it as a consequence of their child's delinquent behavior, not considering that the misbehavior could be a result of interactions within the home. The youth also believed that their misconduct was someone else's fault; for example, they blamed their parents for not giving them enough freedom, the community for not providing enough activities for youth, and their families for pressuring them into breaking the law. Each group did not want to take the responsibility for their own actions. I believe as the program progressed they began to realize that their participation in this program was a result of their own actions as well as the other factors mentioned above.

The belief that education is solely a white man's achievement has been embedded into their children's minds. They believe this to be the reason for their lack of motivation to be educated.

Rick and Gerry did an excellent job

of stressing that despite the hardships they face they can achieve and with effort they can become productive people of society.

Watching the "Stop the Violence" videos and the field trip to the jail, were great ways to emphasize the reality of the consequences of continuing to defy the law. I observed that the attitudes of the youth especially changed. They began to realize that continuing in a lifestyle of delinquent behavior could lead to more serious crimes and incarceration in the future. The videos were realistic in that they portrayed real life situations that African-American youth and adults in low income housing projects and communities deal with daily. For example, the presence of gangs, the increase use of guns, the kids being killed by kids. Hearing from both the victims and the criminals about prevention, was a good way of highlighting the purpose of our program.

I enjoyed the lecture from the UGA basketball player, Steve Jones. He is a prime example of a black man that decided he was going to put some effort into achieving his goals. He did an excellent job of downplaying the glamorous position of sports and instead emphasizing that education was the key to achievement.

I was given the opportunity to observe a family in therapy with Marcia and transport them home every week after their session. They have survived many tragedies and are well on their way to recovery. The daughter has a good head on her shoulders and realizes that breaking the law will hinder her from attaining her goals of becoming an elementary teacher and a mother.

My father died when I was fifteen and that was hard for me, but I have made it this far because of my family and friends. This death was horrible for me, but then I listened to one of the juveniles one night. She was expelled from Clarke County schools in October. We asked her what she would wish for if she had three wishes. She said that she would like to come to Family Solutions twice a week, she would go back to school, and she wants her brother to get out of jail so that he can come home.

Background

The beginnings to this project date back to 1991 when it became clear that juvenile delinquency was a community problem that transcended the boundaries of current funding support and the mission of the court. National data suggest that many delinquents will likely re-offend. It is the premise of the Family Solutions Program (FSP) that families of troubled youth need to be involved in the search for solutions to their problems that result in criminal offenses. We believe that:

- * families must be involved in resolving problems of youth

- * solutions that promote improved functioning exist within the family

- * families do better when they express their ideas to others in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere

- * families and individuals do best when they feel they are part of their local community

- * families can learn from other families

A small group of professionals shared these beliefs and began discussing how these beliefs could help organize an effective program for juvenile first offenders. With the encouragement and guidance of Juvenile Court Judge James McDonald, a group including Richard Sutphen, Ed Risler, William Quinn, and Jerry Gale built an intervention model and located funding to make it possible. We are grateful for the funding support of the Georgia Children and Youth Coordinating Council and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at UGA since January, 1992. We are also appreciative of the work of many others in the Athens/Clarke County community who lent their support to the project and expressed a vision that they shared with us.

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FAMILY SOLUTIONS

A newsletter of the Family Solutions Program for those concerned about youth offenders and families in the Athens Area.

In each newsletter we try to describe our recent activities in different ways. In the first issue we described how the Family Solutions Program came into being in Athens/Clarke County, who participated, who the leaders were, and what kind of topics were covered in the multiple family group psychoeducation model. In the second issue, we offered verbatim reports from parents and youth describing their positive experiences in the program, and reported on how it was making a difference for families and in decreased repeat offenses. In this issue, we would like to offer one observer's comments about the FSP as she traveled the same journey as the parents and youth through the nine weeks. We also have reprinted a recent press release describing our program as the media has responded to it, including WNGC Radio and the Georgia State Peach Network. We also included a brief report of a national conference in which two other states have shown interest in importing our program. We are grateful to the juvenile court for their cooperation in helping us be successful. As two different families recently asked, "I have been through your program and have no future obligation to the juvenile court, but can I come back and go through it again anyway?"

William Quinn
Director

An FSP Journey

The Family Solutions Program (FSP) developed out of the idea that the families of troubled youth needed to be enlisted to find solutions to prevent their child(ren) from repeating criminal offenses. The dilemma was then how to involve the families in an effective intervention model. The solution became a multiple family group setting aimed at helping each participant to develop solutions to the problems that led to the youths' current trouble so as to prevent its occurrence again. One may ask why this approach became the one of choice. The answer lies in the unique dynamics and effectiveness of a group setting.

Efficiency is a reason for using the group approach. It saves time and money by bringing several families together verses one-on-one contact. Primarily, though, the group setting provides a greater variety of resources and viewpoints. Members usually will have a variety of opinions and ideas, thus making the experience interesting, closer to real life, offer more viewpoints, and hence more resources of information and alternatives. Often members of a group will experience that they are not alone, that many others share the same feelings and concerns which can be greatly reassuring. The group can provide a supportive environment that is safe to try out new behaviors and receive feedback in the form of suggestions, reactions, and perceptions. Finally, a group setting has the advantage of helping to make contracts and commitments stick by making them with many others. The advantages to the group approach as outlined are obvious, but why then involve the family?

The FSP originated out of the theories of family therapy. A general tenet that relates specifically to delinquent children is that confusing behavior of a family member will often make sense in the family context. The delinquent behavior may be a desperate attempt for help, to promote family connections, mediate conflict, or keep an unworkable system functioning when it should have collapsed. Despite the reason, the behavior can generally be seen as embedded in the larger social context. This is the main reason to enlist families in the problem solving process. In addition, families often know and have the necessary means to solve its problems. They may just need some help in making changes and staying committed to them.

The FSP meets for two hours per week for nine weeks. Once a family utilizes the FSP to shorten probation time, attendance is mandatory. The nine sessions correspond well with the group process. In the first session, participants get to know one another, learn the purpose of FSP, the goals, and hopefully what they have to gain by participating. They

play a name game (Bologna Bill or Marvelous Marcia) that breaks the ice and helps people get to know each other. Sessions two through eight correspond with the working stage of the group process in which families learn and discuss topics such as rules and goals. The last session is the graduation from the program and brings closure to the group. People exhibit their musical, artistic and storytelling talent. The FSP is leader-directed to provide structure, thought provoking questions, and group exercises. Family participation in discussions about the material presented and in the group exercises is highly encouraged for it is the means of generating the solutions they sought to find in coming to the program. Also, the FSP strikes a balance between intrafamilial and interfamilial interactions. The group leader and facilitators try to encourage discussion between families about family issues and among the members of individual families. Changing family communication increases viewpoints and resources for the family, as well as experience the feeling of not being the only one with a particular situation. Informing them of community resources helps individual families gain a better understanding of their own struggles and potential solutions.

The FSP addressed decision making, goal setting, values, education/future, and rules to facilitate interaction. Amid these discussions several themes of individual family struggles emerged. It seemed as though every week, time was devoted to attitudes and respect of the child and the parent(s). Both felt as though the other did not respect him or her. The group leader and facilitators tried to address these concerns by having the children and the parents list what they think the characteristics of a good family, of a good child, and of a good parent would be. The lists were surprisingly similar. It is clear then that the parents and the children want the same things. However, the ratings each family gave of how close their family came to the descriptions illustrate that they just do not know how to achieve their aims.

There were other issues going on in some families. For some children delinquent behavior was an 'acceptable' way of crying for help, for the attention and involvement of the parent(s) they live with or the attention and involvement of a missing parent. Some do it to

distract parents from hurting each other, expressing anger over their constant struggle in school or being validated by peers, or bringing two separated parents back together by being a problem to force discussion between them. Often in FSP the children are experiencing some kind of change in the family (i.e. a death in the family or an addition to the family) that led them to commit a criminal offense in hopes of avoiding or reversing the change. By doing the FSP, family members can learn how to talk to one another and get their needs met respectfully, without attitude, and hopefully address some of the deeper family issues.

The FSP introduces the topic of goal setting for one of the nine sessions. This topic is important for the children because the children either had very unrealistic goals (becoming a professional athlete) or admirable future goals that may not be realized because of choices they are making now (wanting to be a doctor, but failing every subject in school). The discussion was also beneficial for the parents because they got a chance to hear their child's dreams. Both parents and children benefited from doing the goal setting exercise because the goals they made were directed toward behaviors to improve family functioning (listening more).

There were other working sessions. One was an auction on family values and budgeting, the other on the value of education. Both discussions were of value to the families. The children learned what it takes (money and decisions) to run a family and that without an education (at least high school) survival on their own will be difficult at best. Parents also learned about the value of education for their children and the change in its importance since they were their child's age. In the other working session the children went to visit the jail while the parents had a discussion on issues parents face.

The first and last sessions were done very well. The first laid the ground work for all the future sessions: what to expect, rules, purpose. The subject of why everyone was there and that not everyone was happy to be there was discussed, easing anxieties by illustrating commonalities among all participants. The last session of graduation was also done extremely well. It focused on what each person gained and on the family strengths. It brought the whole group process to an end, but that

the information, the resources, and the friendships would always be available to them. Families wanted each other's phone numbers so they could meet as a group on their own in the future.

The Family Solutions Program is a wonderful alternative to the traditional punitive approach to working with first time offenders. It really turns a bad situation for the family and the youth into one in which they can gain something and grow, which is really a positive model for living: make your mistakes and learn from them. As one parent said, "I didn't think I could afford the time with my child, after having to come here for two hours each week, now I know I can't afford not to."

PRESS RELEASE

First Offender Program for Juveniles Shows 13 Percent Drop in Recidivism

ATHENS, Ga. -- A three-year program involving juveniles who have committed their first crime shows promising results, according to research by two University of Georgia professors of child and family development.

Bill Quinn, director of the UGA Marriage and Family Therapy Program, and Jerry Gale, Director of Clinical Services for the McPhaul Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic, will present their findings November 4 at the annual conference in Chicago of the American Association of Family and Marriage Therapists.

The Family Solutions Program combines working with first offenders and their parents in a group setting with other children and parents, Quinn said.

"Our goal is to use the youth's support system - family and peers - to emphasize problem-solving skills, decision making and communication," he said.

First offenders who are given the opportunity to join the Family Solutions Program must attend nine out of 10 sessions with at least one parent in order to successfully complete the requirements of their probation, otherwise they are referred back to Juvenile Court for further assessment.

The program generally includes eight families, with most of the juvenile offenders between 10 and 15 years of age, Quinn said.

"We require that one parent and the child attend, but we have had other adults also attend and

we've had both older and younger siblings participate throughout the 10 weeks," he added.

Because 85 percent of the participants are African American, the program is facilitated by an African American community leader. There also are four additional facilitators who help out during the programs through role playing and leading small groups. Facilitators have included school teachers, a school social worker, and an administrator for the Athens-Clarke Housing Authority as well as university graduate students.

The participants learn new problem-solving and communication skills through a number of exercises, Quinn said. For example, the parents and children will discuss their ideas of the "perfect" parent and child as a way to discuss changes in behavior. They also will talk about their dreams as a way to begin setting goals to attain those dreams.

During the three years the program has been conducted in Athens-Clarke County, 97 families have completed the program; 83 families have dropped out. Of those who completed the program, 36 percent have committed an additional crime that returned them to Juvenile Court. Among those who either were not accepted for the program or did not complete it, 49 percent committed an additional crime, according to Quinn's research.

"While the recidivism numbers are substantially different between those who complete the program and those who don't," Quinn said, "we also think there are a lot of other things happening with these families that go beyond the numbers, such as the reported improvements in the lives of parents and youth."

Quinn hopes to study whether the younger siblings of the first-offenders tend to have less contact with the juvenile court system as a result of the skills the parents learn in the Family First Program.

The program also emphasizes school problems as well as the children's criminal behavior.

"The risk assessments show that we have more participants who are failing all of their school subjects than we have who are failing none of them," Quinn said. "Almost every child is failing at least one subject. In addition to whatever else is going on in their lives, we also have to provide them the tools to be more successful in school."

Quinn said qualitative research involving the program has

shown that the parents and children who participate find it beneficial. A few families found the program so helpful they asked to participate a second time.

The Family Solutions Program is funded through February 1995 by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Georgia Children and Youth Coordinating Council.

STAFF

Since 1992, 114 families have graduated from FSP. We are grateful for the commitment of all of our staff and facilitators for this accomplishment. Since June of this year, we have benefitted from the participation of many people - Marcia Michaels, Rick Dunn, Brenda Richardson, Xernona Jackson, Deborah Haines, Johnny Holliday, Melinda Craig, Chris Bowman, Frank McCrary, Pat Sheats and John Lawless. They have worked with 23 graduated families. We are especially grateful for the cooperation of the Juvenile Court staff who have provided youth and families with an opportunity to participate in FSP. In addition, we thank Associate Judge Robin Shearer for attending and explaining the juvenile court purpose and procedures to these families. And we appreciate the

work of Shari Kaplan, a UGA intern in the Department of Child and Family Development who devoted much time and energy to act as liaison between the Juvenile Court and the FSP. Because of her commitment and organizational skills, we have asked Shari to continue in January as a staff person officed in the Juvenile Court to conduct risk assessments and keep in contact with the families as they progress through the FSP.

The FSP begins its 15th cycle of multiple family group intervention on January 24, 1995. Twenty-three families are ready to get started.

CHICAGO CONFERENCE

Rick Dunn, Marcia Michaels, Jerry Gale, and myself presented our project at the 51st Annual Conference of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy in November. Sixty-five professionals from around the country working with programs to deter youth crime attended. Two states, Ohio and Wisconsin, have expressed interest in importing the FSP in their state service delivery agencies. All attendees were planning to review the program materials for consideration in their own professional sites.

Family Solutions Program
Department of Child and Family Development
The University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602

FAMILY SOLUTIONS

A newsletter of the Family Solutions Program for those concerned about youth offenders and families in the Athens/Clarke County community. This program is supported by the Georgia Children and Youth Coordinating Council and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at The University of Georgia.

*Families are where we learn how to BE in the world
- Virginia Satir*

In each newsletter we try to describe our recent activities in different ways. In the first issue we described how the Family Solutions Program came into being in 1992 in Athens/Clarke County, who participated, who the leaders were, and what kind of topics were covered in the multiple family group model. In the second issue, we offered verbatim reports from parents and youth describing their positive experiences in the program, and reported on how it was making a difference for families and in decreased repeat offenses. In the third issue, we offered one observer's comments about the FSP as she traveled the same journey as the parents and youth through the nine weeks. In this issue I would like to share my own journey as the group leader of a recent cycle that included 8 families. Also included in this issue is a summary of the effectiveness of FSP as assessed using recidivism data. Also, I would like to recognize Marcia Michaels, a committed professional who has been involved in every facet of the program since 1992. Her dedication to the program has made it possible for so much to have been accomplished.

William Quinn
Director
(706) 542-2650

FSP Effectiveness

In our evaluation of the effectiveness of the Family Solutions Program we have included 89 youth and families who have graduated from the FSP. While we have graduated a total of 121 families, we did not include in the analysis families who recently completed the program because the test or challenge of repeat offending behavior is yet to come. These 89 represent youth and families who graduated as far back as April of 1992, and all those since up to November of 1994. Of

these 89, 61 (68.5%) youth have NOT presented in the juvenile court again with a new offense, 28 (31.5%) have re-offended. Compared to the 74 first time offenders and their families who were processed in the juvenile court during this same time but did not complete the program or have any other treatment or intervention, 31 (41.9%) have not presented in the juvenile court again with a new offense, but 43 (58.1%) have re-offended. These comparisons not only show obvious differences in the rates of re-offending behavior between graduates and non-graduates of FSP, this difference is statistically significant. It was also found that among re-offenders, FSP Graduates had half as many repeat offenses than youth who had no intervention. This difference was also statistically significant. It is very unlikely it happened by chance. In addition, comparisons were made between the groups of graduates and non-graduates on measures of family functioning, peer relationships, parenting attitudes, income, demographic differences like number of single parent families, and school grades. There were NO differences between these group characteristics, suggesting that these FSP graduates did NOT have lower repeat offending behavior rates because they were functioning at a higher level or had more resources before the program began.

Comparison of recidivism rate for FSP graduates and non-graduates

<u>FSP</u>	<u>No Treatment</u>
<u>Graduates</u>	<u>Did Re-offend</u>
28 (31.8%)	43 (58.1%)
	<u>Did Not Re-offend</u>
60 (68.2%)	31 (41.9%)

P < .02

There is additional information you might find of interest about juvenile first offenders and their families. Many participants are

African-American families (83%). There are 55% of the youth who live in single parent families and only 13% in two parent families. The remainder of youth have a parent and another adult, not a spouse, in the home. The average number of school suspensions youth have is 3 during the school year, and approximately 50% of youth are failing any given subject. More are failing science, math and reading than any other subject. On income, 84% of the families have income less than \$20,000, 54% have income less than \$10,000.

My Experience in Cycle 15 (January through March, 1995)

With the help of facilitators I coordinated the FSP for cycle 15 (WQ). The first night I was inspired by the appearance of the group of 9 families. There was a racial diversity, and there were 4 fathers in the group and 6 mothers. A few families brought their other children, either out of necessity or because the parents thought the group would help their other children as well. The rules were established ('If you all get here on time at 6:30 p.m., I promise to dismiss you at 8:30 sharp'). Associate Judge Robin Shearer came to discuss the role of the Juvenile Court and each family's obligation to the court. We played the name game in a circle and with 28 persons, one youth orbited the circle and remembered them all at the end, even Bologna Bill. We role played a youth ('I don't wanna be here - this is dumb'), a parent ('why should I be here - I didn't do anything'), and a group facilitator (I've worked hard all day, and I drag myself here and they don't want my help'). These expressions brought more trust to the group process. The next week (everyone came on time) the group was asked what they wanted from this program ('if you have to come, let's make it worth your while'). Some said better communication, one said to help bring God into his life, and a few who had children who shoplifted thought the children should have to 'face the music' -make reparations to the merchants. We leaders got busy locating the merchants. Managers from Target and Wal-Mart wanted to come to explain to the youth their system of catching shoplifters and how stealing isn't worth it. The next week everyone returned. A discussion on goals occurred and each youth and parent were asked to write one goal that related to what they wanted to

accomplish ('I wanna get a better grade in math, I'm going to own my own business in 5 years'). They shared these with the group. The next week we discussed family communication, and two families paired up and went with one facilitator to a separate room. Each family took a turn discussing a communication problem and working through it ('you're always sayin' you have no homework when you're failing and I know you do'; or, (courageously) 'you don't like anything I do'). Amazingly, the best suggestions for how to change came from the other family in the room. They were gentle and caring messages. The next week we had a guest speaker, Dr. Julia Marlowe, who has developed the Budget Box, a simple method for managing finances in the family. The youth began to realize where mama's money has to go. And another speaker, Dr. Jerry Gale, came and conducted a family auction, where the families bid together on values like a college education, being drug free, and getting along with each other. Families have only so much money so they had to make hard choices. They had to explain their decisions to the group and they began to focus on how to accomplish the really important things. The women facilitators took a night to conduct some movement exercises with the group - the knot game - all standing and holding hands, not letting go, and getting themselves unraveled. And the families had to line up facing each other and moving to the other end of the line by shifting blocks. The families loved it and thought we should have done this earlier. They experienced the value and joy of cooperation. Then the men facilitators were put on the spot. The women challenged them to come up with something good. The men lined up 3 representatives from Target and the General Manager and Assistant Manager in charge of theft from Wal-Mart. You could have heard a pin drip that night. The youth had no idea these stores have 'plants', kids who dress just like them and stand around looking for a thief. And cameras everywhere, especially on kids their age. 'I'll admit it kids, you are all singled out when you walk in the store - we watch you closer than anyone else.' Most shoplifters have the money on them to pay for the things they take, but the 'challenge' or thrill overcomes them. But it isn't worth it, a high school kid going off to college on an athletic scholarship lost it after being caught shoplifting. If these stores actually see someone

who needs something like a pair of shoes or has no coat in the dead of winter, they will give a new article of clothing to them. Then one of our facilitators discussed his own life and its challenges and disappointments. He talked about going to college on a football scholarship but tore up a knee. He didn't study much and now he was going to have to pass without extra help from the athletic tutors. He was devastated and he had to change his goals. He now has a good job and a wonderful family. He said, 'if the mind can conceive, and you truly believe, then you CAN achieve'. The women facilitators said, "We have to hand it to ya'll (the men), you came through with a good program". The week before graduation, every group member was asked what they had gained or how they were better off than before the FSP started. These testimonials became promises of continued self improvement as each had to publicly exclaim their progress and future goals. The last night we had Graduation. Every family had signed up to bring a dish to pass, and the program leaders brought a ham and beverages. Dr. Leslie Bates from the Office of Minority Affairs on campus was the guest speaker, and he was inspiring. We presented each family with a graduation certificate and applauded each family for their success and hard work. One family came even though the father's mother had died during the week and he couldn't come, but the mother who did not know where to go since we had graduation in a different place found it after an hour search, and brought the family including cousins. We had food left for them. This was a tribute to the idea that you can reach your destination if you really want to.

In closing, I will say how impressed I was with the facilitators in the program. We had a school social worker, a concerned parent and father, a family therapist, a school psych grad intern, and two UGA undergraduate interns (they said this is one of the best learning experiences they have had). These people were supportive, good listeners, and lots of fun. The parents and youth voluntarily went around at graduation to thank each one of them for their time and concern (Jay announced he would meet the youth for basketball games this summer). This is the evidence of a great staff.

Marcia Michaels

Marcia Michaels has been with the Family Solutions Program since 1992. She is the only staff person to participate in every FSP cycle. She covers a lot of ground. She coordinates the weekly program for the families. She coordinates the data collection on the families in the juvenile court, and enters and analyzes the data to help us prepare for each group of families who come to the FSP. She gets recidivism data from the Juvenile Court. Marcia provides family therapy for families who need more intensive help beyond the FSP who are going through a crisis. Marcia coordinates the work activities of undergraduate student interns and graduate student facilitators. When there is uncertainty, it's always, 'ask Marcia'.

Staff

Since the last newsletter at the end of 1994, many persons have helped make the FSP a success. Xernona Jackson, a school social worker, is a regular group facilitator and always a pleasant person to have in our midst. David Barnette, a parent and veterinarian by profession, has been a valuable male role model and FSP facilitator. Rick Dunn, an adolescent health specialist with the Northeast Georgia Health District by profession, is a group coordinator and an inspiration to the families. Cassandra Ellis and Jay Jones have been two undergraduate interns who have taken some of the youth under their wings. Carolyn Imperato-McCammon is a graduate student in school psychology who has a special interest in juvenile delinquency and has been a reliable and supportive facilitator. Shari Kaplan has been our juvenile court liaison who calls and visits with families when they don't make it to the program to find out what might be the difficulty. In addition, we appreciate the Juvenile Court staff for their support and Associate Judge Robin Shearer and Judge James McDonald for their consistent enthusiasm and support of the FSP.

Next FSP cycle begins: June 20, 1995

Upcoming presentations of the Juvenile First Offenders and Families Project:

July 25, 1995

Annual Conference of the National Resource Center for Youth Services, Los Angeles, California

November 3, 1995

Annual Conference of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Baltimore, MD

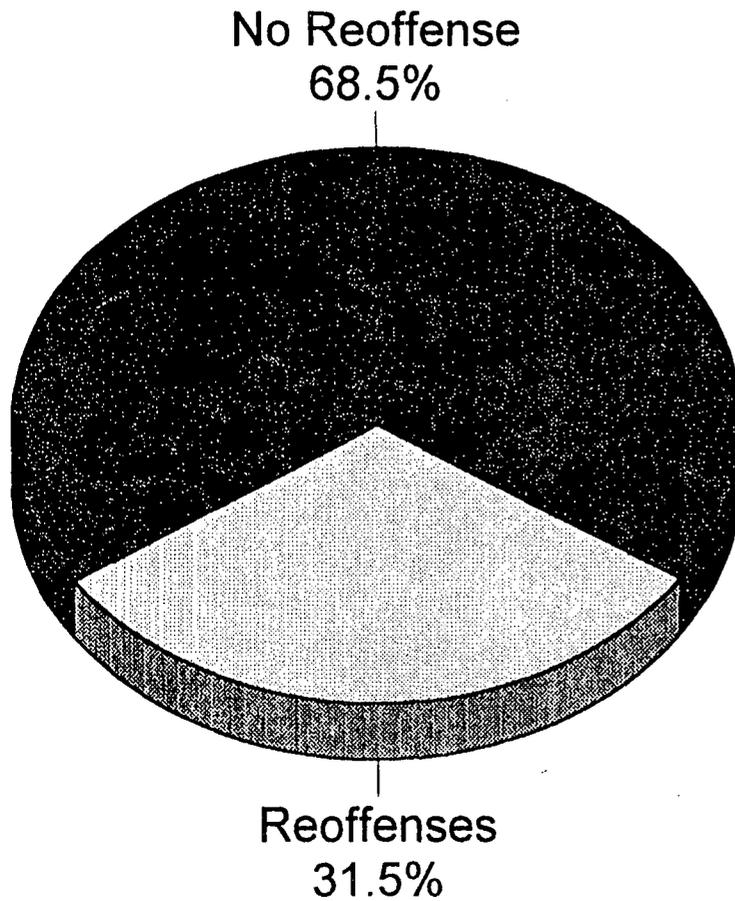
November 15, 1995

Annual Conference of the National Council on Family Relations, Portland, OR

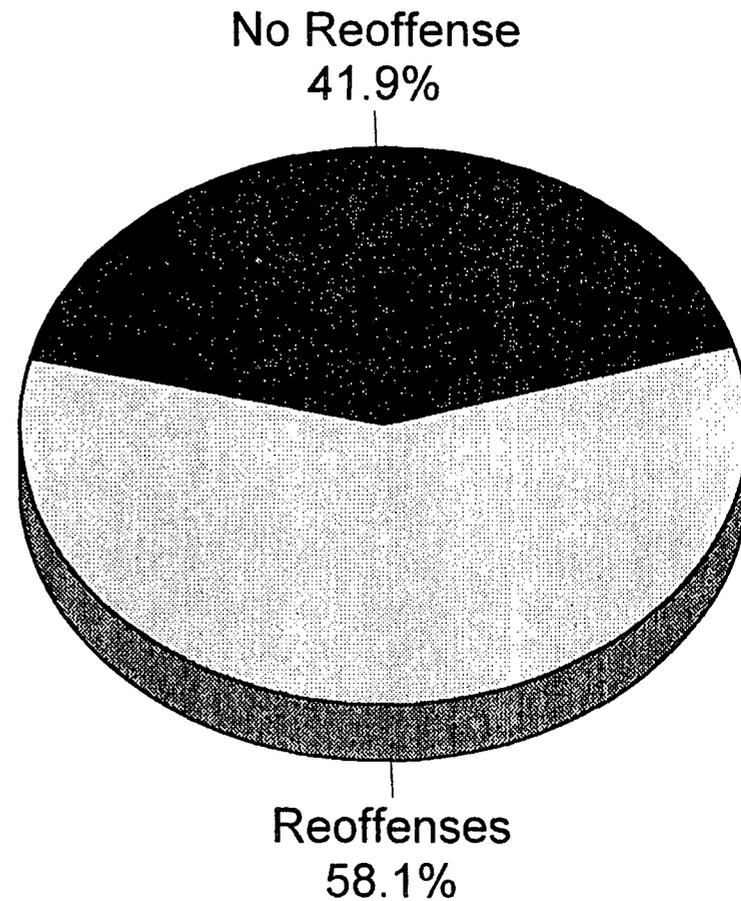
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Recidivism

Graduates



Non-Graduates



Mean Number of Reoffenses

