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PREVENTING DELINQUENCY IN YOUR COMMUNITY

A MANUAL FOR CITIZENS

by

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ACQUISITIONS

DELINQUENCY PREVENTION SERVICE

Division of Youth Services

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INTRODUCTION

Seeing its efforts to rehabilitate the youthful law offender being hopelessly outdistanced by growing delinquency, the Division of Youth Services in Virginia in 1970 created the Delinquency Prevention Service. The Service, with a staff of five prevention specialists, was created to foster delinquency prevention efforts across the State to accompany the Division's well established rehabilitative efforts. In 1974 the General Assembly of Virginia formally authorized the Division to provide this service.

It was decided in the beginning that, rather than focus efforts on children with problems, the Delinquency Prevention Service would focus efforts on community conditions associated with delinquency. Further, it was decided that the approach used by the Service would be in close cooperation with local citizens.

At first, the five prevention specialists worked out of a central office traveling to communities to help them develop prevention programs. Brief handouts, some original and others copied, and other informal tools and methods were used.

With training and experience the specialists became more knowledgeable and skilled, and requests from communities for assistance steadily increased. Also, additional prevention specialists were placed in the Division's six regional offices. As community requests increased and staff grew, it became desirable, if not necessary, to have a comprehensive and down-to-earth manual explaining how a community could generate and operate a delinquency prevention strategy at the community level.

The original intention for **PREVENTING DELINQUENCY IN YOUR COMMUNITY** was to serve as an operational manual for staff of the Delinquency Prevention Service. It soon became evident that its usefulness could and should serve a broader purpose. Consequently, the manual was written so that it could be used by most any person, group, or agency interested in preventing delinquency in its community.

As the title implies, **PREVENTING DELINQUENCY IN YOUR COMMUNITY** describes a way to reduce delinquency in the local community by addressing causes rather than symptoms. Besides being a "how-to" manual, it also discusses the philosophy and theory behind the "how-to." The whole manual is in two parts: this part and the appendices.

The appendices, a very necessary and helpful part of the manual, are bound separately from this part in a loose-leaf binder. They include, among other items, assessment instruments, planning models, and resolutions passed by governing bodies creating youth commissions.

Implementation of the strategy discussed in the manual is primarily dependent upon local community citizens. The Delinquency Prevention Service, with its central and regional staff, provides assistance to citizen groups. (See Appendix A for locations and addresses of the Central and Regional Offices of the Division of Youth Services.)

All the information, skills, and instruments needed to implement the strategy presented in this manual are available through the Delinquency Prevention Service. In addition to the community organization skills necessary to begin the effort, the Delinquency Prevention Service also can provide organizational and program development skills once the local governing officials have elected to go with this strategy. On a continuing basis the Service offers technical assistance, training, and program evaluation. Assistance available can cover areas as broad as community organization and as specific as agenda preparation and the setting of objectives.

The strategy for preventing delinquency advocated in **PREVENTING DELINQUENCY IN YOUR COMMUNITY** is based on both theoretical knowledge, field experience, and common sense.

Besides being tested in Virginia, this strategy has been applied and evaluated for five years across the nation. In some communities it is achieving results which indicate that delinquency cannot only be controlled but it can be prevented and reduced.

This strategy is recommended to citizens of Virginia as a means of reducing crime, but more importantly, as a means of providing all young people with the opportunity to develop into productive adults, the same opportunity that most young people have.



CHAPTER ONE

RATIONALE: THERE HAS GOT TO BE A BETTER WAY

The Great Deception

The public is being deceived. Whether it's deceiving itself or being deceived by others is unimportant compared to the importance of correcting the deception. Contrary to popular thought, law enforcement officials cannot control crime. At least this is what Robert Di Grazia, Boston's chief of police, told his fellow police chiefs. He explained:

We are not letting the public in on our era's dirty little secret: that those who commit the crime that worries citizens most—violent street crime—are for the most part, the products of poverty, unemployment, broken homes, rotten education, drug addiction and alcoholism, and other social and economic ills about which (we) can do little, if anything. Rather than speaking up, most of us stand silent and let politicians get away with law and order rhetoric that reinforces the mistaken notion that (we) can control crime.¹

Statistics confirm Di Grazia's claim that law enforcement personnel, as necessary as they are, cannot control crime. In 1970 law enforcement cost 8.6 billion dollars. The cost in 1974 was 14.6 billion for an increase of almost 60 percent.² In the same five year period crime increased roughly 35 percent.³

Recently, a wide range of criminal justice experts met in Washington. Among them were the former Director of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, a former counsel for the Senate Watergate Committee and professor at Georgetown University, and the head of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. As reported by the United Press International, this group of experts said that "they doubt whether more police with better equipment, improved efficiency in the courts, and better prisons will significantly reduce crime."⁴

A high ranking Justice Department official, Gerald M. Caplan, Director of the National Institute for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, was reported to have said that "banishing crime is an unrealistic goal and spending added millions of federal dollars will not dramatically alter that fact."⁵

If traditional efforts are not likely to control or reduce crime, where do we turn for help?

Out of the Darkness

Of course, the first step is to realize that a change of approach to the problem of crime is in order. Then we need to critically examine and try new approaches. One that has the support of many authorities on crime is a strategy that depends on community citizens to address social conditions that are at the root of crime and delinquency.

Judge David L. Bazelon, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, said:

If our goal is to reduce street violence, more is needed than additional probation officers. Even one-to-one supervision will not suffice. We must look to the conditions that bred the crime in the first place, or else expect the offender to break the law again when we send him back to those conditions.⁶

In reference to juvenile delinquency, Richard Velde, Director of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, wrote that "the amelioration of conditions which result in the involvement of youth in the juvenile justice system is everyone's responsibility." He went on to write:

Most important is the active and intensive involvement of those community forces—schools, religious leaders, mental health and social service agencies—as well as parents and the youths themselves to participate in decisions and policies which affect their neighborhoods and lives.⁷

The group of experts that met in Washington, referred to earlier, said that "crime control must start in the neighborhood with less reliance on police and courts."⁸

Summary

While the public has depended almost solely on law enforcement personnel to control crime, the amount of criminal activity has soared. While a strong law enforcement capability needs to be maintained, it is far from enough. Citizens at the community level must attack social conditions that are at the root of crime. Only then is crime likely to be controlled and possibly reduced.

CHAPTER TWO

PRINCIPLES: START AT THE BEGINNING

There are thousands of programs to fight crime. The successful ones are based on theories that best explain the causes of crime. Rightfully, there are many theories dealing with crime and its causes. The selection of a particular theory from among the many is based on certain principles held to be fundamental by those doing the selection. Five such principles are discussed on the following pages.

Children and Youth

The first principle is that crime can be controlled best, and even reduced, by focusing efforts on youth.

There is practically unanimous agreement among child workers, from the uneducated but highly experienced lay person to the highly trained psychologist and psychiatrist, that the child is the father of the adult. More elaborately, the personality and behavioral patterns that will characterize an individual as an adult, were firmly, but not unalterably, established during the very early years of the adult's childhood. This may explain in large part why, in 1975, more than half (51.7 percent) the inmates in Virginia's penal system who had committed serious crimes had delinquency records as juveniles.⁹

The above being true, it is only reasonable that efforts to control crime should be focused on young people.

Prevention

The second principle holds that the old cliches, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and "A stitch in time saves nine," are still valid.

Prevention may best be explained by contrasting it with treatment or rehabilitation. Both the prevention of crime and delinquency and the treatment of the criminal and the delinquent are necessary, but it is misleading as well as personally and socially destructive, to assume they are synonymous. Just as setting a broken leg (treatment) will not prevent a reoccurrence of another accident, so the treatment of a delinquent will not prevent future occurrences of delinquency. To keep people from breaking legs we need to address conditions that cause people to have accidents. Similarly, to keep children from turning

into delinquents we need to address community conditions that cause children to engage in delinquent behavior.

In treatment the individual is reacted to while in prevention conditions, involving many people, are acted upon. Treatment, in order to be successful, is dependent upon changing the individual with the undesirable symptoms. Prevention, in comparison, places responsibility for change on the community that carries the causes of the symptoms.

Prevention, synonymous with wholesome youth development, is a process whereby community conditions are addressed to the end that all youth receive the care and services that most youth already enjoy.

Grassroots Community

The third principle is that the local community is the primary locus for efforts to prevent delinquency. Crime and delinquency are products of where people live; where they work, play, and otherwise interact with one another; and where they create and respond to social conditions and situations. This being the case, then resolving the problem of crime and delinquency must also occur at the community level.

Resolution cannot come from congressmen and government administrators in Washington, nor from the same in individual states. Federal and state governments can and must provide financial and technical assistance but ultimate responsibility and control must lie primarily with citizens who comprise the neighborhoods and communities.

The above position is justified on at least a couple of grounds. First, if there is a resolution to the crime problem, it lies in the community among the citizens. For citizens to be willing to apply their resources to the problem, they must have a deep sense of ownership for the problem and its resolution.

Second, experts in the field of management say that governments should not be in the business of operating programs. Lee Iacocca, President of Ford Motor Company, was quoted as saying, "One of the things our government *can't* do is *run* anything."¹⁰ Peter Drucker, international management consultant and author, said that the main lesson we have learned about government in the last fifty years is that "government is not a 'doer.'"¹¹

What is the role of government? Government is good at drawing attention to problems, both actual and potential. It can provide financial and technical assistance and is able to monitor and evaluate programs and the use of resources. With government taking the foregoing role and the community operating programs and applying resources to community needs and problems, a potentially successful collaborative approach to solving crime is likely.

Citizen Volunteers

Expanding on the foregoing principle, the fourth principle discusses more definitively the grassroots community. Community is an abstract concept. However, it can be made concrete through a simple definition.

Community is people; it is the people living in relationship with one another in a county, town, city, or part thereof. Obviously, we are talking about many different kinds and groups of people. For the sake of simplicity, it serves the purpose of this principle well to consider only two kinds of community people. On the one hand, there are those who are paid to deliver, directly or indirectly, services to children; and on the other, there are all other people who could act in a non-paid volunteer capacity. The former will be called professionals and the latter volunteers who, themselves, may have professional skills. Each plays a helpful and different role.

Professionals can provide information and data; technical assistance like training, planning, data analysis, and evaluation; and resources such as personnel, money, and materials.

Volunteers come with time, skills, and a different perspective. Volunteers bring a refreshing naivete to difficult tasks whereby they are ignorant of debilitating red tape and, therefore, plunge in head first, and to the surprise of all but themselves, they are often successful. Rather than seeing problems and obstacles, volunteers usually see opportunities and challenges.

Whereas professionals, being members of an agency hierarchy, have to use designated, cumbersome, and time-consuming channels for communicating requests and instructions, volunteers can ignore the hierarchy and go straight to the top with petitions and demands.

Professionals have a dual loyalty; they serve two masters: their agency and the client. When the existence of the agency is threatened, like by decreased funding, loss of clients or territory, and the presence of a new and similar competing agency, the latent "tu" consciousness in the professional is awakened and the client may take a back seat. Volunteers, not having such a vested interest in a particular agency, are able to maintain an objectivity and an advocacy for youth even when a particular agency's existence is threatened.

Finally, after getting over initial suspicion, the client, whether it be an individual or a community, is more likely to accept the help of the volunteer. Rightly or wrongly, the client tends to view the volunteer's help as deriving from selfless interest and love while the professional simply has a job to perform.

Because professionals and volunteers are perceived differently and have distinctive capabilities, all of which are needed to solve the problem of crime, a collaborative effort involving both the citizen and the volunteer should be used.

Focused

Delinquency prevention, as it will be defined later, can be broad and nebulous in concept and in program. It can be any activity that helps young people. Such a broad definition has merit; however, when program plans must be made and executed on a day-to-day basis, delinquency prevention must be focused or there is a hodge-podge of activity without goals and direction and without any way of determining success or the lack of it. This is the fifth principle.

Objectives must be stated in quantifiable terms so that progress toward their achievement can be measured. For each objective a detailed strategy or action should be developed. The action is not a plan to be slavishly followed, but should provide an orientation and a point from which to deviate without wondering aimlessly.

Summary

In concluding this section, it should be useful to summarize the principles discussed. These principles, it should be recalled, will serve as criteria for soliciting a theory to develop a program to control and reduce crime and delinquency.

As for defining a population on which to focus efforts, directly or indirectly, the selected theory will pertain to children and youth, the younger the better.

The prevention of conditions that apparently cause juvenile delinquency, rather than the treatment of delinquents or predelinquents, is the second philosophical principle and criterion for finding a theory.

The third and fourth criteria are closely related. Juvenile delinquency prevention efforts will occur primarily at the grassroots community level. Major responsibility will lie with citizens acting as volunteers who have few, if any, vested interests in local and state government administration and in public and private social service agencies. Government and agency personnel assisting the citizen volunteers should define, in part, the relationship between these two groups of people.

Finally, whatever theory is selected by the above criteria should be translatable into programmatic objectives and methods.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORY AND GOALS: LAY A SOLID BASE

Introduction and Background

Maybe what's needed to reduce crime is more Mother's Days! Or football on Wednesday and Friday nights as well as on Monday nights!

A study of Manhattan Criminal Court records conducted by the *New York Post* revealed one-third as many arrests on Mother's Day as on the three Sundays before and after. The study also showed that arrests dropped sharply when the National Football League's Monday night telecasts began, and they remained low on Monday nights throughout the season.

After winding through a tortuous course of logic, the widely syndicated columnist, Nicholas Von Hoffman, concluded by suggesting that the unexplained rise in youth crime was the result of an increase in the number of hyperkinetic children which, in turn, is caused by artificial food additives. Remove the additives and reduce crime!

The foregoing is illustrative of the lack of sound research and the general state of confusion about crime including its causes and solutions.

Certainly, crime has many, many causes. In fact, it could be said with a high degree of truthfulness that there are as many causes of crime as there are law breakers. Somewhere or another, probably, all the suspected causes of crime have been expounded upon in literature. What is needed to bring some semblance of order to all the chaos is a theoretical framework. Such a framework is a necessity for making possible the task of programming for crime reduction.

The Question

In the summer of 1970, over 100 nationally recognized experts in the field of juvenile corrections and delinquency prevention were convened at Scituate, Massachusetts. This group gathered to address the problem of juvenile delinquency by developing a national strategy, beginning with a theory, for dealing with this social dilemma.*

* Material included from this point to the end of this section on "Theory," with the exception of the subsection on "Access to Socially Desirable Roles," was taken verbatim, for the most part, from "A Strategy for Youth Development," written by Grant Johnson in 1974.

These persons did not begin their Herculean task by endorsing or recommending a particular mode of treatment to deal with delinquent youth. Experience had proved that there were literally dozens of treatment approaches, any of which might be successful at rehabilitation if properly applied at the right time to the right youth. None of these treatment approaches, however, prevented delinquency.

This group readily recognized that with or without special help, most youth develop passably well. If they did not, our nation's social system would collapse once every generation. It does not take a formal plan for most children to grow up to accept useful, productive places in the community. Uncoordinated, common sense policies and practices in the world of family, school, justice, work, recreation, and other youth services turn a majority of adolescents into worthy adults. This haphazard process gets us by, but it contains some serious flaws. The same combination of practices which helps most youth develop wholesomely, actually blocks the social development of many others. Our flawed youth development mechanisms regularly and predictably leave us with a substantial number of youth who do not turn out right.

Further, this group of experts generally agreed that practices which produce these failures have become part of our way of life. Even when proven harmful, some are held and defended as if they were sacred. Instead of working to eliminate obstacles to youth development, we usually choose to deal over and over again with every new batch of youth who run into the obstacles. We spend billions annually on arresting, rearresting, supporting, treating, and trying to patch up these spoiled batches. We spend next to nothing on correcting the recipes which repeatedly produce them.

Delinquency prevention means attending to correcting recurrent policies and practices which produce failures, not to the never-ending patchwork and rehabilitation of those failures.

People faced with problems often ask each other, "Where have we gone wrong?" This provides a chance for airing gripes and finding company for one's miseries, but it is not necessarily the most fruitful way to reach agreement on a workable solution. "Accentuate the positive" may have acceptance as a folk saying, but you seldom hear of people lying awake nights pondering the question, "Where have we gone right?"

Taking a positive approach, the 100 plus experts asked not, "Why do youth become delinquent?" but "Why is it that most youth manage to grow from infancy through stormy adolescence to accept a useful, productive place in the life of their community?"

The Answer

This question concerning the behavior of young people can be answered by listing individual characteristics such as ambition, hard work, respect for law, studious, obedient, mentally healthy, and many others. On the other hand, the question could be answered by trying to explain behavior in terms of outside forces which affect people and push them to act in certain ways. This latter is decidedly more difficult, but it is more appropriate when large numbers of people start having the same problem.

For example, if one man in town is unemployed, it could be because he is just plain lazy. But when unemployment rates soar and thousands who worked last year now are out of jobs, it becomes far-fetched to assume that all those people suddenly and simultaneously developed the same moral defect. We are more likely to solve the problem if we look at the economy than if we blame it on an outbreak of mass laziness. Similarly, when large numbers of youth across the country become truant from school, that too can be dealt with more effectively if it is regarded as a social issue rather than an accumulation of individual defects.

Personal traits and social forces are two of many ways to explain why people act as they do. Youth behave or misbehave both because of their individual characteristics and because of outside forces which they often cannot control.

Those who met at Scituate made a point of talking about forces rather than characteristics. Ambition, respect, sense, mental health, and goodness may help a young person develop properly, but as thrusts for a national or statewide program they are not very practical. They are hard to define, and much harder to deliver. Even if we could agree on an effective way to hand out these admirable qualities, the cost of individually processing every youth who needed them could amount to several times the Gross National Product; and the task would have to be repeated every new generation. So that it could lead to a practical program, the question became, "How do policies and practices in the world around them permit most youth to grow up to accept useful, productive places in their community?"

The threefold answer which came out of Scituate was that policies and practices operate so that most youth (1) *have access to socially desirable roles*, (2) *are seen positively by friends, family, and teachers*, and (3) *feel substantial personal control over the direction of their own lives as integrated members of the community*.

Access to Socially Desirable Roles

Young people as well as adults need to be wanted and loved. In addition, they need to feel that they have power, at least over their own lives. Love and power are acquired by successfully participating in the various roles that the community has established for its preservation. In short, live by the rules, or roles, of society and you'll get your rewards.

A majority of youth, those that turn out useful and productive, have routinely succeeded in their socially assigned roles. Consequently, they have experienced love and they feel that they exercise a significant amount of control over their own destiny. In short, they have a stake in society. Success with roles enhances feelings of love and power, and love and power encourage further success in roles.

Just as adults wear many hats so youth are expected to fulfill many roles. Three roles stand out: member of a family, school student, and a paid worker.

As part of a wholesome family, a youth is in a structure where he can participate in plans and decisions that directly affect him and in the giving and receiving of love. A successful experience in the role of a family member encourages him to have a positive regard for the community beyond his family. Approaching that community with positive regard and expectations, the community is likely to respond likewise. Thus, the young person is on his way to developing a healthy interdependency with society.

Our system of education in the United States, including private education as well as public, provides youth with the first indication of his capability and acceptability in relation to the world beyond his family.

Of course, the experience in family prior to entering school has a profound influence on a young person's school experience. As he continues in school over the years, the influence of the family on the individual wanes while that of the school community increases.

If he succeeds in school, that is, makes good grades and feels that he is liked by most of the teachers and friends with whom he has routine contact, he'll think well of himself. With such a view of himself, he is well on his way to a successful experience beyond his family and school.

As a child becomes older, it becomes increasingly important to him that he also become independent or less dependent on others, especially on his parents. He needs money to do this, as well as to acquire the material possessions all of us want.

He may have money given to him, he may steal it, beg for it, or earn it through honest labor. This last, of course, is the preferred way. Not only does money provide him with a degree of independency, it also acquires for him prestige or status among his peers, something he will seek at almost any expense, legitimately or illegitimately.

By successfully living out the three roles of family member, school student, and paid worker, youth acquire the love and power they need. In other words, by following the rules of the community, youth reap society's rewards. This cause effect relationship produces and reinforces the young person's stake in society.

Negative Labeling

After storming out of a party where all ten persons present behaved like clods, I may boast that "I don't give a damn what others think of me." But somewhere there are persons whose opinions I care about. By and large we are all affected by the way others who are important to us react to us. We come to see ourselves as we think they see us, and we tend to live up to expectations which others have of us.

For a young person still groping to put together his self-image and define his place in life, the effect of reactions from others is especially critical. Doing what other people expect helps most youth become productive members of society. Treating a young person as if he has capabilities to be mature, independent, and useful can help make him take on those qualities; treating him as if he were a born trouble-maker can produce the very trouble that is expected.

Some predictions can come true simply because they are made. If we predict that our landlady will be disagreeable and we act accordingly, we are more likely to provoke arguments from her than if we make the opposite prediction. If we predict that a whole category of people is too ignorant to learn and then don't teach them anything, they will indeed grow up ignorant, and our original prediction will appear to have been correct. When our predictions always seem to turn out correct, the guidelines that we use to make them are not likely to be questioned automatically, no matter how irrational they may be.

Students expected to be slow or troublesome tend to live up to expectations. If subtle cues don't get the point across to them, being thrown into a low track or special classroom reserved for troublemakers does. A court appearance or an arrest can brand a young person delinquent, even if what he did to get into trouble would not be considered an offense if committed by an adult (running away from home, for example). Efforts to avoid the branding by diverting youth out of the

justice system—getting police to drop off those they pick up at a center instead of booking them, persuading judges to send youth into a special program instead of to prison—often backfire. Diversion attempts can themselves produce injurious labels; no matter how well intentioned, a rehabilitation program can do youth more harm than good if the only ones in it are so-called “bad kids.” The same goes for “special” classes in school. If a class is for slow learners or troublemakers only, then all it takes to be branded is to be seen entering or leaving that room. Any program which does not actively recruit non-troubled youth to participate risks this spoiled image problem.

Through the shorthand of negative labeling an undeserved reputation or imputed shortcoming can travel faster than the person labeled can, always preceding him to every new class, court appearance, or job interview. Some youth can't find refuge even at home, if their parents react the same way that outsiders do to a bad report card or news of an arrest.

Alienation

The alienation that young people often feel in respect to society is, in large part, a result of not having access to desirable social roles and of being negatively labeled. With difficult access and negative labels, young people are unable to acquire social skills and personal competency. Consequently, they are powerless when it comes to influencing decisions and actions that affect them.

Powerlessness is a prominent part of the definition of alienation. Some writers are quick to point out that anyone who lives in our kind of system lacks control over the direction of his life, so he is alienated. Strictly speaking, this is true. None of us has much to say about some things which affect our well-being—the price of milk, interest rates, international policies. But alienation is a matter of degree. Most of us most of the time can decide for ourselves our next important personal move, can participate politically, can exert effective pressure on forces in our community and, if we choose, can resist being manipulated by others. Most adults, that is.

For youth, it's different. They are compelled to obey rules made without their participation, to depend for nearly all forms of status on forces that they have little or no control over. Where an adult is free to leave town if he does not like what is happening, youth in many states must break the law to do so. Even some programs designed specifically to serve young people do not respond to the expressed needs, but dictate to youth what kind of help they should want. In a few states,

youth must obtain parental consent just to use these services. Rules, dictates, and laws tightly restrict the control which youth have over their own lives. They are at an economic disadvantage as well; money widens the choices a person can make, and youth don't have much money.

A youth who feels that nothing he can do will change the direction of his future or make much difference in his world is not likely to see the point in being a model of exemplary behavior. Delinquency, despair, drug abuse, and failure are among the manifestations of this condition.

Summary

Although most youth turn out all right, a substantial number do not. Delinquency prevention and youth development occur when the opportunity for young people to grow up as productive members of their community increases. Three important ways to achieve this are (1) increasing youth access to socially desirable roles, (2) reducing negative labeling of youth, and (3) increasing the sense of personal control which youth feel over the direction of their own lives. These are the three goals of the delinquency prevention strategy of this paper.

Some efforts to achieve these three goals are more effective than others. Working with a handful of young people to help them find jobs, to divert them from the justice system or to involve them in decision-making can be effective for a few; at the end of a year, a project may be able to boast of a few dozen or a few hundred youth whom it has helped. Spearheading changes in practices of particular teachers, employment counselors, or law enforcement personnel can be effective for many youth for a short period; youth who come into contact with them may benefit for as long as these individuals remain in their same jobs and are able to get away with acting in a "new way." Developing and putting to work a long-range plan for changing the environment in which youth grow up can be effective for all youth indefinitely, producing benefits which will withstand personnel turnover and persist long after a project has ceased to exist.

This last kind of effort means using a systems approach—working not only to build changes in policies and practices into mainstream community organization, but anticipating side effects of these changes and taking steps to assure that resistance from other parts of the system does not wipe them out. It is this effort at planned change which constitutes full implementation of the strategy for youth development presented here.

CHAPTER FOUR

ACTION: BUILD A SOUND PROGRAM

Having selected a theory and the goals for delinquency prevention, it is now appropriate to develop a program of action based on the theory to achieve the goals. As used for the title of this section, "program" refers to the systematic planning and implementation of an array of interventions, strategies, or smaller programs for the purpose of achieving the three goals discussed in the previous section: increased access to socially acceptable roles, reduction of negative labeling, and reduction of alienation. In this definition interventions, strategies, and smaller programs are synonymous.

For the purpose of achieving the three program goals, four broad strategies have been identified:

1. Community assessment and comprehensive planning
2. Organizational intervention
3. Information, referral, and tracking
4. Public education

Some people may be surprised that the program for achieving the three goals does not include the delivery of treatment services. This is a strongly deliberate omission. The delinquency prevention strategy, which is the subject of this manual, is basically concerned with the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of all youth services and their delivery in a community.

To carry out the concern of this prevention strategy, the delivery of treatment services must be avoided for at least two reasons. One, the office or agency responsible for implementing the four strategies above must be unbiased and non-competitive in respect to other youth service agencies in order to have their cooperation and support. Two, an office that carries responsibility for overseeing the whole system of youth services in a community and at the same time tries to deliver treatment services usually ends up doing the latter at the expense of the former.

Having digressed from the four broad strategies, let us return. Under the four strategies more specific strategies can be carried out. Such specific strategies follow.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Assessment of Needs

Sound programming for youth development and delinquency prevention depends on community-wide, comprehensive planning which in turn is dependent on a formal and objective assessment of community and organizational needs and resources relative to youth. In order to plan and carry out intervention strategies that will achieve the goals, the needs and resources assessments need to be made in the areas with which the goals are concerned: roles, labeling, and alienation. Subsequent assessments involving these goal areas will reveal to what extent goals are being achieved.

An assessment of community and organizational needs can be made by using several sources of information. Among such sources are earlier assessments; studies and plans of the various agencies in the community, both public and private and both local and state government; and statistical and other data in the areas of juvenile justice, education, mental and physical health, welfare, employment, and recreation.

To make a complete needs analysis of the community, it is necessary to conduct a survey whereby information and opinions of the community, including youth, are obtained. (See Appendix B and C for survey instruments for assessing community needs.) In conjunction with a survey, public hearings might be held at which time citizens can express their concerns and receive information. Besides providing much information for planning purposes, a community survey and public hearings, appropriately conducted, involve the interest and help of a wide range of community citizens whose support is necessary for a successful community-wide prevention effort. This latter benefit may prove to be just as important as information obtained.

Assessment of Resources

An assessment involving a youth needs survey is used to get a picture of needs for youth in different settings and in different geographic areas of a city or county. Resource surveys are used to determine the capability of a community to meet identified needs. In this context, resource refers to organizational policies and practices and to inter-agency relationships as well as to particular agencies and services.

Reliable information must be obtained if resources for young people are to be better used. To start with casual, word-of-mouth, or hap-

hazard information not only will result in a disservice to the persons who will be affected, but probably will be embarrassing. The community resource survey can be used to gather reliable information.

Assuming that policy-makers have a good picture of youth needs such as might be provided by a youth needs assessment, what kinds of information are needed to change and improve the way community resources are used? The following areas have been included for use in a planning context in past community surveys:

1. The structure, policies, and practices of agencies
2. Numbers and characteristics of clients
3. Agency personnel assessment of availability and adequacy of current services
4. Agency involvement in coordination activities

(See Appendix B and C for a survey instrument for assessing community resources.)

Information collected for the purpose of listing services as in a service directory is insufficient for purposes of comprehensive planning to meet needs of young people. If you intend to collect information which will permit your group to examine the current range of available services, to consider agency personnel perceptions of service adequacy, and to make recommendations for change, then the information you collect and the way you collect it must be suitable for use in planning. If you want to produce a directory of community services as a side product, then the requirements for getting "directory-type" information must be built into the survey, such as current address, hours, eligibility requirements, fees, and phone number.

It is strongly recommended that citizen volunteers be used in making the assessments of needs and of resources. Besides reviewing existing documents for pertinent information, volunteers can be trained to conduct surveys and interviews. The use of volunteers is not only helpful for accomplishing the task, it also serves to broaden further the support base for a successful delinquency prevention effort.

Comprehensive Planning

With needs accurately determined and resources identified, the necessary data for creating a community-wide, comprehensive delinquency prevention plan have been gathered. (See Appendix D for a comprehensive delinquency prevention planning model.) By matching needs with resources, gaps in services become apparent as do duplications.

The strengths and weaknesses of the community's system of services to youth come into focus. Agency policies and practices and community conditions that adversely affect young people are revealed.

Persons who control the resources necessary for carrying out the comprehensive plan once it is developed and those who will be affected by it should be involved in the development of the plan. Such persons may include agency heads and board members, elected and appointed government officials, representatives from civic groups, persons who are influential in their neighborhoods, and youthful clients.

The first task of this group of people would be to rank the needs in the order in which they think they should be met. Second, steps to meet each need should be stated clearly and the resources and procedures for moving through each step listed. Next is the allocation of resources. The allocation of resources that currently exist in the community would be agreed upon and plans made to acquire those that were needed but did not exist. Finally, persons would be assigned responsibility to see that the steps were carried out and deadlines agreed upon.

One very effective way of carrying out the steps toward the development of the plan is the task force method. Task forces made up of persons suggested above—being sure to include more citizens than agency personnel—could be formed to collect the information and to do the planning around specific disciplines: education, juvenile justice, employment, family life, recreation, welfare, and mental health. Once the individual task forces have completed their assignments, their plans could go to a central steering committee whose job would be to consolidate the individual plans into one comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan can then be legitimized by holding public meetings and then having it adopted by the local governing body and the social service interagency council if one exists. This adoption can be assured by using the large support base made up of citizens and agency personnel who have been involved in the development of the plan and in other youth activities and concerns. (See Appendix E for sample pages from a comprehensive delinquency prevention plan.)

At the same time that the plan itself is being legitimized, it would be well to do the same with the steering committee if such has not already been done. This can be accomplished by having the City Council or the County Board of Supervisors appoint the present members of the steering committee or other individuals to serve as members of the city's or county's youth commission or board of directors for youth affairs.

The youth commission should be a permanent body whose members would be appointed by the local governing body annually or as often as required by the government. The purpose of the commission with its task force committees is to monitor the implementation of the plan, continue to collect information about the youth scene, and to up-date the plan at least annually. This commission and its committees should be provided staff assistance. (See Chapter Five for a model of the organization described above.)

In developing the comprehensive plan after needs and resources have been identified, intervention strategies, of course, must be designed to bring together needs and resources and for solving problems. The following section gives guidance for designing interventions.

ORGANIZATIONAL INTERVENTION

Interventions are specific programs or strategies; they are prescribed actions aimed at bringing about change in the existing situation in order to attain predetermined goals.

Since each community is different in terms of its problems and needs and its progress in addressing problems and needs, it is obviously impossible for a booklet such as this to prescribe necessary interventions. The programs needed by a particular community are implied by the community needs and resources assessments and should be stated in the community's comprehensive plan.

Guidelines

While specific programs or interventions cannot be prescribed, guidelines for developing interventions can be suggested. Grant Johnson¹² mentioned several kinds of interventions for each of the three goals discussed earlier.

Programs can increase youth access to socially acceptable roles by (1) working to change those forces in the community which lend approval to unfavorable school testing, tracking, and counseling practices (particularly those which create winners and losers based on attributed characteristics), (2) persuading police and juvenile judges to stop serving as a dumping ground for school disciplinary problems, (3) convincing legislators that status offenses such as truancy and minor violations of school rules should not be treated as criminal and do not justify giving a young person a record, (4) increasing opportunities

for youth employment and the value which the community places on meaningful work for youth, and (5) encouraging development of facilities to make youth more competent to take advantage of meaningful work opportunities.

Programs can work to eliminate negative labeling by (1) encouraging changes in school practices which produce and maintain such labels, (2) persuading police and judges to divert kids away from the justice system into positive or non-negative labeling alternatives, (3) bringing about change in legislation governing police and court practices (One police chief said recently, "Show me anywhere in the statutes where it says that part of my job is diversion."), (4) promoting measures which assure genuine confidentiality of juvenile arrest records and which make their expungement automatic after a brief period, and (5) point out to school officials and to youth service providers the danger of a spoiled image, the need to "dilute" special programs with substantial numbers of non-troubled youth.

To reduce youth alienation, programs can (1) include youth on their management boards, (2) encourage all youth service providers in the community to have youth participate in decision making about matters which primarily affect young people, (3) work to change parental consent and runaway laws, (4) encourage local attorneys to offer free legal help to youth (just knowing that this is available can reduce one's feeling of powerlessness), and (5) keep youth informed about the ranges of services available to them, and wherever possible involve youth in the collection and analysis of data concerning these services.

In a manual for county officials concerned about delinquency, Aurora Gallagher listed four tentative reasons why some treatment programs for delinquents are more successful than others. The suggestions are just as applicable for prevention efforts as for treatment efforts. Some of them reinforce suggestions made by Johnson.

First, programs that single out delinquents or potential delinquents for special treatment seem to intensify the very behavior they want to change. The traditional juvenile justice system serves as a striking example. Perhaps kids identify with the negative label that sets them apart, and determine to live up to it.

Second, successful programs manifest adult acceptance of youth, even of youth in trouble. Without adult influence and example, the youth cannot develop the qualities necessary to become adults. Youth in trouble often cannot find a suitable place in school, in the working world, in community service, or in their own families. Because these adult institutions reject them, acceptance by individual adults becomes particularly important.

Third, youth themselves plan and carry out successful programs. Each participant in a program needs a say in it. For example, kids and their advisers may sit down to draw up and sign individual contracts that make clear their respective responsibilities and expectations.

Programs that work are voluntary. Delinquents who participate in programs under court orders, or under threat of incarceration if they fail, become more delinquent.¹³

In designing interventions to meet youth needs, wide-angle vision is needed. For example, when probation caseloads increase beyond the capability of existing staff, the immediate thought is to add on additional probation officers. That is narrow vision. Think expansively. Probably one-half of the youth on probation could be safely diverted at intake to other community services, thus reducing the caseload of officers without increasing staff so that better service could be provided juveniles with more serious problems and so that less serious offenders would not have to bear the label and stigma of delinquency.

Below are several suggestions and examples to encourage expanded thinking for designing interventions.

Consider wide range interventions that will touch the lives of many children, or a whole population of children, and their families. This generally means, not looking at children and changing them, but looking at conditions in a community and changing conditions that have a negative impact on young people.

Examine institutional policies, procedures, laws, rules, regulations, and practices, and change those which have an adverse effect on young people. For example, rather than referring truants to juvenile court, let the school act as a facilitator in getting the truants and their families in touch with the appropriate resources to identify and address the causes of their children's truanting. If a part of that cause lies with the school's curriculum or attitude, then resolve the problem at that point as well as at other points. If, on the other hand, resources to meet the problems are not available, then the school should take a leadership role in seeing that they are developed.

It is often possible to increase significantly resources to young people by encouraging cooperation among agencies and organizations with little or no increase in expenditures. Supervised public recreation can be provided in many communities by the Department of Recreation or civic groups providing leadership and personnel and by the local school division providing school facilities.

Often times a new method of dealing with an old problem can both achieve better results and can be more favorable to the child. Such an example is "In-School Suspension" whereby students are not sent away from the school for misconduct but are sent to a special program in the school and are provided attention according to their individual needs. If a student must be suspended, as is sometimes the case, a plan of supervision is developed for him covering the duration of his suspension. One adult—school counselor, teacher, social service worker, citizen volunteer—is assigned responsibility for supervising the student according to the plan of supervision.

Criteria Defining a Prevention Program

Generally speaking, many, many programs for youth can be called delinquency prevention programs. As defined by this booklet, those programs or interventions that meet all four of the following criteria are considered to be delinquency prevention programs.

1. It significantly lends toward the achievement of one or more of the three program goals.
2. It can be subsumed reasonably under one of the four broad strategies.
3. It is designed to have a favorable impact on one or more of the following statistics:

<u>School</u>	<u>Court</u>	<u>Employment</u>
Attendance	Cases at Intake	Number Youth Employed
Truancy	Caseloads	Earnings
Suspension	Detention	
Expulsion	Commitments to State	
Drop-Out		

4. It is an acceptable part of a comprehensive delinquency prevention plan. Acceptability should be determined by a commission, committee, office, or individual who has been charged by a higher authority to guide and monitor the implementation of the plan.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in programming for delinquency prevention, give primary consideration to community conditions, including but not limited to agency policies and procedures. In the long run such an approach is likely to benefit young people and the community as a whole more than an approach that focuses on youth themselves.

INFORMATION, REFERRAL, AND TRACKING

The provision of an information, referral, and tracking service is the closest this overall prevention strategy comes to providing a service directly to youthful clients. In the provision of this service there is the inherent danger that it can become the main function of the agency, neglecting the other strategies: community assessments and comprehensive planning, organizational intervention, and public education.

The organization model in Chapter Five demonstrates an attempt to minimize this danger. A definite division is made between referral, on the one hand, and the other strategies, cumulatively labeled "capacity building" on the chart.

Youth Services Directory

Every community has service resources for young people. In both quantity and quality these resources may not measure up to desirable standards, but they do exist. When it's said, as it often is, that a community has no resources for its youth, very often the real problem is not so much the absence of resources, but rather the inability to bring together those who need services with the appropriate existing services. Ignorance about what resources exist, frustrating red tape, lack of client motivation, and agency apathy can all play a big part in erecting formidable barriers between services and potential service users.

A directory listing all resources available to youth is a means of making the community aware of what resources are available to young people and their families. In addition, such a publication and its distribution, as well as the comprehensive plan, constitute one of several important building stones to a smooth running system of services to young people. If a directory already exists, it should be kept current, distributed, and advertised.

If a directory does not exist and if current, accurate, and sufficient information does not exist elsewhere, it would be highly beneficial to the community to conduct a survey to identify all community resources and then to publish a directory based on the information obtained. (See Appendix F for an instrument to obtain information for a Youth Services Directory.) Such a directory should contain at a minimum the following information:

1. Name of agency, organization, or program title
2. Sponsoring agency
3. Address and phone number

4. Purpose
5. Services provided
6. Eligibility requirements
7. Hours
8. Fee

(See Appendix G for sample pages from Youth Services Directories.)

Along with the Youth Services Directory, each community should have one phone number that can be called connecting the caller with a person who can provide information beyond that contained in the directory and who can suggest a resource when the need, as stated, is obvious.

Referral and Tracking

The process of referral by which a client is introduced to an agency that may be able to meet his or her needs is a very necessary process in getting the right services to a client. Unfortunately, and with some justification, referral is sometimes seen by the one being referred as buck passing or "client passing." When tracking is strongly associated with referral, the charge of client passing cannot be made. Simply stated, tracking is the process of staying in touch with a client and using whatever influence is necessary to acquire on behalf of the client the service or services for which he or she has been referred. Tracking can be carried out in at least three ways.

1. The ideal way of tracking a referred client is for the staff person making the referral to track the client, staying with the client until his or her specific need or needs have been met and the client is ready to exit the system of youth services.

Unfortunately, sometimes the agency making the referral closes its books on the client when the client under consideration has been introduced to a different agency. The receiving agency, the one to which the client has been introduced or referred, does not begin a record on the client until the client shows up at the agency. Consequently, if for some reason—and there are myriads of them—the client never shows up at the receiving agency, he or she is lost completely because the sending agency has closed books and the receiving agency has not yet opened books.

It may be necessary for representatives of all youth serving agencies to get together and work out a mutually agreeable method of making referrals such that no client will be lost in the process and such that every client will exit the system of services only after his or her needs

have been met. Also, it probably would be necessary to conduct training workshops for all social service professionals on making referrals and tracking referred clients. The ultimate goal, of course, is that every young person who contacts the community's system of youth services finds a welcoming hand; remains known to the system during his entire involvement with it; and when he exits the system, his need has been met. (Isn't this the way it is with all persons who have the knowledge to deal with the system of services and who have the money to pay for the service?)

2. Besides agency staff taking responsibility for referral and tracking, there could be created a referral office that functions like a central switchboard receiving, sending, and monitoring the progress of clients referred to it by other agencies in the community. This office would be staffed so that it could perform the same functions discussed immediately above regarding social service agency personnel. In addition, it should have a diagnostic capability and a familiarity with available social service resources so that it could refer persons who came to it without diagnostic work-ups.

3. A third method of handling referrals and tracking, one which could prove most beneficial to the community as well as the client, is having citizen volunteers perform the tracking function after a referral plan had been drawn up by professionals trained in diagnosis and informed about community resources for youth. This method has an advantage over the two preceding in that it involves the lay community through citizen volunteers, thus once again broadening the support base for the community-wide, comprehensive delinquency prevention effort.

This referral and tracking scheme would require the capability of diagnosis, referral plan formulation, and training and coordination of volunteers.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The prevention of delinquency as a distinct discipline or profession within the larger spectrum of human affairs services is new and is just catching on with social work professionals and with the public. As it is presently developing, the prevention of delinquency must involve lay citizens at the local community level where children learn to exercise responsibly their freedom within social constraints. State and federal governments should assist localities, but the ultimate responsibility and control must lie in the hands of local citizens.

Since the discipline of delinquency prevention is new, citizens cannot possibly have learned their roles nor have they developed an attitude toward delinquency prevention in the sense they have toward preventive maintenance and preventive medicine.

For the most part, when it comes to crime and delinquency, society is crisis-oriented. The public's concern is aroused because delinquency is increasing at an alarming rate, because prisons are overcrowded, because neighborhoods are not safe to walk in at night, because sons and daughters are being thrown together daily with drug abusers in the schools. Compared to its concerns for these critical conditions, the public's concern to prevent them by attacking causes is practically non-existent.

The absence of a positive attitude toward delinquency prevention and the need for citizens to learn what they can do to prevent delinquency call for a continuing statewide educational effort. While it is necessary for such an effort to address delinquency and its prevention in general terms, it is even more necessary to speak in specific, concrete terms.

The Message

As implied above, the goal of a statewide educational campaign is two-fold: an informed public with a positive attitude toward the prevention of delinquency, and citizens who know what they can do in their communities to make prevention a continuing process. The message of such a campaign should include the following points.

1. Delinquency prevention is a community process which attempts to assure that all children receive the care and services necessary for wholesome development so that later need for treatment is minimized.

2. While acknowledging that an individual child has responsibility for his behavior and should be regarded accordingly, delinquency prevention efforts are directed at community conditions and processes that have an impact on young people.

3. The prevention of delinquency should not be confused with the treatment of delinquents. Prevention is not the same as treatment, nor does treatment result in prevention. Treatment, focusing on the individual child, is supposed to heal psychological and emotional injuries and disorders or enable a person to cope with them. Prevention, on the other hand, focusing on the community, addresses conditions that cause injury and disorder.

4. Prevention is far less expensive than treatment. It is less expensive in terms of human lives as well as in money. Everyone gives in-

tellectual assent to this fact. In practice, however, there seems to be a breakdown in transmission because, compared to monies spent on treatment, extremely little is spent on the prevention of delinquency.

5. Money and resources spent on controlling crime and delinquency are increasing at a bankrupting rate.

6. At the same time that money spent to control crime and delinquency is increasing, crime and delinquency, themselves, are increasing at critical speeds.

7. Traditional methods of controlling crime and delinquency are not preventing delinquency, judging from statistics.

8. It has been proven that communities can prevent delinquency and achieve a decrease in official cases of delinquency.

9. Practically any community, with less money than it costs to institutionalize its delinquents, can prevent delinquency and thus show a decrease in persons or cases involved in delinquency.

10. The delinquency prevention process described in this booklet has been proven successful in communities in the real world. Its success, in large part, is due primarily to its flexibility, its allowance for innovation, its recognition of the uniqueness of each community, its reliance upon local citizens, and assistance from local and state governments.

Material

Practically anyone, professionals or volunteers, with or without professional skills, can spread the message if given the resources.

In addition to this manual, several resources are available to aid in presenting the message. Speech notecards, audio-visual presentations, informational brochures, "Prevention Profiles" newsletters, and copies of PREVENTING DELINQUENCY IN YOUR COMMUNITY can be obtained from the Regional Offices of the Division of Youth Services. (See Appendix H for descriptions of these materials.)

Of course, public libraries and libraries of educational institutions have a wealth of valuable information. Besides books and magazines there are monthly and annual reports published by the government and private concerns.

The Media

There are many ways to use the newspaper, radio, and television media to spread the message about delinquency prevention.

The news release is a good way to get across to the public information of a short nature and to publicize events.

A press conference is another way of disseminating worthwhile news to the general public. A press conference is announced as if it were a news release and should follow guidelines for a release.

Radio and television stations are very willing to broadcast public service announcements if the announcements are of high quality. High quality public service announcements can be most effective tools for getting a message across.

Participation on radio "talk shows" and television "show and tell" programs can usually be arranged by contacting the station's general manager. Be sure to have a clear message of general interest to the community.

Finally, public hearings can be arranged and opportunities created to appear before civic groups, to sit on panels, to conduct portions of workshops, and to hold seminars. More detailed information on each of the above means of making use of the mass media is provided under Appendix I.

Whatever method is used, it is extremely important to be prepared with the appropriate tools and to establish, in the very beginning, the reputation of providing a good program that holds the interest of your audience and viewers.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHO IS GOING TO GET THE JOB DONE?

Community-wide assessments of needs and resources, comprehensive planning, directory of youth services, service brokerage and evaluation—who's going to get it all done? A good question.

After several years of research and experimentation, apparently the best mechanism to date "for getting it all done" is an Office on Youth directed by a Board of Directors, the members of which are appointed by the local governing officials. On the following pages this mechanism is described through an organizational chart, description of terms, and a consideration of strengths, weaknesses, and alternatives.

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Unit: Board of Directors

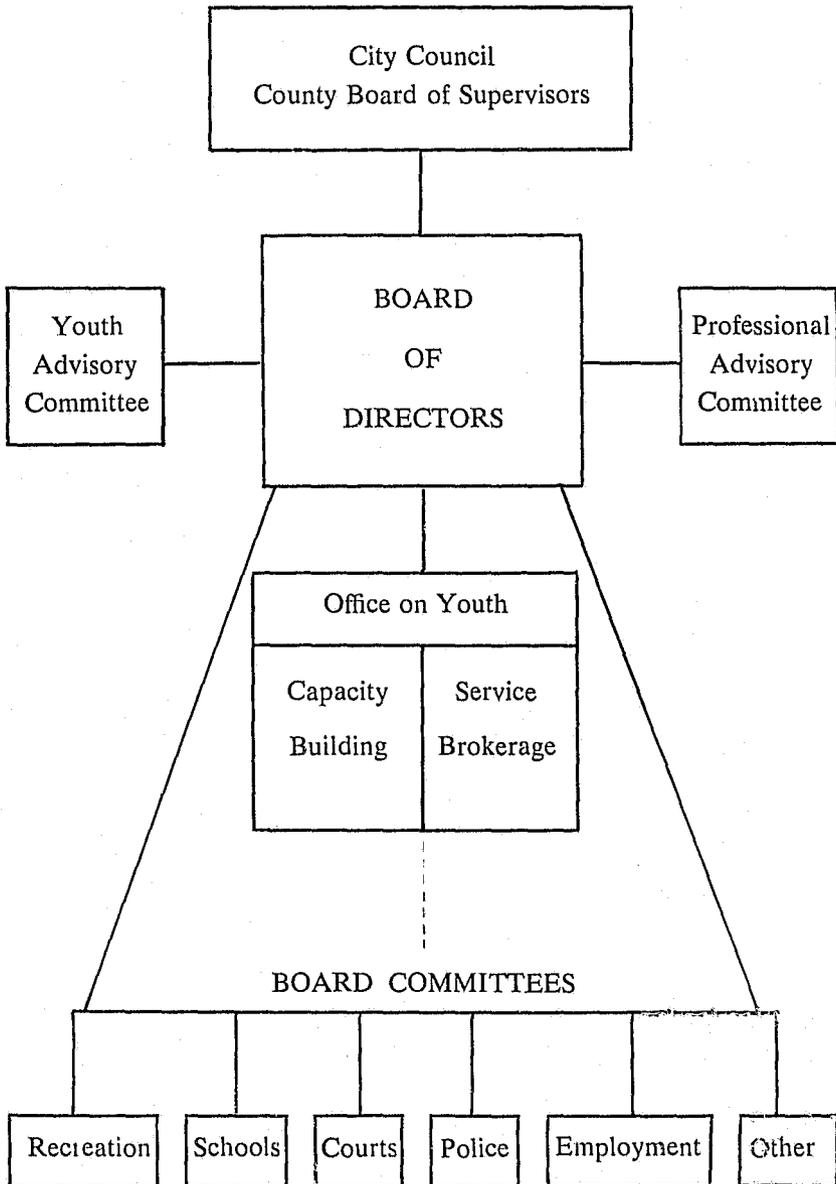
Description:

The Board of Directors, consisting of 10 to 20 members, is appointed by City Council or County Board of Supervisors. It should consist of (1) at least one person from each of its several committees who acts as liaison between the Board and the Committee, (2) several persons who have the capability of influencing decisions made by the community power structure, (3) one or two members from both the Youth Services Youth Advisory Committee and the Youth Services Professional Advisory Committee, and (4) several citizens from the community at large. At least two-thirds of the Board members should not be employed by social service agencies and institutions or by city or county government.

Objectives:

1. To establish direction for the staff of the Office on Youth.
2. To supervise, coordinate, and support the work of its committees.
3. To receive and act upon recommendations of its committees.
4. To assess community needs and resources relative to youth.

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5. Through its Office on Youth staff, to develop a comprehensive and community-wide delinquency prevention plan.
6. To take steps necessary to add, delete, and change laws, policies, procedures, and practices that will improve community conditions for youth development.
7. To provide a public forum where concerns about youth can be expressed.

Unit: Office on Youth

Description:

Beyond a certain minimum, the number of staff for an Office on Youth is dependent on both the functions of the Office and the size of the community. At a minimum, an Office on Youth should have the following capability:

General: administration including secretarial and clerical support services.

Specific to Capacity Building: research and planning and program development and evaluation.

Specific to Service Delivery: diagnosis, referral and tracking, purchasing and contracting for services, and case management and evaluation (not delivery of treatment services).

Objectives:

General:

To carry out the directives of the Board of Directors and to provide staff support to the Board's Committees.

Specific to Capacity Building:

1. To assess community needs and resources, to coordinate the development of the comprehensive plan, and to monitor the implementation of the plan under the Board of Directors.
2. To examine community policies and practices and change those that adversely affect young people.
3. To provide up-to-date information on the quantity and quality of all youth services within the community and their availability.

Specific to Service Brokerage:

1. To provide information about, to refer to, to purchase, and to contract for community services.
2. To provide case management services to clients including staffing, tracking, and specific service evaluation.

Unit: Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)

Description:

The Youth Advisory Committee is appointed by the Board. One to two members of the YAC serve on each of the Board's Committees. Two members of the YAC serve as members of the Board.

Objectives:

1. To serve as a body where needs of young people as seen by youth and others can be received or heard.
2. To prioritize youth needs and submit recommendations to the Board of Directors and the appropriate Board Committees.
3. To review and comment on recommendations made by the Board and the Board Committees.
4. To nominate youth to serve as members of the Board.
5. To appoint youth to serve on Board Committees.

Unit: Professional Advisory Committee (PAC)

Description:

The Professional Advisory Committee is appointed by the Board of Directors. All public and private agencies that provide services to youth may be represented on this Advisory Committee. Two members of the PAC serve as members of the Board. In addition, members of the PAC should serve on committees of the Board relevant to their area of work.

Objectives:

1. To serve as a body where needs of young people as seen by professional deliverers of youth services and others can be received or heard.
2. To prioritize youth needs and submit recommendations to the Board and the appropriate Board Committee.
3. To review and comment on recommendations made by the Board and the Board Committees.
4. To nominate professional deliverers of youth services to serve as members of the Board of Directors.
5. To appoint professional deliverers of youth services to serve on Board Committees.

Unit: Board Committees (BC)

Description:

The Board Committees are committees of the Board of Directors. Each committee is made up (1) of at least one member from the Board, (2) of members from the Professional Advisory Committee,

(3) of one or two members from the Youth Advisory Committee, and (4) of two or more citizens from the community at large who are not employed by a social service agency or institution or by city or county government. It is recommended that chairmen of Board Committees come from this last category of persons. Each Board Committee may have as many subcommittees as is necessary to conduct its work.

Objectives:

1. To develop delinquency prevention guidelines in the area of their concern for approval by the Board of Directors.
2. To work with the Office on Youth staff and the proper authorities in the community to have guidelines implemented.
3. To receive and carry out directives from the Board of Directors.
4. To provide information and help to the Office on Youth staff.
5. To make reports and recommendations to the Board of Directors in the area of their concern.

The best staff with the greatest programs can be rendered impotent by the wrong organizational structure. The key to an effective organizational structure for preventing delinquency is the sponsoring body and policy-making body. The preceding model presents what has proven to be the strongest arrangement of bodies for sponsoring, directing, and operating a community-wide, comprehensive delinquency prevention program. As graphically depicted, the Office on Youth, responsible for operations, is directed by a Board of Directors, the members of which are appointed by the City Council or County Board of Supervisors, the sponsoring body.

This arrangement of these three bodies places the problem and solution of delinquency solidly in the hands of citizens and provides them with authority and status commensurate to the task. In addition, it provides the greatest amount of flexibility yet requires accountability to officials elected by citizens of the community. Lastly, such an arrangement assures a somewhat neutral and invulnerable position in respect to local government administration and public service agencies.

Other options exist for sponsoring and policy-making bodies. A city's or county's administrative office can be a sponsor. Interagency councils have been known to sponsor and direct an Office on Youth as have public but non-governmental groups such as United Way funded agencies. Combinations of private and public sponsors and directors are also possible.

Looking at the organizational model, below the Board of Directors, various alternatives are possible. For example, one or both of the Advisory Committees could be eliminated since young people and professionals are included on the Board of Directors. While this alternative is not necessarily recommended, it is pointed out as a possibility.

The use of permanent Board Committees to continually monitor the youth scene in specific areas is highly recommended. Besides doing much work, such committees give a broad base of support.

Understandably, this model may not be desirable in some localities. If so, many of the functions can be carried out by individuals and groups working alone or together until some kind of organization can be created.

Whatever organizational structure is decided upon, one of the first tasks of the organization should be to establish a set of by-laws. (See Appendix K for an example of by-laws.) After the organization has been in existence for a year or so, it might find it advantageous to incorporate as a non-profit corporation. (See Appendix J for an example of articles of incorporation.) Incorporating could be beneficial for several reasons, the best probably being for receiving tax exempt monies.

CHAPTER SIX

HOW TO GET STARTED

A community-wide, comprehensive delinquency prevention program has been developed, and, on paper, it looks good. But how do you move a program from paper to the community?

It only takes one person to begin the process of turning a paper program into a concrete reality. But that person must be willing to invest a lot of time and effort. Without being exhaustive, this chapter will consider how to get the delinquency prevention program discussed in this booklet established as an officially approved program in your community. The process described below is basically a community organization process.

Be Informed

By themselves, good intentions and enthusiasm, at most, can start a movement. To maintain that movement over a period of time fraught with obstacles, accurate information is necessary. Begin your effort by arming yourself with educational ammunition.

From your local library collect crime and delinquency statistics published by the F.B.I. and check reports by the Gallup Poll about issues of greatest concern to Americans. Acquire from the appropriate local and state agencies statistics and other data relative to juvenile delinquency and student problems such as truancy, suspension, expulsion, and dropout. Take notes from studies and reports by local, state, and national bodies relative to youth needs and problems.

Talk with authorities from the court, school and other systems as well as those from civic groups, some of whom might have already collected similar information.

Of course, you will want to become very familiar with the information. It would be helpful, but not necessary, to prepare an informal report with charts, narratives, and possibly pictures, and a small, inexpensive brochure.

Armed with the above to convincingly convey the seriousness of the problem of crime and delinquency and armed with this document as a tested strategy for attacking the problem, you are now ready to recruit others to join you in your effort to reduce delinquency in your community.

Creating a Felt Need

It is not enough that you, alone, feel deeply the need to do something about preventing delinquency. Others must also feel the need. Creating a felt need in others should not be very difficult because crime is one of the top concerns of American citizens.

Write down the names or titles of twenty to thirty people who are interested in children, particularly in meeting the needs and problems of troubled children. Some of these people you'll know personally; probably most you won't. Consider friends, agency personnel, educators, members of civic clubs, news people, and others. Rely heaviest on the ordinary citizen at this early point. People who have access to decision makers in the community should be considered as well. Discuss with them your desire supported by the information you've collected. Be prepared to answer questions about a possible means of meeting the problem. Visit these people and invite them to a meeting scheduled far in advance and ask for an immediate commitment, but a commitment only to attend the scheduled meeting. Ask that they bring pertinent information and opinions with them.

While you are engaged in the above, also be gathering with you six or seven individuals of the same mind as yours who are willing to commit themselves to a long term involvement. They, with yourself, constitute a nuclear group. After you have informed the six or seven, they also can visit some of the twenty or thirty.

During this entire process, at least two or three members of the local governing body should be kept informed on an informal basis of the process and its progress. The cultivation of these individuals can prove to be extremely useful and even necessary for a successful completion.

At the meeting, for which you previously developed an agenda, have those attending introduce themselves and tell why they are interested. Be sure that radio, television, and newspaper personnel are invited and, if possible, represented at the meeting. State your desire, the problem as you see it from the information you've collected, and mention briefly, more as illustration, the strategy in this document. Then ask for comments.

Organizing for Action: The Steering Committee

After all have had ample opportunity to be heard, entertain a suggestion that a steering committee be formed to explore further the need, interest, and support for action. A member of the nucleus group might be prepared to make such a suggestion. Have those present who would like to be part of such a committee sign on a sheet of paper. You are

still free to recruit others who were not in attendance. Of course, the nucleus group will be part of the steering committee. A date should be promptly set for the first meeting of the steering committee.

Action: Stage One

Before the first meeting, each member of the steering committee should have in hand and should have thoroughly studied the information originally collected and a copy of this document.

At the first meeting of the steering committee, questions and issues should be discussed, holes in information identified, and assignments made to perform research in order to plug up information gaps and acquire additional information.

Depending on how sophisticated the steering committee wants the extended information search to be, the committee could instigate and coordinate a community needs and resources assessment as discussed in Chapter Four of this document. (See Appendices B and C for assessment instruments.) Since this is a long and involved process, it may be advisable to save this research as one of the first tasks for the Office on Youth, and let a less involved information gathering process suffice at this point.

Other citizens in the community who should be informed of the movement should be identified and then various members, two by two, choose whom they will visit. It is important that all visitors have identical handouts and verbal presentations to deliver or discuss. This is necessary to prevent confusion and maintain consistency of thought, direction, and action throughout the movement.

Action: Stage Two

With more people informed and additional information gathered and organized, the steering committee should regroup. At this second meeting, to which the news media has been encouraged to attend, reports can be received from visiting teams and from those assigned to gather additional information. From these reports recommendations can be developed and the next steps planned. Recommendations would be fashioned toward the creation of a community delinquency prevention and youth development organization similar to the model presented in this document.

The first step should be to plan for the wide distribution of information and recommendations from the reports. The news media can be helpful here as well as mailing to key and interested individuals. The

next step is to hold a general meeting or public hearing at which time interested individuals and groups can respond to the report and recommendations, express opinions, and be asked questions. (See Appendix I for holding a public hearing.)

Action: Stage Three

By now a large portion of the community should be aware of the program and the need. Whether all citizens are in support of the program is not important. That the program has the support of certain key individuals is crucial. Written endorsements from as many of these individuals as possible should be obtained.

Now is the time for the steering committee with other interested persons to draw up a proposal to be presented to the County Board of Supervisors or to the City Council. (See Appendix L for a proposal presented to a City Council.)

Presentation of Proposal

Before the proposal is presented to the governing body, members of the body should have been contacted individually in order that they have the opportunity to clear up any questions they have about the proposal. They should also be made aware of those persons who have endorsed the program as one needed by the community.

If it is evident that support is lacking, the steering committee needs to slow down, back up, and execute plans to generate more support. On the other hand, if it appears that enough support exists among the elected officials, as is likely to be the case, the proposal should be scheduled for consideration by the Board of Supervisors or City Council.

In order to demonstrate strong community support for the proposal, arrangements should be made to have twenty to thirty supporters present at the meeting of the governing body when the proposal is going to be considered. While not all these people would speak, they should be publicly recognized by the person or persons presenting the proposal. The body of governing officials may adopt the proposal by resolution or by ordinance. (See Appendix M for a resolution passed by a City Council.) After the proposal has been approved, a milestone has been reached. The next process concerns the development of the new program, and while touched on in this manual, is the concern of another manual.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

It may seem obtuse to say that delinquency prevention programs should prevent delinquency. There is a significant reason, though, for saying it here.

There are many juvenile programs that go under the label of delinquency prevention, yet no one can say definitely that they are preventing delinquency. Most people involved in such programs feel good about them and think they are nice but have no knowledge that they are preventing delinquency.

A major cause of ignorance about the success or lack of success of prevention programs is that there are no agreed upon success indicators. For example, the success of academic programs is indicated by how many students pass or fail, how many go on to college and what grades they make, how many acquire jobs and at what earnings. Similarly, delinquency prevention programs need to have established for them success indicators.

The philosophy and theory expounded in this manual lend toward the adoption of the following factors as success indicators for delinquency prevention programs.

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Courts</u>	<u>Law Enforcement</u>
Attendance	Youth Employment	Intake	Vandalism
Absences	Earnings	Caseload	Reported Crime
Truancy		Detention	
Suspension		Commitments	
Expulsion			
Drop-Out			

When these indicators are changed positively, delinquency is being prevented. Without change in these indicators, delinquency is not being prevented.

Evaluation of many so-called delinquency prevention programs reveals they are not successful in preventing delinquency as determined by the indicators listed above. One must question whether or not re-

sources are being wasted. In this time of tight money and increasing crime and delinquency, money and lives can ill afford to be wasted by simply doing what feels good and looks nice.

The delinquency prevention strategy discussed in **PREVENTING DELINQUENCY IN YOUR COMMUNITY** is an effort to save young lives and to use resources wisely in the process.

May you be blessed by the power in which you rely in your desire and efforts to help the youth of your community!

LIST OF APPENDICES

The following appendices are contained in a loose-leaf binder that is a companion to this booklet.

- Appendix A Division of Youth Services Regional and Central Office Addresses
- Appendix B Youth Needs Assessment Survey Instruments
- Appendix C Community Resources Assessment Survey Instruments
- Appendix D Comprehensive Delinquency Prevention Planning Model
- Appendix E Community Comprehensive Delinquency Prevention Plan: Sample Section
- Appendix F Youth Services Directory Data-Gathering Cover Letter, Questionnaire, and Follow-Up User Survey
- Appendix G Youth Services Directories: Sample Pages
- Appendix H Public Presentation Aids: Description of Available Materials
- Appendix I Guidelines on Using Media
- Appendix J Articles of Incorporation: A Sample
- Appendix K By-Laws: A Sample
- Appendix L Proposals Presented to City Council for Establishment of a Youth Commission
- Appendix M A Resolution and an Ordinance Passed by City Councils Establishing Youth Commissions

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