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An Evaluation of
the Arkansas Project for the
Deinstitutionalization
of Status Offenders

Roberta C. Cronin
Ingrid Heinsohn

Submitted to the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
Prevention, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Law Enforcement
Assistance Administration, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

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We wish to express our special appreciation to the staff of the DSO Project and the Division of Youth Services for their exceptional cooperation and gracious assistance with all phases of our work.

Executive Summary

Late in 1975, Arkansas launched a statewide effort to deinstitutionalize its status offenders and prevent their future incarceration at any level of the criminal justice or youth service systems. This effort was supported through the Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) Special Emphasis Program of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

The Arkansas DSO Project, operated by the state's Office of Youth Services (later the Division of Youth Services), aimed to:

- Remove all status offenders currently incarcerated within the state's three juvenile training schools and divert new entrants.
- Develop community-based alternatives to incarceration.
- Change the local juvenile justice system to reduce status offender detention and adjudication.

Several characteristics of the Arkansas juvenile justice environment were relevant to the state's DSO effort.

- The distinction between status offenders and delinquents only recently had been incorporated in Arkansas law; there were no statutory restrictions on status offender incarceration, however.
- Many counties lacked professional juvenile court services.
- Community-based services appropriate for status offenders were scarce or non-existent in much of the state.
- "State youth services" was virtually synonymous with the training school system.

Two other conditions were equally important. First, deinstitutionalization efforts enjoyed the full support of the Governor. Second, there was a growing interest across the state in improved community-based programming for youth and in upgraded juvenile justice services.

In this environment, the project chose to play a coordinative and capacity-building role vis-a-vis local communities. DSO staff, deployed in four field locations and a central office, delivered no direct services. Instead, they sought to catalyze alternative service development through application of subcontract funds and provision of organizational, technical assistance, and planning support to local communities.

Initially, the DSO Project focused exclusively on status offenders, despite some resistance from local community people. Midway through its first year, however, project staff became responsible for statewide development of Title XX services for all "youth in trouble." At this point, the project correspondingly broadened its emphasis. Henceforth, Arkansas DSO also enjoyed much greater flexibility in service development -- DSO service funds, which carried few restrictions on their application, complemented the more plentiful, but less flexible Title XX resources. One hundred forty-nine youth service contracts were developed under project auspices.

In addition to local planning and service development, the project concentrated heavily in its first year on removal of status offenders from the state system of training schools. These efforts met with mixed results. In the final year and a half DSO focused more intensively on changing the detention and commitment practices of local law enforcement and juvenile courts. State legislation to limit local status offender incarceration and prohibit commitments to the state system of facilities was also introduced and passed.

Active project efforts extended from January 1976 through June 4, 1978. Since the initiation of the project, the following changes have been observed in Arkansas:

- *Availability of community-based services for youth in trouble has increased substantially across the state.*
- *At the state level, a power base has been institutionalized for community-based youth-oriented programming. This is the Community Services Section of the Division of Youth Services.*
- *Legislation prohibiting commitment of status offenders to state facilities and limiting local detention has been adopted.*
- *Commitments of all juveniles to the state youth service system have declined 15% overall. The decline has not been consistent across regions however.*

Evidence regarding changes in local detention practices is limited and not interpretable at this time.

The DSO Project played a significant role in achieving the above changes. Unquestionably, the project was the prime mover in expanding community-based services and in redressing the balance between community-oriented and training school-oriented programming at the state level. The project also cooperated with the Arkansas Crime Commission in securing status offender legislation.

It is difficult to apportion the credit for the overall decline in state training school commitments among a number of key organizations and actors, which include the Crime Commission, the State Youth Services Board, and many provider organizations, as well as DSO. But certainly DSO's role was major. No association was found between intrastate variation in commitment levels and intrastate differences in DSO level of effort; complex interaction effects, while likely, could not be uncovered with available data. Many aspects of DSO effort were invariant across counties, in any case.

Several implications of the Arkansas experience for deinstitutionalization efforts elsewhere were identified:

- *A deinstitutionalization effort needs strong support at the highest levels of government, where appropriations and appointment decisions are made.*
- *Flexible funding options are essential to a large scale deinstitutionalization effort. Maximum benefit from Federal dollars is achieved when projects operate without major restrictions on type of services or other activities (e.g., start-up) covered.*
- *Some advance planning must be devoted to continuation funding if new service development is to play a major role in the deinstitutionalization strategy. Without assurances of continuation support, new services may never get off the ground, or at best, be short-lived. It is true that in the long run institutional resources might be diverted to help with continuation costs, but this is not likely to occur within a demonstration period of only 2-3 years.*
- *The overall deinstitutionalization effort will require careful tailoring to the characteristics of the host jurisdiction. There is no cookbook procedure which we can prescribe for doing this, unfortunately. It is possible,*

for instance, that the supportive, capacity-building approach adopted by Arkansas works best in rural or "service poor" areas; a more directive strategy might be better suited to complex urban systems.

- *A state bureaucracy, given sufficient flexibility, can indeed form a successful partnership with service organizations and local courts. There are apt to be missteps, but a prominent state commitment to local problem-solving with state assistance apparently pays off.*

One final caution is warranted -- even given substantial funds at its disposal, a broad scale initiative like that in Arkansas probably cannot deliver the desired statewide impacts in only two years. It can make significant progress, but complete success is not to be expected.

I. Introduction

Three years ago Arkansas launched a statewide effort to deinstitutionalize its status offenders and prevent their future incarceration or detention at any level of the criminal justice or youth services systems. To support this effort, discretionary funds in the amount of \$1.2 million were allocated to the Arkansas Department of Human Services under the Special Emphasis Program of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Ten other jurisdictions across the country also received awards under the program.

To meet its evaluation mandate, the National Institute of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, awarded a national grant covering evaluation of nine of the eleven sites to the Social Science Research Institute, University of Southern California. In addition, separate grants were made for local evaluations at each site. It was the responsibility of the local evaluator to implement USC's national evaluation design, as well as to evaluate aspects of the individual projects which could not be accommodated by the national plan.*

Arkansas was one of the nine sites included in the USC design. In November 1975, Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (ARRTC) of the University of Arkansas submitted a proposal to evaluate the local Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) Project. This proposal was based on the original Arkansas grant application and, consistent with the emphasis of that application, the evaluation was to focus on project efforts and impacts in 22 of the state's 75 counties. ARRTC was notified of its selection as local evaluator in February 1976.

* Described in NIJJDP, OJJDP, U.S. Department of Justice, *National evaluation design for the deinstitutionalization of status offender program*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, no date.

Meanwhile, the Arkansas DSO Project was modifying its proposed approach. In February it submitted a revised workplan which expanded its emphasis to the entire state. At the very outset then, the evaluators were confronted with the fact that their approved proposal was no longer valid as a prescription for what should be done. As time passed, it became increasingly evident that project changes involved far more than the geographic frame of reference; far from being concerned exclusively with the diversion of status offenders, the "DSO Project" became a central catalytic agent in a process which would affect all aspects of the juvenile justice system in the state of Arkansas.

Geographic expansion alone was a serious problem for ARRTC. In the absence of any uniform statewide record-keeping procedure, data quality would vary enormously from county to county. The identification of "project" sites would be a difficult task, making studies of inter-site variation problematic. But the major problem posed by the expansion was that any conceivable definition of "program client" would be largely irrelevant to what was actually occurring under the aegis of the Arkansas DSO Project. As implemented, the program did not provide direct services to clients; no client would be "assigned to" the project. The number of youth indirectly affected by the project would be far greater than the number which would meet a priori criteria of "project client."

All of the above problems were exacerbated by a continued effort to somehow make the Arkansas project fit the requirements of the national evaluation being conducted by the University of Southern California. In December 1976, after months of meetings and correspondence among all the parties, a decision was reached to phase out ARRTC evaluation activities. ARRTC submitted a final report in March 1977 reflecting its observations of the first year of project operations, but was unable to make meaningful use of the client information system established during the preceding year.

The Arkansas DSO Project proceeded without further involvement of an outside evaluator until October 1977, when the American Institutes for Research (AIR) assumed that role. By this time, nearly all project service funds had been obligated; DSO staff support was due to expire shortly -- on March 4, 1978. And clearly, any opportunities for the application of a comparative design such as that envisioned by USC had been irretrievably lost. Given these constraints, it is legitimate to consider what might be learned from a single largely retrospective case study.

A. Why Evaluate Arkansas DSO?

At the simplest level, one could argue that the Arkansas Project deserves attention merely because it *was* different. But difference in itself is not a sufficient justification. The fact is, Arkansas was different in an important way. Its approach constituted a legitimate and attractive alternative mechanism for achieving changes in the treatment of status offenders.

Unlike the other jurisdictions involved in the DSO Program, Arkansas never provided, nor intended to provide, direct services to youth. Instead, project staff adopted a planning, coordinative, local capacity-building approach to achieving the broad goal of deinstitutionalizing status offenders. And it implemented this approach statewide.

The Arkansas experience therefore might be informative, not just for its own sake, but for what it can tell decision-makers about the process of change in the criminal justice system. More specifically, what can a state bureaucracy, supplied with administrative resources and the control of subcontract funds, do to realize one of the major goals of the JJDP Act? Can we draw any conclusions about the conditions favorable to this approach? To the extent that there were intrastate variations in program strategy, there also may be lessons to be learned about the effectiveness of different techniques of capacity-building at the local level.

B. Evaluation Objectives

In establishing objectives for AIR's evaluation of the Arkansas DSO Project, there were practical constraints to consider. The most active phase of the program was over and numerous staff changes had taken place. AIR had no input into the design of project management information systems, including the procedures for collecting DSO client information. The latter system had been severely disrupted by the earlier evaluation difficulties and was now being redesigned with a new "client" definition.

Our approach to the evaluation of Arkansas DSO, therefore, was grounded on our perceptions of these practical limitations as well as the goal of learning about the juvenile justice change process. Our objectives were to:

- describe youth services and juvenile justice system changes during the DSO period, including both statewide legislative, organizational and procedural changes and changes at the local level;
- describe how the project went about its work at the state and local levels and assess its role in achieving the documented changes;
- identify factors which facilitated or impeded those changes at the state and local levels; and
- describe any differences in results at the local level and examine the reasons for such differences.

The design of our study thus reflects our paramount interests: first, in project impacts on multiple levels and sectors of the Arkansas youth services and juvenile justice systems and second, in the process by which those impacts were (or were not) achieved. Because of timing and other limitations, our efforts were not designed to provide on-going feedback to DSO staff, nor were we able to examine impacts on individual status offender clients.

II. An Overview of the Arkansas DSO Project

A. The DSO Special Emphasis Program

In March 1975, the state of Arkansas received notice of OJJDP's new Special Emphasis Program initiative, "Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders." Its stated purpose was:*

to design and implement model programs which both prevent the entry of juvenile status offenders into correctional institutions and detention facilities and remove such juveniles from institutions and detention facilities within two years of grant award by providing community-based alternatives and using existing diversion resources.

The program represented an important and highly visible element of OJJDP's effort to implement the 1974 Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, a law embodying a departure from some of the traditional solutions to youth crime and misbehavior. Discretionary funds awarded under the DSO announcement would constitute one major avenue of financial assistance to states and localities. State Planning Agency-administered formula grants, available to all states agreeing to participate in the program, were a second source. Agreement to participate in the block grant program entailed, among other things, a commitment to cease status offender detention and incarceration within two years.

The DSO Special Emphasis Program shared the two-year time constraint of the JJDP Act, as well as its central assumptions:

- that status offender detention and incarceration are inappropriate and often destructive;
- that community-based services are the best response to status offender problems;

* OJJDP, LEAA. *Program announcement: Deinstitutionalization of status offenders.* U.S. Department of Justice, March 1975, 207.

- that non-incarcerative treatment costs less and works better;
- that status offender detention and incarceration occur because alternate community resources are inadequate; and
- that the juvenile justice system will use alternatives to incarceration and detention if they are available.

Beyond the statement of purpose and assumptions, the DSO announcement had little to say about specific program strategies. Either "action projects" designed to remove status offenders from incarceration and detention or "projects which strengthen alternative service delivery organizations" for status offenders would be acceptable. Grantees would be required to participate in a major evaluation, as well as coordinate and exchange information with other grantees.

B. The Arkansas Decision to Respond

It is hardly surprising that the DSO announcement created some interest in Arkansas. After all, at the simplest level, it offered additional funds to do what the state would have to do anyway, if it wanted JJDP block grant monies. But the program struck a responsive chord for many other reasons. The preceding year had seen considerable activity in Arkansas on issues of youth service delivery and juvenile justice.

- In 1974, the Arkansas Juvenile Justice Institute, working with citizens' committees, produced a draft of a new juvenile code for submission to the state's 1975 legislative session.* This draft proposed substantive and procedural modifications to the state's 50-year old code. In addition to reflecting changed standards of due process for juveniles, it articulated a nonpunitive, rehabilitative philosophy and, for the first time, recognized a distinction between "status offenders" and "juvenile delinquents." It also included several provisions intended to upgrade the quality of judicial and probation services.

* The Arkansas Legislature meets biennially.

This new code passed early in 1975, with an effective date of July 1.

- Also in 1974, the Arkansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services (SRS)* received a 2-year grant from the Arkansas Commission on Crime and Law Enforcement (the State Planning Agency) to develop a 10-year master plan for the state's youth services. The plan was to emphasize long-range programming for the prevention, treatment, and control of "juvenile delinquency," broadly defined to include multiple problems apt to bring youth into criminal justice system contact.

A core staff and a 25-member advisory council appointed by the Governor were responsible for all data collection, analysis, and policy decisions necessary to arrive at a final document. From the beginning, it was understood by all that the plan would be broad in scope -- encompassing not only the activities of the traditional juvenile justice system, but also the multiple governmental and nongovernmental organizations concerned with youth needs and services. While the planning effort was still in its initial stages in Spring 1975, it was already apparent that the staff and nearly all of its advisory council appointees shared a strong preference for community-based programming and for a nonpunitive approach to juvenile problems.

- 1974 saw the election of David Pryor as new Governor of Arkansas. Throughout his campaign, Pryor had identified himself with two particular human service concerns: better programs for the aging and for the youth population of the state. In general, the Governor and his new staff were quite supportive of deinstitutionalization efforts emerging throughout the human services area. Although the contract had actually been negotiated during his predecessor's term, one of the new Governor's early duties was to appoint members of the Master Plan advisory council.

* Now known as the Department of Human Services (DHS).

- In Fall 1974, a new statewide association -- the Arkansas Conference on Children and Youth -- was born. This development was stimulated in part by a series of conferences on alternatives to incarceration held in the state in previous years. Many concerned youth service and juvenile justice professionals perceived the need for a formal organization to articulate youth service needs and problems. The association was structured as a federation of regional groups, each electing members to a state board.
- The state youth services bureaucracy was about to undergo a reorganization, effective July 1, 1975. As a result, the Juvenile Services Division, one of the major components of SRS, would be losing its divisional status. Its primary functions would be dispersed to other divisions and offices within the SRS bureaucracy. Responsibility for administration of the state's reception center and three training schools would stay with a Juvenile Services Section placed under the Rehabilitative Services Division. The aftercare (parole) function would be lodged in the Division of Social Services, and other personnel would be reassigned either to the Rehabilitative Services Division or the Office of the SRS Director. In the past, there had been no state emphasis on community programming for youth. Although strengthening of community programs was one reason publicly given for the reorganization, prospects for the future under the new organizational structure were uncertain.

In this climate and despite some concern about the short response time, Arkansas decided to prepare a pre-application. The Governor assigned responsibility for the effort to the Rehabilitative Services Division of SRS. The pre-application was submitted on May 16, 1975. In July, at OJJDP request, SRS proceeded to prepare a full application. Again Rehabilitative Services was responsible, although a major role was played by a newly appointed Coordinator of Youth Services, in a new position created within the SRS Director's Office. The full application was submitted in August: additional information and budget detail were forwarded later in response to OJJDP questions. The grant was awarded in November 1975, and Arkansas

DSO Project activities began in January 1976, when the new project director came on board. By this time, the Coordinator of Youth Services position had been expanded to an Office of Youth Services (OYS). The DSO Project was located within this new office.

C. The Arkansas Response—From Preliminary Application to First Year Workplan

Before examining the Arkansas DSO experience, we first sketch out the board dimensions of the Arkansas response to the DSO program opportunity. We rely primarily on interview materials and on three pieces of documentary evidence:

- the pre-application, filed in May 1975;
- the full application of August 1975 (with amendments and clarifications filed prior to the award); and
- the first year workplan, submitted February 18, 1976.

Objectives

Throughout its history, the Arkansas DSO Project articulated the same four basic objectives:

1. Identification and removal of status offenders from the three existing training schools;
2. Identification, interception and arrangement for suitable placement of status offenders committed to the Reception and Classification Center;*
3. Changes in the juvenile justice system that will lessen the possibility of status offenders entering the system; and
4. Development of community resources that will provide alternatives to adjudication of status offenders.

These broad objectives were first spelled out in the preliminary application and were clearly congruent with the thrust of OJJDP's program announcement.

*Later known as the Diagnostic-Reception Center (or D-R), the designation we will use throughout this report.

Identical objectives appeared in the succeeding versions of the Arkansas plans and proposals. Apparently, the key actors involved at the project's inception -- the Governor's staff, the SPA, the SRS staff, and the new project management -- were in agreement at this level of generality, as were the SPA and Juvenile Services (Training School) Boards.

The first two objectives targeted handling of status offenders in the state-operated system of juvenile institutions, composed of a screening/evaluation center and three training schools, now known as "youth service centers."* Status offenders reached this system through commitment by a local juvenile (county) court. For convenience, we will refer to these two as the "deinstitutionalization" or "state system" objectives. The third and fourth objectives target changes at the local level -- that is, impacts to be achieved in individual communities and counties. We refer to these as the "nondetention/diversion" and "service development" objectives respectively.

Project Strategies

How did Arkansas translate its DSO objectives into a manageable two-year plan for action?

First, the DSO Project established some clear priorities among its four general objectives. The state system of training schools would be the primary target for change in the first year. Considerable early effort would be invested in removing currently incarcerated status offenders and diverting all new cases coming into the Diagnostic-Reception Center. Reducing the status offender population in the training schools to zero and keeping it there was viewed as achievable within less than a year. While the groundwork for local changes would be laid during that first year, implementation of local diversion systems and general improvements in youth service delivery were to receive much heavier emphasis during year two.

*The "youth service center" designation is relatively new. For consistency, we use the term "training school" throughout this report, as it is also the most common usage in Arkansas. Training school commitments, formerly "commitments to Juvenile Services," are now "commitments to [the Division of] Youth Services."

In retrospect, this emphasis may seem puzzling. The project might well have argued for an opposite strategy -- to put more local alternative services in place first, before trying to tackle the "hard core" status offender cases who were reaching the state system. A number of considerations played a role in the decision:

- Inadequate state screening and placement mechanisms were believed partly responsible for the placement of many status offenders in the training schools.
- Implementation of a deinstitutionalization/diversion mechanism for the centralized state system could be accomplished relatively easily, compared to instituting diversion systems at the local level.
- Key actors believed that stopping incarceration in state juvenile institutions was of paramount importance to Federal sponsors.

The last consideration most strongly influenced the Arkansas approach. But, key actors were well aware that full achievement of deinstitutionalization goals depended on making changes at the local level. This was clearly expressed in the first year workplan, prepared by the new project director and his staff:

Successful diversion of status offenders from the Reception and Classification Center [D-R] is contingent upon the development of alternative community-based resources and the development and implementation of standardized placement procedures in the community.

The development and completion of these regional level [community development] activities are essential to the overall goals of deinstitutionalizing Status Offenders within the training schools...*

Nonetheless, the plan projected a zero status offender population at the three training schools by December. While the plan encountered trouble very quickly, necessitating repeated revision of the deinstitutionalization schedule, project

* First Year Workplan, February 8, 1976, Sections V and VI D.

staff never abandoned their basic intention to meet these objectives even before many of the local efforts could come to fruition.

A second major element of the Arkansas DSO strategy involved the decision to invest heavily in indirect services. Arkansas proposed a statewide project under state management, whose staff would provide little or no direct client service. Instead, the project would subcontract for essential direct services with providers based in local communities. This approach was wholly compatible with the premises emerging from the ongoing youth services master planning process. The Master Plan premises, as stated in final form, included the following:

Jurisdictionally, juvenile delinquency is a local or community problem and its prevention, treatment, and control is most effectively administered from that level.

That, by nature, state government is not a particularly effective deliverer of direct youth services at the community level and should only be involved in this function to the degree that communities are unable or unwilling to do so.

That state operated and administered direct services will only be utilized by communities to the degree that community resources are unavailable.

That state technical resources can most effectively be utilized to assist communities in developing and maintaining service resources to meet their own specific needs.*

The Arkansas grant application and first year workplan proposed a nearly even split between personnel/administrative expenses (53%) and "placement funds" (47%). Personnel monies would support a staff of 19, 12 assigned to four field offices around the state and seven located centrally.

* Arkansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services, *A systems approach to youth: Comprehensive long range master plan for prevention, treatment, and control of juvenile delinquency in Arkansas*. Final Document - Phase II, September 30, 1976, 12. Hereinafter referenced as *Master Plan*.

The decision to allocate resources in this manner became a target for criticism very early. Once project activities got underway and budget details became more widely known, complaints about the heavy investment in personnel multiplied around the state. Some critics, including a county judge in the northwestern part of the state and the Arkansas Juvenile Probation Officers Association, went on record to the Governor or to the Arkansas Crime Commission with their complaints. Both the Crime Commission and the Governor's Office responded in defense of the approach adopted by the project, and for its part, the project throughout its life never really deviated from its initial strategy on this point.

As time went on and purchase of service activities accelerated, the criticism appears to have subsided somewhat. It is noteworthy however, that in our interviews, many respondents commented on the project's administrative costs, and considerable bitterness about the issue has persisted in the northwest part of the state.

A third element of the DSO Project strategy entailed the geographical distribution of project resources. There were obvious alternatives -- one could spread resources among all counties or regions, equally or proportionally according to some formula of "need." A second alternative would be intensive concentration of resources on specific target areas, with little or no investment elsewhere, at least until successful strategies were identified for transfer and/or sufficient support was available. A third alternative might be characterized as the "first come, first served" approach. The grant application settled upon the second of these, proposing two pilot regions* as the test sites for community development efforts.

Arkansas has eight regions, composed of 6 to 12 counties each, which are accepted across the state as convenient subdivisions for many human service, criminal justice, and other

* Reduced from three pilot regions in the pre-application.

planning/service delivery purposes.* The pilot regions selected -- Regions III and IV -- were known for their "low tolerance for juvenile offenders," evidenced by many commitments to the state training school system. Initially, these regions were scheduled to receive 80% of the field staff and 77% of the purchase of service dollars; the other six regions would share the remainder.

This approach had obvious political liabilities. Practically, too, it would prove hard to achieve the state system goals if service development concentrated in only two regions, while institutionalized status offenders came from all eight. In any case, as a result of post-award discussions and first year workplan development, the DSO staff quickly backed away from this approach. They were fully supported by the Crime Commission. As a result, the final version of the workplan retained a commitment to two pilot regions in the form of greater staff support, but dropped the special allocation of purchase of service funds.

One other aspect of the initial Arkansas DSO strategy deserves mention. The early project plans and proposals outlined a formal role for local community representatives, at least in the pilot regions. The mechanisms for local input were to be regional committees or councils, recruited from public agencies, private service providers, law enforcement/juvenile justice personnel, and other interested community groups.

While the definition of council functions underwent some changes during the development of the first workplan, DSO management evidently expected to involve members in community resource analysis, documentation of needs and priorities, developing regional action plans, and carrying out a public information/public education campaign. The councils "would not be

*Fourteen smaller subdivisions, called catchment areas also are recognized, especially for purposes of community mental health center service delivery. Six regions are subdivided into two catchment areas each; the remaining two regions each are coterminous with a single catchment area.

'advisory' boards. Rather they would be action-oriented groups, willing to give of themselves and their time to see the objectives of this project completed. Local communities respond much better, and understandably so, to local people."* There is no evidence that project staff intended to relinquish much decision-making power to these groups, but they did expect the councils to be a channel for local concerns and a means of enlisting local support.

Shortly after completing the workplan, project management decided to use the council strategy in all regions -- another step away from the pilot region emphasis. Two months later, however, field staff were told the councils were now optional for the non-pilot regions. This policy shift appears to have been motivated largely by the recognition that organizing councils might demand a very large commitment of staff time. In the end, though, all but one region developed some variant of the council theme.

D. Later Changes-- An Overview of Turning Points

We have reviewed the objectives and strategies which characterized the Arkansas DSO Project at the outset. While the basic objectives remained constant throughout the project's history, certain key events can be pinpointed which affected the timing and emphasis on various objectives. We sketch these here, by way of orientation and background for the later discussion of project activities and outcomes.

The First Year

The project's first year was marked by a series of key events involving the control of Title XX service development for youth. In the early days of DSO, development of services reimbursable under Title XX of the Social Security Act was just beginning in Arkansas. At the time, the Division of Social Services (DSS) provided technical assistance to local organizations

* First Year Workplan, February 18, 1976, Section VI B.

interested in seeking such funds in a variety of program areas, including youth services. But the state's Title XX allocation was greatly underutilized, and thus far, few communities had been willing or able to meet the 25% match requirements of the federal program.

Then, in Spring 1976, the Office of Youth Services (OYS) was allocated \$150,000 in state funds by the Governor for matching local and federal contributions to Title XX service programs. OYS proposed to use its new dollars to provide half the necessary match (or 12.5%), in effect investing in up to \$1,200,000 of community programming. The DSO staff, as the core staff of OYS, suddenly found itself with potential control over far more service dollars than anticipated. There was a catch -- the dollars had to be committed by June 30, 1976. This had several consequences:

- The project staff was thrust into an active local service development and technical assistance role much sooner than expected.
- The early project months were dominated by a rush to fund projects, apart from any reasoned allocation strategy. This is not to say that considerations of need were totally ignored, but convenience and potential for quick start-up were certainly more salient.

A second event consolidated this tendency toward early involvement in service development. In the summer of 1976, OYS went on to assume full responsibility from the Social Services Division for developing, maintaining, renegotiating, and reviewing all Title XX contracts designed to serve juvenile delinquent, status offender, or pre-delinquent youth. The OYS-DSS contract, through administrative support provisions, allowed DSO to equalize staff in all regions. In the new fiscal year, state Title XX funds again promised to be underutilized and again, OYS was assured of "state match" dollars. Thus, the project had ample funds for direct services, since few of the DSO service monies were committed either.

At approximately the same time, the DSO Project began moving away from its exclusive emphasis on status offenders. As early as May 1976, central office and field staff began encountering dissatisfaction. Most community people were used to thinking of "kids in trouble" and were not comfortable drawing "arbitrary" distinctions among those who needed judicial or human service attention. They did not want to develop services to help only one special class of youth.*

In any case, DSO management made a strategic decision. Its focus would become all troubled youth. This move is expressed most clearly in a July 16, 1976 memorandum from the project director to all county judges, juvenile referees, probation officers, and youth aftercare service counselors. It says in part:

The initial approach to implementing the Status Offender Project focused primarily on developing alternatives and services for the status offender. It became obvious though that it was wrong to single out this specific group of youth in terms of helping communities provide services for youth. The courts and communities are deeply concerned with any youth with a problem and not with the kind of label he carries. Thus we shifted our focus from looking specifically at the status offender to trying to deal with juvenile problems as a whole. As such we continue to define our role as a support service and resource to community groups. While we will be expanding our scope we will not change our basic role. We will not be providing direct services to youth but will attempt to expand the number of resources and types of support which we can provide to the community.

The project's change of focus was greatly enhanced by the control acquired over Title XX youth services programming. Thus, staff had greater flexibility in developing new programs than DSO funds alone would have permitted. DSO service dollars

* It is useful to recall that at that time, the distinction between delinquents and status offenders had been part of Arkansas statute for less than a year. But even in very recent interviews, many respondents rejected any clear practical division between the two groups, although most were quite familiar with the legal definitions.

could still be targeted to services for status offenders, but they also could be used creatively in combination with Title XX funds to support more ambitious programs for all youth "in trouble."

The DSO staff adhered to this broader focus throughout the remainder of the project. From this time on, regional personnel were known as "Office of Youth Service" rather than "DSO" staff. Their special concern with the fate of status offenders appears to have been well understood in the community, however.

Another event in the first project year stands out as especially noteworthy -- the turnover in the position of Juvenile Services (Training School) Section Administrator. In August 1976, the administrator resigned and was replaced by the director of the youth services master planning effort. The new administrator was far more supportive of the basic DSO philosophy and its commitment to community-based treatment than his predecessor. This event actually produced no shift in strategy, but allowed the project to pursue its state system objectives in a much more favorable climate. Had there been no turnover, it is possible that DSO would have abandoned much of its central screening and placement effort as a lost cause.

The final significant event in the first year involved a decision to seek state legislation prohibiting both local detention and training school commitment of status offenders. While the original DSO grant application alluded to the possibility of legislative change, for most of the first year, project management took no steps in that direction. Then, in the final quarter of 1976, with the biennial legislative session coming up in January, SPA and DSO staff decided to prepare a draft bill. The DSO project director furnished a first draft, with the SPA taking the lead thereafter in finding and working with a legislative sponsor.

The Second Year

In January 1977, DSO found itself threatened with OJJDP

disapproval of second year continuation funds. OJJDP had a number of concerns but the most serious was DSO's apparent inability to carry out the state training school system objectives. DSO had projected a zero status offender population by December 1976, but was still far from its goal. The project expressed its intention to seek status offender legislation, but OJJDP demanded complementary or alternative strategies in case the legislative effort should fail.* As a consequence, the DSO second year workplan incorporated a number of new elements:

- Agreements to refrain from status offender detention would be secured between the DSO project and all county judges in the state. (The first year workplan also had incorporated this notion, but the project had abandoned it early on.)
- Specific plans for activities to block detention were developed for every county.
- General service development was played down, in favor of developing specific services needed to block detention (e.g., emergency shelters).

We cannot judge precisely how much the DSO trajectory was altered by the threat of funding loss and the workplan which evolved as a response. Our guess is that it did produce some tightening of focus on the problem of local detention, but that nondetention plans in most cases incorporated activities the staff intended to pursue anyway. Aside from that, the threat certainly caused temporary delays in negotiation of new DSO contracts.

The other key events of the second year were the passage of two new pieces of state legislation in March and their subsequent implementation. The first piece of legislation was the status offender bill discussed earlier, which took effect on July 30, 1977. The second was a reorganization bill, which once

* OJJDP also required other elements, e.g. a tightening of the client eligibility definitions in DSO contracts and revisions in the data collection system, which we do not discuss.

again unified the various elements of state youth services -- the Office of Youth Services, the Juvenile Services (Training School) Section, and Aftercare (now "Reintegration") -- under a Division of Youth Services (DYS).

The reorganization had been brewing for several months, spearheaded by the Juvenile Services Section Board, and backed by many other elements of the youth services bureaucracy, including OYS. It took effect in July 1977, complete with a new Commissioner, the former Juvenile Services Section Administrator. In the process, the DSO Project was subsumed under a new Community Services Section, one of four in DHS, and acquired a new project director -- with Deputy Commissioner status -- and a new assistant project director.

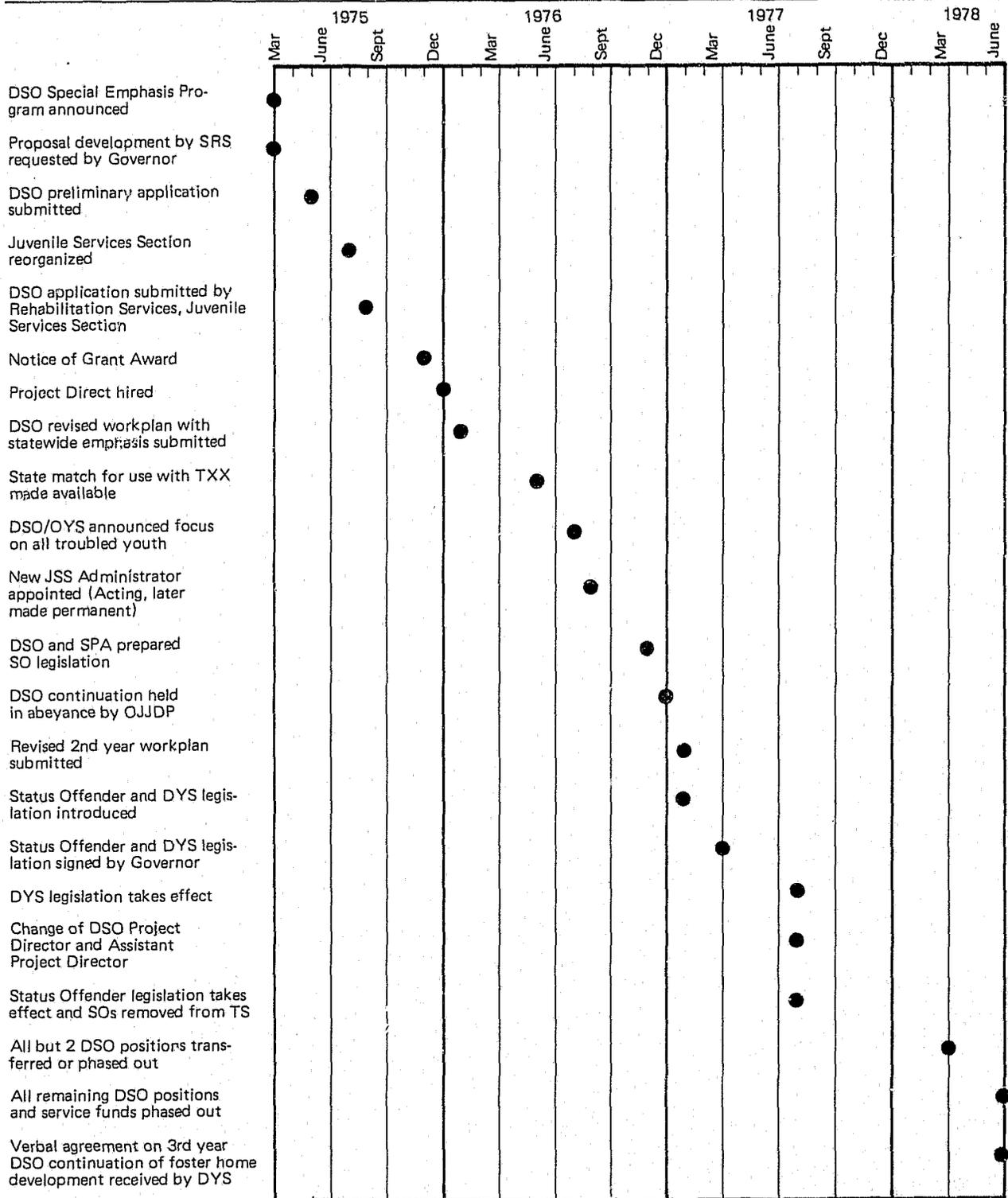
From this point on, the DSO Project lost any distinctive identity and DSO funds became one of several funding sources supporting the community service development activities of the Division.* As the new project director saw it, the paramount task for DSO now was arranging for transition -- phasing out or arranging alternate funding sources for the activities it had supported.

DSO support for program staff terminated on March 4, 1978. Purchase of service through DSO funds continued through June 4, 1978.

The sequence of major events from receipt of the DSO Program Announcement to termination of DSO funding is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

* In addition to DSO and Title XX, the new Community Services Section controlled a state appropriation of "Community Services" funds, and later, a CETA statewide job bank contract.

FIGURE 2.1
Arkansas DSO Project Timeline



III. Procedures

A. Data Collection Procedures

An initial briefing visit to Arkansas was conducted in early November 1977 by the Project Director and Senior Advisor. The bulk of data was collected in the course of six additional field visits by the Project Director and Project Associate. The field visit schedule is shown in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1
Field Visit Schedule

SITE VISIT	REGIONS VISITED
October 31 - November 4	I, V
January 30 - February 3	V, VIII
February 20 - March 3	II, III, IV, V, VI, VII
April 10 - 14	I, V, VIII
May 1 - 5	IV, V
June 12 - 16	V
September 18 - 22	III, IV, V, VI VII

Data were collected from three major sources: archives, narrative interviews, and management information or other secondary data systems. A brief description of each follows.

Archival Data

We conducted an exhaustive review of all DSO materials in all four DSO field offices, the central DSO office, and the State Planning Agency. Topics of interest included:

- the basic chronology of DSO activities;
- the use of regional teams and councils;
- youth service development activities;

- pursuit of cooperative agreements and other contacts with local LE/CJ officials;
- estimates of "success"/"failure" or changes observed; and
- general background characteristics of the locality, e.g., receptiveness to change, LE/CJ and youth service system characteristics, extent of "youth problem."

Other documents collected related to legislative and organizational changes and inter-agency relationships at the state level. Training school board minutes also were examined.

The extent of materials and documentation of activities varied widely from one field office to another, largely as a consequence of frequent staff changes in the field offices.

Narrative Interview Data

Intensive interviews were conducted with seven categories of respondents: staff, service providers, county judges/juvenile referees, other LE/CJ personnel, LEAA regional planners, state human service professionals, and a miscellaneous category consisting of state legislators, other state employees, and private citizens without organizational affiliations. The interview sample is shown in Table 3.2. Of the 127 respondents, the greatest concentration was in Region V, which contains the state capital and the largest proportion of youth age population. Regions III and IV, also relatively populous and originally designated as targets of special emphasis, were next highest in concentration of respondents.

Since there was great variety among respondents in their relationship to the DSO Project, the focus of individual interviews varied, but covered the same topic areas as the archival review. The most comprehensive interviews were those with team members (and former team members, whenever possible). Depending on length of employment with the project, staff were a fairly reliable source of information on both project-related activities and on background characteristics of localities. Several staff were interviewed more than once.

TABLE 3.2
The Interview Sample¹

Service Regions	Project Staff	Service Providers	County Judges and Juvenile Referees	Other LE/CJ Personnel	LEAA Planners	State Human Service Professionals	Other	Total
I	3	3	2	1	1	—	1	11
II	—	2	—	1	1	3	—	7
III	2	5	3	5	1	3	5	24
IV	3	3	1	3	1	1	3	15
V	10	9	1	3	1	5	5	34
VI	—	4	1	4	1	—	—	10
VII	—	5	3	4	1	1	—	14
VIII	—	4	2	3	1	1	1	12
Total	18	35	13	24	8	14	15	127

1. Respondents have been classified according to the region where they were located at the time of interview. Staff responsible for all 8 service regions were interviewed; the staff column reflects the fact that field offices were located in only 4 regions. The central office was located in Region V.

Interviews with other respondents were usually narrower in coverage. In addition to the general topics discussed with all respondents, the interviews with non-staff focused on activities specific to the relationship between the project and the particular respondent. For example, with the LEAA planners we discussed the relationship of the regional criminal justice planning councils to the DSO teams and councils. With service providers we specifically talked about contract development; LE/CJ personnel revealed any changes in procedures for handling status offenders since the legislation prohibiting arrest and incarceration; and from state human service professionals we learned about funding, organization, and routine procedures of particular agencies.

Some 39 follow-up interviews were conducted by telephone. This was usually necessary to supplement contract information extracted from the archives.

We also mailed a structured questionnaire to eight DSO field staff who were most familiar with the project's regional community development activities. The purpose of the questionnaire

was to verify and supplement data obtained through interviews and archival review.

Management Information Systems

We used several sources of secondary data, both internal and external to the DSO Project. We explored two sources of project data: Client Activity Reports and the DSO Client Intake System. The Activity Reports recorded, by region, status offender commitments to the state training school system, removals of status offenders from the system, and diversions at the local level. These activities were not documented systematically throughout the project history and the reporting period fluctuated from monthly to quarterly. The DSO Client Intake System, initiated in conjunction with the original USC evaluation, has a file on 1,528 cases. This system was designed to record descriptive and referral information on every status offender served by a DSO-funded program, as well as some status offenders served through other funding sources. In reality, however, many intakes went unreported. A client progress component was never effectively implemented.

Information on all intakes to the state training school system was obtained through direct review of the intake logs; these data were supplemented by various statistical reports on training school population prepared by the Division of Youth Services Residential Services Section. These data on overall intakes are deemed quite reliable and valid but do not permit separating status offenders from youth committed for delinquent offenses.

Other information systems explored include the Juvenile Court Intake System, the UCR System, and the SPA Detention Survey. The Court Intake System was designed to secure uniform intake data from all counties through the use of the Juvenile Probation/Intake Form. This form is completed by the juvenile probation or intake officer on all juveniles who come into contact with the juvenile court system. The data, collected

statewide, are then centrally stored in the DYS office. Unfortunately, the Intake Form went into use only late in 1976 and county participation is voluntary; approximately 20 of 75 counties have not yet enrolled. In any case, the system provides no pre-project baseline.

The Arkansas Criminal Justice and Highway Safety Information Center has responsibility for data collection and analysis under the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program. Again, there are limitations: this system is relatively new and does not represent all police departments. In 1976, only 24 of the 75 counties reported "complete" data (i.e., all law enforcement agencies in the county representing populations of more than 2,500 submitted Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) for 12 months). Forty-three counties submitted partial 1976 data.* No arrest data are yet available for 1977 or 1978.

Regional and county detention data have been compiled from a survey of August 1975 and August 1977 detention conducted by the SPA. Data were collected by LEAA regional planners, who examined the records at every detention location in the state. Differential quality of record-keeping affects these data to a somewhat unquantifiable degree. In addition, assessments of change based on one month of data have some obvious drawbacks. However, these are our best indicators of detention practice. A project detention survey system was implemented so unsystematically that we opted not to use its results.

B. Data Analysis

The preceding review of data sources and their limitations suggests two important conditions of the data analysis:

- We had large amounts of qualitative data in the form of reports, memoranda, opinions, correspondence, and oral history.

* *A Statistical Analysis Center special report: Selected youth-age arrests in Arkansas, by county, 1976.* Arkansas: Criminal Justice & Highway Safety Information Center, October 1977.

- Nearly all of the quantitative secondary data available were limited in some way, in terms of time period covered and/or presumed validity and reliability.

A core technique used to make sense of much accumulating information was the development of detailed maps of project activities and events at both the state and regional levels. These maps were essentially chronologies derived from multiple data sources, and became increasingly elaborate as time went on. They were a convenient tool for cross-checking interview materials against written records, and for the later interviews, helped in preparation -- identifying areas of missing or conflicting evidence to be explored with appropriate respondents.

These chronologies, in streamlined form, could be extended to form models of the assumed or expected path to project goal achievement. We call these models, which portray the causal linkages between project inputs, activities, and outcomes, "rationales." Rationales for the Arkansas DSO Project will be discussed in detail in Chapter IV. Their utility for data analysis lies in the organization they suggest for using the collected data. Data elements were referenced and categorized according to their place in the basic project rationale. Where multiple data sources were available for the same process or result, this enhanced our ability to examine and verify relationships.

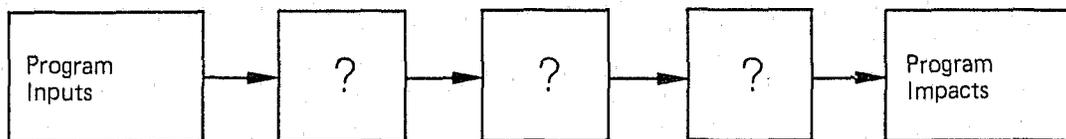
Whenever possible, we attempted to transform our qualitative information into a more quantitative form, through constructing appropriate categories, scales, rankings, and the like. Wherever meaningful, we opted for using the state's multi-county service regions as the unit of aggregation for various input, activity, and outcome measures.

Because of the inherent limitations of much of our quantitative data, our statistical presentations are quite simple, relying primarily on frequency distributions and other descriptive statistics. More sophisticated manipulations were deemed inappropriate and potentially misleading.

IV. The Arkansas DSO Project Rationale

All programs can be viewed as a linked set of activities and events that begin with the commitment of resources and move through the ensuing project activities, the interventions made, and the results. The diagrammatic representations of these linkages, called program "rationales," make explicit the working logic behind an intervention program such as the Arkansas DSO Project.

Program rationales can become quite complex, depending upon the number of intermediate steps postulated between a particular resource input and the ultimate impacts.



While the categorization of the intervening steps in the sequence is always somewhat arbitrary, Figure 4.1 presents one generalized model of the relationship among the components of a program.

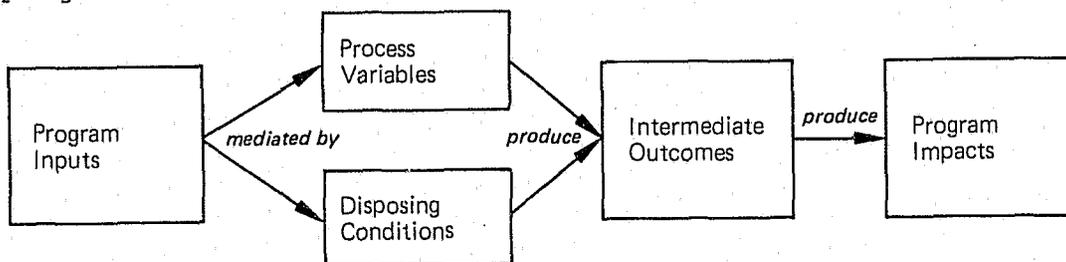


Figure 4.1. GENERAL MODEL OF A PROGRAM RATIONALE

Inputs refer simply to the resources, such as staff, which are brought to bear in carrying out an intervention program. *Process variables* can be broadly construed to refer to the "way things are done," encompassing those activities which are generally under the control of the project. The way the DSO Project

chese to identify service needs of the status offender population would be a process variable in this scheme. The assumption is that such process variables can affect the outcomes of the program.

Disposing conditions, like process variables, can affect program outcomes, but are more stable characteristics of the project environment -- factors not under project control. Examples are the social and economic characteristics of the state, the prior relationship between the project's host agency and other organizations, and the state juvenile code. Strictly speaking, some of the disposing conditions may be manipulable by the project in the long run. As we shall see, this was the case with Arkansas legislation governing the incarceration of status offenders. In the short run, however, existing legislation is a given.

Intermediate outcomes are those conditions or events which are thought to lead to the desired impacts, but are not themselves the ultimate results expected for the program. For example, an increase in the state's emergency shelter capacity might be expected to result ultimately in fewer secure detentions of status offenders; in terms of the overall DSO Project rationale, increased emergency shelter beds is an intermediate outcome, not the ultimate project objective. The term *program impacts* thus is reserved for the longer run results which the program hopes to achieve. In the case of the DSO Project, these include the reduction or prevention of status offender incarceration at state and local levels. The decision as to which are truly the "ultimate" impacts of a project is always somewhat arbitrary. In the very long run, of course, DSO efforts hope to reduce the labeling effects of incarceration and the negative consequences of contacts with delinquent peers, thereby presumably reducing future delinquency.

It is obvious that a "complete" rationale for the Arkansas DSO Project would be very complex, simply because project activities and interventions proceeded at multiple levels of the

state and local systems and encompassed a broad range of strategies, some of which shifted over time. Figure 4.2 portrays a simple streamlined model for the DSO Project intervention. The items linked by dotted lines represent elements which emerged in the second year of project operations and did not figure strongly in the original intervention logic. The components and sequences shown by solid lines were relatively stable throughout the project's history.

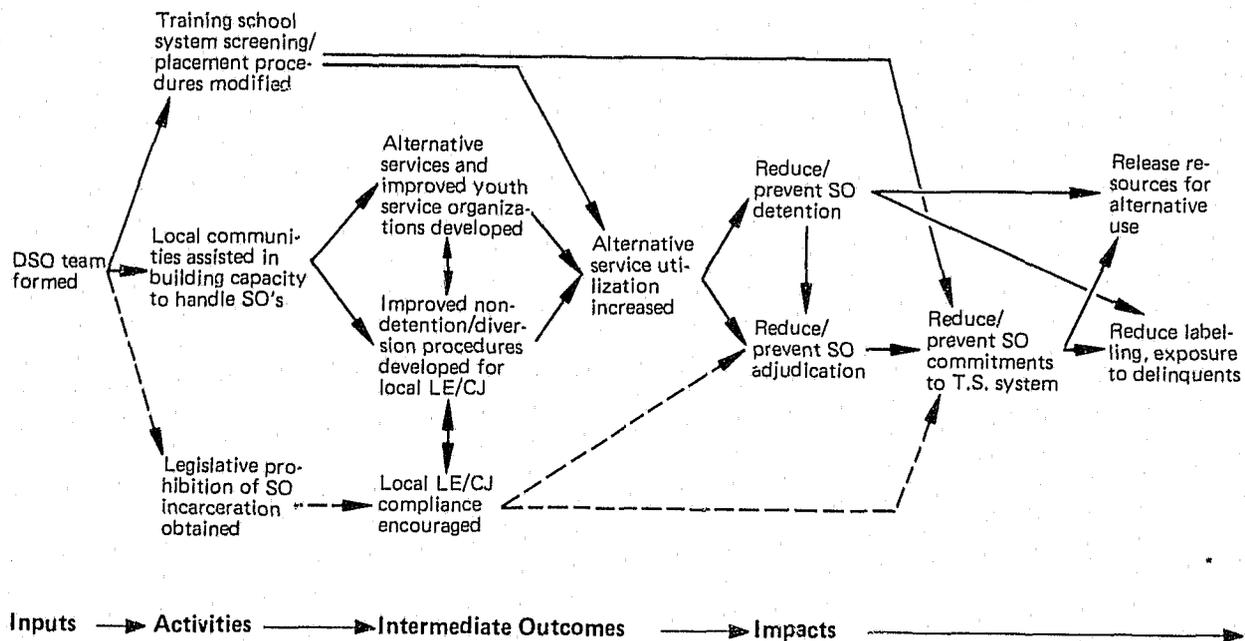


Figure 4.2. SIMPLE RATIONALE FOR ARKANSAS DSO PROJECT

As Figure 4.2 shows, the basic program input was the formation of the DSO team, equipped with financial resources for buying services. At the outset the team envisioned two main lines of activity -- one at the state training school level and the other at the level of local communities. The legislative change strategy emerged later on. The simple sequence by which these activities were presumed to get the desired results is also shown in the figure.

For each of the elements in the simple rationale, a much more elaborate diagram can be developed. A full-blown picture of the project would require several subsets of overlapping rationales. Figures 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 show more refined versions of three critical project intervention sequences -- the state training school deinstitutionalization effort, the local community development effort, and the legislative change effort. (Again, we have used dotted lines to distinguish elements which emerged during the process.)

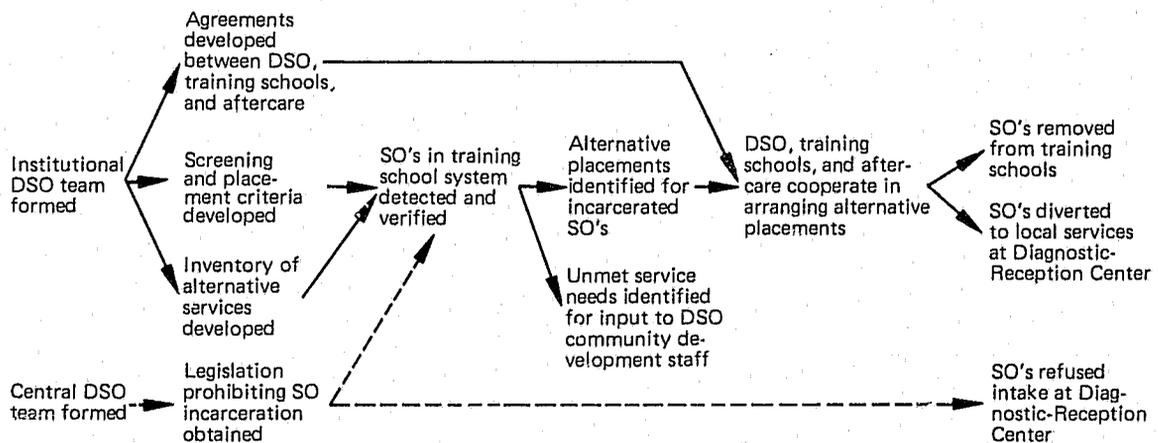


Figure 4.3 RATIONALE FOR TRAINING SCHOOL DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION EFFORTS

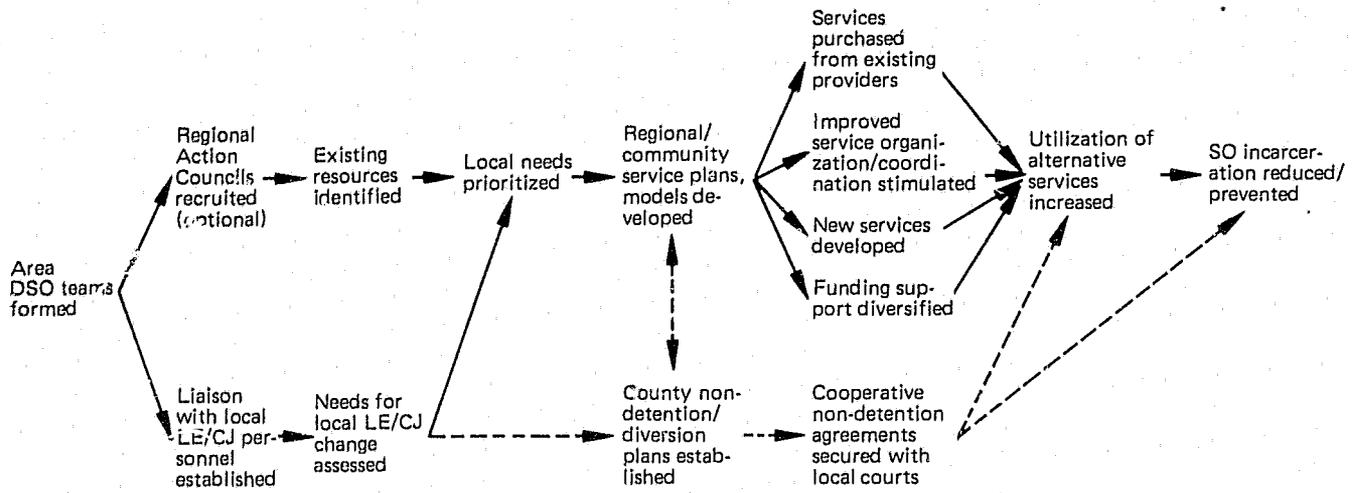


Figure 4.4 RATIONALE FOR REGIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

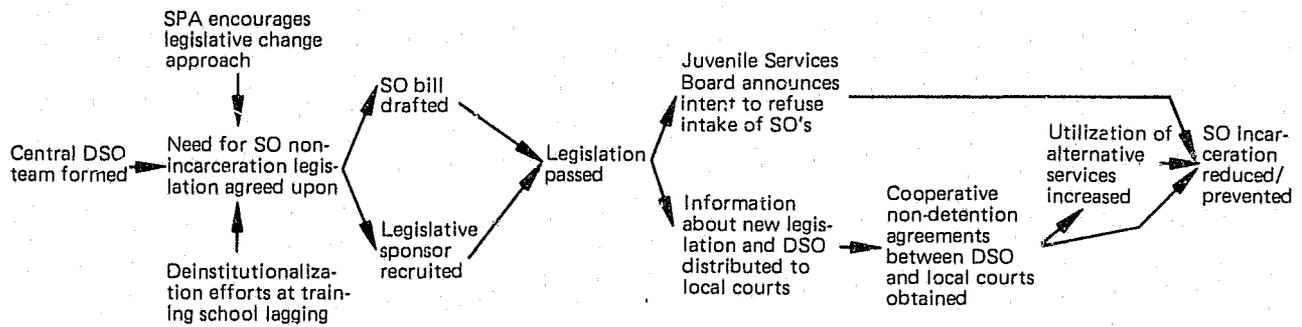


Figure 4.5. RATIONALE FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE EFFORTS

The following five chapters are organized on the basis of the essential components of a program rationale. Chapter V discusses inputs, namely the DSO staff. Disposing conditions, or the Arkansas DSO environment, are covered in Chapter VI. Chapter VII deals with the DSO process. Finally, Chapters VIII and IX discuss accomplishments -- the program's intermediate outcomes and impacts.

V. Inputs: the DSO Staff

The personnel and organizational structure were the central inputs to the Arkansas DSO Project that distinguished it from other demonstration efforts. In this chapter, we discuss the characteristics of DSO staff and deployment. We begin by looking at the DSO team as it took shape in the early months of project effort and then consider what happened to it over time.

A. The Initial DSO Team

Organizational Structure

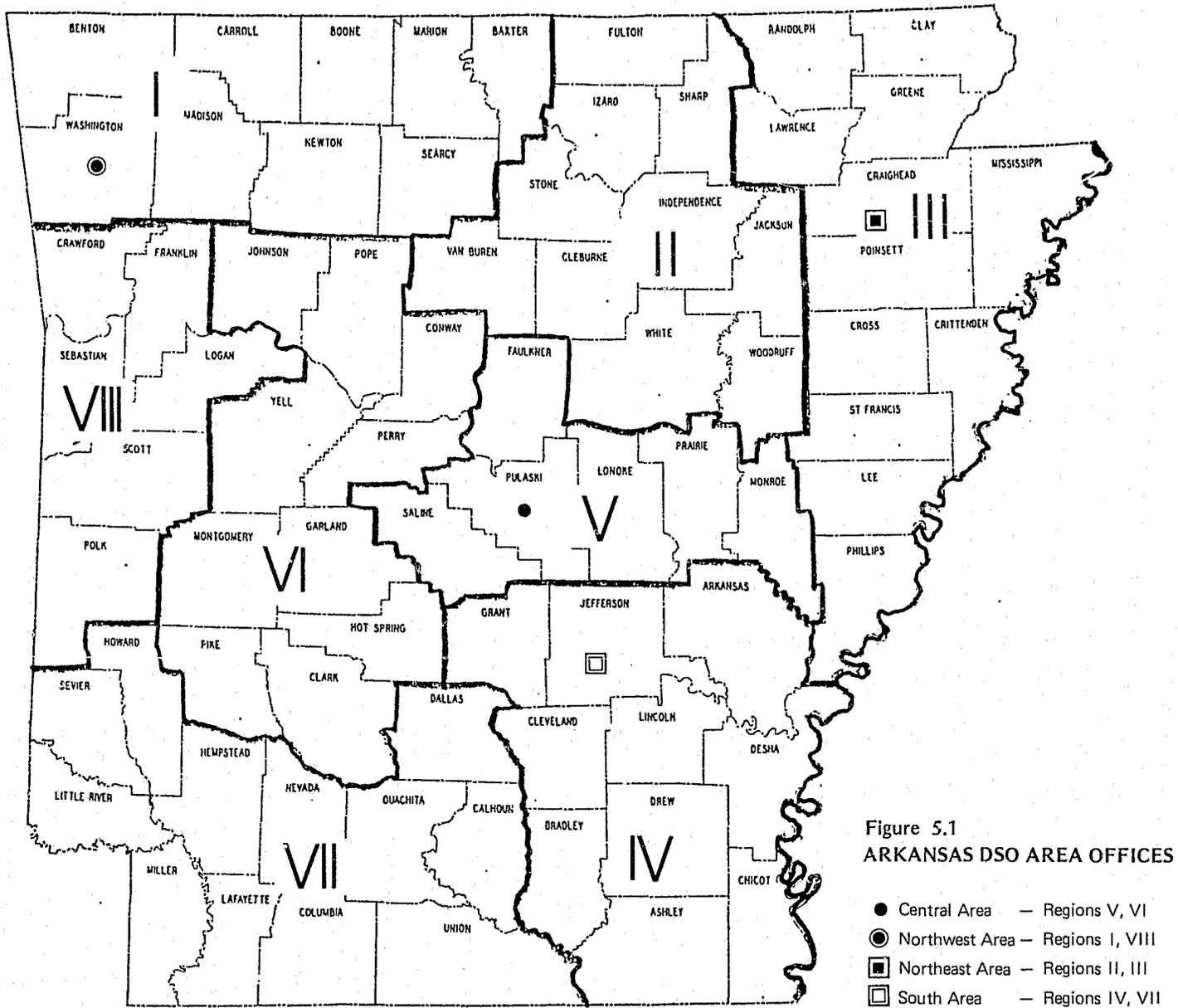
DSO staff were deployed in five locations: a central office and four field offices.

The Central Office, under the Office of Youth Services in Little Rock, was the seat of statewide project management as well as the DSO state training school system efforts. DSO personnel assigned to the central office included the project director and his assistant, a research associate, an accountant, and two secretarial staff. In addition, the institutional case manager was based in Little Rock and had the responsibility for isolating, identifying, and facilitating alternative placements for status offenders entering or already incarcerated in state facilities.

Each of the field offices, called Area Offices, was responsible for serving two regions. Their service areas are shown in Figure 5.1.

The professional field staff fell into three categories:

- Area Supervisors, responsible for overall direction of the field operation in each of the offices.
- Community Development Specialists, responsible for needs assessment, community organization, and service development.



- Area Case Managers, responsible for assisting locally in placement and diversion of status offenders from the state training school system and for client flow tracking and detention surveys.

At the outset, every field office had an area supervisor and a secretary. In addition, the Northeast and South Areas each were assigned a community development specialist and a case manager; these areas contained regions originally designated as pilots for more concentrated effort.

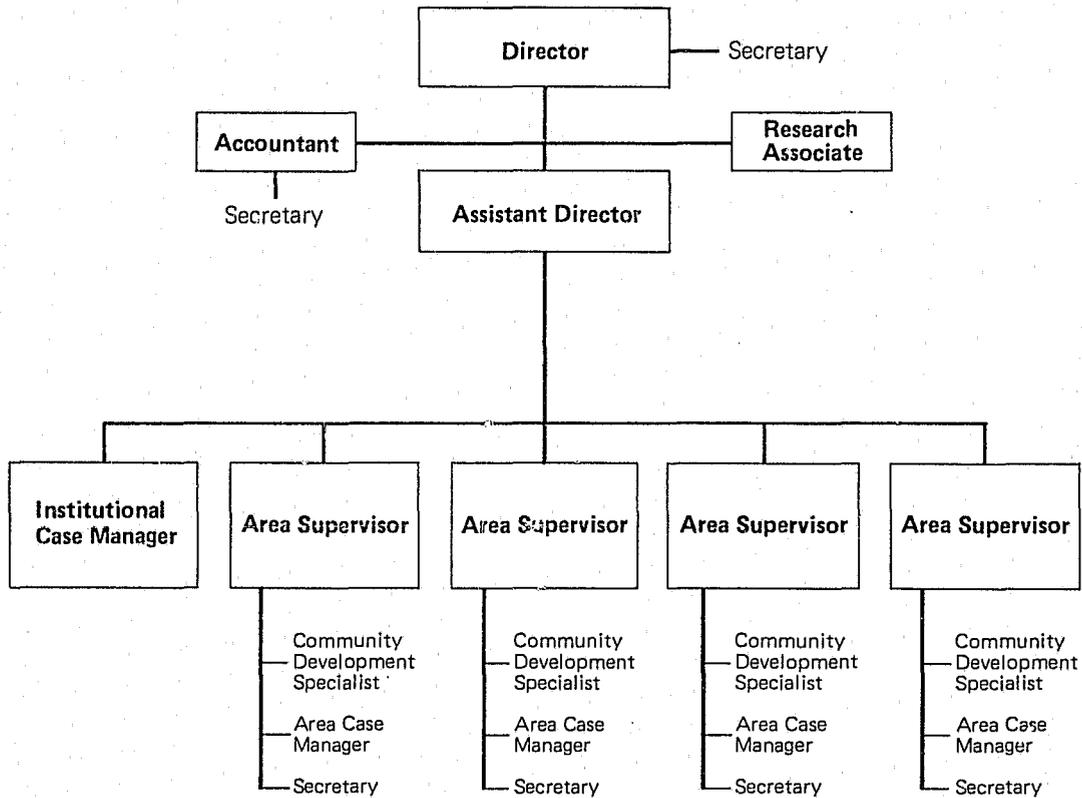


Figure 5.2. ARKANSAS DSO PROJECT ORGANIZATION CHART

In Summer 1976, support for four additional positions was acquired under a Title XX administrative support contract. This money was used to equalize staff in all the field offices; henceforth each area had a community development specialist, covered

by Title XX, and a case manager, covered by DSO. In our discussion, we consider the Title XX-funded positions a full part of the DSO team.

Figure 5.2 depicts the final configuration of 23 positions, which obtained from Summer 1976 through the end of the project.

Desired/Desirable Qualifications

Relevant Qualifications. Given an effective organizational structure, staff qualifications are major ingredients of a successful program. We have identified five qualities which are relevant for staff member positions:

- *Education.* Training in social work or a related field would seem appropriate to many of the job requirements. Equally appropriate would be an education in public administration, or the like, since staff members were to be heavily involved in development of contracts, workplans, needs assessments, and other activities requiring administrative and organizational skills.
- *Experience in youth service or other human service delivery.* Presumably experience would prepare staff more effectively for their technical assistance role and enhance their credibility in the community.
- *Knowledge of local conditions.* Familiarity with local needs and problems obviously can facilitate the planning process; a network of already existing contacts in an area is also a valuable asset.
- *Community organization and development experience.* Such experience would be relevant to many staff activities at the local level, such as public education, recruitment and organization of community participants for the DSO planning and implementation effort, and development of new service delivery mechanisms
- *Management experience.* This would surely be desirable for area supervisors, who were responsible for supervision and direction of team activities in the field.

Job Descriptions. Compared to our set of desired qualities the actual job descriptions restricted themselves to fewer requirements. These are summarized in Table 5.1. In general, the formal job requirements emphasize a social work or related background, except in the case of the project director. Community organization and management experience are preferred but not mandatory for the assistant project director and area supervisors; advanced degrees are required. OYS and DSO management recognized that the qualifications were not really tailored to DSO requirements and wanted greater flexibility. Nevertheless, DSO was required to conform to the state's existing personnel classification system.

TABLE 5.1
Qualifications as Required by Job Descriptions

Position	Educational Requirements	Experience Requirements	Other
Project Director	Bachelor's in Business Administration, Public Administration, Personnel Management, or specialized area supervised	4 years in specialized area supervised or related field, including 2 years in supervisory capacity	—
Assistant Project Director and Area Supervisors	Masters in Social Work or equivalent	2 years in social service related work	Some experience in community development or program management preferable
Institutional Case Manager, Area Case Managers, and Community Development Specialists	Bachelor's in Social Work or Bachelor's in Sociology or Psychology	Field work experience (for social work bachelor's), or 1 year in social service related work or within an area of specialization (for sociology or psychology bachelor's)	—

Actual Staff Qualifications

In our discussion of actual staff qualifications we will focus on the initial staff (those who filled the positions first) in the area offices. We examined actual staff qualifications of the initial staff members on three measures: education and degrees; demographics (age, sex, race); and relevant knowledge and experience.

Education and Degrees. Of the 14 initial staff members, all but one held at least a Bachelor's degree. Five had a Bachelor's plus some graduate school, and four had completed a Master's degree program. Table 5.2 gives a breakdown of degrees without regard to major fields of study.

TABLE 5.2
Education and Degrees

No College Degree	1 (7.1%)
Bachelor's Degree	4 (28.6%)
Bachelor's Degree and Some Graduate School	5 (35.7%)
Master's Degree	4 (28.6%)
TOTAL	14 (100%)

An examination of the staff's field of specialization shows a high degree of "fit" between the educational requirements specified in the job descriptions and the actual backgrounds. Of the nine team members with Bachelor's degrees, eight had majored in psychology, sociology, or social work and one had majored in religion with a minor in psychology. The staff in positions requiring Master's degrees were similarly qualified. Two Master's degrees were in social work, one in guidance and counseling, and the fourth was in education.

Age, Sex and Race Characteristics. A few words about three characteristics of less substantive importance. Most initial staff were relatively young at the time of employment. State-wide, the average age was 28 years and the range was 22-38 years. The average ages and the range showed little variance across regions.

The initial staffing pattern shows an even split between males and females; seven positions were held by men and seven by women. Only two of the first 14 members were black.

Relevant Knowledge and Experience. In order to assess the teams on this measure, we considered four sub-areas: youth service/human service delivery experience; knowledge of local conditions; community organization/community development experience; and management experience. Each of these measures is discussed in turn.

For the youth service/human service delivery sub-area we consider four categories: direct youth service experience, total youth service experience, direct human service experience, and total human service experience. Table 5.3 shows the amount of staff experience in each of these areas. In all but the "total human service" category, at least 50% of the team had less than two years experience at time of employment. More than half of this percentage is accounted for by members with no experience at all.

TABLE 5.3
Initial Staff Experience¹

	Direct YS Experience	Total YS Experience	Direct HS Experience (including YS)	Total HS Experience (including YS)
None	5 (36%)	5 (36%)	4 (29%)	4 (29%)
1-11 months	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)
1 year-1 year, 11 months	3 (21%)	3 (21%)	2 (14%)	2 (14%)
2 years-2 years, 11 months	3 (21%)	3 (21%)	2 (14%)	3 (21%)
3 years-3 years, 11 months	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
4 years-4 years, 11 months	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (21%)	3 (21%)
5-10 years	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)
Over 10 years	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)
Total	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	14 (100%)

1. YS = youth service, HS = human service.

The rationale for seeking people with a knowledge of local conditions is clear. We use length of residence in the area of field work as an indirect measure of this qualification. A resident is likely to be more knowledgeable about community needs and resources than an outsider just entering the area. Also, the

resident is likely to have an established set of contacts which would be helpful in getting regional project activities underway. Table 5.4 summarizes the length of time in the area for field staff. About one third of the staff had spent at least 16 years in the region in which they were employed by the DSO Project.

TABLE 5.4
Length of Residence in Area at Time of Employment*

<u>TIME IN REGION</u>	<u>NO. OF STAFF</u>
1 - 11 mos	1
1 yr - 3 yrs 11 mos	3
4 yrs - 5 yrs 11 mos	4
6 yrs - 15 yrs 11 mos	0
16 yrs - 19 yrs 11 mos	1
20 yrs and above	3
Unknown	2
	<hr/>
TOTAL	14

* Length of residence is lower bound estimate.

We also looked at experience in community organization/community development. Area staff expended a large amount of time and effort in assisting the regional councils to perform community analyses, documenting existing services and resources, and educating appropriate agencies and individuals about the need for services for status offenders. The overwhelming majority (79%) of the initial team members had no community organization/community development experience. Only three of fourteen showed any evidence of such background in their resumes.

Management experience was considered relevant for staff filling the area supervisor positions only. All four of the initial area supervisors met this qualification.

Table 5.5 summarizes the comparative strengths and weaknesses according to the above analysis.

TABLE 5.5
Summary of DSO Team Qualifications

Areas of Relative Strength	Areas of Relative Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and degrees • Length of time in region (knowledge of locale) • Management/supervisory experience (supervisors only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth/human service delivery experience • Community organization/development experience

B. The DSO Team Over Time

The preceding section discussed the initial team members. We now examine what happened to the teams during the course of the project, considering both "structural integrity" of the teams and changes in staff qualifications over time.

Structural Integrity of the DSO Staff

Staff integrity has three components: change of leadership at state level, staff continuity at area office level, and staffing level.

Change of Leadership at State Level. "Leadership" refers to the project director and assistant project director who were located in the central office. During the two-year life of the project, there was one change in leadership, coinciding with the reorganization of the Division of Youth Services. The change seems to have occurred in a non-disruptive manner leaving neither of the two positions vacant. Both the former project director and assistant project director assumed new responsibilities within DYS and remained accessible for consultation.

Staff Continuity. During the course of a two-year effort it would have been unrealistic to expect a zero turnover rate in area office personnel. By the same token, it would not have been surprising for several persons to remain with the project in the same position from start to finish. In the 24-month

duration of the project in the area offices,* the 12 available positions had 24 different incumbents. (Because some individuals held more than one position, there actually were 20 separate individuals involved.) This high ratio of staff to positions suggests a higher rate of discontinuity than would be expected through normal attrition.

Staff continuity or discontinuity may be examined in a number of different ways. Table 5.6 includes three measures of position continuity: number of persons holding a given position over the project term, average months served per position, and percent of staff serving over one year in a given position.

TABLE 5.6
Staff Continuity in Area Offices

Area	Area Super- visors	Area Case Managers	Community Development Specialists	All Positions
Northwest (Regions I and VIII)				
Number of Persons	2	1	1	4
Average months served	9.3	21.0	14.0	13.4
Percent serving >1 year	0	100	100	50
Northeast (Regions II and III)				
Number of persons	3	1	1	5
Average months served	6.3	19.0	24.0	12.4
Percent serving >1 year	0	100	100	40
South (Regions IV and VII)				
Number of persons	3	2	2	7
Average months served	8.0	12.0	7.8	9.1
Percent serving >1 year	0	50	0	14
Central (Regions V and VI)				
Number of persons	2	2	4 ¹	8
Average months served	12.0	9.5	10.3	10.5
Percent serving >1 year	50	50	50	50
All Areas				
Number of persons	10	6	8	24
Average months served	8.6	13.8	11.9	11.0
Percent serving >1 year	10.0	67	50	38

1. In this area, responsibilities for this position were shared by 2-3 individuals during certain periods.

* Area offices were staffed under DSO from mid-March 1976 through March 4, 1978.

A number of points about Table 5.6 are worth noting:

- Only 38% of all area positions were filled by the same incumbent for more than a year.
- The area supervisor positions suffered the greatest turnover by far. No area had fewer than two supervisors; only one of the four areas had the same supervisor for more than 12 months.
- If all measures are taken into account, the Northwest area enjoyed most stable staffing; the South area showed the greatest discontinuity on two of three measures.

The preceding analysis makes no allowance for the fact that in two areas -- the Northeast and South -- there was promotion from within when positions fell vacant. If we consider each office as a whole, disregarding position turnover, then these two area offices would show overall continuity approximately equal to the Northwest area. The Central area would fare the worst under this analysis.* In general, the overall levels of discontinuity remain substantial, however, with only about half the staff members remaining over one year in the same office.

Staffing Level

A final component of the structural integrity of the DSO staff is staffing level, or the extent to which positions were actually filled. The project had been underway less than six months when vacancies in staffing began to occur. Although some positions were never vacant between hiring, no region experienced uninterrupted employment at every position for the entire project period.

Table 5.7 summarizes the evidence on staffing level by area office and by position. Overall vacancy rates by office ranged from 10% to 16% with the Northwest area exhibiting the highest proportion of person-months vacant. The community development

* Revised summary measures for the Northeast area would be: four persons, 14.8 months served, 50% served more than one year. For the South area, they would be: five persons, 13.2 months served, 60% more than one year. Measures for the Northwest and Central areas remain unchanged.

specialist position tended to go unfilled most often, with an overall vacancy rate of 28%. Despite the high turnover observed earlier for area supervisors, this position was vacant only 9% of the time overall, and was never left vacant in two of four areas. For the area offices as a group the vacancy rate was 13%. Positions went unfilled for a total of 35 person-months.

TABLE 5.7
Vacancy Rates in Area Offices¹

		Area Supervisor	Area Case Manager	Community Development Socialist	Total
Northwest Areas I, VIII	Total months ²	24	21	19	64
	Vacant months	5.5	0	5	10.5
	Vacancy rate	23%	0%	26%	16%
Northeast Areas II, III	Total months	24	21	22	67
	Vacant months	3.5	3	2	8.5
	Vacancy rate	15%	14%	9%	13%
South Areas IV, VII	Total months	24	24	16	64
	Vacant months	0	0	9	9
	Vacancy rate	0%	0%	56%	14%
Central Areas V, VI	Total months	24	19	26	69
	Vacant months	0	0	7	7
	Vacancy rate	0%	0%	27%	10%
All Areas	Total months	96	85	83	264
	Vacant months	9	3	23	35
	Vacancy rate	9%	4%	28%	13%

1. Positions filled by "acting" personnel were considered to be vacant, as such persons always had other job responsibilities to fulfill.

2. Total months = number of person-months for which funding was available.

Table 5.8 summarizes the evidence on team continuity and staffing level over time.

TABLE 5.8
Summary of Team Continuity and Staffing Level Over Time

Dimension	All Field Offices	Differences Across Offices
Turnover, length of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent turnover at Area Supervisor level—only one Supervisor served more than one year • 38% of positions filled by same person for more than 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greatest position turnover in South Area, least in Northwest Area • Greatest office turnover in Central Area
Staffing level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All regions experienced vacancies • Positions vacant 13% of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest vacancy rate in Central Area, highest in Northwest Area

Changes in Staff Qualifications

Because of high staff turnover, it was necessary to examine the qualifications of the team members hired after the initial team. To study all changes that took place during the course of the project, we reviewed project staff at three time periods: March 1976, July 1977, and March 1978. This allowed us to compare the qualifications of the initial staff with staff who were present when the change in state leadership occurred, and with those employed at the termination of the project.

Some slight changes were observed on various qualification measures. For example, March 1978 staff had spent a bit more time in the area than the initial staff. In the Northwest and South areas, July 1977 staff had marginally more experience than the initial and final staffs. On balance, however, the changes over time appear negligible.

C. Summary

Area staff characteristics are summarized in Table 5.9. DSO field teams met qualifications specified in job descriptions rather well, but were relatively weak in some relevant areas such as human service delivery and community organization experience. Staff appeared strongest in educational background, knowledge of the area in which they worked, and in the case of

supervisors, management experience. Changes in staff qualifications over the course of the project were slight.

TABLE 5.9
DSO Area Team Characteristics

Qualifications	Initial Teams ¹	Differences Across Areas (if applicable)	Changes Over Time ²
Education and degrees	Average educational level = Bachelor's degree plus some graduate work High proportion of staff with job-related education	—	Negligible
Demographics	Average age = 28, range = 22-38 50% male 14% black	No minority staff in Northwest or Northeast	
Youth/human service delivery experience	71.5% have related experience Few staff with more than 2-3 years experience	Central Area strongest, South Area weakest	
Length of time in Region (knowledge of locale)	Over 80% resided in region 4 or more years, one-third for 16 or more years	South Area strongest	
Community organization/development experience	21% have relevant experience	No relevant experience in Northeast or South	
Management/supervisory experience (supervisors only)	All have relevant experience	—	

1. Teams rates as of Summer 1976.

2. Initial teams compared with July 1977 and March 1978 teams.

Discontinuity in staffing and long vacancies in some positions were characteristic of the DSO area teams. At the central office level, one turnover in leadership occurred, apparently without major disruptions to project efforts.

VI. The Arkansas DSO Environment: Disposing Conditions

In this chapter, we discuss characteristics of the environment in which the Arkansas DSO Project operated. We call these characteristics "disposing conditions," factors which are not within the control of project staff, but which necessarily affect project activities and outcomes. Three categories of characteristics are discussed below: the basic demographic characteristics of Arkansas and its eight regions, the state and local juvenile justice systems, and the state's configuration of youth services.

A. Arkansas: The Demographic Picture*

Arkansas, located in the south central portion of the United States, has a population of 2,109,000.** It ranks thirty-third in total population among the fifty states. Fifty percent of its citizens reside in urban areas compared to 73.5% for the United States as a whole. It has a large farm population -- 9.0% -- more than double the overall U.S. figure of 4.1%.

Compared to the rest of the country, Arkansas is disproportionately old, poor, and black. With a median family income of \$6,271, it ranks 49th out of 50 states; more than one in five Arkansas families has an income below the poverty level. The state ranks ninth in black population with 18.3%, and first in proportion of population 65 years of age and over. Youth aged 5-17 constitute 23.5% of its population, compared to 25.6% for the nation as a whole.***

*Unless otherwise noted, all statistics in this section are derived from the 1970 census.

**July 1, 1976 provisional estimates from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-26, No. 76-4, August 1977.

***U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 619. Estimates for 1975.

In 1976-77, 353,645 youth aged 9-18 were enrolled in its public and private school systems.*

In common with many southern and traditionally non-industrial states, Arkansas has been experiencing relatively rapid growth in recent years. While the U.S. population as a whole grew an estimated 5.6% from 1970 to 1976, Arkansas increased by 9.7%. More than half of this increase is attributable to net in-migration. The migration picture was not uniform across the state, however. Twenty-four of the 75 counties actually lost population through migration. Migration changes ranged from a loss of 12.8% in one rural southeastern county to a gain of 53.9% in a northwestern county.**

Variation Across Regions

The Arkansas landscape shows striking variation, from the Ozark Mountains in the Northwest to the flat delta land along the Mississippi River, the state's eastern border. Its population characteristics are equally varied, as Table 6.1 illustrates.

Region V, containing the capital city of Little Rock, is the most urban of the regions. It contains 21.7% of the state's population. Its median income is the highest in the state.

Region III is the second most populous area of the state. It has no major urban center, but several smaller cities. Almost 19% of the state's youth reside there. The region has a substantial black population and a large farm population as well.

Regions IV (Pine Bluff) and VIII (Fort Smith) also contain small metropolitan areas, but are otherwise quite diverse. The Fort Smith region ranks second among regions in median family income and has been growing faster than the state average. Its

* Statistics obtained from the Arkansas Department of Education. This constitutes the best available and most recent approximation of the age group targeted by the DSO Project.

** U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-26, No. 76-4, August 1977.

TABLE 6.1
Demographic Characteristics by Region

Region	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	State
1976 Estimated Population	245,900	166,700	392,200	228,900	458,000	217,400	227,100	173,200	2,109,400
Percent of Total Population	11.7	7.9	18.6	10.9	21.7	10.3	10.8	8.2	100.0
1976-77 School Enrollment (ages 9-18)	37,816	27,093	69,635	42,079	75,133	34,385	38,684	28,820	353,645
Population Change 1970-76	+20.2	+16.7	+5.7	+0.5	+12.5	+13.8	+1.1	+12.1	+9.7
Percent Black	0.8	6.4	26.2	35.8	18.9	9.3	29.9	3.8	18.3
Percent Urban	39.5	20.7	45.7	52.4	71.7	42.5	45.5	56.7	50.0
Percent Farm	14.6	16.5	14.6	6.7	3.4	7.5	5.5	6.9	9.0
Median Family Income	6,000	5,017	5,638	6,040	7,802	5,979	6,338	6,451	6,271

black population is very small. The Pine Bluff region, in contrast, has the largest proportion of black residents and has been experiencing almost zero growth in recent years because of substantial out-migration. Region VII, which contains the border city of Texarkana, is very similar to the Pine Bluff region in its large black population and its negligible growth.

Regions I, II, and VI make up the most rural portions of the state and show the most rapid population increase. Their populations are predominantly white.

B. The Arkansas Juvenile Justice System

In Arkansas, the primary court for entertaining charges against juveniles is known as the county or juvenile court.

It has jurisdiction over all cases involving delinquency, status offenses, and dependency/neglect. For delinquent offenses involving a youth 15 years of age or older, however, the prosecuting attorney has the option to try the case in circuit court.

The juvenile court, as set forth in the Arkansas constitution, is presided over by the county judge. The county judge is the chief executive of the county, chosen by popular election, and is not required to have any legal training. Since 1969, Arkansas statute has permitted the county judge to appoint a juvenile referee to preside in his place over juvenile cases. In Act 451, the new juvenile code adopted in 1975, the state legislature went a step farther and mandated that all referees appointed after July 1, 1975 must be licensed attorneys.*

At the close of 1975, 32 of Arkansas' 75 counties were served by a juvenile referee, with some appointees serving multi-county areas.** With LEAA support provided through the Arkansas SPA, the coverage has been increasing gradually since then, but there are still more than 20 rural counties which have no trained judicial officer.

The juvenile probation system in Arkansas is locally administered; probation officers are normally appointed by the county judge.*** Arkansas has no state agency authorized to promulgate and enforce probation standards. The SPA, however, does set education, experience, and salary standards for those probation services for which it provides funding. In 1974, the state had 47 juvenile probation agencies serving 51 counties. The number of counties with probation services has grown slightly since then, again largely through the support of LEAA block funds.

*The legislation permitted previously appointed non-attorneys to retain their positions, at the pleasure of the county judge.

***Master Plan*, 204.

***There are other arrangements; e.g., in one county, a nonprofit agency contracts to provide probation services.

Many of the probation agencies in Arkansas are one-person operations. The new Juvenile Code of 1975 requires that the county judge "designate one person as an intake officer for the juvenile court whose duty shall be to receive complaints made to the juvenile court." In the larger agencies, there are officers who handle intake functions exclusively, including determining (or recommending) which cases should be adjusted informally and making referrals to outside agencies. In the small agencies, such specialization is not possible. In either case, the person doing intake is a key decision-maker and his or her personal philosophy of juvenile treatment plays a pivotal role in determining which cases go on to formal court hearings. This is especially true for status offender cases, in which the judge routinely accepts the recommendations. In criminal cases, especially more serious ones, consultation with law enforcement, the prosecutor, and the judge will determine whether the youth goes to court.

At the outset of the Arkansas DSO Project, state statute contained no prohibitions against the pre- or post-adjudication incarceration of status offenders or delinquent juveniles. The legal distinction between "juveniles in need of supervision" and "delinquents," incorporated in the new code, was itself an innovation. The code did mandate separation of juveniles from adults, however. It also expressed a strong preference for carrying out rehabilitation "within the context of the juvenile's own home environment," but commitment to the state training school system by the local court remained a legitimate disposition for all except dependent/neglected youth.

Juvenile detention at the local level was (and still is) largely in the hands of local police and sheriff's departments and occurs initially at their discretion. In some instances, an intake or probation officer may be called in immediately, but for juveniles brought in at night or on weekends, the court often may not become involved for several hours. A survey of August 1975 detention practices by the Arkansas SPA reveals

that 67 county jails, 45 city jails, 2 public detention centers, and 1 private facility were available for secure detention of juveniles. By the time of the SPA's 1977 survey, two additional detention facilities -- one private and one public -- had opened, bringing the total to 117 separate locations where juveniles might be held.

Throughout the initial year of the DSO Project, the absence of legal prohibitions against status offender incarceration was a given for project staff. Only in the second year was there an attempt to manipulate the official ground rules of the juvenile justice system.

Variation Across Regions

Certain characteristics of juvenile justice process in Arkansas -- e.g., the centrality of the county judges, other provisions of the juvenile code, and the lack of legislation bearing on status offender incarceration -- obviously were invariant across regions. But there *was* variation in the availability of professional court services and in the actual detention and commitment practices that obtained in 1975, the year prior to DSO's arrival on the scene.

Table 6.2 illustrates the pre-DSO court services picture in Arkansas. No region had more than 60% of its counties served by juvenile referees; Regions II and VII were lowest with only 30% and 33% coverage respectively. Because juvenile referees were more likely to be present in more populous jurisdictions, however, counties with referees accounted for about 60% of the state's population. In general, the probation service picture was brighter. Counties were more likely to have a probation officer than a juvenile referee. Region III had probation agencies serving every county and three other regions were at the 80% mark or better. Again, Regions II and VII were the least well-provided with services. Overall, 83% of the Arkansas population resided in counties with probation officers.

TABLE 6.2
Pre-DSO Court Services by Region

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Percent counties served by juvenile referees in 1975 ¹	33	30	42	60	33	50	33	50
Percent counties served by probation agencies in 1974 ¹	56	40	100	70	83 ³	80	33	83
Percent counties citing court services as "available and adequate" in 1976 ²	44	10	17	30	50	60	0	17

- 1 Arkansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services, Master Plan.
- 2 Derived from Youth Services Regional Action Plans, developed by DSO staff and team/council representatives in 1976. Although not released in final form until December 1976, most work was completed by mid-1976 and before community development activities were in full swing.
3. One county had a city agency only. If included, Region I would have 100% coverage.

In mid-1976, DSO staff involved regional representatives (through its teams and councils) in a needs assessment process; this assessment was undertaken before much DSO regional activity had occurred. For comparative purposes, we show in Table 6.2 partial results of that assessment -- the percent of counties in which court services were deemed "available and adequate." Again, Regions II and VII do poorly, but by this more subjective measure, even Regions like III and VIII are deemed to have serious deficiencies. We also note that at the conclusion of the needs assessment process, improved court services were ranked a high priority in six of eight regions.

Some perspective on variations in actual detention and commitment practices in the pre-DSO period can be gained from Table 6.3.* We observe the following:

- Given the substantial differences in youth population across regions, it is not surprising that absolute number of detentions and commitments varied a good deal. But commitment and detention rates also were

* For the detention statistics, records were not available for all facilities, and where available, were of varying quality; therefore, the values shown should probably be considered underestimates.

- quite different. In Region I, the juvenile detention rate was over four times that of Region III. For commitment rate, the range was smaller (1.6 to 3.6), but the highest rate was still more than double the lowest.
- Detention of status offenders, as a proportion of total detentions, showed tremendous variation -- from less than 1% in Region IV to over half in Region V. Presumably, this reflects some unknown mix of differential detention and differential labeling practices across regions.
- Regions which ranked relatively high on detention rate, such as Region I, did not necessarily have high commitment rates. The opposite was also true, as Region III illustrates.
- In all regions, a juvenile's commitment risk was relatively small, relative to his chance of detention. (Note that detention statistics are shown for one month only.)

TABLE 6.3
Pre-DSO Detentions and Commitments by Region

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Statewide Averages or Totals
Local Detention (one month)¹									
Total juvenile detainees ²	232	56	101	159	362	52	72	132	1,166
Juvenile detention rate/1000	6.2	2.1	1.4	3.7	4.7	1.5	1.8	4.6	3.3
SO/non-offender detainees ²	23	15	14	1	205	18	25	50	351
SO detention rate/1000	.6	.6	.2	<.1	2.7	.5	.6	1.7	1.0
Commitments to State Training School (Youth Services) System (annual)³									
Juvenile commitments	70	44	230	132	154	80	127	102	940
Juvenile commitment rate/1000	1.9	1.6	3.2	3.1	2.0	2.3	3.2	3.6	2.6

1. Source of all measures: report of August 1975 detention practices, furnished by SPA.
2. Note that individuals may be counted more than once, e.g., if held prior to adjudication and then post-adjudication.
3. All statistics compiled from the 1975 Juvenile Services Section intake log. These include all commitments whether or not the youth was eventually assigned to a training school. No identification of status offenders was possible, but master plan staff estimated that they constituted about 38% of all commitments in 1974.

C. Local Youth Services in Arkansas

In Chapter II, we characterized the climate of interest and concern over youth services issues which prevailed in Arkansas at the time the DSO Project first came on the scene. We also noted that the state youth services bureaucracy had undergone a reorganization in July 1975 and that direct SRS involvement in community programming for youth had been relatively limited up to that point. This organizational structure later underwent significant change, but for a year and a half, DSO operated within its constraints.

In 1975, the only other significant state involvement in youth services at the community level came through the SPA, the Arkansas Crime Commission. This agency was the primary conduit for federal funds to local youth programs. At the time, Title XX as an alternative or complementary funding source was only beginning to get off the ground.

Relationships between SRS and the Crime Commission were apparently strained during this period. The reasons for the strain are somewhat unclear, but among other things, the SPA had failed to come forward with the match money for the DSO grant award, contrary to SRS expectations. In 1975, SRS also had prepared, under contract with the SPA, the juvenile portion of the state's comprehensive law enforcement plan. This contract was not renewed in 1976. With personnel changes over time in both agencies, the situation apparently improved. It is fair to say however, that strained relationships with the SPA were a relatively stable characteristic of the initial DSO environment.

We now turn to the local youth services picture. In the pre-DSO period, Arkansas had a patchwork of local programs serving troubled youth. These programs were sponsored by a variety of funding sources and characterized by very little coordination or commonality of goals. There were, in most areas of the state, no efforts at systematic needs assessment and planning. Local communities and agencies varied widely in their willingness and ability to seek outside funding for desired programs.

In 1974, the Youth Services Master Plan staff identified 87 community-based programs serving troubled youth around the state. Of these, 47 were city or county-sponsored probation programs, five with some limited residential capability. When we exclude the probation-based projects, there remain 27 residential (or mixed residential/non-residential) and 13 non-residential programs. These 40 programs reported serving over 6500 youth in 1974. A few of the non-residential programs served multi-county areas. All but three of the residential programs served the entire state.

Variation Across Regions

While detailed breakdowns of type of service provided or number of clients served are not possible, Table 6.4 does provide some notion of the pre-DSO distribution of non-probation services by region.

Region V was by far the best equipped with programs, in terms of gross numbers at least; of course, the region also has the largest youth population. Four regions had absolutely no non-residential non-probation programs serving troubled youth; two of these regions, II and IV, alone account for almost a third of the state's youth population. Every region had a least one residential program. Although we lack systematic data, we believe many of these had relatively small capacities.

For comparative purposes, we have included in Table 6.4 selected results from the needs assessments conducted early in the DSO Project history. Those involved in the assessments found overwhelming inadequacies in the emergency shelter and alternative living service availability in almost every region and in most counties.

One other possible indicator of the pre-DSO adequacy of local services emerged from a Master Plan survey of youth committed to the state's Diagnostic-Reception Center in 1974. The Master Plan points out that "while 244 or 83% of the status

offenders received a training school disposition, only 57 status offenders or 19% were recommended for such placements by the center."* The report offers no explanation, but presumably lack of alternative services played an important role.

TABLE 6.4
Pre-DSO Availability of Community-Based Programs
for Youth by Region

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Statewide
Number of non-residential programs ¹	1	0	0	0	9	1	0	2	13
Percent counties served by non-residential programs ¹	11	0	0	0	83	50	0	33	19
Number of residential and mixed residential/non-residential programs ¹	4	1	2	1	8	4	4	3	27
Percent counties assessing emergency shelter services as "available and adequate" (1976) ²	0	0	0	0	0	11	8	0	3
Percent counties assessing alternative living services as "available and adequate" (1976) ²	0	0	0	50	17	0	0	0	8

1. Does not include probation programs. Derived from 1974 data provided by Master Plan.
2. From Regional Action Plans.

D. Summary

Compared to the United States as a whole, the population of Arkansas is disproportionately rural, old, poor, and black; the state has been experiencing rapid growth, with considerable in-migration. Demographic characteristics and rate of population vary considerably across regions however. The Fayetteville region (I), for example, is less than 1% black and showed a population increase of over 20% from 1970 to 1976; in contrast the Pine Bluff region (IV) has the highest black population in the state, 35.8%, and experienced negligible growth.

In Arkansas, jurisdiction over juvenile matters is vested in the county executive, called a "judge," or in his appointed

* *Master Plan*, 160.

juvenile referee. At the outset of the DSO Project, the legal designation "status offender" was quite new; there were no statutory prohibitions against status offender incarceration. Court services and detention and sentencing practices varied considerably from region to region, as did the availability of alternative community-based services. Services of all types were most lacking in rural areas, but even the most urban regions evidenced significant service gaps.

VII. DSO Process

We now turn to a discussion of the specific techniques and activities employed by the Arkansas DSO Project to achieve its objectives. There are four types of activities which played a central role:

1. Activities directed at modifying the state institutional system, with its Diagnostic-Reception Center and three training schools.
2. Activities related to the organization of local communities -- i.e., regional teams and councils.
3. Activities aimed at enlarging the community-based service options for status offenders.
4. Activities directed at modifying local LE/CJ systems, including detention practices, juvenile processing, and selection of status offender dispositions.

The distinction among the four groups is somewhat arbitrary, but useful for organizing the discussion. The order of the four corresponds roughly to the project chronology, in that activities at the state institutional level began immediately, followed closely by regional council development and then service development. A more direct attack on local LE/CJ practices came in the second project year.

A. Modifying the State Training School System

The DSO approach to removing status offenders from the training schools or diverting them at the reception point had two basic elements:

- the addition of DSO funded staff -- an institutional case manager and four area case managers -- who would occupy themselves with identifying and tracking status offenders in the system, and

- the development of cooperative working relationships and communication systems among the DSO staff, institutional staff, and the regional aftercare personnel dealing with status offenders in the system.

By March 1976, the framework was in place. The appropriate DSO staff had been hired, and the DSO Project had signed formal cooperative agreements with both the Juvenile Services (Training School) Section and with the Social Services Division (Aftercare). Procedures were adopted for notifying all relevant parties when a status offender was identified in the system and needed an alternative plan. The institutional case manager began identifying, through record screening and call-backs to the committing county, all status offenders currently incarcerated and all new entrants.*

Within a few weeks, however, the deinstitutionalization effort was floundering. It was apparent that DSO intervention was having little impact. In some months, status offenders committed to the training schools exceeded the number released. There were at least three reasons for this failure.

- First, the division of responsibility for securing alternative placement among key actors -- DSO, Aftercare, and institutional staff -- was unclear. For example, the DSO Project expected Aftercare to continue its central and active role in finding placements for releases, with DSO case managers providing back-up on the "tough" cases. In some regions, however, Aftercare personnel expected DSO to pick up the major placement responsibility and were surprised to discover DSO simply making suggestions and maintaining some client-related paperwork.

* This emphasis on *identifying* the status offender stemmed from a peculiarity of the Arkansas juvenile services system -- that is, no committing offense was recorded on documents received by the reception center. This also explains why Arkansas overstated its incarcerated status offender population in its funding application. The more intensive screening conducted by project staff revealed only 84 status offenders, rather than the 120 expected.

- Second, alternate placements which all parties considered acceptable proved difficult to locate. In some cases, nothing at all could be found. In others, the DSO staff suggestion was not implemented by Aftercare.
- Third, the institutional staff, supported by the Juvenile Services Section Administrator, resisted release of status offenders who had not yet completed a normal program -- usually requiring six months.

The DSO Project did make efforts to resolve the problems with Aftercare through new improved procedural statements, but other difficulties remained.

Then in August 1976, the Juvenile Services Administrator resigned and a new administrator was appointed in his place. This was good news for the DSO Project, for the new appointee's philosophy was clearly more in tune with DSO. He had formerly headed the Arkansas Youth Services Master Plan effort, which, as noted previously, was strongly oriented to community-based treatment of juveniles. Over the next few months, several changes were made. A new and more explicit memorandum of agreement among Juvenile Services, Aftercare, and OYS (DSO) was developed and circulated to all relevant staff. In addition, the administrator directed that henceforth status offenders in the training schools were to be put on "holding only" status; as soon as an alternative placement could be found, the status offender was to be released, regardless of his in-house program status. Meanwhile, the DSO service development activities in the field were well underway so that more placement options were becoming available.

While the change of Juvenile Services Administrator played a key role in removing obstacles to DSO objectives, events at the level of the Juvenile Services Board were equally significant.

During the first half of 1976, the Juvenile Services Section's policy-making board had experienced significant turnover.

Three of its five members were replaced by new gubernatorial appointees, each of whom had a definite commitment to community-based services. It is not certain that the Governor set out deliberately to change the character of the Board, but that was the result of his appointments. (We *do* know that the Office of Youth Services and some Board members actively supported candidates sympathetic to the community emphasis.) This Board was then instrumental in selecting the new and more compatible administrator and supporting his subsequent policy directives.

In summary, DSO activities in the deinstitutionalization/diversion area consisted largely of augmenting the screening and placement staff and redefining the responsibilities and communications of already existing staff. The orientation of the Juvenile Services Administrator and secondarily, the Juvenile Services Board were key in determining the potential effectiveness of these activities.

B. Organizing the Local Communities

From the start, regional councils or advisory groups were considered an integral part of the DSO approach to local communities. During the course of the project, the council concept went through numerous changes with respect to focus and responsibilities, however. The grant application proposed the development of regional advisory committees of state employees, employees of private agencies, and interested community representatives for the two pilot regions. They would work with project staff and other SRS personnel in developing policies and procedures for the placement of status offenders removed from the training schools and for their diversion from the local judicial system. In addition, separate regional public relations councils were to be established to assist in publicizing and getting support for the DSO Program at the community level.

In the first year workplan, these ideas underwent some modification. The new plan proposed two groups, the "Team" and

the "Youth Service Action Council." The team would be composed of professionals already located in each region, including the LEAA Regional Planner, the regional Aftercare Supervisor, DSO project staff, and other appropriate SRS personnel. The intention was to utilize these resource persons to provide communities with technical assistance for both needs assessments and the planning and funding of Title XX and LEAA programs. Council membership would be more broad-based. Suggested representation included local employees of SRS and other state and county agencies, private youth service providers, juvenile court personnel, other judicial personnel, law enforcement representatives, and volunteer and community groups interested in youth.

The workplan identified four areas of council responsibility. Together with the area supervisors, the councils were to "identify" existing community resources and to assess their suitability for provision of services to status offenders.* Further duties included "documenting local needs and priorities in terms of possible placement and treatment resources for status offenders"** and managing a public information and education campaign directed toward changing attitudes of various target groups dealing with status offenders. These would include juvenile courts, law enforcement agencies, civic organizations, schools, churches, new media, youth organizations, state agencies, and other professional groups.***

A major responsibility of the council was to work with the area supervisor in developing a viable Regional Action Plan. A comprehensive work document specifying activities for the design and implementation of services in each region, the plan was to give direction to the supervisors and council in carrying out first and second year program objectives.

* First Year Workplan, D. Program Component: Regional Community Development Activities, Activity 3.

** First Year Workplan, D. Program Component: Regional Community Development Activities, Activity 4.

*** First Year Workplan, B. Program Component: Program Management Activities, Activity 9.

The first year workplan specified that recruitment for council members would begin April 1, 1976 and end June 1, 1976 with final appointment of members. The councils were intended to function throughout the project period. In practice, by the end of June, members had been selected for the two pilot regions, III and IV, and their names had been submitted to the Governor for formal appointment. Dates for council meetings had also been set. In non-pilot regions the decision to establish councils was left up to the regional teams. Five teams elected to form an informal council to receive community input and support in their region. (In Regions II and VI a separate council was not formed; council functions were performed by slightly expanded teams. Therefore, we shall count these teams as councils.) The project managed to establish councils in Regions I and VIII in a very short time; each council had already held two meetings by June and was heavily engaged in developing programs. A Region V council never materialized. The membership composition of the resulting councils is shown in Table 7.1.

TABLE 7.1
Regional Council Membership

	I ¹	II	III	IV ¹	V	VI	VII	VIII ¹	Total
Counties	9	10	12	10	6	10	12	6	75
County judge	9	0	1	2		0	2	6	20
Juvenile referee	5	0	1	0		0	0	4	10
Probation per- personnel	4	1	7	2	No council structure	1	1	5	21
Other LE/CJ personnel	—	0	1	2		0	0	—	3
Service providers	2	2	4	2		1	0	2	13
State Human Service re- presentatives	—	5	3	3		0	6	—	17
Other ²	22	3	9	10		16	11	13	84
Total	42	11	26	21	6	18	15	30	168

1. Membership lists were not available so members were determined from meeting minutes. This method did not permit distinguishing among "Other LE/CJ Personnel," "State Human Service Representatives," and "Other" members, so all were placed in the "Other" category.

2. Includes school representatives, clergy, youth, LEAA planners, county administrators, and social workers.

By Summer 1976 the roles of the councils had been formalized. Only minor changes were made in their responsibilities after the first year workplan. Each council now had responsibility for five major functions:

1. Identification of existing youth services in the region.
2. Identification of youth services programs needed in the region.
3. Development of the Regional Action Plan.
4. Public information, education, and training.
5. Information dissemination among state, regional, county, and community youth service providers.*

Eventually, councils in four regions decided to divide into two catchment area councils each and to hold meetings on a quarterly rather than monthly basis. It was felt that this change would improve attendance at the meetings. The first region to split into two catchment areas was Region VI, in October 1976. Region I followed shortly thereafter in December. Region IV was divided in February 1977 and Region VII as late as April.

TABLE 7.2
Regional Council Operations

REGION	LENGTH OF TIME IN OPERATION (MONTHS)	NUMBER OF MEETINGS
I	12	6
II	12	8
III	11	6
IV	12	9
VI	15	11
VII	8	6
VIII	12	7

*Third Quarterly Report, Activity 9, 149-150.

Contrary to workplan specifications, councils were not active throughout the entire project period. There was considerable variation among the lives of the councils. The length of time the councils were in operation and the number of meetings held is shown in Table 7.2.

Compared to the councils, there was an even larger variation among the lengths of time the regional teams were in existence. All teams were established in April 1976. Table 7.3 below illustrates the distribution of the lengths of time the teams were in operation and the number of meetings held.

TABLE 7.3
Regional Team Operations*

REGION	LENGTH OF TIME IN OPERATION (MONTHS)	NUMBER OF MEETINGS
I	4	7
III	10	8
IV	9	7
V	2	2
VII	9	6
VIII	5	7

All councils and teams had ceased meeting by June 1977. Thus, the DSO Project functioned throughout its final year without this mechanism for organizing local participation.

The regional councils did in fact carry out the five duties as specified. But questions have been raised about both the activities and the way in which they were carried out. Our interview data include a variety of reactions on the part of council members toward their participation. A number of members expressed a generally negative sentiment toward the council. A major concern of many members was the lack of clarity concerning roles of

*Regions II and VI, which had combination team/councils, were shown in Table 7.2.

the councils. Members felt that councils were "unstructured," and indicated that they themselves "did not understand the priority setting process;" many were confused about the council's functions, others believed that they received incomplete information at meetings, resulting in misinformation and angry feelings between DSO and the community.

Concerns also were directed toward the council's planning functions. Participants felt that the council was duplicating a planning process that had already been undertaken by the regional criminal justice planning councils and other organizations. Instead of utilizing available plans from LEAA and Title XX, the council "started the planning effort all over again."

Some comments indicated a more general dissatisfaction. Our data suggest that participants became disillusioned and felt that the only purpose of the councils was compliance with some federal requirement. They saw council attendance as a waste of time; meeting time was spent reading handouts, which could have been distributed prior to the meeting. Others emphasized that the geographical area of a region was too large, resulting in long travel time to attend meetings.

Not all respondents were entirely negative about the council experience. Many believed that the concept was a good one but had been diluted by indecision or lack of knowledge on the part of the DSO staff as to what they could or should accomplish. Some respondents pointed out that participants were enthusiastic and wanted to provide more input, but felt that their input was not being used. One respondent indicated that the approach was sound but the council was too homogeneous, "dominated by probation officers." Several respondents brought up the council's decision-making role, implying that greater effectiveness would have resulted, had power to make funding decisions been vested in the councils. This function was not included as one of the council's responsibilities; only in Region VI did staff routinely ask council members to review and formally approve contract development efforts.

On the one hand the council was to be action-oriented; on the other hand it was constrained from certain actions because it could make no funding decisions. Confusion over appropriate roles, as well as the significant staff time investment required to maintain councils, strongly contributed to the lapse in council meetings after June 1977.

C. Developing Community-Based Services

As noted in Chapter VI, alternative services for Arkansas youth were limited when the DSO Project came on the scene. Services which did exist were not specifically designed to serve status offenders and many were not designed for any youth involved with the judicial process. What did the DSO staff do to remedy this situation?

The project began by trying to assess resource availability and service needs for each region and catchment area. The members of the regional teams and councils figures heavily in this effort of course. The first year findings of the Master Plan staff also were available for evaluation by this time. Eight categories of essential services were identified by staff and priorities were established for each county, using local input. Finally, in December 1976, the results were published in the form of "Regional Action Plans."

Service development activities did not, perhaps could not, wait for the formalization of regional priorities. Instead, in May and June 1976, the central office staff was already looking for ways to spend DSO and Title XX dollars. As noted earlier there was time pressure to find Title XX contractors. Staff were equally anxious to get DSO contracts underway because of the status offender placement difficulties being encountered at the training schools.

Several approaches to finding likely contractors were employed:

- On at least three occasions, requests for proposals were developed and circulated to a lengthy list of potential providers around the state. The first RFP, in May 1976, requested bids on diagnostic and evaluation services (D & E) for status offenders. This was followed by an emergency shelter RFP in July and a "Comprehensive Services" RFP in September.
- Project staff directly sought out groups and organizations interested in providing community-based youth services and tried to devise ways for DSO and Title XX funds to assist their efforts.
- Staff followed up on many formal and informal inquiries received from individuals and organizations who had heard about the project through regional council and team members, personal contacts in the state human services system, or project public relations activities.
- The project developed a DSO contract format which could be used to contract directly with individual families interested in providing foster care and emergency shelter to status offenders. Area case managers usually were responsible for pursuing this type of resource, as part of their placement assistance functions.

According to staff members who served at that time, the project operated with no hard and fast rules about who was an acceptable contractor or what was an acceptable range of services or an acceptable service area. Other things being equal, staff preferred multi-county services and providers who could directly offer or coordinate access to a range of services under one roof. Similarly, private nonprofit providers were preferred to governmental ones. But these remained just "preferences" -- emphases to be encouraged by staff in their encounters with prospective providers, but not mandates.

An examination of Title XX and DSO service contracts signed with provider organizations during the life of the project demonstrates the variability that resulted from this approach.

Table 7.4 shows the distribution of organizations which received DSO and Title XX contracts in each region.*

In all, 41 provider organizations received 64 contracts, with each signing from one to four contracts over the project period.

TABLE 7.4
Title XX and DSO Service Contracts by Type of
Provider Organization

PROVIDER TYPE	DSO	TXX	TOTAL
Governmental	12 (18.8%)	3 (4.7%)	15 (23.5%)
Private Nonprofit	28 (43.8%)	19 (29.7%)	47 (73.4%)
Other	2 (3.1%)	----	2 (3.1%)
TOTAL	42 (65.6%)	22 (34.4%)	64 (100%)

Overall, private nonprofit agencies received the bulk of the service contracts -- 73.4% -- with governmental agencies receiving 23.5% of the contracts; profit-making providers played only a minor role (3.1% of all contracts).

Table 7.5 illustrates the way in which multiple strategies were utilized to "develop services." We created a four-category classification scheme for all contracts:

1. *Purchase of existing service.* Here we placed all contracts which "bought into" an existing service, either by purchasing a service such as diagnosis and evaluation on a per client basis or by providing block funding support for continuing youth service operations.
2. *Modification of existing service.* Here we placed contracts which assisted existing youth-oriented providers to expand their staffing, extend their services to a wider geographical area, or modify their client eligibility requirements.

* Excluded from this table are the 85 individual foster care/emergency shelter contracts, covering 124 beds in private homes or small group foster homes. Typically, these contracts covered one or two beds and never more than five beds.

3. *Support of new service type (not formerly provided by the organization).* Contracts designed to support a new service component within an existing organization are placed here.
4. *Support of new service organization.* Here we placed all contracts which brought a wholly new youth-serving organization into existence and supported its early development.

For this classification, the individual contract is the unit of analysis; it was not uncommon for a provider to have more than one contract, one involving purchase of an existing service and another supporting development of a new service type.

TABLE 7.5
Service Development Strategies

Region		Service Development Approach				Total contracts
		Purchase of existing services	Modification of existing services	Support of new service type	Support of new service organization	
I	Frequency	4	0	3	1	8
	Percent	50.0	0.0	37.5	12.5	100.0
II	Frequency	0	1	3	0	4
	Percent	0.0	25.0	75.0	0.0	100.0
III	Frequency	7	0	1	2	10
	Percent	70.0	0.0	10.0	20.0	100.0
IV	Frequency	3	0	2	1	6
	Percent	50.0	0.0	33.3	16.7	100.0
V	Frequency	6	2	12	0	20
	Percent	30.0	10.0	60.0	0.0	100.0
VI	Frequency	2	1	2	2	7
	Percent	28.6	14.3	28.6	28.6	100.0
VII	Frequency	2	0	3	1	6
	Percent	33.3	0.0	50.0	16.7	100.0
VIII	Frequency	0	0	0	3	3
	Percent	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
TOTAL	Frequency	24	4	26	10	64
	Percent	37.5	6.3	40.6	15.6	100.0

We see here that a variety of approaches was used, with contracts supporting new service types and organizations accounting for slightly more than half the service development efforts. And again we see considerable variability across regions.

TABLE 7.6
 Relationship of Funding Source and Service
 Development Strategy

	<u>DSO</u>	<u>TITLE XX</u>
Existing Services:		
Purchase or Modification	18 (43%)	10 (45%)
New Service Types or Organization	24 (57%)	12 (55%)
All Contracts	42 (100%)	22 (100%)

Was there any relationship between the source of contract funds and type of service development supported? Apparently there was not, based on the evidence of Table 7.6. Looking at the state as a whole, Title XX and DSO funds were used equally to support both new and existing ventures.

Regarding service area, the project's preference for multiple county rather than single-county providers is reflected clearly in the distribution of contracts signed. As shown in Table 7.7, only one of every five contracts funded provided for service to a single county.

There were at least three regions where the single county service focus was strong however -- Regions I, II, and III. We were told by both project staff and local respondents that efforts to develop multiple county services were unpopular in many parts of the state -- especially so in Regions I and III and parts of Region VII. This resistance is not reflected in the Region VII contract development, however, although it may have been significant for Regions I and III.

TABLE 7.7
Service Area of Service Contracts*

Service Area		Single County	Mixed—single for some services, multiple for others	Multiple County	Statewide	Unknown	Total
I	DSO (no.)	2	—	2	—	—	4
	Percent	50.0	—	50.0	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	2	—	2	—	—	4
	Percent	50.0	—	50.0	—	—	100.0
II	DSO (no.)	1	—	1	—	—	2
	Percent	50.0	—	50.0	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	1	—	1	—	—	2
	Percent	50.0	—	50.0	—	—	100.0
III	DSO (no.)	3	—	4	—	—	7
	Percent	42.8	—	57.2	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	1	—	1	—	—	3
	Percent	33.3	—	33.3	—	—	100.0
IV	DSO (no.)	1	—	3	—	—	4
	Percent	25.0	—	75.0	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	1	—	1	—	—	2
	Percent	50.0	—	50.0	—	—	100.0
V	DSO (no.)	—	—	12	4	1	17
	Percent	—	—	70.6	23.5	5.9	100.0
	TXX (no.)	—	—	1	2	—	3
	Percent	—	—	33.3	66.7	—	100.0
VI	DSO (no.)	1	—	3	—	—	4
	Percent	25.0	—	75.0	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	—	—	3	—	—	3
	Percent	—	—	100.0	—	—	100.0
VII	DSO (no.)	—	—	2	—	—	2
	Percent	—	—	100.0	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	—	—	3	—	1	4
	Percent	—	—	75.0	—	25.0	100.0
VIII	DSO (no.)	—	—	2	—	—	2
	Percent	—	—	100.0	—	—	100.0
	TXX (no.)	—	—	1	—	—	1
	Percent	—	—	100.0	—	—	100.0
Total	DSO (no.)	8	0	29	4	1	42
	Percent	19.0	0.0	69.0	9.5	2.4	100.0
	TXX (no.)	5	1	13	2	1	22
	Percent	22.7	4.5	59.1	9.1	4.5	100.0
Total	Number	13	1	42	6	2	64
	Percent	20.3	1.6	65.6	9.4	3.1	100.0

* Contracts are classified according to the region in which the contractor is located.

D. Changing the Local LE/CJ System

The DSO grant application and first year workplan did not lay out a coordinated approach to changing the local juvenile processing system, but did identify several activities expected to produce the desired long range impacts. These activities included:

- information/education/training efforts designed to make county judges, juvenile referees, probation officers, and police more aware of the problems of status offenders, and the requirements of the JJDP Act;
- seeking cooperative agreements between the DSO Project and the juvenile courts, binding them to non-detention and non-commitment of status offenders; and

- encouraging police and courts to make use of alternatives to detention/incarceration, as well as to take advantage of new services developing through DSO efforts.

Throughout the first year of project activities, DSO staff systematically tried to make themselves known to the local LE/CJ establishment, and particularly the county judge or his appointed juvenile referee. Often, these contacts were a byproduct of the regional council recruitment process, and were basically informational in character. Some county judges, juvenile referees, and probation officers became members of the regional councils. In addition, DSO area staff made presentations about the project to the regional criminal justice planning councils.

The DSO central office also played a public relations role. The DSO project director addressed both the county judges' and juvenile referees' associations in mid-June 1976. At those meetings, he also arranged for the appearance of a Tucson juvenile judge, known for his opposition to status offender detention and incarceration.

Despite these efforts, at the June 30 meeting of the Juvenile Services Board a member expressed concern about the "communications problems" between DSO and the juvenile referees. The project director later followed up the June meeting with juvenile referees with a project information memorandum reporting a very significant development. In response to questions from the juvenile referees about the effects of the JJDP Act two-year time limit, the project director had requested a policy statement from the Juvenile Services Board regarding future training school acceptance of status offenders. The Board responded unequivocally. On July 14, 1976, following a review of the JJDP legislation and the DSO project commitments to LEAA, the Board voted that *no* status offenders would be accepted at the Diagnostic-Reception Center after August 1, 1977. Thus, this memorandum from the project director put juvenile justice personnel on notice of the direction the state was taking. Up to this time, project staff had not identified themselves with

such a "hard line" position, although tentative references to eventual status offender legislation sometimes were made.

Contacts with law enforcement during the first year were minimal, judging from both staff reports and written documentation. Then, in December 1976, the project instituted a local detention survey; this necessitated some regular contact with police and sheriff's departments in most counties.

County judges and juvenile court personnel ordinarily did not figure prominently in the service development efforts of the DSO staff, although they were aware of activities in their own counties. Notification to LE/CJ personnel that new services were available occurred in two ways:

- Regional team and council meetings included regular exchange of information about all service development activities underway, whether sponsored by DSO or other agencies in the region.
- The DSO Project instituted a policy that all of their service providers would develop cooperative diversion agreements with the local juvenile courts.

This latter policy substituted for DSO's earlier intention to secure direct diversion agreements between DSO and the courts. A preliminary version of the second year workplan put it succinctly: "Formal agreements between the project and the county are not important. What is important are linkages and cooperative agreements between the courts and service providers."*

In sum, the first project year was one of relatively "low key" DSO relationship with the local LE/CJ systems. We could detect no major intra-state variations in project activities vis-a-vis the local systems at this point. The single exception to the low key approach was the announcement of the Juvenile Services Board policy regarding status offenders. In Region I at least, this policy was viewed by many as a DSO betrayal. LE/CJ personnel believed the project had gone back on an initial

* Preliminary Second Year Workplan, December 21, 1976, 15.

commitment to provide sufficient alternative services before cutting off access to the state institutions. This was only one of many criticisms lodged against the project in the Fayetteville region, however.

A marked shift in approach to the local LE/CJ system occurred during the second year of project activities. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention appears to have been the prime mover, with the Arkansas Crime Commission taking a secondary role.

OJJDP was troubled by a number of things:

- The project was experiencing continuing difficulty in removing its committed status offender population.
- The DSO service contracts were not giving sufficient priority to the needs of already committed or court-referred status offenders over the needs of local youth in general.
- The project was not directly attacking the problems of local detention.

In a series of exchanges in January and February of 1977, DSO was informed by OJJDP and the Crime Commission that changes in project plans and activities would be necessary to secure second year funding. In particular, DSO contract client eligibility definitions would need tightening, county-by-county plans to block detention would be required, and a tougher approach to stopping institutional commitments was essential.

In its final second year workplan (February 1977), the DSO Project responded to all these points. The plan included the required county-by-county plans, which incorporated the old notion of direct cooperative non-detention agreements between DSO and the local juvenile referee or county judge. DSO and the Crime Commission had been developing status offender non-detention/non-commitment legislation for submission to the upcoming biannual session of the Arkansas State Legislature. That, too, was incorporated in the second year plan.

The decision to propose legislation appears to have been made somewhat reluctantly by project management. Several reasons for this emerged from our interviews and documentary review:

- The OYS and the Juvenile Services Board were planning to introduce legislation returning Youth Services to divisional status and did not wish simultaneously to associate themselves with a potentially unpopular status offender bill.
- The DSO Project thought its approach to deinstitutionalization was succeeding anyway, even if at a slower pace than originally envisioned.

In the end, the DSO project director wrote a first draft of a status offender bill. Crime Commission staff then put the bill into final form and located a legislative sponsor.

The proposed bill had two main components:

- A section forbidding any commitment of a status offender to the State system of training schools after July 30, 1977.
- A section forbidding secure detention of status offenders in local facilities.

The bill did, however, allow secure detention of a juvenile for up to 72 hours, for purposes of determining the nature of the offense committed. The Crime Commission and the sponsor believed the bill could not pass without such a provision.

Whether these concerns were justified, we cannot say. The bill as proposed encountered no opposition. It was referred to the House Judiciary Committee on February 22, 1977 and completed the essential steps of the legislative process by March 15. On March 18, it was signed into law by the Governor, having passed both houses unanimously.

Once the bill had been enacted, the DSO staff integrated informational materials about the new act into its county-by-county non-detention efforts, as we shall see below.

Table 7.8 summarizes on a regional basis the activities incorporated by the county-by-county non-detention plans. In every county, securing a cooperative non-detention agreement with the local court became a high priority. Each area staff worked out its own approach to local county judges and juvenile referees, but usually a personal visit was made in which the purpose of the agreement and its conformity to the new status offender legislation was explained. In some cases, the visit was preceded by a mailing of relevant documents. If a judge or referee failed to sign, follow-up visits, letters, or calls were used. In a few cases, DSO field staff used intermediaries -- e.g., employees of subcontractors -- to secure the signatures. The process of acquiring agreements stretched over a 13-month period, from March 1977 through April 1978.

TABLE 7.8
County-by-County Nondetention Plans: Number of County Plans Incorporating Each Objective

Region	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	TOTAL
Counties	(9)	(10)	(12)	(10)	(6)	(10)	(12)	(6)	(75)
OBJECTIVE									
Develop cooperative agreements between project & courts, county judge, etc.	9	10	12	10	6	10	12	6	75
Support/develop emergency shelter foster homes/facilities	7	10	9	10	6	8	11	3	64
Fund diversion specialist	8	8	3	0	2	10	2	0	33
Implement detention monitoring system	6	0	5	0	0	2	0	6	19
Develop cooperative agreements among CJ agencies, service providers, etc.	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	6
Develop intake & case management systems	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	6
Disseminate information	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	6
TOTAL	30	28	31	22	16	35	29	18	209

Other major components of the local detention plans for many counties were the development and support of emergency shelter/foster care capability (64 of 75 counties) and the funding

of diversion specialists (33 counties). The emergency shelter/foster home emphasis represented no real departure from the service development concerns of the previous year, but merely a narrowing of focus to the service types considered most crucial for blocking detention. The "diversion specialist" concept surfaced only in the second year.

E. Summary

At the level of the state training school system, we have seen that project activities focused on modification of screening and placement procedures and SRS staff communications networks. Significant obstacles were encountered in the early project months, but a series of events including new Juvenile Services appointments and progress on the local service development front helped put DSO activities back on the desired track.

At the local level, a number of dimensions of project activity were noteworthy. The attempt of the DSO staff to organize local input through regional councils and teams had mixed results. While the teams and councils were very active in several regions during the first project year -- assisting with needs assessment and priority-setting, by June 1977 they had everywhere ceased meeting. Confusion over an appropriate continuing role for these groups contributed strongly to their demise.

The project was very active in the service development arena. Sixty-four DSO and Title XX service contracts were signed with local organizations and agencies; nearly three-quarters of these contracts involved private nonprofit agencies and over half went to support new services or new service organizations. Most contracts supported multi-county services. In addition, 85 contracts were executed with small scale providers of foster care and emergency shelter, primarily private families.

The DSO Project engaged in multiple public relations, liaison, and information-giving contacts with local law enforcement and criminal justice systems. Efforts to change these systems became more systematic and focused in the last year of

project activities, when county-by-county plans to block status offender incarceration were developed and non-detention agreements were sought with all county judges. This apparent shift came under pressure from OJJDP. It appears the OJJDP intervention did not fundamentally alter the project's approach to solving the problems of status offender incarceration at the local level, however.

VIII. DSO Accomplishments: Intermediate Outcomes

In this chapter, we address the "intermediate outcomes" of the Arkansas DSO Project -- the project's accomplishments in the area of service development, in diversion and deinstitutionalization of status offenders in the state institutional system, and in implementing county-by-county non-detention plans. We also briefly review some other intermediate outcomes suggested by interview data and personal observation.

A. Service Development

As noted in Chapter VII, the Arkansas DSO Project had access to approximately \$600,000 in DSO purchase of service funds, almost all of which were earmarked for securing direct client services for status offenders. In addition, OYS in FY 76 and 77 acquired responsibility for developing and administering \$2.8 million worth of Title XX contracts in the youth services area. Utilization of these funds over a two-year period of active service development resulted in the following:

	<u>Number of Contracts Signed</u>	<u>Number of Provider Organizations</u>
DSO-Funded	127	116
Title XX-Funded	22	22
All Contracts	149	126

The number of contracts received by any one provider ranged from one to four, with 86.5% of the providers receiving only one contract. Twelve providers, or 9.5%, had two contracts; four (3.2%) had three contracts; and one (0.7%) provider had four contracts during the life of the project. Eight contractors had multiple DSO contracts. Twelve providers received both DSO and Title XX funds.

As a general rule, a provider with multiple contracts delivered separate and distinct services under each contract, or served different client groups. For example,

- A statewide provider of residential treatment was supported primarily through a Title XX contract, but had a small DSO contract to cover youth not meeting Title XX eligibility criteria.
- In the Northwest area of the state, a Title XX-funded agency providing youth counseling and casework services received a DSO contract to support a new venture -- the development of foster homes for status offenders.
- A Youth Service Bureau received a DSO contract to cover emergency shelter renovation. A later DSO contract covered daily fees for housing status offenders in the shelter.

Before turning to a systematic analysis of services funded by the project, some constraints in the use of Title XX program funds should be noted. The Title XX program of the Social Security Act is directed to low income individuals and families, and requires 25% cost participation by states and localities. It has several broad goals, two of which are especially relevant to the aims of the DSO Project:*

...Preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults unable to protect their own interest or preserving, rehabilitating, or reuniting families;

...Preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care...

* From the notice of final regulations for Chapter II, Part 22 -- Social services programs for individuals and families: Title XX of the Social Security Act. *Federal Register*, 1977, 42 (20), 5842ff.

Contracts developed under the Title XX program are negotiated on a cost-reimbursement fee-for-service basis. While many forms of residential and non-residential services fit under the program regulations, Title XX does not cover:

- foster care in private homes or institutions;
- emergency shelter in private homes;
- emergency shelter in any facility for more than 30 days during any six-month period; or
- any start-up or renovation costs.

Title XX-reimbursable clients must meet income-related eligibility requirements for most services, although youths not in parental custody may be treated as a single-person family and thus meet income guidelines. Obviously, some youths residing with their families will exceed the income limits for Title XX reimbursement.

None of these constraints applied to DSO funds. Thus, despite the generous funding support of Title XX, the DSO monies provided an important degree of flexibility to the project staff. DSO funds, while targeting the needs of status offenders, could cover the full gamut of services. This is seen more clearly in Table 8.1, which categorizes all 149 contracts in terms of funding source and service type.

Table 8.1 classifies contracts into eight basic groups; four of these contain only DSO-funded contracts (start-up/renovation, foster home recruitment, private or group home-based residential services, and diversion specialist contracts). The first three clearly fall outside the limits of Title XX. The fourth group requires some clarification. Diversion specialists, as sponsored through DSO funds, had rather diverse responsibilities, including both direct client services such as counseling and casework, and indirect services such as foster home recruitment and outreach to schools and other organizations. In some cases, diversion specialists handled probation and/or aftercare

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functions. These positions could be supported partly or, with modifications, largely through Title XX, but the more flexible DSO funds were viewed as best for the initial program efforts.

TABLE 8.1
Contracts by Service Type and Source of Funding

Service Type	Funding Source		
	DSO Contracts	TITLE XX Contracts	Total Contracts
Non-residential services (counseling, casework, diagnosis, & evaluation)	20 (15.7%)	6 (27.3%)	26 (17.4%)
Diversion specialist	5 (3.9%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (3.4%)
Foster home recruitment	6 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (4.0%)
Private home/group home-based residential services (fewer than 6 emergency shelter/foster care beds)	85 (66.9%)	0 (0.0%)	85 (57.0%)
Facility-based residential services (emergency shelter, residential treatment)	4 (3.1%)	5 (22.7%)	9 (6.0%)
Mixed residential/non-residential services	2 (1.6%)	10 (45.5%)	12 (8.1%)
Start-up renovation	3 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.0%)
Other	2 (1.6%)	1 (4.5%)	3 (2.0%)
TOTAL	127 (100%)	22 (100%)	149 (100%)

Non-Residential Services

Thirty-one contracts covered exclusively non-residential services to youth in trouble. These contracts fall into three subgroups: purchase of diagnosis and evaluation services, purchase of counseling/casework/therapy, and purchase of services in both the former categories.

	<u>Number DSO Contracts</u>	<u>Average Obligation</u>	<u>Number Title XX Contracts</u>	<u>Average Obligation</u>
Diagnosis and evaluation	5	\$10,600	0	\$ --
Counseling/ casework/therapy	10	\$18,301	5	\$ 76,361
Mixed services	5	\$12,122	1	\$162,094

For a status offender or other youth in trouble, diagnosis and evaluation (D&E) is usually a one-time only service, performed at the request of the court or other agency responsible for disposing of a case or making a treatment plan. Five contracts covered D&E services only. Fifteen contracts covered counseling casework, and/or therapy services, which often involve a continuing relationship with an individual status offender. The "counselor" in such contracts ranged from a psychiatrist to an M.S.W. to a youth worker with no special degree, depending on agency focus and staff configuration. Five of the contracts in this subgroup utilized graduate social work students at the University of Arkansas as counselors. Six non-residential service contracts covered both D&E and counseling services.

In addition to the University of Arkansas, community mental health centers around the state figured prominently as providers of non-residential services, accounting for eight other contracts. The remaining contracts went primarily to community-based non-profit agencies, split about equally between agencies with an exclusive youth focus and those with a broader human service focus. Two contracts went to combination county youth service and juvenile probation offices and two to private profit-making organizations. The latter, both psychological consulting groups,

were the only profit-making providers to receive DSO service funds.

Diversion Specialists

Five contracts were awarded to support diversion specialists. As noted above, these positions are multi-purpose, combining both direct and indirect services to status offenders and other youth.

	<u>Number DSO</u>	<u>Aver.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Aver.</u>
	<u>Contracts</u>	<u>Oblig.</u>	<u>Title XX</u>	<u>Contracts</u>
			<u>Oblig.</u>	
Diversion specialists	5	\$27,738	0	--

These contracts varied in scope, from funding a single individual responsible for a six-county service area, to several personnel forming core staff of an ambitious new combination youth service/county juvenile probation agency. Three contracts went to county governments and two to private non-profit human service agencies.

Foster Home Recruitment

The DSO Project funded six contracts supporting recruitment of foster homes and related services, such as foster parent orientation.

	<u>Number DSO</u>	<u>Aver.</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Aver.</u>
	<u>Contracts</u>	<u>Oblig.</u>	<u>Title XX</u>	<u>Contracts</u>
			<u>Oblig.</u>	
Foster home recruitment	6	\$10,286	0	--

While the Arkansas Social Service Division and various private agencies around the state recruit and support foster homes for children, it was generally accepted by project staff and others that few, if any, of these homes were appropriate for teenagers -- especially ungovernable, runaway, or truant youth. Foster homes seemed, however, to offer a practical solution to the shortage of alternative living situations for youth who needed indefinite placement or shelter on an emergency basis. Foster homes would be easier to "start up" and less expensive than alternative facilities. At worst, they could fill the service gap while

facility-based care was being developed; at best, in some areas, they might make facilities unnecessary.

Through DSO funds, one state agency, a group of state university students, and four community-based non-profit agencies received support for recruitment activities. Components funded ranged from development of brochures to personnel dedicated to recruitment. Actual payment for the homes was handled under separate contract with each individual provider, or in one instance, through traditional Arkansas Social Service Division payment mechanisms.

Private/Group Home-Based Emergency Shelter and Foster Care

The DSO Project or its subcontractors negotiated 85 contracts with providers of foster care. Services covered were of two types:

- "Foster care," for which the family was paid \$5 per day of room, board and supervision actually provided.
- "Emergency shelter," for which a monthly retainer of \$50 per bed was offered, plus \$5 for each day a youth was actually in the home.

No specific dollar obligation was stated in the contract, only the number and types of beds covered. The distribution of contract types follows on the next page.

All but four contracts were negotiated with individual families. The others bought a small number of beds in existing group facilities not predominantly oriented to serving offenders.

	<u>Number DSO Contracts</u>
1 Bed:	60
emergency shelter (ES)	(19)
foster care (FC)	(37)
unknown, other*	(4)
2 Beds:	20
1 ES + 1 FC	(12)
2 ES	(4)
2 FC	(4)
3 Beds:	3
1 FC + 2 ES	(2)
3 ES	(1)
5 Beds:	2
3 FC + 2 ES	(1)
5 ES	(1)
TOTAL BEDS	<u>85</u>

Facility-Based Residential Services

Services contracted for in this group fall into three categories: emergency shelter, covering temporary stay up to 30 days; treatment-oriented residential care, which may extend beyond 30 days and which places greater emphasis on therapeutic components; and mixed emergency shelter/residential treatment services.

	<u>Number DSO Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>	<u>Number Title XX Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>
Emergency shelter	1	10 beds**	2	\$ 40,115
Treatment-oriented residential care	2	\$17,005	3	112,512
Mixed emergency shelter/residential treatment	1	21,433	0	--

* We have included here one single-bed contract covering "intensive treatment."

** No dollar amount specified.

Of the nine contracts in this group, three covered emergency shelter, five residential treatment, and one both emergency shelter and treatment-oriented residential care.

All but one of the providers in this group were community-based youth service agencies. The remaining provider was a community mental health center.

Mixed Non-Residential/Residential Service Contracts

The Arkansas DSO staff were involved with 13 contracts which covered provision of both non-residential services and facility-based residential care. Again, they fall into three groups.

	<u>Number DSO Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>	<u>Number Title XX Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>
Non-residential services + emergency shelter	2	\$44,622	5	\$145,378
Non-residential services + treatment-oriented residential care	0	--	3	357,332
Non-residential services + emergency shelter + treatment-oriented residential care	0	--	2	608,819

Only two of the contracts covered a "comprehensive" service range -- that is, both major types of residential care plus non-residential services. The most common combination was non-residential plus emergency shelter service, covered in seven contracts.

Only one of the providers of this group of services was a county agency. All others were community-based. Agencies with a specific youth service focus predominated.

Start-Up

A small, but significant group of contracts provided start-up costs for youth services, either in the form of emergency

shelter facility renovation expenses or initial program development expenses.

	<u>Number DSO Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>	<u>Number Title XX Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>
Renovation	2	\$13,843	0	--
Program development	1	24,654	0	--

The three community based nonprofit providers who received these contracts all went on to provide both residential and non-residential services to status offenders and other youth. Two of these became the "comprehensive" providers mentioned above.

Other

Three remaining contracts fall into a miscellaneous category. Two covered recreational services for youth "at risk" and a third covered housing and special supervision for a single status offender being released from the training schools.

	<u>Number DSO Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>	<u>Number Title XX Contracts</u>	<u>Aver. Oblig.</u>
Recreational programs	1	\$17,812	1	\$111,527
Housing/supervision	1	1,590	0	--

Contract Utilization

Table 8.2 summarizes the information on contract obligations by service type and shows how well each of the contract types was actually utilized.* Obviously there was underutilization in a number of contract categories. This is not especially surprising in a situation where there was pressure to spend relatively large sums of money in a fairly short time period. Especially where new services and service relationships have been put into place, it often takes time to reach full-capacity operation, establish necessary referral networks, and determine

* Note that unutilized funds ordinarily were re-obligated to other contract efforts. In the case of Title XX, money could be and was lost to other state divisions when there was no likelihood of utilization within DYS, however.

TABLE 8.2
Summary of DSO and Title XX Contract Obligations and Utilization

Service Type	Number of DSO Contracts	Average Obligation	Percent Utilized through 6/78	Number Title XX Contracts	Average Obligation	Percent Utilized thru 6/78 ¹
Non-residential services						
diagnosis and evaluation	5	10,000	23.8	—	—	—
counseling/casework/therapy	10	18,301	89.8	5	76,361	94.6
mixed services	5	12,122	39.9	1	162,094	87.0
Diversion specialist	5	27,738	100.4	—	—	—
Foster home recruitment	6	10,286	73.4	—	—	—
Private/group home/emergency care/foster care	85	1.5 beds	N/A ²	—	—	—
Facility-based residential services						
emergency shelter (ES)	1	10 beds	N/A ³	2	40,115	67.6
treatment-oriented residential care	2	17,005	33.1	3	112,512	99.8
mixed ES/treatment-oriented residential care	1	21,433	41.8	—	—	—
Mixed residential/non-residential services						
nonresidential + ES	2	44,622	100.0	5	145,378	55.5
nonresidential + treatment-oriented residential care	—	—	—	3	357,332	52.8
nonresidential + ES + treatment-oriented residential care	—	—	—	2	608,819	58.0
Start-up						
renovation	2	13,843	109.7	—	—	—
program development	1	24,654	100.0	—	—	—
Other						
recreational purposes	1	17,812	88.0	1	111,527	0.0
housing/supervision	1	1,590	98.7	—	—	—

1. For purposes of examining DSO intermediate outcomes, we have excluded any Title XX dollars obligated prior to DSO intervention in June, 1976 and any Title XX dollars utilized prior to FY 1976-77. (This affects four of the 22 Title XX contracts.)
2. No dollar amounts were specified in the contract. Utilization of these contracts averaged \$947 each, the equivalent of 189 foster care days or 143 emergency shelter days per contract.
3. No dollar amounts were specified in the contract. Utilization amounted to \$5,547, approximately equal to 835 person-days of emergency shelter care.

by experience what client flow realistically can be expected. Several of the facility-based residential services especially suffered from this genre of problem.

The low utilization of DSO contracts covering diagnosis and evaluation or mixed non-residential services requires comment. The 10 contracts in this group were among the very earliest service development efforts of the project -- all took effect within a four-month period from August through November 1976. Thus, these contractors had plenty of time to straighten out any "bugs." The RFP for these services was the first one circulated; apparently, project staff felt that inadequate diagnostic service was a real obstacle to local diversion. Why then was utilization so poor? There are multiple reasons, but two seem most likely, based on interview data and personal observation:

- From the point of view of local court personnel, need for status offender D&E never seemed as critical as finding the right placement after an evaluation had been made. In all our interviews around the state, only one person recalled that lack of D&E was a paramount concern in the early days of the DSO project. Similarly, in the December 1976 regional service plans developed through staff and community input, only 11 of Arkansas' 75 counties listed D&E as one of their top three service priorities. According to the same plan, only five counties were totally without D&E services in 1976.
- Eight of the contractors were community mental health centers, for whom DSO funds were a relatively insignificant portion of their budgeted income. With a couple of exceptions, these contractors had no prior commitment to serving youth involved with the juvenile justice system, and no strong relationships with juvenile court personnel. In addition, some of these contractors reported uncertainty about DSO client eligibility. Thus, the attempt to work with CMHCs on such a limited basis was not too successful. More comprehensive programs developed with other CMHCs (or even with the same ones at a later date) were much better utilized.

B. Implementation of County-by-County Nondetention Plans

In Chapter VII we discussed DSO's development of county-by-county nondetention plans and the contents of those plans. Here we take a look at the project's success at implementation, focusing on the three task areas which figured most prominently in the plans. These are:

- Development of cooperative agreements between the DSO Project and the county judge or local juvenile court (an objective in all 75 counties).
- Support or development of foster home/emergency shelter capability (an objective in 64 counties).
- Funding of diversion specialists (33 counties).

Development of Cooperative Agreements

As shown in Table 8.3, at the conclusion of the DSO Project all 75 counties had signed cooperative agreements.

TABLE 8.3
Cooperative Agreements: Percent of Counties Signing by Quarter

Region	Number Counties	Jan.- Mar.77	Apr.- Jun.77	July - Sept.77	Oct.- Dec.77	Jan.- Mar.78	Apr.- Jun.78	All Quarters
I	9	0%	11%	0%	0%	89%	0%	100%
II	10	0%	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	100%
III	12	33%	58%	0%	0%	8%	0%	100%
IV	10	20%	70%	0%	0%	0%	10%	100%
V	6	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
VI	10	0%	70%	30%	0%	0%	0%	100%
VII	12	0%	67%	0%	25%	8%	0%	100%
VIII	6	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
All Regions	75	12%	59%	4%	4%	20%	1%	100%

Seventy-five percent of the agreements were signed by the county judge himself; juvenile referees signed 23% of the agreements, and other court personnel signed the remaining 2%. The process of obtaining agreements stretched over a full six quarters and there was considerable variation across regions in the pace at which agreements were obtained. We believe this variation had little to do with differing regional characteristics, but rather was related mostly to the way DSO staff chose to schedule their work. Archival evidence shows that the majority of counties showed no real opposition to signing an agreement which stated: "To avoid incarceration/secure detention of status offenders, the court will immediately refer status offenders to the Project/appropriate local service providers identified by the Project." With the recent passage of status offender nondetention legislation in Arkansas, many signers may have felt that opposition would be pointless anyway.

How significant did the local courts consider these agreements? We do know that a handful of counties took them seriously enough to balk at signing.

- One county judge refused to sign until the emergency shelter under development in his area was open.
- A juvenile referee refused to sign because he felt he could not honor the agreement in all status offender cases. Eventually, the chief juvenile probation officer signed on behalf of the county.
- In a couple of other instances, county judges hesitated, feeling the agreement would tie their hands in runaway cases.

On the other hand, a judge in a county DSO considered relatively hostile to project aims was among the first to sign.

In any case, all counties did sign in the end.

Development of Foster Home/Emergency Shelter Capability

We already have examined this aspect from the point of view of general contract development activities statewide. Here we wish only to consider whether the project met its specific county-by-county objectives. (Recall that these were established only during the second project year.) Below is a summary of the implementation results by region, derived from a review of quarterly nondetention plan progress reports. The last report was filed in April 1978, after the end of DSO staff funding.

TABLE 8.4
Foster Home/Emergency Shelter Objectives: Results

Region	Number County Plans Containing this Objective	Number Counties Achieving Objectives	% Counties Achieving Objectives
I	7	0	0%
II	10	10	100
III	9	6	67
IV	10	4	40
V	6	2	33
VI	8	5	63
VII	11	9	82
VIII	3	3	100
All Regions	64	39	61

Two regions, II and VIII, succeeded in completely meeting their emergency shelter objectives. Region I failed in all counties. The failure to meet objectives is of course dependent on how realistically they are defined. For example, the Region I county-by-county plans called for development of a total of 79 emergency shelter beds -- a tall order in the time remaining to the DSO Project. As it was, 19 beds were developed and three DSO subcontractors were continuing recruitment efforts in the region as of April 1978.

In several other regions, meeting objectives involved development of multi-county shelter facilities -- often a lengthy process involving delicate negotiations. Since the DSO Project ended, at least two new emergency shelters have opened, through service development efforts initiated under DSO auspices and with DYS Title XX support. Another tri-county facility is in the planning stage. On our summary chart, at least five more counties would be rated as achieving their objectives, if we took into account the 2 new facilities now in operation. This would raise the overall "success" rate to 69% and yield the following revised regional percentages:

Region IV	50%
Region V	50%
Region VI	100%

Funding of Diversion Specialists

For thirty-three counties, funding a diversion specialist was part of the county nondetention plan. In almost all cases the intent was to fund a multi-county position. The results of the implementation efforts are summarized in Table 8.5.

TABLE 8.5

DIVERSION SPECIALIST OBJECTIVES: RESULTS

<u>Region</u>	<u>Number County Plans with this Objective</u>	<u>Number Counties Achieving Objective</u>	<u>% Counties Achieving Objective</u>
I	8	8	100%
II	8	7	88%
III	3	0	0%
IV	0	-	-
V	2	2	100%
VI	10	10	100%
VII	2	2	100%
VIII	0	-	-
All Regions	33	29	88%

Overall, these implementation efforts fared better than those in the emergency shelter area. It should be noted that LEAA block grant funding, as well as DSO monies, was used to support the resulting positions. In two of the four counties where objectives were not met, project staff dropped the effort to fund a position, opting to provide technical assistance with alternative funding sources if the counties showed interest. In a third instance, the county rejected the diversion specialist option. The fourth county was still actively pursuing the matter with DSO assistance.

Overall Nondetention Plan Results

Table 8.6 summarizes the results of the DSO efforts at implementing county-by-county nondetention plans in each of the eight regions. Overall, 84% of the objectives included in the February 1977 plans had been accomplished by April 1978, when the last progress report was filed.

Implementation "success" rates varied from 50% to 100% according to type of objective. Project staff succeeded in developing local interagency agreements in only half the counties where they intended to do so. Development of emergency shelter capability also fell considerably short of staff objectives, although as noted earlier, the objectives simply may have been overly ambitious for the time frame. The project achieved all of its objectives in three areas: development of cooperative nondetention agreements with counties, development of improved intake systems, and dissemination of project-related information. The latter two objective areas affected only six counties each, however.

Implementation success also varied by region, from a low of 64% in Region IV to a high of 100% in Region VIII.

TABLE 8.6

Summary of County-by-County Nondetention Plan Implementation:
Percent of Objectives Achieved by Category*

Objective	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
Develop cooperative agreements	100% (9)	100% (10)	100% (12)	100% (10)	100% (6)	100% (10)	100% (12)	100% (6)	100% (75)
Support/develop emergency shelter capability	0 (7)	100 (10)	67 (9)	40 (10)	33 (6)	63 (8)	82 (11)	100 (3)	61% (64)
Fund diversion spec.	100 (8)	88 (8)	0 (3)	-- (0)	100 (2)	100 (10)	100 (2)	-- (0)	88 (33)
Implement detention monitoring system	100 (6)	-- (0)	80 (5)	-- (0)	-- (0)	100 (2)	-- (0)	100 (6)	95 (19)
Develop coop. agreements among service providers & LE/CJ agencies	-- (0)	-- (0)	100 (2)	0 (2)	-- (0)	-- (0)	50 (2)	-- (0)	50 (6)
Develop improved intake systems	-- (0)	-- (0)	-- (0)	-- (0)	100 (1)	100 (5)	-- (0)	-- (0)	100 (6)
Disseminate project related info	-- (0)	-- (0)	-- (0)	-- (0)	100 (1)	-- (0)	100 (2)	100 (3)	100 (6)
All objectives	77 (30)	96 (28)	77 (31)	64 (22)	75 (16)	91 (35)	90 (29)	100 (18)	84 (209)

* Number of counties with each objective shown in parentheses.

C. Diversion and Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders in the State Training School System

We discussed in Chapter VII the project's decision to emphasize as a first priority removal of status offenders already in the training schools and diversion of those received at the Diagnostic-Reception Center. We also discussed the early difficulties that emerged. We have touched upon several key events that affected the deinstitutionalization/diversion process, including:

- the change of Juvenile Services (Training School) Administrators in August 1976;
- the Juvenile Services Board's July 1976 decision to bar status offenders after August 1, 1977; and
- the passage of state legislation banning further status offender commitments after July 1977.

In addition, staff efforts at the local level in the areas of service development and public information/education were ongoing throughout the period.

In Table 8.7 we take a look at the month to month results of project efforts on the status offender population of the three training schools. This table spans the period from July 1976 to July 1977, the last month in which status offender assignments to the training schools were acceptable. Screening and placement actually began in May 1976 but statistics for the first two months were incomplete, and therefore have been excluded from the table.

As the table shows, it is only in the last quarter of 1976 that status offender releases began to outnumber assignments. Two other things are suggested by the table:

- During the period examined, *no* marked acceleration in the number of training school status offender releases shows up. (Unfortunately we have no pre-project baseline with which to compare.)

- From the final quarter of 1976 on, there was a fairly consistent decline in the number of status offender assignments to facilities. (These are youths who have been passed on by the reception center, youths for whom an acceptable alternate disposition has not been found.)

TABLE 8.7
Training School Net Gain and Loss: Status Offenders

	1976						1977								1978								
	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M
Status Offender Population on First Day	48	47	53	61	58	53	53	49	41	30	22	9	8	0									
Assignments of Status Offenders	10	14	15	27			8	9	5	3	0	2	0	No further status offenders admitted									
Releases of Status Offenders	11	8	7	35			12	17	16	11	13	3	8										
Net Gain (Loss)	(1)	6	8	(8)			(4)	(8)	(11)	(8)	(13)	(1)	(8)										

What this suggests is that the deinstitutionalization efforts were not particularly successful - youths were leaving by normal attrition. The project's successes, therefore, were occurring at the diversion point. Either a smaller proportion of status offenders seen at the reception center were being passed on, or fewer status offenders were arriving at the reception center. Or, perhaps both were occurring.

Table 8.8 sheds some light on developments at the Diagnostic-Reception Center. A sharp drop in status offenders received at the reception center appears during the two or three months immediately preceding the legislative change, but up to then intakes seem fairly constant. If we look at intakes to D-R in the April - June quarter of 1977 we see that incoming status offenders numbered 32, actually higher than in the comparable quarter of 1976. More apparent is an increase in the proportion of alternative dispositions received by status offenders screened at the center.

This pattern shows up consistently as early as April. It is likely, therefore, that screening and placement work at the Diagnostic-Reception Center largely accounts for the decline in the institutionalized status offender population.

TABLE 8.8
Disposition of Status Offenders at Diagnostic-Reception Center

	1976					1977					1978															
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M
SO's received at D-R	30		22	17	27		39			13	14	17	18	10	4	4	No further status offenders admitted									
SO's assigned to TS	13		10	14	15		27			8	9	5	3	0	2	0										
SO's receiving alternative dispositions	17		12	3	12		12			5	5	12	15	10	2	4										

D. Summary

During a two year period of active service development, the DSO Project executed 149 Title XX and DSO contracts. These contracts provided for a wide range of residential and nonresidential services, as well as foster home recruitment and start-up activities. Some underutilization of obligated funds was observed for certain contract types, such as residential care and diagnosis and evaluation. This is largely attributable to normal start-up difficulties. However, very low D&E contract utilization suggests that need for D&E may have been overestimated; in any case, the D&E contract as implemented apparently was not well suited to meeting those needs that did exist.

The DSO Project had varying success in implementing its county-by-county nondetention plans. Overall, 84% of the objectives were met. Greatest success was achieved in Region VIII; Region IV met the fewest of its stated objectives. Cooperative agreements between the DSO Project and local courts were signed

in all 75 Arkansas counties, despite some early instances of resistance.

Short term results of project activities at the state training school level were mixed. There is clear evidence that alternative dispositions for status offenders screened at the Diagnostic-Reception Center became more common by the second project year. Removing status offenders already assigned to the training schools proved more difficult; no major change was observed until just before the new non-incarceration legislation took effect.

We reserve for Chapter IX any discussion of longer range project impacts on the commitment of status offenders, including consideration of the extent to which status offenders continued to enter the institutional system with other labels.

IX. DSO Accomplishments: Impacts

The Arkansas DSO Project was expected to produce two broad classes of long term impacts. First, it was to remove status offenders currently in the state system of training schools and prevent any further entry of non-delinquent youth. Second, it was to introduce changes which would lessen status offender penetration into the local juvenile justice system, and prevent local status offender incarceration. We first examine the available evidence regarding the state training school system and then turn to impacts at the local level.

A. Impacts on Status Offender Commitments to the State Training School System

Our ability to examine this question is limited by two conditions:

- lack of systematic evidence over time on the proportion of youth who were committed for status offenses, and
- inability to quantify the degree to which status offenders have been relabeled delinquents to qualify them for training school entrance.

After August 1, 1977, we do know that no further youth adjudicated for status offenses were admitted to the Diagnostic-Reception Center, the system's intake point. This abrupt halt was achieved by application of Act 509, the state's new law prohibiting status offender commitments.

We *are* able to look at aggregate youth commitments to the system over time. Presumably, the elimination of status offenders from the population of intakes would result in a decline in overall intakes to the system, unless accompanied by an offsetting increase in delinquent commitments. Has there been any decrease in commitments of youth to the system?

Before examining the quantitative record on this point, it is necessary to distinguish two different types of commitments to the Arkansas training school system. Ordinarily, when a youth is committed to the Division of Youth Services by a local court, he or she is screened and evaluated at the Diagnostic-Reception Center; it is up to Diagnostic-Reception staff to arrive at a treatment plan and decide whether commitment to one of the training school facilities is indeed appropriate. By convention, however, local juvenile courts have often committed children to the system "for evaluation only" -- a way of instructing system staff that they do not wish the child actually to be assigned to a training school facility, but merely want him or her returned to the committing court with treatment recommendations. Apparently, DYS staff traditionally have respected the court's wishes in the matter.* This difference in intent is significant enough to warrant distinguishing between "court return" or "evaluation only" commitments and all others; therefore, most tables will exclude "court returns." We begin by looking at the complete intake picture, however.

Table 9.1 compares *total* commitments for calendar year 1975 -- the year preceding the DSO Project -- with the 12-month period from September 1977 through August 1978. Throughout the latter period, the latest for which data are available, status offender commitments were forbidden by state statute. The post-legislation period shows a 9% overall *increase* in youth commitments. This summary statistic obscures considerable variation across service regions: two regions accounted for substantial increases in commitments (one region more than doubled), two regions showed negligible change, and the remaining four showed

* There appear to be two reasons why Arkansas courts use "evaluation only" commitments: first, some courts feel that local diagnostic and evaluation services are generally inadequate, or at least inadequate for a particular child's needs; second, many judges believe the 3-5 day commitment period required for evaluation at the Diagnostic-Reception Center provides a valuable and effective warning to the youth about the consequences of future misbehavior.

declines ranging from 24% to 48%. Changes in state youth population over time were too slight to account for this pattern, as the rate comparison in the last column of Table 9.1 shows.

TABLE 9.1
All State Training School Commitments by Region

Originating Region	1975 Com- mitments (rate/1000) ¹		Sept. 1977- Aug. 1978 Commitments (rate/1000) ²		Percent Change	Percent Change in Rate
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate		
I	70	1.88	45	1.19	-36	-37
II	44	1.64	23	.85	-48	-48
III	230	3.24	227	3.26	-1	+1
IV	132	3.08	131	3.11	-1	+1
V	154	2.02	326	4.34	+112	+115
VI	80	2.34	107	3.11	+34	+33
VII	127	3.23	97	2.51	-24	-22
VIII	102	3.55	62	2.89	-40	-39
Unknown	-	-	4	-	-	-
Total	939	2.64	1,022	2.89	+9	+9

1. Base: estimated 1975 school enrollment, ages 9-18.

2. Base: estimated 1976-77 school enrollment, ages 9-18. 1977-78 school enrollment statistics were unavailable as of this writing.

When "court returns" are excluded from the comparison, however, the picture changes substantially. As seen in Table 9.2, 134 fewer youth were committed in the most recent period than in 1975. This amounts to a 15% decline in both absolute numbers and in terms of rate. Again there is variation across regions. Only Region VI experienced an increase, of about 10%. Regions III and V show drops of less than 10%. The remaining five regions all experienced declines greater than 20%. In Region II, commitments fell off by 44% although the absolute numbers are small for this relatively rural region.

TABLE 9.2
State Training School Commitments Excluding
Court Returns by Region

Originating Region	1975 Commitments (rate/1000)		Sept. 1977-Aug. 1978 Commitments (rate/1000)		Percent Change	Percent Change in Rate
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate		
I	64	1.72	43	1.14	-33	-34
II	41	1.53	23	.85	-44	-44
III	218	3.07	212	3.04	-3	-1
IV	129	3.01	102	2.42	-21	-20
V	148	1.94	137	1.82	-7	-6
VI	70	2.05	78	2.27	+11	+10
VII	120	3.05	92	2.38	-23	-22
VIII	91	3.16	60	2.08	-34	-34
Unknown	-	-	2	-	-	-
Total	381	2.47	749	2.12	-15	-14

What can we make of this picture? First, the substantial differences between Tables 9.1 and 9.2 make it clear that courts in some regions have heavily increased their use of the "evaluation only" commitment. This seems to be a very marked pattern for Regions IV, V, and VI; in Region V, court returns actually outnumbered "regular" commitments. Examination of the source data reveals that in each of those regions a single large county accounts for nearly all of the observed change.

Why the change? No one explanation seems to cover the facts of the case. Some or all of the following considerations are surely involved:

- The personal predilections of the juvenile referee. In one county, the large increase in court returns coincides with the appointment of a new referee.
- Proximity to the Diagnostic-Reception Center. All three counties are relatively close to the intake center, which certainly minimizes the inconvenience of transporting youth there.
- Limitations of alternative diagnostic and evaluation services at the community level. In at least one county, anecdotal evidence

- suggests that the local D&E provider was unresponsive to the needs of the local court. In another, sheer volume of cases could easily have exceeded the local D&E capacity, although it is not clear that this factor played a role.

The latter two considerations alone cannot explain change over time, in any case, so we are inclined to assign the most weight to the referees' disposition preferences.

Turning to the evidence on changes in "regular" commitments only, the commitment decline in five of the eight regions is quite clear. For the remaining three regions, the changes fall in the + 10% range. There are two questions. First, how significant are these changes in themselves? Second, how do the changes relate to the DSO efforts -- are there grounds for attributing the changes to the DSO intervention?

There is no "correct" answer to the question of the intrinsic significance of a 15% decline. There is every reason to believe that removal of status offenders from the system is largely responsible, although reduced use of the training school alternative for other youth may have played a role. We know, for instance, that females constituted about 27% of all intakes in 1974,* but dropped to less than 20% of intakes in a recent 12-month period. And traditionally, females tend to be overrepresented in the ranks of status offenders; in 1974, 56% of committed status offenders were female and 78% of all committed females were identified as status offenders.**

The last statistic noted above suggests another concern however. Based on a 15% decline, can we assume that *all* the status offenders are out of the state facilities? Pre-project estimates incorporated in the DSO grant application set the annual proportion of status offender commitments at 38%. Yet in the early project months, DSO staff discovered that those estimates were too high; according to statistics filed in

* See *Master Plan*, p. 162.

** *Ibid.*

quarterly progress reports covering July 1976 through June 1977, only about 19% of all admissions during that period were determined to involve adjudicated status offenders. Of course, DSO efforts presumably were paying off in lower status offender intakes during this period but even in the first quarter of project activity, the proportion was only 25%. On balance, the quantitative evidence suggests that some status offenders, but not large numbers, may still be slipping through under a different label.

What about the qualitative evidence? Whenever possible, we probed for our respondents' assessments of the state deinstitutionalization effort. With a few exceptions, our respondents told us that status offenders were no longer ending up in Arkansas training schools. They conceded that if a judge or referee wanted to commit a "status offender type", it was usually possible to find a legitimate pretext. One juvenile referee, for example, noted that runaways are usually short of money; thus they often commit petty theft offenses, for which they could be adjudicated delinquent. No one believed that instances of finding a commitment pretext were common, however.

A minority opinion among our respondents was that there had been little change in the commitment practices of local courts. They argued that few "true" status offenders had ever been committed to the state youth service system,* that in the past the labeling of many offenders merely had been inaccurate. Courts had often adjudicated delinquents as status offenders because it was easier to make a case and/or because the status offender label was deemed less stigmatizing. This opinion receives partial confirmation from the experience of the DSO institutional case manager. When the DSO Project first began, many of the youth in the training schools who had been initially identified as status offenders turned out, upon further investigation with the committing court, to have committed delinquent offenses.

* Persistent runaways or truants were mentioned as the major exception.

What all our respondents are affirming is that the labeling of juveniles is indeed discretionary -- for many youth, the court has the option of either a status offense or delinquent adjudication. Thus, the question of whether all status offenders are indeed "out" depends on the definition of status offender employed. Are all types of youth formerly committed under the label of status offender now cut off from the training school system? The answer is certainly no, given what we know about judicial discretion and given a decline in intakes of insufficient magnitude to completely account for the previous rate of status offender commitments. But are youth who have committed *only* status offenses now avoiding the state system? Yes -- we think this is indisputable.

Now we turn to the relation of changes in state youth service commitments to the efforts of the DSO Project. We began by classifying all counties according to level of DSO staff effort expended. In the absence of any satisfactory objective measures of effort, we relied upon three data sources: field staff ratings of level of effort, obtained from a structured questionnaire; interview materials; and project archives. Staff ratings were given the most weight; if the ratings of two or more field staff diverged widely for a given county, we used the archival and interview data as a supplement to arrive at a compromise rating. Because of the inherent subjectivity of the ratings scheme, we chose crude categories of effort -- high, medium, and low. (Note that we did not attempt to classify or rank entire regions on "level of effort" -- we felt that the differences across regions were too marginal to arrive at a reliable ranking.)

The results of the exercise are shown in Table 9.3 below. Interestingly enough, the data reveal no apparent relationship between level of effort and change in commitment practices of individual counties. Indeed, the 20 high effort counties actually show less change than the rest of the state, although the difference is slight.

TABLE 9.3
Change in Commitment Levels by Level of DSO Staff Effort,
1975 to September 1977--August 1978¹

Level of Effort	Counties Experiencing Decrease		Counties Experiencing No Change		Counties Experiencing Increase		Total Counties		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
High	12	60	0	0	8	40	20	100	-10
Medium	25	69	1	3	10	28	36	100	-19
Low	11	58	2	11	5	32	19	100	-16
Total	48	64	3	4	24	32	75	100	-15

1. Court returns excluded.

What do we make of this finding? Two possibilities suggested themselves. One is that the effort directed at a given county did not necessarily pay off in terms of some essential intermediate steps, such as expansion of alternative service possibilities. Staff respondents had described some instances where this occurred. For example, in one area a lengthy contract development effort fell through in the final stages; in another, repeated overtures to juvenile court personnel failed miserably. A second possible explanation of Table 9.3 is that the high effort counties were in some way the hardest counties to reach -- presumably, they were the object of greater attention in part because they had greater problems.

The first possibility is examined in Table 9.4, where DSO Project spending under both DSO and Title XX contracts is compared with the change in training school commitments. Actual spending is presumed to be an indicator of "successful" project effort.*

Comparisons have been made on a regional rather than county basis because of the frequency of multi-county services and our inability to accurately apportion related spending among counties. We ranked regions on both the absolute numerical change in

* Using per capita *increments* in spending under DSO would not substantially alter the comparisons because pre-DSO spending levels through state youth services or Title XX were negligible.

commitments observed and the relative or percent change. Neither of these rank orderings was significantly related to rank order on per capita spending.

TABLE 9.4
Comparison of DSO Spending and Change in Commitments¹

Region	Per Capita DSO and Title XX ₂ Spending	Per Capita Spending: Rank Order	Absolute Decrease in Commitments: Rank Order	Percent Decrease in Commitments: Rank Order
I	\$18.83	1	4	5.5
II	2.97	8	5	1
III	6.27	6	7	7
IV	4.01	7	3	3
V	13.62	3	6	2
VI	6.87	5	8 ³	8 ³
VII	7.76	4	2	4
VIII	15.56	2	1	5.5

1. Court returns excluded.

2. Based on estimated youth age population.

3. This region experienced an increase in commitments.

We made a number of other comparisons along these lines. We broke down project spending by service type and compared per capita spending for each type with the commitment picture, reasoning that global spending might be less important than expenditures for some key services such as emergency shelter. Again, no significant relationships emerged. We also compared spending by funding source, DSO versus Title XX, with similar results.

Finally, we looked at project spending through June 1977 only, the first year of active service development. We hypothesized that there might be some type of "lag" effect and that areas which had profited from high levels of project expenditure early on might show the greatest change in commitment practices. This proved not to be the case, either.

We turn now to the second possibility raised above. Were the higher effort areas different in some way that explains the absence of any special impact? Table 9.5 characterizes the three groups of counties on a number of dimensions. The high effort counties are the bigger counties; they are responsible for large numbers of commitments and are usually equipped with a juvenile referee. These counties do not, however, have exceptionally high commitment rates and based on project field staff ratings, as a group they turn out to be most receptive to DSO goals. Thus, unless sheer volume and system complexity are deemed important, it is difficult to see why the high effort counties presented any special barriers to project impact.

TABLE 9.5
Selected Characteristics of High, Medium, and Low Effort Counties

Effort Group	No. of Counties	Average Commitments per County ¹		Commitment Rate per 1000 Youth Population		Average County Receptivity to Program Goals ²	Percent Without Juvenile Referee	Average Est. Youth Population per County 1976-1977
		1975	1977-78	1975	1977-78			
High	20	21.6	19.4	2.33	2.11	2.7	10%	9,188
Medium	36	10.9	8.8	2.91	2.35	2.5	36%	3,718
Low	19	3.1	2.6	1.56	1.31	2.3	42%	1,962

1. Court returns excluded.

2. As rated by DSO field staff. Rating scale: 1=generally opposed, 2=mixed reactions or neutral, 3=generally supportive.

To sum up, we are confident that commitments to the state training school system have declined and that this decline is indeed in large part attributable to the removal and diversion of many youth who would formerly have been committed as status offenders. It is also evident that the decrease in commitments has not occurred uniformly across regions or counties. Yet we are unable to link this intrastate variation to intrastate variations in project effort.

B. Project Impacts on Local Communities

Local communities and their juvenile courts are, of course, the main gatekeepers of the training school system, having statutory responsibility for committing a youth to that system. But commitments are after all relatively rare events; the majority of youth in trouble always have been and will continue to be dealt with at the local level. Aside from changes in commitment practices, what project impacts can be observed on local communities and their youth service and juvenile justice systems? We look at two main areas of impact: availability of community-based services and local detention practices.

Community-Based Services

A major objective of the DSO Project was to increase the availability of services offering alternatives to juvenile justice system handling of status offender cases. It is evident from Chapters VII (Process) and VIII (Intermediate Outcomes) that a great many community-based services were brought into play by the project during its two and one-half years of activity. Clearly, the benefits of service expansion and reorganization will be relatively short-lived if such services cannot be sustained beyond the life of the "seed" project.

TABLE 9.6
Current Status of Service Contracts Initiated by DSO Project

	<u>DSO Contracts</u>	<u>Title XX Contracts</u>	<u>All Contracts</u>
Services Continuing	30 (79%)	21 (95%)	51 (85%)
Services Discontinue Discontinued	8 (21%)	1 (5%)	9 (15%)
Total	39* (100%)	22 (100%)	60 (100%)

* Three start-up contracts excluded. Also one contract covering housing and supervision for a single youth was excluded.

Table 9.6 shows the current status of all service contracts developed by the DSO Project, whether originated with DSO or Title XX funding.* Current status was determined from DYS contract files in the case of contracts still receiving support through that agency, or by interview with a representative of the former contractor. In each case, we determined whether the services associated with that contract would be available following termination of the DSO Project and if so, their primary source of future support.

Overall, services covered under 85% of the original contracts are continuing in the post-DSO period. The Title XX-funded services fared best, with only one discontinued; this was expected given that Title XX contracts are renewable indefinitely. The single discontinued contract had never been utilized.

Seventy-nine percent of the DSO-funded services are continuing with a variety of supports. Fourteen contracts have largely been subsumed under Title XX contracts from DYS. Two other contracts have been picked up by DYS Community Service funds. The DSO third year continuation grant is assisting two of the foster home recruitment services during the transition period until state support funds are appropriated. Ten of the remaining efforts are being sustained through the providing agency's private resources or through fees charged to the referral source. The last two contracts, both involving diversion specialist services, have transferred to LEAA block grant funding.

Eight DSO contract efforts were discontinued completely. Of these, six had involved stipends or other support for university students working in counseling, advocacy, or community development roles. Staff interviews suggest that these contracts were viewed as a nice luxury, hardly essential or especially productive. The remaining two contracts both had suffered from

* Individual foster home/emergency shelter contracts have been excluded from consideration, as the foster home effort is currently continuing with a special purpose third-year DSO grant. DYS expects to acquire state funding for this effort at the end of the grant period.

underutilization during their initial term. One had covered diagnostic and evaluation services, and for unknown reasons, was never used at all. The second had been intended to cover counseling to status offenders and their families, but the agency could not generate sufficient referrals. DYS chose not to allocate continuation funding from other sources, and the provider agency, while still interested in pursuing its original idea, was unable to locate support elsewhere.

On balance, it is clear the DSO Project avoided one of the major pitfalls of all limited term demonstration efforts -- it managed to ensure that services and service relationships developed under its aegis would survive the project period. In this, it was helped enormously by the control acquired over Title XX youth services funding and new appropriations of state funds for community-based youth services.

Local Detention Practices

Prevention of secure detention of status offenders was another objective of the Arkansas DSO Project, one which received the most concentrated attention in the last 18 months of the project. In looking at progress on the local detention front, we are limited to a comparison of August 1975 and August 1977 statistics.* Thus, we examine the available data merely as preliminary indicators of project impacts, keeping in mind that August 1977 represents the *first* month in which status offender detention was prohibited by Arkansas statute. The DSO Project efforts did not terminate until June of the following year. Table 9.7 summarizes by region the changes in juvenile detention practices, both for status offenders (and non-offenders) and for juvenile delinquents. Statewide, a 24% decline in status offender detentions is observed. A 38% increase is seen for detention of delinquents, however; this is a substantial shift in terms of absolute numbers, easily large enough to encompass many relabeled status offenders. On the other hand, there is some reason to believe -- based

* These data are currently being updated by the SPA to include August 1978, which would be a much more satisfactory comparison point for our purposes.

on anecdotal evidence -- that local record-keeping had improved markedly in 1977 over the earlier period. So some of the change may be attributable to increased reporting and more precise recording of charges, rather than real changes in detention.

TABLE 9.7
Changes in Local Juvenile Detention, August 1975-August 1977

	Status Offenders and Non-Offenders Detained ¹					Other Juveniles Detained ¹				
	8/75 No.	8/75 Rate	8/77 No.	8/77 Rate	% Change	8/75 No.	8/75 Rate	8/77 No.	8/77 Rate	% Change
I	23	.62	13	.34	-43	209	5.63	196	5.18	-6
II	15	.56	15	.55	0	41	1.53	21	.78	-49
III	14	.20	7	.10	-50	87	1.23	136	1.95	+56
IV	1	.02	7	.17	+600	158	3.69	175	4.16	+11
V	205	2.69	100	1.33	-51	157	2.06	319	4.25	+103
VI	18	.53	23	.67	+28	34	1.00	63	1.83	+85
VII	25	.64	28	.72	+12	47	1.20	53	1.37	+13
VIII	50	1.74	74	2.57	+48	82	2.85	160	5.55	+95
Total	351	.99	267	.75	-24	813	2.29	1123	3.18	+38

1. Monthly rate per 1000 youth.

When we look at the region by region evidence, we frankly do not know what to make of the pattern, or lack thereof. We draw attention to the following points however:

- The absolute numbers of detainees are very small for some regions, as are the absolute increases or decreases. As the comparisons are based on a single month out of each year, one should be cautious about attributing much significance to small changes.
- The ratio of status offender and non-offender detainees to delinquent detainees varies dramatically across regions, suggesting the probability of very different enforcement and charging practices, as well as different detention policies.
- A substantial proportion of the observed change statewide is attributable to Region V; from a review of the county by county data, we know *that* change was concentrated in Pulaski County, the most populous county in the state.

Given the above considerations, further speculation about the meaning of this preliminary evidence seems useless. For individual regions, we could hazard *post hoc* interpretations of changes (e.g., one region with large increases gained a detention center, another acquired a new juvenile referee in its largest county), but none explain the overall picture and none are directly linked to DSO Project activities. In any case, more recent detention data would be essential to make a realistic impact assessment.

Other Local Impacts

We lack quantitative evidence about other areas of project impact on community-based juvenile justice practices. Many of our respondents did, however, report changes which may be in part attributable to the work of DSO Project staff. These include:

- *Attitude and behavioral changes among local law enforcement, juvenile court personnel, schools, and the general community.* Respondents reported increased acceptance of troubled youth as a community responsibility, greater tolerance, and greater interest in using diversion alternatives.
- *Increased knowledge of and respect for juvenile rights.* Many respondents viewed this as the outcome of an extended educational process following adoption of the new juvenile code in 1975. The DSO staff was one of the many groups stimulating this learning process.
- *Improvement in the quantity and qualifications of juvenile court personnel, including juvenile referees and probation officers.* In this area, the SPA was deemed the prime mover, but DSO/DYS funds had contributed to the change. For example, in some areas DSO-funded diversion specialists functioned in part as probation/intake officers.

C. Other Project Impacts

To this point, we have concentrated on impacts closely related to the documented DSO Project objectives. Yet there was one other impact area which may, in the long run, prove most significant of all. That is the reorganization of the state youth services bureaucracy under a Division of Youth Services and the creation within it of a Community Services arm. Significantly, this branch was assigned parallel status with Residential Services; both are Sections, each headed by a Deputy Commissioner. Although we have referred to "termination" of the DSO Project, the core project staff structure, somewhat reduced in numbers, has been institutionalized within DYS as the new Community Services Section.

This development is particularly noteworthy, if we recall that prior to initiation of the DSO Project, the system of training schools and the intake center (known as the Juvenile Services Section) was virtually synonymous with state youth services. At the state level, oversight of community-based programming for youth resided with a Coordinator of Youth Services within the Office of the Director of Social and Rehabilitation Services; the Coordinator had little staff or money to work with until the DSO Project came along. Using the DSO staff and service dollars as a nucleus, he developed an Office of Youth Services and created a state youth service presence in the field. This movement culminated with the passage of legislation linking the community-oriented OYS and the old Juvenile Services Section under a new Division of Youth Services, effective July 1977.

The importance of this development to initiating and sustaining community-based programs for youth is best seen by examining the concomitant changes in state youth services spending from fiscal year 1975-76 to fiscal year 1977-78. The estimates in Table 9.8 show a dramatic increase in funds available for state youth service activities. It is clear that most of this increase has been dedicated to community services although residential services have also expanded in budget. In

FY 1977-78, we estimate that at least 80% of the budgeted community service dollars went into purchase of services at the local level.

TABLE 9.8
 Estimated State Youth Service Spending: FY 1975-76
 and FY 1977-78*

<u>Program Area</u>	<u>FY 75-76</u>	<u>FY 77-78</u>
Juvenile Services/ Residential Services**	4,323,599 (84%)	5,609,121 (56%)
Office of Youth Services/ Community Services	256,000 (5%)	3,855,750 (29%)
Central Administration	575,892 (11%)	515,529 (5%)
Total	5,155,491 (100%)	9,980,400 (100%)

* Estimates derived from available budget records except for OYS FY 75-76. The OYS estimate was derived from other project archives and includes allowance for two administrative positions, the DSO Project operation, and Title XX state match appropriations.

** Includes Reintegration Services (Aftercare).

Community services spending is expected by youth service staff to gain more ground over the coming years, although at a slower rate. Efforts are underway to reduce the residential services component of DYS. In June of 1978, DYS announced the closing of one of its three training schools. In addition, DYS is in the process of divesting the Residential Services Section of the aftercare function. The long-range plan is to have probation departments or other community-based services assume responsibility for follow-up supervision, community evaluation, placement coordination, and other supportive services to training school releasees. Thus far 12 counties have taken on these functions.

X. Conclusions

Our evaluation objectives were to establish whether there indeed has been significant change in Arkansas youth and juvenile justice services and to draw some conclusions about the reasons for such change. This chapter pulls together the evidence presented in preceding chapters.

A. Changes

Since the initiation of the DSO Project in January 1976, the following observable changes have occurred in Arkansas:

1. There is uncontrovertible evidence of a *substantial increase statewide in the availability of community-based services for youth in trouble*. Since availability of alternative services is an essential ingredient in preventing status offender incarceration, Arkansas has made great strides in establishing favorable conditions. There is every reason to believe that the majority of these services will continue in the post-DSO period.

2. *At the state level, a power base has been institutionalized for community youth programming interests within the Division of Youth Services and its component Community Services Section*. This section promises to play a strong role in maintaining and expanding community-based services for all troubled youth through technical assistance, coordination, and development of a diversified funding base for local services.

3. *Legislation prohibiting commitment of status offenders to the state system of youth service centers, or training schools, and limiting secure detention at the local level, has been passed*.

4. *Commitments of all juveniles to the state youth service system have declined 15% over 1975, the pre-DSO baseline period*.

This decline, while modest and gradual, suggests that a significant proportion of youth formerly committed as status offenders is indeed no longer entering the system and that massive amounts of relabeling have not occurred. Despite the overall decrease, *the decline in commitments has not been consistent across regions.* Some regions have shown much more progress than others. One region experienced a modest increase.

Preliminary evidence about changes in detention suggests that *some changes in local detention practice may be occurring, but it is unclear what direction these changes are taking.* In some areas they may involve modifications of labeling and reporting practices rather than reductions in actual numbers of status offenders and other youth held. In any case, more recent data, as yet unavailable, will be required to support any more solid interpretation.

B. Interpretation

What was the role of the DSO Project in producing the changes noted above? It is obvious from our field experience in Arkansas that youth and juvenile justice services were in a state of flux at the time the project came on the scene; there was a developing interest statewide, at a number of levels, in improving community services for all categories of youth and reducing the inappropriate use of punitive sanctions such as incarceration. What might have occurred without the infusion of DSO staff and dollars can never be determined, but we believe the project played a major role in certain areas.

For the increased availability of local services, there is no question that DSO was the prime mover. No other group had equivalent control over youth service funds, nor the flexibility regarding funding sources. No other organization had the advantage of field staff dedicated to youth-oriented

technical assistance and community development. No doubt some growth in local services would have occurred without the DSO project, but it is unlikely that it would have attained comparable levels or that so many Title XX youth programs would have emerged from the growing competition for this source of funds.

On the state youth services organization front, we think the DSO Project was of overwhelming significance in redressing the balance at the state level between community-oriented and training school-oriented programming. True, the reorganized Division of Youth Services might have incorporated some form of Community Services Section in any event. But the DSO Project had set the precedent for a strong community services arm and had amassed the funding clout to go with it -- accounting for fully 39% of the DYS budget in FY 1977-78. In effect DSO has now been institutionalized in Arkansas.

The role of DSO in achieving the state's status offender legislation was less prominent. The Arkansas Crime Commission, or State Planning Agency, played the most forceful role in securing the legislation, with DSO management playing a secondary, more passive part. Because the bill did not encounter any significant opposition in the legislature, it never became necessary for the DSO Project to do more than appear before the appropriate committees and answer routine questions. Once passed, the project did attempt to educate the local courts about the law's requirements, as a complement to the pursuit of cooperative non-detention agreements. But in general, project staff avoided the appearance of having actively sought the legislation, no doubt in the interests of better relations with local courts.

When we come to the role of DSO in producing the overall changes in commitments to the state system of training schools it is more difficult to apportion the credit. Our attempt to link regional or county variation in commitments to intrastate differences in DSO staff effort and DSO per capita contract utilization was unsuccessful. Possibly our measures of effort

were too crude to discern relationships which were really present, but in any case no relationship emerged between service dollars spent and commitment impacts. We think it likely that there are complex interaction effects between project efforts, disposing conditions, and increments in services that we are unable to uncover with the available data.

For example, the table below shows that impacts on commitments were more marked in the less urban counties. But it is

TABLE 10.1
Commitments by Level of Urbanization*

<u>Percent of Population Living in Urban Areas</u>	<u># of Counties</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>Sept. 1977 - Aug. 1978</u>	<u>% Change</u>
50% or more	16	477	444	- 7
1 - 49%	38	348	271	-22
None	21	56	32	-46

* Court returns excluded.

certain that degree of urbanization is associated with a number of other characteristics, such as juvenile court volume, absolute level of youth services, and availability of professional court staff. Urbanization also tended to be associated with level of DSO staff effort. In any event, we cannot posit any straightforward relationship between impact and urbanization based on the available evidence.

Many aspects of DSO activities did not vary across regions or counties -- these invariants include the establishment of regional teams and councils (in all but one region), statewide public relations activities, activities at the state training school system level, and the pursuit of cooperative non-detention agreements with all courts. How much did these aspects of DSO account for the overall decline in commitments? It is impossible

to say precisely. One must acknowledge that there were multiple agencies and organizations, such as the State Planning Agency, the Arkansas Conference on Children and Youth, the State Juvenile Services Board, and many provider representatives, all advocating the same policy direction. Surely all these forces, DSO among them, should share the credit.

About local detention changes, we can say very little. Data bearing on this issue are limited and the upgrading of record-keeping and reporting over time poses significant barriers to their interpretation. Our impression is that massive changes in detention practices cannot be expected to occur overnight however, partly because the decision to detain and actual detention are so decentralized, and partly because compliance with the new legislation is still largely voluntary.

C. Transferability of the Arkansas Approach

We began this report by arguing that the approach adopted by Arkansas was worth examining because it might have applicability to deinstitutionalization efforts elsewhere. What are the ingredients of the Arkansas DSO success? We do think the Arkansas effort has been relatively successful although the long run returns are not all in.

First, the project originators and staff correctly judged the hostility of local communities in Arkansas toward state and federally imposed initiatives and designed their strategy accordingly. They built in a strong field office component, stayed away from direct service provision, and attempted to involve local community representatives in project planning through the regional council mechanism. They worked with existing organizations and services where possible and stimulated new organizational and service development elsewhere. This approach was hardly implemented perfectly, hampered as it was by frequent staff turnover and lack of prior experience with the demands of such a venture, but certainly the project was on the right track.

Second, the project managed to disassociate itself from any enforcement role regarding JJDP and Arkansas status offender legislation. Instead it presented itself as available to assist local law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in meeting the requirements of the statutes. Although it did survey local detention practices for a time, that was done for purposes of "evaluation" and "needs assessment" rather than compliance monitoring. Instead the SPA was the responsible party when it came to monitoring. This division of labor seems to have worked to the advantage of the project in deflecting some of the local court and law enforcement hostility to DSO aims.

Third, the project came into being at an opportune time, when significant funding resources -- in the form of Title XX service dollars -- were up for grabs. The funding acquired resulted in a project of much broader scope than DSO dollars alone would have permitted. It also meant that service contractors could be given reasonable assurances of continued support after the expiration of demonstration funds -- an important impetus to youth service development.

Fourth, the project had a very important ally in the Governor, who shared the DSO program philosophy and gave the project his full backing. In a direct way, the Governor was responsible for guaranteeing project access to Title XX funds. Indirectly, he advanced project interests through appointment of a Juvenile Services (Training School) Section Administrator sympathetic to project aims and through favorable appointments to the Juvenile Services Board. And finally, he backed the creation of the new Division of Youth Services, with its prominent and permanent role for community services interests.

Certainly the Arkansas DSO Project had some unique characteristics. But we think there are evident lessons to be drawn for other locales:

- *A deinstitutionalization effort needs strong support at the highest levels of government, where appropriations and appointment decisions are made.*

- *Flexible funding options are essential to a large scale deinstitutionalization effort. Maximum benefit from Federal dollars is achieved when projects operate without major restrictions on type of services or other activities (e.g., start-up) covered.*
- *Some advance planning must be devoted to continuation funding if new service development is to play a major role in the deinstitutionalization strategy. Without assurances of continuation support, new services may never get off the ground, or at best, be shortlived. It is true that in the long run institutional resources might be diverted to help with continuation costs, but this is not likely to occur within a demonstration period of only 2-3 years.*
- *The overall deinstitutionalization effort will require careful tailoring to the characteristics of the host jurisdiction. There is no cookbook procedure which we can prescribe for doing this, unfortunately. It is possible, for instance, that the supportive, capacity-building approach adopted by Arkansas works best in rural or "service poor" areas; a more directive strategy might be better suited to complex urban systems.*
- *A state bureaucracy, given sufficient flexibility, can indeed form a successful partnership with service organizations and local courts. There are apt to be missteps, but a prominent state commitment to local problem solving with state assistance apparently pays off.*

Particularly with regard to Title XX funding availability in the state, the Arkansas DSO Project had a rare and important advantage. Perhaps few deinstitutionalization initiatives can be expected to enjoy a comparable situation. Thus it is especially important to note one final point -- even given substantial funds at its disposal, a broad scale initiative like that in Arkansas probably cannot deliver the desired statewide impacts in only two years. It can make significant progress, but complete success is not to be expected.

END