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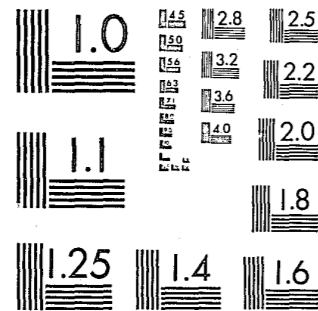
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8/10/83

GROUP HOME
EVALUATION SYSTEM
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Summary of Phase One Report

for

DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES

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by

International Training, Research and Evaluation Council

Fairfax, Virginia
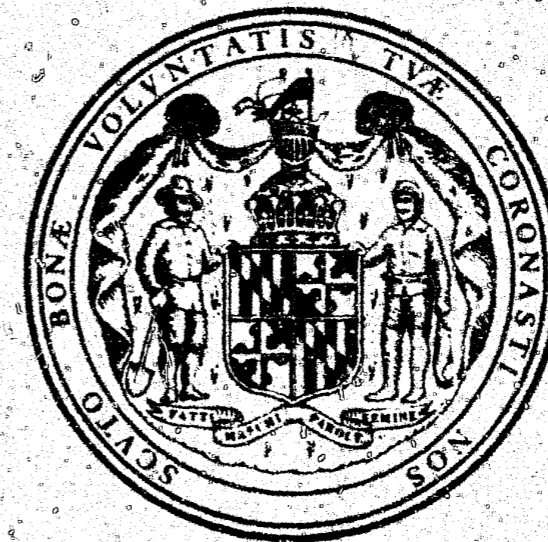
Group Home Evaluation System Development Project:
Summary of Phase One Report

prepared by

International Training, Research and Evaluation Council
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Juvenile Services Administration
State of Maryland

Acknowledgements

project were greatly facilitated. Second, we would like to thank those group homes directors, staff and residents who assisted in the project by completing the various research intruments.

The following graduate and undergraduate students of the University of Maryland made substantial contributions to this project in the areas of instrument construction, data collection, data processing, and preliminary analysis:

- Marilyn Budish
- Joseph Gracia
- Leslie Lehman
- Calvin Moody
- Gary Reicher
- Richard Rosenthal
- Amy Schwab
- Bonnie Wood

We hope the results of this study will reward everyone for time and energy spent by offering clear and more effective means for responding to the needs of Maryland group home youth.

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THE GROUP HOME EVALUATION SYSTEM
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The Juvenile Services Administration (JSA), an agency of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, serves approximately 2,000 juveniles per year, or 700 at any given time, in community-based facilities. Based on the fact that increasing numbers of juveniles are being placed in such facilities, it is estimated that by 1980, over 1,500 group home beds will be needed to meet the burgeoning demands. To insure that quality care is provided to the youth served by this treatment approach, JSA adopted a policy to develop an evaluation and monitoring program for these residential community facilities.

The Group Home Evaluation System Development Project was designed to help implement this policy. An earlier step was taken during 1974, with a study conducted by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD). The NCCD work, although not providing an evaluation base line, offered inputs to the development of Maryland's first set of standards and guidelines for group homes. It was not until 1975, however, with the establishment of the Department's Monitoring and Evaluation of Residential Facilities (MERF) program that systematic review of group homes began. In its infancy, the MERF program focused on physical monitoring and insuring the safety and health needs of the residents. As the program matured, its focus expanded and became more sophisticated, monitoring not only the physical facilities, but also program plans, detailed budgets, case files, and personnel. Currently, in addition to assessing compliance with the standards and guidelines, the MERF program is involved in licensing homes and helping new facilities meet the established standards so that they may be permitted to accept residents.

To aid the MERF program in expanding its monitoring and analysis capabilities, a proposal for the development of an evaluation system was submitted to the Maryland Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice in early 1976. The grant application represented a joint effort between JSA's Divisions of Research and Analysis and Community Services. It was reasoned that the combined perspective embodied in the request was essential to

insure the development of an evaluation system which was based on scientific principles yet was within the framework of the MERF program. The grant application was subsequently approved by the Governor's Commission.

To insure that the resulting system employed the most advanced and responsive techniques available, JSA requested the assistance of outside experts. In August, 1976, following a selection process, the International Training, Research and Evaluation Council (ITREC) initiated efforts toward the development of the proposed evaluation system to complement JSA's ongoing monitoring program.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

General Design Strategy and Data Gathering

This project involves the first stage of the design of an evaluation approach to assist in improving group home programming. The focus of this effort was to analyze the relationship between what the group home operators hoped to achieve in terms of care and treatment for their residents while in the facility and what was ultimately accomplished. As such, this study was designed to permit group home operators to use the resulting information as a basis for making program modifications.

The ultimate goal of this project was to establish an ongoing evaluation system involving the Juvenile Services Administration and Maryland Group Homes. To achieve this goal, an atmosphere of cooperation and a system based on mutual respect and trust were needed. To create such an atmosphere, it was essential to involve a variety of decision makers. These included JSA research and program staff, as well as group home operators.

Various national and state agencies were contacted for purposes of obtaining past studies on the topic area, and scores of texts and reports were reviewed. This provided background knowledge essential to the development and codification of the issues related to the processes to be investigated. It also identified various instruments used in other studies to assess group home operations.

To supplement this background information, input was solicited from JSA program and research personnel, the Maryland Association of Residential Facilities for Youth (MARFY) and other group home personnel. A survey of group home administrators provided the primary information on program objectives used to identify criteria utilized for analysis purposes during subsequent phases of the project.

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An initial set of instruments was developed and tested in a cooperative effort between the Research Team, JSA staff and a number of group homes that were not included in the study sample. This process began in mid-November, 1976, after JSA received draft copies of the various research instruments, with pre-tests of the questionnaires in four group homes.

Following the analysis of the pre-test data, a final set of six instruments was developed. Brief descriptions of the evaluation instruments are as follows:

Instrument No. 1: Residents' Psychological Inventory. This was designed to measure seven psychological outcomes [1] pertaining to residents. They focused on responsibility, insight, independence, self-image, goal orientation, effective communication and value of education.

Instrument No. 2: Residents' Behavioral Checklist. This was designed to measure the frequency of resident involvement in various types of responsible and rebellious behavior during the two months prior to the study as reported by the residents themselves.

Instrument No. 3: Staff/Youth Specific Instrument. This instrument permitted staff to report on their knowledge of frequency of the same types of resident behavior during the two months prior to the study. It also sought information on two process variables, [2] the amount and type of positive and negative reinforcement provided to residents by staff. For each resident, the staff member most familiar with the individual case completed the instrument.

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[1] For purposes of the study, outcome variables were considered to be measures of group home goals and objectives. More specifically, outcomes were measures of those things that group home operators hope to achieve with residents of their facility, i.e. stimulation of responsible behavior, increased self-respect, etc.

[2] For purposes of the study, process variables were considered to be measures of elements of group home program operations that may have some relationship with desired outcomes. These included certain program features (i.e. amounts of positive reinforcement used; intensity of group meetings) which are used to varying degrees to treat and/or help the youth residing in the various group homes. The search for actual associations or relationships between outcomes (i.e. increased self-respect) and processes (i.e. intensity of group meetings) was the main focus of this study.

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Instrument No. 4: Resident Interview. This instrument sought residents' appraisal of the treatment processes and program dynamics of the homes. The treatment models relative to which information was gathered included: Positive Peer Culture, Guided Group Interaction, Reality Therapy, Behavior Modification, Teaching Parent Model and the Traditional Family Model.

Instrument No. 5: Staff Questionnaire. This instrument sought information on staff burn out and job satisfaction as well as information on a variety of personal and employment characteristics of staff. In addition, "process items" were addressed (i. e., staff communication, career orientation, etc.).

Instrument No. 6: Administration Questionnaire. This instrument sought information on group home operations; home characteristics; program characteristics; program processes; and, program objectives.

A sample of 23 homes was selected. Illustration I-1 geographically pinpoints the homes sampled. The sample included homes in five of the seven regions, including a mixture of urban and rural settings, housing both male and female residents of all races. Data collection commenced February 2, 1977, and was completed on April 16, 1977. To insure that data collection activities progressed efficiently and with a minimum of disruption to facility operators, an extensive effort was made to familiarize the administrators and staff with the project. Site visits were made to explain procedures and answer questions. Two to three weeks prior to the data collection visit, letters were mailed to confirm dates and request a list of residents. This was done to insure their anonymity from the visiting research team. At the same time, the Administrative, Staff, and Staff-Youth Specific Questionnaires were mailed or hand delivered so that they could be completed by the group home personnel prior to the resident data collection visitations.

The research team administered the three resident instruments. Usually these visits were made during the late afternoon when the youths returned from school.
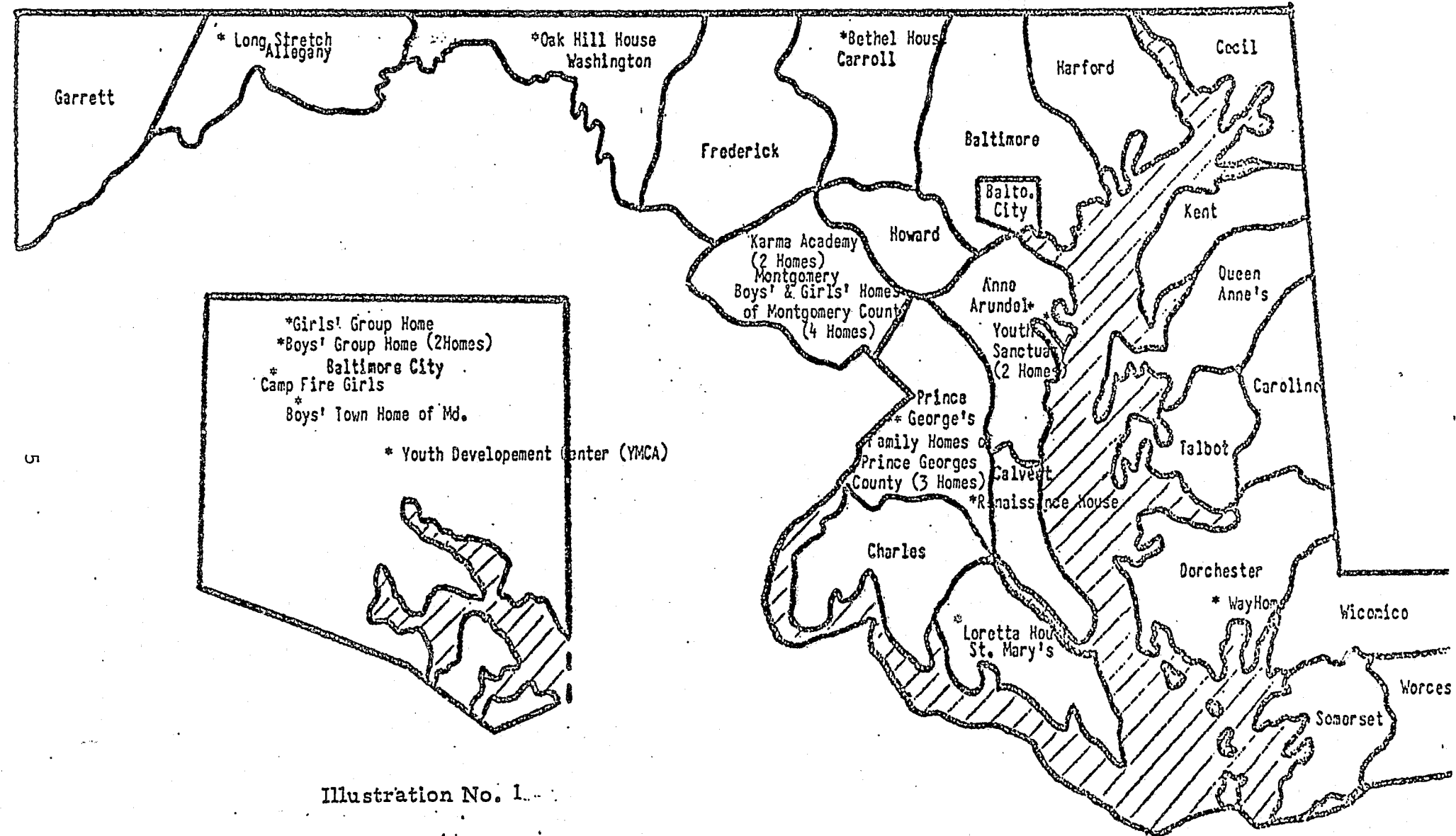
Maryland Group Homes Included in the Project Sample

Illustration No. 1

Resident interviews and behavioral testing were administered first. These processes were conducted simultaneously and took approximately 20 minutes per resident. Specifically, the Resident Interview was administered by the ITREC Research Coordinator in a closed room or some other location insuring privacy. Residents completed this phase individually. Following the interview, individual residents reported to another private location, where they listened to a tape of the Behavioral Checklist and responded on an answer sheet.

The completion of instrument No. 1: Residents' Psychological Inventory, constituted the next step in the process. This instrument was administered by having the residents listen to a tape in a group situation and place their responses on answer sheets. These groups were restricted to six or fewer residents in order to maximize control of the testing situation. This data gathering process lasted between twenty and thirty minutes in each home.

The third step involved the collection of completed administrative and staff questionnaires that had been distributed by mail or by the research team during the site visitations discussed above.

ANALYSIS STRATEGY

As noted above, the six instruments were used to generate two major categories of information, process data and outcome data. The initial step in the analysis strategy was to obtain reliable and valid measures of the various aspects of group home programs (processes) and the goals or objectives of the programs (outcomes). This was accomplished by combining individual questionnaire items which were statistically determined to be measuring the same underlying phenomenon, whether a process (e. g., Intensity of Group Meetings) or an outcome (e. g., Responsible Behavior). This grouping of individual items to provide measures composed of two or more indicators serves the purpose of reducing redundancy in the data, as well as providing confidence that the resulting process and outcome scores are measuring the actual concept or element of interest.

These data were then analyzed to provide two types of findings, descriptive findings and process evaluation findings.

Descriptive Findings. Findings which describe the situations in group homes were obtained. This involved selecting variables that relate to group home policies (e. g., residents' length of stay; extent of use of reinforcements; etc.) and developing detailed descriptive information regarding these various aspects of program operation. First, JSA research and program staff were presented with detailed lists of variables available for analysis. They selected the variables felt to

have the most significance from the standpoint of modifying and developing program policy. Second, using these variables identified by JSA, descriptive data were prepared regarding all outcome and process measures.

An example of such a finding is as follows: It was found that the majority of the residents reported that they have neither high nor low feelings of trust and closeness with their group home peers, rather they trust their peers moderately and feel moderately close to them.

Process Evaluation Findings. Findings regarding relationships between process variables (e. g., positive reinforcements) and outcome variables (e. g., responsible behavior) were obtained through the use of a "process evaluation" strategy.

The process evaluation approach is not intended to produce evidence of success or failure of the group homes under study, but rather to provide insights as to aspects of group home operations (processes) which are related to the attainment of certain goals and objectives (outcomes). These relationships were examined through the use of appropriate statistical techniques.

An example of this type of finding is as follows. It was found that residents who reported frequent involvement in helping and leading activities with their peers also reported high levels of responsible behavior. Such a finding suggests that group home staff develop program features which permit residents to help and lead their peers in various areas.

Additional Information

In conjunction with the Group Home project, a survey of neighbors living close to 23 separate facilities was undertaken. [1] This survey considered the following subjects:

- the attitudes of community residents toward the concept of community-based treatment;

- the actual behavior of community residents as related to specific group homes; and,

- characteristics of the group homes in relation to the communities of which they are a part.

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[1] This activity, not provided for in the project contract, was made feasible by the availability of student research interns in Dr. Knowlton Johnson's Change Agent Training Program at the University of Maryland. It was coordinated by Bonnie S. Wood.

Financial support for this work was not provided by JSA. However, due to expressed interest, an overview of various data collection processes, as well as a breakdown of some of the information gathered, is presented.

Section II

A SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FROM THE RESIDENT DATA

INTRODUCTION

This section presents a summary of important findings which emerged from the analysis of resident data. Descriptive results which provide information as to the extent and nature of various program elements in the homes sampled are provided, as well as process evaluation results which show evidence of relationships between these program elements and program objectives. These results serve as the bases for a series of implications which are included in this discussion. Further details regarding the various findings and implications can be found in The Group Home Evaluation System Development Project: Phase I Report.

Separate sets of findings related to each of four outcome measures or group home objectives studied during the project are detailed in this section. These included Responsible Behavior, Rebellious Behavior, Self Respect and Two-Way Communication. Seven objectives were originally identified for the research team by group home administrators and personnel. Subsequently, JSA staff selected these four as being of primary interest for extensive data analysis. The process variables, or aspects of group home programs, discussed in terms of their relationships with the objectives are those which emerged as most important after analysis of all program elements which the literature, group home personnel and JSA staff identified as having relevance for program development and modification.

While some of the findings may seem to be exactly what one might expect, it is important to obtain research evidence which confirms personal assumptions or expectations. Also, findings show that many of these seemingly self-evident implications have not been extensively applied in group home programs. An effort has been made in this study to address issues which have direct impact on program effort so that results of the evaluation may have practical and useful applications for group home personnel.

RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

Introduction

Encouraging responsible behavior among youth sent to group homes is a major goal of those involved in the juvenile rehabilitation process. As a result, many of the treatment approaches used in group homes focus on stimulating residents to behave in responsible ways.

For purposes of the research, "responsible behavior" was considered to be made up of commendable activities that group home residents reported being involved in. These activities included such things as helping a friend; teaching someone something; talking another youth out of doing something dangerous or illegal; etc. To gather information about Responsible Behavior, residents were asked a series of tape recorded questions concerning whether or not they had been involved in such activities between Thanksgiving of 1976 and the date of the home visit (i. e. February-April, 1977). Each youth responded on specially designed answer sheets to insure anonymity.

When the information provided by the residents was compiled, two things became evident. First, some residents in all of the homes are involved in activities considered to reflect Responsible Behavior. Second, although the promotion of Responsible Behavior is a major goal at the group home facilities, it was found that most residents reported little participation in activities considered by the study to be responsible.

The paragraphs which follow describe what was learned when information concerning self-reported Responsible Behavior was analyzed in relation to a number of the treatment approaches being used in the group homes. The object of this analysis was to attempt to link the treatment approaches to the occurrence of the behavior.

The Definition of Treatment Approaches Considered to Promote Responsible Behavior

The following aspects of group home programs were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Responsible Behavior.

- Leadership Roles. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents assume or are given roles by staff which involve guiding or helping other residents.

- Vocational Training. This measure related to the availability of vocational training opportunities to residents within the home environment.

- Positive Reinforcements. This was a measure derived from data reported by staff. It measured frequency with which various types of positive reinforcement were extended to individual residents, i. e. offering praise, allowing later curfews, etc.

- Negative Reinforcements. This was a measure derived from data reported by staff. It measured the frequency of application of various types of negative reinforcements with individual residents, i. e. reduction in allowance, exclusion from group outings, etc.

- Resident Decision Making Power. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents have decision making power with regard to such things as rewarding and punishing other residents, changing house rules, etc.

- Manager Roles. This was a composite score related specifically to the supervisory function of the residents; i.e. assigning chores to other youth in the group home and verifying their completion. Manager Roles differ from Leadership Roles in that Manager Roles involve a supervisory or "trustee" function, whereas Leadership Roles involve a helping or "big brother" function.

Treatment Approaches Related to Responsible
Behavior: Findings and Implications

In analyzing the data, it was found that four treatment practices were related to Responsible Behavior, while two practices were unrelated. Those which were related included: Leadership Roles, Vocational Training, Positive Reinforcement, and Negative Reinforcement. Those found to be not related were: Resident Group Decision Making Power and Manager Roles. The treatment approaches which were related to Responsible Behavior will be discussed first.

The discussion will focus on Leadership Roles and Positive Reinforcement since they were found to have the strongest relationship to Responsible Behavior. While Vocational Training and Negative Reinforcement were found to have weaker relationships with Responsible Behavior, certain trends were observed which, when considered with the stronger relationships concerning Leadership and Positive Reinforcement, may have important implications for program change.

Study findings indicated that the majority of residents are not often involved in helping or leading other youth in the group homes sampled. When the data concerning Leadership Roles were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Responsible Behavior, it was found that this program aspect was directly associated with behaving responsibly. That is, those residents who reported higher levels of leadership involvement also said that they behaved more responsibly. These findings suggest that youth be given as many opportunities as possible to exercise leadership and to do things which will involve them in helping fellow residents solve problems.

A way in which group home staff can increase opportunities for residents to become involved in leadership activities involves vocational training. The various house directors and administrators reported that the majority of youth sampled have no access to vocational training in the homes. However, when vocational training was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Responsible Behavior, it was found that the provision of one or more types of vocational training is associated with higher involvement in Responsible Behavior. While this relationship was not strong, it may be that the availability of vocational training provides opportunities for residents to assume Leadership Roles by helping others engaged in the activity, etc.

Based on these findings, it can be assumed that if group homes provided residents with more access to vocational and similar programs, residents' opportunities for involvement in Leadership Roles would increase. Such a development should encourage the expression of Responsible Behavior. Study findings suggest that such activities be carefully designed so that residents will not merely be participants but will have opportunities to assist one another. Team sports and joint craft or school projects would be examples.

Another way group home staff may consider expanding opportunities for residents' involvement in Leadership Roles relates to conditions where particular youth need support or assistance in certain areas (i.e., school, hobbies, drug usage, etc.). Study findings suggest that staff might call on residents who are good at such things to "help" their peers.

Group home staff reported that they are using Positive Reinforcements (i.e. allowances, later curfews, etc.) to varying degrees in all of the facilities studied. When the use of such reinforcements was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Responsible Behavior, a number of interesting findings resulted. On the one hand, it was found that residents who received medium amounts of Positive Reinforcement also reported high Responsible Behavior. 1/ On the other hand, in cases where staff reported that they had used this technique very little or a great deal, youth were not becoming involved in activities that were considered as indicative of Responsible Behavior.

In summary, study findings indicate that although there is a relationship between Positive Reinforcement and Responsible Behavior, there is an optimal level at which this technique can be applied if it is to be effective. In attempting to reach this optimal level, group home staff might consider carefully planning the use of Positive Reinforcement. Apparently, too little reinforcement will not strengthen desired

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1/ Medium amounts of Positive Reinforcements were considered those which were scored as 8 through 10 on a scale of 1 through 18.

behavior. However, too much reinforcement does not appear to be effective either, so consideration might be given to not rewarding the youth on every occasion of Responsible Behavior, but rather at frequent, but varying intervals, and over a period of time, rewards for the same type of Responsible Behavior might be gradually reduced. If this approach is used, the youth may adopt the responsible activities as part of their life styles as opposed to just doing certain things knowing or expecting to be rewarded.

Staff also reported that they are using Negative Reinforcements (i.e. reduction in allowance, restriction, etc.) to varying degrees in all of the homes studied. The use of Negative Reinforcements appeared to be related to Responsible Behavior, although its overall effects were not as strong. That is, residents who received a small amount of Negative Reinforcement tended to report high Responsible Behavior. As Negative Reinforcement (or punishment) was increased beyond a moderate degree, the Responsible Behavior of residents dropped, indicating that while some punishment may be profitable in terms of behavioral change, large amounts of it may be counterproductive. Reasons for this are obvious; constant punishment arouses feelings of anger and hostility or even submissiveness, rather than a desire to assume responsibility. The findings suggest that while judicious use of Negative Reinforcement can be very effective, the application of such techniques should be carefully planned.

Treatment Approaches Unrelated to Responsible Behavior: Findings and Implications

Two additional group home practices were found not to be related to Responsible Behavior. The implications that can be drawn concerning the effect of these treatment methods on Responsible Behavior are limited. These included:

-   Resident Group Decision Making Power; and,

-   Manager Roles.

These practices were measured and analyzed in that it was assumed that their effects would be comparable with those of Leadership Roles. That logic was employed in that Decision Making, Manager and Leadership Roles all concern areas in which group home residents

can "take charge". The amount of decision making that residents are given varied widely throughout the homes, with most of the residents reporting that they had never been managers. When these program practices were analyzed in terms of relationships with Responsible Behavior, they were found to have no important effects. Therefore, group home operators would not expect the assigning of group decision making power and of manager roles to residents to stimulate Responsible Behavior, although no detrimental effects of these practices were observed. In summary, no implications for change of program practices in the areas of group decision making and manager roles are indicated in this study.

REBELLIOUS BEHAVIOR

Introduction

Paralleling the group home goal of stimulating Responsible Behavior is the control of Rebellious Behavior patterns among group home youth. In fact, a primary objective of many of the prominent treatment approaches being used in Maryland group homes is to decrease various types of rebellious activities; therefore, the study of Rebellious Behavior occurring in the group home setting was included in the project.

For purposes of the research, "rebellious behavior" was defined as activities that residents reported being involved in which reflected a lack of adjustment. These activities included such things as talking back to staff; picking on or threatening other residents; failing to do chores; damaging group home property; etc. Information regarding these activities was gathered in the same manner as that concerning Responsible Behavior.

The major finding which emerged concerning Rebellious Behavior was that most of the residents were not frequently involved in these types of activities. Not surprisingly, a majority indicated that they had been involved in various types of rebellious activities in the past.

The paragraphs which follow describe what was learned when information concerning self-reported Rebellious Behavior was analyzed in relation to a number of the treatment approaches being used in the group homes. The object of this analysis was to attempt to link the treatment approaches to the occurrence of the behavior.

The Definition of Treatment Approaches Considered In
Relation to Rebellious Behavior

The following aspects of group home programs were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Rebellious Behavior.

- <u>Negative Reinforcements</u>. This was a measure derived from data reported by staff. It measured the frequency of application of various types of negative reinforcements with individual residents, i.e. reduction in allowance, exclusion from group outings, etc.

- <u>Physical Restraint</u>. This was a single item, staff-reported measure of the frequency with which residents have had to be physically restrained.

- <u>Disparity- Staff Tone of Authority</u>. This was a measure of the difference between the extent of authority that staff reported using and what the residents said was used.

- <u>Experience with Staff Concern</u>. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents see staff members as being available, caring and open with them.

- <u>Intensity of Meetings</u>. This was a composite score which measured the degree of anxiety, tension and confrontation generated during group meetings.

- <u>Leadership Roles</u>. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents assume or are given roles by staff which involve guiding or helping other residents.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the information analyzed concerning these treatment techniques and their relationship with Rebellious Behavior was provided by the youth sampled.

Treatment Approaches Related to Rebellious Behavior:
Findings and Implications

In analyzing the data, it was found that four treatment practices were related to Rebellious Behavior, while two practices were unrelated. Those which were related included: Negative Reinforcement, Physical Restraint, Disparity-Staff Tone of Authority and Experience with Staff Concern. The discussion will focus on Negative Reinforcement, Physical Restraint and Disparity-Staff Tone of Authority since they were found to have the strongest relationship to Rebellious Behavior. While Experience with Staff Concern was found to have a weak relationship with Rebellious Behavior, certain trends were observed which, when considered with the stronger associations may have important implications for program change.

As previously noted, study findings indicated that the use of Negative Reinforcements, as reported by staff, varies considerably across the group homes studied. When Negative Reinforcement was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Rebellious Behavior, a number of interesting findings emerged. First, the data indicated that Rebellious Behavior did not increase or decrease steadily as the use of Negative Reinforcement changed. Second, it was found that the <u>lowest</u> occurrence of Rebellious Behavior was among residents who had seldom been punished. Third, residents who had received a moderately low level of negative reinforcement were found to be the most rebellious. Lastly, Rebellious Behavior proved high among residents who had received punishment very frequently.

While the pattern of relationship between Negative Reinforcement and Rebellious Behavior differs somewhat from its pattern of relationship with Responsible Behavior, the same implication can be drawn. The findings suggest that negative reinforcement must be utilized carefully in order to be a useful technique. It may be beneficial for group home staff to examine their policies and practices with regard to applying negative reinforcements. Following such a review, staff may wish to experiment and develop a system for the use of Negative Reinforcement. Such techniques as immediately applying the punishment upon occurrence of the behavior; designing negative reinforcements to "fit" the undesired behavior; and, tolerance of certain types and amounts of Rebellious Behavior are examples of the various system approaches that group home staff might investigate. If such a system is developed and negative reinforcements are carefully planned, it may be advisable for staff to inform residents of the consequences that will be consistently associated with particular types of behavior. In this way, the youth will be "put on notice" and know what to expect if they are rebellious. However, if the planned approach is not carefully and consistently employed, a "sense of

injustice" may result and lead to higher levels of Rebellious Behavior.

Staff reported that only 19 percent of the residents have ever had to be physically restrained, and none of these more than "once or twice". When Physical Restraint was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Rebellious Behavior, it was found that those residents who had been physically restrained reported significantly higher involvement in Rebellious Behavior than those who had not.

This finding can be explained from the standpoint that physical restraint has to be used with certain residents due to the fact that they "act out" frequently and seriously. While this is a logical argument, the argument can be made that needless use of force may stimulate more youth to act rebelliously. Again, residents' sense of injustice may be a primary consideration in attempting to foster certain types of behavior and control other types.

Support for this position was evidenced in terms of study findings related to residents' Experience with Staff Concern. Specifically, when Experience with Staff Concern was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Rebellious Behavior, it was found that the more such experience residents have had, the lower their involvement in Rebellious Behavior tended to be. Although this relationship was not a strong one, this finding suggests that residents who feel that staff are available and caring are less likely to develop a sense of injustice which might lead to greater involvement in Rebellious Behavior.

During the study, staff were asked how often they used a "tone of authority" in everyday interaction with residents. Similarly, the youth were asked how often they had felt "bossed around" by staff. It was reasoned that the difference between those two points of view would shed light on the relationship between what staff thought they were doing in terms of using authority as a treatment approach and what residents perceived was happening to them. When the differences in responses were compiled, it was found that the majority of the residents reported less staff use of an authoritative tone than group home personnel say they are trying to employ. When this difference was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Rebellious Behavior, on the one hand it was found that rebelliousness was lowest among the majority of residents who reported that staff were using less of an authoritative tone than staff reported using. On the other hand, residents who felt that staff were bossing them around, while staff maintained that they were not, were youth who had reported being involved in frequent rebellious activities.

These findings suggest that group home staff cannot assume that their actions are being accurately perceived by the residents. In fact, the data indicates that it is not what the staff say they are doing that is related to Rebellious Behavior, rather it is what the residents "think" in terms of the use of authoritarian tones that is important. Consequently, group home personnel may want to consider the same sort of development of feedback mechanisms which will help them determine whether their interactions are actually being realized by the youth. In order for staff to affect resident behavior, they need to be aware of how the approaches and techniques they are using are "coming across" to the residents.

Treatment Approaches Unrelated to Rebellious Behavior: Findings and Implications

Two additional group home practices were not found to be related to Rebellious Behavior. The implications that can be drawn concerning the effects of these treatment methods on Rebellious Behavior are limited. These included:

- Intensity of Meetings; and,

- Leadership Roles.

Intensity of Meetings was studied because the major group treatment methods employ intense confrontation in meetings as a tool in attempting to reduce undesirable behavior outside the meetings. Some residents reported highly intense meetings, although most of the residents reported that the group meetings being held in the homes are only moderately intense. When the level of meeting intensity was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Rebellious Behavior, no specific associations were found. Thus, staff might consider redirecting their efforts away from the generation of anxiety and confrontation during group meetings to utilization of other types of treatment approaches.

Although the development of Leadership Roles is an important consideration in attempting to stimulate Responsible Behavior, study findings suggest that providing youth the opportunity for such roles does not affect Rebellious Behavior.

SELF RESPECT

Introduction

Self Respect was studied during the project because it was frequently cited by group home staff and administrators as a significant problem of many home residents. In that many of these youth come from environments providing little or no support for the development of confidence and self-esteem, staff felt that many youth had little self respect. These factors are generally recognized as being important to the successful adjustment to community life.

For the purposes of the research, "self respect" was considered to be made up of various self attitudes reflecting confidence and self acceptance. These included such statements as "I have a number of good qualities"; "I usually have good judgement"; and, "I do what is right most of the time". To gather information about self respect, residents responded in terms of "true" or "false" to a series of tape recorded statements on specially designed answer sheets.

The data which were obtained revealed that most of the residents had generally high levels of Self Respect. It appears that staff may be overestimating the extent of this particular problem among the youth with which they work.

The following paragraphs describe what was found when the information regarding Self Respect was analyzed in relation to a number of the program elements being used in the group homes. The purpose of this analysis was to attempt to link the treatment approaches to the existing levels of Self Respect.

The Definition of Treatment Approaches Considered To Promote Self Respect

The following aspects of group home programs were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Self Respect.

- Experience with Staff Authority. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents saw staff as being authoritarian in manner and refusing to listen to excuses for behavior.

- Disparity-Staff Tone of Authority. This was a measure of the difference between the extent of authority that staff reported using and what the residents said was used.

- Staff Average Education. This measure assessed the levels of group home staff's education, i.e., from high school through an advanced degree.

- Disparity-Conditions for Success. This score measured the difference between the extent to which staff reported setting up conditions for resident success (i.e., giving them tasks they can accomplish) and the amount of success the residents said they had experienced in the homes.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the information analyzed concerning these program elements and their relationships with Self Respect was provided by the youth sampled.

Treatment Approaches Related to Self Respect: Findings and Implications

In analyzing the data, it was found that four treatment practices were related to Self Respect. Two showed stronger relationships while the remaining approaches exhibited less association. Those which were found to be strongly related included: Experience with Staff Authority and Disparity-Conditions for Success. Disparity-Staff Tone of Authority and Staff Average Education had weaker relationships, thus the following discussion focuses on Experience with Staff Authority and Disparity-Conditions for Success.

Study findings indicated that the majority of residents stated that staff did not use authority frequently. When the data concerning Experience with Staff Authority were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Self Respect, several important findings emerged. A tendency was observed for Self Respect of Residents to decrease as their experience with staff authority increased. However, those residents with extremely low experience with staff authority reported less Self Respect than did residents with slightly higher experience with Staff Authority.

While these findings suggest that a high level of Staff Authority may have detrimental effects on self respect of residents, they also indicate that some degree of staff authority is necessary to illustrate to the youths that group home personnel are concerned and care about them. Although the study did not uncover why this occurs, it may be that the higher levels of staff authority are seen by youth as degrading, which lowers their levels of self respect. In short, the findings suggest that group home personnel should bear in mind that there is probably an optimal level of authority, optimal in the sense that the levels of authority which are utilized be such that youth do not feel that staff is apathetic or unconcerned about them or that group home personnel are attacking residents' self concepts. Reaching such a level will be a matter for experimentation among staff and residents.

As previously noted, Disparity-Staff Tone of Authority concerns the difference between the levels of staff authority that residents and staff report. It is not surprising, in the light of the above discussion, that Self Respect tends to be lower among residents who reported that the staff used a tone of authority to a greater degree than the staff indicated. It may be that these residents are "focusing in" on staff's every use of authority because it supports their low self concepts which developed prior to their arrival at the facility. Moreover, these findings suggest that staff consider not only how and when they use authority, but how its usage is being perceived by the residents.

Average Education of Staff, while not found to be strongly related to Self Respect, did in fact produce some interesting findings. It was found that the majority of residents sampled are in group homes staffed by individuals with college educations. When this program aspect was considered in terms of its relationship with Self Respect, it was found that as the average educational background of staff in a particular facility rose, the Self Respect of residents in such homes rose.

In light of the above discussion of staff authority, it appears likely that this finding relates to the techniques or methods of authority used by staff. That is, staff with advanced educations may be more effective in achieving that optimal level of authority which is sufficient to maintain control yet not degrading to the residents. These staffs may base their authority on collaboration rather than conflict. The reader will recall that a similar implication was presented with regard to preventing the development of a "sense of injustice" which might

contribute to Rebellious Behavior. It appears of primary importance for group home staff to closely examine their methods of establishing and maintaining authority, with attention to alternative techniques which rely on collaboration and provide justification to the residents for staff's use of authority when it is necessary.

The treatment orientation concerning the creation of conditions for success was also studied during the project. In particular, efforts were made to determine the difference or disparity between what staff felt was happening and what youth said was going on. In developing this measure, staff were asked how often they "set up" conditions for the residents to experience success, and the residents were asked how often this actually occurred in the homes. Findings revealed that the majority of residents experienced less success than the staff reported trying to stimulate. When this information was examined as it related to Self Respect of residents, a noteworthy pattern emerged. On the one hand, Self Respect was low where the staff reported setting up conditions for success but the residents were not experiencing a high level of success. This most likely occurred due to the residents' perceived inability to accomplish things when opportunities are being provided. On the other hand, Self Respect was also low where the staff reported not setting up conditions for success, and the residents said they were experiencing success. Apparently, the mere experience of success is not sufficient to guarantee high Self Respect; rather, success must be recognized by others if it is to impact on the Self Respect of youth.

One way to achieve such recognition may be to insure that successful experiences of residents are acknowledged by "significant others" (i.e., staff). Such an approach is consistent with much of the self esteem/self concept literature which maintains that a person's actions develop meaning through the reactions of others. Hence, findings suggest that if group home staff provide opportunities for success of which all residents are capable of taking advantage, and clearly show the youth that they have been successful, Self Respect among the residents may be brought to higher levels than currently exist.

In summary, findings indicated that staff actions and orientations, whether in the area of authority or resident achievement, can significantly impact on the Self Respect of residents.

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Introduction

Two-Way Communication was considered during the study because open communication between residents and staff is considered a requisite of most of the treatment methods used by Maryland group homes. Thus, efforts are being made in the majority of homes studied to help the residents develop their communication skills. Importantly, effective communication requires that youth must be able to express themselves and also be willing to listen to and act on what others are saying.

For purposes of the research, the concept of "two-way communication" was made up of resident behavior and attitudes which reflect a capability of using communication as a problem-solving device (i.e., listening to other peoples' points of view, talking freely to counselors and teachers, etc.). Information regarding these behaviors and attitudes was gathered by having residents respond to tape recorded questions and statements on specially designed answer sheets that assured confidentiality.

When the information provided by the residents was compiled, it was found that the majority of youth reported moderate to high levels of Two-Way Communication. The following paragraphs describe what was learned when this information concerning Two-Way Communication was analyzed in relation to a number of group home program aspects. The object of these analyses was to attempt to link the treatment approaches to the occurrence of Two-Way Communication.

The Definition of Treatment Approaches Considered In Relation to Two-Way Communication

The following aspects of group home programs were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Two-Way Communication.

- Experience with Staff Concern. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents see staff members as being available, caring and open with them.

- Contentment with the Home Environment. This was a composite score that dealt with residents' degree of contentment with regard to relationships with staff and the living situation in the home.

- Leadership Roles. This was a composite score which measured the extent to which residents assume or are given roles by staff which involve guiding or helping other residents.

- Staff Average Education. This measure assessed the levels of group home staff's education, i.e. from high school through an advanced degree.

- Staffing Pattern. This was a measure of the number of group homes that use the House Parent or "ma and pa" versus the Counseling Model.

- Discussion of Past Delinquency During Group Meetings. This single-item measure concerned the extent to which residents discuss their past delinquency during group meetings.

- Intensity of Group Meetings. This was a composite score which measured the degree of anxiety, tension and confrontation generated during group meetings.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the information analyzed concerning program aspects and their relationships with Two-Way Communication was provided by the youth sampled.

Treatment Approaches Found To Be Related To
Two-Way Communication: Findings and Implications

In analyzing the data it was found that six treatment practices were related in varying degrees to Two-Way Communication. Four of the six showed strong associations. These included: Experience with Staff Concern, Leadership Roles, Staff Average Education and Staffing Pattern. While Contentment with the Home Environment and Discussion of Past Delinquency during Group Meetings were found to have weaker relationships with Two-Way Communication, certain trends were observed which, when considered with the associated treatment approaches, may have important implications for program change.

As reported above, the majority of residents sampled experienced fairly high levels of Staff Concern. When this treatment technique was analyzed in relation to Two-Way Communication, a strong association was found. That is, as youth's Experiences with Staff Concern increased, reported levels of Two-Way Communication rose.

This finding suggests that Two-Way Communication may be stimulated by outward displays of support and concern from group home staff. This approach toward stimulating Two-Way Communication is supported by results pertaining to residents' attitudes as to Contentment with the Home Environment. More specifically, although most residents reported moderate contentment, when analyzed in relation to Two-Way Communication, it was found that the higher the level of contentment, the greater the degree of Two-Way Communication that existed.

It appears that in order for residents to feel confident and assured in "opening up" to staff, they must believe that staff is concerned about them and have a sense of personal relationships with group home personnel. Thus, study findings reinforced the idea that trust is an important ingredient in effective two-way communication.

As noted within the discussion on Responsible Behavior, most residents had infrequent involvement in leadership and helping roles. However, as was the case with Responsible Behavior, Leadership Roles was found to be directly associated with Two-Way Communication. That is, residents who indicated they were very involved in Leadership Roles also reported high levels of Two-Way Communication.

Apparently, those types of helping roles, as well as stimulating Responsible Behavior, may provide opportunities for residents to practice two-way communication. That is, through the use of Two-Way Communication in helping roles, they have increased opportunities to develop appreciation for its utility in working out problems. It is logical to conclude that group homes may enhance program efforts by developing opportunities for residents to exercise helping and leading behaviors with peers.

Staff Average Education was also found to have a significant relationship with Two-Way Communication. In fact, the more educated the group home staff, the more the residents of the home tended to use two-way communication to solve problems.

This finding may have emerged in that staff with advanced educations may be more inclined than less educated personnel to utilize two-way communication as a problem-solving method. Importantly, when educational attainment findings are considered in combination with the possible tendency for highly educated staff to base their authority on a collaborative model as discussed above, it appears that group home directors would be well advised to provide added training in counseling skills to personnel that have not had an opportunity to do college work in these areas.

Sixty percent of the residents sampled live in homes that utilize a Counseling Model. The remaining youth reside in facilities that employ the house parent or "ma and pa" approach. Importantly

Sixty percent of the residents sampled live in homes that utilize a Counseling Model. The remaining youth reside in facilities that employ the House Parent or "ma and pa" approach. Importantly, when Staffing Pattern was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Two-Way Communication, findings revealed that residents of homes that use the counseling model scored significantly higher on Two-Way Communication than those that live in homes with house parent programs. This finding suggests that staff with counseling backgrounds may have more highly developed skills related to influencing residents to utilize Two-Way Communication and to see it as a source of assistance with problems than personnel that have not received training in various counseling methodologies. Moreover, providing training in this area may well be an avenue that administrators of House Parent homes may wish to pursue.

During the study, one additional method of stimulating Two-Way Communication was documented. More specifically, it was found that the majority of residents sampled rarely discuss their past delinquency during group meetings. Yet, when Discussion of Past Delinquency During Meetings was analyzed in relation to Two-Way Communication, it was found that residents who frequently discussed their past delinquency during such meetings tended also to be two-way communicators. Although the relationship was weak, the discussion of past delinquency during group meetings may be one way for staff to stimulate Two-Way Communication. Other methods may be tried by those staff who are oriented toward Reality Therapy and would direct residents' attention away from the past.

Treatment Approaches Unrelated to Two-Way Communication: Findings and Implications

One treatment approach, when analyzed in terms of its relationship with Two-Way Communication, was found unrelated. The implications that can be drawn concerning the effect of the Intensity of Group Meetings on Two-Way Communication are limited.

Nonetheless, based on the weak relationship found, staff might consider re-directing their efforts away from attempting to raise anxiety and confrontation levels during group meetings. Instead, they may wish to experiment with the application of counseling techniques that are most likely to foster Two-Way Communication among residents (i.e., listening and non-threatening probing skills).

THE TREATMENT ELEMENTS ANALYZED IN RELATION TO ALL GROUP HOME OBJECTIVES

Two treatment elements were analyzed in relation to Responsible and Rebellious Behavior, Self-Respect and Two-Way Communication. These included:

- Staffing Pattern. This was a measure of the number of group homes that use the House Parent or "ma and pa" versus the Counseling Model.

- Length of Stay. This measured the length of residents' stays in group homes at the time of data collection in terms of calendar months.

As previously discussed, Staffing Pattern proved to be an important program element with regard to Two-Way Communication. However, it was found that Staffing Pattern was not strongly related to Responsible and Rebellious Behavior or Self Respect of residents. This suggests that there is not a significant difference in quality of care between House Parent and Counseling Homes.

Interestingly, analysis revealed that Length of Stay also was not related to any of the objectives studied in the project. Nonetheless, a trend was noted for Responsible Behavior, Two-Way Communication and Self Respect to increase as Length of Stay increased. Unfortunately, these relationships were of insufficient magnitude to warrant conclusions. Analysis also showed that there does not appear to be an optimal length of stay in terms of promoting the various program objectives.

Section III

A SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS
FROM THE STAFF DATA

INTRODUCTION

This section presents a summary of important findings which emerged from the analysis of the staff data. Again, both descriptive and process evaluation results are provided, as well as their implications.

Separate sets of findings related to each of two staff outcome measures or objectives, Job Satisfaction and Burn-Out, studied during the project, are documented in this Section. These objectives were identified through discussions with group home personnel and JSA staff. The process variables, or aspects of group home jobs, discussed in terms of their relationships with the objectives are those which emerged as most important after analysis of a wide variety of job aspects identified through the inputs of group home personnel, JSA staff and relevant literature.

JOB SATISFACTION

Introduction

Job Satisfaction is often associated with goal attainment. Further, managers of all types generally consider employee satisfaction as a critical factor involved with job performance. As a result, the job satisfaction of group home staff was studied during the project.

For purposes of the research "job satisfaction" was made up of the enjoyment of the job and a preference for the present group home assignment over others. To gather information in these areas, staff were requested to provide the extent of their agreement with a series of questionnaire statements pertaining to their jobs (i.e., I am being paid for a job I enjoy doing; This job gives me more satisfaction than jobs I have had in the past, etc.).

When this information provided by staff was compiled, it was found that the majority of staff respondents are moderately to highly satisfied with their present positions.

The paragraphs which follow describe what was learned when the information concerning Job Satisfaction was analyzed in relation to a number of aspects of group home programs which apply directly to group home staff. The object of these analyses was to attempt to link the various program aspects to Job Satisfaction.

The Definition of Program Aspects Analyzed in Relation to Job Satisfaction

The following aspects of group home programs were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Job Satisfaction.

- Self Determination. This composite score concerned the degree to which staff members can decide their own working methods and goals.

- Development of Personal Relationships. This composite score concerned staff attempts to develop personal relationships with residents and to express verbal praise to residents for responsible behavior.

- Use of Volunteers. This measure was concerned with the number of hours per week that staff have access to volunteer workers.

- Communication. This composite score measured the degree of emphasis placed on maintaining channels of communication among staff and administrators in the group homes.

- Knowledge of Impact. This was a composite score which measured the degree to which staff knew of successful impacts on residents or were aware of indicators of progress in their work. An added dimension was the degree of feedback obtained on discharged youth.

- Contribution to Career. This composite score pertained to the degree that the group home job contributed to the individual's career goals.

- Staffing Pattern. This was a measure of the number of staff who are in group homes that use the House Parent versus the Counseling Model.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the information analyzed concerning program elements and their relationships with Job Satisfaction was provided by the group home personnel sampled.

Program Aspects Related to Job Satisfaction: Findings and Implications.

All six of the program aspects proved to have some relationship with Job Satisfaction. The strongest associations were found with Self Determination and Communication. Thus, the discussion which follows focuses on these program characteristics. In addition, comments are offered concerning the following program aspects due to the fact that weak relationships were uncovered between them and Job Satisfaction: Development of Personal Relationships, Use of Volunteers, Knowledge of Impact, and Contribution to Career.

The majority of staff members sampled reported medium to high levels of Self Determination in their jobs. Notably, when the data concerning Self Determination were analyzed in terms of their relationship with Job Satisfaction, a direct association was found. That is, those staff members who reported high levels of Self Determination also indicated more satisfaction with their jobs.

This finding suggests that staff discretion is an important ingredient in the satisfaction of group home jobs. Facility directors may wish to consider broadening staff responsibility for determining their own working methods and goals.

One area where staff might be given increased discretion concerns the development of personal relationships with residents. Study findings indicated that staff who reported frequent attempts to develop personal relationships with residents were most likely to be highly satisfied with their jobs.

Another program aspect which may affect staff's exercise of self determination is the use of volunteers in the group home programs. Study findings indicated that one third of the staff members sampled had access to less than ten hours of volunteer assistance per week. When Use of Volunteers was analyzed regarding its relationship

with Job Satisfaction, findings suggested that greater use of volunteers contributes to higher job satisfaction. It may be that the provision of an effective volunteer system in the group homes helps to free staff from various routine tasks and allows them more time to exercise discretion and become personally involved in treatment. Importantly, a moderately low use of volunteers (i. e. , eleven to seventeen hours per week) seemed to have more detrimental effects on Job Satisfaction than little or no use (i. e. , ten or less hours per week). It may be that token attempts at a volunteer system consitute more of a burden than a help to staff, in that they are required to coordinate and direct volunteer activities, but get little in return. This implies that, in order to be of true assistance and to be worthwhile, group home volunteer systems must be well organized and fairly extensive, i. e. , at least twenty hours of volunteer hours per week should be considered.

A more global aspect of Self Determination involves the career directions of group home staff. It was considered important to assess whether staff members are currently "where they want to be" in terms of ultimate career objectives. For the most part, study findings indicated that staff members feel that their current jobs consitute medium to high contributions to their careers.

When Contribution to Career was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Job Satisfaction, it was found that satisfaction tended to be highest among those staff for whom the job constitutes a moderate contribution to their careers. One explanation of this finding is that in situations where the job is seen as highly contributive to one's career, there may be a greater tendency to look ahead to more fulfilling positions, hence, limiting satisfaction with the present "stepping stone" job.

The majority of group home personnel sampled reported high levels of communication between one another and with administrators. When analyzed in relation to Job Satisfaction, Communication was found to be directly associated with Job Satisfaction. Staff who reported higher levels of communication in terms of being informed of developments and having channels of communication available were more satisfied with their jobs.

One area of communication which was studied involved whether or not staff was provided feedback as to progress and impact they were having on the youth. The majority reported having moderate knowledge of their impact on the residents. When Knowledge of Impact was analyzed in terms of its relationship with Job Satisfaction, only those staff who reported extensive Knowledge of Impact were found to be highly

satisfied with their jobs. Those who reported moderate to high Knowledge of Impact were not any more satisfied than those who reported little knowledge. This suggests that increased staff knowledge of success or failure with the youth they are working with may not necessarily lead to greater Job Satisfaction. In order for Knowledge of Impact to positively affect Job Satisfaction, it must be very extensive, and not provided to merely a moderate or high extent. Only the most extensive knowledge is related to high Job Satisfaction. As such the development of formalized procedures for channeling feedback to staff on the progress and success of youth after discharge might be considered as a way to improve opportunities for Job Satisfaction.

These findings support the idea that the provision for specific channels of communication is an important element of group home management. Hence, group home managers may wish to increase the use of such vehicles as staff meetings, informative bulletins and opportunities for decision making. These techniques may result in higher levels of Job Satisfaction due to the increased communications they stimulate.

Program Aspects Unrelated to Job Satisfaction

Staffing Pattern was analyzed and found not to be related to Job Satisfaction. Seventy percent of the staff work in homes using the Counseling Model and the remainder are in homes which rely on the House Parent approach. 1/ When comparisons for relationships between Staffing Pattern and Job Satisfaction were made no important associations appeared. Based on these findings, it may be concluded that the utilization of the House Parent versus the Counseling Model makes no difference in terms of the Job Satisfaction of Staff.

BURN OUT

Introduction

One of the problems which seems to be endemic among the group homes is the high rate of staff turnover. Explanations for this phenomenon offered by group home administrators focused on the

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1/ When compared with the previously mentioned finding that only sixty percent of the residents are in homes using the Counseling Model, it is apparent that the staff/resident ratio tends to be higher in these homes.

generally low salaries in most group homes and the tendency for staff to burn out.

Burn Out is a relatively recent concept which has received little or no attention in community corrections literature. In view of its recognition and acceptance in practical circles, Burn Out was studied during the project. For purposes of the research, "burn out" was defined as:

the tendency for staff to become increasingly unable to respond to the demands of the job, due to the high levels of personal and emotional commitment required.

To gather information about Burn Out, staff members were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with a series of questionnaire statements (i.e., This job requires too much personal investment; You have to put a lot of your feelings, hopes and goals on the line in this job, etc.).

Study findings showed that the majority of staff reported that they had little difficulty in responding to the demands of the job. However, this was considered significant in that Burn Out was seen as a process occurring over time and many of the staff could be seen as having the symptoms or the potential to Burn Out.

The paragraphs which follow describe what was learned when that information concerning staff Burn Out was analyzed in relation to a number of elements of group home jobs.

The Definition of Program Aspects Analyzed in Relation to Burn Out

The following aspects of group home jobs were analyzed in terms of relationships with Burn Out.

- Average Work Week. This measure concerned the number of hours per week that group staff work.

- Uncompensated Overtime. This measure concerned the number of hours of overtime worked by staff, but for which they were not remunerated.

- Annual Salary. This was a measure of base pay received by staff.

- Knowledge of Impact. This was a composite score which measured the degree to which staff knew of successful impacts on residents or were aware of indicators of progress in their work. An added dimension was the degree of feedback obtained on discharged youth.

- Decision Making in Screening and Discharge. This was a composite score referring to decisions in areas normally considered administrative (i.e., screening of new residents, graduation and discharge of residents).

- Staffing Pattern. This was a measure of the number of staff who are in group homes that use the House Parent versus the Counseling Model.

Unless otherwise indicated, all information concerning these job aspects and their relationship with staff Burn Out was provided by group home staffs.

Job Aspects Related to Staff Burn Out: Findings and Implications

Data analysis indicated that three job aspects were related to staff Burn Out, while three were not. Those that were related included Average Work Week, Uncompensated Overtime and Knowledge of Impact. Those job aspects found not be related to staff Burn Out were Annual Salary, Decision Making in Screening and Discharge and Staffing Pattern.

With regard to Average Work Week, it was found that as staff's average work week increased, Burn Out increased. The majority of personnel sampled reported working over 40 hours a week on the average. This finding suggests that efforts be made to reduce the total number of hours that staff are required to work. Where limited finances prohibit the hiring of additional staff, the expanded use of trained volunteers might be considered. Possibly, local colleges and universities would provide needed support.

Another option might involve the establishment of shift schedules with provision for compensatory time. This may be beneficial in that extra hours would occur only when specifically needed.

One fourth of the personnel sampled reported an average of ten uncompensated hours of work per week. Over half reported at least some uncompensated overtime. Interestingly, however, Uncompensated Overtime was found to have only a weak relationship with Burn Out. Although there was a tendency for Burn Out to increase as uncompensated overtime increased, the relationship was not as important as the one concerning Average Work Week.

This suggests that being paid for extra work is not necessarily a solution to the problem posed by long hours. It appears that attention should focus on reducing the actual number of hours worked, paid or unpaid. Again, the provision for compensatory time may be a viable alternative in that flexibility in staff schedules may provide the appropriate manpower at the times when it is most needed, yet it may offer sufficient relief for group home personnel.

Knowledge of Impact was found to have a relationship with Burn Out comparable to its relationship with Job Satisfaction. Staff who reported the most extensive knowledge of their impact on youth were the least likely to be burned out. This suggests that providing extensive knowledge of progress and success of residents may have desirable effects on group home staffs.

Job Aspects Unrelated to Staff Burn Out: Findings and Implications

Over fifty percent of personnel sampled reported Annual Salaries of less than $9,000. The unrelated nature of this job aspect with Burn Out, suggests that the hours of work, not the payment for such work, is the important consideration in minimizing Burn Out. Although salary increases are always welcome, they should not be viewed as a blanket solution to many staff Burn Out problems that exist.

With regard to Decision-Making in Screening and Discharge, most of the staff reported moderate to high involvement in such administrative decision making areas. However, involving staff in certain administrative areas does not appear to be an effective strategy in alleviating job pressures and dealing with Burn Out. It is possible that such involvement adds to an already burdensome workload in some cases. Perhaps, if used as a diversion from, rather than an addition to regular work with residents, such a strategy could be more effective.

Finally, Staffing Pattern was found to be no more important with regard to Burn Out than it was with Job Satisfaction. Whether group homes employ the Counseling or the House Parent Model is not a critical consideration regarding the staff problems analyzed in this study.

A REVIEW OF THE APPROACH AND A SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

GENERAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of the community survey was to determine the extent of support for group homes held by members of the surrounding community. To develop information on the topic, data were gathered concerning three specific issues related to the community relations of group homes. These were:

- the attitudes of community residents toward the concept of community-based treatment;

- the actual behavior of community residents as related to specific group homes; and,

- characteristics of the group homes in relation to the communities of which they are a part.

As a means of gathering desired information, a separate questionnaire instrument was developed. Among the types of information to be collected included:

- the community's familiarity with group home program operations;

- the visibility of the home in the community; and,

- the amount of contact community members have had with group home staff and residents.

Information was also gathered concerning the personal characteristics of those that responded to the survey.

To insure that data were collected in a systematic manner, a specific procedure was designed. It was based on the assumption that familiarity of community residents with group homes would decrease as their distance from the facilities increased. Moreover, the data collection process was initiated at the residences adjacent to the group homes. Subsequently, interviewers moved outward into the surrounding neighborhood until the desired number of respondents were reached. Importantly, over 80 percent of all the community residents who participated in the survey lived within two city blocks of a group home.

Eleven communities where group homes had operated or are presently functioning were selected for inclusion in the survey. 1/ Eight of the areas have homes that are currently operational; in three communities, the group home operations had been terminated prior to the survey. 2/ A total of 188 citizens were interviewed in the eleven communities. Interestingly, of those surveyed, 67, or 36 percent, were unaware of the existence of a group home in their neighborhood.

The sample selection was based on scientific and practical considerations. For example, only those group homes located within an urban/suburban area were considered for inclusion in the survey. The potential sample was limited in this manner to minimize variation resulting from environmental differences and to maximize the number of community residents available for contact around each group home.

1/ Administrators of currently operating group homes approved data collection in their neighborhoods, and were alerted as to the date and time that interviewers would be in the neighborhood.

2/ Two of the homes had ceased operation within two months of the survey. The third had been closed for less than two years. Questions asked of neighbors of these terminated homes pertained to when the homes were operational.

An additional consideration utilized during the selection process focused on the relationships that various group home administrators felt their facilities had with the surrounding community. 1/ This approach was used for the following reasons. First, it was employed so that facilities perceived to be positively and negatively accepted by the surrounding communities were included in the sample. Second, this consideration was utilized so that homes which promote community involvement as well as those that do not encourage such interaction were surveyed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A summary of the data and related conclusions of the community survey are presented below:

- A majority of those surveyed supported the group home concept and saw it as a valuable tool in combating juvenile delinquency. In every case, the majority of those who did not feel this way lived in neighborhoods where group homes had been closed.

- The majority of the respondents felt that it is very important to inform neighbors of intentions to establish such homes, although this had not been done in the cases of most of the respondents.

- Taken as a whole, involvement of community residents with the group home programs was found to be minimal. A majority were never given an opportunity to ask questions about the homes and never participated in a facility-sponsored event. Among neighbors of terminated homes, this lack of involvement was even more pronounced.

1/ This information was available as a result of the site visits conducted in conjunction with the Group Home Evaluation System Development Project.

- Community contributions of money, time, etc. to the homes has been slight in general and nonexistent from neighbors of terminated homes (i.e. during the period in which the homes were in operation).

- Contact with individual residents of the homes has been extremely limited, both in terms of the respondents themselves and their children.

- Survey respondents were most concerned about crime, noise and disorderly conduct. Of those respondents that indicated concern in these areas, 26, 24 and 41 percent, respectively, attributed these concerns to the presence of a group home.

- The majority of community members have neither spoken favorably about group homes nor complained about these facilities to their friends.

Section V

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GROUP HOME EVALUATION SYSTEM

Traditionally, the primary purpose of evaluation has been to generate one set of findings rather than to provide a structure which produces results on a continuous basis. Emphasis on the latter purpose differentiates the Group Home Evaluation System Development Project from other evaluations which have been conducted in Maryland and elsewhere.

The first phase in developing an ongoing evaluation system in Maryland was an evaluation of 23 group homes, which involved 151 residents and 108 staff members. Work focused on identifying measurable program objectives and elements of group home operations which are important in achieving these objectives.

With the knowledge gained in Phase I, the second year of the program (Phase II) will concentrate on building the evaluation component into the total Juvenile Services Administration's group home system. This will link group homes to the monitoring and research resources of the Juvenile Services Administration. To be successful, the ongoing evaluation system must meet the needs of service providers and the Juvenile Services Administration (i.e., group home administrators and treatment staff and JSA administrators, monitors and evaluators).

The initial stage of the second year of the project will involve revising the evaluation instruments used in the first year. These revisions will be directed toward developing a package that is relatively simple to administer, clear in language and meaningful in content to residents and staff. The package will also be designed to provide information relative to program operations that is useful to both group home and Juvenile Services Administration decision makers. Inputs regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the package will be solicited from group homes as the project progresses.

After the revisions are finalized, it is envisioned that some of the questionnaires will be administered only once, with updating as required, while others will be administered at intervals to

determine behavioral or attitudinal change on the part of the residents and changes in such measures as job satisfaction on the part of staff. Decisions as to optimal intervals for testing will necessitate input from group home staff. It is likely that some instruments will be administered by group home personnel; some by the MERF Team; and, some which require responses to be treated confidentially, will be administered by outside researchers. The use of graduate students from various surrounding universities has been considered for this purpose.

To increase the validity of the revised package, plans are underway to administer the instruments to ten or more group homes during the Fall of 1977 and Spring of 1978. The pretests will also help develop better collection procedures which are simple and which require minimal disturbance of the daily operations of group homes.

Training for all personnel to be involved in implementing the evaluation system is also considered an important activity during Phase II of the project. First, the MERF Team will be trained in the testing methodology developed during the first year. Second, training will be provided for staff representatives of group homes within the state and in adjacent areas outside the state. It is anticipated that staff from the same general areas (i.e. 4 to 6 group homes) will meet in a central location to receive the training. The training will be conducted by ITREC project personnel and JSA staff. The training will familiarize group home staff with the evaluation instruments and data collection procedures. Since the instruments and procedures will still be subject to revision at the time of the training, group home staff input will be encouraged. Third, JSA research staff will receive training in multivariate data analysis. This knowledge will assist JSA in analyzing on-going data received from group homes and preparing the findings for dissemination.

In conclusion, JSA has designated the development and implementation of the Group Home Evaluation System as a high priority project for the coming year. Its success, however, hinges on bringing together a variety of resources. Toward this end, JSA views the knowledge and experience of various Maryland group home staff as indispensable in the ongoing evaluation system. In order for this resource to be of maximum value, however, it is essential that feedback of evaluation findings be provided to group home operators in a prescribed manner. A summary report disseminated at established time periods, either semi-annually or annually, for example, is one dissemination mechanism currently under consideration.

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