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A RESOURCE MANUAL  
FOR THE  
VIOLENT JUVENILE OFFENDER  
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM  
PART I--ALTERNATIVE INTERVENTIONS

By:  
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June 1981

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PART I--ALTERNATIVE INTERVENTIONS

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RESEARCH  
ACQUISITION

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## I--INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

This resource manual is designed to assist the Violent Juvenile Offender Research and Development Program sites implement the intervention model described in the Background Paper. The manual should prove to be a valuable resource for developing the program design for the final application, for implementing the intervention theory and model, and for training project staff and other relevant agencies. It is anticipated that this manual should meet **five** general needs:

- Provide information to link the theory behind to the program to the intervention model;
- Provide further data on and practical applications of the model for design of structural elements and treatment approaches;
- Provide strategies for projects for developing strong and effective linkages with community agencies, organizations, and programs;
- Promote implementations of the intervention model which are comprehensive, feasible, and evaluable; and
- Assure that the five projects comprising the national program are consistent in their implementation of the intervention model and apply the programs underlying principles throughout all phases of the program.

Thus, the overriding objective of this manual is to provide a resource document which will aid the five individual projects to adhere to the national program intervention model. While local resources and experiences will likely impact on the program implementation of each site, each project **must** incorporate the same underlying principles, structural components, and treatment approaches for this national Research and Development Program to be successful. This document should assist project operators in achieving this consistency.



## BACKGROUND: INTEGRATED THEORY AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

A review of the literature has shown that there is no single factor or particular combination of factors which cause violent delinquency. No **single** explanation of violent delinquency can adequately explain the multiple causes and correlates of either violence or delinquency. Rather, the determinants of violent delinquency include individual, situational, and environmental or structural factors, and these factors will be present in varying degrees and combinations in the individuals served by the program. As such, this program is rooted in an "**integrated theory**" which incorporates properties of both the individual and the environment to explain behavior and to implement intervention approaches and modalities.

While grounded in theory, the actual design of the model draws heavily upon the practical experiences of those juvenile corrections agencies and community programs across the country which have been successful in early efforts to work with violent youth. As an initial task in the development of the intervention model, members of the Violent Juvenile Offender consortium (OJJDP, NCCD, NOSR, URSA Institute) visited 15 sites in ten states to study programs which were designed specifically for violent juveniles. Consortium members examined program theory, structure, operations, services, and community linkages and contexts. Promising approaches and critical program elements were identified. Data collected on these site visits, together with recommendations from the literature (eg., Dale Mann, 1976; Paul Strausburg, 1978; Dennis Romig, 1978) were combined with the integrated theory of violent delinquency to design the intervention model for the national program. Thus, the national design reflects a synthesis of both theory and practical experience.

## PROGRAM ORIGINS AND GOALS

### Program Rationale

Despite the fact that violent juvenile offenders constitute a relatively small and identifiable population, the juvenile court and corrections agencies have, until recently, largely neglected to single out these youth to provide them with unique dispositions and services. Rather, these youths have traditionally been placed into programs and facilities with "non-violent" delinquents and have received the same sentences and treatments.

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Research has found such efforts to be ineffective. Recently, the public has become increasingly concerned with violent juveniles, demanding more attention to their control and treatment. Consequently, violent juvenile offenders have become a primary focus of many states' legislatures and juvenile justice systems. In addition, increased research efforts have produced new data on these youths and potential intervention approaches for this population.

This increase in knowledge and concern has placed the juvenile justice system at a critical crossroads in determining the types of policies and interventions best suited for violent juvenile offenders. A choice must be made between adhering to the traditional juvenile court values of "**parens patriae**" and rehabilitation, or moving to the more punitive and retributive philosophy of the adult court. It is anticipated that the Violent Juvenile Offender Research and Development Program will produce needed information concerning the possible benefits of maintaining the rehabilitative ideals of the juvenile court, and whether this goal can be accomplished while also attending to public safety issues. Thus, this program should contribute significantly to the policy decisions which need to be reached concerning this troubled and troublesome population.

### Program Goals

The goals of the Violent Juvenile Offender Research and Development Program are:

- To **build knowledge** about violent juvenile crime and violent juvenile offenders;
- To **test** a theoretically grounded **intervention model** for the treatment and reintegration of violent juvenile offenders; and
- To **measure the impact** of a specific program developed exclusively for chronic violent juvenile offenders on the **juvenile justice system's** ability to handle violent juvenile offenders **fairly** and **efficiently**.

### Program Design: The Research and Development Model

To achieve these national goals, OJJDP has chosen a research and development approach to test the intervention theory and strategy. The use of the R&D model will resolve many of the previous shortcomings in research on treatment effects by utilizing a carefully

controlled program design which closely incorporates theory and adheres to social science research standards for rigor and validity. The importance of this manual is to ensure a high degree of validity in the interpretation and application of the intervention model. Through technical assistance and other inputs to projects, we will ensure uniform implementation across sites in the intervention/treatment approaches, and thus produce a high degree of validity in the national research program. Once again, our aim is to provide a conclusive test of a particular theoretical approach and model, and this manual is an important step in specifying the "independent variable."

The remainder of this manual provides practical applications of the intervention model, and presents strategies for the sites to involve the juvenile justice system and other relevant community agencies and organizations in services and operations in this intervention model.

## II—PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE INTERVENTION MODEL

The intervention model developed for the national program is grounded in two assumptions. First, there is no single cause for violence. Each project will admit youths with diverse backgrounds and varying treatment needs. Second, theory is best operationalized when program design integrates theory with existing research findings and practical experience. The applications of the model described below are rooted in the knowledge developed through the early efforts of programs pioneering in violent offender interventions.

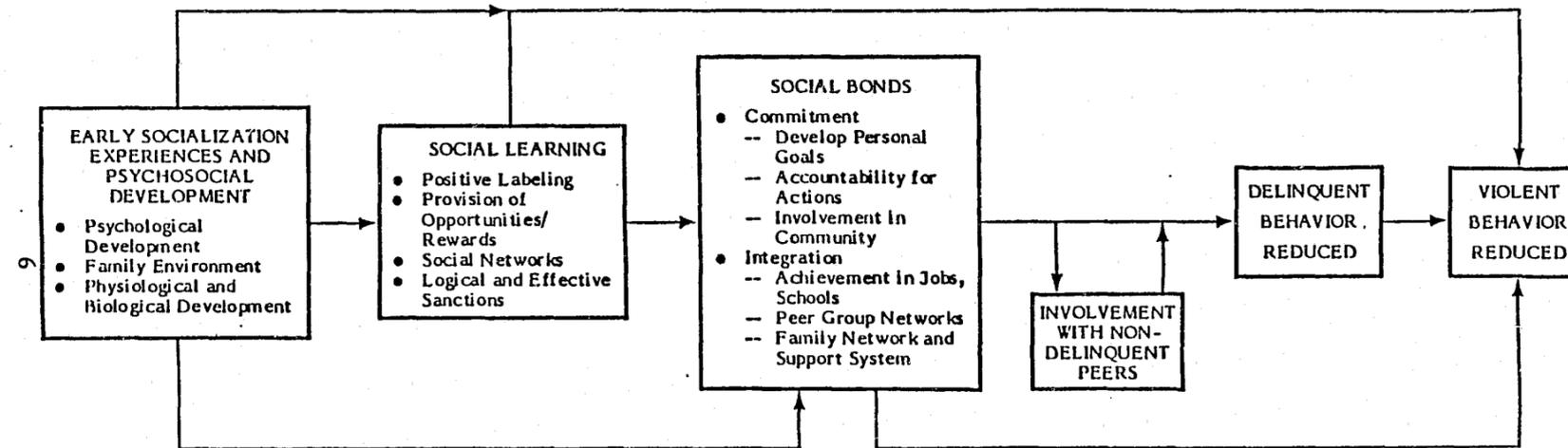
### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Theory

The intervention model to be tested integrates control, social learning, and strain theories of delinquency, and incorporates individual psychosocial and developmental factors unique to violent youth. Figure 1 shows the units and processes of the intervention model.

**Control theory** (Hirshi, 1969) posits that delinquent acts occur when an individual's bonds to society are weakened or broken. Social and personal bonds develop in the societal units where socialization usually occurs: family, schools, community (e.g., laws) and peers. Where bonds are weak or fail to develop, the youth will then associate with and be influenced by delinquent peers. The youth will likely commit delinquent acts, and, under certain conditions, violent delinquency will occur. **Strain theory** (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960) offers an explanation of why bonds break down. The theory posits that delinquency results from socially induced pressures such as blocked opportunities to achieve social and personal goals. Under such conditions, the frustration of blocked opportunities will lead to weakening of bonds and participation in delinquent lifestyles and acts, possibly including violence. **Social learning theory** (Bandura, 1977) proposes that violent delinquency is learned through observation and reinforced through practice. Delinquent peers

FIGURE 1: Intervention Model for Violent Juvenile Delinquency



provide positive reinforcement for delinquency and violence, while youths fail to develop accountability for their actions.

**Individual factors** are psychosocial development factors and those early socialization experiences which distinguish violent youth as a subset of delinquent youth (Sorrells, 1977, 1980). They include predisposing factors such as violent or abusive families, emotional disturbance, lack of empathy, and physiological or biological disorders. These individual factors may act as predisposing variables in the onset of violent behavior in youths with either strong or weak bonds.

The intervention model suggests that violent delinquency can be reduced by strengthening social and personal bonds through a process of social learning and provision of treatment services as needed for individual factors. The intervention model defines two types of bonds--**integration** (external) and **commitment** (internal) Elliot, Ageton, and Cantor, 1979). Integration includes such variables as participation and achievement in conventional roles and activities (families, schools, peers, careers), and the presence and recognition of an effective sanctioning network. Commitment includes such variables as setting realistic and achievable personal goals, personal attachments to families and peers, and perceptions of self-determination and control over one's experiences.

Strain and learning theory explain the process by which bonds are weakened or strengthened. Bonds may be weakened by negatively reinforcing experiences such as failures in nondelinquent roles and activities, and social disorganization at home, in school, or on the streets. External bonds are strengthened through positive labeling and reinforcement in school or job-related activities, constructive family environments or living arrangements, and an effective sanctioning network. Internal bonds are strengthened through positive experiences in setting and reaching personal goals, involvement in supportive social networks, and participation in community life and social institutions.

The development of strong bonds (commitment and integration) is mediated by early childhood socialization experiences and psychosocial development. These factors specify the importance of violence in the home as a model behavior, child rearing practices and family cohesion as contributors to the learning and development of violent behavior. The model proposes that violent delinquency is thus reduced not only when social and personal bonds are strengthened, but also when alternative non-violent behaviors are developed and learned as responses to emotional, situational, and environmental stresses.

The intervention model proposes two paths to violent delinquency and its reduction. First is the direct causal influence of individual psychological or other predisposing factors. Past interventions with such factors have regarded violence as akin to a disease and have operated according to a "medical model," treating the symptoms of violent behavior--often using psychotherapy--in the hope of "curing" it. The current formulation regards violence as a behavior that, except in rare circumstances, can be controlled through the systematic application of social learning and control theories by teaching new behaviors while "treating" the causes of violence through diverse and individualized services. The primary focus of intervention in this case, however, is on the behavior, somewhat irrespective of its causes.

The second path to violent delinquency is via learning in several social contexts, beginning possibly with families, continuing through other social units (e.g., schools), and continuing in peer groups and other violent subcultures. Unformed, or deteriorated, bonds then lead to violent delinquency, mediated by individual factors. This path suggests interventions which focus on strengthening and sustaining social and personal bonds to minimize violent delinquent influences from peers and environmental stresses at the same time that new non-violent behaviors are learned.

We assume that violent behavior can result from either of the two "paths," and that the balance of interventions between individual factors and social variables will change depending on each youth's background and needs. The intervention model hypothesizes that the social learning process will strengthen bonds to non-delinquent lifestyles while it also enables youths to develop behavior norms void of violent delinquency. Thus, the development of social and personal bonds and learning of nonviolent responses are related but somewhat independent: while stronger bonds may minimize some conditions leading to violent behavior (e.g., associations with delinquent peers), they do not in and of themselves teach appropriate responses to other situations where the youth may respond violently.

#### **Underlying Principles**

The intervention model represented in Figure 1 proposes that violent delinquency will be reduced and controlled using a social learning approach to strengthen bonds and resolve individual psychosocial stresses. The model is supported by four underlying principles

which incorporate the intervention theory and can be applied to program strategies. These principles should in turn inform program design for correctional interventions described in the next section. The underlying principles are described below, including their linkages to the theoretical model.

### **Social Networking**

This strategy suggests that increasing positive socialization experiences will strengthen personal bonds--"commitments"--to families, peers, schools or other social institutions, as well as to non-delinquent lifestyles. This strategy requires that alternative positive lifestyles and peer networks be available to youths, that positive role models and relationships with significant others be developed, and that these networks serve as resources upon which youths can draw in times of stress from other parts of their lives. Examples of social networking include empowerment; role development (Hawkins and Weis, 1980); development of personal goal-setting, problem-solving and decision-making skills; and opportunities for self-determination. Designed to reduce youths' alienation from and increase their involvement in social and family institutions, these tactics should be applied to several areas where personal attachments develop: family, school, job, peers, and community.

Basically, the social networking process involves the development of interpersonal skills and personal resources which will enable the individual to establish meaningful relationships. During treatment social networking might include:

- establishment of relationships with staff most responsible for treatment, i.e., case manager, counselor, social worker, etc.,
- establishment of skills for communication, problem solving, and socializing;
- positive interactions with other youth in treatment; and
- strengthening ties to family and significant others in the community.

As the youth progresses toward reintegration into the community, social skills become more significant. Therefore, projects may provide:

- a community liaison person from the community or family to assist youth in gaining access to employment or education;
- more frequent opportunities to visit friends and relatives;

- more leisure activities such as recreation;
- a sponsorship program whereby one youth is responsible for a youth in a lower phase. Sponsorship implies educating new residents about program rules and procedures, "a quasi-big brother" role and other supportive roles;
- family problem-solving teams to discuss problems within the living unit. These teams are to mirror real family life.

Social networking must promote participation of family, peers, schools and the community in the course of behavioral change. As mentioned earlier, these are the primary social units through which a youth becomes bonded to society. The processes of social networking will vary within those units, depending on phase of treatment and priority of needs.

### **Provision of Youth Opportunities**

This strategy is designed to strengthen youths' social bonds--"integration"--to non-delinquent and conventional activities by providing opportunities for achievement and rewarding successful participation in schools, jobs, family, and community. This strategy requires that skills be developed to increase opportunities for success, that realistic and achievable goals and expectations be set for each activity, and that success in these activities be positively reinforced.

Largely, this principle aims at the youth's self-determination, ability to set personal goals, self-esteem, and opportunity to achieve conventional success at school or at work. A program that has provisions of youth opportunities tends to supply:

- reward systems (to be discussed under social learning)
- youth participation in setting treatment goals
- vocational training/placement with skills
- academic instruction relevant to the youths' needs and desires, with differential reinforcement, realistic and achievable goals (e.g., GED), and an individualized learning pace
- community service roles for the returned youth

Examples of this strategy include education, job training, and job development interventions that provide the social and interpersonal skills necessary for success in society. Such tactics must provide not only for immediate tangible gains (e.g., diploma, training stipend, job placement) but also for enhancement of roles within these conventional spheres of activity (e.g., social mobility, job advancement). The development of skills and opportunities for success will strengthen youths' social bonds by providing positive rewards, equipping youths to live in society through conventional and rewarding school- or job-related activities, and providing economic and social resources to reduce reliance on delinquent and violent lifestyles for either economic or social status gains.

### Social Learning

While the above principles focus on identifying the personal and social bonds to be strengthened, social learning specifies the process by which these bonds are reinforced. It also specifies a process whereby youths learn accountability for their actions and to avoid reliance on violence or delinquent activity for personal or economic gain. Social learning acknowledges and addresses the role of environment and context in the development of violent behavior.

The social learning principle specifies behavioral change through positive and negative reinforcement. Positive reinforcements occur when social interactions provide personal and social rewards, facilitate personal goal achievement, and minimize environmental or social stress. Negative reinforcements occur through application of clear systems of logical consequences and sanctions for violent behavior. Positive social learning occurs, for example, when educational activity leads to incremental knowledge gains as well as a diploma or certification; when job training leads to job skills, placement, or advancement; and when job placement results in fair wages, social recognition, and opportunities for advancement. Positive social learning also occurs when social and community activities provide opportunities for decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and self-determination that leads to empowerment and a sense of control. Negative reinforcement for illegal and violent behavior results from the imposition of sanctioning systems that are clear, fair, effective, and consistent. "Clear" implies that punishments are consistently and explicitly tied to illegal acts or violations of stated rules; "effective" suggests that responses occur quickly and without ambiguity or contradiction; "fair" implies that sanctions acknowledge and take into account situational factors involved in rules violations or illegal acts.

By rewarding positive gains and sanctioning illegal or antisocial acts, the youth's negative behavior is directed toward a behavior more adaptable to the social world. Sanctions for violations of program rules and regulations must be clearly articulated and consistently applied. Some suggested negative sanctions are:

- room time, room lock down, isolation, early bedtime
- demotion or suspension of privileges
- physical restraint for acting out, violent behavior
- return to earlier, more restrictive program phase (e.g., security center)

Programs should have a client appeal procedure for particularly severe sanctions. The use of sanctions and their duration should be proportionate to the proscribed act or rule violation, and should be explicitly linked to violations of performance contract agreements. Sanctions should support the treatment efforts rather than create a punishment cycle.

Reinforcements or rewards can include:

- furloughs
- point systems
  - treatment points
  - work points
  - bonus points
- special privileges
- special roles such as sponsorships
- special evening programs
- opportunity to move to higher status in program
- early release

These external gains should be available not only to the **excellent** performers, but can be extended to youth who display commitment and dedication but may also have had a few setbacks during treatment. Rewards should be proportionate to progress. There should be a perceived reward for each incremental gain. The intrinsic value of a reward system is in enabling a youth to feel he is capable of managing his own life by accomplishing set goals. In addition, self-esteem is heightened, and life may seem more directed.

**Goal-Oriented Interventions.** Throughout all aspects of planning and programming, realistic and achievable goals must be set. They should include learning accountability for

one's actions, as well as alternatives to violence or aggression. Interventions must be based on each youth's individual needs and abilities; planning requires identifying specific problem behaviors (e.g., substance abuse, poor communications skills, sexual aggressiveness) and providing the youth with the supports and treatment necessary to overcome them. It may include addressing identified psychological problems by using strategies which specify behavioral objectives.

Upon intake a case manager or case management team is responsible for conducting a needs assessment. The youth is subject to an oral interviewing and/or assessment techniques such as testing. Referral source data should be considered since it often summarizes the youth's previous treatment experiences and describes reasons for the referral. The needs assessment process should focus on the identification of such problem behaviors and individual treatment needs.

Individual factors are extremely important in the formulation of appropriate treatment goals for these interventions. Critical factors include psychosocial development and early socialization experiences, which tend to distinguish violent youth as a subset of delinquent youth. They include predisposing factors such as violent or abusive families, emotional disturbance, lack of empathy, and physiological or biological disorders. These individual factors may act as predisposing variables in the onset of violent behavior in youths with either strong or weak bonds. Goal-oriented interventions should be set up with the knowledge of these factors, and should be oriented toward resolution of specific problem behaviors.

#### PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The underlying principles and processes are systematized through these structural components: **case management, a range of treatment approaches and community reintegration.** Programs providing a continuity of treatment from intake through reintegration for each youth offer a structure and process for positive socialization.

#### Case Managers

A single person should be identified who has continuing responsibility for each youth from intake through the reintegration process. The case manager must see to it that the youth

receives all the services and treatments identified in the assessment process. Consistent with the need for project autonomy, case managers should be responsible to project directors, should be responsible for only project youth, and should maintain small caseloads.

Specifically, the major functions of the case manager are: 1) coordinating the youth's diagnostic assessment, 2) development of a treatment or correctional plan and performance contract, 3) involving the youth and family, 4) placement or referral for treatment, 5) supervision of the youth and monitoring of the treatment process, 6) provision for and intensive monitoring of gradually less secure community reintegration placements which integrate and build upon the treatment approaches of each phase, and 7) program termination and provision for or referral to supplemental treatment and/or opportunities. Thus, the case manager is the critical constant in translating and interpreting the intervention to the youth, the provider of feedback and corrective input, as well as the advocate for all necessary service inputs. He or she is also responsible for integrating inputs from family, community, and service providers.

**Diagnostic assessment** refers to the process through which the specific needs of each youth are identified at intake. The diagnostic assessment is crucial due to the wide range of individual situation, and social factors which may have contributed to a youth's violent delinquency. Each project must have a rationale process to identify the factors and the corresponding service needs of the youth. In addition to being crucial from a treatment standpoint, the diagnostic assessment also serves to generate baseline data for the evaluation. It is the responsibility of the case manager to make sure that each youth assigned to him or her receives this diagnostic assessment and that it is done properly. Each diagnostic assessment should examine the youth in eight general areas:

- delinquent careers--apprehensions/arrests, incarceration, self-report, detail on target offense
- family--e.g., composition and interaction, background, criminal history, abuse and neglect, sanctioning
- education--achievement, involvement, attitude, school environment
- peers--gang involvement, type of friends, peer pressures
- coping--support systems, accountability, reinforcement
- interpersonal skills--social functioning, sexual, making friends, use of community services

- employment--job skills, work experience, expectations
- special characteristics--physical disability, mental health, developmental disability, learning disability, nutritional

**Treatment performance contracts** are agreements between the youth and the case manager for behavioral performance and program participation. Such agreements are "two-way streets"--the youth agrees to undertake certain activities and meet behavioral goals, while the program agrees to provide service. Sanctions are imposed for contract violations (see social learning). Youth and family participation should be utilized in planning the treatment, making modifications and appealing unacceptable sanctions. Others, such as police officers or community agencies, may be involved. Preferably, contracts will seal performance and treatment goals for each program phase. Contract modification should exist for each stage of the program. For example, in the orientation phase a youth may only be required to maintain a routine schedule, such as attend group meetings, attend lunch, make the bed, etc., while at another phase he may be expected to develop communication skills. Modifying contracts periodically allows for an ongoing assessment of client needs and a continuing opportunity to change goals. Case managers must maintain records of all contracts and their modifications.

**Involvement of Youth and Family.** Projects must provide a mechanism whereby youths, and where possible their families, are involved in the development of the youths' individual plans. Case workers should be sure the youth (and his family) understands the overall treatment plan and its separate components. Involvement in its design should strengthen the commitment of the youth and the family to the treatment plan. Performance contracts, signed by both the youth and the responsible project worker, should specify: agreed-upon goals; methods for measuring progress toward those goals; and continuing review and modification of each youth's plan. Case conferences should be held which consist of the youth, his parents, the case manager and relevant members of the treatment staff. Through such conferences, family members are made aware of the problems and the goals set to alleviate them. The family should be taught the processes of the case management system and how to adapt those methods to the home environment.

**Placement or referral for treatment interventions** actually begins at the referring institution. Case managers should consider referral source data as a valid indicator of problems and their seriousness. Individual factors (discussed earlier) are important when

making the actual placement. Many youths may be required to enter a secure care unit when the orientation phase begins. Initial placement should consist of:

- establishing a daily routine
- orientation to rules and procedures
- encouraging a commitment to participate
- crisis counseling

The duration of the orientation phase usually spans 90 days or a little more, but may also be affected by law. Since this period may also be probationary in nature, length of time and types of activities will vary depending on the degree of control necessary as well as specific behavioral treatment needs.

**Supervision and monitoring of the in-residence treatment process** by the case manager should be done periodically. Monitoring before, midway and after a treatment phase is favored among current programs. Case conferences and interviews with youth and family give a forum for verbal exchange about successes and failures during treatment. Written records should be maintained, and will include a standardized form prepared by URSA Institute.

**Providing and monitoring movement into community placements** requires the establishment of a working network of community services and aid from family and community residents. Case managers should provide:

- intensive supervision
- access to health, education, and general survival services for the client
- agreements with other service providers, schools, and job training programs to receive referrals
- allowances for the youth to the to return to the project periodically for advice and referral
- assessment methods to identify when one service or phase is complete and the client is ready to move on to another service or into another phase

**Project Termination** refers to the need for case managers to be responsible for determining when a client is ready to have his involvement with the project terminated. Furthermore, the case manager should determine when the client is ready for transitions to increasingly less restrictive settings, and when the client is still in need of some non-

project related service. When termination is deemed appropriate but other services are felt to be beneficial, the case manager should initiate such contacts for the youth.

### **Treatment Approaches**

Treatment approaches include the specific interventions designed both to strengthen social and personal bonds and to address individual problems and factors related to violent delinquency. These treatment approaches should, wherever possible, be designed specifically for violent delinquents and utilize techniques shown to achieve positive rehabilitative results (Fagan, et al., 1981). Treatment approaches need to incorporate the underlying principles of the model: social learning, social networking, provisions for youth opportunities, and goal-oriented interventions. The settings of treatment will include all program phases from secure care units to community residential placement (group homes), and ultimately independent living. At minimum, the range of treatment approaches must include the following:

- medical care and health needs
- education (social learning and youth opportunity)
- job training and job placement
- constructive living arrangements
- individual and family counseling
- mental health treatment approaches
- leisure-time activities

**Medical Care and Health Needs.** Each youth should receive a complete physical and dental examination at the time he or she is admitted to the program to determine specific medical problems (e.g., physical disfigurement, speech defects, physical/motor handicaps, or chronic illnesses) and to identify other potential sources of physical stress which may contribute to violent behavior. Treatment contracts should include goals oriented toward self-maintenance which include general hygiene, nutrition, physical fitness, and other personal needs. The provision of medication should follow a formal procedure and should have a standard public policy stating conditions which warrant medication and the length of time it should be taken.

**Education.** The education plan should be designed separately for each individual. It should assist the youth in strengthening his life skills as well as his academic skills. The

range of educational services must be from remedial education to secondary level education for the more advanced students. Romig (1978) found that effective correctional education tends to include:

- an understanding teacher experienced with this population
- individualized diagnosis of learning skills
- specific learning goals
- individualized program
- basic academic skills
- multisensory teaching
- high-interest material
- sequential material
- rewarding attendance and persistence
- differential reinforcement of learning performance
- culmination in a GED or diploma
- follow-up into other educational settings or job placements
- career planning and decision

For those youths who had difficulty in adjusting to the traditional public school environment, it is important to employ alternative learning processes. These alternatives should include: encouraging a positive attitude toward learning through promoting student participation in the program governance, use of individual educational goals, relevant curricula, and the incorporation of self-learning techniques. In addition, classroom situations could be used as a setting for practicing new roles and behaviors.

**Job Training Skills and Job Placement.** To ensure a more successful reintegration into the community, youth will need **marketable** skills which will lead to employment with some chance for growth and advancement. An assessment of the labor market for youth will reveal types of skills needed. Projects should seek to develop work skills for existing jobs and opportunities. Contacting employment firms and private industries with programs for youth would help in developing agreements for job placement. It is also important to identify skills and creative abilities of the young person and mold them into a marketable package. Youths should also learn job-seeking skills such as resume preparation, interviewing techniques, and work habits. Experience in workplace socialization should be provided.

**Constructive Living Arrangements.** A broad variety of arrangements should be made available to youths leaving secure care. Consistent with the reintegration focus of this initiative, treatment approaches and supports should be available to youths in settings with varying levels of supervision, such as small group care, foster care, independent living in their communities or in new communities, and in-home care. The goal should be to move youths through a smooth and consistent transition to progressively less restrictive environments, with the ultimate aim of returning them to their families or enabling them to live on their own. The project should provide continuing supports to youths leaving secure care. Program staff should train staff of alternative living situations on how to apply the underlying principles of the model, so as to achieve consistency of rules and rule-setting throughout program participation.

These living arrangements should simulate the activities of the home environment. One program visited developed a family team for each youth. The authoritative figure was labeled "uncle." The uncle was responsible for managing the treatment plan and addressing emotional complications. Another identified a "mentor" in the community. Ultimately, the youths' natural or extended family should provide the same supports and structures for the youth.

**Individual and Family Counseling.** The results of research on programs for serious or violent youth (Romig, 1978) showed that rehabilitation programs designed to improve behavior seem to succeed if the following variables exist:

- input from client and family
- diagnosis of the problem and problem setting
- fixed behavioral goals
- provisions to practice new behavior
- direct observation of the results of practicing new behavior
- evaluation and modification of goals

For the violent youthful offender, counseling should aid in:

- identifying problems of coping
- developing skills in self-management
- instilling attachment, commitment and moral beliefs
- encouraging a desire to adopt a more positive and adaptive lifestyle
- self-awareness

- observing indications of needed sanctions or rewards (social learning principle)

Counseling is also an important vehicle to reestablish the social network in which the family provides affection, emotional support, and reinforcement. Project staff must recognize, and take into consideration, that many of the youths will not have an intact family, and some youths will have no family living with them whatsoever. Project staff should be equipped to handle this situation.

**Mental Health Treatment Approaches.** Mental health treatment should be available to those youths whose need for it is identified through individual assessment. These should include psychological and/or psychiatric counseling for seriously emotionally disturbed and character-disordered youths. Treatment should be aimed at specific behaviors and factors contributing to violence identified during the individual assessment. Where possible, underlying causes should be addressed (e.g., child abuse, family disorganization). Therapeutic and behavior treatment should be available, and should utilize goal-oriented approaches to controlling violent behavior. Contract goals should reflect the expected outcome of counseling. This approach should especially focus on the principle of social learning, whereby reinforcement of acceptable and constructive behavior (and not attitudinal changes) is emphasized.

Daily sessions with the youth provide an opportunity for:

- frequent continuous interaction with staff and other youth
- learning behavioral control and alternatives to violence or aggression
- monitoring of performance toward behavioral goals, feedback
- identifying the need for special support (i.e., medication, psychiatric care and nutrition)

**Leisure-Time Activities.** Youths should be provided adequate opportunities for both physical recreation and nonphysical leisure-time activities. They should be able to experience both organized activities which involve them meaningfully in community life and solitary activities which build self-sufficiency. These activities can be supplied within the program or through existing youth-serving agencies such as boys and girls clubs or nearby parks and recreation programs. Community interventions can be undertaken to help alter community conditions which may erode commitment or integration. Programs can assist local agencies to constructively design leisure-time activities.

## Community Reintegration

Reintegration processes occur throughout the treatment experience, beginning the first day. As the youth moves toward return to the community, staff should:

- provide intensive youth supervision
- gain knowledge of the culture of the community, its resources and strengths
- develop an understanding of the family's lifestyle
- provide opportunities for the youth to practice new skills and behavior in the community
- identify personal living needs
- identify and evaluate the youth's previous community ties (e.g., friends, recreation, church, other)

Since this phase lessens restriction and dependency, a pre-release structure should allow the youth a taste of future living conditions. This would include allowing youth to leave for home visits, school, work, or in community activities. As the youth becomes more capable of independent living, the program can reduce checks on youth's whereabouts, allow flexible curfew, and encourage independent decision-making. Simultaneously, parents should be trained in the techniques employed by case managers while receiving counseling on parenting methods. A contract could be made between parents and youth, clarifying expected roles and behaviors.

Schools and law enforcement officials should be informed (through a case conference) of the youth's successful treatment. This should decrease negative interactions that may result because of the youth's past criminal involvement.

Community service agencies could be helpful by arranging tasks that would benefit the youth as well as his environment. An effort toward community development, though ambitious, would enable local organizations and agencies to maintain the social learning, youth opportunity and social networking environments established in earlier phases of the program. This continuum and consistency of environment is crucial to support the youth's gains in other settings. This phase of the program therefore assigns responsibility to the community for a major role in the intervention effort.

## III--LINKAGES TO THE COMMUNITY AND JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Each of the Violent Juvenile Offender Research and Development Program sites operates within the social environment and juvenile justice system of its state or local community. While the success of the project will, in part, depend upon external contingencies beyond the control of the project, the project is not a passive actor in the system. Each project must develop strong, positive linkages with community programs, organizations, and agencies if it is to be "successful."

OJJDP in funding this initiative, is hopeful that the projects will be successful on two levels. First, it is hoped that the program will be effective in rehabilitating and reintegrating those violent juvenile offenders who are admitted into the program. Second, it is anticipated that the program will deter other potentially violent youths from committing violent acts by increasing the efficiency and fairness of the juvenile justice system. By handling violent juvenile offenders "fairly and efficiently", the system is helping to implement the intervention model at the earliest stages by establishing "accountability" and "clear and consistent expectations." The successful fulfillment of each of these objectives is contingent upon the projects' relationships with its social environment and the organizations and agencies therein.

**Rehabilitation/Reintegration.** The intervention model stresses, more than anything else, the need for the project to reintegrate its clients into the community. As discussed earlier, this requires project linkages with community educational and vocational programs, private and public employers, specialized service providers, recreational programs, families, courts, community-based programs, etc. Without obtaining support and aid from the community, program youth will likely be unable to sustain the gains made in earlier phases of the program (Coates, Miller, and Ohlin, 1976).

**Deterrences.** Prior research on violent youth has shown that non-systematic, unpredictable and inappropriate handling of violent juvenile offenders by the juvenile justice system is a significant factor in the onset and perpetuation of violent juvenile crime (Roysen and Edelman, 1980). Efforts to deter youths from violent acts are often compromised by the

inconsistencies which exist in the juvenile justice system—from arrest through disposition and placement.

If the system can not assure that individuals will be arrested, convicted and sentenced consistently for violent offenses it can not expect that youngsters will be deterred from crime by fear of punishment. Furthermore, if the juvenile justice system cannot treat its clients fairly, it cannot expect its clients to believe anything it says or to actively participate in any of the rehabilitative and treatment services it provides. Recognizing this issue, one of the three original national goals for the program was:

to measure the impact of a special program exclusively developed for chronic violent juvenile offenders on the juvenile justice system's ability to handle violent juvenile offenders fairly and efficiently.

As such, projects which are successful will not only curtail crime by rehabilitating the clients it treats, but also by impacting on other components of the juvenile justice system to bring about a more "fair and efficient" system.

Recognizing the inherent difficulties involved for a new program in developing the inter-organizational linkages necessary to accomplish the two objectives discussed above, the remainder of this resource manual will present a number of practical suggestions that grantees may consider when seeking to establish, maintain, and expand linkages with other organizations in general and the juvenile justice system in specific.

#### SYSTEMWIDE LINKAGES

As most observers in the field agree, "juvenile justice system" is a term rooted more in theory and ideal than in practice; the "system" is more of an abstract concept than a description of an integrated set of component agencies. What is known as "the system" is in fact the operational relationships and shared responsibilities of a number of autonomous entities which process juveniles from arrest through adjudications and corrections. The operations of "the system" and the responsibilities of the entities involved in it often vary from state to state, and within states from county to county. The relationships between the elements of "the system" are controlled by legislation, by formal rules, by regulations and protocols, and by informal agreements and shared perceptions.

The success of an individual project in operationalizing the theory and implementing the model is contingent in part upon actions of system entities including the court, the prosecutor, the state corrections and probation departments, and the police or other law enforcement agencies. To maximize the participation and effectiveness of the juvenile justice system in interventions with violent youth, projects should at a minimum undertake the following activities:

- extensively consult with and involve the system components in the development of the program design,
- educate them regarding the integrated theory, the intervention model, and its mandatory program elements,
- explain the reason for and the nature of the experimental design,
- secure formal and informal agreements regarding, for example, early identification of program-eligible youths, and the transfer and assignment of project participants,
- establish clear operating procedures which guarantee system involvement in the smooth transition of program participants from residence to community to reintegration,
- secure agreements to ensure the free flow of information to and from the project and to provide for access to data called for in the research and development effort on both experimental and control group youths.

There are a number of approaches a site can take in establishing firm supportive linkages with other actors in the system. These suggestions are based on the experiences of earlier projects treating this population which have found these activities to be useful and supportive elements of their operations. They include the following.

**Advisory Panel.** An advisory panel should consist of key criminal justice actors--policy-makers if possible--of the enforcement, adjudications, and corrections agencies operating in the community. The role of the panel can range from coordination of resources, services, and decisions which are system-wide in nature, to the mediation of issues which surface between the program and individual member agencies. The benefits of such a panel include:

- providing increased visibility to the project and assuring appropriate youths are referred,

- preventing resistance to the experimental design utilized by the project and necessary for the Research and Development effort,
- assuring that the research requirements are fulfilled through data access,
- providing the program legitimacy with the rank and file members of the agencies involved,
- securing the services and resources necessary for successful reintegration,
- the development of operational contracts, procedures, and protocols between the program and the individual agencies.
- identifying roles and procedures for system and community agencies which incorporate the intervention model

Establishing an advisory panel can be a difficult undertaking involving considerable lead time and requiring the full cooperation of all agencies to be successful. The process of formation should begin as soon as possible and be characterized by the establishment of firm meeting dates, development and dissemination of agenda, and the establishment of appropriate operating procedures. The role of the panel should be clearly defined and the panel should be considered an important element of the program's system-linkage efforts.

**Planning Committee.** A planning committee should consist of key administrative or operational staff experienced in day-to-day system and agency operations. The role of a planning committee would be more proactive than the Advisory Committee. For example, such a committee may have been convened to develop the initial grant pre-application. In such an event the objective should be to "institutionalize" that planning effort. A planning committee composed of influential actors can be helpful in the full development of the program and the planned implementation of the model in the community. Issues which such a committee may be involved in include:

- developing procedures to control program-system interactions,
- identifying processing problems faced by the system and the development of responses to deal with them, so that system handling of violent youth is both "fair" and "efficient,"
- identifying operational problems faced by the program and assisting in the development of responses or the acquisition of resources to deal with them,

- focusing on the provision of data to inform the operation of the program and to suggest ways to enhance both the system and program activities which accompany it, and
- identifying gaps in data collection and methods to ensure that research requirements are met.

A planning committee which is made up of key staffers of the individual agencies in the system can be helpful, but such an effort is often difficult to administer. Unless such a body has been involved in the early application stage and an operating style and process has been established, the chances are that one cannot be formed after project start-up. Such a committee may involve a greater commitment of time and energy than an advisory panel, and as such should be focused upon system-wide issues which would benefit agency participants as much as possible.

**Eliciting Feedback from the System.** A process should be developed which involves soliciting input from the arresting officer, the prosecutor, the judge, the individual preparing the social history, and the family to use in the development and negotiation of the performance contract for each program client. Under the direction and guidance of the case manager, such a process has been instrumental in the success of at least one program dealing with violent juvenile offenders. Such a process can:

- be a means of gaining the support, recognition, and autonomy needed by the program in its efforts and to instill upon the participants the seriousness of the exercise and its importance,
- serve as a way of involving the responsible members of the system in a critical program function outside of their normal activities, which in turn may serve to improve the processing of violent juveniles through the system,
- represent an important and active role for system actors in the implementation of the program design through participatory case management, which in many ways is more relevant than those of advisory or planning committees,
- provide a vehicle for the continuing participation of involved system actors, which may be instrumental in the later reintegration of the individual client.

Obtaining this feedback is perhaps as difficult as any of the system-wide efforts, but one which is important to the effectiveness of the intervention process. It requires the

establishment of significant operating agreements and protocols and the formation of a clear operating process to control performance contracting. It places significant responsibility on the individual case manager to schedule sessions, to inform participants, to facilitate and direct the contracting process, and to move the process to a resolution. Feedback to participants on the results and progress of individual clients is an important element that must also be considered.

The above three approaches to systemwide involvement are by no means the only ones available to a project. They are suggested approaches which have proven successful in some but not all contexts. If there are other system-wide vehicles available in a community, such as criminal or juvenile justice councils, the project should make an effort to become involved in such groups and encourage the discussion of issues germane to the program and violent juvenile offenders in general. Again, some effort to solicit the involvement of the range of juvenile justice system agencies in the program is recommended.

#### SPECIFIC LINKAGES

Programs must supplement their attempts to establish systemwide linkages with efforts to establish clear, consistent working relationships with each entity of the juvenile justice system. Of critical importance is working through the inevitable conflicts which will emerge between the project and other juvenile justice programs and organizations concerning the management of individual cases. Certainly, the issue will emerge of autonomy of the program to make and carry out client decisions versus the accountability of the program to violent juvenile justice system agencies "responsible" for the ultimate outcome of the decisions. Successfully balancing the subtle interplay between autonomy on the one hand and accountability on the other is critical to the integrity of the national program. Last, the project should, whenever possible, have a means of drawing upon the considerable resources and expertise of the other members of the system to insure maximum operating efficiency and effectiveness.

While the actual entities in place in any one community will vary from site to site, the range of functions are consistent and include:

- Corrections--state or local community corrections agencies and authorities, including local probation agency;

- Court--juvenile court, adult criminal court (waived cases), family court, etc., together with court intake, pre-sentence investigator, probation department;
- Prosecution--district attorney, state's attorney, county prosecutor, juvenile prosecutor;
- Enforcement--local police department, state police agencies, sheriff's departments, and probation departments.

The following discussion offers a number of suggested areas upon which programs should focus in establishing and maintaining specific linkages with the other entities in the juvenile justice system. The goals of such linkages should be both to improve processing and to promote program operations.

#### Corrections

The relationship of the individual project to the controlling correctional entity in the community is obviously critical. The organizational, structural and operational elements of that relationship will control the level of autonomy enjoyed by the program. The freedom of the program to set operational standards, to hire, promote and terminate staff, and generally to function according to the conditions set out in the R&D effort are all aspects of that relationship.

At a minimum, the relationship of the project to the Agent of Record of the correctional authority responsible for the individual program participants must reflect a shared understanding of the program focus. It is assumed that this understanding will have been established in the preparation of the pre-application and will be maintained throughout the grant. Specific areas of agreement must include:

- the role of the project within the correctional milieu,
- the definition of eligible participants,
- the case management process which will control all interventions, and
- the general process of termination, reintegration, and reassignment.

The smooth and effective operation of the program will also require additional areas of cooperation and coordination. these include:

- The project must be prepared to provide regular feedback to the Agent of Record--on case progress, program progress, and general operations;
- The project should establish a process of obtaining access to the resources of the correctional agency such as:
  - technical assistance or in-service training opportunities available from the agency,
  - contracting policies and procedures as well as authorized contract service providers used by the agency,
  - data and information resources and systems in place and used by the agency.
- The project should be available, in time, to assist the agency in the replication of similar efforts in other jurisdictions under the responsibility of the agency and to support such efforts where attempted.

As with all specific linkages, the relationship between the project and the correctional system should be controlled by written agreements which set out in precise terms the structural, organizational, administrative, and operational procedures which will be followed in implementing the R&D effort. Written agreements can and should not be considered sufficient. In addition, regular communication and an ongoing maintenance of liaison must be used to ensure that written protocols and policies are enforced and interpreted appropriately and to insure that the resources of the agency and the program are made available to each other.

### The Court

The relationship between the program and the juvenile and adult (where relevant) courts must be substantial. The court must be made aware of the eligibility criteria which will be applied to individual youth and the operational criteria which will control treatment. Furthermore, the court must understand the experimental design--the reasons for it and its consequences. The continued use of the program as a dispositional alternative will be contingent in part upon the feedback available to the court regarding individual client progress and general program performance. The project must always be cognizant of and sensitive to the court's role in the community and its interest in those adjudicated delinquents assigned to and served by the program. The nature of the court-project

relationship is perhaps the most sensitive to the competing conflicts between accountability and autonomy. Hence, the relationship between the court and the program should be characterized by:

- extensive consultation and involvement of the court during and after program conceptualization to communicate the elements of the program, the strict program eligibility requirements and the R&D focus of the effort;
- written protocols establishing the shared responsibilities of the relationship and clarifying the lines of authority and autonomy during each phase of program operations--including movement, termination, reintegration, and revocation and recidivism;
- information-sharing and feedback regarding individual case progress, program progress and goal attainment; and
- use of the expertise of the court where appropriate and possible in the case management process.

One specific court-project linkage which should be established is in the preparation of individual offender social histories. In those cases where court staff--intake officer or court-tied probation--are responsible for the preparation of social histories to be used in the disposition decision and subsequent processing of an offender, the project staff--especially case managers--should work closely with court staff to insure that the social histories are of a form and content that can be of benefit to the program and ultimately the participant. Written protocols identifying the form and content of histories are appropriate and should highlight a clear documentation of the instant offense together with appropriate historical data. Where necessary, the project should promote the use of outside resources (diagnostic) to assist in social history preparation. In those cases involving the adult court (through waiver) pre-sentence investigatory procedures should be given the same scrutiny. By enhancing the ability of the disposing court to prepare social histories or pre-sentence investigations which are useful to the project, the system's ability to process the violent juvenile offender will be enhanced and the goals of the R&D effort will be realized in part.

A final critical area of linkage with the court is in the reintegration process. The program should be prepared to provide technical assistance to any other agents who may assume responsibility for graduating youth. Such assistance should be substantial and involve the case manager and agent (of course, this is also relevant for corrections agency

linkages). The development of appropriate community resources available to the individual participant upon reintegration should be shared by the project and the agent. Formal and informal operating agreements detailing shared responsibilities should be developed and enforced.

### Prosecution

While the role of the prosecutor in adjudicating juvenile offenders varies, the entity assuming such responsibility--court intake or prosecution, juvenile court prosecutor, or state's attorney, district attorney--should be involved in the program significantly. Prosecutorial responsibilities including charging, plea negotiations--which may or may not include recommending dispositional alternatives--and waiver recommendations; all of these are critical to the program and its operations. Prosecutors (and those assuming that function) should be closely involved with the program.

The linkage between the program and the prosecutor should at the minimum be characterized by information-sharing and consultation regarding program eligibility and operations. As a critical "gatekeeper" prosecutors should be made aware of the limits of the program and the program should be sensitive to attempts to "widen the net"--recommending dispositional alternatives which the program provides. For its part the program, to insure its integrity, must:

- involve the prosecutor early in the developmental process,
- involve the prosecutor in the case management process,
- attempt to become involved with the prosecutor as soon as possible in the individual case to document the situational aspects of the case, e.g., extent of injuries, provocation, past history, patterns, etc.,
- enter into dialogue with the prosecutor regarding the range of issues, both legislative and adjudicatory, presented by waiver, involving:
  - the prosecutor's role in the process,
  - the impacts of waiver on processing of participating youth through system,
  - differences between pre-disposition lengths of detention for waived and non-waived participating youth.

As with other elements of the system the relationship between prosecutor and program must be characterized by information-sharing. However, the critical role of the prosecutor in the processing of violent juvenile offenders through the system and the latitude enjoyed by the prosecutor in that regard must be appreciated and care given to documenting whenever possible the relative and variable impact on program operations and program success of the range of prosecutorial decisions and discretionary practices.

One corollary to the role of the prosecutor is the role of the defense. The involvement of defense attorneys--public defender, private assigned counsel, or private secured counsel --in the program is somewhat problematic. On the one hand, the program, in the interests of fairness, efficiency, and effectiveness, should promote the early acquisition and provision of counsel for youth who ultimately will be program participants. On the other hand, the role of counsel as an advocate for client placement can serve as a problem in the maintenance of the eligibility criteria for participating youth. At a minimum, the program should involve the public defender and private bar in the program at an early juncture to insure program integrity and autonomy.

A second area of legal representation involves the need for due process assurances in program operations and the question of whether case management program routine and protocol decision-making will be subject to legal scrutiny and client advocacy. Again, the question can only be resolved by the careful consultation and involvement by the legal community in the process of program development. Failure to recognize the significant role of advocates and defense counsel in the juvenile justice system could serve to impede the success of the program.

### Law Enforcement

The role of law enforcement, especially the individual arresting officer, in the program should not be disregarded. The arresting officer can often provide a critical perspective in the documentation of the instant offense, can serve as an important resource in the case management process, and can be critical to the success of reintegration efforts. Involvement of police agencies should be considered wherever possible. Areas of involvement beyond those highlighted above include:

- Program should provide data on program performance, client performance, and should be able to secure crime data where needed from enforcement agencies,

- Feedback should be made available to arresting officers regarding individual performance and plans for reintegration, and
- Police should be informed about the program on a regular basis and should be solicited for information regarding violent crime in the community on a regular basis.

#### **OTHER COMMUNITY LINKAGES**

As discussed earlier, for the program to successfully reintegrate its clients into the community, linkages will need to be established and maintained with several community-based agencies and organizations outside of the juvenile justice system. The exact nature of the linkages and the organizations will vary from site to site, and depending on what stage the youth is in (i.e., secure care, community-based residence, reintegration). Clearly, however, reintegration will work only if the project has developed working relationships with: educational and vocational programs, recreational programs, psychiatric services, drug related services, employers, etc. Potential community service providers need to be discovered and then assessed for their quality and consistency with the national program's underlying principles. This assessment should initiate prior to utilizing the service, and should continue until project involvement has ceased. When such services are not provided by direct project staff (e.g., through subcontracts), the service providers especially need to be closely monitored to assure compatibility with the national program intervention model.

Monitoring and quality control over subcontracted services can be accomplished through several complementary procedures. As part of the project's initial organizing efforts, a local conference or informational meeting should be convened for community agencies and organizations to describe and explain the program theory and design. At this session, project staff can underscore the importance of community development so that youths are treated consistently, applying the underlying principles, in all services and settings.

When subcontracts or formal agreements are negotiated for services to project youth, the RFP and the proposals received should again articulate the theory and ask for specific measures as to how providers will incorporate the underlying principles in their services.

Contracts or formal agreements which control these subcontracts should be specific with respect to the providers' methods to incorporate the underlying principles in their services to project youth. The contracts should mandate specific training curricula to orient subcontractor staff to the intervention model and underlying principles. Periodic training sessions provided by the Violent Juvenile Offender site to subcontractor staff can reinforce the application of the intervention model in specific treatment approaches.

Routine and systematic feedback from subcontractor to project administrators can also provide opportunities to review and monitor subcontractor services. Project youth are an important source of this information. UI will provide a mechanism for case managers to gather this information through Youth Rating Forms.

Finally, projects should develop systems to monitor subcontractor services through periodic site visits, quarterly reports, and other written feedback. UI evaluation data collection will also gather input from youths on subcontractor services.

#### **Summary of System Linkages**

Each program must establish clear, consistent linkages with programs, organizations, and agencies in its community. Particular attention must be devoted to the juvenile justice system in general and individual entities and agencies which make up the system in particular. Linkages should be characterized by formal agreements and protocols establishing the role of the program vis-a-vis the system, the range of services and resources available to the program from the system, and the range of resources available from the program as well. Furthermore, each project should attempt to be as autonomous as possible in order to assure the implementation of the national program model. Clearly, the actual experiences of each program under the R&D effort will vary from the others, but each should attempt to enhance the capacity of the system within which it operates whenever possible.

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