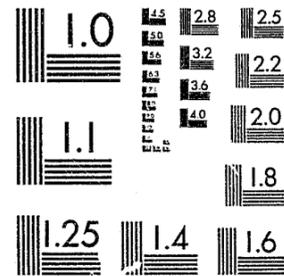


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DANE COUNTY
JUVENILE JUSTICE STUDY:
INTAKE THROUGH DISPOSITION
& SERVICES

88244

DANE COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION, 1982

DANE COUNTY
JUVENILE JUSTICE STUDY:
INTAKE THROUGH DISPOSITION
& SERVICES

A study conducted by the Dane County Youth Commission, a division of the County Executive's Office, under a grant from the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice.

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- Four Lakes Indian Council*
- Streetworker Program (United Neighborhood Centers)*
- Project Aware*
- Omega
- Youth Restitution Program
- Freedom House School*
- Operation Fresh Start
- Lutheran Social Services Family Therapy Program
- Lutheran Social Services Home and Community Services
- Lutheran Social Services Adolescent Center
- Bockari House
- Odyssey House
- Martin Luther Center
- U.W. Hospital's Teenage Clinic
- Parental Stress Center
- Adolescent Alcohol/Drug Abuse Intervention Program - U.W.
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*This program is no longer in operation

PREFACE

For those unfamiliar with the juvenile justice system, it is essential to know that the philosophies of the juvenile and adult systems are very different.

The state legislature has developed a special set of laws for the juvenile system that governs and guides the actions of judges, police officers, court workers, and social service providers, as well as children and their families. The laws are found in Chapter 48 of the state statutes and are known as the "Children's Code". The general provisions and purposes of the Children's Code are as follows:

- 1) To assure fair hearings and protect the constitutional and legal rights of children, while protecting the public safety.
- 2) To provide for the health and well-being of children, preserving the unity of the family whenever possible.
- 3) While protecting the public interest, to remove children from the consequences of criminal behavior and to substitute a program of supervision, care and rehabilitation.
- 4) To divert children from the juvenile justice system to the extent consistent with protection of children and the public safety.
- 5) To provide community-based programs and keep children in their homes whenever possible.
- 6) To supervise out-of-home placements of children.
- 7) To assist families in changing circumstances in the home which might harm the child or prevent stable family relationships.

In all decisions involving juveniles, the best interests of the child are to be the paramount consideration, but the court must also consider the interest of the child's parents or guardian and the interests of the public.

These basic principles provide the framework within which the juvenile justice system functions and the data of this report must be interpreted and understood.

Introduction

In 1979 the Dane County Youth Commission received funding from the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice to conduct an extensive study of Dane County's juvenile justice system. The intent of the project was to provide an improved data base upon which to develop better planning, programming, coordination and evaluation in this area.

The study was conducted in two phases. Phase I focused on the procedures, programs and services which may come into play from the point of a youth's initial police contact up to his/her referral to juvenile court. The findings of Phase I are reported in three already released publications: School Status and Educational Needs of Court-Involved Youth (June, 1981); Perspectives: Juvenile Law Enforcement in Dane County (November, 1981); and Parent and Youth Perspectives: The Juvenile Justice Experience (December, 1981).

The major focus of this report (Phase II of the study) is on procedures, programs and services involving juveniles who are referred to Dane County's juvenile court intake. The objectives of this phase of the study are as follows:

- 1) To develop a profile describing youth referred to Dane County's juvenile court intake for alleged offenses (as defined).
- 2) To provide detailed descriptive data on the disposition of these cases.
- 3) To collect all available data on the objectives and course of dispositional plans, and to assess the adequacy of this information for use in service evaluation and planning.
- 4) To provide descriptive data on the dispositional services, programs and facilities available to the court.
- 5) To obtain systematic information from the major professional groups involved in the dispositional process concerning their opinions and perceptions on the basic questions addressed by the project, including the impact of the revised Children's Code.
- 6) To work with agencies to increase their own evaluation capabilities and to assist the court in monitoring the effectiveness of dispositional services and programs.

Information was collected from written records in the files of the Dane County District Attorney, juvenile court and Social Services Department on a systematic sample of 566 cases passing through juvenile court intake from March, 1979, through March, 1980. Information on a random sub-sample of the group was supplemented by interviews with the social workers involved in each case. Descriptive data on dispositional services were obtained through surveys and interviews with agency personnel. Since Dane County has a wide range of such services, a decision was made to provide descriptive data on a representative sample rather than on all of the juvenile services and programs currently available to the juvenile court. Interviews were conducted with the key professionals involved in the dispositional process -- judges, juvenile court program personnel, the Juvenile Court Commissioner, Public Defender, District Attorney and Social Services personnel, including intake and ongoing case workers and administrators. Intensive assistance was provided to three different types of dispositional programs in Dane County which displayed an openness to participation and a desire to improve their evaluation capacity.

This report is divided into six chapters corresponding to the six objectives outlined above.

CHAPTER I
DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE STUDIED

Introduction

Chapter I provides descriptive data on youth who were processed by court intake from March, 1979, through March, 1980. These data, based on a systematic 25% sample from a total of 2,257 youth referred to juvenile court intake, include selected demographic characteristics, types of offenses involved and the number of prior contacts on record.

Methodology

A 13-month period was used to gather information on four classes of youth:

- 1) alleged delinquents, s. 48.12*
- 2) adjudged delinquents, s. 48.34
- 3) children alleged to be in need of protection or services (CHIPS), s. 48.13
- 4) adjudged CHIPS, s. 48.345

For purposes of this report, "delinquent" refers to a child who is at least 12 years of age but not yet 18 and who has violated a state or federal criminal law. This report does not deal with youth waived to adult court. As used in this report, CHIPS refers to offenses which would not be illegal if committed by adults -- i.e., runaway, curfew violation, truancy.

Two groups of youth have been excluded from the above four classes. First, dependent and neglected youth were excluded from the CHIPS category because the intent of the study was to examine only those youth who reached

* Throughout this study, numbers preceded by s. ____ refer to Wisconsin state statutes.

the stage of court intake as a result of their own actions. Second, cases petitioned for truancy were not included in the sample because they are processed through the system in a special way. Some information on this small group is provided in Appendix A.

Of the 2,257 youth who were processed through court intake during the study time-frame, 1,817 (81%) were alleged delinquent and 440 (19%) were alleged CHIPS. Therefore, the 25% sample for this project consisted of 556 cases, 456 of which were alleged delinquent, and 110 alleged CHIPS. The list of alleged delinquents and alleged CHIPS is maintained by the Juvenile Court Intake Coordinator. The size of the sample and the random selection insure that the findings will be representative of the total population of juvenile offenders under study.

Case information was gathered from the Dane County Central Index files in the Juvenile Reception Center, juvenile court records and records maintained by the Dane County Department of Social Services. All available information was collected on sex, age, city/county residence, race, alleged offenses, and prior justice system contacts of youth in the sample.

Profile of juvenile offenders

Information on the sex, age, residence and race of the youth in our study sample is presented in Table I-A.

TABLE I-A
CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH IN SAMPLE

Characteristics	CHIPS N=110		Delinquency N=456		Total N=566	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sex:						
Male	50	45%	378	83%	428	76%
Female	60	55	78	17	138	24
Age:						
Range	12-17		8-17		8-17	
Mode*	15		16		16	
Residence:						
Madison	71	64	228	50	299	53
Non-Madison	25	23	169	37	194	34
Not recorded	14	13	59	13	73	13
Race:						
White	81	74	33	73.0	414	73
Black	7	6	27	6.0	34	6
Hispanic	1	1	4	.8	5	1
Native American	2	2	3	.6	5	1
Oriental	--	--	3	.6	3	0.5
Not recorded	19	17	86	19.0	105	18.5

* Highest frequency age

Sex

Juveniles alleged to be delinquent are far more likely to be male. On the other hand, females exceed males in the alleged CHIPS category. The male/female ratio for the sample when CHIPS and delinquency cases are combined is 3:1. Such findings are routinely duplicated elsewhere and probably reflect differences in social roles and expectations.*

* Meda Chesney-Lind, "The Family Court and the Female Delinquent", Issues in Criminology 8 (Fall 1973): 51-69

Sex and offense type

Offenses for which over half the offenders were female included curfew violations, running away, and eluding or obstructing an officer. There was no type of delinquency offense for which more females were arrested than males. However, while sex does seem to be a factor in charging delinquency or CHIPS, there does not appear to be a significant difference between dispositions received by males and females. (See Chapter II.)

Age

The age range for our sample was 8-17 years; the mode (highest frequency) was 16 years. Matching age with offense, we find the mode was highest -- 17 years of age -- for allegations of robbery, trespass, reckless use of a weapon, possession of burglary tools, eluding or resisting an officer, disorderly conduct, and drug-related offenses. The mode was lowest -- 15 years of age -- for ordinance violations and forgery. Age alone, however, does not appear to be a significant factor in the type of crime committed or the disposition ordered.

Residence

When those cases with unknown residency are removed, the data show that City of Madison youth were charged with 61% of all juvenile offenses referred to juvenile court intake. 1980 census figures indicate that Madison youth constitute approximately 44% of the juvenile population of Dane County. This data is qualified by the relatively large number (13%) of youth whose residence was unrecorded. It should also be noted that these differences may primarily reflect local differences in police and school referral and reporting policies rather than real differences in the incidence of juvenile offenses related to residence.

Race

Since 18% of the case records contained no indication of the race of the juvenile, these data may not accurately reflect the racial distribution of Dane County juvenile offenders. More complete records and additional information on other factors such as socio-economic status would be needed to clarify the relationship, if any, between race alone and court referral in Dane County.

Alleged offenses

Of all the offenses alleged to be involved in cases in this study, 18% were CHIPS offenses and 82% were delinquent offenses.* The state of Wisconsin has two classifications for delinquent acts. Part I offenses are described as serious offenses involving threats or injury (i.e., burglary, murder, robbery and aggravated assault). If committed by an adult these offenses would be classified as felonies. Part II offenses are delinquent acts which, if committed by an adult, would be classified as misdemeanors. Part II offenses include such acts as drug possession, family offenses, vice, vandalism and driving under the influence of alcohol. Analysis of the delinquency charges in our sample reveals that 48% were for Part I (felony) offenses and 52% were for Part II (misdemeanor) offenses. Tables I-B and I-C present the types of delinquent and CHIPS offenses allegedly committed by the sample population.

* Many cases involved more than one alleged offense.

TABLE I-B
ALLEGED DELINQUENT OFFENSES OF YOUTH IN SAMPLE
N = 502 (82% of all offenses)

<u>Offense</u>	<u># of Offenses</u>	<u>Modal Age of Offender</u>	<u># of Males</u>	<u># of Females</u>
Burglary	78	16	71	7
Theft	67	17	63	4
Shoplifting	63	16	40	23
Criminal damage	48	17	43	5
Operating motor vehicle without owner's consent	46	15	41	5
Disorderly conduct	27	17	16	11
No drivers license	22	15	19	13
Battery	18	16	13	5
Receiving stolen property	14	15	13	1
Possession of drugs	10	17	6	4
Juvenile drinking	10	16	9	1
Party to a crime	10	15	9	1
Trespass	9	17	7	2
Sexual assault	8	15	8	--
Attempted theft	6	16	5	1
Armed robbery	6	17	6	--
Reckless use of firearms	5	11	5	--
Robbery	4	15	4	--
Attempted burglary	6	15-16	5	1
Possession of burglary tools	4	17	4	--
Carrying concealed weapon	4	17	3	1
Forgery	3	15	2	1
Obstructing	3	17	--	2
Prostitution	2	17	--	2
Fraud	1	17	--	1
False alarm	2	15-16	1	1
Throwing missiles	2	--	2	--
Arson	2	--	2	--
Runaway	2	15-16	--	2
Resisting an officer	2	--	1	1
Capias (pick-up order)	1	15	1	--
Hit and run	1	14	1	--
Attempted forgery	1	15	1	--
Possession of a pistol	1	15	1	--
Firecrackers	1	--	1	--
Mailbox tampering	1	15	1	--
Snowmobiling illegally	1	15	1	--
False I.D.	1	16	1	--
Illegal riding	1	--	1	--
Curfew violations	1	15	1	--
Obscene calls	1	15	1	--
Traffic violations	1	--	1	--
Fire bomb	1	15	1	--
Shooting ducks illegally	1	17	1	--
Eluding an officer	1	13	1	--
Boating illegally	1	15	1	--
Attempted battery	1	15	--	1

TABLE I-C
 ALLEGED CHIPS OFFENSES OF YOUTH IN SAMPLE
 N - 111 (17% of all offenses)

Offense	# of Offenses	Modal Age	# of Males	# of Females
Runaway	83	15	37	46
Juvenile drinking	17	16	9	8
Curfew violation	6	16	4	2
Uncontrollability	5	15-16	--	5

As indicated in Table I-C, running away (either from home or a court placement) is by far the most common alleged CHIPS offense. These cases appear throughout this report to be the most difficult of cases for the juvenile court system to manage effectively.

The data were analyzed to determine the number of justice system contacts these youth had before their most recent offense. The data show that the number of prior contacts recorded in the Central Index for our sample group ranges from 0-25. The frequency of prior contacts was highest for those currently charged with forgery, battery, reckless use of a weapon, and uncontrollable behavior, and lowest for those referred for shoplifting, ordinance violations and juvenile drinking.

The offenses were then grouped into Part I, Part II, and CHIPS, and analyzed by prior Central Index entries. These results are presented in Table I-D.

TABLE I-D
 NUMBER OF PRIOR OFFENSES OF SAMPLE YOUTH BY CURRENT OFFENSE TYPE

Offense Type	# of Prior Offenses		
	5 or more	1 - 4	0
Part I (# = 205)	69 (34%)	92 (45%)	44 (21%)
Part II (# = 196)	28 (14%)	123 (63%)	45 (23%)
CHIPS (# = 100)	12 (12%)	67 (67%)	21 (21%)
TOTAL (# = 501)	109 (22%)	282 (56%)	110 (22%)

This table indicates that approximately 20% of youth who come to court intake have no record of prior contact with authorities. It is also clear that juveniles charged with major offenses are more likely than any other group to have had repeated contact with the juvenile justice system.

In general, youth who reach Dane County court intake have been involved with the law more than once and for relatively serious offenses before formal action is taken. Furthermore, referral to court intake seems to be more strongly affected by the juvenile's prior record in combination with the severity of the offense than by any other characteristics reviewed.

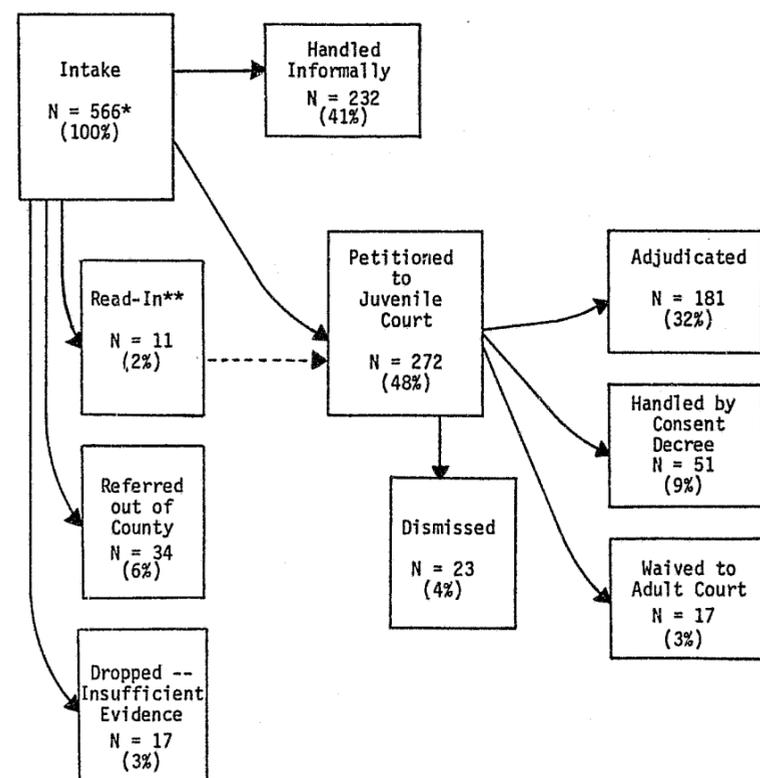
CHAPTER II

PROCESSING OF SAMPLE CASES: INTAKE THROUGH DISPOSITION

Introduction

The fact that a juvenile is apprehended and referred to court intake does not mean that he/she will automatically appear in court. Of the 566 cases in our sample, 48% actually were petitioned to juvenile court. The following chart summarizes the alternatives used to divert juveniles from formal adjudication.

CHART II-A
PROCESSING OF SAMPLE CASES



* Represents ¼ of actual cases processed through the juvenile court system between March 19, 1979 to March 19, 1980.

** "Read-In" -- means that there were additional offenses - admitted by the child - which were not included in the original petition. These admissions are considered by the judge when developing a disposition order for the original petition.

Intake

In Dane County, the Juvenile Court Intake Coordinator and the Deputy District Attorney decide whether a child will receive informal handling or formal processing through the court system. As indicated earlier, Chapter 48 of the Wisconsin state statutes (Children's Code) specifies, as one of the primary goals of the juvenile justice system, the diversion of children from the system to the extent consistent with protection of both the child and public safety. It appears that this principle is in operation in the Dane County juvenile justice system since only 48% of those referred to court intake were petitioned to juvenile court. The relationship between intake decisions and offense type and number of prior contacts as recorded in the Central Index is summarized in Table II-A.

TABLE II-A
RELATIONSHIP OF INTAKE DECISIONS
TO TYPE OF OFFENSE & PRIOR CENTRAL INDEX ENTRIES

N = 501*

PART I OFFENSES	# of Prior Central Index Entries					
	Intake Decisions	0	1 - 4	5 or More	Mode	Range
Formal (N = 111)	21	43	47	3.5	0-15	
Informal (N = 81)	22	43	16	1.5	0-17	
Waived (N = 13)	1	6	6	0.9	0-17	
PART II OFFENSES						
Intake Decisions	0	1 - 4	5 or More	Mode	Range	
Formal (N = 72)	13	48	11	1.5	0-9	
Informal (N = 120)	31	73	16	1.5	0-9	
Waived (N = 4)	1	2	1	3.5	1-6	
CHIPS						
Intake Decisions	0	1 - 4	5 or More	Mode	Range	
Formal (N = 51)	5	39	7	1.5	0-9	
Informal (N = 49)	16	28	5	1.5	0-8	

* The number of prior entries could not reliably be determined for 38 formal and 33 informal cases in the sample under study.

Informal handling

Informal handling involves voluntary supervision which usually consists of a Department of Social Services contact with the family and an offer of counseling or referral to other agencies if the family so desires. (s. 48.245). Forty-one percent (41%) of the cases were diverted to voluntary supervision: 33% alleged delinquent, and 8% alleged CHIPS.

The group of delinquents handled informally constituted 40% of all delinquents on the District Attorney's intake list. There were more youth handled informally than formally for all crimes except burglary, robbery, and sexual assault.

Consent decrees

After a petition is filed but before adjudication, the parties involved, including the juvenile, parents or guardian, District Attorney, Social Worker,* juvenile's attorney, and judge may enter into a consent decree (s. 48.32). Consent decrees are similar to informal handling in that they are meant to avoid the stigma attached to adjudication and frequently involve less restrictive dispositions, but similar to formal processing in that violation of the terms of the order can result in the original petition being returned to the court.

Nine percent (9%) of the sample cases were settled by consent decree. The most common disposition, usually not in combination with any other disposition, was involuntary supervision in the community. Formal or involuntary supervision places conditions on the youth's behavior -- some limiting and others directing. Those conditions must be prescribed by the judge as a part of the dispositional order, be reasonable, set expectations for the child's conduct and the conduct of the parent or guardian, and be designed to promote the physical, mental and moral well-being of the child (s.s. 48.21 and 48.34).

* The statute does not require the approval of the social worker in the consent decree process, but by Dane County Juvenile Court policy the social worker is now routinely involved.

The use of consent decrees was more prevalent with Part II offenses (misdemeanors) and with those individuals who had a low number of prior referrals as recorded in the Central Index. The percentage of cases settled by consent decrees was highest for driving without a valid license, possession or sale of drugs, carrying a concealed weapon, shoplifting, disorderly conduct and trespassing, none of which is a Part I offense.

Formal adjudication

Thirty-two percent (32%) of the youth brought to intake were petitioned and formally adjudicated in juvenile court. Of the delinquency cases, Part I offenses were more likely to be adjudicated or waived to adult court than Part II offenses or ordinance violations, with the exception of sexual assault and battery. A higher percentage of CHIPS than Part II delinquency cases were handled formally. This is consistent with the conclusion that the number of prior contacts with juvenile authorities significantly affects intake decisions (see table I-D). Additionally, 7% of the CHIPS cases were petitioned as delinquent. Most of those were either runaways from previous placement or had a delinquency charge in addition to a CHIPS charge.

Other court options

Of the 272 cases petitioned, 23 or 8% were dismissed. In these cases there had often been an unusually long period between the date of the offense and the court hearing. In the meantime, the matter had usually been resolved in some other way. Another 2% were "read-in". The cases dismissed and read-in did not display any particular pattern or concentration in terms of sex or type of offense. Finally, 3% of the cases were waived to Circuit Court by the juvenile court. Procedures and criteria for waiver of a juvenile to adult court are described in 5.48.8 of the Children's Code.

Offenses most likely to be referred to circuit court were Part I crimes and criminal damage committed by older juveniles with a long history of prior referrals.

Juvenile court dispositions

Chapter 48 defines some of the standards and information to be utilized in the making of dispositional decisions. The report submitted to the court by the social worker must include the social history of the child, a statement of rehabilitation or treatment objectives including behavioral changes and academic, social and vocational skills to be achieved by the child (s. 48.33). There are additional statutory requirements when out-of-home placement is recommended (s. 48.33, 4-6). The statutorily defined aims of the court in making the disposition are to take advantage of the least restrictive alternative, to accommodate the preservation of the family, to protect the child's best interests and to assure a comprehensive program of care, treatment and rehabilitation (s. 48.355).

The court has various dispositional alternatives available. Depending on the nature of the offense and the status of the child, a judge may (as per s. 48.34):

- 1) counsel the child and/or family
- 2) place the child under supervision of social worker or other responsible adult in the community
- 3) place the child outside of home
- 4) transfer legal custody
- 5) place the child in a correctional institution
- 6) order restitution
- 7) order special treatment or care
- 8) revoke or suspend driver's license

- 9) impose a fine of up to \$50; for every subsequent adjudication the fine ceiling may be raised by an additional \$50
- 10) place the child in a supervised work program
- 11) allow a child at least 17 years old to live independently
- 12) order the child's participation in various safety courses (s. 48.34)

For the sample in this study, the most common formal disposition assigned was "involuntary supervision in the community". This was used in 61% of the cases adjudicated: 51% delinquent and 10% CHIPS. Involuntary supervision in the community was used for all types of offenses, usually in conjunction with other services or programs. Other common dispositions were restitution, psychological evaluation/therapy, home detention and out of home placements. See Table II-B for complete data on disposition of adjudicated cases.

TABLE II-B
DISPOSITIONS OF FORMALLY HANDLED CASES
(Includes adjudications and consent decrees)

Dispositions	Total (N=232)		Delinquent (N=179)		CHIPS (N=53)	
	%	#	%	#	%	#
Supervision (involuntary)	61%	118	66%	23	43%	23
Restitution	26	58	32	2*	4	2*
Home Detention	10	19	11	5	9	5
Forfeiture	5	12	7	--	--	--
Psychological Eval./Counseling	26	42	23	19	36	19
Drug/Alcohol Eval./Counseling	2	2	1	2	4	2
Independent Living	1	1	1	1	2	1
Placement Outside Home	32	37	21	37	70	37
Foster Home	11	9	5	16	30	9
Residential Treatment	10	14	8	9	17	14
Group Home	6	7	4	7	13	7
Department of Corrections	3	6	3	--	--	6
Relative's Home	2	1	1	3	6	1

(The columns add to more than 100% because of assignment of more than one disposition per case.)

* In these cases a delinquency factor in a case brought as CHIPS led to the assignment of restitution.

Placement outside the home for delinquents was more common for Part I offenses than for others. Custody transfer to the Department of Corrections was used in only four areas: burglary, battery, theft and robbery. Of the CHIPS dispositions, out of home placement was most common for "runaway" and "uncontrollable" petitions. In fact, juveniles in the CHIPS category have frequently been petitioned to court hearing because placement has become the only remaining alternative.

Based on our 25% sample over a 13-month period, Table II-C presents estimates of the number of adjudicated cases assigned to each disposition in 1979.

TABLE II-C
(1979)
ESTIMATED ANNUAL DISPOSITIONS USED BY JUVENILE COURT

Dispositions	Total	Delinquent	CHIPS
Supervision	522	436	86
Placements Outside Home	273	144	129
- Foster Home	96	33	63
- Residential Treatment	85	52	33
- Group Home	52	26	26
- Department of Corrections	26	26	0
- Relative's Home	14	7	7
Psychological Evaluation/Therapy	255	155	70
Restitution	221	214	7
Home Detention	88	70	18
Forfeiture	12	12	--
Alcohol/Drug Treatment	14	7	7
Independent Living	8	4	4

The relationship between prior contacts with the juvenile justice system, as indicated in the Central Index, and dispositions as entered in the court record is examined in Table II-D for adjudicated delinquents, and Table II-E for adjudicated CHIPS.

These tables reveal that juveniles with more prior referrals to court are more likely to receive the following dispositions: restitution, home detention, psychological evaluation or therapy, and out-of-home placement. Other types of dispositions either remain constant or decline as the number of priors increases.

TABLE II-D
DISPOSITION OF FORMALLY HANDLED DELINQUENCY CASES BY PRIOR REFERRALS
(N = 166)

Dispositions	No Prior Referrals (N=31)		1-4 Prior Referrals (N=101)		5 or More Prior Referrals (N=34)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Supervision (ordered or extended)	15	48%	41	41%	14	41%
Restitution	6	19%	24	24%	12	35%
Forfeiture	0	--	6	6%	3	9%
Home Detention	2	6%	7	7%	6	18%
Independent Living	0	--	1	1%	0	--
Psychological Evaluation/ counseling	3	10%	20	20%	11	32%
Drug/Alcohol Treatment	0	--	2	2%	1	--
<u>Total Placements</u>	3	10%	23	23%	16	47%
- Foster Home	2	--	6	6%	4	12%
- Group Home	0	--	6	6%	5	14%
- Residential Treatment	1	--	6	6%	4	12%
- Dept. of Corrections	0	--	4	4%	3	9%
- Relative's Home	0	--	1	1%	0	--

TABLE II-E
DISPOSITION OF ADJUDICATED CHIPS CASES BY PRIOR REFERRALS
(N = 53)

Dispositions	No Prior Referrals (N=4)		1-4 Prior Referrals (N=36)		5 or More Prior Referrals (N=13)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Supervision	2	50%	11	31%	3	23%
Restitution	1	25%	2	6%	1	8%*
Forfeiture	0	--	0	--	0	--
Home Detention	0	--	2	6%	1	8%
Independent Living	0	--	1	3%	0	--
Psychological Evaluation/counseling	0	--	12	33%	6	46%
Drug/Alcohol Treatment	0	--	1	3%	0	--
<u>Total Placements</u>	2	50%	23	64%	10	77%
- Foster Home	1	--	12	33%	3	23%
- Group Home	--	--	5	14%	2	15%
- Residential Treatment	--	--	3	8%	5	38%
- Dept. of Corrections**	--	--	1	3%	--	--
- Relative's Home	1	--	2	6%	--	--

* Delinquency involvement

** Department of Corrections placement as a result of delinquent activities.

TABLE II-F
STATUS OF COURT DISPOSITIONS AFTER SIX MONTHS

Disposition	Disposition Completed	Disposition Revised	Case Open	Returned to Court on New Charges
Consent Decree	41%	8%	24%	27%
Adjudicated Delinquent	27%	9%	27%	36%
Adjudicated CHIPS	19%	19%	22%	41%
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>15%</u>	<u>24%</u>	<u>36%</u>

Consistent with other findings in this report, CHIPS cases appear to be the dispositions which most frequently reappear before the court -- either for a revision of the original court order or because new charges have been filed.

CHAPTER III
CLIENT OBJECTIVES AND SERVICE EVALUATION:
INTERVIEWS WITH SOCIAL WORKERS

Introduction

The third, and most important objective of this study was "To collect all available data on the objectives and course of dispositional plans, and to assess the adequacy of this information for use in service evaluation and planning." This involved checking the Social Services and Circuit Court files for all relevant information on each of the 566 cases under study.* Because those records have never been organized in a way which would facilitate this type of data collection, this proved to be an extremely laborious and often unrewarding task.

Written records available

The intake report written by the intake worker, although often of excellent quality, tends to focus on the incident that brought the family and child to court and usually does not include sufficient client/family history to suggest what the needs of the client are or, therefore, what the treatment objectives or plans might be. This report was routinely filed in the Social Services file, but not in the court file.

The dispositional order written by the presiding judge must specify the placement and/or treatment warranted by the evidence submitted and outline the services mandated by the court (s. 48.355). The order must identify who is to provide these services, where any out-of-home placement is to be, the amount of support, if any, to be paid by parents, and the expiration

* State and federal guidelines on confidentiality were carefully observed.

date of the order. As stated earlier, the aim of post-dispositional activity is defined by Wisconsin statutes to be the implementation of treatment plans to improve a child's behavior and increase his or her academic, social and vocational skills (s. 48.33). The dispositional order was consistently filed in both the Social Services and court records, as were the rules of supervision. However, both dispositional orders and rules of supervision varied greatly in their specificity and tended to be quite general. They seldom defined the kind of specific client needs/objectives which lent themselves to service evaluation and planning.

A court report, containing treatment plans, is to be submitted to the court either orally or in writing by the social worker assigned to the case at the time of the hearing, and to become a part of the court record.* For most of the cases in this sample, the court report was apparently submitted orally and would have required extensive transcription from the court reporter's notes to be utilized in this study. Unfortunately, information on client/family needs, treatment objectives and plans, and the course of dispositions varied greatly among Social Services files and was not consistently available. It should be noted here that it is not the usual role of the social worker responsible for involuntary supervision to provide direct services, but to arrange for the provision of special services designed to meet the identified needs of the client/family. Some of the information on the course of dispositional plans must, therefore, be supplied by the agencies providing these services. Such information was seldom available in the case files.

* The statutory requirement for a written court report may be waived if all parties consent to an oral report and if the report does not recommend removing the child from his/her present living situation. If an oral report is made, the code requires that "a record of the report shall be transcribed and shall be made a part of the court record." (s.s.48.33)

In summary, there is apparently no current requirement that the individual history and needs of the child/family be stated in writing and related to services needed to meet specific treatment objectives. On the basis of existing records it is, therefore, impossible to define the system wide treatment/rehabilitation needs of court-involved youth in Dane County. The absence of this basic information also makes it extremely difficult to determine the adequacy with which client needs are being met by existing services.

Assessment of the adequacy of services is further complicated by the fact that there is no routine feedback to the court on the status of the client at termination of service. At the time of this study, there was no notice of termination filed in the court record in the majority of cases.* Although the Department of Social Services policy suggests that termination notices be filed in the court record, this apparently did not occur routinely in practice and seldom included a written evaluation of client progress.

In view of the limitations of the written records for the purposes of this part of the study, it was decided to attempt to obtain more complete information through direct interviews with the social workers assigned to a significant sample of our study population. The remainder of this chapter describes this effort and the data which it generated.

Methodology

The project staff, in consultation with court intake and other Social Services staff, designed a structured interview based on the portions of the Children's Code which define guidelines for determining jurisdiction and case disposition.** All social workers were asked the same questions

* Subsequent information suggests that termination notices are currently (1982) being filed more regularly.

** Wisconsin statutes, s. 48.12 and 48.33

regardless of whether the case had been handled formally or informally.

Of the 327 cases representing a random half of our total sample, 103 were found to have been under formal or informal supervision during the period of study by the social worker interviewed and to have the relevant records still available. These cases form the sample for this part of the study. Of these 103 cases, 67 were handled formally and 36 were handled informally. Two-thirds, or 24 of the 36 informal cases were ongoing; that is, they were open prior to the offense under review in this study.

The reader should be aware that this subsample contains a slightly higher percentage of formal petitions (65% vs. 48%) and a lower percentage of informal dispositions (35% vs. 41%) than is found in the original sample. However, the subsample distribution of alleged Part I, Part II and CHIPS offenses that were formally petitioned, as well as the dispositions utilized, were very similar to those in the original sample.

Social worker interviews

Social workers were questioned first on their perception of their primary role in working with the individual client. Workers often mentioned more than one role. Percentages are based on 103 cases, not on the total number of responses. The most frequent response was "monitor and evaluate performance" (37%), followed by "coordination/case management" (36%). Twenty-six percent (26%) of the workers perceived their role as providing direct services/counseling. Those workers who were only involved with a case at intake were more likely to see their role as providing direct services than those workers who had ongoing case responsibility.

As stated above, 67 cases were handled formally by the court and 24 were informal, ongoing cases. Workers handling these 91 cases were questioned regarding how often they had phone or in-person contact with their client.

They were also asked how often they evaluated the progress of each particular case, usually through contact with the family or placement. Although the interviewers attempted to focus on the handling of the incident which brought the case into the sample, workers tended to discuss their total contact with the client and family -- particularly if it had been extensive or involved formal supervision.

TABLE III-A
FREQUENCY OF CONTACT BY TYPE OF SUPERVISION

Frequency of Contact	Formal Supervision (N=67)		Informal Supervision (N=24)	
	Client Contacts	Progress Evaluation	Client Contacts	Progress Evaluation
More than weekly	4 (3)*	2 (2)	8	0
More than monthly	22 (10)	12 (3)	3	1
Monthly	21 (4)	17 (5)	0	4
Every 2 to 6 months	3 (0)	19 (5)	1	9
One contact only	4 (0)	3 (0)	1	5
Other miscellaneous	7 (4)	8 (3)	6	3
No contact	1**	1	1	1
No response	5	4 (3)	4	1
	N = 67 cases		N = 24 cases	

* Parentheses indicate the number of cases in out-of-home placement.
** This case was eliminated from further consideration in this study.

Cases under formal supervision receive the greatest attention from social workers, with 71% of formal cases being contacted at least monthly, compared to 46% for those under informal supervision. Similarly, the progress of 47% of these cases was reviewed at least monthly, compared to 21% of the informal cases.

These data are incomplete and should be interpreted with caution. In order to clarify what "supervision" may mean in particular cases, better information is needed on the nature as well as the number of client/family/placement contacts under the widely varied circumstances in which formal and

informal supervision occurs. The type and amount of supervision needed and/or provided is clearly related to a number of factors, including the nature of the problem, the role of the family, the involvement of other direct services, placement status, and worker caseload.

Client goals and objectives

The court disposition for adjudicated CHIPS and delinquent cases is usually based on a court report submitted by a social worker. This report includes "a statement of the objectives of the rehabilitation ... to be provided including desirable behavior changes and academic, social and vocational skills to be achieved" (s. 48.33[2]). Accordingly, social workers in our sample were asked to list all behavioral, academic, social and vocational objectives for all cases which had been handled formally. Although not questioned directly as to whether the family was included in the treatment plan, workers for 21% of the cases specifically mentioned the family in describing their goals. Table III-B summarizes how often workers mentioned each of these categories.

While improvement in behavior and academic skills were the most frequently mentioned objectives for all offense types, workers were much more likely to identify the need for improvement in social skills in the CHIPS group than in the Parts I and II (delinquency) groups. The need for vocational skills improvement was more frequently identified for delinquency than for CHIPS cases.

These categories were further analyzed to determine specific client changes or skills set as goals for the juvenile offenders in our sample and to determine how well clients had met those goals. Tables III-C through III-F list these findings.

Tables III-B through III-F are presented on the following pages.

TABLE III-B
CLIENT OBJECTIVES BY TYPE OF OFFENSE

Objectives	Part I (N=29)		Part II (N=20)		CHIPS (N=17)		TOTAL (N=66)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Behavioral	23	79%	18	90%	16	94%	57	86%
Academic skills	24	83	14	70	13	76	51	77
Social skills	14	48	9	45	12	70	35	53
Vocational skills	9	31	7	35	3	18	19	29
Other goals*	3	10	1	5	1	6	5	8
No goals**	3	10	1	5	1	6	5	8

* Usually completion of specific program or activity (e.g., go to group home, participate in treatment).

** The explanations given for the five "no goals" were that the youth was placed under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, the youth left the county, or the youth was already under orders for a previous offense.

TABLE III-D

ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES INCLUDING A RATING OF HOW WELL THE OBJECTIVE WAS MET AFTER SIX MONTHS

Changes Sought	Part I Cases (N=24)		Part II Cases (N=14)		CHIPS Cases (N=13)		Total	Effec- tiveness Rating
	Objective not met	Effec- tiveness Rating	Objective not met	Effec- tiveness Rating	Objective not met	Effec- tiveness Rating		
Attend school	20	(3.4)	8	(3.1)	8	(2.6)	36	(3.2)
Improve performance	2	(2.0)	5	(3.0)	2	(2.5)	9	(2.7)
Reduce truancy	2	(3.0)	2	(1.0)	3	(3.3)	7	(2.6)
Attend alternative/ Special Ed. classes	3	(5.0)	1	(4.0)	2	(3.0)	6	(4.2)
TOTAL OBJECTIVES	27		16		15		58	
AVERAGE RATINGS		(3.4)		(2.9)		(2.8)		(3.1)

TABLE III-E

SOCIAL OBJECTIVES INCLUDING A RATING OF HOW WELL THE OBJECTIVE WAS MET AFTER SIX MONTHS

Desired Behavior	Rating Scale:					CHIPS (12 cases)	Total (34 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating
	1 Objective not met	2	3	4	5 Objective very effectively met			
	Part I (14 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating	Part II (8 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating				
Improve family relation- ships	5	(2.4)	4	(4.2)	6	(3.8)	15	(3.4)
ObeY parent(s)	6	(3.3)	1	(3.0)	3	(3.3)	10	(3.3)
Attend family counseling	2	(3.0)	2	(1.0)	1	(1.0)	5	(1.8)
Resist peer pressure	--		1	*	1	(3.0)	2	--
Other**	2	(3.0)	2	(3.0)	3	(2.3)	7	(2.7)
TOTAL OBJECTIVES	15		10		14		39	
AVERAGE RATINGS		(2.9)		(3.1)		(3.1)		(3.0)

* Not rated

** Includes: "form lasting attachments", reduce foul language, "assess functioning in home and community", complete community service, live independently (2), and parent needs training (2).

TABLE III-F

VOCATIONAL OBJECTIVES INCLUDING A RATING OF HOW WELL THE OBJECTIVE WAS MET AFTER SIX MONTHS

Rating Scale:	1	2	3	4	5				
	Objective not met			Objective very effectively met					
Changes Desired	Part I (9 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating	Part II (7 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating	CHIPS (3 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating	Total (19 cases)	Effec- tiveness Rating	
Complete restitution/ community service	7	(4.8)	6	(3.3)*	2	(3.0)**	15	(4.2)	
Learn farming skills	1	(5.0)	--		--		1	(5.0)	
Seek employment	2	(2.5)	1	(5.0)	1	(3.0)	4	(3.2)	
TOTAL	10		7		3		20		
AVERAGE RATINGS		(4.4)		(3.7)		(3.0)		(4.0)	

* One of these six cases was not rated because youth was still enrolled in restitution program at the time of the interview.

** One of these two cases was not rated by the worker.

Analysis of these tables indicates that, for the most part, client objectives focused on staying out of trouble, going to school, and getting along better with other family members. Client objectives and effectiveness ratings tended to be similar for the three types of juvenile cases.

Behavioral objectives that were most often achieved by the client included meeting with the social worker, keeping regular hours, and living independently. Objectives usually not met were successful participation in an alcohol and other drug abuse program and family counseling. Workers usually mentioned a client's refusal to participate as the primary reason for the low ratings that occurred.

As noted above, most academic objectives were very general, usually focusing on improved school attendance or performance. Only six of the 58 objectives listed mentioned the need for alternative education or specialized school programs. These six were rated as very effectively met by the client.

Almost all of the 39 social objectives identified in Table III-E focused on improving parent/child interactions. Only six cases indicated a need for the client to modify his/her functioning within the community. Participation in family counseling or therapy was rated as especially low. Again, lack of client follow-through was the reason given for the low rating.

Vocational objectives were listed least often but rated by the social workers as most effectively met. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the vocation-related objectives involved completion of restitution or community service and had a high completion rating. Only four of the 66 cases reviewed mentioned employment as an objective for the client.

Because of the small numbers of cases for which specific behavioral, academic, social or vocational goals were set, these data are suggestive only. Development of a routine recording system providing identification of specific

client objectives, strategies or services utilized, and evaluation of the effectiveness with which objectives are met could significantly improve accountability and resource management in this area.

Community resources

Workers were next asked to identify community resources which had been particularly effective or ineffective for a given case. Thirty-seven different services were listed as particularly effective. Those most often mentioned were the Dane County Department of Social Services (11), restitution programs (7), private therapists (4), out-of-county residential treatment centers (7), and in-county foster care/group homes (6). In 70% of the sample cases, the worker was able to find at least one particularly effective service.

Ten types of service were rated as very ineffective -- usually because the child or family refused to participate. Private therapists, family counselors, and alcohol and other drug intervention and treatment programs were the services usually mentioned in this category. (Note: Private therapists were rated as both very effective and very ineffective, suggesting a high degree of variation in the use and effectiveness of this type of service.)

In 80% of the cases reviewed, workers felt there were appropriate services available and accessible. Of the remaining 20%, most said the problem was either a long waiting list for needed services or the fact that the particular client refused to use existing services. New services needed were identified as treatment for prostitution cases, alternative education, intensive supervision, a co-ed drug-free half-way house, and "programming for intelligent, anti-establishment kids".*

* It should be noted that workers were questioned on services needed for a particular case and were not asked to identify service gaps for the juvenile justice system as a whole. For system-wide service assessment data see the 1981 and 1982 reports prepared for the Youth & Family Aids Planning Committee by Dane County Department of Social Services staff.

Placement out of the home occurred in 23 cases: 22% of the interview sample, and 33% of the cases formally adjudicated. Thirteen of the delinquents (19%) and ten of the CHIPS cases (29%) were placed outside their homes. In 70% of the delinquency cases and 100% of the CHIPS cases the placement was seen as appropriate. Of those instances where placement was considered to have been inappropriate, the most common reason was the need for a more restrictive or secure facility. Also mentioned specifically as needed alternatives were a more treatment-oriented setting, independent living, and programs with an educational component. Foster care was seen as less effective for CHIPS than for delinquency cases.

Problems and successes

Case workers were asked to evaluate the difficulty of carrying out the dispositional orders on adjudicated cases in the sample. Their responses are found in Table III-G.

TABLE III-G

DIFFICULTY OF CARRYING OUT DISPOSITIONAL ORDERS BY OFFENSE TYPE

N = 66

<u>Type of Offense</u>	<u>Difficult</u>	<u>Not Difficult</u>
Part I	7 (33%)	21 (67%)
Part II	7 (58%)	12 (42%)
CHIPS*	10 (67%)	5 (33%)

* There were two "no responses".

It appears that the orders of the court become more difficult to implement as the seriousness of the offense, from a legal point of view, declines. Workers found the dispositional orders difficult to carry out in 67% of the

CHIPS cases. However, only 33% of the serious felony cases had dispositional orders which were difficult to effect. Table III-H lists the problems and obstacles perceived by social workers in working with a particular case. This table includes both formal and informal cases. Twelve workers reported no problem dealing with the case under review.

TABLE III-H

WORKERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS IN PROVIDING SERVICES (BY OFFENSE TYPE)

N = 79

<u>Type of Problem</u>	<u>Delinquency (N=49)</u>	<u>CHIPS (N=30)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Family	31 (63%)	19 (63%)	50
Youth	24 (49%)	11 (37%)	35
Juvenile justice system	13 (26%)	3 (10%)	16
Education-based, schools	9 (18%)	3 (10%)	12
Other problems	5 (10%)	0 --	5
No response or don't know	5 (10%)	4 (13%)	9

Workers who did have problems saw them as mainly associated with attitudes of the family and youth. Workers tended not to relate their problems in dealing with CHIPS cases to either the juvenile justice system or the schools. The difficulties experienced were seen as related more to a lack of cooperation on the part of the youth/family than any problem inherent in the community.

The workers were asked to rate the effect of the youth's involvement in the juvenile justice system as "very helpful", "moderately helpful", or "not at all helpful". The results appear in Table III-I.

Formal handling was seen as helpful in a much higher percentage of cases of all types than was informal handling. This finding raises the question of whether more cases should be referred to court for formal handling, or more of the informal cases should be handled without referral to court intake in the first place, or both. It is clear that 73% of all cases handled informally do not appear (to the social worker) to have been helped by their contact with the court system.

TABLE III-I

"HELPLESSNESS" OF THE SYSTEM BY TYPE OF OFFENSE AND HANDLING

Type of Handling	Type of Offense							
	Part I		Part II		CHIPS		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<u>Formal</u>								
Very helpful	12	41%	9	45%	4	23%	25	38%
Moderately helpful	11	38	8	40	10	59	29	44
Not helpful	6	21	3	15	3	18	12	18
<u>Total</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>100%</u>
<u>Informal</u>								
Very helpful	0	--	3	23%	1	8%	4	12%
Moderately helpful	3	43	0	--	2	15	5	15
Not helpful	4	57	10	77	10	77	24	73
<u>Total</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>100%</u>

Social workers were asked to identify any successes they had achieved in the particular case under review. They indicated success in three areas: (1) changing the behavior of the youth; (2) having the youth complete the disposition; and (3) changing the behavior of the family. Responses of workers who provided these assessments are reported in Table III-J.

TABLE III-J

AREAS OF SUCCESS PERCEIVED BY SOCIAL WORKERS

Areas of Success	Delinquency N = 66 (49 formals 17 informals)		CHIPS N = 33 (17 formals 16 informals)		Total N = 99
	#	%	#	%	
Changing behavior of youth					
- Formal	39	80%	12	70%	51
- Informal	15	88%	12	75%	27
Completing disposition					
- Formal	26	53%	4	24%	30
- Informal	1	6%	0	--	1
Changing behavior of family					
- Formal	5	10%	3	18%	8
- Informal	2	12%	1	6%	3
No long-term success	12	18%	7	21%	19

For 66% of the cases, workers reported some success in working with the case. Changing the behavior of the youth was the area in which workers were most likely to find some success. Success related to changes in the behavior of the family reportedly occurred in only 11% of the cases.

Again, we find that cases handled informally are likely to be perceived as experiencing less success as a result of their contact with the system. Interestingly, most workers indicated that the behavior of youth handled informally had changed for the better. However, previous responses indicate that this change, by itself, was not sufficient to produce an overall positive rating for most informal cases.

Effects of the Children's Code

Workers were asked to assess the effects of the Children's Code or other legal requirements on the case being reviewed. For 75% of these cases, there were no perceived problems created by state statutes. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of CHIPS and 22% of the delinquency cases were seen as somewhat hampered by new Code requirements.

Those who identified Code-related problems usually mentioned one of the following:

- 1) CHIPS cases usually do not involve serious law violations but frequently warrant serious and intensive intervention. The principle of "least restrictive" disposition is seen as being in conflict with meeting the complex needs of a CHIPS case.
- 2) Increased involvement of attorneys and increased concern for due process are seen as slowing down dispositional consequences for a delinquent act. Workers feel there is a tendency for attorneys to "over-defend" and over-emphasize protection of rights at the expense of provision of appropriate treatment. Consequently, youth sometimes avoid being held accountable for their actions.

Subsequent involvement in the juvenile court system

Finally, workers were asked to indicate whether the youth had further contact with the court system after the 13-month period under review. The

post-survey period includes approximately 12 months. Table III-K summarizes the juvenile court involvement of all youth in the interview sample for whom data were currently available.

TABLE III-K
NEW INTAKE REFERRALS BY ORIGINAL CASE DESIGNATION AND HANDLING*

Original Case Designation	Original Handling							
	Formal Cases				Informal Cases			
	# of Original Cases	#	%	Returnees	# of Original Cases	#	%	Returnees
Part I	27	7	26%	(1.3)**	4	2	50%	(1.0)**
Part II	19	11	58%	(1.8)	9	9	100%	(2.0)
CHIPS	16	8	50%	(3.0)	8	7	88%	(1.1)
TOTALS	62	26	42%	(2.0)	21	18	86%	(1.5)

* New referral to court intake means any subsequent act of the youth which results in any type of formal or informal action by court intake workers, the case worker, or a judge or court commissioner. It does not include "warn and release" actions by local police departments.

** Numbers in parentheses represent the average number of referrals to court intake during the 12-month post-survey period.

This table indicates that formally adjudicated, serious delinquency cases are less likely to have subsequent (within a year) court contact than are Part II cases or CHIPS cases handled informally. Within each offense type, informally handled cases were more likely to return to the system than those cases formally adjudicated. Formal CHIPS cases returned to court intake an average of three times in the 12 months following the original intake, giving further indication of the difficulty the court experiences in this area.

A review of the total sample by project staff revealed a returnee rate which is roughly similar to the returnee rate reported by social workers.

(see Appendix B). Forty-four percent (44%) of the original sample returned to court on new charges during the 20 months beginning with the project sample period. Forty-two percent (42%) of the original delinquent cases and 47% of the original CHIPS cases returned to court. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of these new cases were handled formally (as opposed to 48% of the original cases).

Project staff did not determine which original case types or dispositions were more or less likely to return to court on new charges.

Summary and conclusions

Data presented in this chapter are based on a subsample which had committed more serious offenses and had been processed through court about 15% more often than the original sample.

The frequency of contact with clients under supervision was highly variable for those under both formal and informal supervision. In view of the reliance on supervision -- either formal or informal -- in the disposition of 80% of the cases involved in our total sample, it would appear to be desirable to develop a better understanding of what "supervision" involves and accomplishes in the many types of cases in which it is utilized.

The juvenile justice system often views client needs in terms of what behavior or attitude the youth needs to change. The most common behavioral change sought was improved school attendance. Other common objectives were "reduced law violations" and "improved relationships with parents and other adults". Twenty-three percent (23%) of the sample were placed in out-of-home living situations.

Three or four treatment objectives for an adjudicated youth are generally established by the court or case worker. These are usually broad goals in the areas of school, community and home. Analysis of the data revealed few significant differences in the number or kind of behavioral and academic objectives

set for delinquent and CHIPS youth. Similarly, the frequency of contact between social workers and clients did not differ between the CHIPS and delinquent cases. It does appear that CHIPS cases are more likely to have social skills objectives and less likely to have vocational objectives than are delinquents.

Records kept within the juvenile justice system do not consistently record client progress toward stated treatment objectives. Also, client behavioral change objectives are frequently too broad to make evaluation of client progress possible. Thus, after reviewing court records and Social Services files, and interviewing assigned case workers, we remain unable to determine how effective dispositional orders or related services are in meeting the needs of court-involved youth. This basic problem should be addressed through the development of a routine, uniform system of recording (1) client needs, (2) case management and service objectives, (3) periodic progress evaluations, and (4) client status when services are terminated.

However, we were able to record workers' impressions of the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system in dealing with different types of cases. Social workers consistently indicated that cases involving less serious, usually non-delinquent or CHIPS offenses were more difficult to work with and had less satisfactory outcomes than cases involving more serious delinquency. Cases of all types handled informally were also a source of frustration to workers. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the formally handled cases were seen as at least somewhat helped by being in the system, while 73% of the informal interventions were viewed as not at all helpful.

Consistent with this pattern, CHIPS cases were seen as the most difficult and least helped of all cases in the system. While workers identified fewer problems in CHIPS cases, the problems appear less amenable to change through referral to court intake and subsequent services. Again, this appears to be

especially true for informally handled CHIPS cases. These and related findings in this study again raise the possibility that these cases might be handled in some different way. It must be re-emphasized, however, that they often involve very complex family problems which are difficult to resolve in any context.

Workers reported that they had little difficulty implementing the dispositional orders of the court. When problems were encountered, they were most often classified as family or client-caused. Basically, workers seemed to believe that the system and services were adequate. When failures occurred, lack of youth and/or family cooperation were seen as the problem.

In summary, court referral is most effective when the case resembles what would be a fairly serious crime if committed by an adult. As one worker said, "Give me a good clean delinquency case anytime." In these cases, a petition is filed, the court disposition is usually rapid, the behavior expected from the youth is well delineated, and the role of the social worker is clear. In these instances, the youth themselves feel that the system is effective.* However, when the cases involve primarily non-criminal issues, complicated by family and school problems, the system is seen as far less effective by those who work in it.

The questions raised in these interviews represent an initial effort to obtain improved information on client needs and objectives, and the adequacy with which they are being met through the court system and related services. If this effort encourages the routine collection of such basic data in the future, it will have served a useful purpose. The strong impact on young people and their families and the heavy investment of county resources clearly warrant increased emphasis on evaluation and accountability in the management of juvenile offenders.

* See Parent & Youth Perspectives: The Juvenile Justice Experience, Dane County Youth Commission, December, 1981.

CHAPTER IV
REPORT ON COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction

In Dane County there are a number of private, non-profit agencies which provide a variety of human services for state, county and city governments on a fee-for-service basis. These agencies are often referred to as community-based organizations. Many youth services in the county are provided by these organizations.

Chapter IV of this study provides descriptive data on a sample of post-intake dispositional services available through community-based organizations to the Dane County Circuit Court - Children's Division. These services include counseling, supervision and family support, day treatment, out-of-home placement, out-patient and residential treatment, restitution and supervised work, and independent living arrangements as provided for in the revised Children's Code (1978).

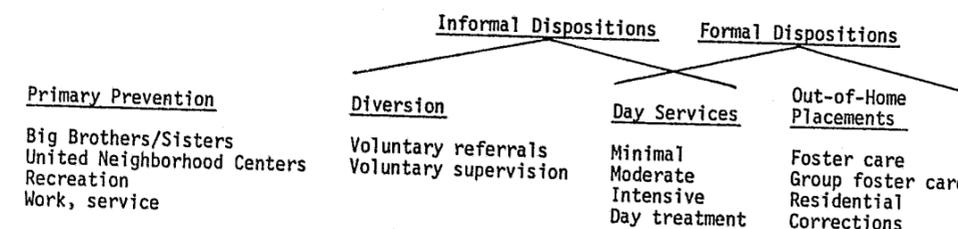
Data on the various dispositional alternatives were gathered to aid Dane County agencies in planning, developing and coordinating youth services, and in both monitoring and strengthening the network of services related to the county's juvenile justice system.

Methodology

The collection of information for the community-based organizations segment of the study consisted of two phases: the compilation of a comprehensive list of dispositional services currently available to court-involved youth, and the development and administration of an interview schedule to a representative sample of staff from these services.

The list of available services was compiled from results of a survey of all youth-serving agencies in Dane County completed in 1980 by the Youth Commission and from a special staff survey done within the Dane County Department of Social Services (DCDSS) of the problems of court-involved youth and families and the resources most often used to address them.

Selection of the services to be studied was based on two major criteria: (1) that the agency be involved in serving the youth of our sample: youth alleged or adjudicated delinquent or CHIPS (see Methodology in Chapter I); and (2) that the service or program be representative of the range of alternatives available to court-involved youth and families. The continuum of services was conceived as shown below with examples:



Twenty-four programs from 18 agencies were selected for study. While these 18 agencies comprise only 28% of the 64 agencies on record as serving court-involved youth and/or families, they provide services to the majority of those who are referred for special services.

Development of an appropriate survey tool for the study took place over a two-month period. Input for the questionnaire was solicited from several relevant agencies, including the Dane County Juvenile Court Program and the Dane County Department of Social Services. The interview schedule was designed to capture both common and unique program components among agencies and to assess perceptions of the services network available to court-involved

youth, including the level of communication and coordination among youth-serving agencies.

The interview format was selected as the method for administering the questionnaire because it allowed for in-depth exploration of the issues under examination. Interviewers were given four hours of training to insure consistency in soliciting and recording responses.

The 24 programs studied are listed below.

Youth Work Experience Program
*Learn Some Fun (Urban League)
Referral and Follow-Through (RAFT Program, Briarpatch)
Briarpatch
*Four Lakes Indian Council
*Streetworker Program (United Neighborhood Centers)
*Project Aware
Omega
Youth Restitution Program
*Freedom House School
Operation Fresh Start
Lutheran Social Services Family Therapy Program
Lutheran Social Services Home and Community Services
Network (morning program)
Network (afternoon program)
Lutheran Social Services Adolescent Center
Bockari House
Odyssey House
Martin Luther Center
University of Wisconsin Hospital's Teenage Clinic
Parental Stress Center
Adolescent Alcohol/Drug Abuse Intervention Program, University of Wisconsin
Volunteers in Probation
Alcoholism Program and Education Center (APEC), Madison General Hospital

* These programs provided services during the period of the study but are no longer operating or providing services to youth.

FINDINGS

Referral information

Respondents from the 24 agencies listed the major sources of referral to their programs. From highest to lowest frequency of referral, the sources include: Dane County Department of Social Services workers, school personnel, Dane County Juvenile Court Program workers, law enforcement officers, youth workers, mental health workers, neighborhood centers, parents, peers, and self. The great majority of referrals to most of these programs are made by Dane County Social Services workers. The fewest came from youth themselves.

Intake assessment

Twenty-two of the 24 programs conduct client assessments at intake. Two programs are dependent upon assessments made by the referring agency. Six programs use only client interviews at intake. Seven programs use intake interview assessments of clients and parents, in combination with relevant information from referring agencies, and results of tests the agencies administer to the clients. The remaining seven programs base client assessments primarily on results of tests given to clients upon entering.

Client progress, evaluation and termination

All but two of the 24 programs assess the progress of clients while clients are involved in the programs and receiving services. Most agencies employ a combination of ongoing progress assessment techniques. Fourteen of the programs make assessments based on one or more of the following information sources: case reviews conducted at weekly or monthly staff meetings, progress checks against original treatment plans or contracts, checks on "indicators of success" (e.g., no further court contact, decrease in number of runs from home), clients' self-evaluations, feedback from outside agencies and individuals

who also deal with the clients. Client progress in four of the programs is measured primarily by the results of tests administered to clients periodically. Two programs use only "indicators of success" (as previously defined) to check on client progress. Another program "subjectively" assesses progress through observation of the client. One program relies primarily on feedback from other agencies and individuals who also deal with the client. Another monitors client progress based on the program's "Level System". (In the Level System, a client is assigned a level of privileges based on his/her behavior.)

In 11 of the programs, the decision to terminate services is based on the client's attainment of goals set at intake. The termination decision is commonly made in combination with assessments of client progress and behavior in other areas as well. For six of the programs, termination decisions are based on one of the following factors: problems have been resolved; the court determines termination; or the client and/or family no longer want services. Clients' participation in seven of the programs is time-limited, i.e., no more than 1,000 hours or one year maximum of participation is allowed.

As indicated in Table IV-A, half of the agencies regularly conduct exit interviews with clients and their families.

TABLE IV-A

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS CONDUCTING EXIT INTERVIEWS WITH CLIENTS AND FAMILIES

Frequency	With Clients		With Families	
	#	%	#	%
Regularly	15	63%	12	50%
Sometimes	2	8	2	8
Never	7	29	10	42
	<u>24</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>100%</u>

Fifteen programs administer client satisfaction surveys to clients leaving the program and use the information for program improvement purposes. Nine programs do not conduct such surveys.

Program evaluation

Respondents were asked to identify whether regular internal or external evaluations were conducted on their programs. Table IV-B indicates their responses.

TABLE IV-B

PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS THAT ARE INTERNALLY OR EXTERNALLY EVALUATED

Type of Evaluation	Frequency	
	#	%
Internal and external	11	46%
Internal only	6	25
External only	1	4
Do not evaluate	5	21

Respondents were also asked to explain the internal and/or external methods by which their programs were evaluated. Internal evaluation methods used by these agencies include obtaining feedback from other community agencies which also deal with the program's clients, utilizing client satisfaction surveys and compiling statistics on client progress and rates of success. Evaluations are conducted by outside sources for 12 of the programs. Two of these programs are evaluated by professional evaluation research teams. Four programs are evaluated by the program's funding source (evaluation is required by program grants). One-third of the external evaluations are based primarily on feedback from other community agencies which also deal with the program's clients and on statistics on client progress and rates of success.

Problems in delivering services

Agency representatives responded to a set of questions about the service delivery problems or barriers they encounter in meeting the needs of adjudicated youth. Their responses appear below in order of "most serious" to "least serious" problem or barrier.

- Youth poorly motivated or hostile.
- No sanctions to keep youth in program.
- Inadequate staff time.
- Bureaucratic obstacles:
 - Clients in too many programs.
 - Too much paperwork to conform to regulations.
 - Caseloads too high.
 - Time delays between placements.
 - Children's Code -- no way to keep kids in program.
- No way to involve families.
- No back-up facilities for disruptive, non-delinquent youth
- Other agencies refuse to work with clients.
- Inappropriate referrals.

Individual respondents also listed other barriers to service delivery which they considered serious:

- There are limited alternative placements, so young people are inappropriately placed.
- Young people are forced into independent living when they are not ready, due to the inadequate number of appropriate foster homes and other living facilities.
- Kids refuse to have families involved or parents refuse to be involved.
- Other agencies will not use some of the needed services offered by the responding agency or refuse to refer when referral is needed.
- Ineffective supervision by the court-related agency.
- Lack of help for drop-out youth returning to public school.

Staff training

Program representatives were asked to respond to questions on staff in-service training. Sixteen of the programs have regular in-service staff training and eight do not. For those with regular training, the frequency varied from bi-weekly to yearly. Nineteen of the respondents suggested that more in-service training was needed for staff to continue doing their jobs well. Only five felt that the present levels of training were satisfactory. The

following is a list of workshop topics that program staff have found beneficial:

- Alcohol and other drug management
- Developmental planning
- Group therapy
- Roles of the child care worker
- Supervision of the staff
- Children's Code
- Child labor laws
- Sensitivity to adolescent issues
- Family counseling
- The juvenile court system

Service improvement

Survey respondents cited the following as areas they would like to improve or expand within their agency:

- Vocational training
- Alternative education
- Follow-up services
- Home, community and streetworker services
- Independent living services
- Supported work programs
- More services to different racial groups
- Client evaluation
- Increased staff training in alcohol and other drug counseling
- Improvement of service by diversifying and stabilizing funding sources and increasing staff size

Many of the respondents emphasized the special need for increased services to youth in rural areas. Services noted as especially in need of expansion were: educational alternatives; recreational, social and employment opportunities; family services; and improved transportation to increase access to these and other community resources. In short, almost every basic service needed by youth and families is in need of expansion in rural areas.

Problems encountered in fund-raising

Respondents cited many problems in raising funds for their programs. Those mentioned are listed below:

- No one wants to take responsibility for funding.
- Funding monies are growing scarcer.
- There isn't enough staff to do fund-raising.

- It is a constant battle to raise program funding.
- It is difficult to prove program impact to funders.
- Some funding sources prohibit raising funds from private sources.
- The amount of yearly increase in funding is not enough to keep pace with real costs.
- Inordinate amounts of time and effort have to be spent in fund-raising.
- There are not enough funds to serve all of the clients referred as "in need".
- There are no funds for those without insurance to cover the service fee.

Only seven of the 24 programs report that they do not currently have major fund-raising problems.

Technical assistance needs

Respondents were asked if they felt their agency needed technical assistance in any area. Four program respondents felt satisfied with their program's present level of service and indicated that technical assistance with the program was not needed. All other program respondents felt that they needed technical assistance in various areas. They are listed below in order of highest to lowest frequency mentioned.

- Program monitoring and evaluation
- Alcohol and other drug counseling and intervention
- Fund-raising
- Utilizing public media for communication and public relations
- Program development in prevention services
- Management by objectives (MBO training)
- Development of consultation skills
- Supervision of staff
- Providing follow-up services
- Improving effectiveness of utilizing volunteers
- Crisis intervention
- Expanding supported work programs
- Maximizing use of funds
- Assistance in monitoring client/staff or client/volunteer interactions

Most programs indicated they did not have the funds needed to purchase the training and technical assistance needed.

CONCLUSIONS

Staff members of 24 representative programs providing the majority of special services to court-involved youth were invited to comment on a number of major issues. Since an attempt has been made to present their responses in condensed form, they will not be further summarized here. However, some issues raised by these data deserve further emphasis.

Availability of services

Dane County has an unusually fine and complex network of services for youth and families. The programs chosen for this review include most of the essential services or types of services available to young people with serious personal/family problems. The high percentage of referrals from Dane County Social Services reflects the fact that the Department has the primary referral responsibility for court-involved youth. However, the relatively low percentage of referrals from all other sources to most of these programs highlights a major problem in the youth/family services area.

The problem is that the best, if not the only, way to gain access to services of this type is usually through the court system. This fact, coupled with state statutes which compel the county to seek out-of-court services for juveniles until a serious offense or a convincing history of recurrent problems has developed, has some unfortunate consequences: (1) services to which troubled youth and families could be referred at earlier stages and ages are seriously under-developed; (2) getting many early offenders (and their families) to use those services that do exist is difficult, at best; and (3) by the time many young people get to court their personal, family and school problems are so severe that treatment is costly, difficult, and often unsuccessful. This concern about early intervention procedures and services is shared by

social workers and several other professionals in the juvenile court system.*

Throughout this study, case workers and program personnel have consistently expressed their frustration in attempting to work with both youth and families who are "turned off" to themselves and each other as well as to potential help. Increasing the training, communication and services needed for more effective early intervention, primarily through school, police, church, family, and self-referral, should become a high community priority.

Program evaluation

While most of the programs make some kind of initial client assessment, progress and terminal evaluation, there is wide variation in practices and in the potential usefulness of the techniques utilized. It is very encouraging to note that help with "program monitoring and evaluation" was the most frequently mentioned among the many technical assistance needs identified by these programs. Since adequate monitoring and evaluation is vital not only to internal program development but to documentation of program effectiveness for potential referral sources and county-wide planning and funding, avenues for provision of technical assistance in this area should be explored and developed within the county.

Service improvement

The emphasis on the need for alternative educational programs with vocational training and supported work components is in full agreement with the views of school personnel recently surveyed by the Youth Commission.**

* Parents of youth in the juvenile justice system frequently express frustration about the lack of effective early intervention services. See Parent & Youth Perspectives: The Juvenile Justice Experience, Dane County Youth Commission, December, 1981.

** See School Status & Educational Needs of Court-Involved Youth, Dane County, Dane County Youth Commission, June, 1981.

This group of young people is experiencing a very high failure rate in conventional school programs. Providing impetus and support for the development of more appropriate educational alternatives for both in- and out-of-school youth is probably one of the most effective approaches to delinquency prevention open to the county at this time. It will require the well-coordinated utilization of school, community, private business, and public and private agency resources. In the summer of 1981, a CETA planning grant awarded to the Youth Commission permitted a feasibility study of such a coordinated service model in rural Dane County school districts. The resulting WEB Program (Work-Experience Bank), funded by the Governor's Employment & Training Office, began in two non-urban school districts in January, 1982. This program has not only begun to meet some urgent needs, but will contribute to the expansion of Dane County's experience and capability in the area of coordinated service delivery to young people.

The emphasis on home, community and streetworker services is also an important theme in the youth/family service area today. There is increasing agreement that many of these young people and their families simply cannot be effectively reached by the old "come-to-the-office" model of social service delivery -- especially when the office is in a different neighborhood or community. Working with people in their own homes and communities not only makes them feel much more comfortable, but reduces negative labelling and maximizes the opportunities to make coordinated use of familiar, local resources and support systems.

Distribution of services

Another observation on which there is literally total agreement is that rural communities have equal needs but a disproportionately low supply of essential services of every kind. This fact, coupled with the demonstrated and understandable reluctance of rural communities to use Madison-based

services,* means that rural youth/families are seriously under-served at the present time. Both the need for and the increased effectiveness of locally-based services argue strongly for further decentralization of existing services and increased focus on the development of in-home, neighborhood and community services throughout the county.

Planning and funding

Funding is probably one of the most frustrating and demanding problems facing private service providers. Not only do fundraising activities divert a very significant proportion of the potential client service time of senior staff members, but the year-to-year uncertainties make effective long-range planning extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The Dane County Department of Social Services and its Youth & Family Aids Planning Committee have major planning and funding responsibilities for services to court-involved youth. The public school system has broad responsibility for meeting the basic educational needs of young people, including those defined as "handicapped" (s. 115.76-89). Madison Area Technical College is also required to provide educational services to any youth 16 or older who wishes to attend vocational school in lieu of or as a supplement to public school. MATC's cost for providing this educational service is 100% reimbursable from the Department of Public Instruction (s. 118.15). The Dane County Unified Services Board has responsibility for those youth having alcohol and other drug problems, as well as those who are emotionally disturbed or developmentally disabled.

Effective planning and funding to meet the needs of court-involved youth should involve the well-coordinated efforts of each of these agencies working with community service providers. Since the private, community pro-

* See Perspectives: Juvenile Law Enforcement in Dane County, Dane County Youth Commission, November, 1981.

grams provide nearly all of the local services available to court-involved youth, they should be provided with stable funding sufficient to meet those needs and given regular opportunity to participate in system evaluation and planning.

CHAPTER V
INTERVIEWS WITH JUVENILE JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS

Introduction

Chapter V of this report presents the findings from interviews with representatives of the major professional groups involved in the dispositional process. A structured interview was designed to obtain systematic information on their opinions and perceptions concerning the basic questions addressed by this project.

Methodology

A structured interview schedule* was developed by project staff over a two-month period. Input on the questionnaire was solicited from the Advisory Committee for this study. An open-ended format was selected to allow for the fullest exploration of the opinions and perceptions of professionals involved at varying stages in the juvenile court process. Those interviewed included those primarily involved in the dispositional process: four judges of the Dane County Circuit Court - Children's Division, the Juvenile Court Commissioner, attorneys from the District Attorney and Public Defender offices, and Dane County Department of Social Services and Juvenile Court Program staff and administrators.

FINDINGS

Adequacy of predisposition information

Respondents were asked many questions about the adequacy and availability of the information needed to make decisions about intervention and dispositions for youth. The majority of those interviewed appeared to be

* Copies are available at the Dane County Youth Commission.

fairly well satisfied with the adequacy and availability of this type of information. However, some problems were identified and the following suggestions were offered:

1) More police input. At the intervention stage, Juvenile Reception Center personnel expressed the need for more complete and explicit information from the police on the offense charged.

2) More detailed social and family history. Many respondents, including Reception Center staff, other juvenile court personnel, and several judges, expressed a desire for more social history on juveniles. According to their perception, there is not enough examination of the child's behavior and history over time. They would like to have a deeper understanding of the family, its background and financial circumstances and the child's place within it, the child's own viewpoint, goals and values, and more information on the child's attitudes toward and performance in school.

3) Consent decrees. One judge expressed concern about the assumption that when the opposing attorneys agree on a disposition and request a consent decree, their agreement serves the best interest of the child. Several case workers and judges do not agree with that assumption and feel excluded from that decision-making process. One representative from Social Services felt that the attorneys do not appreciate or utilize the professional expertise of the social workers involved.

4) Written court reports. One judge would like to have caseworkers make more specific recommendations in their court reports and another recommended that all court reports be submitted in writing.

5) Increased parent involvement in developing a disposition. It is important to note that all who addressed this issue expressed a need for more input from families of these youth in developing the terms of the disposition.

Confidentiality requirement

State statute 48.396 requires the police and court records of juveniles to be kept separate from adult cases. Court records cannot be shared with other professionals except by order of the court.

Respondents were asked for their opinions about the impact of the legal requirement that juvenile records be kept confidential. Responses were mixed, but most agreed that the requirement should be clarified and practices reviewed to encourage appropriate sharing of information. One respondent felt that confidentiality requirements were often used as a crutch to save time or as an excuse not to share information.

Case workers reported the confidentiality requirement to be a handicap in making both intervention and dispositional decisions. They specifically mentioned the need for better access to information from the schools, especially at the point of intake. They also expressed frustration over attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of dispositional resources when they cannot learn how a client responded to a particular program. Progress and/or termination evaluations are apparently not routinely received or required from service providers.

Both attorneys from the District Attorney's Office noted specific areas in which they felt that the confidentiality requirement produces troublesome results. One felt that the requirement prevents victims of crime from knowing how the offender was handled, thereby clouding the credibility of the system. The other saw it as unnecessary for juveniles of 15 and over, and conducive to parental irresponsibility.

Post-disposition information

When asked to assess how effectively intervention and disposition decisions are implemented, approximately half the respondents expressed satis-

faction, while the others identified a number of problems in this area.

Social workers reported that information developed for the court report at the dispositional hearing is not routinely relayed from intake workers to the ongoing workers. Several judges and other court personnel raised issues about the dispositional order specifically. One felt that parts of the order were sometimes not followed and wanted to know why this occurs. Another would like to see more thorough follow-up by field workers so that as circumstances change, the terms of the order can be changed accordingly. Court personnel generally felt that they had very little feedback after the disposition is ordered and that this sometimes permits the circumvention of some elements of the court's orders.

As previously indicated, many of those interviewed felt that there is not sufficient feedback on the youth's progress to assess effectiveness of the dispositional order or of the services provided. Those who did find the feedback sufficient stated either that the information was there or could be made available upon request. However, a Social Services administrator stated that while some sort of feedback from service providers is available, the criteria on which to judge the effectiveness of those resources are not agreed upon, are misleading or are not reflected in the feedback currently supplied. At the present time, there does not appear to be an effective way to monitor case progress.

Those who found the feedback insufficient made suggestions for improvement. Attorneys from the District Attorney's Office stressed the need for more feedback from service providers in order to assure sound dispositional choices in the future. That opinion was expressed by several judges as well. In addition, one attorney from the District Attorney's Office suggested that better communication between law enforcement and the Department of Social Services could help insure that a youth's rules of supervision are enforced. An intake

worker emphasized the need for better communication so that police will know if the youth they bring in is being treated or served in some way.

There is a general consensus that there have recently been encouraging gains made toward the goal of a better coordinated intake-through-post-disposition system. The position of Intake Coordinator is seen as an extremely valuable addition to that part of the process. Communication and cooperation between Social Services and the Department of Corrections is also reported to be improved by the inclusion of a county Social Services representative on the state Department of Corrections' planning committee for referred youth, and the development of a new referral form which provides the Department of Corrections with more complete information. The link between Social Services and the District Attorney's Office, frequently strained in the past due to understaffing of that office, has been strengthened; although many workers would still like to have more access to the District Attorney's staff for case discussion.

Service needs and availability

The majority of those interviewed felt that Dane County has an unusually wide range of good dispositional alternatives. Many, however, pointed to special needs and problems which remain.

A need expressed by many was for a facility to treat drug-dependent youth on a short-term basis. Some of the judges wanted the option of ordering short-term incarceration when a youth failed to obey the original dispositional order. An attorney in the District Attorney's Office agreed, arguing that the threat of incarceration is the only way to solve the problem of enforcing court orders; another suggested it as an appropriate alternative for youth who run away from placement.

Education programs better adapted to the needs of some court-referred youth were identified as another area of need. The needs of rural youth for alternative educational services were seen as particularly great. Other related services desired by attorneys, social workers and administrative personnel were vocational programs and jobs for youth.

A representative from the Juvenile Reception Center, as well as one judge, felt that the problem of service availability is compounded by the agencies' eligibility requirements. They were concerned that especially troublesome youth often cannot meet the requirements, and that financial considerations often play a greater part in accepting youth for treatment than the best interests of the child. One respondent felt that youth without special treatment needs and those over 16 present the most difficult placement problems.

Supervision, the current most commonly ordered disposition, was the focus of widely varied comments. There was some feeling that supervision can be a nominal practice, with contact between the worker and the child infrequent, with little counseling or case management. Opinions differed as to whether this was desirable or undesirable -- depending on whether action or inaction seemed best suited to the needs of the case. One social worker suggested that supervision be replaced with other, more creative dispositions that match the offense. On the other hand, one of the judges would like to see supervision become a more intensive, treatment-oriented disposition on its own. A counselor at the Reception Center supported this view, reasoning that more intensive in-home services are one of the least costly and least disruptive alternative dispositions.

Other service needs noted were more foster homes, facilities for the emotionally disturbed who are not committable or legally "dangerous", a juvenile "Huber Center", and more court-ordered as well as voluntary family counseling.

Children's Code

The interview schedule contained several questions about the effects of the revised Children's Code on the handling of juveniles. The finding that stands out among the answers is the difficulty now experienced in handling CHIPS cases.

The Code is seen as having limited the system's ability to intervene in CHIPS cases while continuing to expect that intervention should occur and have some impact. The major difficulty with CHIPS cases was described as follows: Status offenses such as juvenile drinking, truancy and uncontrollability are no longer subject to immediate court intervention unless there is a long history of unsuccessful, informal, out-of-court intervention. By the time court intervention is permitted, the case has often become so complex and difficult that there are few effective dispositional alternatives available to juvenile court. One judge felt that such extended informal handling led to a disrespect for the system on the part of juveniles, making intervention -- when it does occur -- even more ineffective. Thus, the resources available for CHIPS cases are seen as inadequate, and often made available too late to be effective.

One official disagreed with this analysis, stating that since the threat of formal adjudication is stronger than the actual dispositional power of the court, formal handling of CHIPS cases should be used sparingly.

Another problem with the Code which is seen as compounding the above difficulties is the inability of the court to enforce its dispositional orders. For example, there is no mechanism through which chronic runaways can be helped. A few recommended that the guidelines for holding runaways be altered in order to increase the availability of detention for this group. As mentioned earlier, several also recommended giving the court the ability

to use short-term incarceration. Several of those interviewed suggested that some way of enforcing restitution for larger amounts and after age 18 is needed. According to one attorney, the answer is either to restore the court's ability to intervene and enforce its orders or to deal with CHIPS on a strictly voluntary basis.

Each respondent perceived both positive and negative effects from the Code. One improvement noted was the narrowing of discretion and the establishment of criteria for intervention. Judges can be more sure that what they have done will not be undone on a technicality. The overall result has been less inappropriate intervention and more respect for the rights of children. Most felt comfortable with the adversarial framework, although a social worker's role in ongoing casework may be damaged when he/she is portrayed as the child's adversary in court. Some feel that the emphasis on due process has had a negative impact as well. The potential for legal manipulation, rather than the child's needs, to determine the disposition, has increased. The lawyer, not the social worker, is seen as the "good guy" in the child's eyes. A by-product of the formality and complexity of the Code has been to diminish the role of the social worker. Moreover, some argue that youth and attorneys are now overly concerned about rights and tend to ignore the responsibilities of the child.

The time limits imposed by the Code revision are seen as positive. They not only serve the court's need to keep cases moving, but help to reduce the time lapse between the offense and the disposition, which maximizes the deterrent effect. Several noted the recent Wisconsin Supreme Court decision on the "dangerousness" criteria for Department of Corrections placements. (This decision made it possible for the court to order juveniles to Corrections for crimes against property as well as persons.) According to one attorney, this makes Department of Corrections placement more accessible, thereby in-

creasing the deterrent effect of other dispositions. The new truancy bill is also seen as positive in appropriately placing the burden and responsibility on the schools.

Other recommendations for change

There was a general desire expressed for more parental and community involvement. If CHIPS jurisdiction is retained, the court should have more clout with parents, according to one public defender. There should be a way to make parents more responsible; either now, by providing more support services to families, especially single parents, or in the future by teaching parenting skills in the schools. Another suggestion was for a more aggressive posture on parents' financial contribution to the cost of services. This respondent felt that the court should order payment for expensive treatment in some instances or require a larger monetary contribution from the family.*

The call for more parent involvement was expanded to include the community. Respondents would like to see informal neighborhood networks setting up prevention and diversion programs and, in general, acting as an extended family.

* Dane County charges parents up to \$5.00 a day (the maximum allowed by the state) for costs of out-of-home placement. A request which would allow the county to raise this ceiling is pending before the state. Parents who fail to make their required contributions are pursued through the courts.

CHAPTER VI REPORT ON PROGRAM EVALUATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In April and May of 1981, the Youth Commission provided program evaluation assistance to three youth programs in Dane County under the Juvenile Justice Study funding. Each program received approximately 40 hours of a professional evaluator's time and assistance. In that time, the current evaluation system of each program was examined, further evaluation needs were addressed, and a plan for future evaluation was suggested. This report will describe this process and discuss the importance of program evaluation in general.

The three programs were selected on the basis of their favorable reputation for effectiveness and their interest in participating in this project. The programs are: Martin Luther Center, a residential treatment facility for adolescents with emotional, social and family problems; Operation Fresh Start, a program which assists adolescents and adults who have barriers to employment in developing job skills; and Phoenix House, a group home for older adolescent girls.

Program evaluation

The nature and usefulness of program evaluation is sometimes misunderstood both by program staff and funders. This misunderstanding results in resistance to evaluation and lack of utilization of findings. Therefore, it may be useful here to briefly describe program evaluation as it relates to the programs served in this project.

Program evaluation can have a number of objectives and potential audiences, three of which are especially relevant to this report:

- 1) to help in program planning and development;
- 2) to allow programs with similar clients, goals and problems to benefit from the experience of others;
- 3) to help program managers, funders and users to determine whether the program achieves a high enough degree of success to warrant continuation, support or patronage.

In order to meet these objectives, two kinds of information are generally collected:

- 1) Process information: This information concerns any aspect of program implementation, including characteristics of clients, the nature and intensity of services provided, allotment of staff time to different tasks, resources expended, and so forth.
- 2) Outcome information: This information concerns the degree to which the program achieves its desired effects, results or objectives.

Funders often expect evaluation to focus exclusively on outcome. From this perspective, they view evaluation mainly as a means for making decisions about a program's effectiveness and for determining whether or not a program should be funded. This expectation is communicated to program staff, who therefore understandably look upon evaluation with some trepidation. This view of evaluation is regrettable since it regards evaluation far too simplistically. The evaluative questions to which both funders and program staff really need answers are rarely so clear-cut. Evaluation, if properly planned and executed, can answer more complex questions.

Consider a hypothetical example. An evaluation is carried out on a drug abuse day treatment program for adolescents. The primary objective of the program is maintenance of abstinence during the course of the program. The outcome information collected by the evaluation indicates that an unacceptably high percentage of clients do not remain abstinent. If the

evaluation had focused solely on outcome, the conclusion drawn would most likely be to terminate the program. This would not be acceptable to the community, however, because no other services are available for these clients and because program staff, funders and many of the clients themselves are convinced that the program has very worthwhile effects.

Fortunately, in this example process information was also collected. Records of client and family attendance at individual and group therapy sessions were kept. This process information, when analyzed, indicated that a large proportion of those clients who continued to use drugs during the program had families which did not fully participate in the family therapy program. Program staff, with the help of the clients' social workers, were able to encourage families more strenuously to participate in the program.

Program staff, clients and funders would all be able to benefit from the results of the evaluation of the program in our example. Both funders and staff gained insight into an important aspect of their program and were able to make program changes which should lead to improved outcomes for the clients.

This example illustrates that outcome information, in order to be truly useful, must usually be considered in combination with process information.

Current status of evaluation

In order to develop evaluation plans for the three programs in this study, project staff met with each program director and appropriate staff to discover their evaluation needs and priorities and about the kinds of evaluation systems already in place. The three programs serve different

clientele and provide different services. Their existing information-recording and evaluation systems differed greatly in level of complexity and completeness. Nonetheless, some aspects of the evaluation situation in the three programs were quite similar.

In all three programs, reporting required by funders was minimal. Evaluation requirements were limited to the very simplest sort of outcome reporting. The programs received little or no feedback concerning reports made to funders and there was little sense that the information contained in the reports is used to make funding decisions. In addition, funders had not provided programs with the resources or technical assistance necessary to carry out evaluations which could be used as needed by the programs.

Despite the lack of external motivation for evaluation, all three programs seemed eager to improve their evaluation capabilities. Once evaluation was explained to them, they quickly grasped its advantages and spontaneously generated a variety of questions which could be answered by evaluation. They never communicated any hesitation about allowing program methods and outcomes to be examined. This enthusiasm and openness were consistent with the sense of conscientiousness and commitment to program effectiveness which they conveyed.

While program staff were enthusiastic and interested in evaluation, they lacked much of the technical knowledge and skills necessary to carry out evaluation. This lack of knowledge was reflected in the evaluation systems which were in place. While they varied in complexity and completeness, they shared two qualities. First, information needed for evaluation was difficult to retrieve from case records. In most cases, it was buried in narrative case notes, staffing records and the like. Second, some

crucial information was not present at all. Concerns about confidentiality or lack of awareness that a given bit of information was important prevented many important facts from being documented.

Each program had some criteria for success and some method for counting the successful and unsuccessful cases. However, the success criteria tended to be rather simple and undifferentiated, and information about client characteristics and program process which might shed some light on the nature of client outcome was sketchy.

These evaluation inadequacies did not appear to be the result of any lack of openness or unwillingness to make the effort, but rather were due to a lack of knowledge and guidance concerning evaluation.

Given this situation, the goal of the technical assistance staff was to educate the program staff about what evaluation can do and what it requires and to plan an evaluation system which could be used by the program.

The planned evaluation systems

Like most programs, these three programs are not static. They change constantly in response to staff turnover, changing client needs and changing context of service. Therefore, one-time evaluations would be of limited value. It was decided, instead, that evaluation should be established as an ongoing process which would be able to answer questions raised by a changing program and changing information needs. If resources ever became available, more intensive evaluations over a limited period of time would certainly be useful. But given the present situation, an evaluation system which is part of the normal routine of the program and which can be carried out with few additional resources is more practical. The design of such a system was the goal for all three programs.

With this goal in mind, the necessary components of such an evaluation can be described. Some of these components were developed during the project. Others were proposed.

Each program needs:

- 1) A program implementation description: This description is part of the necessary process information. It includes discussion of all aspects of the program which might affect client outcomes: staffing patterns, types of interventions, services delivered by whom for what period of time, and so on. It is important that this description be of the program as it is actually implemented. In order to be able to understand outcomes resulting from contact with a program, it is necessary to know what happens to the client in that program.
- 2) Background information about clients: This information is also necessary to understand outcome. The same program is likely to have different effects on different kinds of clients.
- 3) Individual process information: While the program implementation description includes process information which is common to all clients, individual process information must be documented to indicate the aspects of clients' experience which may vary, such as length of contact with program, case manager, special interventions or referrals made.
- 4) Immediate outcome indicators: Each program has objectives for clients to achieve during or at the end of their involvement in the program. These objectives must be carefully chosen to reflect accurately what the program is trying to accomplish. The degree to which they are met must be documented.
- 5) Long-term outcome indicators: All three of the programs have explicit or implicit long-range goals for clients. Therefore, when it is practical, some information about long-term outcomes should be recorded. This is not currently attainable since most programs do not systematically remain in contact with former clients.

The evaluation staff worked with program staff on the development of each of these evaluation components as needed. A summary of the technical assistance provided each agency -- including forms developed -- is available through the Youth Commission office.

A format for summarizing data was developed for each program. This summary included backgrounds of clients, individual process information,

short-term outcomes, and when available, long-term outcome information. In the case of Fresh Start, a system for client follow-up was also designed.

In the design of these summary formats, two goals were paramount. First, the information included in the format had to be as complete as possible while remaining brief and easy to use. Second, the information developed must be kept confidential. The system designed to accomplish these goals included a summary sheet about one page in length for each client's file. The sheet is to be either identified by a client number or not identified at all. Information could be recorded on each sheet as it became available. When the client leaves the program, the sheet would be removed from the client's file and stored with other anonymous summary sheets. If the sheet is identified by a client number (usually for the purpose of matching follow-up data), the name/number key would be kept locked in a place where only the appropriate people would have access to it.

With the program implementation descriptions and the completed client information summary sheets, the information could be compiled as needed to answer evaluation questions. Data could be used to review individual clients' progress or summarized across a number of clients for drawing conclusions about the program.

Each program had unique needs stemming from a unique situation and program type. Therefore, each received technical assistance which addressed its individual problems and needs.

A great deal of progress was made in the time available toward improving the evaluation capabilities of these programs. However, much more needs to be done before these evaluation systems can be assumed to be self-sustaining. The programs need more technical assistance to implement and

refine the systems and to learn how to analyze and report the data collected.*

Program cooperation in evaluation

Regardless of what audience an evaluation is intended to address, what purpose it is intended to fulfill, or whether it focuses on process, outcome, or both, no meaningful evaluation can take place without the full cooperation and participation of program staff.

In order for the evaluation to be useful, the evaluator must take advantage of the superior knowledge and insight which staff have about what occurs in the program, what problems exist, what outcomes are of interest, and how information can practically be collected. The evaluation must also foster in program staff a sense of participation in and ownership of the evaluation.

In order for the evaluation to be complete and accurate, the evaluator must overcome any defensiveness and suspicion which program staff feel. To encourage the development of this type of relationship, the evaluator must:

- 1) Involve program staff in the design of the evaluation, the plan of what information will be collected and how it will be collected. Program staff have insight into how variables can meaningfully be measured. In addition, staff will probably be responsible for the collection and recording of much information. They can help insure that the system will not be so awkward or burdensome as to interfere with other duties.
- 2) Arrive at mutually agreed upon evaluation criteria. It is not useful, reasonable, or fair to choose measures of success without in-depth knowledge of what outcomes the program is trying to effect.
- 3) Provide the program with the benefits of evaluation. Almost all program staff have questions which, if answered by evaluation, can make their jobs easier and more gratifying and help to improve their program. Regardless of the primary intended audience of an evaluation, any evaluation should address some

* The Youth Commission was able to provide additional evaluation technical assistance under a follow-up grant from the Youth & Family Aids Program.

of these questions. In addition, any evaluation findings which are to be reported to any audience should be shared with the program.

Program evaluation should not and need not be punitive or adversarial. It should be a cooperative process of collecting, organizing and reporting information which can be a great benefit to all involved. The response of these agencies further supports both the need and desire for the development of technical assistance in program monitoring and evaluation for community agencies serving court-involved youth in Dane County.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Dane County juvenile court system and the services available to it are among the finest in the state. Its judiciary has been a leader in seeking to avoid incarceration of young people in distant state correctional institutions in favor of the development and utilization of alternative service in the community. This philosophy, plus the creativity of many talented individuals and agencies has led to the evolution of a richly diverse network of private agencies and programs which provides most of the direct services available to the court and the County Social Services Department in their dispositional planning.

This decentralized and complex service system is also one of the factors which has made it difficult to assess the effectiveness with which the needs of court-involved juveniles and their families are actually being met. The basic purpose of this project was to study this and related issues in a systematic way---a task those involved in the daily process seldom have the time, training or funding to do. Since the Youth Commission is specifically charged with responsibility to "conduct youth needs and services assessments" and to "work with agencies in development and implementation of procedures designed to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of youth service delivery throughout Dane County," it appeared to be the body to take on this difficult task. A summary of the major findings and conclusions follow.

FINDINGS

1. Who is referred to juvenile court intake?

A 25% sample of the 2,257 cases referred to Dane County's juvenile Court intake from March, 1979 through March, 1980 were the subjects of this study. Eighty percent (80%) of these cases were referred for alleged delinquency; 20% for juvenile or status offenses (CHIPS cases). Seventy-five percent (75%) of the total sample were males, while 55% of the CHIPS cases were female. Ages ranged from 8 to 17 with the highest incidence of referral among 17-year-olds. Juveniles from the City of Madison were more likely to be referred to court intake than those from other communities in the county.

Half the delinquency cases were for offenses which would have been felonies if committed by adults. Over 80% of the CHIPS cases were for "running away". Eighty percent (80%) of those referred to court had at least one recorded prior offense. The range was 0-25 prior contacts.

2. What happens to the cases referred to juvenile court intake?

Approximately half of the cases referred to court intake were handled informally with services offered by or through Dane County Social Services on a voluntary basis. The other half were petitioned to juvenile court for a formal hearing. Of these cases, 8% were dismissed. In 20% of the cases the DA, Social Worker and defense attorney agreed upon a plan for dealing with the case which the judge approved (consent decree). In two-thirds of the cases the court found the youth to be in need of mandatory treatment of some kind. Six percent (6%) of the cases were waived to adult court (usually serious offenses committed by an older juvenile).

The more serious the offense and the greater the number of prior offenses, the more likely a case was to be handled formally.

For cases which were formally adjudicated or handled by consent decree, involuntary supervision, usually in conjunction with other treatment, was the most common disposition. Approximately 70% of adjudicated CHIPS cases involved placement outside the home.

The greater the number of prior referrals to court intake, the greater the likelihood was that the court would order outside placement, counseling, home detention, or restitution. For CHIPS cases, more priors increased the likelihood of out-of-home placement and psychological counseling. For both delinquent and CHIPS cases supervision was listed as a disposition less often, as the number of prior court referrals increased. Six months after the court appearance, the status of dispositions was as follows: 25% were successfully completed, 15% had been revised, 24% were still open and 36% of the cases had returned on new charges. 44% of the sample returned to court intake on allegations of new offenses within 20 months of the initial sampling.

3. How effective were the interventions offered/ordered by the court?

Because available records did not systematically indicate what specific (behavioral, academic, vocational or social) objectives were set for individual cases or the progress made, it was not possible to directly assess the effectiveness of court intervention on a case-by-case basis. However, individual interviews conducted in 1981 with the social workers responsible for 103 of the cases in our sample provided some information on this question. Among the relatively few cases in which individual objectives were identified and evaluated, the following were

perceived as having been most effectively met: complete restitution/ community service, attend a counseling program, attend alternative education, meet with social worker, and independent living. Objectives not effectively met included reducing/stopping alcohol or other drug abuse and attending family counseling. These objectives were rated low because many times the family or youth refused to attend the treatment program.

The social workers felt that there were appropriate services available for 80% of the cases under review. Services mentioned as particularly effective in these cases included supervision (Dane County Social Services), restitution/job programs, residential treatment and foster care group homes. Those rated as ineffective---usually related to poor child or family participation---included counseling, therapy, and alcohol and other drug abuse intervention and treatment programs.

Workers indicated that serious delinquency cases which resulted in formal court action were most likely to benefit from juvenile court intervention. In contrast, 73% of all cases handled informally were evaluated by the social worker as "not at all helped" by court referral. Eighty-six percent (86%) of the informal cases returned to court intake on a different charge within a year of the original charge. During that same period, 42% of the formally handled cases returned to court intake.

In 75% of the cases reviewed, the workers did not feel that the Children's Code was a barrier to effective intervention. In the remaining 25% of the cases (37% of the CHIPS and 22% of the delinquent) the worker felt somewhat hampered by the revised Children's Code, usually for one of the following reasons: 1) There is no legal way to detain runaways long enough to provide help (75% of CHIPS cases). 2) The increased concern for "due process" sometimes results in greater emphasis on protection of rights than on provision of appropriate treatment.

4. How adequate are current records in providing the information necessary for needs assessment, service evaluation and planning?

One of the most serious problems encountered throughout this study was that the case and court records proved inadequate to the task of identifying major client and service needs or evaluating the effectiveness with which the juvenile court system is able to meet them. We doubt that other counties are currently doing any better in this respect, but feel that Dane County has the potential to make significant progress in this area at very little cost and great advantage to its clients and the system as a whole. Effective case management in the juvenile system depends heavily upon sound, comprehensive assessment of client/family needs. While encouraging progress has been made recently, particularly in cooperation between school and court service personnel, two examples will help to illustrate the extent of the problem.

School problems: We know from other sources that court-involved youth as a group experience a very high incidence of school failure and that the school experience is an extremely influential aspect of their lives.* Other than the admonition to attend school, case records identified the need for special efforts to improve the experience in less than 15% of the sample cases.

Chemical abuse: While professional estimates of the extent of serious alcohol and other drug abuse among court-involved youth consistently run between 50-80%, our review of case records, social worker case interviews and dispositional orders indicated that special needs in this area were identified in less than 20% of the sample cases.

Some of the weaknesses associated with inadequate needs assessment are that 1) planning may be more influenced by available services than client/family needs, 2) important service objectives may not be identified and 3) service needs and effectiveness cannot be adequately evaluated.

*"School Status & Educational Needs of Court Involved Youth of Dane County", Dane County Youth Commission, June, 1981.

*"Delinquency & Dropout, Delbert Elliot & Harwin Voss, 1974

Dane County has the professional expertise and growing inter-agency cooperation to address these issues if they are given sufficient administrative priority.

5. Characteristics of dispositional services available to the court.

The court has a broad range of services available to treat court-involved youth in Dane County. Most direct services are provided through private, non-profit agencies based in Madison. These services include restitution, job training, counseling, alternative education, day treatment and out-of-home placements. Programs which focus on specific, positive objectives and experiences such as restitution, job training and alternative educational approaches tend to receive high success ratings. However, because of the lack of identification of specific client needs and service objectives or follow-up evaluation in most case records, it is difficult to determine the degree to which current services are meeting existing needs. A staff survey conducted by the Dane County Department of Social Services as a part of the Youth & Family Aids planning process partially addresses this issue.*

The nature, extent and understanding of program evaluation varied greatly among agencies. Eighty percent (80%) conduct some form of program evaluation. Ninety percent (90%) conduct some type of ongoing assessment of clients involved in their programs. Sixty-three percent (63%) administer client satisfaction surveys upon program completion. However, few programs are satisfied with the quality of their evaluation efforts, and very little information on client progress currently appears in social service or court record.

*Available from DCSS for 1981 and 1982.

Major problems these agencies encounter in attempting to provide effective services include the following: lack of adequate staff time, poorly motivated clients, no sanctions to keep youth or family in program, bureaucratic obstacles, and lack of stable funding.

A majority of agencies indicated a need for agency improvement, staff training or technical assistance. Areas of greatest concern included: fund-raising, evaluation, alcohol and other drug counseling, alternative education and vocational skills training. Most agencies indicated they did not have the funds needed to purchase training and technical assistance.

Almost all agencies surveyed agreed that logistical problems limited their ability to serve rural youth. They indicated that if funds were available, they would be most willing to expand and improve services to rural Dane County.

6. What do professionals in the system think about various aspects of the juvenile court service system?

In 1981, key professionals in the juvenile justice system - including judges, court and social service administrators, and representatives from the District Attorney and public defenders office - were interviewed to gather their opinions regarding important issues affecting the juvenile justice system.

Most professionals interviewed were satisfied with the adequacy and availability of information needed for making sound dispositional decisions, although some felt that more information from police, youth, parents, and social workers would lead to more appropriate and effective dispositions.

Several respondents expressed concern that confidentiality requirements prevent the court from obtaining useful planning information.

Professional opinion varied on the adequacy of existing dispositional processes. Many expressed a need for more information about what happens after a disposition is ordered. Others suggested the need for an increased ability to use short-term incarceration as a means of enforcing other dispositions. Still others felt the need for more specialized vocational, educational and specialized care alternatives for adjudicated youth.

Comments on supervision as an element of most dispositional orders ranged from a recommendation to make much more intensive supervision available as a treatment option, to abolishing it in favor of more case-specific services or programs. The common theme appeared to be that the goals, nature and effectiveness of various types of supervision are in need of clarification.

A major complaint expressed was that while the court has retained responsibility and jurisdiction in CHIPS cases, its ability to deal with these cases effectively has been curtailed. Intervention is often deferred until the situation has become extremely difficult to treat and the court has no way of enforcing its orders---especially with runaways.

7. What are the evaluation needs of community-based programs providing court-related services?

Three representative agencies (Operation Fresh Start, Lutheran Social Services, and Phoenix House) were selected for review and technical assistance. Each of these agencies had some evaluation capabilities. However, they lacked the expertise and confidence to plan, implement and interpret comprehensive evaluation procedures. They also doubted whether funders really understood, wanted, and/or used evaluation results in making ongoing funding decisions.

Work with these agencies led to the following conclusions:

- a) Agencies very much want to know how to develop, implement and use evaluation procedures.
- b) Agencies have more evaluation capabilities than they (or their funders) realize.
- c) Agencies are very receptive to outside technical assistance.
- d) "Evaluation" is a much-discussed but little understood concept by funders, program operators or the general public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While this study did not fully succeed in meeting all of its objectives, we believe that it has served to define some important problems and issues in approachable terms and to suggest steps which could further enhance the quality, effectiveness and accountability of our juvenile court system. We hope that this information will be utilized by an appropriate work-group (or groups) under the direction of the Children's Division of the Dane County Circuit Court. The Dane County Department of Social Services, its Youth & Family Aids Planning Committee and representatives of major service providers clearly have vital roles to play in such an effort.

On the basis of this study the Youth Commission offers the following recommendations.

I. Needs Assessment

There should be an increased emphasis on comprehensive assessment of client and related family needs, definition of individualized treatment objectives, and identification of services capable of meeting those objectives.

II. Case Records

An efficient data recording and retrieval system should be developed. This system should permit individual client tracking as well as periodic monitoring of system data on client characteristics, needs, dispositions, service objectives, management and progress. Whether or not written court reports are required in all cases, a summary sheet with such basic information should be a part of every case file.

III. Service Evaluation

Requirements should be developed for reporting of specific client-service goals, progress reports and terminal evaluation by service providers (with provision for technical assistance as needed).

IV. Informal Handling

The high percentage of informally handled cases which do not appear to be helped by this process should be examined and recommendations for alternative approaches developed.

V. CHIPS

There should be further examination of the causes of the highly frustrating inability to deal effectively with many CHIPS cases. Recommendations for changes---in laws, procedures and/or services---should be developed.

VI. Supervision

The nature, extent and goals of supervision as a disposition should be clarified.

VII. Community Based Service Providers

An annual forum should be convened which would allow key professionals in the juvenile court system and administrators of community based services to address issues such as the following:

- Technical assistance and training needs of the agencies;
- Funding capability of the county for court-related services;
- Changes in court procedures or personnel;
- Changes/updates in dispositions, local ordinances, and state of federal statutes;
- Coordination problems;
- Changing client needs and new priorities or service gaps that have been identified;
- Other barriers to effective service delivery.

APPENDIX A

TRUANTS

Introduction: Truancy cases are handled differently than delinquency or other CHIPS offenses. Because they were not included in the lists from which the main sample for this study was selected, truancy cases are not discussed in the primary report. However, some information was collected on truancy cases and is reported in this Appendix. The reader should know that the Commission has conducted a thorough assessment of the educational needs of youth in the juvenile justice system. The results of that assessment are contained in a report entitled "School Status and Educational Needs of Court-Involved Youth."

Processing of Truants: Chapter 289 of the Wisconsin Statutes (1979) has established a special process for handling truancy problems. The schools' responsibilities are outlined in detail. The new law mandates the development of internal procedures to identify truant students and a uniform collection system for attendance information. Prior to referring a truancy complaint to the Department of Social Services, the school must develop a statement of its attempts to correct the problem. In addition, school staff must document the academic/social/behavioral problems that may relate to the truancy, provide their perception of parental attitudes toward the problem, and their recommendations for remedial action.

The written referral to the county Social Services Department must contain the above information. Within 20 days of receipt of the referral, the department is required to notify the school that it intends to either: 1) file a petition of truancy (CHIPS) with the District Attorney's Office, or 2) implement an alternative plan which is described in detail. Petitions must be based on a substantial history of attendance problems.

CONTINUED

1 OF 2

Methodology: The same 13-month period, March, 1979 through March, 1980, was used to gather information on children alleged CHIPS because of truancy. A 25% random sample of the total truancy cases reaching the intake list was taken. This yielded 17 cases out of a total of 69.

Case information was gathered from the Central Index files in the Juvenile Reception Center and from juvenile court records. Again, certain demographic characteristics of the youth, as well as dispositional information, was collected.

Characteristics of the sample: As indicated in Table A-I, the data shows that youths alleged to be truant are more likely to be female. Our sample contained 11 females and 6 males. This is an even higher proportion of females than is commonly found in the other CHIPS offenses. The residential and racial composition of the truant sample was very similar to the original sample. The age range was 9-15 with the mode at 15. The total number of entries recorded in Central Index for our sample ranged from 0-9, but the majority of cases had only one or two prior contacts. Females were likely to be slightly younger than males at the time of their first contact.

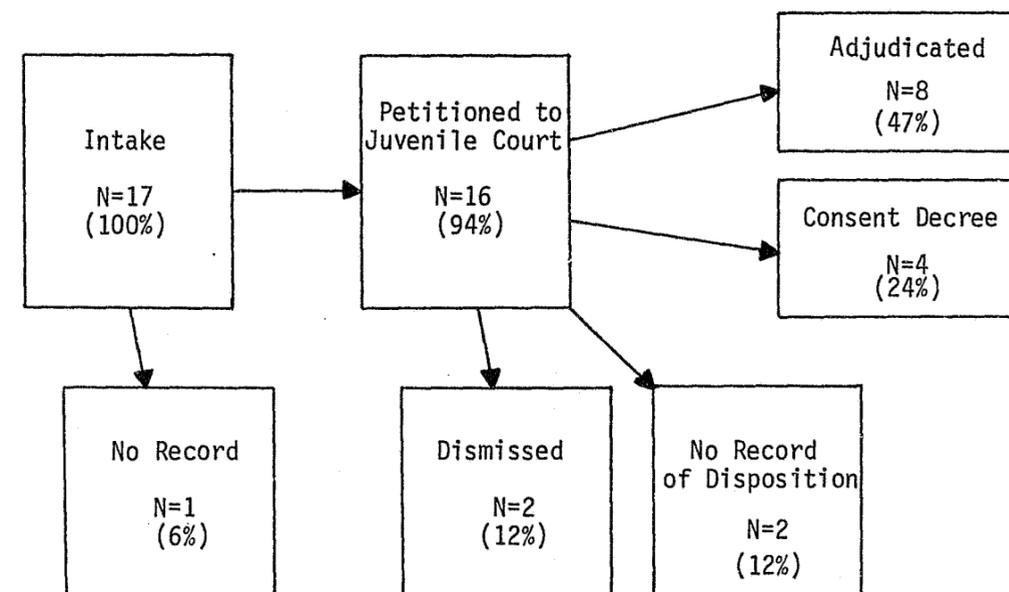
TABLE A-I
TRUANCY CASES: DESCRIPTIVE DATA

(N = 17)

Sex		Age at Truancy Referral	Range	Mode
Male	6 (35%)	Female	10-15	14-15
Female	11 (65%)	Male	9-16	16
		Total	9-15	15
Race		Age at First Central Index Entry	Range	Mode
Black	1 (6%)	Female	10-16	11-12
Oriental	1 (6%)	Male	10-13	13
Spanish	1 (6%)			
White	14 (82%)			
Residence		Central Index Entries		%
City	10 (59%)	No entries		24%
Non-City	7 (41%)	1-4 entries		47%
		5 or more entries		29%

The sample cases were analyzed to determine how they were processed through the court system. Chart A-II reveals that all cases for which records were available were formally petitioned to juvenile court; 70% of the petitions resulted in either a consent decree or adjudication. The data indicate that schools are sending only serious truancy cases that have not responded to school interventions.

CHART A-II
PROCESSING OF TRUANTS THROUGH JUVENILE COURT
(N = 17)



The four consent decrees and eight adjudicated cases were reviewed to determine the types of dispositions used by the court. As indicated in Table A-III involuntary supervision in the community was assigned to all formally handled cases, but it was not the only disposition. Just under half the cases also received orders for special education programming; 17% of the

sample were ordered into alcohol or other drug treatment programs -- a rate eight times higher than for the total sample referred to intake.

TABLE A-III
DISPOSITION OF TRUANCY CASES*
(N = 12)

<u>Dispositions</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Placed on supervision	12	100%
Special education programming	5	42
Placed out of home	3	25
Psychological evaluation/therapy	3	25
Home detention	2	17
Alcohol/drug treatment	2	17
Restitution	1	8

* Includes 8 adjudicated cases and 4 consent decrees.

TABLE A-IV
TRUANCY CASES: RULES OF SUPERVISION

Rules of Supervision for eight cases were found in one of three sources:

- in the dispositional order
- submitted to court by the social worker
- included in the consent decree

<u>#</u>	<u>Rules</u>
1	No law violations
5	Obey parental rules
7	Attend school
3	Cooperate with worker
1	Parents cooperate with school
3	Observe curfew
1	No runaways
1	No alcohol/drug use
1	Report violations of rules to worker
1	More truancy will result in a return to court

The information contained in Tables A-III and A-IV indicate that truancy cases reaching court are complex and difficult to treat. The dispositions

frequently attempt to correct conditions beyond the influence or control of the school. For further analysis of the truancy issue, the interested reader is encouraged to examine School Status and Educational Needs of Court-Involved Youth, Dane County (June, 1981), a study conducted by the Dane County Youth Commission.

APPENDIX B

RETURNEES

Introduction: In the process of this project, some effort was devoted to a study of juveniles in the sample who had subsequent contact with the juvenile intake department. Time and personnel limitations did not permit extensive analysis of this data. However, they may be of interest to some readers.

The Sample: This sample of returnees was drawn for the purpose of studying those juveniles who return relatively quickly to court for new offenses. It consists of a sub-section of our original sample who appeared again on the intake list from March, 1979, through October, 1980, as a result of allegations of new offenses. Thus, our sample does not necessarily consist of "long-term repeaters" because only those who returned within the 20-month time frame are included. Nor does it include youth returned to court for violation or revision of their rules of supervision.

This selection process yielded 195 cases alleged delinquent and 52 cases alleged CHIPS: 44% of the total sample, 42% of those alleged to be delinquent, and 47% of those alleged to be CHIPS.

Characteristics of the Sample: On most characteristics, this group did not differ significantly from the original sample. Not surprisingly, the returnees tended to have a higher frequency of prior contacts, with those returning on alleged CHIPS offenses having a greater number of prior contacts, with those returning on alleged CHIPS offenses having a greater number of prior contacts than did the alleged delinquents.

As expected, a larger percentage of cases involving returnees was processed formally through the system: 58% as opposed to 48% for the original sample. Conversely, the percentage of cases handled informally was lower for the returning offenders: 34% compared to 41%. The percentages of consent decrees and of cases dismissed and waived were approximately the same for both groups.

The data shows that returnees who were formally adjudicated were more likely to be placed outside the home or to be ordered to undergo psychological testing and evaluation than those adjudicated in the original sample. Chart B-I presents the dispositions utilized with the total group.

Table B-II profiles the types of dispositions utilized by the court for both CHIPS and delinquent returnees.

CHART B-I
PROCESSING OF RETURNEES THROUGH JUVENILE COURT

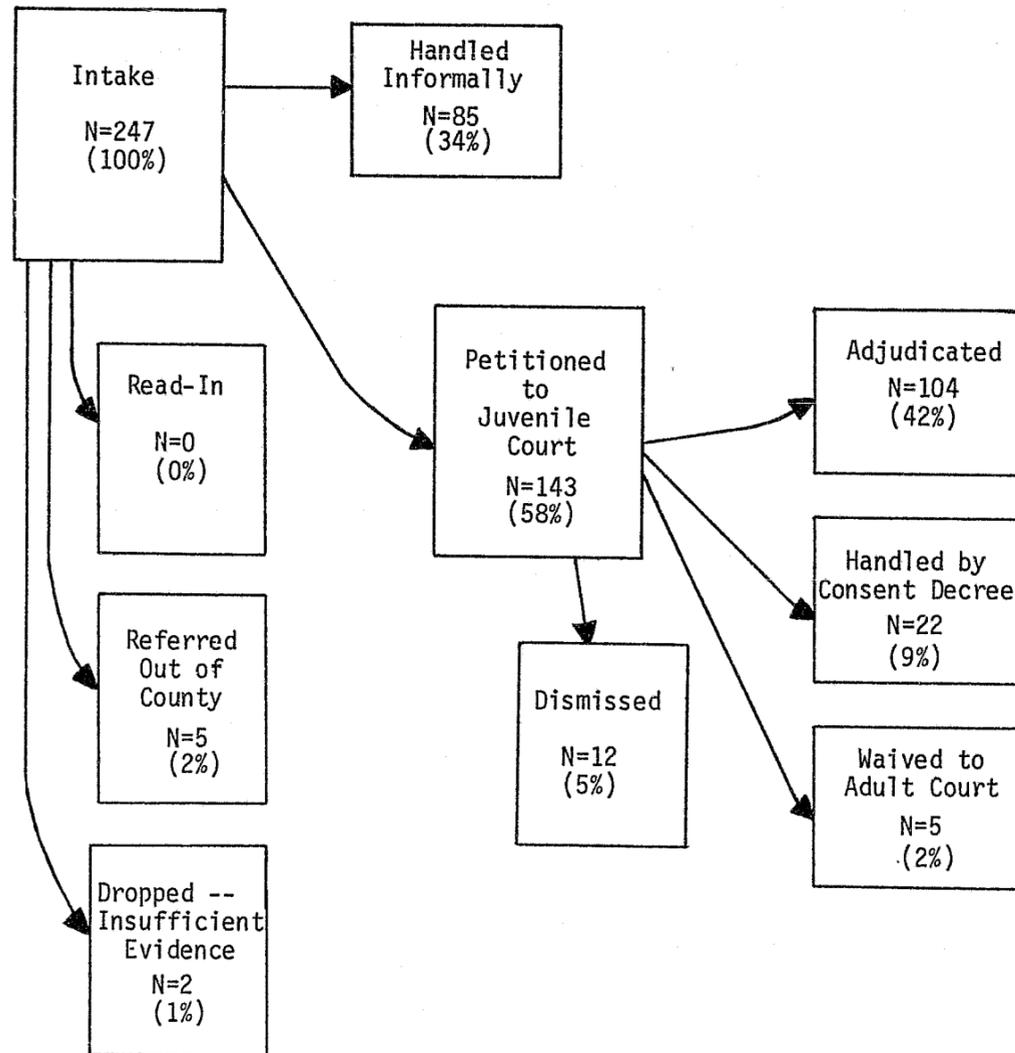


TABLE B-II
DISPOSITIONS OF ADJUDICATED RETURNEES

(N = 126)*

Dispositions	TOTAL	Delinquent (N=92)	CHIPS (N=32)
Supervision	54%	44%	10%
Psychological Evaluation/Therapy	32%	24%	8%
Restitution	27%	26%	1%
Home Detention	15%	13%	2%
Forfeiture	5%	5%	0%
Community Service	3%	3%	0%
Alcohol/Drug Treatment	.8%	.8%	0%
Placement			
- Residential Treatment	39%	22%	17%
- Group Home	15%	9%	6%
- Foster Home	10%	6%	4%
- Department of Corrections	8%	2%	6%
- Relative's Home	4%	4%	0%
	2%	1%	1%

Percentages do not total 100% because more than one disposition is possible in a given case.

* Includes 22 consent decrees.

When compared to the original sample, dispositions for the returnees were more likely to include home detention, placement outside of home, and psychological evaluation/therapy. Supervision was the only disposition ordered less often (54% for returnees compared to 61% for the original sample). When comparing the original sample to the returnees, in no instance did the variation in the use of a given disposition exceed 7%.

END