Delinquency Prevention: Individual Control or Social Development?

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Prevention is defined as a defensive reaction to an anticipated or expected occurrence. The term 'delinquency prevention' suggests that some precautionary action is taken to limit the likelihood of particular antisocial behaviour from occurring. Acting on the basis of statistical data it is predicted that certain behaviours will occur or recur in a particular section of the youth population.

Generally, programs are devised to be run in schools or community organisations with a view to attracting the interest of such young people and diverting them from other activities which may bring them into conflict with the law. The key ingredients of delinquency prevention programs appear to be a genuine concern for the participants, and development of skills training through activities such as employment programs, social relationships and leisure pursuits.

There appear to be two levels of delinquency prevention programs: one may be called primary prevention and the other, secondary prevention. Primary prevention programs aim to divert 'at risk' youth before they become involved in delinquent acts, whereas secondary prevention programs aim to prevent adjudicated antisocial behaviour from recurring.

In this paper it is argued that the aim of both levels of delinquency prevention programs should be to connect young people to mainstream community life and that the long-term welfare of the community is better served through social development strategies rather than through emphasising individual control strategies. It is conceded that individual control strategies may have measurable positive effects in the short term, but longer term gains may be possible through linking individual control programs to mainstream community life.

The Difference between Individual Control and Social Development

Individual control programs are attractive to government departments and community agencies because participants are an identified group and the service can be provided by a single sponsoring organisation with perhaps a little coordination with other agencies. The service can be delivered efficiently and often there is evidence that the undesirable behaviours have been brought under control and diminished (Coates et al. 1978). However, recidivism studies indicate that secondary prevention programs do not have lasting impact on a significant proportion of participants (Lipton et al. 1975).

There is also evidence that primary prevention programs tend to include some participants who may well have succeeded without the preventive program (Empey 1982) and others whose behaviour has deteriorated, possibly as a result of participation in the program (Alder & Polk 1985).

Despite these limitations individual control programs continue to be funded. Perhaps they would be more successful if funding were conditional upon a statement of long-term expected outcomes. Such a statement would show how the program connects with mainstream youth activities and gives access to conventional status and power in society. On the other hand we may care to attempt the even more complex and difficult task of social development, that is the movement towards equal participation of all members of society. In a capitalist democracy, such as ours, this basically means the elimination of poverty and creation of a full employment economy.

Elimination of poverty frees people from the tremendous daily burden of anxiety about food, clothing and shelter and from dependence upon the charity of others. A full employment economy enables people to become financially independent and to gain a sense of personal fulfilment.

While elimination of poverty and the creation of a full employment economy involves structural change and may be expensive, these considerations need to be balanced against the great cost of running individual control programs with limited success.

This paper proposes constructive evaluation of existing approaches and programs with a view to developing programs of lasting value to participants and to the community.

A Social Development Proposal

This proposal is based on the assumption that the ideal delinquency prevention program is directed at primary prevention utilising social development strategies. The first question to be addressed by such a proposal is: what do we want for all young people in our society? One way of responding to this question is to list common sources of gratification and look at these across key social institutions as shown in Table 1, derived from the work of Pearl (1978) and from Elliott, Ageton and Canter (1979).

Through participation in these key social institutions young people gain important gratification and the understanding necessary to contribute positively to the wider political, cultural and recreational arenas of the society. Conversely, the less gratification they gain from key social institutions the more alienated they become, and are consequently less able to understand and contribute to the wider arenas of the society. Gratification is then sought in antisocial ways—generally association with other young people whose ties with key social institutions have become somewhat tenuous or broken.

As the school is the social institution established by the state for the purpose of developing social understandings and personal skills in all young people, it has a major role in strengthening the ties of young people to other social institutions, especially work. The role of the school in meeting important gratification is critical to the present and future participation of young people in their society. This role has become more and more critical with the progressive fragmentation of society, including the family unit, and the weakening of the connection between school and work for many young people over the last thirty years (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1984; Stricker & Sheehan 1978). This is not to argue that school should become a youth club or welfare agency. It is simply to take seriously the current catch phrases that are being used in

relation to schooling in Australia—terms such as 'access', 'success', 'equal opportunity' and 'school retention'. In Victoria there is an integration policy which stresses the inclusion of all students in regular schools and points to the catastrophic and lifelong consequences of labelling and segregation from regular schooling.

Table 1
Gratifications across Key Social Institutions

Important Gratifications	*Key Social Institutions* Family Peers School Work Community Organisations	Major Arenas of Society
Security Comfort Meaning Belonging Usefulness Competence Hope Excitement		Politics (power, status, money systems) Culture (folkways, multicultural understandings) Recreation (pleasure pursuits—formal and informal)
	+ = supportive - = negative 0 = neutral or non-existent	

The Victorian Minister of Education's papers and the 'Curriculum Frameworks' documents suggest that at least at the policy level this government is aware of the social developmental role of schools. For example, Ministerial Paper Six states:

> the Government's fundamental expectation of schools is that they further the knowledge, understanding and competencies necessary for young people to:
>
> a. participate effectively in the life of a multicultural society;
>
> b. undertake worthwhile work; and
>
> c. plan an active role in the processes through which our society is regulated and improved.

The school curriculum is the means by which the government's expectations are to be met. The Framework documents define curriculum to include not only subject material but also the way the school is organised for the teaching and learning process, as follows.

The term 'curriculum' covers all the arrangements the school makes for students' learning and development. It includes the content of courses, student activities, teaching approaches, and the ways in which teachers and classes are organised. It also includes decisions on the need for and use of facilities.

Critics may well ask why this approach to schooling has not yet made apparent inroads in the area of delinquency prevention, and some suggestions for further work at the implementation level can be made:

- while state schools have opened up to local community participation, some communities have been slow to respond, so connections between school and community are not as strong or as cooperative as they could be;
- the importance of student participation in the governance of their schools is not clearly understood in some schools, particularly in traditional working-class areas and amongst migrant populations where the Australian culture is strange and the language difficult;
- the number of hostile 'experts' who are critical of school performance in the areas of literacy, numeracy and behaviour control. These pressures make it difficult for teachers to support moves to open up schools further to community participation and to feel that they have an educative role as well as a training role;
- the traditional style of teacher training does not enable young teachers to fully comprehend the Ministry's definition of curriculum. In order to understand school organisation and classroom climate as integral aspects of school curriculum, trainee teachers need more exposure to schools, possibly through school-based projects throughout their training period;
- the links between school and industry need to be strengthened so that:
    - the drain of good teachers to industry is arrested and reversed, or at least the possibility of exchange remains a lifelong option;
    - students can move from school to work and back again and gain credits for work experience more easily;
    - all state schools need to be equipped as a community resource so that people of all ages can identify with their local school;
    - the increase in funds allocated to private schools has increased the competition for 'bright' students and this has the effect of eroding the image of the local school as an instrument of community cohesion and cooperation.

There may be other pressures at work but the above list of factors working against government policy for social development at the primary prevention level serves to illustrate some of the barriers that still need to be overcome. Until they are overcome, we, as a community will continue to fund delinquency prevention projects at the secondary level and possibly using individual control strategies rather than social development. Unfortunately, despite the quality of worker employed in these types of remedial and correctional programs, the barriers to success are far more formidable than those just outlined in relation to achievement of social development goals in schools because, for example, correctional institutions are outside the mainstream social institutions.

These barriers become apparent upon observation of examples given in Tables 2 and 3. The Tables illustrate the differences in strategies that could be employed in relation to the key social institutions by individual control and social development approaches to primary and secondary prevention. It will be seen that the central theme of the individual control approach is 'person blame', whereas the central theme of the social development approach is situational improvement through education and cooperation. The major barrier to success for individual control programs, where there

is no alternative to their establishment (for example in correctional institutions), is how to design such programs so that they connect to social development programs at the primary prevention level. By designing individual control programs in this way, 'redemptive' pathways to full membership of the community are created through reversing negative gratification and/or by developing gratification in other key social institutions.

Table 2
Examples of Primary Prevention Strategies

Social Institution	Individual Control	Social Development
Family	1. Developing proposals that some people should not have children (but no implementation due to human rights concerns) 2. Identify 'at risk' families and offering counselling and welfare benefits	1. Family support - guaranteed minimum income - housing - health - child care - legal aid - equal access to education
Peers	1. Diversion from court programs 2. Separation of 'troublesome' youths, e.g. court order: 'do not associate with . . .' 3. Curfew	1. Encourage youth contribution to their local community—interesting things to do with people of all ages 2. Youth cooperative initiatives recognised
School	1. Hierarchy of disciplinary sanctions 2. Privileges conditional upon 'good' behaviour	1. Code of behaviour established for and by teachers, students and parents 2. Cooperative, inclusive teaching, e.g. cross-age tutoring, student action research projects, mixed ability groups 3. Relevant 'negotiated' curriculum—see 'Frameworks'
Work	1. Restricted entry through raising pre-requisite qualification 2. Part-time casual work with no written contract 3. Unemployment benefit	1. Full employment economy 2. Industrial democracy 3. Combine work with study
Community Organisations	1. Restricted entry through: a. high membership fees b. credentials c. recruiting competitively, e.g. foot-ball clubs that recruit all over Australia, thereby losing their local identity	1. Inclusive of local community members 2. Self-help neighbourhood programs through Local Government 3. Advocacy for disadvantaged groups

Table 3

Examples of Secondary Prevention Strategies

Social Institution	Individual Control	Social Development
Family	1. Return to family with counselling and welfare benefits 2. Supervision order	1. Family support (see primary prevention strategies)
Peers	1. Separation from peers through detention (with other delinquent peers) 2. Individual skill development programs in detention 3. Strict parole conditions re self and peers	1. Project which involves identified youth taking responsibility in community organisations and activities, e.g. reading to aged people; responsibility for organising a community project; peer tutoring and counselling
School	1. Re-entry on restricted conditions 2. Remedial classes, separate from other students	1. Integration into mainstream school classes and activities 2. Inclusive teaching styles (see primary prevention strategies) 3. Negotiated curriculum (see primary prevention strategies)
Work	1. Work-release programs 2. Work pre-requisite for parole	1. Job creation programs that lead to permanent employment and career paths—including previously uninvolved youth
Community Organisations	1. Relaxation of entry restrictions for outstanding sponsored individuals 2. Special organisations for ex-offenders	1. De-institutionalisation 2. Community education

Conclusion

According to the old saying, prevention is better than cure. This paper has argued that delinquency prevention is dependent upon curing some social ills and for this reason individual control strategies must be linked to social development policies and programs. While the individual must be held responsible for his or her behaviour, membership of the major social institutions and participation in the major arenas of community life, are a group responsibility.

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The Youth and the Law Project
Community Crime Prevention in Action

Youth and Staff from the
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The Youth and the Law Project is set in the Macarthur region, a region which incorporates three local government areas of Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly. The region is 60 km to the south-west of Sydney, and has developed east and west of the Sydney-Melbourne railway line from Liverpool to Picton.

The region was originally planned as a self-sufficient, satellite city of the Sydney metropolitan area, incorporating housing, schools, shopping centres, transport and employment for the expected 250,000 residents (by the year 2000). Unfortunately, the plans were not brought fully to fruition.

The landscape is currently a mixture of medium-density to low-density housing in the north, rural and bushland in the south and west. Industry has settled in the built-up centre of the region, but not to planned expectations. The development of public transport to the large housing estates east and west of the railway line has been haphazard and falls well below the transport needs of the local population. In its third decade of development, the construction of entertainment, cultural and sporting facilities is only just beginning.

The population of Macarthur is currently 130,000 and over 50 per cent of the local residents are under the age of eighteen. Half of the local population live in housing commission estates. There is a high population of single parent families. Many people commute to Sydney (an hour and a half journey each way) for both work and entertainment. For young people, entertainment includes sporting activities, the occasional youth club and hanging around the mall.

The young people of this region share, with their parents, the problems of being dislocated from their friends and networks, frustration with an unresponsive 'system', insecurity about the prospects of future employment (to a greater degree than the inhabitants of central Sydney) and boredom.

The New Approach

The Youth and the Law Project was developed through the interest of the Law Foundation of New South Wales in the region. The Law Foundation of New South Wales is a philanthropic trust, set up to fund innovative projects in the areas of legal education, access to legal services and crime prevention.

The Law Foundation was interested in providing funding for a pilot program to prevent youth crime in the region.

In December 1984 the Foundation invited Professor Duncan Chappell, now the Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology, to prepare a comprehensive report on youth crime in the region.

Recommendations to combat crime

Professor Chappell's findings showed that, in real terms the area's crime rate had been overstated by the media—violent crime was more marked in central Sydney. Most offences in the area were break-and-enters, car theft, and minor property crime. Truancy was high, as was child abuse, with many children running away from home and 'sleeping rough'. Relations between the community (especially young people on housing estates) and the police were poor, with claims that uniformed police harassed young people when investigating offences. Chappell found inexperienced legal practitioners defending children in court and the children themselves ill-informed about court processes and the consequences of a guilty finding. He believed too many children were brought before the courts and favoured more use of cautions and diversionary schemes.

The next three papers describe successful community crime prevention initiatives in the region.

Three Years of Youth Participation in the Community

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Youth Forum Ltd, a statewide youth organisation with extensive experience in supporting action research initiatives of young people throughout New South Wales, prepared a submission which was presented to the Law Foundation of New South Wales for a crime prevention project in the region using young people as its agents.

The Youth and the Law Project Concept

The key question about youth crime prevention that the Project has faced from its beginning is 'who should own the problem?'. It is in the nature of people to value most what they have produced themselves. The home handyperson who spends eight weeks making a ratty old coffee table is likely to value this table more than one purchased from a store. Whatever approach that was to be used to reduce crime in the region would have to be owned by young people. If we could not do this, the Youth and the Law Project would fall into the same category as other additions 'dumped' on the region—an under-utilised art gallery, a picnic area vandalised because the residents did not want it, a railway bridge that people will not use because it is in the wrong place.

The bottom line for our Project is: 'if young people want it—given support, they will do it'.

This approach carries its own risks and rewards. The risk is that we as staff, as adults in the community, as decision makers, may be forced to support ideas and projects that we do not agree with.

The reward is that all the resources this project produces, all the physical things it makes, the ideas and ideology it promotes—will be accepted and protected by the young people of the community.

Forum Projects

The Project is based largely on the belief that many crimes perpetuated by young people are based on unfulfilled needs.

Young people have a need for interesting and entertaining things to do, a need for security and a safe environment, a need for employment and creative and productive pastimes, a need for socialising with their peers, a need to take risks and to be independent and a need for success.

When one or more of these needs are not met, young people can, amongst other alternatives, take out their frustration through activities which are destructive to society—vandalism, theft, shop stealing, violence and others.

One way of meeting these needs is to join a graffiti gang. Graffiti gangs are social—you meet new people, they are productive learning experiences—participants begin by learning to 'tag' walls and after serving their apprenticeships, move on to more adventurous works. They provide security within a peer group and are obviously a way of exerting independence from adults. They are, of course, risk-taking enterprises—the risks escalating from the risk of being discovered, to the risk of death and injury. As a form of behaviour, they are, however, unacceptable to the mainstream of society. Graffiti offends our aesthetic senses, we associate it with violence and insecurity. The Youth and the Law Project aims to provide a socially acceptable alternative to this sort of behaviour.

The Project is based around action research initiatives—called Forum Projects. As a part of a Forum Project, young people:

- identify a pressing problem facing young people in the region;
- research the background to the problem;
- decide on a range of solutions to solve the problems;
- plan a project to implement this solution; and
- implement the solution.

Forum projects are by no means a simple process. They generally take between eighteen months to three years to complete.

The Life of a Forum Project

Forum Projects begin with a gathering of young people and this happens in two ways. The Project holds an Annual Community Youth Forum involving 150 young people from schools, youth centres, refuges and skillshare schemes throughout the region. Young people attend the Forum in groups and bring with them a short presentation about an issue of concern to them. These presentations happen over the first two days. For the final two days, young people meet with others interested in the same issue. They brainstorm possible solutions to the problem, agree on the solution they will implement and plan a strategy for its implementation. The Forum ends with a presentation from each workshop group, detailing the plans for the next year.

The second way is through a Workshop Day. Workshop Days focus on a single issue and have been held to develop solutions to problems such as vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse and the problems facing young people from non-English speaking backgrounds. The format of the day involves both skills development for the young people who attend and the development of a solution to the issue of the day.

The next step is for the group to meet. Young people who attend each of these events are invited to attend meetings afterwards.

Generally groups meet with a staff member to pursue their objectives. It is the role of the staff member to assist the groups in making contact with people in the community who can help them meet their objectives, plan skills development, maintain communication with the group and provide research and information services to the group as they need it.

The staff of the Project are 'door openers' for the young people and skills providers. These skills range from simple, but essential, skills such as how to use a telephone book, arranging and running meetings, to more complex skills such as dealing with decision makers in the area, and writing press releases. The skills a group learns very much depend on what the group is doing. The one area in which staff do not contribute is in the area of deciding objectives and directions for the group.

The next step is to make contact with the community. The Youth and the Law Project is about communication with the community and gaining access to the resources on offer there. As a 'door opener' the staff make contact with people who Forum Project participants decide are appropriate to their needs.

The final step which occurs through the life of the Project, is to succeed. We recognise that one of the most positive experiences young people need to have is one of success. For this reason, all Projects must succeed.

The Process

Forum Projects are the principal way the Youth and the Law Project operates. Some of the other elements of the Project that directly support this facet of our Project, but are in themselves discreet projects include:

Community Youth Forum

The Community Youth Forum in itself is not a significant event. Its only purpose is to begin Forum Projects. However, it provides a number of positive 'spin-offs' for young people.

Group leaders

As a youth event, the Forum should be run by young people. At a Workshop Day held in February, fifteen young people are elected to run the Forum. They attend a five-weekend training program to plan the conference and learn how to run seven workshops leading to Forum Projects, and six 'Getting to Know You' sessions.

Teachers, youth workers, local aldermen and others attend the Forum as participants, but upon arrival, the organisation and running of the Forum is in the hands of these fifteen young people.

Workshop days

Workshop Days are one-day events focusing on a particular issue, and are the tools the Project uses to contact and involve particularly disadvantaged young people. Young offenders, homeless, unemployed young people and young people from non-English speaking backgrounds are unlikely to attend the four-day Forum, because it is simply too threatening. We have had success in making contact with these young people through Workshop Days.

The Community Youth Forum also provides a learning experience for young people whose only contact with the Project is the Community Youth Forum. All participants give a twenty-minute presentation to explain to the other participants their views on a particular issue. For most of the participants this is the first time they have had the experience of being up-front. Schools and youth centres are asked to provide information about the Forum to young people who are not normally offered this opportunity.

We are not after debaters, nor public speaking champions—we are after young people who want to do something about the issues—not just talk about them.

For many participants, this is the only opportunity they have had of working with other young people in a cooperative environment. They learn about their values and the twin skills of making oneself heard and understood and of listening to others.

All of the activities of the Project are attended on a voluntary basis. For this reason we plan that there is something in it for everyone.

If young people decide to be involved in a Forum Project, a Forum or a Workshop Day there are certainly many positives along the way. Often young people use one or more of these linked activities as a stepping off point to more long-term involvement. At other times they may take what they have discovered and that is all.

The program of the Youth and the Law Project is to provide opportunities—opportunities that are not available in the community as it stands. Young people may decide to use them as they wish—but making that decision—to be involved or not involved, is also a learning experience.

Community links

The staff of the Project are represented on, for example, network committees, management committees, and regional planning groups, within the area.

Implications for crime prevention

The Project cannot show that through its existence there is less juvenile crime in the region. The Project facilitators work in differing capacities with about 300 young people each year and the problems of evaluating that figure amongst a group of 60,000 others are staggering to say the least.

Adding to the area

It can be seen that part of the reason for youth crime in the region is the lack of facilities and services for young people, and the young people have reduced this problem by :

- writing a booklet to explain the legal system;
- improving relationships between young people and police;
- providing a vehicle for young people's views to be represented in the media;
- producing a discussion kit about child abuse;
- creating and running an under-18's nightclub; and
- lobbying the Campbelltown City Council to provide skateboarding facilities.

Before the Project began in 1985, there was little or no consultation with young people by decision makers in the area. Young people as part of the Project have radically changed this situation.

Instances of such consultation include: attending police briefings; discussions with the Mayor regarding skateboard facilities; discussions at Council meetings regarding the Child Abuse Kit and Drug Education Project; and discussions with Members of Parliament, at both state and federal levels regarding a planned multicultural festival.

These experiences are positive ones for both the young people and the decision makers. Young people learn that people in these positions are approachable and helpful on many occasions, and for decision makers it is often one of the few opportunities they have to meet ordinary young people. In terms of access, these positive experiences also open conduits of communication between other young people and the powers that be as well.

Role modelling and the press

Months of reviewing the local press failed to find any positive reporting of young people. In fact, young people who were reported in the media were drug addicts, murderers, rapists and car thieves. On top of this, young people soon see that the young people who seem to attract the most attention at school and at home by welfare and other authorities are the troublemakers. A clear message is given to young people that the best way to be noticed is to steal something, burn down a school or stab someone.

At the Youth and the Law Project great lengths have been taken to promote and publicise the positive activities of young people. The response of the print media to the flood of material has been gradually to print more and more of these positive stories.

The most important role models of the project are of course the young participants themselves. Through their peer groups, these participants are providing a model that says 'It's OK to be productive, it's OK to do useful things'.

Participants in the Youth and the Law Project are not all convicted offenders, but they are also not all the brightest, most articulate kids in the area either. Most are young people who are seen by their friends as being fairly ordinary people—but, to coin a cliché, they are doing fairly extraordinary things, and by doing so, showing their friends that we have within us all, the capability of being extraordinary.

Skills building

Society seems to be, by its nature, competitive. Through their involvement in the Project, young people learn skills which allow them to compete better. They learn how to communicate, how to set and achieve their own goals, how to organise, work with, and in, groups. These skills enable young people to compete for jobs, for education, for access to services and in general allow them to take a place in our society rather than to fall through the gaps and become offenders.

Involvement in this Project is not a panacea for all the social ills of our society, but young people possessing these skills are better able to deal with the problems that face them.

Self-esteem

The core of the Youth and the Law Project hinges on using all of its activities to encourage a feeling of self-worth amongst the participants.

The participants in the Youth and the Law Project are learning to chase success and if a criticism of the Project is that it makes too much of small successes, it is a criticism that we will wear emblazoned on our shirts, because we firmly believe that self-worth is brought about by these successes. Even when a Forum Project group fails to meet its goals, there must be enough successes along the way to make it worthwhile for all concerned.

Diversion

Finally, whilst the Project was set up as a preventive and not a diversionary scheme, it does serve the diversionary role that any drop-in centre serves, that being, that whilst young people are occupied in the activities of the Project, they cannot be engaged in destructive activities elsewhere. It is, however, a product of the processes of the Project, and not its aim to act in this way.

Conclusion

The Youth and the Law Project is a juvenile crime prevention project where young people act as the agents of crime prevention.

The key to the success of the Project lies in five main areas:

- Young people are doing things that are 'real'. Young people are 'almost adults'. They want to take action on real issues. Anything less would not be accepted.
- Young people are running the Project. Young people want to exert independence and take risks. The Project provides an environment that allows them to do this in positive ways.
- The natural complement of taking risks and responsibility is that the successes of the Project are owned by the participants. Young people involved in the Project, their friends and peers, recognise that the pursuit of positive change in the area is worthwhile, enjoyable and interesting.
- The community benefits from the Project by reaping the rewards of Forum Projects. An essential element of the Project is that it shows adults that young people are willing and capable of improving the area, and dispels the largely 'media-presented' myth that all young people are ratbags.
- The Project is open to, and taken up by, all young people. Participants in the Project come from all walks of life and promote the belief that these goals are attainable by all—and not the chosen few.

Child Abuse¾ No Way!

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The Youth and the Law Project is designed to give young people a chance to do something about a topic that concerns them directly or indirectly. I was fortunate enough to be one of four people who worked on a group project concerning a very serious problem with our society. Child abuse nowadays is not a rare phenomenon. It is a cleverly disguised problem which the public is more often than not quite unwilling to discuss. Essentially, most people prefer not to involve themselves with other people's problems. However, an apathetic attitude such as this can mean the difference between a happy child and one who is physically and mentally injured and scarred. It could mean the difference between life and death. Until the Community Youth Forum in 1986, I had no idea of the magnitude of the problem nor how little information was available to the public.

What evolved from the Forum was a group willing to further the need to strike an awareness amongst everyone, children and adults, in recognising any form of child abuse and being responsible enough to do something about it. The group was called 'Kids Caring for Kids'. The group decided to create a kit, a booklet containing learning activities and discussion questions on physical, emotional and sexual abuse, which would inform and help others through what is learned. It sounded like a great idea.

Information was collected by writing to people and checking definitions. It took two years of 'brainstorming ideas' to come up with a kit which could be effectively run in groups of five to ten people facilitated by an experienced person with some training in the area of child abuse.

The product of our efforts was the kit 'Child Abuse—No Way!'. Covering the three types of abuse: physical, emotional and sexual abuse, the kit ideally should not be seen as therapy, but rather as a training module in encouraging awareness.

Each section contains:

- an information cover page;
- a fictional story and discussion questions;
- a skill developing activity; and
- a definition and various newspaper clippings.

For legal reasons, real stories and photographs could not be used, but the fictional stories are based on reported cases.

The kit also contains information on:

- how to notify an authority if one knows or suspects a case of child abuse;

- how to support a victim;
- indicators of abuse;
- the vital difference between good and bad touching;
- an extensive contact list of places and people who can help;
- how to run the kit itself; and
- suggestions on what you can do to help.

The kit encourages people to become actively involved in stopping abuse. It develops group participation allowing a variety of opinions and ideas to be discussed with every contribution being acknowledged. The kit acts as a channel for the discussion of child abuse amongst young people which in the past has been an unapproachable topic. Previously, this issue was only discussed in adult circles.

Although distributed to schools, youth groups and community welfare agencies throughout New South Wales, and interstate, information contained in the kit should not be reserved for young people—it should be known by everyone. The kit was launched by the Hon. Virginia Chadwick, Minister for Family and Community Services on 16 June 1988.

We did not claim to be experts. We learnt that parents too, have many problems and can be easily provoked by the innocence of children. However, there is a fine line between abuse and corrective handling. No child should be subjected to any form of abuse. There are people available to talk to and places to stay if things should get a little rough at home. 'Child Abuse?—No Way!': that is what it is all about.

The Entertainment Group Forum Project

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Campbelltown
New South Wales

The entertainment group set out to improve entertainment for the youth in the Macarthur area. The aim was to find out why the Macarthur area needed new and improved entertainment, to find out exactly what the youth wanted and set up an appropriate entertainment venue involving the council, local business, and the youth, in setting up and running the entertainment venue.

A survey of the needs of Macarthur youth was conducted. This survey showed that the majority of youths wished for:

- evening entertainment;
- an accessible entertainment venue;
- affordable costs of entrance fee and drinks and food; and
- sufficient supervision so that parents would not worry about their children and that the youths' fun would not be overly interfered with.

When the need was ascertained, the information gathered was presented at a public meeting to which the following groups had been invited: local nightclub and pub owners; police; community youth organisations; parents and citizen associations; school principals; contact teachers; and young people involved in project support groups.

At the meeting a detailed plan of the nightclub sought (based on 'Shockwave' the under 18's night club in Newcastle) was shown. It included:

- a floor plan;
- a list of all features and facilities and their benefits; and
- the benefits of the under 18's nightclub to the community.

Resulting from the meeting contacts were developed in the community, and the group was able to demonstrate its opinions, research and organisation. Valuable information was received from people in different fields and the group gained an awareness of future possibilities.

After the Public Meeting an attempt was made to establish a community support group, but people were unable to commit themselves.

The group then visited local real estate agents to find out about vacant factories or buildings. Many problems occurred:

- real estate agents reacted negatively to the group because it was more interested in finding out about buildings rather than buying or renting;

- there was a lack of suitable vacant buildings or factories available in the Macarthur area; and
- the suitable buildings were costly.

The Campbelltown Rollerena Fitness Centre had been trying unsuccessfully to run a disco at their fitness centre. The Manager contacted the group's Project Officer, and the Rollerena management was impressed with the work of the group and the Rollerena Advisory Committee was formed to help run a nightclub for under 18's.

The committee meets on a regular basis at the Rollerena office in Campbelltown. Issues discussed included:

- a name change from 'Club Teen Disco' to 'C.T.'s under 18's Nite Club';
- new ideas relating to non-alcoholic cocktails;
- organising bands; and
- designing promotional materials.

Initially, about fifty people were attending 'Club Teen Disco' but with word-of-mouth advertising, numbers grew to 120 people, an almost 200 per cent improvement within weeks of the advisory committee's involvement with the Rollerena. New members joined the group who were interested in becoming involved in the running of C.T.'s.

Members of the group went regularly to the C.T.'s and took notes on how to improve the nightclub. A suggestion box was made available for other people. Dress regulations were set, similar to those of licensed nightclubs. Bands make regular appearances—approximately once a month.

The success of this project can be measured by the regular attendance of around 700 youths.

How Young People see School: This is no Ship of Fools

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In the elegant prose of *Madness and Civilization* (Histoire de la Folie), Michel Foucault (1967) explores with searing insight the process by which society has constructed, refined and applied the mechanisms of segregation and confinement for those considered unworthy of the usual rights of social cohabitation and intercourse.

> Leprosy disappeared, the leper vanished, or almost, from memory; these structures remained. Often in these same places, the formulas of exclusion would be repeated, strangely similar two or three centuries later. Poor vagabonds, criminals, and 'deranged minds' would take the part played by the leper, and we shall see what salvation was expected from this exclusion, for them and for those who excluded them as well. With an altogether new meaning and in a very different culture, the forms would remain—essentially that major form of rigorous division which is social exclusion but spiritual reintegration (Foucault 1967, p. 7).

So deep have been the prejudices against various groups, that they have been forcibly evicted from the tenancy in the communities that one would have assumed their birthrights guaranteed them. The spectre of leprosy diminished, the leprosariums remained as monuments to social control. Their vigil became more functional as new communities were rounded up and housed therein—the insane, the 'morally and mentally defective', and the criminal. The situation of these institutions in the midst of 'normal' society was as worrisome in the Fifteenth Century as it has been in the Twentieth Century. This anxiety is manifest in the more lateral 'solutions' explored.

The popular notion of the 'ship of fools' applied variously, as it has been to all and sundry: political parties, state and federal cabinets, and more imaginatively to departments within tertiary education institutions, has particularly sobering origins in Renaissance history. To expunge or abort madness from their communities, local authorities commissioned merchant seamen to accept consignment of a human cargo of the insane and deliver them to wherever they could be traded, sold or ejected. A difficult transaction for even the most entrepreneurial of international traders to expedite, what happened to these tragic cargoes is not carefully chronicled in historical records. The concern was simply with identifying and removing a group that manifest a perceived threat to society. Put simply, it was a political act. The problem was far too difficult, attitudes far too entrenched; let us simply remove that problem by a sleight of hand.

If space permitted we could explore this history further in order to demonstrate that while treatments have changed over time, the intent has, in some quarters, fundamentally endured. A committee commissioned by then Director of Education, Frank Tate, to explore the issue of intellectual disability is indicative:

> The army of unskilled vagrants, habitual inebriates, criminals and lunatics is largely recruited from the ranks of the mentally defective . . . by discovering these social criminals before they have committed crime, society can take measures to prevent them ever committing it by means of permanent custodial care (Victorian Public Records Office 1911, pp. 1-2).

According to Lewis (1987) the 'invention of measurable intelligence' and the expansion of the special education industry in Victoria owes more to the traditions of social cleansing and control Foucault describes, than it does to the more popular discourse of 'benevolent humanitarianism'. Indeed, the powerful and pervasive belief that mental defectiveness signified a predisposition to criminality and moral depravity, made it imperative that society protect itself by means of diagnosis and segregation of these imminently dangerous people.

This process of diagnosis and segregation had two immediate effects. It necessitated the creation and continual refinements of the instruments of diagnosis, not that they have ever been subjected to the cold light of public scrutiny. Moreover it created a need for the creation of destinations for the diagnosed. The industry was thus forged. Like all other such processes, the function begat the need for experts to police the diagnosis and custodial care programs. Ultimately the bureaucracies grew. This was capped off by the necessary spawning of their linguistic legitimation.

This last facet is most pressing in the context of this discussion. While the imperatives for the types of actions we are describing here ran according to one agenda, public explanations were always depicted within a significantly different discourse. The depoliticisation of language to divert from or conceal bureaucratic or political intentions has been extensively explored elsewhere (Barthes 1972, p. 143; Foucault 1967; Cohen 1985). The point of this discussion then is to place a recent research project I conducted with young people in Melbourne schools within a broader context of education and social policy.

We need, as Kapferer (1987) has observed, to be vigilant against the dragooning of education, delinquency prevention programs and other areas of youth policy development into concealed imperatives for the containment of young people contrary to their needs and valuable educational and social outcomes. This project was designed to consider the needs of young people, to examine how schools might better meet these needs and evaluate an off-site model of educational provision to 'at risk' students.

A great deal of research interest has focussed upon the role of academic failure and differential and stratifying school institutional processes in the production of a marginal and resistant student population (Polk 1984; Knight 1985; Slee 1988). That these people are increasingly being directed towards a range of unsatisfactory choices, including juvenile crime, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness and prostitution has been the subject of serious and vicarious academic and media attention. A popular response to the perceived problems of these young people has been the proliferation of alternative settings and programs to cater for their 'special needs'. Mongon (1988) is amongst local and international researchers who have demonstrated the inherent problems of this symptomatic or reflexive response. Ultimately the question of the goal of increased post-compulsory school participation needs to be confronted. Is there an educational point? Will it contribute to better educational and social outcomes for all young people? Or is it a variation on the theme of containment thought entertainment and restricted range of alternatives?

Schools cannot be the 'ship of fools'. To entertain, to contain without addressing the critical issues of articulation between education, training, higher education and the labour market; or confronting the needs of homeless youth will not suffice. It would merely contribute to the growing numbers of resistant, alienated and disenfranchised youth. What this project unambiguously demonstrates is the capacity of young people to distinguish between rhetoric and reality and to articulate an agenda of needs.

How Young People See School

A group of thirteen to fifteen-year-old students from Collingwood Education Centre, Fitzroy Secondary College and Richmond Secondary College was approached. The brief for the 'Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service' project was to:

- identify the educational needs of young people; and
- evaluate their existing education program.

The focus here is on the first part of that commission.

Project design

Approaches were made to the aforementioned schools as these were all served by the agency sponsoring the project. At Collingwood Education Centre (CEC) Michael Metcalfe's Year 11 Social Studies class volunteered to design, implement and evaluate a survey of Year 7-10 students randomly selected from the three schools. They were assisted by Year 11 students from Fitzroy Secondary College (FSC).

The project was to become a part of those students' Year 11 curriculum, their work evaluated and contributing to their assessment. It is essential that such work be legitimised through recognition as accredited assessment tasks.

Preliminary discussions determined that the target population for the research would comprise ten students from each of level 7, 8, 9 and 10 from each of the following schools: CEC, FSC and Richmond Secondary College (RSC). So forty students participated from each school with the total sample population being 120 students.

This sampling was designed to gauge the levels at which issues emerged or became more critical for students. It also allowed for variance between the selected inner urban schools. Teachers randomly selected the students; however, there was an attempt to make the samples equal in terms of gender representation.

Student researchers

The students from CEC and FSC engaged in the research teams were required to participate in two training days at the Melbourne College of Advanced Education. The setting provided the opportunity for students to work within and observe a tertiary education institution. The participation of lecturers from Melbourne University, Melbourne College of Advanced Education and the Ballarat College of Education extended this tertiary orientation for the students. Implicit was a commitment to the principle that learning is not unique to the formal classroom.

Students were assured that their findings would be useful. The students would present their results to the Victorian State Board of Education to assist them in their deliberations which would influence the shaping of the Years 7-10 curriculum.

The students were led through a range of activities to develop their research skills and commenced the task of identifying the students' perceptions of their educational needs. The range of issues included the following: work skills orientation and education; teaching methods and social development; human relations and social development; school governance; gender and multicultural issues; and school amenities.

The students themselves determined the questions for the survey. This process was valuable as it enabled the students to interpret their own experience and articulate their understandings in a public forum and to test their understandings against the experiences of their peers. Students owned the research process and results.

The students' perceptions of school—what the data showed

Summary of findings:

- A comprehensive curriculum was offered to Years 7-10 students in the sample schools. Mathematics and English were deemed the most important components of the schools' academic fare. Curriculum development is required in:
    - Work Education
    - Computer Studies
    - Technology Studies
    - Human Relationships/Personal Development.
- Increasing student commitment to the study of science has not filtered down to school level according to this sample. There was a slippage of perceived importance amongst the older students.
- The majority of the respondents aspire to the completion of Year 12 studies. This contrasts with national evidence on participation rates.
- Compulsory attendance should be increased to sixteen years of age.
- A significant level of anxiety was recorded about leaving school and vocational destinations—or otherwise.
- Higher education was not considered to be an option that was realistically available to most of the cohort.
- Students expressed concern that links between the labour market and school programs were not made explicit.
- Factors contributing to 'unhappiness' at school may possibly be ameliorated without involving fundamental changes to school life and its administration.
- Teaching methodology represents a major focus for student dissatisfaction. A point highlighted in the QERC Report (1985, p. 42).
- Rule-making and application is seen to be remote from the students. A greater say in the determination of school rules was seen to be important.
- Students expressed a need for the recognition and extension of their rights.
- Room exists for the improvement of student/teacher relationships.
- Though the chart, on the face of it, reported that girls get as good a deal from schools as boys, female respondents were more inclined to express the need for an extension of their rights and the development of more participatory structures in the school.
- School climate, educational delivery and achievement and curriculum content would all improve through greater student participation in decision-making. This opportunity would increase the commitment of 'troublesome' students.

Young People on the Outside?

The above findings were supplemented by discussion with young people at the Fitzroy Community Youth Centre who had prematurely left school.

Among the issues which emerged which contributed to the marginalisation and school-leaving of these people were the following:

- Access to information about financial assistance for impoverished students is scant within schools.
- When such assistance is arranged, it is insufficient to meet the requirements of families seeking to extend their children's education.
- Institutional inflexibility leads inexorably to the exclusion of many young people.
- Students who have to assume home duties for periods of time, receive little assistance in re-entering school life. Students who need to work part-time have similar difficulty in making part-time arrangements with schools.
- Discipline procedures induce dossiers, labels and sanctions which are segregative and non-redemptive.
- Teaching methodologies were identified as inflexible and the teachers as remote. The young people believed that teachers often misunderstood the problems students experienced. Whether this is accurate or not is irrelevant if the perception is established.
- Curriculum seemed irrelevant and chances of it leading to work slim.
- Families felt unwelcomed by the school or were reticent to approach the school because they felt 'deficient' or inadequate.
- Crisis support in schools is severely limited and inadequate.
- Attempts at remedial education are frequently humiliating.
- Schools do not, through their curricula, establish a climate of acceptance of students in different or difficult circumstances. Social ostracism leads to many feeling little option but to leave school.

The Impact of the Research

One of the most exciting aspects of the project was the presentation of the report by the students to the State Board of Education, senior personnel from the Ministry of Education, and the Catholic Education Office and to academics and students from the Student Participation Working Party at the Rialto building in Melbourne.

Clearly the meeting was of mutual benefit. The research team engaged in public discussion of their work had to articulate and defend their findings. Moreover, they tabled recommendations for school improvement. Students were accountable for their work, demonstrating in a most productive manner the skills and knowledge that they had gathered on the way.

An invitation extended to students to participate further in the State Board of Education's 'Barriers to Participation Project' was indicative of the impact of the research upon those who attended. The monitoring processes that were built into the project also served to endorse the beneficial nature of the project. Tertiary students from Melbourne College of Advanced Education produced a film from the project. More importantly, others were involved in observing the student researchers and interviewing them to evaluate the quality of the learning experience. Both the film and the evaluation reports provided a powerful confirmation of the learning process and the utility of the work undertaken.

A strong theme throughout the work lies in its concurrence with reports such as QERC 1985; *Making The Future* (Middleton et al. 1986); *In The National Interest* (Commonwealth Schools Commission 1987) and *Learning Initiatives To Include All*

Students In The Regular Classroom (Slee, in press) which move the emphasis from compensatory models of educational delivery to the development of non-stratifying comprehensive curricula for all students. Students invite schools to continue to embrace them in participatory decision-making structures of curricula development and school governance. Holdsworth (1988) has demonstrated the ability of students to assume such a role. They argue for a broadening of curriculum and of assessment practices so as to achieve greater congruence with the world that awaits them. To support such development they seek the movement of support into the schools rather than away from the classroom, and the 'freeing up' of institutional arrangements to enable participation on 'part-time contracts'.

Alternative Settings to Cater for the 'Special Needs' of 'At Risk' Students

A number of alternative centres have emerged to cater for the 'special needs' of 'at risk' students. There are two major concerns emanating from the application of labels such as 'special needs' and 'at risk' students. Firstly, the definition of categories for such differential treatment is highly subject, often impoverished by a lack of contextual analysis or understanding.

Secondly, the application of such labels, and the ensuing treatment of students has been convincingly demonstrated to assume the yoke of a self-fulfilling prophesy (Lemert 1967; Schur 1971 and 1973; Pink 1982).

Though based upon good intentions, the proliferation of 'off-site' solutions to disruption in schools represents an example of this labelling process. Two teaching units were established in Victoria. Those responsible were remiss in reflecting international evaluations of, and consequent anxieties about similar centres. Her Majesty's Inspectorate tabled its unfavourable review of off-site centres in 1978. That report entitled *Behavioural Units* (Her Majesty's Inspectorate 1978) raised a number of disturbing issues which included: the problem of labelling and its consequences on educational outcomes; restricted curriculum offerings to the students; reintegration processes were neither well-defined or successful for the majority of referrals; referral processes were inconsistent between schools; disproportionate referral of working class and minority group children; parents and students often not clear on the reasons for referral or their educational prognosis; and referral of students had no appreciable positive effect on the referring school in terms of diminishing suspensions, incidence of corporal punishment, or declining referrals.

While authorities in Hartford, Connecticut found that only 7 per cent of students referred to units found their way back to their regular classroom (Hartford Public Schools 1975), Daines records that the behaviour warranting the referral re-emerged in more than 60 per cent of the students who managed to be reintegrated (Daines 1981). This becomes particularly significant when considering the Inner London Education Authority's report that only 30 per cent of those referred to off-site centres are successfully reintegrated (ILEA 1985). No such evaluation of longitudinal data has been conducted in Australia. Reports remain anecdotal and descriptive.

Further disquiet is prompted by Galloway (1980) who notes that:

> . . . the increasing referral rate reflects a variation on Parkinson's Law: the number of problem children referred to psychologists for special education has increased in direct proportion to the availability of resources.

The rapid expansion of off-site units in Britain to offer over 7000 places for students by 1984 (Mongon 1988, p. 190) is testimony to the maxim of generating one's institutional indispensability. Since 1980, Victoria has played host to a further five units with numerous others coming under different descriptions. This and continuing

calls for further expansion have occurred since the release of integration policy which affirms the Education Ministry's commitment to desegregation.

As the students have articulated in this research project, their needs are not essentially 'special' and therefore in need of individual remediation. **All** young people have needs. Pearl et al. (1978) summarises these needs for us:

- Recognition and extension of COMPETENCE
- BELONGING
- Students' work needs to demonstrate USEFULNESS, both to themselves and the community in which they live
- HOPE for the future.

That the traditional, narrow, stratified academic curricula is not accommodating these needs for identifiable groups of young people has been well documented in a succession of research reports and government documents (QERC 1985; Commonwealth Schools Commission 1987 and DEET 1987) are indicative. The failure of schools in developing curricula and organisational flexibility to include **all** students was identified by the National Inquiry into Homeless Children (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1989, pp. 271-2).

The challenge then is for education authorities and their schools to develop curricula which address the needs of all students rather than developing processes which transport children into streams which lead them further away from the possibility of successful educational outcomes. We seem to have returned to our introduction: the proliferation of metaphorical 'ships of fools' is unacceptable from educational and social justice standpoints. Similarly we need, as the students are exhorting us, to address what it is we are going to do with the post-compulsory curricula to ensure that the drive for retention is not an imperative for social containment.

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Education and Children 'At Risk'

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This paper is based upon the philosophy and practice of the Education Unit at Ballarat Children's Home and Family Services. It also draws upon the experience and background of the two teachers within that unit (S. Henderson and J. Coish).

The aim of the paper is to highlight the need for structures to address the problem of increasing concerns amongst educators in relation to familial, behavioural and academic breakdowns amongst early post-primary school age children. It will focus attention on education as a response to social indicators.

The Educational Perspective

Schools are learning to have to cope with a growing number of disenfranchised people. They are learning that they have to adopt strategies, curricula and management models in order to cope with the increasing social and educational demands placed upon them. Whilst this process evolves into practical terms viz. Victorian educational transition over the last decade, the problems for and in schools increase: that is, schools are responding in a delayed manner.

The universal objectives of education seem to be overshadowed by the realities of day-to-day living in today's classrooms. Whilst the ideals are still manifested and one hopes that educational realisation is met, it does appear that the days when schools dealt exclusively with dictating and moulding the cultural ethos, the social mores and values, the vocational training and experience and general educational pursuits are numbered. These are now being challenged by a seemingly rapid social change, or the consequences of such a change.

Education may aim to change society, but in order to accommodate such change society must place the necessary demands on it. The demands have always been there, but now the education system is not fully equipped to deal with them.

Schools and teachers in their new roles, are increasingly frustrated with the problems of getting involved and coping.

Nonetheless, criticisms directed at schools in the past still have some relevance today. In general they indicate that service to the community falls short:

> Schools are inappropriate settings for nearly all objectives involving responsibility that affect others . . . (Coleman 1974, p. 146)

> Many school leavers are disappointed and often alienated (Fitzgerald et al. 1976).

> Too many young people are leaving the education system unprepared for the demands which their new lifestyle will place upon them (Morgan & Hart 1977, p. 47).

Whilst these reports and others (Behrens 1978; Barnett & Burrell 1982; and Browne 1983) have highlighted problems that are now being addressed, there is still a significant perceived deterioration in academic skills and the lack of the capacity of school systems to cope with the increasing social problems. It should now be recognised that the comment made by Musgrave (1976) that 'education is now seen as a social problem (p. 36)' is indeed very real today.

The Problem Perceived

In simple terms the so-called Australian classless society is increasingly being shown to be mythical when tested against the measurements of economic consumerism and material wealth. There is an ever-increasing void between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. Schools have focussed on the ability of people to learn to survive and adapt within the parameters of the 'haves'; however, there are indications that to be in the position of the 'haves' is becoming harder and harder to attain.

Just how bad things are and at what rate social problems are increasing can be debated. It may be that things are not getting worse, but that more issues are being identified and addressed or that we are becoming far more attuned to them. Whatever the stance in terms of educational initiatives and issues, 'the nature of the beast is changing'.

Attention is no longer focussed on the norm of the nuclear family: home ownership, employment; but rather there is recognition of split families, welfare, poverty, children in crisis, delinquency and unemployment.

Today it is not so important to debate what is happening and why, but rather the impact occurring as a result. It is not the intention of this paper to investigate these issues, but rather to raise it for further discussion and research at a later date.

The factors that need to be considered are the relationships between juvenile delinquency commonalities, the social framework and how schools fit into the picture.

In early patterns of juvenile delinquency the following similarities emerge. There are consistently family or emotional problems: parent rejection, single parents and/or step-parents seem to be the norm rather than the exception. Many express not only the behavioural traits of needing to impress their peers, but also a desire to climb in status within the sub-group. Having difficulty at home and with a variety of social expectations leads to difficulty within the school system. It usually follows that the sub-culture is identified and a reinforcement of negative self-image ensues. At this point there is a general rejection of the educational institution. Allied with the above criteria are the issues of authority and power relationships which are constantly being challenged.

What schools are seeing is opting out, as a result of problems and in some cases a reaction against the school because of its methods of dealing with the problems.

In terms of the social influences, we observe that in Victoria alone between 1985 and 1986 children in foster care increased by 27 per cent, child protection cases increased by 29 per cent and whilst welfare payments remained fairly static, supporting parents benefits increased by a massive 70 per cent (Victorian Year Book 1987).

A review of police statistics shows that in the same period a major increase in all crimes occurred. Similar rates of increase were observable particularly for child offences—up by an average of 10 per cent per annum, with particular notice being paid

to 1986-87 where child drug offences were up by 58 per cent and street offences increased by 33 per cent (Victorian Police *Annual Reports* 1985-1987).

Underlying the above are the changes within the social fabrication of families, employment opportunities and desires. These sorts of issues combined with the transitions within Victorian education establish an interesting scenario of what the future consequences may be in terms of social and educational adaptions.

In the Ballarat education region alone (which also reflects state-wide trends) school attrition and retention rates are changing. Ten years ago approximately 60 to 70 per cent of Year 7 enrolments had left school prior to their final year. Now that figure is almost reversed in that 60 to 70 per cent of Year 7 enrolments are staying on. This means that schools are taking in an increasing number of students with different social experiences at the base level. These students are staying on at school due to general social changes and the lessening of opportunities, leaving the schools trying to meet their needs. However schools as communities and social microcosms, are subject to vastly different perceptions and 'pulling factors'. As far as the students are concerned the pressures and problems around them outweigh the 'importance' of school.

In conversations with many teachers, we are hearing the same sort of complaints and worries about the general incidences and behavioural problems that are occurring in schools. The common factor is that 'things have got worse' and they are getting 'harder and harder to deal with'.

The sorts of problems referred to are increases in overt aggressiveness, particularly amongst males, increased fighting and more malicious wounding, acts of violence against persons and property; burning, use of knives, manufactured weapons and general acts of violence and vandalism. Allied with this is the general impression that lack of common courtesy is more the norm than the exception.

On the other hand, there has been an increase in the number of parents seeking consultation with schools for help in dealing with their children. They are far more willing to talk about their family problems. There has also been an increase in the number of complaints made about teachers and from teachers about students.

Overall, the picture that emerges is one in need of investigation. What we at the Ballarat Children's Home and Family Services are saying is that given certain criteria, a chance exists for children to miss out on educational opportunities that should be available to them, and the possibility exists that they may offend. Thus the concept of intervention has been developed, and we are attempting to address and anticipate these problems.

The History of the Education Unit

In 1981 the Youth Support Unit was funded (by the Transition Education Advisory Committee) for a project officer to liaise between young people involved in the Hostel and Community Supervision Programs, their families and the school system. During this time it became clear that the educational services available to potentially capable students, were inadequate in their resources to motivate these students. A need existed to establish a School Extension Program. Difficulties at school are often exacerbated by students who are experiencing chronic family problems. Most youths caught up in the welfare system fall into this category. The residents of the hostel and the participants of the Community Supervision Program are no exception.

By 1986 the Education Unit was dealing with chronic school truants and aimed to provide support and develop programs of personal skills, social competency, life skills and leisure time. What this lead to was a little like a 'dumping ground' for schools who did not, or could not, face up to the problems of dealing with these students.

By the end of 1987 the question was raised whether the Education Unit should continue to provide an alternative schooling model, separate from mainstream

schooling, when current state educational philosophy and objectives demanded integration and retention in post-primary schooling. A review was undertaken and as a result the current model was adopted based upon the Integration Model of Processes: whereby the aim was to increase the participation of children with impairments and disabilities in the education programs and social life of regular schools in which their peers without disabilities participate. It also seeks to maintain the ideal of the participation of all children in the educational programs and social life of regular schools.

Thus, our current model was established and began operation in February 1988. It should be pointed out that the unit operates under the auspices of a pilot study and is undergoing changes and extensions as the need occurs. It is also subject to a formal review.

The Current Situation

The Education Unit's primary focus is to provide a viable educational and counselling service to its clients: students, families and staff from Ballarat's post-primary schools.

Through discussion and research, it was felt that there were seven categories of students who could benefit from the program, and it is those seven categories that are termed 'at risk'. With the use of consultation and referral forms, 'at risk' students are identified and referred to the Education Unit. They are students who:

- are or were on court orders;
- are socially/educationally/family isolated;
- have experienced abuse or neglect;
- have more than one major family, social or educational problem;
- are or have a family member in care;
- are truant or school refusers; or
- suffer extremely low self-esteem.

Students may be referred and accepted into the unit on the basis of one or more of these above criteria.

Once accepted, the Education Unit aims to establish a pattern of acceptable school attendance, behaviour and attainment by:

- withdrawing a student (on a short-term basis—four weeks) to participate in a full-time educational, social counselling program at the Education Unit located within the Ballarat Children's Home and Family Services building.
- on completion of the four-week program, integrating the students into mainstream schooling on a part-time basis for three weeks;
- on completion of part-time integration, undertaking a three-week phase of full-time school at the end of which the Education Unit teaching staff withdraw and adopt a monitoring coordinating role.

Tantamount to the success of the program is the continuing support structures that are developed. Whilst the teaching staff withdraw their full-time support in order to begin a new group, the school initiatives concerning curriculum, management and behavioural strategies are maintained, as well as the family counselling and therapy and any other support personnel that have been brought into the case. (*See* Appendix 1, Program Outline and Staff Responsibilities).

The Education Unit has as its specific objectives the following, in that each student who participates in the program has access to:

- individual education tuition at an appropriate level for success;

- programs of remediation or extension;

- a variety of curriculum materials and stimulus in order to broaden their concept of their own school achievement;
- individual and family counselling from the teaching staff, family counsellors, social workers and youth workers;
- a variety of social situations to broaden their experiences and methods of adaptability;
- appropriate curriculum and behavioural expectations from staff in mainstream schools; and
- mainstream school supports from school staff, Ballarat Children's Home staff and any other person deemed appropriate within the development of the program.

Education Unit Statistics

Although still in its infancy the Education Unit is attempting to come to terms with those issues that schools are unable to. A number of factors may contribute to the relative success of the program because it is unlike an 'ordinary' school in size, location and number. It does not have a school staff, apart from the two teachers. It draws upon personnel and resources that are immediately accessible within its own organisation and which would be unavailable in schools. In all we believe that the Unit has the potential to address a number of problems effectively. Also it might be regarded as relatively unique in that it is not dealing with 'after the event' nor is it just advising and passing the onus back to schools, but rather it is dealing in a preventative and early intervention manner.

Table 1

Overall Figures

Number of referrals	41
Referrals accepted	24
To date satisfactory conclusions	22
Unsatisfactory conclusions	2

Table 2

Student Ages

12 Years	8
13 Years	9
14 Years	7

Table 3

Student Residence

Housing Commission residents	12
Other Ballarat city	6
Ballarat country	6

Table 4

Family

Two parents (Biol)	7
Two parents (Step)	7
Single parent	9
Relative responsible	1
In care	0

Table 5

Employment

Parent employed	11
Parent unemployed	13

Table 6

Major conflicts with

Parents	8
Teachers	15
Non sub-group peers	13

Table 7

Major problems

Was/is on court orders	2
Suffered abuse or neglect	4
Major behavioural problem	17
Personal hygiene problem	7
Aggressiveness	6
School truancy	10
School refusal	3
Illiteracy	4
Innumeracy	4
Lack of social skills	14
Immaturity	7
Academically below age 2 years +	9
Low self-esteem	14
Strong older peer influence	5

Table 8

Major emphasis of program

Truancy matters	13
Behaviour modification	17
Academic assistance	14
Family intervention	11

Initial Assessment of the Unit to date

The ten-week program appears to be just the right length and balance of time to deal with and develop supports for the students, and families. Our timetable has been organised so as to incorporate a term holiday break between full-time attendance and either the first or second integration phase. So far, this has worked well, as it creates the impression of a new start for the student, who commences a new term together with peers. All students have expressed a little concern about going back to school, but so far, this has been overcome relatively quickly.

It is interesting to note the different viewpoints expressed about the Unit's role. Schools generally see the role as a service to themselves in dealing with such aspects as school truancy, student behaviour problems, motivation and curriculum support.

Ballarat Children's Homes and Family Services see the role as a service to the student and family in terms of support and counselling.

The student sees the role as a service to him/herself whereby somebody who is not associated with the school is taking an interest or providing assistance.

The teaching staff are consciously trying to work towards satisfying all three viewpoints. In some cases it is regarded as more appropriate that more effort be placed on one area, depending on the nature of the problem at hand.

As teachers, the most important criteria for successful integration still is that all the parties involved must have the confidence and willingness to work towards a satisfactory solution.

We have maintained the philosophy that environmental influences do not excuse a student; they may, however, help in understanding and addressing the cause. Much of

the Education Unit's work, therefore, has centred around family, school and community liaison, with a follow-up of any other support services that may be involved with the case.

During the full-time component of the student's attendance, approximately 160 hours are spent virtually on a one-to-one basis. From this, it is not unrealistic to expect some positive development to occur. It is noteworthy that this time equates a teaching load of four to five classes per week (without the class size) over a whole year. Students who have been in the program so far and have been successfully integrated at school are gaining generally good reports from staff. Also staff appear to be satisfied that the appropriate supports for the students are now in place. It is also interesting to note that where problems do eventuate the school is in a better position to remediate them.

Evaluation

It should be kept in mind that the Education Unit and its staff do not constitute a behaviour moderation unit, a special school, or psychoanalysis. Rather it constitutes a unit or team who believe that within our own network and access to other services we can offer a coordinated service to schools, families and students.

To talk in terms of success and failure of the program and/or students is a little difficult when the parameters of success and failure are defined differently and seen differently by the schools and the unit. The unit is concerned with access and preventative educational and social strategies to alleviate some of the familial pressures that affect learning and behaviour. This program is followed up and built upon by schools whereby students should have access to a network of people and strategies. The nature of the supports will vary in each individual case. What is important, is that the school is in a position to continue the work and employ the Education Unit staff in the most beneficial way in the time that they are available to schools.

Conclusion

Over the years enough evidence has been collected to show that there is a need for a combined coordinated service to function as the catalyst for families with problems in structure, school truancy or refusal, potential offending and general school presented problems. The Education Unit attempts to provide this catalyst by engaging such students in worthwhile educational and social activities so that they may attend school in a manner which is more befitting of the 'normal' or 'average' student. To expect these students to be totally adaptable and to forego their previous experiences is too ambitious. At the very least, the students have been presented with an opportunity or experience that they would otherwise not have had, and we only hope that some good has resulted from it.

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Appendix 1 - Program Outline and Staff Responsibilities

Program			
Education Program		Week No.	Length
A.	School Referral	8	
B.	Assessment Procedures	9-10	
C.	Education Unit Attendance - school work - special program	1-4	4 weeks
D.	Half time Education Unit	5-7	3 weeks
E.	Full time at school	8-10	3 weeks
F.	Integration and support	Ongoing	
G.	Monitoring of previous students	Ongoing	

Staff Responsibilities

FOR A.	Consultancy Discussion Reviews Liaison Coordination		Co-ordinate and cross refer to other BCH & FS services for their input: family counselling and therapy, family aid, youth support and financial services.
FOR B.	Selection of students		Assessment Committee discussion and investigation of referrals, follow up and interviews
FOR C.	Teaching - remediation - academic - leisure - coping skills		Development of appropriate curriculum
FOR D.	Counselling		Curriculum and classroom supports
FOR E.	School based support group follow up and monitoring		
FOR F & G		→	Continue monitoring and active role on school based support group.
FOR ALL		→	Maintain ongoing report and evaluation procedures

Helping Alienated Students

Peter Flint
St Augustine's Special School
Geelong
Victoria

St Augustine's Special School[1], Geelong, is a special school for adolescents with severe behaviour disorders. It has a maximum enrolment of 12 students, boys and girls. There is a total staff of five, two general area teachers, one physical education and outdoor education teacher, one vocational preparation teacher and the Principal.

The school is housed in a converted house on the site occupied by the Administrative Headquarters of St Augustine's Adolescent and Family Services, Barwon. It is intentionally different in appearance and operation from the students' previous experience of schooling.

The Students

The students are referred to the school from the Ministry of Education, Community Services Victoria, local paediatricians, or other welfare agencies. The students have long histories of an inability to handle conventional schooling. Their behaviour patterns range from the violent aggressive adolescent to the neurotically withdrawn one.

The average student has most or all of the following qualities:

- male;
- single parent family, below the poverty line;
- long history of school suspension, expulsion, disruption and truanting;
- verbal IQ about 80, performance IQ about 100;
- 3-4 years behind in language skills;
- 4-5 years behind in maths skills;
- very low self-esteem as measured on Coopersmith Self-Esteem inventory;
- sees education as worthless;
- wants to get a job, while not demonstrating any job retention skills;

[1] It is important to note that the 'special' nature of the school is related to 'behaviour'. The school does not cater for the adolescent with mild mental impairment, the psychotic adolescent, or the physically disabled adolescent. However some of these conditions are present in the school as the condition has been uncovered during the school's assessment.

- will leave school at, or before, 15 years devoid of any employment skills;
- at high risk of being a 'feral adolescent'.

What has alienated them?

Life experiences, family and school issues have affected them.

School issues: inadequate assessment; irrelevant curriculum; alienating school structures; and staff attitudes.

How do we help alienated Students?

Through people: the school staff are our most valuable resource. Other factors are: different education structures; due process; thorough assessment; and curriculum.

School Mission Statement

The school seeks to educate those adolescents who are unable to participate in regular schooling due to major behavioural problems. It addresses the needs of the whole person.

Goals of the School

The goals of the school are: to have the child physically present; to develop a peaceful and enjoyable educational environment; to develop an individualised educational environment for the child; and to implement, monitor and evaluate the program.

Programs of the School (in order of priority)

- Behaviour Management
- Therapeutic Interventions
- Program Enjoyment
- Self-Esteem Development
- Academic Maintenance
- Preparation for Transition

Problems

One problem is the gap after school, and before work. These students cannot cope with local unemployment programs. They cannot manage the social demands. Something else is needed. The school needs to undertake again the socialisation task of years 1 and 2 of life, perhaps through a long-term low stimulus wilderness program.

We agree with the research by Safer 1982 (USA), Topping 1983 (UK), and Slee 1988 (Australia), that while our school copes and maintains many young people in an educational environment, we do not provide a long-term educational environment.

The Future

The school must develop a post-school pre-vocational program and possibly a long-term wilderness program.

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The New-Look Police Youth Club

Percy Carter
Superintendent
Police Department
New South Wales

Community perception of the Federation of New South Wales Police Citizens Youth Clubs, and, for that matter, Police Citizens Youth Clubs throughout Australia, appears to be that of male-dominated sporting organisations providing boxing, wrestling, judo, weight-lifting and other 'manly' activities for macho young men. Certainly this was once the case. Today the picture is changing.

The Mission of the Federation of New South Wales Police Citizens Youth clubs is :

> By ethical, cost-effective and efficient means, provide the citizens of New South Wales with programs and activities designed to impact on the incidence of antisocial and criminal behaviour amongst young people.

This statement of the federation's raison d'étre was formulated in 1987 against a background of doubt concerning the relevance of the organisation to the young people of today's society.

Before examining the 'New Look Police Citizens Youth Clubs', a review of the Federation's history and structure is worthwhile.

The First Fifty Years—1937 to 1987

The Federation began on 1 April 1937, following initiatives of Police Commissioner William J Mackay and the Rotary Club of Sydney. On that day, the first Police Boys Club opened in a disused police lockup in Woolloomooloo. The premises had been renovated for the purpose with financial assistance from the government of the day.

Woolloomooloo was chosen because it was one of Sydney's most difficult areas to police. Crime and antisocial behaviour in the area involving young people was rampant and there existed a rising incidence of substance abuse.

On 23 September 1938, the Federation of NSW Police Boys Clubs was incorporated under the *Companies Act* of 1936 as a public company, limited by guarantee and was registered as a charity.

In 1945, the company changed its name to the Federation of NSW Police-Citizens Boys Clubs in recognition of the work and support provided by the community.

In November 1985, the Federation was renamed the Federation of NSW Police Citizens Youth Clubs, finally recognising that females were strongly represented amongst the membership.

The Federation is recognised as a partnership between the Police and the Citizens. This recognition is enshrined in a formal 'Partnership Agreement' between the Police Department and the Federation.

The branch network

Fifty of the branches are charities, each holding individual registration under the *Charitable Collections Act 1934*. Twenty-one of the branches are located within the Sydney metropolitan area with the remaining thirty branches spread throughout the remainder of the state. Camp Mackay at Kurrajong is a special holiday camp and is available for use by all branches and community groups.

Each Federation branch has an authorised strength of two police officers with three units deployed to Camp Mackay.

Each of the fifty-one branches has limited autonomy within the company structure. Each branch has a citizen management committee elected annually. The branch president may be the local police commander, although there is no departmental requirement for this to be the case. Management committees vary in size from five to twenty-five members. The branch commander must hold the rank of Superintendent or above.

Some observations

From inception until the middle '80s the Federation flourished, but, 'like Topsy, it just grew'.

Success was measured in terms of funds collected, branches established and sporting records broken. Unfortunately, the police component came to see their duty as merely perpetuating the sporting image of the Federation and, as a consequence, became more and more isolated from their operational colleagues.

Boxing enjoyed considerable prominence and the Federation and its personnel bathed in the reflected glory of world champions. Little, if any, attention was paid to the crime prevention role of the organisation, the original purpose for which the organisation had been founded. In fact, fundraising in many and varied forms accounted for most police time.

No membership fees were required, membership records were scant and those in existence were unreliable. The high reported membership of 170,000 or so, was an urban myth. Mainstream operational police regarded the 'Boys Clubs' as a backwater and police commanders took the opportunity to unload non-productive units to the 'Boys Clubs'.

The Lusher Report and Inter-Departmental Committee Inquiry

In April 1981, the Report of the Commission to Inquire into New South Wales Police Administration was released. Known as the *Lusher Report* (1981, p. 303) the following recommendations were made concerning the Federation:

- That having regard to the structure of the Federation, police should not be used as part of police duties for the Federation purposes disclosed. Nothing in this recommendation is to be construed as any restriction on off-duty police engaging on a voluntary basis in any charitable or community activity including that of the Federation.

- Members of the police force should not be used as fund raisers for the Federation as part of police duty.
- The use of the word 'police' in the title of an organisation registered in this state should be restricted. It should be reserved exclusively for the New South Wales Police Force and its functions and government ministers, departments, bodies and instrumentalities relating thereto.

The Police Department, the government of the day and the Federation rejected these recommendations. The Federation took no steps to alter policy. State Cabinet examined the Lusher recommendations relating to the Federation in June 1983 and as a result, an Inter-Departmental Committee was established to review the Federation and advise the Government.

In November 1983, the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) report was released. Containing forty-eight recommendations for change, the IDC report was seen by many as a blueprint for the Federation's future development and operation.

However, the importance and urgency of the recommendations failed to overcome the inertia and complacency of the Federation and the entrenched resistance to change throughout the Boys Club movement. Little was done.

In April 1986, the IDC was reconvened to evaluate progress, and later issued a further unfavourable report.

The Police Department then formed an implementation team to push through the suggested reforms which included:

- the Manager's role should be upgraded to the more operational functions of the club rather than the routine administrative functions;
- serious consideration should be given to the establishment of zones throughout the state with the appointment of zone managers to coordinate and oversight the activities within their zones;
- full-time and part-time clerical assistants should be engaged by the individual clubs to handle all book work and general administrative functions and other duties as and when required by the Manager;
- public servants should not be employees of the Federation and existing public servants should be phased out over a period of two years and replaced by open recruitment by the Federation;
- encouragement of cross-fertilisation between other organisations and the youth club movement, such as local government and community welfare organisations;
- increased use of club facilities, especially during off-peak periods, that is weekends and school holidays;
- clubs to provide vacation care programs through liaison with community welfare, recreation bodies and local government when required;
- programs and activities conducted by clubs to include sessions on police related matters, such as the law, role of the police, crime prevention, road safety, drug abuse, police projects.

These recommendations have now been adopted and implemented. However, it should be pointed out at this juncture that the sporting elements of the Federation's programs and activities will never be completely abandoned and form a vital link between the branches and the target group.

Into the 21st century

In 1988, the decision was taken to provide education programs to all Federation personnel. The initial program was designed to make all staff aware of the task ahead

and the necessity for branches to expand their activities to meet community expectations and needs.

The program content included:

> Branch management principles; community based policing; a program approach to problem solving; role clarification; the Police Department's Statement of Values; mission; corporate objectives; corporate strategies; the Federation's objectives; family violence; juvenile crime; minority groups; client group identification; and young people at risk.

Major emphasis was placed on clarification of the role of police in youth clubs based upon the requirements of the Police Department and the Federation.

In this regard, the statement of values, mission statement, corporate objectives and strategies of the New South Wales Police Department provide clear direction for all members of the service. Similarly, the Federation's Memorandum and Articles of Association provide direction to police and other members of the community involved in provision of the Federation's services.

Statement of values

This statement provides that:

Each New South Wales Police Officer delivers service in a manner which:

- upholds the rule of law;
- preserves individual rights and freedoms;
- places integrity above all;
- seeks to improve the quality of life by community involvement in policing;
- strives for citizen and police personal satisfaction;
- strives to capitalise on the wealth of human resources; and,
- husbands public resources—both money and authority.

The mission

The Police Department mission is:

> To provide for, and with the assistance of the people, a high quality, ethical and cost-effective police service in New South Wales as defined by the Parliament, government and relevant legislation, including: protecting life; preventing crime; enforcing the law; maintaining peace and good order; safeguarding property; and facilitating the safe and free movement of people and traffic.

To perform all these functions with impartiality and integrity and engender a feeling of safety and security within the community.

The corporate objectives

- To increase the feeling of safety and security in the community giving priority to crime prevention and detection programs;
- to make policing services more responsive to the needs and feelings of the community;
- to encourage greater involvement of citizens in policing;
- to influence changes in driver behaviour, with the object of reducing road deaths and injuries;
- to improve management and organisation to optimise use of resources;
- to minimise corruption within the police force.

The corporate strategies

The corporate strategies in support of the corporate objectives aim to:

- disseminate and adhere to the statement of values;
- reduce street and family violence;
- reduce the supply and trafficking in illegal drugs;
- reduce the incidence of sexual assaults;
- reduce motor vehicles theft;
- reduce child abuse and exploitation;
- reduce property break-ins;
- reduce the incidence of arson;
- rehabilitate juvenile offenders and reduce juvenile crime;
- implement community based policing;
- emphasise foot patrols;
- progressively redeploy police to increase the general duty response strength in patrols;
- expand Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House and other community based policing programs statewide;
- establish community consultative committees;
- intensify the random breath testing program;

- raise the awareness of responsibility of all police to enforce traffic laws;
- emphasise speed reduction in traffic law enforcement;
- restructure the police force to increase line management authority, responsibility and personal accountability;
- introduce a divestment program to improve use of capital and personal resources;
- upgrade management reporting systems;
- review effectiveness of large resources users;
- implement merit based promotion for Senior Sergeants by 1 January 1988 and Sergeants by 1 April 1989;
- include a police ethics component in all training courses; and;
- further impact on causes of corrupt behaviour.

The Federation's Memorandum of Association

Part 3 of the Memorandum of Association defines the objects for which the Federation is formed, and includes the following sections:

a) to promote programs and activities directed to the personal, physical and cultural development of children and adolescents in New South Wales;

b) to awaken citizens and police to their responsibilities towards children and adolescents;

c) to nurture citizenship;

d) to provide an interface between the police force and the citizens of New South Wales, especially children and adolescents, which fosters mutual respect and understanding;

e) to provide cultural, recreational and sporting programs for individuals, community groups, organisations and the underprivileged, regardless of sex, race, creed or ethnic background;

f) to provide educational programs pertaining to the maintenance of law and order, such programs to include but not be confined to such matters as: the role of the police, crime prevention, road safety, and drug abuse;

g) to do all such acts, deeds, matters and things and to enter into and make such agreements as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

Acceptance of the new ideals is growing throughout the organisation and is reflected in the diverse range of programs and activities now being offered throughout the Federation. Specific needs are assessed in consultation with the local police,

community leaders, welfare workers and the end users of the Federation's facilities and services.

Programs and Activities

All of the programs and activities listed are designed to have an impact on the level of crime and antisocial behaviour attributed to young people. Experts in the various fields are encouraged to assist, together with local police, educators, welfare workers, agencies and government departments.

Crime prevention workshops

These workshops are aimed at Year 9 students and similarly aged persons. The three-day workshops involve interaction between police, students, Family and Community Services Department workers, State Rail officers, schoolteachers and other government agency personnel who are concerned with youth. The aim of the workshops is to offer alternatives and set out the consequences and difficulties presented by peer group pressure, anger, boredom, frustration, desperation and aggression.

Minority group—police resource workshops

Police from the Youth Clubs held informal talks with minority groups and have determined that there is some apprehension about the police in general. It was also evident that confusion exists concerning individual's rights. Workshops are now conducted in some youth clubs to improve relationships between the groups and to encourage them to use Federation facilities.

The programs are most successful. At Mount Druitt Police Citizens Youth Club, sessions to improve relationships are well attended and tensions between young people of varying racial backgrounds, parents and police, have been visibly reduced.

The Fairfield Cabramatta Police Citizens Youth Club has been honoured by the Vietnamese Community in Australia, New South Wales Chapter, who have awarded the Club a citation in recognition of the work done for Vietnamese youth in the area.

Neighbour network

This program is being run as a pilot in cooperation with the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN). Designed as a self-help program for people who are alone or are experiencing fear, boredom and isolation, participants are encouraged to form friendships with each other and get to know the police. The program aims to stop people becoming victims.

Young offenders support teams

This program has young people from Children's Courts performing community service work at Police Citizens Youth Clubs at the request of Family and Community Services officers. The work is performed under the supervision of Youth Club police. The police officers support these young offenders in a non-judgmental, non-moralistic and non-authoritarian manner. This helps to improve the young offenders' general relationship with the police. An additional benefit is improvement in self-esteem and an improvement in perception of 'the system'. The program also encourages young offenders to utilise the branch facilities during their leisure time.

Court support program

Police from Youth Clubs are offering support to the Cobham and Minda Courts to transport young offenders to and from drug and alcohol counselling. This service often enables young persons without family support or transport to comply with conditions of bail and other orders. Often the relationship between police generally and the offender is improved and can assist in proving to the young offenders that 'the system' does work.

Police careers out west

Year 11 and 12 students from western areas of Sydney who are considering joining the police force, but lack encouragement and support, are invited with school careers advisers to participate in this program.

The Police Citizens Youth Club transports the young peoples to the Sydney Police Centre (the largest operational police complex in New South Wales) where talks are delivered by police from the Recruiting Section and the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit. Various police training films are shown. Tours of the Police Centre are conducted and a luncheon is shared with 'on duty' police. The Water Police station is then visited and the activities of the section are explained and a tour of the facilities made. On the following day, the young people are transported to the Police Academy at Goulburn where they tour the premises, receive information from Academy Staff, speak to student police officers and are briefed on the academic and physical fitness requirements of modern police training.

Careers markets

Companies and organisations including the defence forces, fire brigade, ambulance and police set up stands at Youth Clubs and offer information and advice concerning employment and pre-engagement requirements. The days are very well attended by career guidance advisers and students.

A wide variety of service equipment is always put on display to emphasise the skills required for successful operation in the hope that prospective applicants will see the advantages of remaining at school and improving their qualifications.

Off street school break-up parties

The Federation provides accommodation and a safe place for Year 12 break-up parties. This provides a safe environment with sufficient unobtrusive supervision.

The protective umbrella of the club shields students from alcohol and drugs and allows behaviour regarded by many adults as definitely antisocial to occur without incident or complaint.

Passive areas

Many branches are now converting areas for passive recreation. Jukeboxes, pinball machines, television and video facilities are being installed. Participants are encouraged to 'do their own thing'. A feeling of ownership soon develops for the area and peer group pressure maintains order and decorum. Smoking and the consumption of intoxicating liquor are not permitted. Barbecues and video nights are regularly held, together with discos, usually on Friday and Saturday nights.

The aim is to encourage young people to find entertainment off the streets and to prevent them from becoming victims or offenders. In one particular area where this

program has been running there has not been a single break and enter offence or act of malicious injury to property committed at the local primary school for over six months.

The kids have reported that before going to the Club for the passive activities they used to 'give the school hell' and 'hate the cops'. These attitudes are now changing.

Anti-graffiti

Known offenders and young people generally are invited to do lawful graffiti murals at various branches on walls specifically designated for the purpose. Sometimes the spray cans of paint are provided for the artists at no charge. At Mount Druitt in the western suburbs of Sydney there has been only one incidence of graffiti to the club building since the program commenced. Previously it was a major problem.

At Moree in the far north west of the state, local young people are provided with spray cans at no cost, given colour coordination assistance if required and may decorate the outside and inside of the branch building. The only restriction is on language and visuals which may cause gross offence. The incidence of malicious injury to property from graffiti in the town has fallen to an all time low.

Police as friends

Youth Club police make themselves available to the public for discussions on matters relating to life and policing matters generally in the areas served by the branch. Parents have the opportunity to speak with the police concerning problems in the home and issues such as drugs, family violence and general behavioural issues involving the children. Similarly, the children can discuss their home life problems.

Jarjums talent quest

The Head Office of the Federation held a major talent quest for Koori kids. Heats were conducted at branches across the state with the finalists appearing in a Friday night concert at the Sydney Town Hall. The concert was well attended by members of the public. Musical backing was provided by the full NSW Police Concert Band. The event was hosted by Johnny Young of Young Talent Time and many prizes were awarded to the participants. Shelleys (Our State Drink) funded the operation which was hailed as a great success.

Koori culture expo

The Mount Druitt branch held a Koori Culture Expo in 1989. Koori kids were invited to submit art at any one of the Federation's 52 branches. Special awards were made to the winners and all aspects of the arts were catered for.

Wilcannia/Mount Druitt youth interchange

Under the auspices of the Mount Druitt branch, the Koori community at Wilcannia in the state's far north west nominated 27 young Koori kids to travel to Sydney for a two week all expenses paid holiday. Two police officers from Wilcannia and the two police from the Youth Club accompanied the kids to Sydney in a Federation bus. Not one of the kids had seen a city or the sea. Visits were made to Darling Harbour, the Zoo, large city buildings and Australia's Wonderland. Ferry trips on Sydney Harbour, barbecues and visits to police establishments including Camp Mackay completed the visit which successfully broke down many barriers.

A number of similar exchanges are to take place during the remainder of 1989.

Law week

Most branches now actively participate in Law Week and assist the Police Department with the delivery of a wide range of lectures and open days.

Drive to survive

This program has been introduced to target young drivers and riders below the age of 25 years who account for a disproportionate number of all fatal motor injuries and deaths. The attitude of young people towards training courses of this nature is very casual to say the least. Our 'Drive to Survive' program is supported by motor racing personalities which attracts large audiences.

In order to be effective, the program must combine the theoretical aspects of driving with practical experience. A panel of defensive driving experts presents the course. The panel should include well known driving and riding identities, highway patrol riders and drivers. The Police Rescue Squad and local police personnel are also encouraged to become involved.

The program outlines specific crash situations and ways to anticipate them and take defensive action. Situations such as one and two car crashes, collisions at intersections, roundabouts, traffic lights, whilst overtaking and with animals are covered. Emphasis is on the 'arrive alive' theme, and, 'anticipate what the other driver may do'.

Bicycle safety

Bicycle safety programs covering rider safety, technique, clothing and helmets, maintenance and skills acquisition are offered. The assistance of the Bicycle Institute of New South Wales is to be sought to further extend the program.

Protective behaviours program

All managers and selected support staff are presently undergoing the full Protective Behaviours Program. This will enable managers to train their staff and volunteers in this vital crime prevention technique. The program is designed to give children and young people strategies to avoid becoming victims or to cease being victims. Federation participation in this program is funded by Shelleys (Our State Drink).

Peer support

The majority of managers and their assistants have now completed the Peer Support Foundations education program. Selected Federation branches are now sustaining the Peer Support Program for young persons in conjunction with local schools and before and after school hours.

Rehabilitation of young offenders

In conjunction with the Probation and Parole Service of the Department of Corrective Services, Federation branches are now actively involved in programs to rehabilitate young adult offenders.

Officers of the Probation and Parole Service identify young recidivists and offenders who have served their first gaol sentence who may benefit from involvement in Youth Club activities. The Federation then involves the offender in a full range of

activities. Additionally, many offenders perform Community Service Orders at Police Citizens Youth Clubs under the supervision of the police officers.

Alteens

This program operating at a number of branches offers special assistance for young people who are victims of domestic difficulties emanating from alcohol abuse.

Task force Y

This head office initiative seeks to develop a coalition between corporations, the Police Department and the Federation in order to develop a joint strategy to counter juvenile crime and antisocial behaviour by young people. Corporations are being invited to contribute to, or sponsor programs through the Federation such as: emergency accommodation (in Youth Clubs); reuniting missing kids with their families; sidetrack theatre, 'Runaways'; small business courses for youth in areas of high unemployment; going straight with computers; skateboard symposium to set standards; responsible drinking programs; safe sex; and special programs for rural youth.

In addition to the programs outlined, the Federation offers over 100 other activities and pastimes. Particulars of these are set out in Appendix 1.

Membership survey

The Federation is presently conducting random membership surveys at metropolitan branches. The survey results will provide assistance to our forward planning in assessing our market and client group needs.

Conclusion

The Federation is a member of the Australian Association of Police Citizens Youth Clubs. There are now 129 Police Citizens Youth Clubs operating across Australia involving 225 sworn police officers on full-time youth club duty. All of these clubs now offer programs and activities aimed at reducing crime and antisocial behaviour by young people. In New South Wales we are determined to re-establish the Federation of New South Wales Police Citizens Youth Clubs as the premier crime prevention organisation for youth in Australia.

I am confident this objective will be achieved.

Appendix 1 - Activities and Pastimes offered by the Federation of New South Wales Police Citizens Youth Clubs

Activities—Disabled
Activities—Elderly
Air Rifle Club
Archery
Armenian Folk Dance
Art Classes
Athletics
Australian Rules
Badge Making
Badminton
Ballet Classes
Band
Baseball
Basketball
Baton Twirling
Bible Studies
Bicycle safety
BMX Bikes
Boxing
Brownies
Bush Walking
Camera Club
Camp Mackay
Cheer Leaders
Chess
Chess
Childrens Gymnastics
Circle Dancing
Circuit Training
Computers
Cosmetics
Creative Writing
Cricket
Cycle Training
Dancing
Darts
Debutante Ball Training
Disco Blue Light
Discussion Groups
Drawing
Drill Squash
Drop-in Centre
Drum Corp
English/Communication
Fencing
First Aid
Fishing
Greek Dancing
Gymnastics
Half Court Tennis
Handball
Handicapped Children
Hap Ki Do
Highland Dancing
Hockey
Housie
Indian Dancing
Indoor Bowls
Indoor Cricket
Indoor Soccer
Insearch/Comm. Serv.
Irish Dancing
Jazz Band
Jazz Fitness
Jisukan
Job Search
Jolly Jumbuck Time
Ju Jutsu
Judo
Kaido
Karate Shotawaw
Karate-Goshiu Ryu
Karate-Kempo Kai
Kendo
Kick Boxing
Kindy Gym
Korean Dance
Kuman Mathematics
Kung Fu
Ladies Self-Defence
Lectures
Library
Library
Majorettes
Marching Girls
Mini Ball
Mini Bikes
Model Aeroplanes
Model Railways
Mural Painting
Neighbourhood Watch
Nijitsu
Old Time Dancing
Orchestra
Philately
Physical Fitness
Piano Lesson
Pinball
Pipe Band
Playgroup
Police Officer Survival

Pony Club
Pool
Pre School
Radio Broadcasts
Radio Controlled Cars
Roller Skating
Rugby League
Rugby Union
Sauna
School Sports
Self Defence
Shintaido
Shorinji-Kempo
Skateboarding
Snooker
Soccer
Soft Ball
Squash
Subbuteo-Table Soccer
Swimming
SWOS Training
Table Tennis
Taekwondo
Tai Chi
Television and Video
Tennis Coaching
Touch Coaching
Touch Football
Trampolining
Tug-O-War
Typing Lessons
Video Games
Viet Queyen Do
Volley ball
Vouinam
War Games
Water Confidence
Weight Training
Wing Chun
Wrestling
Yoga
Youth Liaison

'Project DARE'
Drug Abuse Resistance Education[1]

Michael Smith
Superintendent
Northern Territory Police

Project DARE began when Chief Gates from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) approached the Superintendent of Schools for the Los Angeles Unified School District, Dr Harry Handler, in January 1983, to enlist support for a cooperative effort to combat drug and alcohol use.

As a result of the ever-growing problem, Chief Gates suggested that a new approach, focusing on prevention and designed to build trust between the community and law enforcement agencies was needed. Dr Handler agreed and a task force comprising police officers, education specialists and health specialists was appointed.

Thus Project DARE was developed as a specific education program designed to be taught to children by trained police officers, in a structured education program.

The project spread rapidly throughout California and is now servicing some 1,200 cities in 46 States of the USA. It is also being taught in New Zealand, Samoa, Canada, US Defence Schools worldwide, and the Northern Territory of Australia.

DARE In The Northern Territory (NT)

Training courses open to all police forces are conducted periodically in Los Angeles. In November 1987, Senior constable Scott Mitchell of the Northern Territory Police Force received the DARE training at the Los Angeles Police Department. This was made possible through the joint funding of the Commonwealth Government and the NT Health Department under the auspices of the Ministerial Council of Drug Strategy.

The scheme, which has the catch phrase, 'DARE to Say No' is a primary prevention program aimed at children who have yet to have their first drug experience. Its goal is to reduce the incidence of drug abuse by children through presentation of a prevention curriculum by specially selected and trained uniformed police officers.

The DARE lessons focus on four major areas:

- providing accurate information about alcohol and drugs;
- teaching students decision making skills;
- showing them how to resist adverse peer pressure.
- giving them ideas for alternatives to drug use.

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[1] An earlier version of this paper was published in the *NPRU Review,* vol. 2, no. 2, 1986.

In this project the definition of 'drugs' includes alcohol and tobacco. The DARE instructors employ a variety of activity-oriented techniques to involve students in group discussions, a healthy exchange of ideas and feelings, and role-playing exercises.

A joint police and Education Departmental committee was subsequently formed to examine the possibility of implementing DARE in the Northern Territory. A Health Department representative is now also on the committee. This committee decided to trial DARE at two Darwin Primary Schools and this was conducted during the second semester of the school year in 1988.

The school community response at the two schools was very encouraging indeed. This resulted in the decision to expand the trial to two additional schools in the first semester of 1989, and again, excellent results were obtained.

In view of this, the program has been offered to all primary schools in towns where the school based constables are located. Initially, the offer is limited to two primary schools per constable. In addition, it is also planned to extend the program to remote areas, particularly where petrol sniffing and alcohol abuse is a problem. To assist this end, a constable was recently appointed to service the coastal Aboriginal centres.

A DARE Instructors' Training Course was recently conducted in Darwin involving twenty students in the course. Most of these were NT school based constables and two NSW Police members from their Police and Citizens Youth Club organisation.

Due to the need to ensure that the DARE program is specifically relevant to the Northern Territory, and to satisfy the Education Department's requirements, a Subject Area Committee for Drug Education was formed by the Education Department and included police representation. It is intended that DARE will supplement and reinforce the existing Health and Drug program of the Education Department. Some minor modifications mainly for 'localising' purposes to the original program have occurred.

The program is broken up into three separate sections; they are kindergarten to grade 4; grades 5, 6 and 7 (primary school); grades 8, 9 and 10 (secondary school) is optional. The simple theme running through the whole program is 'DARE to Say No'. The program is set out to involve the classroom teachers themselves in the program, as the support of teachers and education staff is necessary to optimise the results.

Despite the obvious enthusiasm by all involved with Project DARE in Darwin, a professional independent appraisal of the pilot program is essential and this is currently being conducted. This will not only assist us to fine tune and modify the program to enable maximum benefit, but it will also provide an independent appreciation of its real value.

DARE is directly addressing the drug problem, that is drug abuse by children. The vital aspect is having specially trained uniformed police officers teaching drug resistance to children. This has had more impact than any other method so far.

School Based Community Policing (SBCP)—An Update Report

School based community policing is a unique scheme which originated in the Northern Territory and has achieved a high level of acceptance within the school communities. It has also gained wide public and government support and attracted considerable interest in all states of Australia. The scheme has since commenced in Western Australia in 1987, and New South Wales in 1988, but was later withdrawn there following the change of government.

The principles of the scheme and one of its subordinate programs, DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), also contributed significantly to the Victorian Police's development of the Police in Schools program in 1988.

The purpose of SBCP is to provide children with a better appreciation of law and order issues and the police generally. It also provides a very effective communication line between police and young people.

The scheme commenced in Darwin in 1984 with a pilot constable located at Casuarina High School. The scheme attained full servicing of all twenty secondary schools by sixteen constables in 1988. Each constable also has a responsibility to the neighbouring primary and preschools.

Because of the special nature of this role, there was some initial difficulty in obtaining the right constable. However, with the progress of the scheme, a better understanding of the role by other members has developed and there has been a slow but steady increase in the number of suitable applicants.

Although the role of the constable in schools is continuing to develop, the original job profile is basically unchanged. A substantial amount of time is spent on student counselling, and through this, much has been achieved in meeting the basic objectives of the scheme. In addition the DARE scheme has now been included and this will involve a substantial amount of time in primary schools.

There have also been a number of more serious matters brought directly to the constables by children and undoubtedly many of these matters would not have been reported otherwise. These incidents include sexual assaults, common assaults, prostitution and illicit drug dealings, where schoolchildren were victims.

As the scheme progressed, some useful spin-offs involving the constables have developed. Some of these are summarised as follows:

- Supervision of young offenders who have been directed to attend school whilst on police and court bail, or as a probation condition. This includes unemployed children of all ages who do not normally attend school.
- Operating a diversion program during school holidays involving young offenders referred by the juvenile courts.
- Specialised assistance to 'socially at risk' children, including Junior Police Rangers and Police and Citizens Youth Club activities. Blue Light discos with appropriate follow-up action.
- Assist recruit and in-service training in effective communication skills with juveniles.
- Conducting special juvenile patrols on selected nights to determine entertainment and behavioural trends. Liquor outlets and dubious business premises are also examined.
- Service of summons by SBCP constables upon children in their homes, thus providing a direct contact with the parents of offending kids.

The constables are also involved with various local youth programs, including after-school activities such as sporting and social occasions, Blue Light discos, Police and Citizens Youth Clubs, and school holiday programs.

The scheme also has a Sergeant coordinator whose main function is to ensure that the basic concept of the scheme is maintained and applied consistently throughout the Northern Territory. The role also involves the coordination of SBCP activities as it applies to other sections and branches. Fortnightly conferences are conducted and representatives from the relevant sections attend.

One area of concern is a lack of appreciation by some operational members of the value of the scheme. This problem can arise through an insufficient knowledge of the role and achievements of the school constables, and is largely overcome by greater on-the-job interaction between the operational members and the school constables. This should involve all the members of a patrol district and can easily be performed through the medium of some item of interest to the kids, such as a police vehicle or motorcycle.

The importance of this interaction cannot be overstressed as it is essential that all members have a full appreciation of the school constable's role and that he is seen by all to be an obvious part of a district patrol team. The main benefit is that both the

children and the police members are able to see each other in a more positive light than normal.

Since the commencement of the scheme the children are now receiving a far more balanced view of law and order and a much broader appreciation of the police role, particularly the positive aspects of it. In this context it needs to be understood that children often have very strange, and at times, weird understandings of the police role. This is invariably due to the nonsense that other people convey to them, including some parents and other children. This is not just a police concept of the issue, but one which has been frequently stated by school executive staff who see our scheme as an excellent way to solve this problem.

Children who become involved in juvenile crime invariably come from home environments with irresponsible parents, single parents or no parents. The school constable scheme has been able to assist a great number of these kids, many of whom respond well to any constructive adult interest in them.

Junior Police Rangers—An Update Report

In June 1985 the scheme was launched with the recruitment of thirty-six children at school Year 8 level. A year later a further thirty-six children were enlisted and twenty-four were recruited in 1987.

Since their recruitment these children have been trained by using the resources of the police, fire service, emergency services and the Police and Citizens Youth Club in a number of skills including:

- Conservation of flora and fauna
- First Aid
- Bush craft and orienteering
- Survival techniques
- Boat handling and principles of navigation
- Water safety, swimming
- Abseiling
- Communication with peers, including public speaking
- Communications/radio procedures
- Safe handling of firearms
- Self-development
- Leadership
- Fire safety (home and rural)

The purpose of the scheme is to use the Junior Police Rangers (JPRs) as a nucleus for involving safety and other skills not normally taught in the schools.

Considerable progress has been achieved, with the first two groups having successfully completed their training. In addition the JPRs have also had good interaction with many other young people in the community, including some skills training.

This aspect has mainly included disadvantaged children and is becoming more important as the scheme progresses. As our major concern is for the well-being of juveniles, and the high incidence of juvenile crime, it is most important that this scheme is able to identify and assist appropriate young people.

With the completion of their skills training, the JPRs are able to play a more important role. With the assistance of some corporate sponsorship, particularly from WESTPAC, many children have been assisted by the scheme.

These children were identified by the school based constables as people who would benefit mostly from the scheme. By involving the school constables a much

broader interest in disadvantaged children is being achieved. Further, the school communities, particularly the constables, are well situated to provide essential follow-up.

More recently, the JPRs have been given a valuable fifteen hectares of land on the Arnhem Highway near Kakadu National Park. The land is idyllic with an adjoining lake for canoeing, swimming and life-saving exercises, hilly escarpment for climbing, abseiling and other relevant training. It is also located within one of the best flora and fauna regions of Australia.

The unit is currently negotiating with potential corporate sponsors for the establishment of basic facilities to enable accommodation for some 100 children. This will greatly facilitate the JPRs' involvement with other youth, particularly socially 'at risk' children.

Blue Light Discos in the Northern Territory—An Update Report

Blue Light discos first commenced in Victoria in 1976 and in the Northern Territory in 1981.

Over time, the discos have been continually improved and expanded to every major centre in the Northern Territory. There are currently nine in full-time operation with Humpty Doo now the oldest, and the new-look Darwin disco which attracts an average attendance of 800 young people per month. Other more recently established branches have commenced at Katherine and Jabiru.

A more recent innovation has been the introduction of Junior Blue Light discos which cater for the younger children and these are proving to be extremely successful.

There have already been over 10,000 attendances by young people to our Northern Territory discos this year, and this of course highlights the popularity of the discos and demonstrates the great value that functions of this kind have to the community. In many cases our discos are the only social occasion where a suitable environment exists in which parents can be confident that their children are well supervised.

In addition, many of our discos have also been able to provide some financial assistance to local needs young people and groups. This of course is an extension of the Blue Light discos' objective of caring for young people.

This very successful situation is largely due to the great efforts of police, service clubs, other volunteers, sponsors and the local media. Through these efforts we have a very viable pro-active function which reflects considerable credit to the police force and all the people involved.

The Blue Light disco scheme is part of our community policing program and apart from providing an attractive entertainment for children, it also provides an important interaction between youth, police and the community.

More recently it has proved to be a useful venue for some of the school based constables to provide a positive social involvement in the local community. It is also a good revenue basis for providing other recreational facilities and assistance for youth.

Yahoos—the Tasmanian Response

Don Williams
Inspector
Tasmania Police

The link between juvenile crime and alcohol is widely accepted by experts and commonly perceived by members of the community. There appears little doubt that the lowering of inhibitions through the consumption of alcohol often leads to a lowering of moral scruples in juveniles. The logical assumption is that if juveniles could be attracted away from over indulgence of alcohol, a fall in juvenile crime rate should occur.

The subject of this paper is 'YAHOOS'—**Youth, Alcohol, Happiness, Oblivion, Obituary, Sorrow**. The thrust of the paper is the Tasmanian response to the problem.

Yahoos

Yahoos are described in *Gulliver's Travels* by Johnathon Swift (1667-1745) as a race of brutes in human shape, and when one sees a group of drunken youths, who would wish to argue with that description. Many members of the public see the so-called street kids as today's yahoos, drunken louts with no responsibilities and less ambition, seen in malls and on street corners. The unfortunate fact is that the yahoos of today come from all walks of life, from the deprived to the privileged.

One of the most disturbing aspects of research into underage drinking in Tasmania is the apparent attitudinal change in juvenile drinking habits. Where once juveniles drank to obtain a lessening of their inhibitions and to create a feeling of happiness, there is now a large section of youth who see the need to drink themselves into oblivion to say their night out was a success.

All too frequently, these drinking bouts lead to criminal acts which would not otherwise be contemplated by the offender.

The Tasmanian Response

On 10 December 1988, as a government initiative, after discussions with police, government agencies and other bodies, the Commissioner of Police in Tasmania, Mr Bill Horman, called for a statewide conference of interested parties to meet at the Police Academy, Rokeby, to discuss the underage drinking problem, and to formulate resolutions and a possible strategy plan or programs to overcome the problem.

The response to the call was magnificent with seventy-two persons representing many government departments, agencies, service clubs, breweries and hotels, churches,

youth workers, members of parliament, women's groups, and several youths representing themselves and others in the community prepared to attend a conference on a Saturday just before Christmas.

The agenda for the meeting was arranged in response to requests from attendees who wished to speak, and the items covered a wide range of matters from many perspecntives.

The Commissioner of Police subsequently reported the findings and resolutions to the government through the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Approval was immediately given for the Commissioner to establish and chair a Working Party which is now called the Alcohol Abuse and Underage Drinking Working Party. This group comprises some twenty-five representatives of the various agencies and groups which attended the conference.

The Working Party has formed several sub-committees to look into such matters as:

- youth entertainment;
- resources directory;
- personal data cards; and
- research.

The sub-committees report to the major body on the results of their findings and, after due consideration, the matters approved by the Working Party are referred to an inter-departmental committee, the members of which have relatively direct access to the respective Ministers of the Crown.

The Tasmanian Situation

The results of a national survey conducted by the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse released on 29 May 1988 found that people Australia-wide viewed the three main problems facing teenagers as drugs, unemployment and alcohol in that order of seriousness.

The interesting point of the figures from a **Tasmanian perspective** was that the public view of the seriousness of the problem stood apart from the rest of the nation, in that alcohol abuse was the greatest concern in Hobart, followed by unemployment and drugs.

Whatever the feelings of concern in order of seriousness, it is important to note that 93 per cent of people questioned throughout Australia considered there was an underage drinking problem in this country and 73 per cent said that underage drinking was more of a problem today than in the past.

Statistics in Tasmania reveal that underage drinking offences detected in 1981-82 numbered 1,738, increasing to 3,131 in the period 1986-87, a rise of 55.5 per cent.

These figures support the comments of Mason and Wilson (1989) that underage drinking offences in Australia are on the increase after a noticeable decline in the period immediately after 1983.

Alcohol and crime

Statistical information linking alcohol consumption with crime is somewhat sketchy at this time, but positive monitoring of these figures is presently a target of Tasmania Police and it would seem, could be a worthwhile national research project.

Conversely, figures on direct alcohol related offences such as street and breathalyser offences, drunkenness and driving under the influence of alcohol are well

documented. In the period 1981-82, of 6,067 persons charged with those offences, 592 (9.8 per cent) were under eighteen years, and a further 1,650 (27.2 per cent) were under the age of twenty-five years. The total percentage figure of those under twenty-five years of age charged was 37 per cent.

In the later period 1986-87, the total number charged with alcohol related offences rose to 8,217, an increase of 26 per cent on the previous figure, 858 of those charged were under eighteen years (10.4 per cent) and a further 2,959 (36 per cent) were aged between eighteen and twenty-five years, giving an overall figure of 46.5 per cent under the age of twenty-five years.

Government response

On 16 February 1989, the Tasmanian Government announced several initiatives in tackling the problems of youth, many of these initiatives as the direct result of the resolutions put forward at the Underage Drinking Conference.

The government also announced the appointment of a Minister for Youth Affairs, (which included their youth policy) and a commitment of $1,000,000 over the next three years for the benefit of young people.

Youth policy

Through their new youth policy, the Tasmanian Government will now:

- **Take effective action to combat underage drinking**
  through the formation of a Working Party set up under the Chairmanship of the Commissioner of Police as a result of the Underage Drinking Conference proposal.
  This Working Party will consist of various interested parties from the community and will work parallel to a committee consisting of members of government agencies, the latter group being a liaison link between the various Cabinet Ministers and the Working Party.
  The government sees the establishment of these committees as the most promising move to date to devise strategies to reduce underage drinking in the Tasmanian community and pledges its full support to the activities of the Working Party.
- **Increase support for the 'Kids 'n' Cops' Program** and similar projects.
  The 'Kids 'n' Cops' program was commenced in Launceston, Northern Tasmania as the result of meetings between police, community workers and youths. It has resulted in the youths of that city having their own building for meetings and alcohol-free entertainment.
  The main thrust of this approach is to give youths a place they can identify as theirs, to give them responsibility in the running of the affairs of the program and to give them confidence and a sense of achievement, of being part of the community and promoting goodwill and understanding between youth and police.
  The program has been very successful to date and almost certainly will be extended to many other areas of the state and probably interstate.

- **Appoint youth liaison officers with the Police Department** to enable police to provide further assistance to youth by encouraging the expansion of appropriate activities and other development work in Police and Citizens Youth Clubs and in the wider community, including the highly successful 'Kids 'n' Cops' program mentioned above.
- **Introduce a police/school liaison officer scheme** to enhance the understanding between young schoolchildren and police. Similar schemes elsewhere in Australia and overseas have proven to be an effective tool in establishing better relations between children and police. The training program for Tasmanian police officers has commenced, with two members recently attending a course in Victoria.
- **Encourage the establishment of youth (alcohol-free) entertainment venues**

  The scarcity of alcohol-free venues where teenagers congregate is seen to contribute heavily to the pressure on many youths to enter hotels or to consume alcohol in other places.

  Following discussions between local businessmen and senior police officers, alcohol-free discos have become a reality in several areas around the state.

  In Hobart, 'The Crush Club' set the scene for other organisations to follow. On opening night, 500 teenagers attended, and were entertained by a disc jockey and served alcohol-free cocktails. The night was a resounding success, applauded by government, the community, and, more importantly, the kids themselves. So successful is the Crush Club that numbers must now be restricted, with entry gained on a 'one out, one in' basis.

  Plans are in hand to run the disco two nights a week, with consideration being given to providing entertainment to the younger set on Friday nights, and older youths on Saturday nights.

  Football clubs and some suburban hotels are now running entertainment for youth in their area, and the response shows that youth and alcohol-free entertainment clearly mix. The same success story can be claimed for Launceston, Tasmania's second largest city, with alcohol-free discos proving extremely popular.
- **Continue education programs on the danger of alcohol**

  It is considered by government that one of the best ways to tackle the problem of underage drinking is to educate young people about the dangers of alcohol abuse.

  The Education Department has introduced a new compulsory Health Education Program into schools which includes the targeting of the use and misuse of alcohol.
- **Encourage the use of voluntary identification cards**

  The government has already announced that they will provide for voluntary photographs on drivers' licences as it is considered this will assist police and hoteliers to establish the age of young persons.

  This service will extend to young persons over the age of eighteen years who do not possess a driver's licence if they wish to participate. In other places the mandatory use of some form of proof of age and identification is required. Tasmania will monitor the innovation and gauge its success before initiating such steps.

  The Alcohol Abuse and Underage Drinking Working Party have a sub-committee working on the introduction of a personal data card, which will be issued to youths over the age of eighteen years who do not have a driver's licence. The proposed card will have the photograph of the person and personal data such as address and date of birth, and will be laminated. The

name of the card has yet to be determined, and consideration is being given to conducting a competition to allow input from youth in that regard.
The Australian Hotels Association, Transport Tasmania, Licensing Board and Tasmania Police, working together, will produce the card and conduct the advertising campaign for the issuance of the card. The Australian Hotels Association will advise their members not to allow young persons access to their premises if there is any doubt as to the person's age, unless the card is produced.

- **Introduce tougher penalties for underage drinking**
  Whilst it is the belief of the government that education is the best strategy, it recognises that increased penalties for persistent offenders has an important deterrent role.
  As well as fines, the government will establish, on a trial basis, a system whereby second offenders will have their right to obtain a driver's licence at seventeen suspended for up to six months.

A list of the initiatives in youth affairs approved by the Tasmanian Government can be found in Appendix 1.

Youth Policy Council

A top level Youth Policy Council has been established, chaired by the Minister for Youth Affairs and comprising the heads of all youth bodies. Their role is formulating policy, programs and strategy for youth activity and employment.

Summary

The success of the concept of police/community involvement in discussions to minimise and eventually eradicate the underage drinking problem can be seen by the initiatives from government following the Underage Drinking Conference.

The police, government and community, working together as a team as is occurring in the Tasmanian response, surely can provide the answers to this antisocial problem through education and participation with youth to provide alcohol-free entertainment, and to engender a greater awareness in the children of today (the youth of tomorrow) the dangers of alcohol and the advantages of public spirited cooperation between all parties.

The success of the alcohol-free entertainment concept (in addition to the well established youth clubs) indicates that youth have been crying out for this type of entertainment, and they are prepared to respond if the community will extend a friendly, helping hand.

References

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Appendix 1: Further Initiatives in Youth Affairs—Summary

Appoint a Minister for Youth Affairs

Commit an additional $1,000,000 over the next three years for the benefit of our young people

Create a Tasmanian Youth Fund

Create a Youth Policy Council

Conduct an annual State Youth Affairs Congress

Take effective action to combat under-age drinking by

- Education programs;
- Voluntary identification cards;
- Youth entertainment venue;
- School holiday programs;
- Tougher penalties

Expand alcohol and drug support services

Appoint Youth Liaison Officers

Increase support for 'Kids 'n' Cops' and similar projects

Police/School Liaison Officer Scheme

Implement further schemes to reduce youth unemployment

- Increase recruitment of young Tasmanians into state service
- Establish career choice
- Continue Training Express, Young Managers, Add-an-Apprentice

Develop 'Look before you Leave' program

Increase funding for housing options and related support services for homeless young people under eighteen

Implement the new youth housing policy for eighteen to twenty-five year olds

Assist single Tasmanians to purchase their own homes

Establish a Tasmanian volunteers scheme to encourage older people to contribute to youth activities

Introduce a 'headstart' program

- Expansion of Project Hahn
- Media Youth and Young Achievers Award
- Tastudy
- Overseas student scholarships
- Tasteem
- Ongoing research into youth needs

Expand child protection services

Create a Child Protection Services Division within the Law Department

Introduce legislation governing use of evidence of children in courts

Introduce a specialist assessment and treatment youth service

Expand the Department of Sport and Recreation Youth Program

- Support for young Tasmanian athletes
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- Youth lifestyle activities
- Bicycle helmet subsidy

Support the ANZAAS Youth Conference (1990) and National Venturers Meet (1991) to be held in Tasmania

Encouraging Good Citizenship within Schools

Bob Shaw
Inspector
Victoria Police

The Victoria Police have long been committed to their state's youth, and its members over the years have given freely of their time in an effort to guide young people away from destructive or antisocial behaviour. This tradition is ongoing with the formalisation of programs aimed at keeping the younger members of society out of trouble. Victoria was the first state to introduce Blue Light discos and presently operates a program to encourage discipline among children participating in sports. The foremost endeavour of the force in this area has been the introduction of the Police/Schools Involvement Program, which seeks to encourage good citizenship through education.

As all Australian states now have Blue Light discos, this will not be discussed at any length in this paper, but the Victoria Police's two main initiatives, Operation Olympus and Police/Schools Involvement Program will be outlined in some detail.

Operation Olympus

The major aim of this project is to encourage self-control and discipline among young people and target those who are participating in a contact sport. It consists of an end of year award being given to the most disciplined club in a league. These trophies are made available by the police to those leagues catering for under sixteen and under fourteen years sport, who are desirous of participating. Response so far has proved to be very encouraging and it is hoped to increase the size of the program significantly very shortly.

The Police/Schools Involvement Program

The Police/Schools Program commenced operation in July 1988, in response to certain concerns of the Chief Commissioner Mr Glare. An Inspector was tasked with the research, development and coordination of a scheme whereby young people could receive education in good citizenship, and basic moral values. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Mr Crabb, was also a firm supporter of the concept and provided funding for fifty additional police, as well as the development of the idea.

This has now become a reality in Victoria and the force is well in the process of placing the fifty personnel into schools to ensure that training is given to our youth in

this vital area. Already some very positive feedback from the schools involved (many of which see both the value and the need for this type of education) has been received.

The effect of morality on crime

The effect of the system of values and norms on the crime rate appears to be somewhat more effective in preventing crime than a system of dedicated law enforcement. A study of crime rates in Edinburgh as compared to cities of a similar size in the United States showed that the Scottish city had only a fraction of the problems of its American counterparts. This experiment was commented on by Commissioner Avery, who stated:

> This is not indicative in his view of the comparative superiority of the Scottish Police, but has to do with the social norms and humanity's methods of getting people to observe them. He suggests that the effects of law enforcement agencies are puny compared with the extensiveness and intricacy of these other behavioural regulators (Avery 1981).

If we accept this view, then there is a responsibility within society for the reinforcement of moral rules and to ensure that all citizens are not only made aware of them, but are given the proper reasons for obeying them.

The Need for the Program

Crime

Not unlike most of the western world, the crime rate in Victoria has reached an unacceptably high level with serious offences and crimes of violence escalating despite major efforts on the part of the police. Traditional reactive police methods appear to be doing little to stem the rising tide of antisocial behaviour.

In 1988, the Chief Commissioner Kel Glare gave his answer to the crime problems as being to educate the young. In a press release he said:

> An anti-crime program which teaches basic rights, obligations and responsibilities, together with the consequences of breaching the criminal law, could and should be integrated with all other programs aimed at eliminating the causes of crime.

While not being palatable to the more traditional elements in some police circles, it is interesting to note that Sir Robert Peel, who laid the foundation stones of modern policing, stated that the basic mission of the police was not to repress unlawful conduct by force and punishment but to *prevent* crime and disorder from occurring. It would seem that an education program as outlined by the Chief Commissioner falls quite neatly within the basic mission statement.

In the 1987-88 *Annual Report* of the Victoria Police certain disturbing statistics were outlined. In this period, a rise in violent crime of 19 per cent was noted, as was the following observation of Mr Glare:

> Since 1945 the number of major crimes has increased from 21,483 to 310,534. In 1987/88 an increase of 1345 per cent. While the population has more than doubled from approximately 2 million to 4.2 million in that period, the figures indicate a disproportionate and disturbing upward spiral.

If we consider how the community would have reacted to offences such as the assault and robbery of elderly people in 1945, as compared with now, we would see a marked difference in attitude. A reaction of horror and demand for justice would have swept society in the earlier years. This type of crime, which does not seem to be isolated these days, is considered just another offence in today's modern world.

Alienation

Another concern of the Victoria Police is that we have tended to move away from the public we serve. This seems to have been inevitable with the rapid increases in technology and population, where police have had to become more mobile in order to meet demands for their services. It has resulted in a loss of personal contact which was originally established with the old-time foot policeman. Father John Brosnan who served as the Chaplain of Pentridge Prison for thirty years was quoted as saying: 'If priests and police would walk among the people more and drive around in their motor cars less, we'd all be better off' (Prior 1985, p. 107).

What is needed is a means of getting the police interacting with the public to form a closer relationship. More positive contact will hopefully remedy this situation and this should commence at an early age. It is argued that if a child's first contact with police is positive, then it will take a great deal of negative influence to turn this perception around. The same applies in the opposite case.

Children also need to be given information on how and why the police do their job and where they (the police) fit into society. Complaints have been lodged against members of the force which result directly from ignorance and lack of understanding of why particular actions are being taken.

Similarly, many children fail to see the police as being human. Children appreciate seeing a police car and talking on the radio, but they are surprised to know that police marry and have children. Their perception of police is that they are machines.

Positive contact as well as the provision of information is needed. As well the police force is a vital part of any police schools program and serves to further enhance respect for law and order.

Overseas Initiatives

The consequences of crime

The concept of police-in-schools is not new and has been operating overseas and interstate for some years now. The Chief Commissioner saw first-hand, a program in operation in Florida (USA) called, 'The Consequences of Crime'. This was the idea of Judge Clifton Kelly of the Florida Circuit Court who had the unpleasant task of sentencing to death, a 16-year-old youth who had kicked to death and robbed an elderly woman. Kelly noted that in his opinion, the youth appeared to have received no moral training in education at all. He then looked at what legal education was being given to school children in the Florida school system. Much to his disgust, he found that students were being taught how far they could push the law before they broke it, and what their legal rights were when they did, rather than being persuaded not to break it in the first place. Kelly and an educator Sherman Wantz wrote a program which teaches what the outcomes are of criminal conduct and encourages people not to break the law.

The value of this project was officially noted when the Florida Legislature made 'The Consequences of Crime' compulsory teaching in that state. Mr Glare was most impressed with the effect that the program had in turning peer pressure against the

disruptive elements in a class. Instead of being looked up to as rebels, they were seen as idiots and sanctioned out by the majority of children. The program is taught by teachers and encourages police input.

Project DARE

Project DARE is an initiative of the Los Angeles Police and Education Departments and is aimed at the city's horrendous drug problem. Uniformed police officers teach the program over a seventeen-week period to children aged nine to eleven years, and seek to impart a positive self-concept and resistance to peer pressure as well as giving alternatives to bad behaviour. It has been evaluated as being successful in changing attitudes towards both police and drug abuse.

There are various programs throughout the world as well as interstate and in all cases studied the results are:

- an improved perception of police;
- a drop in unlawful behaviour directed at school premises;
- better attitudes to authority; and
- better attitudes to school work.

Aims And Objectives

Aims

In answer to identified problems in Victoria, certain major aims were formulated which meet with the corporate goals of the Victoria Police. These are:

- to reduce the incidence of crime in society;
- to develop a better relationship between police and youth in the community;
- to create in young people an understanding of the police role in the structure of society;
- to extend the concept of crime prevention into the Victorian school system; and
- to equip young people with the necessary skills to avoid dangerous or threatening situations.

Objectives

Specific behavioural objectives for the program have been set and it is hoped that after the program that children will:

- demonstrate the values, responsibilities and obligations society currently deems valuable;
- state the consequences of a person's actions regarding unlawful behaviour;
- demonstrate sufficient self-esteem and skill to say no to drug abuse and other antisocial behaviour;
- engage in positive interactions and consultation with police members; and
- state the basic role of the police and the legal system in Victoria.

Program Operation

The thematic approach

The Police/Schools Involvement Program has developed six major themes which are designed to fit within the Ministry's curriculum framework. These themes are as follows:

- the role of the police;
- the legal system (courts);
- rights, rules and responsibilities;
- the consequences of our actions;
- keeping ourselves and others safe;
- drugs and alcohol (life skills).

Some themes will run for only a short time, whereas themes like 'drugs and alcohol' will run throughout the school year.

Why police input?

With police actually taking the program to schools, it will ensure that the type of education advocated by the Chief Commissioner will be given to Victorian school children.

School Resource Officers (SROs) have been instructed to work in closely with the school communities in the areas that they are operating and to cooperate with school councils and members of the teaching profession. The main instructions given to these members are:

- they are not at the school in their roles as law-enforcers;
- they are not there to gather intelligence and that any information obtained should be handled with discretion. (Naturally if a serious matter comes to light, the SRO is expected to pass it on);
- SROs will not carry firearms into the school grounds; and
- SROs will not act in the capacity of school disciplinarians.

Operational duties

It has been the experience of proactive initiatives in this state that the participants in some have been branded as 'plastic police' or 'kiddy cops' and their duties labelled as 'the soft option'. Measures have been taken to attempt to keep these sorts of perceptions to a minimum. A previous initiative saw police based at a location away from operational members and issued with instructions that they were not to perform any operational duties at all. This served to engender a feeling of hostility between the two camps and made it difficult for the proactive initiative to attract staff.

The first consideration for this program was the accommodation of the SROs. It was considered highly desirable that these members, where possible be placed at operational police stations in order to have them seen as 'part of the crew'. By this means it is hoped to give them more acceptance with their peers.

While SROs will be engaged on full-time duties in schools, they will also be encouraged to make themselves available periodically for an operational shift. Similarly, school holidays are somewhat longer than police leave and it is expected that when SROs are not required in schools, they will be used for operational police duties. Hopefully this will go a long way toward discarding the 'plastic police' tag, as

well as keeping SROs up-to-date with current trends in society and the ever-changing world of modern policing.

Dress

It is considered important that SROs be seen as members of the police force at all times, and thus should wear full police uniform while in schools. During activities such as sports days, it is hoped to equip members with tracksuits bearing the police insignia to assist in reinforcement of identity.

Training

Upon appointment to the program, members are given two weeks' training in teaching methods and effective communication at the Hawthorn Institute of Education. This aims to equip the SROs with the necessary skills to enable them to communicate successfully with children of primary school age, as well as giving them credibility in the eyes of teachers and the rest of the school community.

It is considered necessary to have the SROs trained by an outside body, as the necessary expertise in primary teacher training did not exist within the force, as well as the fact that teachers' unions and parents' groups saw external training as a creditable means of preparing police for school-based duties.

The first training course was conducted in February 1989, and saw twenty students graduate. Feedback from members who attended, indicated that the course was highly job related and very professionally conducted by well qualified people.

Evaluation

Because of the number of outside organisations interested in the progress of this program it has been deemed necessary to brief an external evaluation consultant to conduct the program. Funding for this has been promised from the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services.

Secondary school pilot program

Early in the development of the program, the Officer in Charge of the Warrnambool Police was approached by Mr Duncan Stalker, the principal of the Warrnambool Technical School. Mr Stalker had recently returned from a trip to the Northern Territory and was most impressed with the school-based constable program in operation there. It was decided to place a police member at Mr Stalker's school, who would carry out duties similar to those in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

The results in attitudinal change will be fully evaluated at the end of the school year, but perceptions thus far, are that the program will prove to be a major success. There have been several instances where an anti-police attitude has been turned around completely. The results already obtained in other states which have conducted these programs is positive.

Conclusion

The concept of school-based policing is not new, but the Victorian program and approach certainly is. Chief Commissioner Glare sees this project as being an investment in our future generations. The results will not be felt overnight, and we must be prepared to wait for the harvest when it hopefully arrives in years to come.

We now have a chance to attack crime at the grass roots level and prevent it through education of the forthcoming generation. It is our responsibility to make sure that we take positive action to check the spread of crime. As Seneca, the Roman statesman and philosopher, said in 65 AD, 'He who does not prevent a crime when he can, condones it'.

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Diverting Young Offenders from the formal Justice System

Juvenile Mediation/Reparation Scheme

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The title of this conference 'Preventing Juvenile Crime' is quite interesting. Whilst we all accept the juvenile crime phenomenon is real, it is encouraging to see that the Australian Institute of Criminology is taking a positive approach to juvenile crime by advocating that it should be prevented rather than accepting it as a 'fait accompli'. Crime prevention is an integral part of policing.

Juvenile Crime

'Kids to-day are getting away with murder'.

'Juveniles have no respect for anything or anyone'.

'The law now has so many protections for young crims, we may as well give up and go home'.

'Young offenders just get a slap on the wrist'.

These are quotes from fellow police officers and the printed media. It is the popular view in the community that there has been a dramatic increase in juvenile crime, particularly crimes of violence. Many feel that the most effective way to handle the problem is for courts to severely punish young offenders and ensure that greater numbers are locked up and kept off the streets. It is thought that heavier sentences would ensure that young offenders do not re-offend. In actual fact none of these assumptions are correct.

There is some evidence to show that more young people are being charged with more offences than in the past. It is not clear whether this means that children are actually committing more crimes or whether they are just being caught and charged more often. The real situation probably lies somewhere in between.

However, often there is little point in punishing an offender, as the punishment can be shown to be counterproductive. With juveniles this is often the case. Most adolescent

offenders do not return to court. By charging them we are often condemning them to further and deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system, which is, it is submitted, a failure.

To address this failing justice system police forces across this country **must** develop and implement diversionary processes for appropriate young offenders. The concept of diversion as a prevention tool, seems to be perfectly tailored to policing, and with the proper application of the diversion concept, policing will make a significant headway in the battle against juvenile crime.

What is juvenile diversion?

Juvenile diversion in the strictest sense is the referral of a youth who has violated the law to an alternative program, rather than having that youth going through an adjudication process into the juvenile justice system. Juvenile diversion, in a broader sense, is the development of meaningful alternatives to be used in solving the juvenile crime problem in our society other than what is currently being offered within the juvenile justice system.

Why is juvenile diversion necessary?

A juvenile diversion system is necessary as an alternative to the very costly, overcrowded, and too often ineffective juvenile justice system. Much research has shown that juvenile institutions are not rehabilitative'. For example, Cressy (1960) commented 'they lead to an increase rather than decrease in antagonism to authority'. Lipton, Martinson, Wilks (1975) said 'they are criminogenic rather than rehabilitative. In addition, Rutherford and Bengur (1976) said 'they are very expensive to operate'.

Do we need more research to justify the concept of diversion?

The New South Wales experience

The last decade in New South Wales has seen the introduction of a wide range of new juvenile diversionary programs and policies. Many of them have been drawn from research findings and recognise the transitory nature of juvenile crime, the counter-productive effects of programs and the dangers of net-widening Underlying these reforms in New South Wales and in other parts of the world is a dissatisfaction with the traditional approach to juvenile justice which was based on the adult correctional model although harsher in its application.

The key reforms from a police perspective were firstly, the police cautioning program; and secondly, the juvenile and mediation/reparation scheme.

Although not one of the new reforms, the 'warning on the run' has been used by New South Wales Police as a discretionary power for some time.

When police detect a child offender committing a 'trivial' offence, they may take no formal action and

- issue a 'warning' (either on the run, or at a police station); and
- record the particulars of the child and the offence in the official police notebook. The matter is dispensed with at this point. No centralised record is made of this encounter.

In 1984 the New South Wales Labor Cabinet approved the introduction of a cautioning scheme. The scheme commenced operation on 1st September 1985.

The two major objectives of the scheme are:

- to divert early and less serious offenders who would have otherwise gone to court; and

- to allow the court to concentrate its resources on more recidivist or serious cases, or cases where the facts are disputed.

A caution is a formal procedure whereby if a child admits the commission of an offence, then at an arranged time they attend a police station accompanied by their parent, guardian or other chosen adult, and an official caution will be administered by a senior police officer. The child must agree to the caution process.

Cautions are not available for offences which must be dealt with by way of indictment. Cautions are only available for summary offences and offences which are capable of being heard summarily.

The underlying rationale for this is to restrict the applications of the cautioning scheme to the less serious offences.

When the New South Wales Liberal/National Party coalition government came to power some 12 months ago, the Police Minister, Mr Ted Pickering immediately abolished the right to a caution for a child who commits any offence involving a motor vehicle, for example, stealing, or being knowingly carried in a stolen vehicle.

There is no right to a caution even for first offenders committing minor crimes. The investigating police will retain the discretion to determine whether a juvenile offender will receive a caution or face a charge.

A child can receive more than one caution. Prior criminal record or previous cautions will not necessarily preclude the issuing of the caution.

All cautions are recorded in the Police Central Names Index computer system and the police can consult these records for the purpose of criminal investigation. Most Australian jurisdictions have some form of juvenile cautioning. In New South Wales in the last half of 1988 the juvenile cautioning rate was 2 per cent of all formal interventions. In Queensland and in Victoria it is considerably higher. By comparison, the scheme is being used much more conservatively in New South Wales. Furthermore, in New South Wales cautions are given in the vast majority of cases only to first offenders who have committed less serious offences. The more serious and recidivist offenders are still being dealt with by the courts.

Although the cautioning scheme represented a much needed reform in New South Wales, its introduction was associated with some degree of controversy and confusion. Media, police and community perceptions of the scheme were at times negative, based on the incorrect assumption that serious offences had been decriminalised by the scheme. In fact, the guidelines issued to the police are relatively strict.

Juvenile Mediation/Reparation Scheme

The Juvenile Mediation/Reparation Scheme for young offenders was a new innovation for Australia although hundreds of similar schemes for juveniles and adults have been developed in the United States, Canada and England over the past years. These schemes have been shown to be successful in encouraging rehabilitation in the justice system.

The scheme represented the first major step to be taken by New South Wales towards young offenders being encouraged to make direct amends to victims of crime. This scheme places the responsibility of the offence directly on the young offender and addresses the plight of the victim, as it is sometimes said that criminal justice proceedings are substantially offender-oriented. Although certain schemes provide financial compensation to victims there have been no formal avenues for direct contact between the victim and offender, or for the possible making of amends to those persons who have been harmed.

Mediation schemes in New South Wales have operated from Community Justice Centres since 1980 by providing an avenue for the resolution of minor civil and criminal disputes (such as disputes between neighbours, relatives, landlords and tenants) shown by experience to be under-responsive to conventional law enforcement procedures. Overseas mediation/reparation schemes for offenders have been in operation for some years with

some success (depending on the type of offences) both as a pre-court and post-court disposition.

Mediation/reparation schemes are particularly appropriate for young people because they encourage a greater sense of responsibility. Young offenders are given the opportunity of facing the consequences of their action in a way that should foster reform. The scheme also provides educational elements to the young offender that allows them to realise the human consequences of their crime.

The scheme provides the victim with an avenue of gaining recompense, in a symbolic sense, for the offence committed against them. The offender may apologise directly to the victim; may perform some work directly for the victim or in an area agreed to, by the victim and offender. At all times a neutral person (the mediator) ensures that the needs of both parties are attempted to be satisfied.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- to provide social education for the young person regarding the human consequences of their offence;
- to provide the victim of the offence with an avenue for reparation;
- to ensure that the victim is recognised as part of the criminal justice process; and
- to provide the young offender with the opportunity of repairing in some symbolic way the damage done by their crime by making amends.

Criteria for police referral to the scheme

- The young person accepts responsibility for the offence;
- there is an identifiable victim such that there is some link between the damage and the victim;
- the young person is likely to obtain some benefit from their participation in the scheme;
- young people who are heavily dependent on alcohol or unlawful drugs are not suitable for the scheme; and
- before agreeing to participate the young person has been informed of their right to seek legal advice.

The initial process

A young person comes under police notice for committing an offence. The person is then apprehended and taken to a police station.

If appropriate and if the offender admits to the offence, a statement is taken by the police officer. The offender is then asked if he wants to participate in the scheme.

If the offender indicates that he does, a referral card is completed and given to the offender, who is then directed to present to the Community Justice Centre nominated by the police officer.

In the meantime the relevant information about the offender, the victim and the offence is telephoned through to the Community Justice Centre. This is the end of police involvement until such time as the mediation or reparation process is complete or the offender withdraws from the scheme.

The mediation process

After the Community Justice Centre organises a time convenient for a meeting between victim and the offender the meeting (mediation session) is held with the parties (victim and offender) and two trained and accredited Community Justice Centre mediators. The young person is entitled to have a parent, guardian or other adult present at the time of the session.

Mediation is a dispute settlement process that provides an acceptable, neutral and impartial third party (the mediator) whose role it is to facilitate communication and understanding between the parties and in the context of the scheme to assist them in formulating an appropriate reparation agreement given the circumstances disclosed in the mediation session.

Mediation is a voluntary process and at any stage of a session either party can reject further participation by the mediator, who has no formal tenure other than that granted by the parties. The mediator has no power to make decisions or to enforce suggestions and recommendations affecting the settlement of the dispute.

Reparation by the young person may include:

- an apology;
- work for the victim;
- service in the community or for another person nominated as suitable by the victim;
- return of stolen property; or
- repairing the resultant damage to the victim's property.

The scheme does not generally cover cash compensation payments because of the danger of the Scheme becoming a system for imposing fines or seen as a debt collection scheme as has occurred with some American schemes. However, if compensation is appropriate in a particular situation, the young person is over 16 years and approval is given by the Director of the Community Justice Centre following the mediation process, then cash compensation may be a form of reparation, but only in a nominal or symbolic sense rather than as real monetary value for the harm done.

Supervision of agreements

Any agreement made between the parties at a mediation session is monitored or supervised by the Community Justice Centre who uses mediators for this purpose.

The amount and type of monitoring required in any particular case varies according to:

- the need and circumstances of the victim;
- the type of offence and surrounding circumstances;
- the character of the offender; and
- the specific conditions of the agreement reached between the parties.

Referral back to referrer and finalisation of matter

A matter is referred back to the referrer (that is police) for reason of a breakdown in the process or the completion of the process.

The Community Justice Centre can refer a matter back to the police before it is finalised if:

- either the victim or offender are not willing to participate;
- the mediation broke down or no agreement is reached between the parties; or
- the mediated agreement broke down and cannot be resolved by further conciliation or mediation.

On the other hand once a matter has proceeded through the mediation process and the agreement has been monitored then the supervisor or monitor reports to the Community Justice Centre on the outcome and the Community Justice Centre reports the matter back to the police. The police then take no further action on such matters.

As with police cautions, records of mediation referrals will be maintained by police and can be referred to by police for the purpose of criminal investigation or as a guide to appropriate action should a young person come under notice for further offences.

Benefits of such a scheme

The victim can benefit by:

- the opportunity to meet the offender in a setting where feelings and fears can be vented;
- the opportunity to have questions answered;
- having a direct, personal role in the resolution of the case;
- the possibility of some amends being made for the damage done;
- developing an understanding of the young offender and having the opportunity to offer forgiveness;
- encouraging a sense of responsibility in the young person.

The young person can benefit by:

- seeing their victims as a real person through meeting with them personally;
- developing an understanding of the human consequences of their actions;
- having the opportunity to make up for what they have done in a personal way;
- having a direct, personal role in decisions about the consequences of their actions, with the resulting sense of ownership of the decisions;
- being diverted from the court system which may further lock the young person into a path of offending.

The community can benefit by:

- being able to deal with some of its own problems instead of looking to the state for solutions;
- the likelihood of lowering the number of young offenders who get caught in the recidivist cycle;
- the reduction of conflict by demonstrating dispute resolution methods to the community;
- the likelihood of victims and offenders gaining an increased understanding of the justice system.

The police can benefit by:

- having a wider range of options available for dealing with a broad range of young offenders;
- having an option which can bring home the personal consequences of their actions to young offenders;
- having more time and resource available to deal with more serious offenders.

When the Liberal National Party Coalition Government came to power in New South Wales in 1988, the Minister for Police, Ted Pickering, withdrew police participation from the Scheme.

Conclusion

In relation to the changes outlined, I am confident that these initiatives are striking an appropriate balance between the requirements for community protection, the requirements of the judicial process, the needs of the young offenders as well as the concerns of the community and of the government.

Whilst the new strategies and programs are not claimed to provide a panacea for the complex problems of youth crime, I do believe that our ultimate goal, the successful community integration of young offenders, is more likely to be realised through these measures.

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Police Initiatives in Juvenile Justice

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This paper will look at the police organisation as a whole, how the police are perceived by the community, and how the police are attempting to change that perception and provide a service which is both cost-effective and sensitive to competing interests.

The Police Commissioner has established a mechanism for consultation with the community, called Community Consultative Committees. The author has had the opportunity in the last eighteen months to attend over one hundred of these committee meetings. A recurrent theme has been the policing of young people. The issue has been raised by both the community representatives as well as the police.

Perceptions of the Police

People feel threatened by youth, and most particularly by young people from minority groups. They express dissatisfaction with police expecting them to do something to allay their fears and make them feel safe again—like they used to feel!

Ask young people in New South Wales whether they regard police as people who will offer them protection—by and large they will say 'no'. In fact if anything they are wary of police and even afraid of them.

Children who have been, or are victims of crime—in particular sexual, physical or emotional abuse rarely turn to police for protection.

Ask young offenders in New South Wales and generally speaking they will tell you police are a pack of animals or something approximately that description. They all have stories of police or police harassment and have experienced or heard of police assaulting kids in custody or on the streets. It may seem to be stating the obvious but young people involved in crime do not see police as agents of protection.

The traditional police response to juvenile crime in New South Wales has been to charge the offender and have them put before the court. Many children appearing before the courts for the first time have never had the benefit of receiving an official Caution.

Police generally (along with the rest of the community) have not been sympathetic to the needs of young people, seeing the police role as one of law enforcers whose primary function is to apprehend the offenders and put them before the courts. It is then up to the

courts to decide what should happen. Of course it is not uncommon for police to express total dismay at decisions made by the courts and commonly talk of the courts letting them down or not supporting them in their quest to clean up the streets.

That is not to say that all police are like this. There have been police assigned special tasks regarding the policing needs of our young. Police Citizens Youth Clubs are one such example.

Police as school lecturers are another. In both these cases the mainstream police have regarded colleagues involved in these areas as plastic cops (and other more descriptive euphemisms). The Police Child Mistreatment Unit (investigating offenders involved in child abuse) are often regarded by their peers as 'The Nappy Brigade'.

The picture being painted here is not a very positive one. To recap:

The community: older and middle-aged people feel threatened by young people, particularly when the latter are in groups. They express dissatisfaction with the police.

Young people in general: are wary and often distrustful of police.

Young people as victims: generally do not look to police for protection or as adults to whom they can disclosed.

Young people as offenders: dislike and distrust police and regard them as the enemy.

Aboriginal youth: Aboriginal juveniles have an ongoing and destructive relationship with police, which is only now being addressed by Aboriginal people and police.

As an organisation it would appear that we have concentrated on responding to juvenile crime at the expense of attempting to prevent it. Without wanting to be too critical it appears that we have stuck to the macho side of the job (responding to armed hold-ups, drug-related offences, property theft, traffic, homicides, and fraud) and avoided the more difficult area of crime prevention.

It should not surprise us, when we consider the police culture and how it has developed over the decades, together with community and government expectations of police that they have not taken a more sympathetic approach to juvenile offenders.

Having stated all of the above it can now be said that much of that is to some extent historical.

A Change in Direction

The New South Wales Police Service is changing. The strengths and weaknesses of the organisation have been analysed and decisions affecting structure and policy taken, which reflect a commitment to preventing crime as well as protecting life and property.

The government allocates a budget in excess of $800 million to enable to Department to achieve its mission (that is, to protect life, prevent crime, enforce the law, maintain peace and good order, safeguard property and ensure the safe and free movement of people and traffic).

There has been a recognition that if police are to be effective in preventing juvenile crime then they must understand what contributes to it. To do this they must have a constructive relationship with their 'clients', be they victims or offenders.

To be really effective we must begin with kids and act to intervene where necessary to offer them protection from crime and/or to be involved in rehabilitating them to ensure that they do not become recidivist offenders.

To achieve this, and more effective policing in general, the New South Wales Police Service under the leadership of its Commissioner, John Avery, has undergone (and still is undergoing) some dramatic changes in the last few years, in terms of policy, structure and practice.

The most significant element of this restructuring has been the flattening of the command hierarchy giving maximum authority to the Patrol Commanders. This now enables Patrol Commanders to direct people to take a problem solving approach to preventing and reducing juvenile crime and an increasing number of them are doing just that.

While many people in the youth area are still critical of police, the opportunity for them to work constructively with police is now a possibility.

It is more often New South Wales police who are taking the initiative in preventing and reducing juvenile crime rather than youth workers or other government agencies. No longer constantly having to toe the party line and defend their actions, police are accepting that mistakes have been made and that often their actions in enforcing the law did nothing to improve the situation. In many parts of New South Wales, police are challenging themselves and other players in the field to overcome their historical differences and work as a team to combat juvenile crime. The following are examples of what is happening.

The Department has recognised that young people exist and have special needs. To that end we have appointed a person with special skills to advise on a police response to youth issues, including ways to prevent and reduce juvenile crime.

A number of other priorities have been set which acknowledge the importance of prevention and the connection between social factors and crime. In the area of juvenile crime the Police Executive have established the following areas as corporate priorities: child abuse, domestic violence, property theft, drug abuse, motor vehicle theft, arson, street safety and speed reduction. Program coordinators have been appointed to act on behalf of these priorities.

The Child Protection Program has initiated a variety of activities aimed at juvenile crime prevention. These are patrol or locally based programs which are proof positive that where it counts, things are happening, such as:

Crime prevention workshops: These are three-day workshops which analyse the reported offences to the Patrol with year groups of school students and develop strategies to avoid becoming involved in antisocial and criminal behaviour. They also link into the Patrol's Community Consultative Committee, to ensure the relationship remains ongoing, and constructive.

General duties youth program: This program involves general duties police and aims to:

- take a problem solving approach to police/youth issues, advising the Patrol Commander on strategies to improve efficiency;
- act as an advocate for young people's issues (as victims and offenders) in the Patrol; and
- liaise with schools in the Patrol. The general duties youth officers are given the freedom to write their own job description in consultation with other police and the community, and to set their own rosters to enable them to achieve the aims of the program;

  Within this program there are a variety of approaches being taken which reflect local needs. These police have been given the information necessary to appreciate the process of becoming a juvenile offender, and whilst targeting social factors are also spending them with recidivist offenders to explore ways of breaking the cycle.

Underage drinking: A document title 'A Police Response to address the unlawful Consumption of Alcohol by Juveniles' was circulated around the community and has resulted in a strong response from the community and the liquor industry. Presently the issue is being

pursued by our Department which is committed to raise the connection between alcohol consumption and crime, and do what it can to bring about more responsible drinking practices by our youth.

The above only covers a few of the initiatives being undertaken by the New South Wales Police Service. There is still an enormous way to go for there to be effective police involvement in preventing juvenile crime; however, the foundations have been laid for a combined police community approach to this issue in New South Wales and it is my belief that with the support of government and the community great things can be achieved.

Love, the Missing Ingredient

Ron Barr
Youth Insearch
New South Wales

The Australian community is becoming increasingly aware that a growing number of its young people are living in crisis situations brought about by:

- the breakdown of families;
- inability to get work;
- drug and alcohol dependency;
- having to live on the street;
- sexual abuse, including incest; and
- being unloved and unwanted by their families.

The major cause of all the above is the lack of love in the everyday life of young people. It is often taken for granted that our children know that we love them. This is a fallacy. Children must constantly be reassured that they are loved by their parents. Out of love grows trust and compassion which provides the basis for a positive self-image and the strength to survive.

Youth Insearch Project

Youth Insearch was established as a result of a number of young people attending a workshop to discuss the needs of youth in Riverstone, New South Wales.

The material needs of young people were discussed, but it was the general consensus of those present that it was the emotional life awareness and coping skills which were the most important needs for these young people.

Those present expressed a desire to participate in discussion groups conducted at residential venues, held in a relaxed, safe and confidential environment. Consequently, the Youth Insearch Program was written up which included such topics as:

- communication;
- self-esteem;
- drugs, alcohol and the adolescent;
- adolescent sexuality;
- peer and social pressures;
- how to say no; and
- parent/adolescent relationships.

A suitable venue was found to conduct this first camp. It was an overwhelming success, and formed the basis of the many camps that followed.

Youth Insearch is a simple concept based on love, caring and trust, for youth of all lifestyles. It does not become involved in controversial, religious and political issues. The aim is to help young people learn the positive values of life and turn away from drugs, crime and despair.

The program works by encouraging participants to deal with reality and take positive steps in life. It offers support by drawing on the resources of those around to help participants reach their goals more easily. For those with no hassles, this is a learning experience and they provide support for those who need it.

The camps have shown that all people like to live in an atmosphere of care and support. Youth Insearch provides this 'world' away from the other world, where youth are inspired to achieve feelings of love, happiness and stability, and apply these in their everyday lives. For this reason the camps are conducted in hostel-type conditions in tranquil, bushland settings.

Camps are designed and run by youth with a group of supportive adults. An atmosphere of caring and support is created by Youth Insearch leaders who can identify and understand the feelings and hardships of participants because of their own experiences.

Youth find stability, learn the good side of themselves and develop a positive self-image. This results in young people finding alternatives to their current lifestyle and taking on a positive direction with regard to drugs and alcohol and education. It also promotes recovery of the family unit.

The special needs of the participants made it necessary to set up a network of support groups. Like the camps, these groups have grown and have been assisting many other young people find stability, develop a positive self-image and sense of worth as well as helping them to continue schooling or obtain employment.

Over the past three years, nearly 4000 young people, from all over Australia, have successfully participated in the program.

The Youth Insearch concept is not designed to be a lifelong commitment, rather a learning experience. We provide help to those in need, however, it is our ultimate aim that they will become self-reliant.

Youth Insearch was featured on a special ABC TV '7.30 Report'. It had a tremendous impact on the nation and thousands of phone enquiries were received along with a flood of letters and donations.

The documentary shown in 1989 in the ABC's Real Life Series—'I Want to Know What Love is', produced a similar reaction. In fact requests have been received from hundreds of localities throughout Australia to set up Youth Insearch. However, lack of funds is the major item hindering future development of the program at the current time. The New South Wales Government has provided premises for camps. Other than this, Youth Insearch has not been given any financial assistance from any government. The Youth Insearch Program is funded entirely from the private and corporate sector.

To safeguard the interests of Youth Insearch and to assist in the establishment of projects nationally, the Youth Insearch Foundation (Aust) Inc. has been set up. The Foundation is a registered charity and incorporated in New South Wales.

After attending a Youth Insearch camp a schoolteacher wrote a report outlining her impressions of the project. The following extract from this report best sums up Youth Insearch's contribution to society:

> This program gives me faith that our society will work through its troubles. It gives me hope that we will care and support each other rather than fight and put each other down. It convinces me that many lives are being saved from ruin through drugs, and self-destruction, and it follows that this is saving me as a taxpayer a lot of money in the future through giving these people back their personal power, their self-

confidence and self-esteem rather than be future dependents on the welfare system or even perhaps the prison system.

Conclusion

Many people ask, 'Why does the program work?' Simplicity! It is based on love, trust, and compassion. The program was written by young people, and is administered by young people. Many times it is the simple uncomplicated things that work best. Youth Insearch is a low cost solution to a high cost problem.

Early School Leaving
'Whatever happened to that Kid?'[1]

David Crosbie
Director
Grassmere Youth Services
Victoria

In recent times a great deal has been written about youth homelessness, school retention rates, broadening school curriculum options, the need for more skilled workers, youth training, the coordination of youth services, and of course, youth offending.

In many of these discussions the term 'Early School Leaver' plays a major role. The term is used as though we already have a shared understanding of its meaning. It is assumed that all early school leaving is related to factors such as poverty, failure at school, lack of parental education or concern, and negative peer influences. At the same time, the legacy of the 'self-made man' remains and there are still those who consider all early school leavers to be potential 'Alan Bonds'.

Despite some confusion and lack of information, early school leaving is an issue of concern. Most people would agree that young people without access to schooling do not have the same life opportunities as students who can be maintained within the educational system. Lack of education is seen to affect employment options, and access to services such as health, accommodation and further training. This lack of access is often further accentuated by the limited availability of youth services in certain geographical areas.

It is against this background that Grassmere decided to support research into early school leaving in the local area. This paper, based on the booklet from this research has three main components: school based research, research results and case studies.

The School Based Research

Encouraging students to research issues of interest and concern to them is no longer new. The benefits of allowing students to begin to make meaningful connections between ideas and information are becoming self-evident. However, the process is not spontaneous.

How students went about collecting data for this project was described by the classroom teacher:

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[1] Copies of the booklet, *Whatever happened to that Kid*? are available from: Grassmere Youth Services, PO Box 125, DOVETON VIC 3177.

> Contacting the early school leavers and their parents was the most difficult part of the project.
>
> We decided to conduct the interviews by telephone because this was the easiest and safest way we could think of. Everyone had a go at writing a telephone introduction. I chose K's because it was short, to the point and innocent (some of the introductions made it sound like we were from ASIO). K seemed pleased about this. The other girls seemed surprised. The boys just kept making chauvinistic comments. K was a girl in the class the boys used to build up their egos.
>
> With the questionnaires ready, the names and phone numbers listed and the telephone introduction written, it was time to start ringing.
>
> The kids looked nervous. They wouldn't look me in the eye. I gave a pep talk on overcoming fear, how kids had to take risks to succeed, how this project was important, how we promised ESLAG .... What about the money? Come on, ten bucks for the first interview!
>
> But suddenly they all had jobs, calisthenics, football training, ballroom dancing lessons, their parents didn't like them using the telephone. The bell went. I was forcing questionnaires into their pockets as they backed through the door.
>
> That night K contacted an early school leaver's parents and did an interview. K was rapt. The parent had been very friendly. His son (the early school leaver) was going to ring K the next night. K was the only kid who had tried. The boys were quiet. No nasty comments today. K had guts.

The students took part in all aspects of the research including helping design the questionnaires, identifying respondents, conducting the interviews, coding the results into the computer at La Trobe University and even writing their own conclusions. They were paid for their work. As an end in itself this process was worthwhile. At the same time it must be said that these students needed guidance, support and encouragement to stick with the project and although they collected extensive information, their ability to draw logical conclusions was a little disappointing. It is an area that obviously needs work.

Research results—introduction

The results were surprising but before considering the findings, it is important to establish the methodological context. To quote from the booklet:

> The results obtained from this study could not form the basis of generalisations about all early school leavers. The early school leavers and parents who provided the data for this research represented a biased sample in that:
>
> a) all the students attended the same school
>
> b) all lived within the same geographical area
>
> c) all the students and parents questioned had not changed their place of residence since the students left school (up to 5 years earlier)
>
> d) all were contactable by telephone at their home address
>
> e) all agreed to participate and answer questions from students over the phone.

Despite this sample bias, the research may not be as lacking as it first appears. Although the student researchers were inexperienced, they undertook the project without strongly preconceived ideas or vested interests. Their interviews were discussed in detail with the teacher supervising the research to ensure honest procedures were followed.

Findings

Six points should be highlighted from the findings.

- **The large number of early school leavers**

  In one school, 80 students had left prior to completing Year 9 in the last 5 years. The student researchers managed to follow up 30 early school leavers and 31 parents of leavers. Although perhaps not statistically significant, the results are interesting in that they represent the collective viewpoints and experiences of 30 students and 31 parents who have had direct involvement in the decisions and consequences of early school leaving.

- **The large percentage (80 per cent) of parents who were better educated than their children**

  Given the rise in retention rates over the last 20 years, this is rather exceptional.

- **The number of parents (24 out of 31) who tried, but could not convince their children to stay at school**

  Does this mean that at 14.6 years (average age) children make their own decisions? What are the implications for education?

- **The number of early school leavers (approximately two-thirds) who stated they could handle the academic subjects along with their teachers and peers**

  If school was generally a positive experience why did these students decide to leave?

- **For approximately 50 per cent of the students, leaving school early could be seen as a 'good decision'**

  This reflected in the following results:

  12 out of 30 leavers had stable employment (i.e. longer than 12 months)

  18 out of 30 leavers did not regret leaving school

  18 out of 30 parents felt their children had made the right decision leaving school.

- **The students who had negative experiences or attitudes towards school had more difficulty obtaining or maintaining employment**

  This is reflected in the employment patterns of those students who were 'kicked out' or who stated they had negative attitudes to school.

In summary, the most important point to emerge within the sample is that early school leaving is not a product of any one factor—home, school or parental attitudes. Consequently any generalisations about early school leaving must take into account the range of individual cases, from the capable student who accepts a permanent job offer, to the impoverished student 'kicked out' of school and unable to find employment. The results reveal this wide range of student and parental experience.

The Case Studies

The six case studies presented in the booklet are unique. They are about real individuals in real situations and have been compiled by practising teachers, social workers, youth workers and psychologists. Whilst recognising the differences that exist between each case study, as a group they serve to highlight several key issues in relation to early school leaving.

In broad terms the case studies can be divided into two groups; school based and community based.

School based

Each case study describes a student who had difficulty coping with school structures, curriculum and procedures. The behaviour of each of the students created antagonism with peers and some staff. In each case the parents' involvement was arranged by staff.

The staff attempted to implement predominantly individual strategies to change each student's ability to fit in at school. All the teachers achieved some measure of individual change.

Although the outcomes and the follow-up vary slightly in each case, the common focus is clearly upon the difficulty of maintaining some students within the normal school system.

Community based case studies

In each of these case studies, the focus is not integration into school, but integration into the community and in particular, employment.

Each case individual spent time drifting out of school and out of work. The best things in life may be free, but these case studies highlighted the importance of income for young people. The case studies also highlighted the importance of a supportive work environment.

It is clear that the success of each of these case studies is primarily based upon obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment. However, in each there was a significant time gap between leaving school (officially or unofficially) and finding suitable employment. All experienced some sense of alienation from the community during this transitional period. The common focus amongst the workers involved with these youths was to minimise the negative impact of unemployment and achieve integration into the community through stable employment.

Overall, the case studies really serve to identify the mandate that different workers focus upon when dealing with early school leavers. Education ministry staff clearly have no mandate to follow up on, or to provide any ongoing support to students who leave school. This raises many issues in relation to the role of schools and their relationship with other youth service providers.

Conclusion

In some parts of Australia a daring experiment has been conducted over a number of years. It seems that radical non-intervention has been trialled on early school leavers. With high employment the results appear to be about 50:50. Grassmere considers the experiment a failure.

Police and Social Workers: Joint Work with Youth in England

David Jefferies
Acting Detective Inspector
Queensland Police Department

In February and March the author had the opportunity to visit the United Kingdom and study the joint investigation of child abuse by police and social workers. The visit demonstrated the operations of the metropolitan police component of joint teams operations at Shooters Hill (Bexley), Hillingdon and Putney, Manchester, Lancashire and Cheshire.

It also gave the author the opportunity to interview social workers employed by social services departments, as well as members of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

The visit showed that excellent and pioneering work has been done in various parts of the United Kingdom. This work was the subject of the so-called 'Bexley Project'.

The Bexley Project

The Bexley Project as it came to be known grew out of a working party established in 1984 by the metropolitan police 'to review methods of conducting and recording interviews with children who were alleged to be victims of sexual assault'.

Traditional methods of police interviewing, including the taking of a written statement, presented obvious difficulties. Even where the interviewer was able to develop sufficient rapport with a child to discover the nature of the offence, transposing the child's words into an acceptable form of written statement had evidential shortcomings, particularly where the child's vocabulary did not extend to recognised adult terminology.

Police officers were often accused by defence lawyers of putting words into the child's mouth and interpreting the child's language incorrectly.

These established methods did not protect the child from repetitive questioning by various agencies, all of whom had and have an equally important role to play, whether investigative, protective or rehabilitative. The initial purpose of the police review was to study specifically whether or not the police investigative role could be improved by adopting new interview practices, including the use of anatomically correct dolls, line drawings and video recordings, which could subsequently be made available to other agencies.

The police working party, having looked at the issues, reached the view that where an alleged sexual assault on a child involved sexual abuse within the family, or by any individual acting in the caretaker role in respect of the child, the police service could not deal with the complex issues alone. The working party therefore sought and obtained authority to widen its study to include joint investigation of child abuse within the family.

The Bexley London Borough was approached and agreed to take part in the development of new approaches.

Both organisations have a clear duty to investigate allegations of sexual abuse against children, and both organisations give such investigations high priority. Neither organisation had a specific policy about the method of the investigation of sexual abuse and both considered that their existing systems were adequate. However, experience strongly suggested that children who were the subject of alleged sexual abuse were often unable to use the only form of communication that some investigating officers could offer that is, the use of adult spoken language. They were often interviewed repeatedly by officers and other professionals who were not able to discuss sexual matters comfortably. Improved interviewing techniques used by trained and sensitive investigators were seen as means of reducing the trauma for children and of enabling them to give a more comprehensive picture of the abuse in their own words. The Bexley Project attempted to bring coherence to random practices.

The fundamental principle that must be understood and accepted by personnel in both organisations, is that the primary aim of joint investigation is the welfare and protection of the child/victim**.** Other specific aims, such as arrest and/or prosecution, although important, are secondary.

Open communication and close cooperation between police and social services is essential if joint investigation is to be effective.

Selection criteria

The working party decided that each organisation would select its own staff for the project, and that this selection would be made by senior managers or officers at local level. Both organisations agreed that the project workers should:

- be confident in their respective professional disciplines and roles;
- have sufficient professional confidence to adapt established techniques and practices and learn new ones;
- be experienced in child abuse work and interested and sensitive to the needs of children;
- be willing volunteers given the nature of, and training for, the work to be undertaken; and
- be selected from male and female members of each organisation.

For this project the metropolitan police changed its criteria for the rank of investigating officers of sexual offences from the rank of Detective Inspector or above, to Detective Constables. Detective Inspectors and Detective Chief Inspectors still retain responsibility for supervising the investigation. This decision was agreed by the police for the following reasons:

- As the project widened the scope of police involvement, that is, police would respond to referrals based on suspicion, concern, vague allegation, as well as on direct disclosures, and would conduct investigations that would not necessarily result in prosecution; there were insufficient Detective Inspectors (DI) and Detective Chief Inspectors (DCI) to ensure their availability for investigating all child sexual abuse referrals.

- Use of Detective Constables would provide a broader base of cover; and with their level of training they would be able to provide the standard of investigation required.

The working party decision to select male and female social workers and police officers to act as the investigative team was based on the desire for the project to provide:

a) a recognised parenting model for the child

b) an element of choice for the child in the disclosure process as some children may find it easier to talk to an investigator of a particular sex or profession.

c) A model for the child of a non-abusing man who can take responsibility for protecting him or her against further abuse (McLean & McAndrew 1987).

Although both organisations attempted to recruit both males and females, the majority of police project workers were male and those from social services, female. Participation in the project did not mean a release from other duties because it was important for the newly trained staff to pass on their new knowledge and skills to their colleagues.

Aims of Project

The aims of the Joint Investigative Project were to reduce the trauma for children in having to suffer several interviews, and to develop a closer working relationship between police and social workers. For the purposes of briefing prospective project workers these aims were developed and stated more explicitly by the trainers as:

- reducing the number of occasions children are interviewed;
- providing group support for difficult decisions and actions and enhancing morale and commitment;
- establishing a deeper understanding of individual roles which in turn leads to an enhanced understanding of child sexual abuse and how to deal with it;
- increasing effective communication between professionals about child sexual abuse—the sharing of information builds up more accurate and comprehensive knowledge of individual cases and broader general knowledge; and
- enabling services to be delivered to the victim and family in a coordinated manner.

A further list of aims has been prepared more recently. They are to improve the quality of service to victims of child sexual abuse and their families by:

- enhancing coordination, cooperation and communication between social services and police (joint investigations);
- providing specialist training for investigators;

- increasing the awareness of child sexual abuse and professional roles and responsibilities;
- removing interview repetition;
- removing medical examination repetition;
- providing improved interview and medical examination facilities;
- introducing interview techniques with enhanced communication to aid disclosure;
- providing at all stages of an investigation
  (i) protection for victims
  (ii) child and family care;
- providing effective materials for suspect interviews; and
- improved decision making.

'The joint investigative project was born out of research into new methods of recording police interviews with suspects of any crime' (McLean 1987, p. 71).

Following the success of the initial project at Bexley, it was decided that such joint investigation would be utilised in a number of areas throughout the region policed by the metropolitan police and where the local authority was prepared for its social security workers to be involved. The visit to Putney and Hillingdon allowed the author to see such teams in operation and speak to staff who had undertaken such training and who were involved in putting the theory into practice.

The development of the Bexley Project might best be summarised by the words of one of the police officers involved: 'lots of meetings, lots of frustration, lots of procedural brick walls in trying to find a working interface between the police and social services' (McLean 1987, p. 73).

Training

The working party developed a package to include four elements thought to be essential for training in this area of work:

- self-awareness in attitudes to joint working;
- self-awareness in attitudes to sexual abuse;
- procedural and legal aspects of child sexual abuse; and
- technical skills of interviewing.

Procedural elements of the project were covered by the project trainers as were aspects of self-awareness. These included exercises in stereotyping and the recognition of respective professional roles, in making disclosures of a sexual kind, the experience and understanding of sexual abuse within the family, and alternative terminology for different parts of the body. Outside speakers were brought in to cover the nature and manifestations of sexual abuse, skills in interviewing children and the use of technical equipment and aids to interviewing such as video, dolls, line drawings (McLean 1987, pp. 73-4).

The effects on participants in these training courses can be judged by their comments:

> There was a gulf in training between the two professions. They chat, we make decisions straight away and act on them. In the police you're told what to do, training wasn't like that. The exercise of describing a previous sexual experience and being questioned about it showed you how difficult it must be for a child.
>
> I was always dubious about child sexual abuse, but now I realise, when you talk to kids about small abuses, the large ones must be happening too.
>
> It's the best social work course I've ever been on. The self-awareness worked very well. There was a certain closeness at the end and respect for each other's role. I still have some reservations about some police, and some social workers.
>
> It was enlightening to see police officers as vulnerable as me. They were able to share stereotypes and we accepted our different roles.
>
> Exercises of getting to grips with your own feelings about sex and putting your own feelings about sex and putting yourself in the position of the child are invaluable. The matching of four police officers and four social workers was vital. We became closer over the days and gained a mutual awareness of each others role.

Training for Supervisors

It was generally agreed that the issue of training for project supervisors was not adequately addressed. No specific training course was provided for supervisors before the project became operable and although they were free to attend parts of the workers' training course some did not. A one-day course for supervisors was subsequently arranged when it was clear that this had been a significant omission (McLean 1987, pp. 77-8).

Actual Investigation

A satisfactory investigation requires a solid base from analysing background information from all available information sources. These have included the NSPCC, the Probation Service, Schools, Education Welfare Services, Health Visitors, GPs, the Clinic of Child and Family Psychiatry, Senior Clinical Medical Officers, other local authorities to whom the family have been known, Child Abuse Registers and police records.

The sequence of events in any investigation undertaken by these teams depends upon the nature and circumstances of that individual case. However, there are a number of areas that are relevant to most investigations. These are as follows:

1. Interview the referrer or informant to determine the exact nature of the referral and the grounds on which it is based. This person may be able to suggest corroborative sources. The informant may request anonymity and this request must be a consideration balanced against not receiving the information. In any event, identity of the informant is kept anonymous initially even though they may be asked to provide a statement and later give evidence. The informant should always be told of the outcome, even if only in broad terms.

2. Visit the family. Speak to the guardians and always speak to the child and any other children there.

3. If the alleged abuse is or may have been recent, an early medical examination should be considered. Forensic evidence is important and may be lost if there is any delay in this part of the process. Medical examination should always be considered, but is less urgent forensically, if the above took place sometime in the past. Usually the medical examination and interview should be linked (*see* 6 below). In ideal circumstances, plan the medical examination to follow the interview. The facts revealed may influence the examination and the interview may build the confidence of the child and allow an examination to take place without undue trauma.

4. Seek consent for: interviewing the child; a medical examination; the use of video recording by other agencies or for training purposes; and ensure that a written consent form is provided for this purpose.

5. If consent is refused (for example the parent may be the abuser) consider the removal of the child to a place of safety and take legal advice on medical examination.

6. Interview the victim in a specially equipped recording room.

7. Interview any witnesses and obtain written statements. Any child witnesses, particularly those in the family may be interviewed using the video room, remembering other children in the family may have witnessed abuse or been victims themselves.

8. Interview the suspect. Usually this will occur at the police station but interim interviews may take place elsewhere, such as at home. (McLean 1987).

Coordination phase

Within three working days of the appointment of the joint investigators, the progress of the investigation must be coordinated. The responsibility for this phase of the investigation lies with the Team Leader, Central Child Abuse Service, and involves the investigators and their supervisors. The purpose of the coordination phase is to review the case, discuss what further investigative action may be needed and what recommendations are to be made if a case conference is called. Some other areas for discussion at this phase are:

- arrangements for the victim and others at risk;
- action to be taken regarding the offender;
- the supervision of the family;
- any further enquiries which may be necessary;
- determining whether a further coordinating meeting is needed before the case conference; and
- what recommendations are to be made to a case conference if called.

The advantages of the coordination phase are:

- to ensure that all necessary action has been or will be taken;
- to provide a briefing for and review by the Team Leader (Central Child Abuse Service) and the investigator's supervisors;
- to ensure that all decisions take account of the views of both agencies; and
- to ensure that police and social services' approach to the case conference is determined.

Coordination meetings do not necessarily involve individuals meeting at a particular time in a particular venue, as this would often present logistical problems and delay decision making. Coordination meetings can often be conducted through telephone discussions.

Formal coordination meetings appear to be particularly necessary in cases where:

- the agreed procedure has not been adhered to, thus leading to difficulties;
- there is disagreement between police and social services during the initial investigation;
- there is disagreement regarding future action; or
- the cases are complicated and difficult (McLean 1987, pp. 13-14).

Workers spoken to who were involved in joint investigations were very positive in their support for this approach. The comments shared with the author included the following:

> Police on the scheme are more open with their view than other police officers. Perhaps it's the training and working with the social workers, it rubs off after a while.
>
> All the workers have been very 'feeling' with children. You're inclined to think that police go in with two left feet, but I think they've been very caring. It's very comforting to know you have a policeman to protect you in aggressive situations.
>
> Joint work has been a good experience. It's given credibility and trust. We have complementary skills, and legal and statutory rights. The police find it easier to speak to hostile people, they provide a scene for you to do your work. They haven't gone off doing their own thing.
>
> It's working well. It takes longer but it enables a fuller investigation and better feedback. There are very good relationships at ground level. At the end of the day you may not get any more evidence but we may get a case history which is helpful. I'm impressed with the dedication of social workers who get appalling pay for the hours they work.
>
> You get a second opinion. On your own you might not have made the right decision. Now you get the caring side as well. Before, the police were out to prosecute the offender and Social Services to look after why has this person done it. Now there's a compromise. I'd rather work with a social worker than a second police officer because you get a different angle. It does take a lot longer, but you do the job much more thoroughly.

> It would be better to work with the same social worker to build up joint working skills. There's not quite the same relationship with people from the other course.

Most workers spoken to acknowledged the impact that the Cleveland incident, and the Report of Justice Butler-Sloss (1987), had on their work. There was consensus on the positive impact that the joint policy document 'Working Together' had on their work (Department of Health and Social Security and the Welsh Office 1988). This document is a 'guide to arrangements for inter-agency cooperation for the protection of children from abuse'. It recognises that 'in every area there is a need for a close working relationship between social service departments, the police force, medical practitioners, community health workers and others who share a common aim to protect the child at risk. Cooperation at the individual case level needs to be supported by joint agency and management policies for child abuse, consistent with their policies and plans for related service provision' (p. 38). The release and implementation of this document has certainly greatly assisted in creating a climate for 'working together'.

Manchester and Yorkshire

In Manchester and Yorkshire joint investigations and training initiatives have been in place for some time.

Anne Bannister and the staff of the Manchester Child Sexual Abuse Unit have done some excellent work in demonstrating the benefits of adopting a child-centred philosophy in dealing with child sexual abuse.

The unit considers that it is important at the investigative stage to be clear about a child-centred philosophy and to keep it in mind throughout the investigation. In their view: 'the key person in an investigation, the only person, apart from the abuser, who has all the evidence, and the person who is most likely to tell the truth about what happened, is the child. Even a pre-verbal or severely mentally handicapped child may be able to demonstrate with the help of dolls and puppets, what has happened. The medical evidence will be another part of the jigsaw, an additional piece of information that may confirm what the child is saying. The police, who are also a protective agency, must be informed as soon as a definite complaint occurs. Then a full assessment of safety must be made.

The Manchester Child Sexual Abuse Unit look at nine factors, all considering the child:

- The safety of all the children of both sexes if the abuser lives in or near the home;
- If the abuser lives elsewhere with other children, their safety must be assessed;
- If the abuser is arrested and given bail, conditions not to visit the home should be imposed;
- If this happens can the non-abusing parent be relied upon to protect and supervise the child?
- Can the non-abusing parent resist pressure or persuasion from the abuser?
- What is the non-abusing parent's attitude to the abuser and how will this affect the child?
- What is the non-abusing parent's attitude to the disclosing child?

- Has the child a protective ally for support?
- Is the vulnerable abused child at risk from other adults?

A case conference is called and local guidelines followed. This conference delineates a core group, a small number of people who can work directly with the child, the siblings, the non-abusing parent and the abuser. The questions to be asked on assessment will already have indicated some treatment areas, for example, the necessity for a protective ally for the child. The questions also point to the need for work with the siblings and the non-abusing parent and for work to be done on the abused child's relationship with her mother, but the primary focus must be on the abused child' (Bannister 1988).

The work done by Anne Bannister and Bobbie Print (1988) in developing a model for 'Assessment Interviews in Suspected Cases of Child Sexual Abuse' is most impressive.

The flow chart of their three phases interview approach can be found in Appendix 1.

The Rockdale scheme represents a good foundation for the development of child centred practice and the minimisation of secondary victimisation of children who have been sexually abused. Principles of intervention have been clearly formulated in the development of their protocols, in their training course, and in the monitoring of practice.

The value of this scheme lies in the skills, energies and commitments of police officers and social workers 'on the ground'. The Manchester experience has led to the development of good working relationships which minimise inconsistent responses to children. As a result, children on the whole do not have to repeat their stories to personnel from different agencies, are not interviewed insensitively or in inappropriate locations and are not subjected to repeated medical examinations. Disclosures are occurring more often and retractions are not. Children are being believed.

Whilst Cleveland and its approach has certainly had major effects on child protection, it has also heightened awareness of the need for, and a commitment to, working together.

If we in Australia are to improve child protection, the key will be cooperation between agencies and networking and this can be enhanced by joint training.

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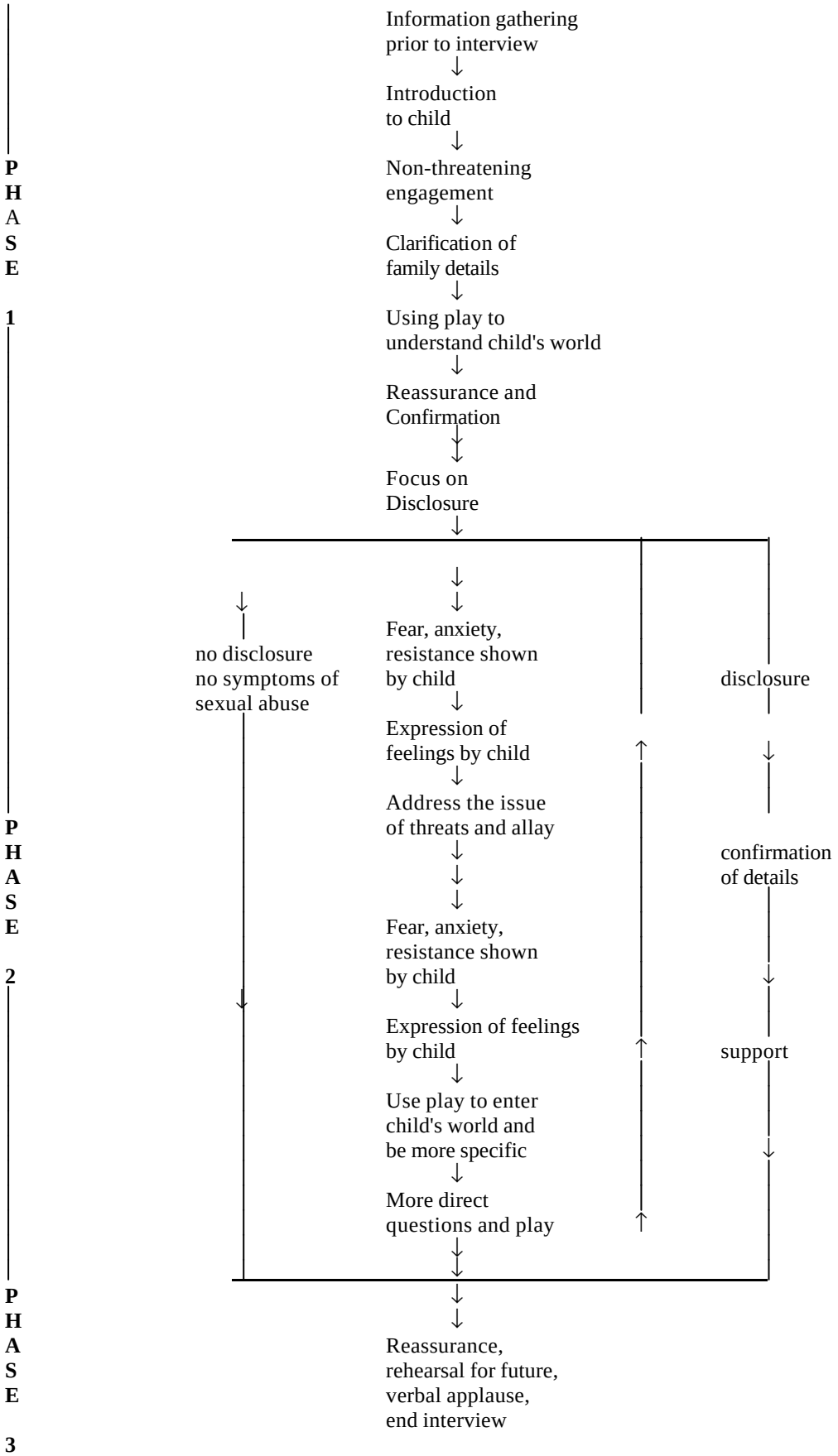
Appendix 1 - Assessment Interviews



Source: Bannister & Print 1988

Youth Work¾ Taking it to the Streets

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The Law Foundation of New South Wales Travelling Fellowship Program allows for workers in the field to obtain grants of up to $10,000 to explore their interests in legal education, community access to the law, crime prevention and related areas, overseas. As part of this program the author had the opportunity to examine youth crime prevention work. Initial contacts were through the Justice, Home Affairs and Youth Affairs Ministries, and through contacts made previously by a number of colleagues.

As in Australia, identifying projects specifically aimed at youth crime prevention was a difficult task, but it was discovered that The Netherlands, France, England and Sweden, have a range of services dealing with the 'youth problem'. These services included recreational programs, drop-in centres, employment and training programs, social welfare services and certainly some crime prevention services.

Youth work has its roots in recreational services, based on the increased leisure time available to young people in the 20th century. The Scouting movement, church based youth groups and sporting clubs were the first expressions of a youth service. These services provided skills, religious training, a social environment for young people and in short, kept them occupied.

In the 60s, 70s and 80s, youth work has changed with the political and economic front moving into areas of welfare, education, employment training and crime prevention; however, youth services predominantly are still working to keep young people occupied.

There seems to be a basic belief held by Australians, and in other countries, that 'idle hands make mischief'. Whereas a picture of a group of fifteen-year-olds having a picnic in a rural paddock conjures up feelings of 'how wonderful it is to see them enjoying themselves'; the idea of a group of young people hanging around a mall, smoking and being loud, conjures up feelings of insecurity and apprehensions of violence.

On the streets late at night—people will cross the street rather than face the onslaught of a band of young people having a night on the town.

Youth crime prevention, as the community perceives it, has two missions:

- to reduce crime in the community; and
- to reduce the perception of crime in the community.

[1] The Youth and the Law Project is a Youth Crime Prevention project in South-Western Sydney.

The community not only wants to be safe it also wants to feel safe. This is the challenge that has been formally placed on the shoulders of the youth services of The Netherlands and France and more informally in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Australia.

The Netherlands

In 1984, the Dutch Parliament commissioned an enquiry into crime prevention. The commission of enquiry headed by Dr H. J. Roethof turned in its findings in 1985 in the form of a report 'Society and Crime'. The report provided a blue-print for the development and implementation of a range of crime prevention projects over the subsequent five years and fifty million guilders were allocated to the task.

Over 250 projects were funded under this program to achieve one or more of the report's three objectives:

- to develop an urban environment according to town planning and architectural criteria which will present the fewest possible opportunities for crime;
- to strengthen the bond between the younger generation and the rest of society;
- to strengthen occupational surveillance by drivers, janitors, shop staff, sports coaches, youth workers and others in respect of potential offenders.

It is the third point which has been adopted by the youth sector with a vengeance, because it is easy to do and because it is easily explained to local decision makers. If young people are watched all the time they cannot do anything wrong.

In The Netherlands a number of drop-in centres are funded under this criteria. These drop-in centres are located adjacent to local shopping centres. Their role is to provide activities for young people during times in which they would otherwise be unoccupied. Coffee shop, pool, sports and pinball facilities are provided and visits to city theatres and attractions are also organised through the centre.

The role of centre workers is to ensure the centre is open and able to provide these activities, to provide information and advice to young people in need and usually to spend part of their time physically bringing young people to the centre.

These sorts of activities are, of course, not unique to The Netherlands: there are also operations in housing estates in the United Kingdom and throughout Sweden.

This seems an expression of what youth crime prevention should not be—and too often is, surveillance. No matter how many young potential offenders we watch, and how long we watch them—there will always be times when this surveillance is lacking.

Youth drop-in centres make the community feel safe—they know where young people are—but if that is simply their role—let us be honest and leave it to the police. It also has the danger of accusing young people of the crime of being young! For what reason do we justify making it unacceptable for young people to be itinerant, unoccupied and 'hanging around'?

A solution to this situation is:

- recognise that young people have a legitimate right to be on the street;
- engage in crime prevention/youth work that is developmental and not surveillance;
- meet young people on their own turf; and
- have services which respond to the needs of young people.

Some ideas

Zwolle Randgroepenwerk Project (Edge-Group work project) This project, loosely translated as marginal group project, was set up in 1985 to combat rising rates of youth crime, particularly in the areas of petty theft, vandalism and a disturbing rise in crimes of violence perpetrated by the youth of the region.

Zwolle is a small, semi-industrial town in the North Midland of The Netherlands. In typical Dutch style, the town focuses on the old town, a collection of shops and 15th century buildings principally the sole domain of tourists, and moving outwards through expensive residential, and light industrial areas through to the Buitenveldt—or the outer suburbs, made up of high and low rise public housing.

The town has a population of about 80,000 and suffers from disproportionately high rates of homelessness, youth unemployment and a large community of Turkish and Surinamese immigrants.

The Project is an excellent example of taking crime prevention out of a centre and into the young people's environment.

It consists of four workplaces decentralised throughout the region. Three workplaces are based in housing estates—generally a converted shopfront or unit; whilst the fourth is shared with a secondary school, adjacent to the town centre.

The project aims to reduce crime by meeting young peoples' needs.

The Zwolle Project makes contact with young people, discovering what particular needs of theirs are lacking and working with these young people and the community to meet these needs.

The Project began in response to a series of particularly brutal attacks on the region's gay community by a group of young people. These young people were, at the time, living in a squat, near the town centre.

The Project team made contact with these young people and began to work with them to fill their most pressing need—that of a home.

The Project staff set about gaining the permission of the housing corporation to hand over the lease of the premises they were staying in, in return for which the young people would renovate it. The team also made contact with local building materials and suppliers, and local tradespeople, to provide materials and training for the group.

Over two years the group renovated two buildings, after which they gained employment in the local glasshouse manufacturing industry. They are no longer involved in the reported thuggery against the local community.

The story is not, of course, as simple as that. It took a great deal of time and effort to gain the trust and support of the group, and a great deal more time and effort to gain the support of the local community for the venture.

This initial project has formed the model for all the work of the project.

The essential elements of the needs-based approach Make contact with young people through police, schools, drop-in centres, other contacts;

- identify their needs through discussion; and
- use community resources to give the young people opportunities to meet those needs.

The advantages of this approach are that if young people control the process, it operates within their own territory and it brings young people into contact with the wider community.

The major disadvantage is that it is a labour intensive service. The Zwolle Project employs twenty-two staff who, over the course of one year, work with about sixty young people. It is to the credit of the local community that they consider the quality of service provided to young people—of much greater importance than quantity.

Youth service ¾ the Mission Locale A further example of the needs based approach to youth crime prevention can be seen with the Mission Locale idea.

Often the approach of youth workers is to 'look after' the needs of young people. If they need a place to stay—we find one, if they need something to do—we provide them with a range of toys; if they are having problems at school—we visit their teachers and sort them out. In other words we take on the problem as our own, and answer it.

The end result of this method of operation is that youth workers become very skilled at gathering information, solving problems and gaining access to services. The young people under their care, however, come out of the process with one problem solved, one need met; but generally without the skills to solve even that same problem again.

This process is labour intensive, quick and easy, and self-perpetuating. It also continues the process perpetuated by most of the community—that of taking control out of the hands of young people.

The principal problem young people face in having their needs met, lies in:

- lack of knowledge of 'who' makes the decisions;
- lack of knowledge of how to find out who makes the decision;
- lack of assertiveness and information gathering skills; and
- the 'counter run-around'.

Mission Locales These were set up in France as part of a broad range of crime prevention programs under the banner of 'Bonnemaison'.

The centre was set up to facilitate the employment and social integration of young people. Young people come to the centre for information. Typically young people come because they suffer problems of unemployment, homelessness or difficulties with the education system.

Staff at the centre provide a description of the existing services that can help the young people. For example, if a young person is unemployed, staff will explain how to gain access to social security payments, how to seek employment and which services can assist with emergency financial aid.

It is then up to the young people themselves to go out and take advantage of these services. The staff will often make appointments; however, they will not fill out forms or see the people themselves.

Through this process, the clients learn the 'nitty gritty' of making oneself understood by counter staff, how to fill out forms, how to find these services—all the information that will assist them in doing it themselves (or providing information for their peers)—the next time.

There is, as well, a fail-safe mechanism. Staff monitor the progress of young people through these services, to ensure that they do not again, fall through the gaps.

The approach of the staff is a holistic one. The 'Mission Locale' recognises that there is rarely an occasion where a young person is 'just homeless'. The staff maintain contact with young people until all their needs have been met.

Conclusion

The important features to crime prevention projects are:

- ensuring young people maintain control;
- operating in young people's environments and not the worker's place of safety; and
- ensuring that the process is a developmental one.

Finally, an enterprise in Stockholm illustrates the risks and rewards of this sort of process.

Sweden: City Gruppen

Stockholm had a particular problem with a group of twenty or so Skinheads. The Skinheads were the perpetrators of violent attacks particularly against blacks and shopkeepers in Kungsgatan, near the city.

Most of the young people whose homes are on the outskirts of Stockholm live, for all intents and purposes, on the streets of Kungsgatan.

It fell to the City Gruppen project to do something about this problem.

City Gruppen aimed to:

- get them off the streets;
- reduce their excessive drinking; and
- remove the opportunity for right-wing groups to use these young people to their own advantage.

They tried traditional methods of drawing these young people back into society; counselling, providing activities such as music studios and eventually incarceration of the ring leaders—with little success. Eventually they decided to meet the group on their own terms.

The group had expressed the interest in having a Skinhead clubhouse in Kungsgatan. This, they argued, would allow them to play music, discuss Skinhead issues, and obviously to drink within the confines of a building, rather than in public view.

City Gruppen agreed to this idea provided the group would accept the supervision of a social worker. The group agreed to this and City Gruppen began looking for a building. Obviously nowhere could be found. It was not surprising that owners of particular buildings were not thrilled by the idea of letting their premises for a Skinhead clubhouse. Eventually, a building company came to the rescue by providing two demountable buildings for the Skinheads, and the City of Stockholm provided vacant land and up to 90,000kr[2] to kit it out. The group now had a clubhouse, complete with furniture, fridge, sound system and telephones!

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[2] A$1.00 = approximately 5kr (as at October 1991)

For some time this seemed to appease the Skinheads, however, after eighteen months the problems soon began. Excessive drinking, lack of organisation and dissidence within the group eventually led to the clubhouse being virtually destroyed, and the social worker being almost strangled by the leader of this group.

Rather than abandon the project, discussions between police and City Gruppen culminated in a decision to leave the group to their own devices and to assist them in solving their own problems by providing them with funding to employ their own staff. With funding the group was offered a challenge. They understood that this funding would only continue if the funds were used wisely.

There were in fact two groups of Skinheads; a small group of those who were extremely negative and searching for a licence to attack society, and a much larger group of 'positive Skinheads' who were interested in music, clothes and hairstyle of being a Skinhead. In short, the positive Skinheads kicked out the negative ones.

Why did it work?

- The negative Skinheads enjoyed being ostracised by society—it was part of their culture;
- by providing the things they asked for, society was welcoming them in—on the Skinhead terms, not society's; and
- the Skinheads were given control.

Could we do this in Australia?

Youth Justice Reform in New Zealand

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On 28 May 1989, Royal Assent was given to the New Zealand Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 and the Act became effective on 1 November 1989.

The new law introduces principles and procedures for dealing with young people who offend against the law which are in contrast to those of our previous enactments—the Child Welfare Act 1925 and its successor, the Children and Young Persons Act 1974.

The new law, as in the case of its predecessors, covers children and young persons in need of care and protection, as well as those who offend against the law. There is to be, however, a jurisdictional separation between these two groups, to the extent that measures for dealing with young offenders can be seen as an act within an act, without the blurring of principles and processes between care and protection and youth justice, which characterised the previous approach.

Theoretical base

Post-war debate in most western countries about how best to deal with young offenders has centred on two basic paradigms—the 'welfare model' and the 'justice model'. The two models are often represented as opposites, with clear distinctions of ideology, practice imperatives and outcome goals. Ideologically, there has been a shift in New Zealand towards the principles underlying the justice model, but without embracing that model's more doctrinaire aspects, particularly those aspects which contribute to the model's 'just desserts' pseudonym.

Rather than embrace the 'just desserts' approach which attributes offending to full choice of the offender who must be held responsible for the offence, we have attempted to see the principle of justice in a wider context as argued by Holt (1985). The origins of crime may be seen in a broader macro-economic and social context, with well-known relationships, for example, between incidences of crime and unemployment.

A related strand of thought which emerges from research is that there is little to distinguish most young offenders who are caught, from those who are not. Formal involvement in re-offending occurs to a greater extent among those who are caught than amongst those who are dealt with without such formal involvement. This may be explained in part by labelling theory, which argues that formal involvement initiates a process of self-labelling, and labelling by others, of the offender as criminal, thus helping to determine further

decisions to offend. It may also be explained by the increased opportunity to associate with, and learn from other offenders (Woodward 1985).

There is abundant research showing that juvenile justice systems work in a discriminatory way against members of ethnic minorities and working-class youth. Welfare considerations play a significant part in this discrimination (Holt 1985). The New Zealand experience supports this finding. Maori and Pacific Island youth are more fundamentally at risk of the more coercive, intrusive welfare dispositions, under the guise of treatment, and in pursuit of rehabilitation, than are their Caucasian counterparts. New Zealand recognises the fact that most professional decision-makers in the youth justice system are from the dominant white culture, and moreover are rarely identified as working class, contributing directly to this state of affairs.

Social background

A number of issues began to emerge contemporaneously which have affected the shape of our new legislation. These can be summarised as:

- A growing dissatisfaction amongst practitioners about the effectiveness of their work with young offenders. They laboured under the unreal expectation that they could control offending behaviour through treatment programs, and gradually a loss of confidence in the goal of rehabilitation built up.

- New and more determined efforts by Maoridom to secure self-determination in a mono-cultural legal system which demonstrably discriminates against them, and holds of little value Maori custom, values and beliefs. The Maori renaissance contributed in turn to a renewed awareness of the plight of Pacific Island cultures in New Zealand society.

- Related to Maori concerns, but also an issue for the wider community, was the growing rejection of the paternalism of the state and its professionals, and a need to redress the imbalance of power between the state and its agents, and individuals and families engaged by the criminal justice system.

- Sixty years of paternalistic welfare legislation had little impact on levels of offending behaviour. Costly therapeutic programs that congregated young offenders, particularly in residential settings, emerged as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Decarceration and deinstitutionalisation became buzz words for both those seeking to free up locked-in resources for other uses, and those seeking more positive outcomes for individuals.

- Concerns emerged for more decided justice, in both process and disposals. Courts were beginning to dismiss cases where prosecuting authorities had failed to exercise strict procedural safeguards in the questioning and/or arrest of juveniles, and the indeterminate guardianship order as a response to the serious young offender was being reduced. Increasing numbers of young offenders were being sent to the adult court for sentence—over 2,000 in 1988—an indication of the inability of the juvenile system to deal with them effectively.

The Reform Process

The newly elected 1984 Labor Government determined that problems with the care and protection aspects of the Children and Young Persons Act 1974, could not be remedied by amendment, and authorised a full review for children and young persons legislation. It could not have been conceived at that time, either how long or how radical the outcomes would be. The legislation has been debated exhaustively in New Zealand, over a four-year period. Much of the attention focussed on care and protection issues—arguments for and against mandatory reporting of child abuse; arguments for and against professional expert power; debate about whether it was possible to harness the energy and commitment of extended family systems, in European, Maori and Pacific Island cultures, to counter the incidence and effects of physical and sexual abuse. The reforms underway in youth justice elicited little debate, either because they were swamped by the child abuse debate, or because they had widespread acceptance. The process of reform occurred went as follows:

- A government appointed working party (without Maori representation) was appointed in 1984.
- A public discussion document was issued by the working party in December 1984, and submissions were called for.
- The government introduced its Bill in December 1986, with the Bill following the line adopted by the working party in most major respects.
- There was widespread public dissatisfaction with the Bill, expressed to the Select Committee of the House of Representatives. Maori people were particularly critical of its failure to establish culturally relevant ways of approaching care and protection and offending issues. Criticisms also centre on the Bill's complex, bureaucratic and professionally dominated provisions.
- Following an election in August 1987 and the return of the Labor Government, the new Minister of Social Welfare, having considered the weight of submissions about the Bill, established a new working party within the Department of Social Welfare to review the Bill, and to advise the Select Committee how the Bill could be recast to make it simpler, more flexible, more culturally relevant, and more directed to providing resources for services rather than for infrastructure.
- That working party reported in December 1987, and from February to April 1988, the Select Committee travelled to Maori marae and Pacific Island centres throughout the country, hearing submissions on how to recast the Bill.
- From April 1988 until April 1989 when the Bill was returned to the House for its second reading the Select Committee and officials worked together to produce what was, in effect, a new piece of legislation—one that had an immediately favourable response from Maori and Pacific Island interests. The young offender aspects achieved almost total political unanimity.

Features of the New Law

Principles

Youth justice aspects of the Act have their own set of principles, distinct from principles governing care and protection issues.

Summarised, the principles state that:

- Unless the public interest requires otherwise, criminal proceedings should not be instituted against a child or young person if there is an alternative means of dealing with the matter.
- Criminal proceedings are not to be instituted solely to provide assistance or services needed to advance the welfare of the young person or their family group.
- Measures taken should be designed to strengthen families and foster their own means of dealing with their offending young.
- Young offenders should be kept in the community where practicable and consonant with the need to ensure public safety.
- Age of itself is a mitigating factor in determining whether a sanction should be imposed, and in determining the nature of the sanction.
- Sanctions should take the form most likely to maintain and promote the development of the offender within their family group, and be the least restrictive form appropriate.
- Any measures taken should have regard to the interests of victims.
- The vulnerability of young people entitles them to special protection during any investigation relating to the commission or possible commission of an offence by them.

Limitations of arrest, and procedural safeguards during investigations

For the first time in New Zealand, the law limits the power of police, or other enforcement agencies, to arrest in preference to proceeding by summons. Currently, in excess of 60 per cent of young persons facing charges in the Children's and Young Persons' Courts in New Zealand, have been arrested. There is some evidence in the literature that suggests that whether or not a young offender has been arrested affects later disposals. New procedural law is introduced to govern enforcement authorities' actions in questioning children and young persons they suspect of offences, and to establish the rights of the young people to consult with others. No statement made by a child or young person will be admissible as evidence, unless made in the presence of a trusted or neutral adult, not being a member of the enforcement authority.

There has been an anticipated reaction by some enforcement agencies to what they regard as law aimed at frustrating criminal investigations and lacking in trust of police generally. The legislature was persuaded by objective evidence, however, that current procedural guidelines contained in judicial and police rules, are not always adhered to. These rules now have the force of law.

A new diversionary process

Previous diversionary mechanisms adopted in New Zealand have been shown to have two major defects:

- they have been largely constructed around panels of officials and professionals—the Children's Boards and Youth Aid Conferences—quasi-judicial bodies; and
- they have always been bypassed whenever police exercised their powers of arrest.

With more than 60 per cent of young offenders appearing on arrest, less than 40 per cent of those who appeared had been considered for a diversionary option. Worse still, there was evidence (Morris & Young 1987) that the diversionary mechanisms were having a net-widening effect, by drawing into their ambit very petty offenders who should and could have been handled in much less formal ways.

The policy imperatives, then, were to find a diversionary mechanism that was not bypassed by arrest, that was not susceptible to net-widening, and which eliminated the quasi-judicial panel approach. The result has become known as the Family Group[1] Conference, (FGC) convened and facilitated by a new statutory official, known as the Youth Justice Coordinator (YJC).

Features of the diversionary process are:

- Where a child or young person is charged with an offence, no information may be laid until a FGC has been held. The prosecuting authority must refer the matter to the YJC.
- Where the offender has been arrested, the court may not enter a plea, but must refer the matter to a YJC to convene a FGC. The exceptions are where the charge is a purely indictable offence, or where on legal advice, the young person indicates a non-guilty plea.
- The FGC is authorised to find alternatives to prosecution in dealing with an offender who admits guilt.
- Families are entitled to deliberate in private and to arrive at decisions and plans, which must then be negotiated with the officials present.
- Where a FGC agrees on an alternative measure, the YJC is bound to try to persuade the prosecuting authority to accept that decision.
- Where a FGC does not agree on an alternative, the matter proceeds to court for adjudication. The law provides, however, that the court be informed of the wishes of the Family Group, so that prosecuting authorities may be held accountable should they override without acceptable cause, the plans, decisions or recommendations of the Family Group.

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[1] A 'Family Group' is defined in law to recognise different cultural understanding of family. It includes whanau, hapu and iwi for Maori, and equivalents in the various Pacific Island cultures. Basically, it means extended family, something more than the nuclear care giver family. A 'Family Group Conference' is a meeting of the culturally defined family group, with officials.

- Where the Family Group Conference is unable to prevent a prosecution, the conference has a role in advising courts on appropriate sanctions for the young offender.

Court Jurisdiction

The new law maintains the distinction between a child and young person. The legal age of criminal responsibility is ten years, but except for charges of murder and manslaughter, no child between ten and thirteen years may undergo criminal proceedings. Instead, they must be dealt with under care and protection legislation, that is civil proceedings, which are now to be heard in the New Zealand Family Court system (previously confined to marriage dissolution and child custody issues).

A young person is defined as someone of fourteen years and up to the age of seventeen years. A new court, known as the Youth Court, of purely criminal jurisdiction and applying due process procedural safeguards, has been established for young persons charged with offences.

Features of the new court are:

- No judge may be designated a Youth Court judge unless he or she is suitable to deal within the jurisdiction by means of his or her training, experience, personality and understanding of the significance and importance of different cultural perspectives and values.

- All young persons must be legally represented with the court appointing a youth advocate where no private arrangements have been made.

- Courts, may, in addition, appoint lay advocates, to ensure the court is made aware of all cultural matters relevant to the proceedings.

- The Family Group has a status in any proceedings and has the right to make representations.

- Hearings of the Youth Court are to be held separately from any other court, and courts are to minimise waiting times, the association of offenders awaiting hearings, and the extent to which parents are obliged to congregate in common waiting facilities, by scheduling hearing times.

Court Orders

The Youth Court will have the standard disposal options of discharge, admonishment, conditional discharge, and orders for fines, restitution and forfeiture of property.

Disposals involving long-term and more coercive sanctions, have been formed with regard to the following principles (*see* Freiberg, Fox & Hogan 1988):

> **Proportionality:** the principle which limits excessive attempts at rehabilitation and open-ended orders, where these could not be applied to adults committing the same offence, and which recognises the mitigating factor of youthfulness, and youth time-frames.
>
> **Equality**: the principle that responses to like offences should be similar, that seeks to limit the influence of personal, social, cultural or economic status factors

in determining individual outcomes, and which limits the more coercive, controlling sanctions to certain classes of offence, rather than classes of offenders.

Determinancy: the principle that all sanctions should have definite limits, known in advance.

Specificity: the principle that the exact nature of any sanctions should be known, in advance.

Frugality: the principle that the sanction should be the least restrictive option.

The orders available, in ascending order of severity are:

Supervision Order: with or without conditions, limited to a maximum of 6 months.

Community Work Order: with the consent of the young person, the court may order not less than 20 hours and not more than 200 hours of supervised work in the interests of the community, within a 12-month period.

Supervision-with-Activity Order: with the consent of the young person a 3 month order of structured supervision activity, which may be followed by a 3 month Supervision Order.

Supervision-with-Residence Order: an order which totals 9 months in all, the first 3 months of which is spent in the custody of the Department of Social Welfare. The custodial period reduces automatically to 2 months provided the young person does not offend while in, or abscond from, the custodial placement. The appropriate place of custody is determined by the Director-General of Social Welfare, not the court.

Transfer to the District (Adult) Court for Sentence: where the Youth Court declines to sentence, usually on the grounds of seriousness of the offence(s). Only 15 and 16-year-olds may be so transferred.

The Court may not order Supervision-with-Residence or Transfer to the District Court unless:

- the offence is purely indictable; or
- the nature and circumstances of the offence, had it been committed by an adult, would have resulted in a mandatory whole-time custodial sanction for that adult; or
- the court is satisfied that because of the special circumstances of the offence or the offender, any order of a non-custodial nature would be clearly inadequate.

The court may not order Supervision-with-Activity, unless the nature and circumstances of the offence are such that, but for the availability of the order, the court would have considered a Supervision-with-Residence Order. Thus while a custodial option is provided for, the court also has a clear option of a high tariff community-based alternative. New resources have been obtained from the government to resource this new order.

Orders other than Supervision-with-Residence, may nominate with their consent any person or organisation who is willing to carry out the administration of the order, thus opening the way for tribal and cultural authorities to take a direct role in work with their young people who offend. The Department of Social Welfare will resource this work.

Plans and report back to courts

The Youth Court may not order any of the orders listed above until it receives a plan, detailing how that order is to be implemented, including:

- the arrangements made for the care and control of the young person in custody or under supervision; and
- the nature of any program that would be provided to the young person during the period.

The plans are to be prepared by the person or organisation which agrees to administer the order, or by a social worker where the Department seeks the order.

As both a means of ensuring accountability to courts for the administration of orders, and as an attempt to build with courts the credibility of community-based sanctions, the person or organisation nominated by the order is required to report in writing to the court on the expiry of the order, on the effectiveness of the order, the young person's response to it, and any other matter considered relevant by the writer.

Practical Approach

We are becoming convinced in New Zealand that managing and minimising the impact of the criminal justice system on young people and their families has more chance of producing positive outcomes for them, and therefore the wider community, than targeting professional services to control young offenders. For that reason government funds have been obtained for the development of such latter services targeted to adjudicated young offenders, by the voluntary or private sectors. Social workers, iwi and cultural authorities will be able to purchase services of the mix required according to the individual case. The goal of all supervision orders is to ensure, first and foremost, that the young person is supervised and the chances of reoffending reduced, during the life of the order. Helping and educative services may be offered, but require voluntary acceptance by the young person. The Department will still provide direct supervision services where necessary, and will be the only agency charged with arranging appropriate Supervision-with-Residence.

However, the prime focus for the Department's youth justice social workers will be systemic management. Social workers will be expected to take the initiative in promoting the principles and strategies of youth justice work, with the other primary actors in the criminal justice system—notably police, judges and the legal profession. They will have an educative function in persuading others about such factors as:

- the benefits of avoiding or delaying the first prosecution;
- the need for rigid gatekeeping of the criminal justice and care systems;
- the promotion of family decision-making as the prime discretionary measure;
- applying the principles of proportionality, equality, frugality, determinancy and specificity in practice;

- recognising the negative impact of pre-adjudication custody, or disposals; and
- strict control of pre-sentence report contents, given the potential these have to promote young people on the tariff of disposals.

Future Possibilities

While the immediate future will be occupied with monitoring the impact of new legislative form, and advocating for the practice change necessary to realise policy imperatives, there will be opportunities to advance the reform beyond this present effort. Two possibilities arise, the former more likely in the short-term, than the latter:

- A recent revision of the Crimes Act has resulted in a Bill currently before Parliament which, if passed, will raise the age of criminal responsibility to 12 years. If this occurs, lowering the minimum age of a young person from 14 to 12 years will be seriously considered. The effect will be to have all offending matters proceeding to a hearing, heard in the Youth Court, and eliminate from care and protection proceedings in the Family Court, the ground that the child has committed an offence or offences. Then the separation of care and protection, and offending matters, will be complete.

- There is clear evidence in England and Scotland that successful diversion of offenders in the juvenile system, can result in harsher treatment of them immediately they reach the ambit of the adult system: in New Zealand, that is when a young person reaches 17 years of age. Government is increasingly giving messages to young people that they should stay in education or vocational training until they are 18 years of age. Certainly, they get minimal income support before that age, are unable to vote, or enter licensed premises, or join the armed forces before they are 18-years-old. These grounds, plus the need to extend efforts directed towards decarceration, commend an extension of the youth jurisdiction upwards by at least a further year.

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Can the Children's Court Prevent Further Offending?[1]

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The Children's Court is at the symbolic hub of our response to juvenile crime. It is to this court that young people are brought by police, their parents, the education and welfare authorities to account for their behaviour. The court must balance many conflicting social demands in a feat of jurisprudential juggling which is repeated across the country daily. The court is expected to dispense justice—to the victim, offenders and the community—and to do 'good'. It must satisfy calls for punishment, retribution, rehabilitation and attempt to buttress legitimate adult authority. There is a strongly held belief that courts can influence the future behaviour of both individual offenders appearing before the court, and potential offenders in the community. Calls for harsher sentencing practices are a direct reflection of this belief. The question of whether the court can prevent further offending is considered in this paper. This question will be addressed by: briefly discussing changes in the legal and ideological base of the Children's Court in recent years; summarising the results of a study of young people's understanding of the court system; and detailing an approach the Children's Court could take to prevent juvenile offending.

The Children's Court

In the preceding twenty years there has been a restructuring of the legal and ideological basis of the state's response to marginal, 'at risk' and offending young people. The state's responsibility for 'at risk' young people had primarily been expressed through child welfare legislation. Child welfare statutes in each of the states provided a wide-ranging ability to intervene in the lives of young people. In the past, the stated rationale for intervention was welfare of the child. The implementation of this legislation was frequently coercive. Children appeared before courts charged with criminal offences and in many cases non-criminal offences (for example uncontrollable, in moral danger). It was rare for children to be legally represented and many children were placed in custodial institutions. The child welfare

[1] This paper reports research partly funded by a Criminology Research Council grant. The views expressed are the responsibility of the authors and not necessarily those of the Council.

bureaucracies were vested with substantial discretionary authority, which was not subject to review in court.

The move for reform of the Children's Court gathered momentum during the 1960s and 1970s. The call was not for rehabilitation for offenders (or those 'at risk') but for justice; children should only be charged for actions that adults too could be held accountable for. Reformists demanded that if children were charged, they should be accorded similar legal rights and responsibilities to adults, although the sanctions of the criminal law should be slightly modified (Morris et al. 1980).

It is ironic that both the child savers who campaigned for the introduction of Children's Courts in the early twentieth century and the reformers of the 1970s placed great faith in the court system as a method of effectively transforming the treatment of young people in our society. The proponents of the justice model strongly believed that the court system could protect children from the predatory practices of the welfare bureaucracies and police forces.

The welfare or needs approach has given way to a justice or 'just desserts' model. In some jurisdictions this transformation has been embodied in legislation. In other states change has occurred through daily practice. The courts have been 'legalised'. This change without legislation has been possible because Australian Children's Courts were modified adult summary courts, rather than specialist welfare tribunals (Seymour 1985, 1988). The core elements of the adult criminal justice system had always remained embedded in Australian Children's Courts. The change in the knowledge or ideology of the correctional professionals changed the language within which they justified their professional intervention. No longer do courts justify their intervention primarily on the basis of the needs of the child, but instead deal with children according to their alleged deeds.

The consequences of the shift from a welfare to a due process approach may be summarised as:

- the courts have been legalised—legal representation is now accorded as a matter of practice;
- there has been a trend towards decarceration with the closure of many old children's homes;
- offenders and 'at risk' young people are no longer a major priority for child welfare departments. Resources have been concentrated in child protection.

The consequences of decarceration and the focus on child protection have not been entirely positive.

There has been a process of re-labelling where the same poor disadvantaged young people appear before courts—but more often than not are charged, not with the status offences of old, (though this still occurs too frequently), but with petty criminal offences and crimes of poverty. The problems of disadvantaged young people are now dealt with by way of neglect and by policing. Children are still ejected from families or forced to leave because of problems within the family. These teenagers are abandoned by the state to live in abject poverty. Rather than providing potential, opportunity and support, intervention is restricted until the child commits a petty crime or, by virtue of their public presence of the streets, is harassed, moved on or arrested by police for public order offences. For young people the reality is that the child welfare and juvenile justice system has moved from a half-hearted commitment to child saving to child blaming.

In sum, the net effect of changes in legislation and practice has been to increase the importance of the court. 'Reformers' dismissed the possibility of rehabilitation.

They assumed that the introduction of due process rights would constrain the (mis)behaviour of the child welfare authorities and the police. For those advocating a tougher stance the court is also of importance for it is through the sentencing practices and the power of the court that this stance will be implemented.

Children, Courts and Offending

Given the centrality of the court and its supposed role of dealing with, and responding to, crimes committed by juvenile offenders, it is useful to assess its operation. Whilst there is no shortage of literature and research on the juvenile justice system, there is a dearth of material about how the processes and institutions of juvenile justice are experienced by the individuals around whom the whole edifice is constructed. For this, and other reasons, the author recently undertook a study of how children understood and experienced the court system. The research was based on in-depth interviews with children immediately after their court appearance.

The research found that children misunderstood and misconstrued much of what occurs in court. Worse still, it found that the processes and structures prior to, during and subsequent to court, acted to prevent children from participating in the court. Formally and informally, they were pressured into passivity and relegated to the status of objects to be dealt with by the court. The research provides a comprehensive insight into the court through the eyes of the child (O'Connor & Sweetapple 1988).

For the purpose of this paper, the most important finding was that children's experiences and understanding of court had little or nothing to do with the offences they had committed. For the child, and indeed it seems for the adults who dealt with them, the focus of the court was its sentencing function. This is not conducive to the court playing a role in preventing further offending. It is useful to briefly examine the way in which the offence disappears in the court process.

Children come to court de-powered by their belief about police treatment of young people, by actual or threatened physical and/or psychological police violence, and overstated warnings about their likely sentence.

Given the threats, it is not surprising that even prior to entering the court their expectations of court centred on sentencing. Their expectations of sentence were out of all proportion to the crime(s) committed. For example, many first offenders imagined that they would be sent to the proverbial 'home'. Even when children did not expect to be locked up, their expectations of court were still tied to notions of sentencing. Court was a place to which they were brought to be dealt with rather than a place of inquiry into the allegation against them or a place in which the alleged wrong could be put right. They approached court from a relatively powerless position. They had few expectations that they could have any impact upon the court proceedings or the outcome. Court was merely a place where they would be acted upon by others regardless of their feelings or beliefs.

Expectations of sentence out of all proportion to the crime committed resulted in children entering the court precinct awed by the court. The expected sentence rather than their misdeed(s) and the events surrounding their misdeed(s) was focal. Similarly their expectations of the actual process of court provided a script in which they played but a marginal part. They expected to participate in the most limited and peripheral of ways. Children, it seems to them, should be seen but not heard.

In describing their actual experience in court the children portrayed themselves as passive participants in the court; not just standing and sitting on command but being 'talked about' and 'talked at', talked down to and threatened. Although they were physically present while they and their futures were being discussed, the children were rarely involved in this dialogue either by direct communication, or indirectly, by instructing their lawyer during their court appearance. At no stage did their accounts reveal any meaningful dialogue

between themselves and the other court participants either. If the children spoke at all in the court they did so at the behest of the magistrate—that is, they spoke only when they were spoken to, they answered questions but they never initiated dialogue.

So it is not surprising that their court appearance was described as an event—primarily as an outcome—rather than a process. Their accounts embodied scant recognition that their case had been subject to detailed consideration or inquiry by the court and there was little mention either of detailed explanations by their advocate of the background to the offence.

Even when they recognised their own passivity in the face of the court, the children did not bemoan the fact that they have been 'dealt with', 'handled', and processed quickly. The unexpected 'leniency' of the sentence appeared to be one reason for this. Although the brevity of the court appearance frequently contrasted with the child's initial expectations of a detailed consideration of the case, any resultant dissatisfaction with the length of the court appearance was far outweighed by the relief engendered by the perceived leniency of the sentence.

The inability of children to participate in the court process enhances the potential for injustice and reduces the potential for the court to focus on the offence. The extent of direct participation in the court process, for the children interviewed, was limited to a few phrases, primarily 'yes' or 'no'.

The questions addressed to the child frequently only allowed such answers. This was the case whether they desired to say more or not, or whether or not they were legally represented. The ramifications of this approach by magistrates and other court participants would not be so dire if every child was adequately and sympathetically represented by a lawyer. But this is often not the case. Undoubtedly some children's advocates did take adequate instructions from their clients and did put the child's perspective before the court. In most cases, however, lawyers took inadequate instructions, constrained as they were by the overwhelming workload and their lack of familiarity with children. The seeming impossibility of acquainting the magistrate with the full facts surrounding the commission of the offences made Tom, sixteen years, very frustrated. He had pleaded guilty to stealing food worth $14. He was homeless, had no form of income and was hungry. He was angry that this did not come out in court:

Tom: He should have known I only took it for food.
Q: Why didn't anyone say anything do you think?
Tom: I don't know, they're probably too stupid.
Int. Why didn't you say anything?
Tom: Because I had to sit there and listen because I'm not allowed to speak unless I'm told.
Q: Would you have liked to have told the magistrate?
Tom: Yeah. If I had a chance.
Q: And you didn't get a chance.
Tom: No.... It would be better if you were allowed to speak in court instead of sitting there and listening.

Tom received a suspended sentence and was warned that if he re-offended he would be incarcerated. He left court, theoretically in the care of the state, with no food, no money and nowhere to live.

Tom's anger and frustration marked him as rare amongst the children who were interviewed. Most children, even though they recognised the desirability of being able to address the court themselves, felt no such negative emotion when this ability was effectively denied them. Most children were passive in the face of the court process; satisfied with the representations of their lawyers. Their lack of familiarity with the legal process had left them without a full appreciation of the ambit of the lawyer's role. They believed themselves well served by the lawyer's plea for mercy, and the mitigation of the sentence they had expected.

The dynamics of power from the point of apprehension to disposal in court systematically strip from the child any capacity to assert themselves in the courtroom context. The court processes are structured so that participation by children is effectively, if not intentionally, precluded. Ironically many of these processes—such as legal representation by rostered duty solicitors—were developed to prevent injustice, to address the structural imbalance between defendant and prosecution. In many cases, however, legal representation simply reinforces the child's disadvantaged and dependent position and, at the same time, allows the court to proceed under the fiction that the child's wishes and interests are represented. In the end, the child is rendered compliant by the court and its officers:

Q: Did you feel that people wanted you to keep quiet in court?
Brett: Yes.
Q: Why?
Brett: Well, I was told by solicitors and several other people to make a good impression on the judge, which we were trying to do.
Q: And being quiet would help with this impression?
Brett: Yes.

The process of the court, the reliance on threat and warning, the restrictions on the ability of the child to participate in the proceedings undermines any potential of the court to respond in an effective way to juvenile offending. The process of the court from the point of apprehension to the point of disposal serves to shift attention from the offence, the context in which it emerged, and the consequences for the victim to the determination of the child's fate. In many cases this concern is misplaced since few children are at risk of being institutionalised at their initial appearances. Rather than the court attending to what the child can realistically do to right the wrong that has been done, a superficial pre-decided charge is acted out in which the child's fate is considered.

So the victim rarely sees the offender and the offender rarely sees the victim. Both remain ignorant of the other, of the other's potential suffering. The child does not encounter the hurt of the victim, nor have to grapple with making recompense in a meaningful way. The victim never sees the offender, never has to enter the offender's world, never has the comfort of knowing that the offender who violated their privacy—far from being a violent thug—is most likely a somewhat pathetic young person from their own neighbourhood.

Children's Courts are not about offending, they are about power. The commission of an offence represents, in part, a breach of the structures of power in our society. Offences by children are interpreted and dealt with as challenges to the patterns and processes of authority and domination in our society. The processing of juvenile offenders, including sentencing, seeks to reinstate or reinforce the normal relations of power. It is only in this context that the language and practice of threat is explainable. It is only in this context that the maintenance of images of excessive punishments, of homes, are functional. If the focus were on the offending behaviour, the language of juvenile justice practice would relate to the breach of social harmony, of social relationships, of putting right the wrong, of reparation, rather than punishment.

Can Children's Courts Prevent Furthering Offending?

In the context of the argument that the Children's Court and juvenile justice system are only peripherally concerned with the offending, this is indeed a novel question. The answer that logically follows from our analysis is that, to the extent that courts continue to de-power children, then their ability to prevent or affect further offending is limited.

It is also crystal clear that attempts to 'toughen up' the system through harsher policing and penalties will fail to prevent further offending. As deterrents to juvenile crime, these

solutions have been tried and have demonstrably failed. The children interviewed in the court study were clearly not deterred from committing misdemeanours by their images of rough policing and excessive punishments.

This is not a time to be defeatist, to assert that nothing will make any difference. Nor is it a time to discount the importance of crimes of children and their impact on their victims and the community. It is possible to envisage a court and juvenile justice system that can facilitate the prevention of further offending.

Elsewhere the author has proposed a framework for a fundamental reorientation of our approach to responding to juvenile offending (O'Connor & Sweetapple 1988). This paper will conclude by summarising the key elements of this approach and by speculating about potential roles for the court in this context.

Respect for children

The starting point must be a reassessment of the manner in which we relate to children and young people. It has never been appropriate to be fundamentally disrespectful of children. It is not now. The dynamics of power and domination which underpin adult relations with children must be reconstructed. The logic and language of threat have no place in the development of socially equitable relationships. A respect for children necessarily entails a recognition of them as citizens with rights and responsibilities. The legal rights theoretically made available to persons charged with criminal offences should be respected in practice.

Nature of juvenile crime

It is also necessary in constructing responses to juvenile crime that we respond to its reality rather than to the myths that surround it. All crimes are not of equal severity and it is clear that the nature of juvenile crime differs from adult crime in terms of the value of property involved and the lower incidence of crimes of personal violence (Mukherjee 1985). Juvenile offending does not inevitably lead to an adult criminal career. For whatever reasons, most children age out of crime (Seymour, cited in O'Connor & Tilbury 1986).

Responding to the crime, not the breach of power relations

Responses must focus on the nature of the crime and the context in which it emerged, rather than the current practice of responding to the breach of the dominant relations of power.

Reconciliation, not denunciation and intimidation

In moving from a response generated by the dynamics of power to one generated by a focus on the crime, the language of threat and intimidation must be abandoned. Threats are both dishonest and ineffective. They remove the focus of the justice system from the experience of victim and offender. The response to juvenile crime should be oriented by a concern to reconcile victim and offender, to put right the harm that has been done.

The necessity of reconciliation is especially important for juveniles because their crimes are primarily committed in their local community. Crime is prevented not by threat and intimidation but by the fabric of social connectedness between people, their community and their physical environment. Alienation or disconnectedness provides the basis for breach of social norms.

Informality

The call for reconciliation is in part a plea for informal rather than formal processing of juvenile offenders. The research calls into question the utility of formally charging young people and bringing them before the court. It achieves little for the child offender, victim or

the community. The language and logic of a criminal justice model as it currently exists separates offender, victim and crime.

Taking the life conditions of youth seriously

If we take seriously the pain experienced by the victim, we also must take seriously the life conditions of young people. The societal concern with controlling and depowering young people has been discussed above. The manifestation of this power imbalance is evident in the extent of physical, sexual, social and psychological abuse. The increasing level of misery experienced by youth also needs to be considered.

The level of child poverty in our community has increased dramatically. In 1972-73, it was estimated that 231,800 children (7.2 per cent) lived in poverty after incomes were adjusted for housing costs. The corresponding figure in 1985-86 was 684,000 children or 17.5 per cent of Australian children (Whiteford 1987).[2] These figures of course relate to those children living in families. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Inquiry into Youth Homelessness found that large numbers of young persons are homeless.

The level of poverty, suffering, and abuse must not be ignored in responding to juvenile crime. For a considerable number of the children interviewed for this research, offending was a direct or indirect result of misery, oppression in the home, and the lack of the legitimate source of income or accommodation outside of the home. Offending is an inevitable consequence of being forced to live on the street.

It must always be remembered that one reaps what one sows. Unfortunately more and more children are forced to live in poverty, are subject to violence in the home and are denied access to meaningful participation in the labour market. The cost of this structural violence towards youth will one day have to be repaid.

A meaningful court system

If we are to take crime seriously then we must also take court seriously. It goes without saying that taking court seriously embodies the creation of a meaningful court system. This necessarily involves ensuring that children's legal rights are safeguarded, that the proceedings are conducted in a manner which is understandable to the child and that the child has the real ability to participate meaningfully in the court process and finally, that sentences are proportionate to the crime and are reconciliatory rather than punitive in function and orientation.

The importance of developing, respecting and enforcing procedural safeguards should not be underestimated. In addition, it is possible to speculate on ways in which the preventative role of the court could be enhanced by utilising its symbolic role. For the community, young people, young offenders and their victims, courts are at the centre of state sanctioned responses to juvenile crime. Indeed their actual location in the juvenile systems means that Children's Courts potentially can have an informed overview of juvenile offending and its context.

On the whole, Children's Courts are locally based. The officers of the court:

- see the children appearing and re-appearing;
- see families appearing and re-appearing;

[2] Despite the myth of affluence, a higher proportion of Australian children live in poverty than in other developed western economies. Only the United States of America has higher levels of child poverty.

- can identify the specific areas of local communities where juvenile offending may be a problem;
- know of the local resources (or lack of resources) available to young people; and
- the surrounding social and economic context.

Children's Courts are invested with significant legal power and authority. In combination, their actual power and authority, the acceptance of this by the community and their overview of offending patterns in a community, potentially provides the court with a pivotal position in the development of local strategies to prevent juvenile crime. The court can act as mentor and catalyst.

Currently the court process decontextualises and individualises the pattern of activities and occurrences which results in a child being charged with a criminal offence. Our criminal law primarily focuses on specific events. No-one's—let alone children's—behaviour is made up of discrete, disconnected, and de-contexted events. Behaviour occurs in a context, is continuous and interwoven with the vicissitudes of the social and physical environment. Yet the process and focus of the court on the whole ignores this. The court is separated from the social context that surrounds it and so too are the children who appear before it.

Individual Children's Courts process hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of children a year. Yet the potential common links between these children are ignored. The court closes its collective eyes to the common local social factors which might give rise to offending by children.

The traditional means by which courts seek to inform themselves of the background to offences by individuals is through some form of 'social inquiry' report. These reports seek to mitigate penalty by explaining the factors giving rise to the offence or offences. On the whole these reports medicalise problems or account for them in terms of psychological factors or family dynamics. The report might note the individual's lack of employment, their illiteracy or their family's poverty. Unfortunately, the common themes in these reports across cases are rarely noted by the court. If the court were oriented to the prevention of further crime instead of accepting the individual accounts of poverty, isolation, family violence and so on, the question of 'why' and 'what can be done' could usefully be asked.

Let us imagine that the court used its powers to 'cause investigations to be made' in a different way. Imagine if the court sought a report on the common social factors that gave rise to the fact that it regularly processed many children for street offences. Imagine if the court sought a report on why so many of the children it dealt with were illiterate. Perhaps the local principal might be called at the time of sentencing to ask why so many children wagged school. What could his school do to remedy the problem of school non-attendance? On another occasion, a representative of local government might be called to explain why there were so few recreational activities for young people in their locality.

We should use the traditional processes of the court to inquire into the real causes of local juvenile crime. Such an approach would contextualise juvenile offending. It would call to account not just the individual offender but those whose omissions may have contributed to the context which gives rise to crime. Armed with such information, the court would be in a position to facilitate the prevention of juvenile offending. The court could act as a catalyst, prodding the community and its local institutions to develop responses which could reduce crime.

In conclusion, the path towards fair and humane treatment of children is far from clear. It is littered with the carcasses of old ideas and attitudes about children. The challenge that faces us is the development of respect for children. A juvenile justice and Children's Court system that is respectful of children as people and that seeks to identify the causes of juvenile crime and develop local responses to those causes may indeed play a role in preventing further offending.

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Community Aid Panel

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It is certainly about time that someone in the law enforcement and legal profession came up with a system of helping people to rehabilitate rather than seeing them merely as offenders (Ian Morton, State Field Officer, The Boys Brigade, Australia).

The Community Aid Panel is not a soft option, and used effectively, it will increase offenders' appreciation of those 'other' three R's, Responsibility, Respect and Remorse (Mr Geoff Thomas, Children's Court Magistrate).

How many of us would be in our present positions, if our every indiscretion had been identified and we had been brought before a court? What happens when a young offender is brought before a court? The present position is that detention or a community service order is not considered appropriate. A deferred period of detention or fine still has the effect of potentially damaging the career path of young offenders and the other alternatives of a mere dismissal or 'rap over the knuckles' would prove of little use in deterring a young offender from re-offending. This last result certainly falls far short of the expectation of the public who suffer at the hands of young offenders. In addition, the police are discouraged in their work, which may possibly lead to a breakdown of police effectiveness when the police are dealing with the apprehension of young offenders. The court is thus placed in a dilemma when a young person appears before it.

In the latter part of 1987, an alternative to existing sentencing options titled 'Community Aid Panel' commenced at Wyong, on the Central Coast of New South Wales. Young offenders with less serious offences, who entered pleas of 'guilty' and, who subsequently volunteered to attend before the Panel, were afforded an adjournment of approximately three months in hearing their matter. Essentially, in that three-month period, the young person sets about convincing the magistrate that they do appreciate the three R's referred to by Mr Thomas. At the same time, any personal difficulties that the young person may have encountered leading up to the offence or perhaps contributing to the offence may be highlighted.

The Panel

The Panel consists of a suitably experienced police officer, a solicitor, one or two members of the community and a young person. The young offender and his parents attend at the Panel and discuss openly and frankly the offence and the circumstances which led to the commission of the offence. Suggestions are made which encourage the young person to undertake some community activities. Because the person is a volunteer, he or she is able to go into the community and perform community service with dignity, because they have volunteered to do so rather than being compelled to do so.

The dilemma mentioned above is best answered by the involvement of the Community Aid Panel. The court maintains the control of the eventual result. However, in the meantime, information is able to be presented to the court, which reflects the young person's response to an opportunity to undo the wrong that he or she has done; that opportunity being to repay the community.

The advantage of the Community Aid Panel is that it does more than resolve the dilemma. It acts in a far more positive way. The young person appears before the Panel and efforts are made to identify why the offence was committed. Frequently there is no real reason why an offence has been committed, but whether or not the base cause is identified, efforts are made to ensure that there is no repetition of such offence, or any other offence by the young offender. Efforts are made to address drug or alcohol involvement and psychological problems (which are often at the heart of the offence) so that re-offending does not occur.

The Panel also provides an opportunity for family and friends to gather around a young offender in a positive way, to enhance that offender's self-esteem—which is so often a problem with the young and unemployed. If one's attitude toward one's self improves, then one's attitude towards others will equally be improved. The interest shown in the young offender by the Panel and family and friends is often all that is needed. Many an offence is, in itself, a cry for help.

It is obvious that the state cannot afford the supervision and guidance often required by a young offender. Child welfare agencies are unable to assist in every instance. The cost is, of course, prohibitive and therefore any assistance from the child welfare authorities is usually reserved for the third, or more frequent offenders. The Community Aid Panel is able to take up the slack at minimal cost to the community. It draws on the community for voluntary assistance. At Wyong, it has been found that voluntary assistance is willingly provided and that the concept of the Panel is readily accepted by the community at large. The community has been able to be served by the voluntary work of the young offenders. In addition, whilst orders for compensation may not have been able to be made by the court, the young offender, in his resolve to show his remorse, may be in a position, through his own efforts or otherwise, to attend court on the adjourned date in a position to repay, on a voluntary basis, some, if not all compensation due to the victim.

The victim is not ignored by the Panel. The young offender is encouraged, in appropriate cases, to apologise to the victim. This has to be carefully monitored and of course it is not attempted unless the Panel, or the coordinator of the Panel is satisfied that it is appropriate. There have been occasions where a young offender has carried out certain voluntary work for the victim, especially when the offence is of a non-violent nature.

Much has been said by supporters of the Panel about the benefits which flow to the young offender. However, by far, the greatest winner is the community. The tasks undertaken by the volunteers in the short time since the Panel began, have been varied and most beneficial. It is not uncommon for young persons to perform over and above what is suggested. One young person performed 206 hours, far more than anything asked of him. Another performed 106 hours. Many of the young persons continue to attend at day care centres and the like because they enjoy the company. Another young lad worked in a

nursing home assisting elderly patients. Having completed his tasks and having been dealt with by the court, the young lad returned on Christmas Day with a gift for each of the 14 persons he 'adopted' during his time there. The mother of a young girl who attended the Panel and who assisted other senior citizens from one centre, invited all of the patients to her home for Christmas morning tea, having arranged transportation for them as well. Through the voluntary work suggested, the young offenders are exposed to community projects such as state emergency services, volunteer bushfire brigades, the need to assist the elderly in the community, the disabled and disadvantaged.

The Panel, as it operates in the Wyong area, meets each Wednesday evening in a building, away from the Courthouse or Police Station, provided by the Wyong Shire Council. It is conducted in a relaxed atmosphere, without being totally informal.

Particular areas can have particular problems and needs. The Community Aid Panel might be able to be directed to ethnic groups; also many of the problems of dealing with Aborigines in court may be able to be solved by the involvement of members of the Aboriginal community in Panels in certain areas.

The Panel is not without its critics. Some say that the referral of a young person to the Panel, especially for a first offender, occurs too early in the life of the young person. It may be that in some cases the young person would never offend again in any event. At the other extreme, it may be that a young offender is simply using the Community Aid Panel as a vehicle for overcoming his immediate problem and has no intention of mending his ways. However, the reality is that in the middle there is a very wide core of young offenders who achieve something for themselves as a result of having committed an offence. They achieve self-respect, a sense of pride in the voluntary work that they have done, and a fresh starting point. Often there is a re-unification of family group. Employment often flows as a result of the involvement of the Panel. One young lass was 16-years-old and was seven months pregnant. She was a state ward. It came out in discussions with the Panel that she had not seen a doctor in relation to her pregnancy for many months. As a result of her appearance before the Panel, she began pre-natal classes the following day and the child was delivered about one month premature. There are many similar examples. A young person, arrested for a street offence, was appearing unrepresented, simply prepared to plead 'guilty' to the offence to have it out of the way. He accepted the proposal to attend before the Community Aid Panel and it transpired that the young person had a serious speech defect. Suggestions were able to be made to him to assist him to receive treatment for that defect.

Since the Panel commenced in October 1987, well over 200 young persons have appeared before the Panel. The number of these volunteers who have re-offended is approximately 5 per cent. Many thousands of dollars in compensation have been paid to the community which would otherwise not have been available for thousands of hours of voluntary work.

Conclusion

It should not be considered that the Panel is just another alternative, as much of its success rests on the genuine desire of the young persons wishing to be involved. It brings the police and the community together. It narrows the gap between young persons and the police, especially when the young person sees that he is being assisted in his preparation for court by a police officer. It may also be said that young persons, although volunteering for the scheme, are in fact coerced because of the position in which they find themselves. Every effort is made to avoid any such implication.

The community is ready to help, the Police Department is only too willing to be involved and in the Central Coast and Newcastle areas, the legal profession have shown that they are ready to assist. The only expense involved is that of the police officer. His duties involve the coordination of the work done by the young offender, referral by the court, the

appearance of the young person before the Panel, and the preparation of the reports for court as to the activities and response of the young person.

At all times it is stressed to the young person that he or she does not have to become involved with the Panel. In some cases, the Panel may not do any good. These cases would be rare, but in the overall scheme of things, the concept of the Panel has a positive effect on the young offender, the police, the victims and, importantly, the community at large. The court at all times has control and has the benefit of knowing far more about a young person than would normally be the case. If leniency is called for, there is a clear basis for leniency—the young offender has earned it.

A Community Driven Response to Juvenile Offending

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he Townsville Regional Attendance Centre (TRAC) developed from our desire to provide the courts, the police, and child care officers with an option between reporting and signing a book and incarceration. This paper will provide a background to the program and describe how it operates. It will provide information on its two components, the Compensatory and Correctional Curriculum, and draw attention to the fact that it is community based. It will highlight the fact that it is presently not funded and look at the ways we are trying to overcome this. During this process you will see that the program offers considerable potential and early results are encouraging.

Although outdoor programs are to be strongly advocated they do not address all issues. There appear to be two gaps:

- was what children learnt or experienced transferred to the community setting?

and

- did the program actually address the child's offending?

It seems that outdoor activities have benefited children by improving their self-confidence, self-reliance and from the interaction they experienced with caring adults. These programs often addressed offending behaviours in general, rather than individual offending behaviours, through campfire discussions. However, there was little input on how to avoid offending.

The program to be discussed here includes an adventure component, the 'Compensatory Curriculum', and a component which addresses the child's offending, the 'Correctional Curriculum'. Two programs have been run by the Centre and although, due to a lack of resources, no statistically reliable results can be produced, our qualitative evaluation has been very encouraging.

History

In 1987 other than signing a book, nothing was being provided for children placed on Supervision orders by the court. The policy in Townsville and other areas of Queensland, due to the high number of child abuse reports, was that children on supervision orders had to report to their Child Care Officer (CCO) and sign a book. If the child's CCO was present the child could see the CCO for a short time, but nothing substantial was offered; nothing in the way of a structured intervention program.

The local Juvenile Aid Bureau were far from impressed and magistrates were frustrated with the lack of options open to them. Although section 67 of the *Children's Services Act 1967-80* (Qld), has included reference to attendance centres, they have seldom been used. To the authors' knowledge only one other attendance centre operates in Queensland, Shaftsbury, and this is based primarily on the Compensatory model, so it was decided to use this section of the Act to provide the impetus for the program.

Community Based

The program involved early offenders who were placed on a supervision order with the condition that they attend the attendance centre. Without funding, volunteers and other youth organisations were relied on for support. Although this step was taken because of the lack of funds, it had the added advantage of providing contact with a variety of organisations and people. It also provided greater variety and flexibility while not over-taxing any one organisation or individual.

The 'stockpiling' problem was avoided by involving the young person in activities as soon as possible after their court appearance. This step also helped overcome the perceived concern of many that there is little consequence associated with juvenile offending. This staggered start was also useful for the purpose of evaluating aspects of the program in order to look at the relative effectiveness of the component parts.

Compensatory Curriculum

The program was initially run on a fortnightly basis on Saturday afternoons. Activities included abseiling, canoeing, sailing, map reading and orienteering, touch football and rock climbing. The program commenced with one youth in attendance but after eight weeks the group had grown to six. During the fortnightly activities considerable rapport was developed between the young people and the authors and this greatly facilitated group work processes during the Correctional activities.

With a group of six the intensive phase of the program was commenced. This involved the group meeting twice weekly on a Tuesday and Thursday evening, 6 pm to 9 pm, at a high school for five weeks. On the Tuesday of each week a compensatory component which included: screen printing, photography, Aboriginal and Islander child care agency providing information about Aboriginal culture, horse riding and a barbecue was conducted. On the Thursday the Correctional Curriculum, one of the most rewarding sections of the program was conducted. (*See* Figure 1, referral process and program flowchart).

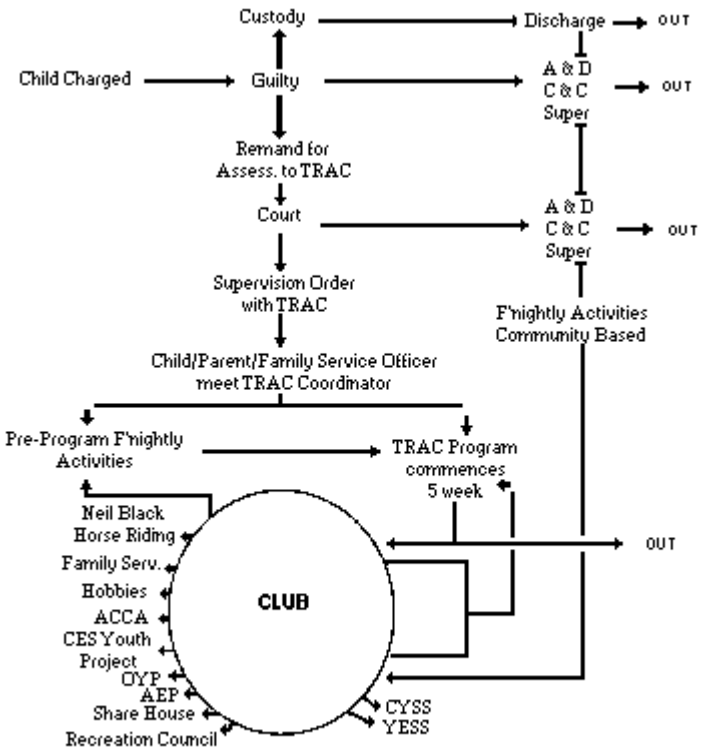
Correctional Curriculum

The TRAC intervention framework (including the Correctional Curriculum) is based on the theoretical model proposed by Denman of the Centre for Youth Crime and Community at Lancaster University in the UK. Denman argues that traditional intervention programs with

juvenile offenders offer what he calls a 'compensatory curriculum'. Compensatory curricula address the general milieu of disadvantage typically experienced by young offenders and therefore offer activities focused on education, leisure and outdoor activities to build confidence and skills. He goes on to say that whilst these activities are an important part of any program they have 'more to do with caring than delinquency reduction' (Denman, 1984 p. 43). Research has shown that to focus solely on 'compensatory' activities does not lead to a reduction of delinquent behaviour. In TRAC a program is offered which acknowledges the need to develop explicit, complementary compensatory and correctional curricula.

Figure 1

Townsville Regional Attendance Centres
Referral process and program flowchart

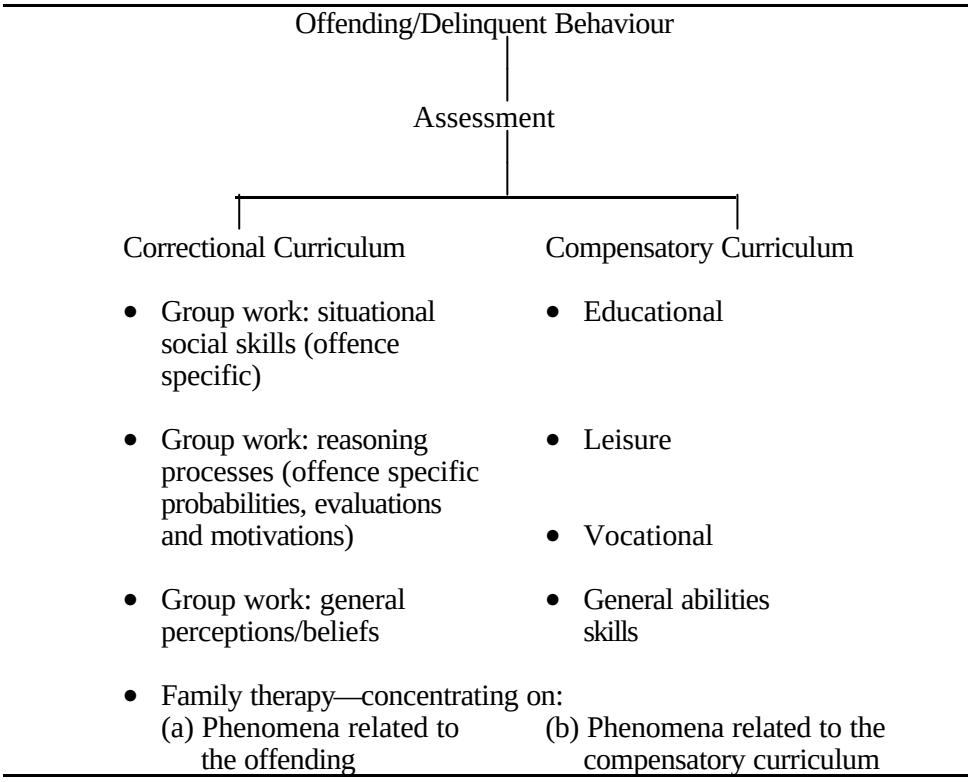


Again drawing from Denman's model (Denman 1984) the correctional curriculum is designed to address the individualised needs of each participant. Preliminary assessments seek to uncover the reasons behind each individual's behaviour rather than general causes for the delinquent acts. In other words, there may be five individuals who have engaged in identical behaviours but for quite different reasons. This clearly has implications for group work. To draw from our own experiences; Billy and John were both convicted of 'break and enter' offences. Billy says at one point during assessment that he is 'bored' a lot of the time. John on the other hand reports a serious argument with his father just prior to the offence. In the former case group activities are structured to look at possible alternative behaviours. In the latter, the focus is on the basics of rational thinking On the face of it those working in the area might argue that this is self-evident, but our experience has shown that unless each participant is individually assessed and their needs articulated, there is a tendency for workers to take the 'line of least resistance' in their group work and to operate 'as if' the bogey of peer pressure, for example, is once more to blame!

The group work skills required to address a correctional curriculum are as follows. The first step is a detailed assessment of each participant in the program. Such an assessment in the TRAC program may take up to four hours for each individual and will look at all areas outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Intervention Framework



In addition to general group work, one important technique that has been found invaluable is the use of 'stop points'. First articulated by Thorpe et al. (1980) to address situational factors, it has been found to be a useful way to look at the range of factors precipitating an offending episode. In essence each participant draws a cartoon scenario of a 'typical' offence for them. The episode is filmed using the author as director and the others as actors. The scene is reviewed and 'stop points' identified by group discussion. Stop points are those points in the episode where the participants could have thought, felt or behaved differently in a way that may have lead to a different outcome (that is no offending). Episodes are re-filmed with the appropriate changes. Two points are important. The first is that alternatives are generated by the participants themselves and not imposed by an 'outgroup' authority figure and secondly, that they have the opportunity to try on the new behaviour in the company of their peers. The importance of the detailed assessment process becomes evident, allowing the group workers the chance to maximise the learning opportunities for each participant according to their uniqueness. Our experience is that even the most resistant are drawn by the fun elements of the exercise—it brings out the ham in them!

This is not to say that group work with these young offenders was easy. It was very hard work. An excellent article on group work with sexually abused girls by Wayne and Weeks (1984) gives a graphic account of the difficulties encountered in working with young people. We found we could easily relate to the experiences they described.

One further program has been run with similar results and we have been encouraged by the responses from the young people involved. Of the eleven children involved, one has spent a period in custody and two have reappeared in the Children's Court. Pre- and post-program testing has indicated positive attitude change, particularly on those indices that predict further delinquent acts. Positive changes in the dynamics of the group and the willingness of the group to attend was encouraging. Although it was compulsory to attend it is significant that only two boys missed attending on two occasions. All had to give up something they enjoyed doing at some time. Probably the most telling example of the willingness to be involved was one boy who could never be contacted during the course of the week. His mother was never sure of his whereabouts. But, on the Saturday morning of an activity the boy would phone us to find out where we were meeting and what we were doing.

Funding

This program is currently without funding. It does not fit the criteria for funding from state or federal governments and although we are receiving encouragement and support from the staff of the Department of Family Services in Townsville the program cannot progress without funds. It is ludicrous that a problem which costs the community millions of dollars can exist, while a program such as ours does not fit any guidelines for funding. It does not require a huge input of monies. TRAC requires a base and a full-time coordinator to get it fully functional. It will eventually require additional funds, but it is considered that for $100,000 a year an effective program can be run. This may seem expensive to some but consider that if 50 young offenders are able to be diverted from custody, the savings to the government alone would be in the order of $500,000. The savings to commercial operators, insurance companies, private individuals and the like would also be considerable. It would involve community participation which still has some difficulties to be overcome, but these are not insurmountable. Although funding is being sought from the government, it is also planned to tackle the corporate sector for funding. It is our intention to set the program up as a Trust and to seek support from the industries most affected by young offenders: the insurance industry, small business organisations, industry and commerce groups.

We have also been approached by Community Corrections about being involved in an attendance centre for offenders aged between 18 and 22. We are negotiating with them for

their facilities and resources to be shared with TRAC in return for our expertise. Magistrates in Townsville and the surrounding district are fully supportive. Thus the provision of a base and the payment of a coordinator would see the program well under way.

Flexibility And Portability

A final aspect of the program is its flexibility and portability. TRAC is flexible in so far as not only one particular strategy is adopted. Most programs provide one type of service or activity, for example, camps or evening functions. We take a theoretical/methodological position (compensatory/correctional curricula) and use whatever suits given existing constraints (for example money and staff). So TRAC has already run fortnightly activities with a five-week intensive phase, a weekend camp, one-off activities, and a week-long camp is now being planned. Because it utilises community resources the program could operate in Brisbane or in Burketown. The TRAC model mobilises existing resources and therefore is extremely portable. In this regard it helps to overcome much of the inherent disunity which for one reason or another exists amongst those providing services for youth.

TRAC is still very much in a developmental phase and unless some positive support to resource the program is received it will prove very difficult for this initiative to offer the sort of hope for effective intervention with young offenders that we believe it can.

Conclusion

To conclude, the main points and issues highlighted in this paper, which distinguish TRAC from other programs and go some way towards addressing the concerns raised in this area are reiterated:

- Correctional Curriculum
- Community Based
- Funding and Corporate Sponsorship
- Flexibility and Portability.

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Youth Attendance Orders: a Contribution to Preventing Juvenile Crime

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Youth Attendance Orders

The Youth Attendance Order was first introduced in legislation in 1985 as part of a review of the *Penalties and Sentences Act 1985* (Vic.). It followed on the adult Attendance Order and the general thrust to community based corrections, including youth corrections. It was the first legislative initiative in the juvenile justice field since 1960 when the *Social Welfare Act 1960* (Vic.) established Youth Training Centres (YTC) in Victoria. Resources enabled implementation to occur following the closure of Bayswater YTC.

The YAO was launched by the then Minister for Community Services of Victoria—the Hon Race Mathews, MP, on 22 June 1988. Individual coordinators were appointed and in July a comprehensive induction and training course was conducted over five days. The first young person was given a YAO on 1 August 1988 by Senior Magistrate John Barns.

Definition

The Act defines a Youth Attendance Order as a 'non-custodial correctional alternative for an offender who would otherwise be sentenced to detention in a youth training centre as a result of the gravity or habitual nature of the offender's unlawful behaviour'. Youth Attendance Orders are available to young offenders aged fifteen to seventeen years appearing in the Children's Court. Prerequisites before the order is imposed are that:

- the youth consents;
- a place is available; and
- an assessment of suitability has been made.

Objectives

Youth Attendance Orders aim to:

- provide the Children's Court and young people with a direct alternative to incarceration;
- prevent the young offender from further offending;
- reduce the population of offenders in YTCs;
- punish the young offender through imposing restrictions on his or her liberty;
- provide young offenders with an opportunity to make amends for the offences committed unpaid community service work; and

most importantly:

- enable the offender to abide by the laws of the community successfully by providing opportunities according to an individually planned program, for instruction, guidance, assistance and new experiences.

Description

Youth Attendance Projects will commence in rural regions during 1989-90. Projects are conducted from nine Metropolitan Youth Supervision Units. A coordinator is responsible for the assessment of the young person, matching an offender with a sessional supervisor, and support through the length of the order, which cannot exceed fifty-two weeks.

There are two components to the requirements of the order which together may require attendance for a maximum of ten hours per week.

- Unpaid Community Work
  This is an essential component which requires the young offender to attend for four hours of work each week for the duration of the order. Examples of such work (covered for Workcare under legislation) are: gardening, painting, woodwork, assisting with jobs.
- Personal Development Activities
  This is a phased component of the order of a maximum of six hours which can be reduced at the discretion of the coordinator, according to program standards. Examples of personal development activities include: health access classes, gymnasium, literacy and numeracy classes and TAFE courses.

Some statistical results

The following data provides an overview of the progressive implementation of the Order from 1 August 1988 to 23 June 1989.

Table 1

Number of YAOs at end of Month 1988-89

Month	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Total	7	19	26	30	37	38	43	53	55

Comment:

The total number of places has been limited to 80 due to resource limits and program design. Use of the order has been a little slower than anticipated. Inner Urban, Westernport and Western Suburbs have reached targets more quickly than other regions.

Table 2

Number of YAO Assessments and Placements to 23 June 1989

Number assessed unsuitable given YTC	8
Number assessed unsuitable given Probation	6
Number assessed given Supervised Adjournment	1
Number assessed as suitable	82
Number assessed as unsuitable but placed on order	4
Number suitable, not placed on order	3
Total placed on YAO	**86**
Total Assessments	**101**

Comment:

Table 2 highlights the fact that magistrates must seek a suitability report, but retains the right to impose the order contrary to the recommendation in the report.

Magistrates should be considering a Youth Training Centre sentence before referring the young offender for assessment.

Table 3

Number of Youth Placed on YAO by Gender

Gender	**No.**	**%**
Male	83	96.5
Female	3	3.5
Total	86	100

Comment:

The YAO is an order that can be geared to individual requirements to complete the order. In effect, some young women prefer the institutional option to a more 'demanding' community based option. The percentage of young women on sentence is about 5 per cent of males in YTCs.

Table 4

Success Rate of Order by Breaches and Completions at 23 June 1989

Outcome	No.	%
Breaches	12	14
Completions	18	20.9
Currently on Order (including Warrant of Arrest 5)	56	65.1
Total	**86**	**100**

Comment:

The outcome of 2 breach actions before the Court was a continuation of the order. There are 5 youths 'on the run' among those currently on the order, for whom breach action is pending.

Table 5

Number of YAOs by Age

Age	No.	%
15	15	17.4
16	46	53.5
17	25	29.1
Total:	**86**	**100**

Comment:

The YAO is restricted to youths aged 15-17 years, that is of Children's Court age, 15 and over.

Table 6

Number of YAOs by Region

Region	No.	%
Inner Urban (Windsor)	13	15.1
West (Ascot Vale)	19	22.1
North West (Broadmeadows)	8	9.3
North East (Heidelberg)	10	11.6
Inner East (Hawthorn)	4	4.7
Southern (Oakleigh)	5	5.8
Outer East (Box Hill)	8	9.3
Westernport (Peninsula)	9	10.5
Barwon (Geelong)	10	11.6
Total	**86**	**100**

Comment:

Predictably the larger population base and growth areas of Western Suburbs have larger numbers, with Inner Urban showing high figures, often from dense population units such as high rise flats.

Table 7

Category of Offences by Number of YAOs imposed

Offence Category	Most Occurring Offence	No.	%
Assaults	Common Assault	29	9.9
Robbery	Armed Robbery	21	7.2
Burglary	Burglary	54	18.4
Theft (Illegal Use)	Theft of Motor Car	36	12.4
Other Theft	Theft	50	17.1
Property Damage	Wilful Damage	15	5.1
Driving Offences	Unlicensed Driving	16	5.5
Other		72	24.6
Total		**293**	**100.2**

Note: Multiple offences have led to 1 x YAO

Comment:

Although property/car offences comprise 60 per cent of all offences, they range from property to person offences and from a few serious offences to 20 court appearances for an offending history over 6 years.

Table 8

Number of YAOs by Length of Sentence

No. of Weeks	No.	%
12 weeks or less	9	10.5
16 weeks or less	11	12.8
20 weeks or less	14	16.3
26 weeks or less	30	34.9
30 weeks or less	8	9.3
40 weeks or less	9	10.5
52 weeks or less	5	5.8
Total	**86**	**100.1**

Comment:

Table 8 indicates that 74.5 per cent were given 6 months orders or less. It is suggested that this proportion corresponds with that of YTC dispositions.

Summary

The implementation of the order has been reasonably smooth. The dedication of coordinators, adequate resources, training of staff, appropriate linkages with magistrates, good publicity material and program standards—have all contributed to what appears to be a successful start to the Youth Attendance Program. Although the program has not been long established, it appears that a comparison of cost for a trainee in the YTC is more than $1,100 per week, whereas the cost for a YAO per week is about $300 including salary, sessional and operating costs.

Conclusion

Upon completion of the Order on 14 March 1989, Sonny, the car thief, stated in response to the question: 'How do you feel about the YAO now?'

Answer: 'I feel better in a way because I didn't get a sentence [meaning: locked up] and I haven't offendered [sic] for a long time'.

Armed robber Fred, said: 'Glad it is finished—26 weeks is a long time' and 'I've kept out of trouble'.

A Case History

Youth, male, received 30 weeks YAO for: Assault by Kicking and Intentionally Cause Serious Injury.

At the time of the offence this youth was sixteen years, seven months, he became involved in a fight in which the other person lost an eye.

The magistrate indicated that even though the youth in question had no prior convictions of offence he warranted a nine to twelve months YTC sentence.

Progress of youth—programs/community work

(i) Programs attended over 30-week period:
Ten-week Health Access Program on sexuality, drugs, alcohol, smoking, etc;
Computer course at Footscray TAFE College for eight-week period;

Attended Ascot Vale Leisure Centre one night per week. Reason for this program was to demonstrate an appropriate use of leisure time;
Woodwork—making items for own use;

(ii) Community work—again this program is used to develop skills;
Gardening—Ascot Vale Garden Coop: preparation of vegetable plot;
Painting, planning, woodwork, such as toy manufacture.

Progress/regress: throughout his order

All young people serving YAOs appear to have a period of regression. This is generally around the eight to twelve-week mark, and then again late in the Order. This youth was no exception, he received a formal warning eleven weeks into his Order and again at twenty-one weeks. His program participation and conduct was good, his problem area was attendance.

Current situation

The young person has had his Order extended for a period of five weeks to make up time missed due to absences and illness and has currently three weeks to complete his Order.

Problems with Implementation of YAO Project

Within a matter of three weeks Western Youth Supervision Unit had four young people referred to and accepted on the project. This made program development very difficult to achieve, as firstly, the supervision requirements had to be met. This required individual supervision and program development for each of the young people.

At the same time contact with community groups and organisations was taking place with very limited success.

Best Features of the Program

The Western Youth Supervision Unit has a capacity for twelve youths on the project at any one time.

Since August 1988 a total of twelve youths have completed the Order:

9 successfully
1 was varied to the YTC sentence
2 were breached

The main benefit to young people on the project is that it allows them to remain in the community with family and friends. Other benefits are that the project allows them to gain assistance in employment, counselling, and skills training.

The attitude of young people towards the project has mainly been of a positive nature.

Suggested Improvements

At present the community work component is four hours per week. It is felt that at times it would be more advantageous to the young person, the project, and the sessional supervisor, to have an eight-hour session rather than the four-hour one.

Young people going before the courts should be given opportunities to be assessed as to the appropriateness of a YAO.

Outdoor Adventure Camps: Personal Development through Challenge

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The attributes and skills required for a successful criminal career are numerous and are acquired and developed through a mixture of personality, contacts and background. Essential ingredients would include initiative, cooperation, resourcefulness, risk-taking, trust, group-cohesiveness and physical fitness; proficiency in these areas is inversely proportional to the likelihood of apprehension. However, only a small percentage of offenders make good criminals, for most of their acts are petty, spontaneous, ill-considered (Murray & Borowski 1986) and quite often made under the influence of drugs or alcohol and driven by a sense of desperation or despair (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1987).

Many programs, particularly for youth, make use of activities or outdoor adventure as a means of developing personal attributes such as self-esteem, confidence, responsibility and trust in a positive way, and building on individuals' achievements and success to encourage further development. This is a major role of sport and recreation in schools and youth clubs (Seagrave & Chu 1978), but it has been shown that some individuals do not respond to the competitive and over organised way in which many sports and activities are presented (Yiannakis 1980, p. 848). Such individuals do not respect the rules per se and prefer to establish their own parameters of behaviour. 'Risk-taking is likely to appeal more to youth with pre-delinquent tendencies and it is for this reason that challenging adventure programs of the Outward-Bound type are likely to appeal more to the non-conforming individual than organised, formal sports of the interscholastic type' (Donnelly 1981).

Many such activities can be set up and organised within local neighbourhoods without great cost. Inner city and suburban environments provide numerous opportunities for challenge and adventure for kids but most of these are withheld by virtue of such considerations as private property, security, public safety or public liability. Ironically the search for such adventure and excitement by urban adolescents often leads to criminal conviction and intervention by the very agencies that advocate adventure training. With a little thought and understanding 'Out-of-bounds' could become 'Urban Outward-Bound'. An example of such thinking is the opening up of the canal system that flows through many East London housing estates in the United Kingdom. These stretches of water were surrounded by barbed wire and high fencing years ago, yet each school holiday the obituary columns of the local newspaper were full of the names of young children who had drowned in the local waterways. The local response was to promote water-based youth clubs. Water safety and learn-to-swim campaigns were organised and regular supervised access

was allowed on the water. In a few years what had once been an open sewer and dumping ground was transformed into an open public amenity and thanks to the community, the incidence of drowning decreased markedly.

However, there are many adolescents who are too alienated from their own community to participate in such initiatives and these are most often the ones who resent such programs and vandalise them. For them risk-taking and challenge are a way of life. It is for these reasons that when such individuals fall within the jurisdiction of probation and welfare agencies, outdoor activities have been considered a useful medium to initiate trust, confidence and hopefully induce change.

The use of outdoor activities is based on the philosophies of the German educationalist, Dr Kurt Hahn, an exile of Nazi Germany who settled in the United Kingdom prior to the Second World War. During this war there was concern about the large numbers of young seamen who died with little struggle when forced to abandon ship whereas older, more experienced sailors were able to survive. As a response to this he established the first Outward-Bound School using adventure and challenge as a basis for learning. Outdoor activities fall into two categories.

Extended Outward-Bound Courses

These courses are strenuous, physically and mentally demanding and of extended duration usually four to five weeks. Generally referrals are made through schools and colleges as part of an ongoing training program, but increasingly such camps are used as an alternative or adjunct to institutional care or Youth Detention Centres. Research indicates that such camps 'are a desirable alternative to traditional institutional care' (Kelly & Baer 1969). Background variables such as use of first court appearance, presence of both parents in the home or first institutionalisation type of offence were important conditions affecting recidivism. It was also found that the program was more successful for delinquents who stole material goods or cars. Youths who were responding to an 'adolescent crisis' rather than to a character defect appeared to profit most (Cardwell 1978). Most researchers have found Outward-Bound Courses have had a positive effect on recidivism rates (Baer, Jacobs & Carr 1975; Cytrnbaum & Kerr 1975). But there are other problems generated by such intensive courses namely, such intervention does not change the reward structure in the school and communities to which participants return, and changing expectations without changing realities may arouse frustration and resentment (Partington 1977).

Such programs have become the general 'model' for all outdoor activity programs and as such have caused an image problem. They are seen as something between punishment and social engineering and where offenders are concerned, sometimes appear to be a final 'desperate' solution, the consequences of failure being inevitable incarceration. Such an image has been reinforced by initiatives such as the short, sharp shock program in the United Kingdom. Inner city kids, many without a home, and often undernourished, would be referred to such programs as a sentencing option from the courts. They would return well-fed, super-fit, confident, assertive and ready to take up their place at the top of the neighbourhood pack. As one writer to *The Times* put it, 'The community would have been better served if they were sentenced to complete a course in basket-weaving or knocking the skins off rice puddings'.

Compulsory courses, as part of sentencing options, are less psychologically damaging than incarceration and this is perhaps a reason for their perceived success.

Voluntary, Integrated Short-Term Courses

Outdoor activity camps for a range of adolescents, used in conjunction with community activities and used purely as an extension to ongoing community programs are also popular. In Tasmania, Project Hahn has been operating for a number of years in this way.

Project Hahn

This program is based on the premise that self-confidence, self-worth and personal autonomy are built on personal success and achievement. Outdoor pursuits are the vehicles used because success and achievement are immediate and can have high personal impact.

Clients are largely young disadvantaged Tasmanians including young offenders, state wards, school-refused and refusers as well as the long-term unemployed. The latter category make up the largest percentage of the client group. Numerous studies have shown how young people's morale and self-respect is eroded, often resulting in their progressive alienation from society.

One major result of long-term unemployment is that, at a critical stage of their development, these young people have limited opportunity to either demonstrate their personal capabilities or to develop them, making it very difficult to maintain a positive self-image.

An important point here is to acknowledge the heterogeneity of youths at risk rather than singling out and attempting to treat a small proportion of them. It recognises that the difference between being a young offender or not is often only a legally imposed distinction. Youths are recruited from a range of organisations and venues, as well as by direct advertising in the media and in the neighbourhood.

Personal development depends on the interaction between the individual, group and setting. What is controlled in Project Hahn is the setting. A perusal of the literature related to challenge programs could lead one to believe that the outdoor pursuits environment will inevitably provide such a setting. This is far from the truth—any setting has potential to enhance personal growth but also has the potential to destroy or retard that same growth.

Some of the principles to be kept in mind when designing any challenge setting, whatever the environment, are described below by two of the originators of Project Hahn, M. Wells and M. Freestone.

Individual needs

The challenge setting should increase the individual's self-understanding and develop such personal competencies as self-sufficiency, self-reliance, self-respect and self-confidence. The term self is used in this context not as in the Narcissus myth but in the sense of the real inner being. This point is important because individuals must understand the difference between love of true self and the self-edification of an image or ideal self which unfortunately is the more common usage of the term.

In the same way, the need for individuals to feel that they are in control of their actions is important. The feeling that success is the result of your effort and that your destiny is largely under your control is central to a feeling of autonomy. (Autonomy is a much better description of this human need than the oft used term 'power' which implies control over others rather than self.)

Communication between leaders and the group should be by negotiation whenever possible, although it should be well understood that at times where the safety of group or individuals is threatened then direction should obviously be heeded.

Group needs

Although we are essentially interested in individual needs, the needs and safety of the group obviously cannot be overlooked. An environment which allows an individual to become aware of their own worth will also allow them to learn about the needs and abilities of others. Such a setting will also illustrate that individual goals and safety can often only be achieved through cooperation as opposed to competition. That is, the degree to which I achieve my goal is dependent on the degree to which other group members do also.

On the other hand, competition essentially means that one individual achieves their goal at the expense of other members of the group. The challenge setting should demonstrate human interdependence. Inner-directed effort improves self, outer-directed effort serves only the purpose of proving ourselves or seeking approval and is a sure sign of a lack of self-respect. Leaders should endeavour to develop shared tasks and activities with the group to which participants will have a commitment.

Challenge and safety

Obviously challenge and risk are an essential part of the setting. What is being provided is a real life adventure rather than an artificial one (for example, shopping spree, eating binge or other substance abuse). Such a challenge will not always be physical for every individual. Where one participant's challenge may be abseiling down a cliff, for another, such a task may prove relatively easy and the challenge may rest in coming to grips with living in the group, communicating and forming relationships.

While some of an individual's learning will stem directly from their physical and mental effort, other will come during periods of reflection and relaxation. While engaged in mental effort one is likely to be logical, rational and deductive. During relaxation thought is more likely to be inductive, non-logical and result in personal revelations regarding self. The period around the fire in the evening is ideal for such reflection and it is best not to structure this period of time. Individuals wishing to withdraw from activity for short periods should not be discouraged for the same reason. It is essential that the setting be real, but isolated from the stresses of the individual's everyday environment. This provides the social safety required since learning comes not only from successes but also mistakes. In this regard it has been found that the length of the course is critical. It is unlikely that all participants will be able to leave their 'normal environments' psychologically and emotionally in less than three or four days. This period of time is used for building up basic skills required to undertake the challenge later. Given the constraints of time, finances and individual commitments, a period of eight to twelve days has proved successful. Most courses are conducted over ten days. This social safety can also result from participants being chosen from a diversity of locations and backgrounds, both male and female. In this way participants are more able to make mistakes or openly show fear and other emotions without great social cost.

In endeavours of this nature, physical safety is of utmost concern. It is well known that each individual has a different perception of danger and that there is an optimum level of risk or challenge for each individual, performance at less than that level results in boredom, beyond, in anxiety and fear. Instructors must be sensitive to such individual variations and design activities accordingly.

Involvement of probation and parole

The participation of probation and parole officers was requested from the coordinator of Project Hahn in 1985 after their own leaders had found problems in earlier courses coping with the behaviour displayed by a number of their participants. It was hoped that our skills in dealing with this population could be assimilated into their program. In exchange for our services, Project Hahn reduced the fees for a select number of probationers to minimum cost. Since this time forty probationers have been referred and sponsored by the Tasmanian Law Department and two probation officers have also participated. Challenge courses have been designed around six components:

- Introductory day or half-day session in the locality of clients. Often a local river or rock face is chosen which gives participants a taste for the challenge whilst at the same time showing the potential of their home environment.

- On the course itself—basic skills training, team building, assessment of individual and group capabilities.

- Development—a wide range of activities tailored to meet the capabilities and needs of the group.
- Consolidation—a final activity to extend previous skills and experiences, where participants will be expected to take as much responsibility as possible for planning and implementing their own project (expedition).
- Review—group evaluation of experiences and personal self-assessment.
- Follow-up after the course. Day activity with the same group after three or four weeks to consolidate friendships, reinforce lessons learnt and gain feedback from participants. Where possible and where appropriate this is shared with probation and welfare and CYSS workers as a basis for future casework.

These six components take into account the various stages through which a group progresses in an experiental learning cycle.

A group's development has five stages:

STAGE 1: DEPENDENCE

Group members are polite
They avoid conflict
They are concerned about being accepted or rejected
Their orientation is towards task.

STAGE 2: CONFLICT

Group members become involved in conflict because of concerns about status, power and organisation. The pecking order and scapegoats become obvious.

STAGE 3: COHESION

There is more cohesion between members as there is more affection, open-mindedness and a willingness to share. The group is motivated to learn to problem solve as they all trust each other. Sometimes the pressure to conform to the group may detract from the task at hand.

STAGE 4: AUTONOMY

There is a supportive group climate. Concerns about interdependence and independence are resolved so that both can occur along with the dominant need to solve problems.

STAGE 5 SEPARATION

Group cohesion can break down as members are concerned about disengaging from relationships. This separation or loss needs to be addressed by debriefing or participants can regress to conflict stage and exhibit bizarre behaviour (Watson, Vallee, Mulford 1981).

Operation of Project Hahn

Over the five year period a total of 520 young people have attended Project Hahn courses, approximately seventy-five of these have been female. During this time the project has developed through three different phases of management and operation as a response to funding short-falls and the continuing difficulty of making successful referrals. It is estimated that for every male that actually participates in a course three will have been approached, shown interest in attending but dropped out prior to the course's commencement. For females the figure would be closer to five. Thus a considerable amount of the organisation's resources have to be allocated to pre-course recruitment in the form of advertising, public speaking and networking to maintain the pool of prospective clients to ensure that courses actually run. This has been a crucial issue in many challenge courses, but has received little attention in research or in the literature.

Direct approach

Initially Project Hahn employed a full-time female community worker to provide information and organise recruitment. Community groups such as CYSS centres, youth shelters, colleges and youth clubs were canvassed. It soon became apparent that such an approach was insufficient to gain commitment from young people to make a decision that involved such apparent risk to themselves and self-exposure. They needed much more advice, support and reassurance than one person could provide.

Direct networking

The idea of networking was introduced where workers in shelters, CYSS groups, welfare and probation offices were invited to become directly involved in designing, organising and participating in courses themselves. The concept of 'training the trainers' was seen as a way of providing continuity, gaining feedback as well as providing a support and encouragement role in recruiting within local communities. Project Hahn staff were thus able to devote their energy and talents to actually running the courses and providing introductory and follow-up sessions. This phase produced a flexible, yet independent, organisation that was sufficiently 'in tune' with agency and client needs but it still suffered from inadequate and uncertain funding. Additionally the demands of agency support still resulted in staff burn-out.

Agency networking

It became apparent that there was sufficient support and interest of staff in the relevant agencies (education, welfare and probation and parole) so that they could be relied on to fill the recruitment role. This has been successful only in so far as workers within those agencies have had the enthusiasm and time to maintain the network. Hopefully this arrangement will be more formalised in the future when this role is coordinated by the Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation.

Involvement of probation clients

Clientele of the Probation and Parole Service can be divided into three groups:

- first and minor offenders;
- repeat offenders who have remained within the jurisdiction of community based corrections; and
- recurrent offenders with custodial experience.

The first group, should they not re-offend, have a high chance of successfully completing a probation period without the need for much intervention, other than regular contact and support. Repeat offenders are the main target group; those who participate in

Project Hahn's activities do not necessarily immediately stop offending but it has been found that for the majority their offences become less serious and they also show an increased propensity to respond to other aspects of supervision, that is, they are more willing to attend relevant classes such as literacy, job-training, alcohol and drug treatment. Recurrent offenders have not been given the opportunity to attend Project Hahn courses. In the future it is visualised that special courses will be set-up to suit their particular needs (Mason & Wilson 1988).

Participation by probationers has always been voluntary. Even on a course they are free to leave should they wish to do so. It has been found that referrals from any agency are successfully made when trust and contact between client and referring worker has been built up over time. On average this contact would last around nine months. To many young people the idea of committing themselves to such a challenge course requires reassurance and feedback from others and the knowledge that they are making a positive step. This process requires sensitivity and knowledge from the referring workers who preferably should have a first-hand knowledge of what is involved.

Those referred through Probation to Project Hahn courses are more than likely to have an undue influence upon the chemistry of the group. Offenders are predominantly male, they are likely to have a reduced sense of commitment and responsibility but most importantly to manifest extremes of personality type ranging from severely withdrawn to extreme extrovert. In order that the group as a whole is not dominated by such individuals it is important that probation officers making referrals have the insight and knowledge of personality types to know whether individuals will benefit from the course and similarly whether the course has anything to offer them.

In a job where it seems we have very little to offer our clients it is easy to jump at the chance of making a referral to Project Hahn purely to be seen as 'doing something positive'. Similarly the temptation to refer purely because someone is having a bad time at home, or has accommodation problems or hassles with the police or girlfriend/boyfriend can be overwhelming but such factors are not sufficient reasons to send someone off into the bush for ten days. The client himself will be the first to recognise such action as escapism and will react on the course accordingly.

There is a high degree of self-selection on entering the courses and therefore measurement of success is not really feasible. Voluntary participation indicates that individuals are ready to make that step and therefore the outcome is most likely to be successful. Participants are not only likely to complete the course but to assimilate effectively its lessons into everyday living. Feedback both from probationers and their supervising probation officers is 75 per cent positive. It is noticeable that for participants there is a higher rate of successful completion of probation orders without further conviction and also that a satisfactory success rating given to probationers on completion of their supervision order is higher than the average—60 per cent compared with 50 per cent (Corrective Services Division 1988). Much of the evidence of success is anecdotal and because total numbers are small it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions about the effects of the program on individual participants. There are, however, a couple of issues that have emerged from our experience that may be of interest.

Composition of groups

The issue of mixed or single sex groups is a hotly debated topic; generally mixed groups are less competitive, more responsible but there is a difficulty in recruiting girls. Girls reluctant to participate can be a result of fearing 'put-downs' by boys like those that occur in the classroom. These feelings of inferiority are shown by either not participating at all, or by

taking a passive role in activities. This often occurs even when girls are more skilled and experienced than most of the boys they are with (Kuchel 1987).

Project Hahn has employed a female leader for the past three years which had the effect of successfully recruiting more female participants; there has been a 20 per cent female participation rate from probation referrals where females represent only 15 per cent of total caseload. It has also been noticeable that even in groups that have all male participation a female leader significantly reduces the competitive and potentially unruly behaviour that all male groups tend to foster. Two very successful 'all female' groups have been organised and run where the level of participation, involvement and feedback has been very high. It was noticeable, however that it was extremely difficult to recruit girls who were on probation orders on to such courses. They preferred the idea of a mixed group.

Follow-up

Offenders under welfare, probation supervision have an average length of supervision of twelve months. This amount of time allows for adequate build-up of trust for introductory day activities as well as follow-up activities after participation in an adventure course. Such follow-up may take the form of a separate activity or participation and assistance in helping out new participants in the next introductory session. In this skills and expertise as well as self-confidence can be reinforced and feedback imparted to prospective participants.

To summarise, some of the fundamental lessons which have been learnt over the last three years are:

- groups with a mix of gender social, economic, cultural and geographic backgrounds are more effective than homogeneous groupings;
- the value of female leaders in activities;
- the value of continuous and sensitive communication and negotiation between leaders and participants and between participants themselves;
- feasible yet challenging activities that are within the capabilities of participants (to the outdoor pursuit enthusiast the degree of risk/challenge often seems incredibly low);
- development of course content with the participants' results in greater commitment;
- importance of progress. Activities are a means not an end. The aim is not to turn out bushwalkers or rock climbers. If an individual wishes to continue an activity it is merely a bonus;
- the inability of decision makers to see the program as a personal development program as opposed to a recreation program and the tendency to see such activity as a potential replacement for employment (that is a form of entertainment or social control);
- the importance of good role models as instructors;
- interpersonal skills are the number one requirement of staff. Outdoor pursuits skills are of secondary consideration;

- as offender rehabilitation is 'negatively geared' as a political issue there is a tendency and a temptation to sell such program to the community as a form of punishment to justify the public expenditure involved; and

- instructor 'burn-out' has been a problem. Being away from home for long periods in an incredibly demanding environment combined with the uncertainty of continued funding, has resulted in the turnover of three sets of staff.

Conclusion

Although total numbers of probationers referred to outdoor adventure courses in Tasmania is small there is sufficient encouraging evidence to suggest that a positive impact on their own development has been made. There is no simple measure to quantify this, measurement of recidivism rates, for instance, is fraught with difficulties and ultimately over-simplifies the issue. Anecdotal evidence indicates that in the short term changes have been made which in the long term may lead to less offending behaviour. However, such measurement issues have not been considered so far in Tasmania, particularly when it is remembered that no positive evidence has yet been produced to suggest that the imposition of probation supervision has had any discernible effect on altering offending behaviour.

To use the earlier analogy of the seafarers, we may not be teaching people to be competent swimmers but at least we are helping them to work out for themselves in which direction the tide is flowing.

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Community Based Initiatives in Crime Prevention

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A common perception throughout Australia is that Corrective Services are not linked to community based crime prevention programs. This perception certainly holds for Victoria.

The Community Based Corrections Division of the Office of Corrections in Victoria has established ten Regions throughout the state, which are responsible for:

> the maintenance of credible community based correctional services including supervision, counselling, personal development, community work and referral services for offenders consistent with Parole Board, courts and community requirements and expectations and to maximise the proper use of alternatives to prison and without unwarranted intrusion, ensure effective supervision and facilitate an offender's personal development.

Within regions, the role of staff has been to link offenders into services which exist within their own community. The objective is to reintegrate the people who have been incarcerated or found by the courts to be in need of community alternatives to incarceration. However, Community Based Corrections' role is seen by some offenders as an intrusion into their daily lives. This disruption to their routine is considered by some offenders to be more difficult to cope with than the total loss of freedom encountered in prison.

Offenders being released from prison and those coming from the courts are assumed to be involved in crime prevention programs—programs aimed at addressing some of the reasons which would appear to have contributed in some way to the offending behaviour.

Placement of offenders with community agencies such as counselling services, psychological services, educational and drug rehabilitation groups, is aimed at improving the situation for offenders and hopefully reducing their likelihood of re-offending.

Community Based Corrections' role as a crime prevention agency is a linear one. We tend to limit our involvement to the fulfilment of community and court expectations ensuring compliance with requirements of orders.

While most of us are happy to continue in this linear fashion, the Ringwood Office of Corrections has taken a unique approach to its role as a crime prevention agency within the community.

As a social control agency within the community we have linked with the Croydon community and been able to take a lateral approach to our traditional role in crime

prevention. This does not mean that we have altered our focus, but rather have widened our horizons. Through our involvement within the local community we have been able to provide insights to that community about its offenders. We have at the same time been emerging from the shadows of the penal system to establish our own credibility for the knowledge and skills we possess in dealing with offenders in a community setting.

Bonnemaison

In 1988 as part of the build up to the state elections in Victoria, the government announced the BLAST Program (Building a Law Abiding Society Together). The BLAST Program proposed the development of a Bonnemaison type of program here in Victoria.

The Bonnemaison program was a French initiative in the early 1980s in which the French equivalent of our local government bodies provided funding to community groups developing crime prevention programs. What Bonnemaison did to prevent ongoing crime was to ask social workers to identify problem groups in the community and develop programs aimed at diverting these young people away from the antisocial behaviour in which they were involved.

One of their programs took young people involved with gangs which harassed and assaulted train travellers, and paid them a salary to attend drama workshops. The workshop produced a video in which the youths portrayed their lives on the Metro. It was claimed that this program directly reduced the likelihood of these young people continuing the activity which brought them to the attention of authorities.

Croydon Good Neighbourhood Program

The Good Neighbourhood Program initiated by the Victorian State Government is different from the French program in that it makes money available for proposals which will assist not only the identified offenders, but will also help prevent young people from getting into a position where they might offend.

In brief terms, fifteen councils across the Melbourne metropolitan and Victorian country areas were approached by the state government with a $10,000 seeding grant. This was to be used to initiate a Good Neighbourhood Committee.

Following this seeding grant, up to $40,000 could be accessed via submission and an additional $20,000 could be gained from the government on a dollar for dollar basis with money raised by the community.

The City of Croydon was one of the first local government bodies to take up the invitation. They approached a number of existing government bodies in the area and interested community representatives inviting them to become involved in their committee.

It was suggested to council that the Regional Manager and one member of staff who had worked with offenders in that municipality, would be interested in being part of the committee.

The committee, once finalised, comprised 20 personnel from diverse backgrounds including academics, professionals, retired people, youth workers, police and students. In the first few weeks there was discussion about the causes of criminal behaviour. After the third week, the group decided it was time to do something concrete, rather than continue a debate in search of a single answer.

The group proposed the following initiatives: information liaison officers for schools, a shuttle bus for the area, a practice facility for garage bands, discounted tickets for local cinemas, an Outward Bound type adventure course, a 'no wine bar', and a program which to date has received a lot of media attention Australia-wide, a 'safe train'. All members of the committee are committed to these seven proposals and all members of the committee assisted in developing these proposals.

Realising the potential of developing programs, the committee's proposals were costed and the state government granted the committee a further $40,000. As yet no submission has been made for the further $20,000.

Student Information Officers

These came about because a headmaster, who was on the committee, explained the difficulty in getting information about activities to young people and to parents. Schools have traditionally had newsletters sent home, but information in these letters did not appear to reach the target groups of students and parents.

Youth workers also discovered that student-to-student word of mouth achieved excellent results in conveying information about activities.

The student information officer would be a paid position. Students nominated by their school would be paid $20 per month to take on the active role of disseminating information about activities occurring within the community to other students. They would attend training programs and regular meetings at the council where information on activities and events within the City of Croydon would be provided to them.

The Bus

The shuttle bus program identified the need for a better transportation system within the local community. Young people who attended activities in the area would, because of the lack of after-hours bus services, or lack of parental interest, or due to the disinterest of youths in being answerable to parents, find themselves walking long distances during the late hours of the night. This problem was conveyed to us by the police, the young people themselves, as well as by youth workers who were trying to run programs for these young people.

Making use of a bus belonging to the City of Croydon, the youth workers made themselves available to take young people home following Council-run activities at the local hall. They found themselves travelling around the district for three to four hours after an event and also discovered that a lot of youth came from neighbouring municipalities.

The committee then gained support from a local church group who not only offered to provide a bus but also provided bus drivers for this service. They were happy to have 'the bus' which is traditionally used by Sunday school groups, painted to attract young people.

Approaches made to commercial companies to run such a service met with a great deal of hesitation and concern for the safety of their drivers, yet given the response to date from young people, this bus could be commercially viable.

An interesting aside is the safety aspect of the bus proposal. While having initially been established to counteract the poor after-hours public transport services, it has become a safety bus for many young people who would otherwise themselves be at risk either of offending or of being offended against.

Garage bands

Having initiated the idea of garage bands, we discovered that garage bands and the encouragement of garage bands really started during the 1960s in Liverpool, England. Liverpool Council informed us that support of garage bands was undertaken as a means of addressing the high level of youth offending.

To the youth workers in the City of Croydon, many young people had expressed an interest in being part of a band or associated with a band. They wanted a facility in which to practice without the constant restraints of family and neighbourhood.

This proposal gained financial support from Rage Without Alcohol and the QUIT campaign. Though money was available though the Good Neighbourhood program, these

two groups provided additional funding and consequently we were able to get a facility and also purchase equipment. In addition, professional rock bands came into the area to provide training days for potential musicians.

A monastery donated an unused squash court in a sparsely populated area. The Office of Corrections thought that through its contacts it would be able to provide materials for the development of this court into a viable practice studio.

To date the young people with an interest in this project have donated a lot of their own time to get this project off the ground. The building is in a gully on the church property with very poor access. It was envisaged that Office of Corrections clients would develop appropriate roadways; however, the young people themselves decided to take the initiative and consequently held working bees to get access into the building.

Within the next few weeks offenders already on Community Based Orders will rebuild the facility.

Discount Cinema Tickets

While a number of the cinemas in Melbourne offer discount admissions on Tuesday nights and student concessions at most other screenings, it is still a very costly exercise for young people to attend the cinema.

The committee looked into subsidising cinema tickets and making these discounted tickets available to students, unemployed young people and those receiving social security payments.

An approach was made to the owner of the local cinema, whose response was quite encouraging. He was not only prepared to pilot the program of discounted tickets, which would initially be subsidised by the Good Neighbourhood program, but be prepared to continue the program without financial backing.

All tickets including the existing discounted tickets would be subsidised a further $1.50 on the presentation of a discount voucher and proof of being a student, unemployed or receiving social security payments. These vouchers would be available at schools, at the local CES and at local CYSS programs. They would also be made available to the police for distribution. The cinema owner expressed interest in encouraging family groups to attend his cinema. He proposed his own subsidy for family groups at his cinemas.

This idea has already gained a great deal of support and interest from young people in the community.

The Great North-South Walk

Outward Bound courses have existed for quite some time and are popular in the community. These types of courses have been tried and are still in use in many states of Australia as programs for young offenders.

The Croydon proposal stems from the belief that young people who come to the attention of police and the courts could be assisted if their level of self-worth and self-esteem was raised.

The proposal was for an Outward Bound type course, which would be called 'The Great North-South Walk' and would be held in the Western District of Victoria. It would be conducted over nine days and consist of trekking, canoeing, bike riding and a community work project. Fifteen young people between the ages of 14 and 19 would be invited to attend.

This trek is to occur in late July. To date, clients of the Office of Corrections, Community Services Victoria and young people identified as at risk by their own families, by the courts and community youth workers have been enrolled in this adventure.

All equipment including bicycles, canoes, wet weather gear and trekking equipment has been donated. The money set aside for this program is mainly to be used in employing an

experienced Outward Bound instructor who will take primary responsibility for the program. Staff of both the Office of Corrections and the City of Croydon will also be participating in the trek.

'No Wine' Bar

It had come to the attention of the Community Corrections Officer responsible for supervising clients in the Croydon area that a high percentage of the younger offenders under her supervision had alcohol problems. It was also felt that for many young people few options for entertainment existed other than in local hotels where peer group pressure demanded young people consume alcohol, irrespective of their age.

A 'no wine' bar was proposed. This would be an environment which had all the social draw cards of a hotel or entertainment facility but without the presence of alcohol.

This does not mean that the bar would serve low percentage alcohol drinks but rather, non-alcoholic cocktails. Cocktails that would be visually interesting and pleasing to the palate.

To develop a range of non-alcoholic cocktails a competition was arranged between all Melbourne Metropolitan colleges with Hospitality Courses. The competition culminated on Friday, 28 July 1989 at the Box Hill TAFE hospitality schools restaurant and prize money totalling $2,000 was given to the young people presenting the best non-alcoholic cocktails.

In conjunction with this competition, a business plan is presently being developed with the assistance of the Business School from Outer East College of TAFE. This proposal is aimed at developing a self-sufficient commercially viable facility in which the cocktails developed will be available along with food and entertainment.

The garage bands referred to earlier will have the opportunity to use this facility for a public appearance and 'the bus' will be linked to this facility.

As a commercial venture, this proposal will be seeking financial support from business groups and the community. To date, support has been gained from Outer East TAFE College in terms of a business plan and from Croydon Council who have indicated their preparedness to provide this project with a home.

This proposal should result in the development of a highly viable entertainment facility which, while being available for young people, will also be available to the broader community during the remainder of the day.

Safe Train

The one proposal which has received a great deal of media attention has been that of a 'safe train'.

Although a number of perceptions of this program have been conveyed to the community by both politicians and the media, the initial proposal was to rent a two carriage train which would start at Lilydale and stop at all stations through to Ringwood before continuing express to the city. The train would depart at approximately six o'clock Friday and Saturday evenings and would return from the City, going express from the City to Ringwood at approximately midnight. Parents and interested persons could greet the train at stations between Ringwood and Lilydale.

This proposal was developed not simply because trains were considered unsafe to travel on, but because many of the assaults that took place, occurred late at night when few people were on the trains or stations. By increasing the numbers of people on the trains and on the platforms, it was felt that the likelihood of offences occurring would decline.

As an enticement to get people on the trains, two policemen would be employed to travel the train and entertainment would be provided in these two carriages. Entertainment would take the form of a jukebox and/or live entertainment.

This program should be finalised within the next month or so, at which time state ministers for transport, police, representatives of the railways and unions will meet to discuss the implementation of this proposal.

While all people would be encouraged to use the safe train and age would not be a limitation, people under the age of 13 years would be discouraged from travelling without some form of parental supervision. Individuals displaying antisocial behaviour, such as drunkenness or hooliganism would not be permitted on the train and their behaviour would be reported to their parents by the police if necessary.

Networking

This committee has seen the effective development of networks. Each of the programs has led to the development of extensive involvement with other parts of the community and an awareness of all participants of each other's activities.

Examples of cooperation are many:

- schools have been much more aware of the need for efficient communication. They have been made aware of how the Office of Corrections' clients can assist them in grounds maintenance, for example;
- sign-writers, the church and council maintenance staff combined to develop 'the bus';
- churches, local musicians, government organisations such as Quit and Rage without Alcohol and the manpower of the Office of Corrections joined forces for the garage bands;
- a local cinema owner has, with the support of the Good Neighbourhood committee, been able to express his commitment to the community;
- Outward Bound programs, government departments, individuals dealing with offenders and councils joined to implement 'the Great North-South Walk';
- TAFE Colleges, the Australian Bar Tenders Guild, soft drink companies have all joined forces to develop the 'no wine bar' concept;
- police, unions and ministers, along with the community as a whole have all got behind the safe train proposal; and
- young people have not just been assisting in the formulation of programs but have been active in their implementation.

The networks that are developed in this way are beneficial, not only to the programs being developed but also to all participants.

Related Benefits

From an Office of Corrections' point of view, this has not only highlighted our profile in the community, but has linked us with positive entrepreneurial approaches to crime prevention within the community.

This idea of Student Information Officers has the potential to revolutionalise the flow of information within all schools. Should it prove to be successful it may be replicated within other groups in the community.

The success of 'the bus' may find other community groups being prepared to donate the services of their vehicles to assist when public transport is unavailable. It may also prove to bus companies that it is commercially viable and safe to provide such a service in this and other unserviced areas.

Discounted cinema tickets may encourage other cinema owners to replicate the initiative. Cheaper tickets and family concessions may see cinema attendances increase,

improve the profitability of smaller cinemas and see family units use this as a form of family activity.

The concept of 'the Great North-South Walk' may also provide a viable sentencing option to courts and the contacts now developed will be used to run similar Office of Corrections programs statewide.

Viable alternatives to alcoholic beverages which can be served in both licensed and public facility may flow on from the 'No Wine Bar' proposal. It may also result in entertainment venues being developed for this relatively untapped market.

Reductions in the numbers of carriages on late trains to increase the numbers of people in carriages may result in safer more frequently used public transport.

Conclusion

As individuals and organisations we have a responsibility to use our knowledge and experience in conjunction with the community and its resources to develop strategies for crime prevention, particularly amongst young people.

Positive Responses to Youthful Graffiti

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This paper is based on facts and figures collated over a five-year period at the City of Gosnells. Attempts have been made to identify the extent of vandalism and graffiti, and introduce a strategy to reduce the problem as the cost to the ratepayer and private companies is escalating at an alarming rate.

The City of Gosnells is located 20 kilometres south east of Perth, Western Australia, and at the base of the Darling Ranges. The Municipal Council covers 125 sq km in area with a population of 68,000 persons and the projected population in the year 2001 is 86,000.

One of the objectives of the City of Gosnells is to reduce vandalism and graffiti by providing alternatives for the youth of today.

Rising Cost of Vandalism

Since 1977 a 'vandalism' record has been kept by the Council. The damage recorded is of building-related matters and does not include engineering and gardening department figures. However, recently, vandalism to parks and gardens has been recorded also. Vandalism is increasing. Because of the ever-increasing costs of damage to council buildings a special committee was formed to look at ways of curbing this trend.

It was recommended that in 1987 a public meeting concerning vandalism be arranged and a vandalism working party consisting of four councillors and the principal building surveyor was formed.

The main topics of discussion were:

- activities and programs being conducted in an effort to reduce vandalism;
- young people's lack of pride in their public facilities;
- neighbourhood watch, industrial watch;
- the need to set up a system to prevent and cure the problem;
- the cost to the public;
- community services orders; and
- graffiti offenders.

Two recommendations arising from the meeting were:

- that student councils from the four high schools be invited to a discussion session; and

- that a public meeting be held.

School Involvement

On 4 September 1987, a discussion session for school principals and prefects on vandalism was held. The agenda included issues such as why vandalism occurs; ways of preventing vandalism; responsibility of offenders; can student councils influence students or young people in the area on vandalism; and do the student councillors think it is a good idea that one of the group represents today's workshop findings at a public meeting?

Why does vandalism occur?

Suggestions were: boredom; peer group pressure—the 'in thing'; emotional reasons—young people get hurt and retaliate; individuals as well as groups make statements, tags, and initials; media influence; it is a challenge to see if kids can get away with it; it is a form of art rather than vandalism and it was not seen as damage; they have pride in their own work; parents not knowing where their children are; parents letting their children out at night; children seeking attention and resulted from frustration and low self-esteem; children rebelling against parents; children are not being brought up in the proper way; there are not enough activities for teenagers or children to do; there are not enough places for people to meet, for example, public parlours or arcades; more social activities are required, together with public transport to the venue; jealousy; and both parents working.

Ways of preventing vandalism

Suggestions were: Blue Light discos for children from fourteen to seventeen years of age; more advertising in schools for 'drop-in' coffee shops; to have a School Watch system; to publish acts of vandalism more predominantly in community newspapers; to improve lighting; to have more activities for the young; to provide a wall to show off art; to restrict the sale of spray cans; that the Council should provide more entertainment to prevent boredom; that painting of cars should be made available; install trail bike tracks; that less advertising of vandalism would reduce copycat acts; to publish what goes on in Council and where the money goes; to place billboards in parks; to initiate more community watch systems; to provide more supervision; to introduce tougher penalties; to provide wider surveillance; to provide plain clothes police to check out places; to develop neighbourhood watch; to provide a number to ring if you require help; and that age groups should be encouraged to discuss vandalism with their own age group.

Responsibility of offenders when caught

Suggestions were: to have the parents to watch culprits clean damage; that those without money do community service; that those with money repay out of their wages; that offenders do community work in their own time or counselling in certain cases; that fines not be increased because the kids will retaliate; that kids fix it rather than parents pay for it; that when caught to do social work to restore damage and/or to attend lectures; that the cane should be reinstated in schools; and that culprits should be made to clean their own mess.

Public Meeting on Vandalism

One hundred and fifty people representing church groups, interested ratepayers, Progress Associations, the Red Cross, schools, police, Rotary, sports clubs, Scouts, District Information Centres, and other service groups attended this meeting.

Question time was very lively and many important points were put forward. Comments during the question time covered many of the aspects that the students had come forth with at their previous meeting. It was interesting to note that both the young and the older

populous had similar ideas. Interested people were asked to form an investigation committee.

Community Service Orders and Youth Participation

A meeting on community service orders was held on 25 February 1988 to which all service groups in the district were invited. The speakers were Kevin Endersby and John Pavlinovich from the Department of Community Services. It was stated that the Salvation Army, Gosnells Refuge and Anglicare were the only local groups participating in the community service order program at the moment, so that youths have to travel to complete orders during the weekends. If the service orders are not completed the kids are fined.

The program is successful for approximately 90 per cent of youths. These youths have generally committed crimes of vandalism, disorderly conduct, crimes related to cars, or traffic offences. Service orders are for approximately ten to sixty hours duration and the hours worked dismiss the charges, therefore no conviction is registered.

The number of youths participating in the program is increasing. There are 60 per cent more youths in the program this year than last year, with there being approximately 1,500 participants in 1988.

The project performed must be non-profit and a particular job must not be taken from a paid worker. The work can be spread over a number of projects within an organisation and hours are flexible. Participants are covered by insurance. At the conclusion a report must be filled out by the organisation detailing the hours worked and the attitude of the participant.

Police Involvement in the Community

Neighbourhood Watch

There are six suburbs within the Gosnells City Council which are established as Neighbourhood Watch Areas. All suburbs have property identification programs in full swing and the program is seen as very successful.

Industrial Watch

This program is operational in the Maddington Industrial Area with some nine business companies involved, each paying around $1.40 per night for about six visits by a patrol company.

Business watch in Gosnells no longer operates due to lack of commitment by business companies.

School Watch

Within the Gosnells district, seventeen schools have been included in the school watch program.

There has been no major damage to schools since this program commenced in January 1989.

Safety House

There are fourteen schools involved in Safety House in the Gosnells area, each with their own committee, reporting to a state coordinator.

Police And Citizens—Blue Light Disco

The Gosnells Police and Citizens Youth Club is the only one of this type run by the police within the Gosnells district.

The club is situated in Maddington and last year catered for some 80,000 children. An extension to this club is proposed in 1990 at the Thornlie Community Centre.

There are two Blue Light discos and one Police and Citizens disco held in the Gosnells District catering for up to 800 children. These discos are held approximately every five weeks.

Truancy Patrols

Two Truancy Officers service the Armadale Division of which Gosnells is a part.

Since its commencement, the scheme has apprehended 2602 potential offenders about the streets of the metropolitan area. Of these, 27 per cent were truants from school. The 73 per cent of non-truants included juveniles that have left school for work who are generally unemployed, are under suspension from school, or those who had left school for other reasons.

During the operation of the Truancy Patrol, a total of 692 charges were laid against 308 offenders. In reality, 11 per cent of the juveniles on the streets in the metropolitan area were committing criminal offences.

The Truancy Patrol in conjunction with other community policing schemes has resulted in an overall reduction of 20 per cent in daytime related crime, particularly break and enter.

In suburbs such as Forrestfield and Girrawheen, the Truancy Patrol has reduced daytime break and enter by over 70 per cent.

It was of concern that 73 per cent of these juveniles were male and 26 per cent were Aboriginal.

Community Policing Liaison Officer

There is one appointed Community Policing Liaison Officer stationed at the Gosnells Police Station. This position is to assist all persons involved in the community policing initiatives mentioned above.

Divisional Committee

The Community Policing Divisional Committee for the Armadale Division meets every five weeks to discuss and inquire into problems within the community and it seeks assistance from government departments in solving the problems raised.

The Gosnells City Council assists Neighbourhood Watch by making available (free of charge) Community Centres for meetings, ordering and supplying Neighbourhood Watch Signs to be placed on road verges. A Council representative attends these meetings when requested to do so.

The Gosnells Council assists with Blue Light Discos by supplying premises at a reduced price and having the premises cleaned.

The Council assisted the Thornlie Blue Light Disco by extending the size of the Hall to comply with Health regulations and to enable more children to attend.

The Division is assisted by the Council making available premises for meetings.

Council Buildings

Inspections have been carried out on all Council buildings and within defined areas, particularly those areas with high vandalism.

In areas around buildings that have screen walls or shrubs obscuring vision, these have been removed. Low lighting (bollards) have been removed and high pole lights installed (mercury vapour type). For windows, glazing is one of the high costs of damage. Perspex glazing has been tried, but tends to scratch easily and can be popped out. Laminated glass seems to be the most successful. It has not stopped breakage, but does prevent entry.

Partly-lit car parks have had better lighting installed and security patrols are used on an ad hoc basis when problems are identified in an area.

At one recreation centre, adjoining owners agreed to set up a 'watch'.

A reduction in vandalism is apparent from the Council's initiatives and police pilot programs in the Gosnells area.

Graffiti

Graffiti or Suburban Art, as we prefer to call it, is usually carried out in most cases, by very talented young artists. From interviewing these youngsters, it has been found that most come from good homes, are not down and out and are not street kids as such. In fact most

seem quite intelligent and are keen to gain legal sites. These youngsters are expressing their need for status in our society. They do not appear to be involved in sports or be interested in club orientated activities.

Definitions

'**Graffiti expression**'—occurs when racist comments are written and is a means of expressing an individual's views.

'**Tagging**'—this seems to fall into two categories:

- where the urban artist or graffiti artist signs his name in a special way or wording, which is his own signature on a piece which he has done;
- where a person who has no artistic skills imitates tagging signatures of skilled graffiti artists or creates his own tag. Tagging on pieces also indicates he either likes the person's work, or by writing over it indicates that he is not impressed with that type of art. This usually happens when an urban artist either copies someone else's design or copies one from a book.

'**Pieces**'—this is work carried out by 'kings' or up and coming 'kings'. Pieces are murals which can cover large areas of walls. The design is well thought out and sketched by the artist prior to the actual work being carried out.

Graffiti—where do you start?

A seminar on graffiti was held. Proposals put forward at the seminar were:

- to establish a 'Drop-in' Centre for youth involved in urban art;
- to establish the position of Community Youth Worker, whose responsibility it will be to approach and coordinate the youth in directing them away from illegal graffiti to approved urban art locations. This person would also liaise with local government, Transperth, Westrail and private enterprises for legal sites; and
- that the Community Youth Worker position be funded by the state government.

There was great concern by all at the seminar that if immediate action were not taken, the youth who have been approached will see it as another bureaucratic, long-winded, 'twelve months down the track' decision.

It became apparent at the seminar, that the majority of the graffiti kings live in the South-East Corridor, hence the high amount of graffiti within the City of Gosnells area. With this in mind, the Mayor suggested that a meeting should be held at Gosnells to seek further information and ideas.

This meeting recommended among other things:

- that a Committee be formed to establish an ongoing involvement in the implementation of such a scheme within the City of Gosnells; and
- that the principal building surveyor arrange a meeting with available Councillors and the Chamber of Commerce and any other interested local business people to discuss the matter of graffiti and possible suitable approved sites within the City of Gosnells.

A further meeting was called on 25 January 1989 to establish a working party regarding graffiti. This meeting was derived from realising that graffiti or urban art had to be treated separately from vandalism. The objective of the Working Party was to redirect the artists' energy by making graffiti legal and providing specific approved sites.

Two days later local graffiti artists were invited to air their views on all aspects of graffiti at a public meeting.

Twenty-five to thirty youths attended the meeting, some being the kings with others being their followers and taggers.

Discussions were held and their opinions were sought on many aspects of graffiti and what the Council could do to support this activity.

The positive help given by the Gosnells Chamber of Commerce was pointed out; as was the need for guidance, the idea being to formulate some policy initially to try and find space through the Committee.

A father, who was accompanied by his son a 'king' and several other artists said he would like to see an association formed of young people who could control to a degree some of the other 'toys' and 'kings' who caused damage. If this could be worked in conjunction with the City of Gosnells, and areas and sponsorship be made available, it would be a workable project and they could control the illegal section. He felt that maybe after five to six weeks legal walls could be repainted and used again. He also emphasised that their talent which was genuine should be recognised, and felt that the City of Gosnells could help in this respect.

The Community Policing Officer asked if the artists had ever wanted to attend art school. The Project Officer explained on their behalf that a lot of schools tended to look down on urban art as an art form and this was one reason it was hard to develop.

The Community Policing Officer pointed out that in respect of the police in general, there had always been an aggressive attitude towards graffiti artists because of legalities, but that he was pleased that the City of Gosnells was trying to organise legal sites and he was prepared to work with the City to help in any way he could.

The Youth Affairs Bureau spoke of the pilot scheme they had inaugurated to get young people involved and to also include locals, police and local groups.

It was proposed that a youth worker be employed to liaise with local government and to investigate where the main problems areas lay. The employment of a part-time officer who would liaise with the youth worker to seek legal sites and get young people together who were interested in urban art was also sought.

An application for a 'Future Plus Suburban Art Project Grant' was successful in February 1989.

At the local government executive committee meeting held on 15 February 1989, Councillor K R Trent reported:

> The Minister for Youth has announced the Suburban Art Project which will be piloted between January and June 1989 with the idea to develop the ideas and skills of young people from unlawful graffiti into positive and artistic work at approved community sites. Any established youth centre preferably with links to local government is eligible to sponsor a Suburban Art Project and applications can be made with the Youth Affairs Bureau.

The development worker to coordinate the Suburban Art Project commenced on 9 January 1989 on a part-time basis working twenty-five hours per week for the first three months to be reviewed after that period. The worker is currently preparing a record of areas with most damage and making contact with local and state government offices.

The council sought further support from the business community:

> The recent thinking is to channel these artists' talents into more productive outlets by providing areas for them to do their art on. Some suggestions were walls of commercial buildings, where the art could take the form of advertising.

Hip Hop Jam

It was decided to hold a Hip Hop Jam at one of Council's Recreation Centres.

A Hip Hop Jam is a group of artists getting together to do a few spray painting pieces with music, rap singing and beat boxing.

Part of the art program is to get the artists involved into organising and programming these projects with the back up support of the Project Officer and the Council.

It is anticipated that another Hip Hop Jam Session will be organised prior to the conclusion of this project sometime in September.

Other future events that have been organised are two workshops for the Richard Rushton Holiday program in July, participation in the National Art Week in October 1989 with demonstrations in spray can art at Maddington and Thornlie Shopping Centres and the provision of a 'Drop-In' Centre bus with large boards incorporated for spraying (windows down).

What this Program has achieved

In the 1988-89 financial year, a record of graffiti vandalism on Council buildings showed approximately $14,000 in insurance claims, where paintwork had been removed from buildings and bus shelters.

This figure does not highlight the cost which has occurred on the ongoing maintenance of these buildings. Every time a building is sprayed, even with the use of anti-graffiti material (high labour and material costs), building surface is affected.

However, with the initiation of the Seminar on Graffiti and the word having spread that Councils, police and the government were serious about supporting a graffiti project and making it legal, graffiti became non-existent on Council buildings until the end of the financial year with only one public building and one piece being sprayed with anti-racist slogans.

This is prime evidence that the youth are supporting the program and it is up to the Council and the government to keep up this support, so that the youth do not get frustrated and feel let down. With this in mind, the prime move of this Council will be to keep that interest going for as long as it is needed.

The Western Australia Police reported that insurance claims in the Perth metropolitan area totalled some $192,000 in 1988. This graffiti bill does not compare with the Eastern States. However, it is obvious that if this trend cannot be stopped now, it will escalate out of control. As a result this program was initiated to turn illegal graffiti around, making it **'legal, safe and seen'**. Without the support of the artists, this would not be possible.

To this end, we feel we have made a most successful beginning.

Aboriginal Youth and Offending

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The South Australian juvenile justice system aims to rehabilitate rather than punish young offenders. It seeks to:

> secure for the child such care, protection, control, correction or guidance as will best lead to the proper development of his personality and to his development into a responsible and useful member of the community (*Children's Protection & Young Offenders' Act 1979* (SA) 81-88: s.7).

Aboriginal young offenders have clearly done less well under this system than their non-Aboriginal counterparts, being over-represented in nearly all areas. There has also been a failure of mainstream services to cater, in any real or effective way, to the needs of Aboriginal youth.

This paper suggests two main reasons for this over-representation. Firstly, it argues the justice system has discriminated against Aboriginal youth and secondly that diversionary and 'treatment' programs have failed to identify and hence adapt to the specific needs of Aboriginal young offenders. Finally the paper will briefly outline some strategies undertaken by the South Australian Department for Community Welfare.

The System

As stated, Aboriginal youth are over represented in all levels of the juvenile justice system. Professor Faye Gale (Gale, Bailey-Harris & Wundersitz 1990) suggests this over-representation in relation to their population numbers is by

> some seven times at the point of apprehension (whilst) their relative position deteriorates until, at the final point of detention, they are over-represented by some twenty-four times.

This figure in South Australian juvenile institutions hovers between 25 and 35 per cent of the total number of youths incarcerated being Aboriginal.

Gale argues 'the system' has failed Aboriginal young offenders at all levels. She offers statistical evidence suggesting police arrest (as opposed to report) more Aboriginal youth, than non-Aboriginal youth (p. 8). She suggests this occurs as many Aboriginal youths have less social support, such as employment, or a strong nuclear family. In turn, the 'screening panel' process which deflects many minor young offenders into panels and away from the court system, historically treats more harshly youth who are presented before it whilst under arrest. Subsequently, far more Aboriginal youth are proportionally sent to court, hence

denying them access to a diversionary system for which South Australia has gained worldwide acclaim for the opportunities it affords young offenders.

Magistrates, according to Gale et al. (1990), are more likely to give Aboriginal youth more severe penalties than non-Aboriginals. They are certainly more likely to be sentenced to detention than other young offenders, and are less likely to have that sentence suspended.

Whilst, as Gale et al. (1990) suggest, we have failed to identify many adequate and legitimate supports which already exist, we have also failed to offer culturally sensitive 'diversionary' and 'treatment' programs. By and large, Aboriginal youth have been expected to 'fit in' to our very successful mainstream services for young offenders, believing all youth have similar problems and taking no account for the specialist needs and requirements of Aboriginal youth. Clearly in South Australia, these services have been of limited value, hence new and innovative intervention strategies have been both proposed and implemented. Prior to briefly outlining these strategies, however, a discussion follows as to the rationale for these programs, the perhaps unique problems faced by Aboriginal youth in our society and how these differ from non-Aboriginals.

Alienation

It is believed that many Aboriginal youth feel totally alienated from the general community. They have a restricted or limited vision of their role in the wider community and what they can achieve, which is directly related to their Aboriginality. To support this view a state-run young offender program which youths attended as an alternative to detention, required youth to answer a series of questions to make up a personal 'shield'. Questions such as favourite food, favourite sport, were asked with key questions, one being 'Where will you be (describe yourself) in ten years' time?' Over a period of three years, some sixty youths were questioned with relative equal numbers from, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups. Results showed 80 per cent of non-Aboriginal youths described themselves in middle-class settings for example, nice house, car, married with children, employment. (A number of these youths also indicated they would attain their goals by criminal means; however, the future was positive). Aboriginal answers were very different. Many had great difficulty answering the question, however 75 per cent of all answers depicted them in ten years being either dead, drunk or locked up.

Whilst this exercise was clearly not conclusive, it did begin to give an understanding as to how these youths perceived themselves, their world in general and their place in it. It seems that their belief of their limited role in mainstream society is constantly supported and reinforced by the world around them. Many Aboriginal youth from an early age experience racism, both overtly and covertly. Many lack role models of people who have successfully bridged the gap into mainstream society whilst many come from families where alcohol abuse, offending and violence are normal occurrences. School becomes another failure, being a seemingly pointless exercise to many Aboriginal youth. Ingram (cited in Menary 1981, p. 39) describes school for Aboriginal youth as a huge 'confidence trick', as it suggests to these children if you study now you will reap the rewards (employment) later, a fallacy for Aboriginals. To take this point one step further, in many ways Aboriginal youth are constantly teased by our society. They watch television which vividly displays all the benefits and rewards available to, as they believe, their non-Aboriginal counterparts. They are victims of a materialistic society which suggests, 'the more you have, the better person you are'. Aboriginal youth believe they are not privy to the game, let alone have any ideas of the rules as to how to play it.

Not only do these youth feel excluded from the general community, but many have little or no knowledge on which to fall back. This does not mean, however, these youth do not wish to be proud of their Aboriginality. On the contrary, in the writer's experience, many desperately seek pride and self-respect in who they are and what their place is in the world, even though this is often expressed in negative and harmful ways.

This powerlessness over one's life has dramatic consequences for many Aboriginal youth. Eckermann (1978) highlights the importance of an individual maintaining control over their own destiny by stating:

> the need to establish and maintain effective control over the socio-cultural-economic environment permeates all other aspects of development and underpins all needs systems (Eckermann 1978).

In addition Weiner (1978, p. 6) suggests two dimensions affecting success and failure with regards to the perceived causes of a problem. Does the individual perceive the causes of the problem as being stable (for example IQ), or unstable (for example luck), and controllable versus uncontrollable (does the person perceive to be able to control or change the cause?). These papers suggest Aboriginal youth attribute their situation to stable and uncontrollable factors (that is, being Aboriginal and other factors outside their control) which, according to Weiner, greatly reduce their expectancy for future success.

To summarise then, we have youth who are discriminated against by a system, as suggested by Gale et al. (1990). They have a negative view of themselves and their future substantiated by almost everything they see about them. They believe they have no ability to change this situation, and hence display a range of emotions including anger, frustration and depression. These emotions lead to actions resulting in offending, alcohol and drug abuse and as being increasingly experienced, suicide.

Strategies

The generalist statement of all programs is as follows.

Aboriginal young offenders have to have knowledge of and pride in their own culture and heritage, whilst having the confidence and ability to operate in, and relate to the general community as they desire.

Strategies are either short-term 'deflective' in nature or longer term 'treatment'. All use Aboriginal workers (as only they can truly impact Aboriginal youth) and all attempt to use volunteers, and community members where possible.

As a beginning point, the South Australian Department of Community Welfare (SADCW) has initially focused on reducing the high numbers of Aboriginal youth in our juvenile institutions, considering these to be in most need. The aim is to reduce Aboriginal youths as a percentage of the total population of these institutions to 15 per cent (a reduction of 50 per cent) by the end of 1989-90 financial year, leading to under 10 per cent in following years. Other areas of the juvenile justice system and preventative programs will then be targeted.

Division Programs

Community Service Orders are community based work programs given by the courts as a direct alternative to detention. This option has been grossly under-utilised by Aboriginals. Emphasis is now being placed on Aboriginal community members supervising Aboriginal youth with a series of country and city projects being offered. Youth will live and work in Aboriginal country communities such as Point McLeay, and it is believed the extra encouragement and support offered in these communities will enable these youths to successfully complete their orders.

Warrants default programs

Nearly half those incarcerated for non-payment of fines in our institutions are Aboriginal. Similarly as with Community Service Orders, (community work is an option for non-

payment of fines under the South Australian system) success has only come from Aboriginal people organising Aboriginal projects for Aboriginal youths to work on. Again, community people are recruited to supervise these youths.

Bail supervision

Due to the lack of structure in many of the adolescents' lives, Aboriginal community members are again recruited to supervise them between court appearances to ensure attendance, rather than remand in custody.

Longer term 'change' programs

Intensive Neighbourhood Care (INC) This is a highly successful program where offending youth are placed to live with community based families who receive training and support. Country regions have recruited Aboriginal families and matched youth with dramatic effect, hence staff have been allocated to adapt the model to the metropolitan area. Youth are placed with a family from one day to two years, depending on need. The most noticeable aspect of this program is the realisation that the majority of Aboriginal youth placed want the stable, caring, structured environment these families offer**.**

Intensive Personal Supervision (IPS) IPS is a scheme where meaningful people in a youth's life are engaged to use and develop that relationship. They spend time with, guide and encourage the youth, believing that these people are more readily accepted by, and with less stigma attached to other government workers. Generally, contact is for ten hours per week and for between three and six months.

Aboriginal Youth Team

This Team of Aboriginal Workers has been established to work intensively with offending youth in both above groups and on an individual basis. These programs concentrate on reinforcing cultural knowledge and pride, building confidence and skills in mixing in the general community, and supporting endeavours in employment, sport and recreation. The Team will encourage youths to expand their horizons and generally use group processes to support each other's endeavours. In addition, 'Wilderness Camps' will continue to be run, based on cultural awareness and pride.

Vocational and employment training

Aboriginal youth face two main problems in gaining employment. Firstly, they lack the skills and confidence required. They do not see work as a realistic option for them, hence have not learnt the necessary skills or work habits. The second aspect is employers' attitudes. They often lack confidence in Aboriginal youth and their motivation to maintain their employment.

The program is based in a factory and has three phases. The first teaches basic work habits and builds confidence in such skills as woodwork, fibreglassing, mechanics, spray painting, and assembly. Staff will attempt to motivate youth into Stage 2, which involves specialised training. Numeracy and literacy courses, welding, fork-lift driving, plastics and rubber are just a few of the courses offered with support from staff and volunteers.

The program then acts as mediator 'selling' the youths and their skills to employers. Work experience is gained for them (again with support) on Stage 2 leading to full-time employment (Stage 3). A wide range of employers have either been involved or committed to become involved in the future.

Gatekeeping

Finally, our Department has allocated a manager's position to ensure youths are not unnecessarily brought into the system or incarcerated, and these other alternative programs are used.

Summary

In summary, Aboriginal youth have greatly suffered in our juvenile justice systems. Program planners need to encourage research and acknowledge differences when formulating strategies. Programs need to encourage pride in Aboriginality, give confidence and broaden visions for the future and intensively support efforts made. Over time, many more Aboriginal youth will have the opportunity and confidence to realise their potential, therefore reducing offending and improving society as a whole.

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Youth Advocacy

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Youth Advocacy is a framework of action based on human rights principles when working with young people. Its principles and current outcomes clearly indicate that not only does it attempt to prevent juvenile crime but it creates opportunities for young people to take responsibility in addressing life issues.

The Concept of Youth Advocacy

Definition

The overall thrust of Youth Advocacy is to empower young people in their everyday lives. Youth Advocacy attempts to provide support to young people in all areas that affect them, be it education, housing, employment, unemployment, health, social security, recreation and human relationships. Youth Advocacy also gives to the young person insights into the adult world of decision making and the exercising of authority, and enhances the young person's understanding of legal process. This helps the young person to make clear choices about issues that affect their everyday life. Youth Advocacy can assist young people to use the existing social systems to develop a real sense of self-worth. Thus, young people are in a better position to be responsible for themselves and more able to deal with society's demands.

Youth Advocacy is an established framework for workers to use with young people across all social levels. Its emphasis is to empower young people through their own actions in situations that affect them. Youth Advocacy is a reflection of the principles of human rights in practice.

Youth Advocacy aims to prevent the diminution of a young person's self-respect, caused by paternalistic and authoritarian attitudes of those people who have professional authority over the young person's life—teachers, lawyers, law enforcement authorities as well as well-meaning but misguided social workers, youth workers, probation officers and others within the helping professions.

The Process
Youth Advocacy processes include the following:

- Youth Advocacy is at all times a human rights approach with young people. This perspective rejects the welfare model which does not empower young people and at best still leaves the young person dependent on social structures.

- Youth Advocacy is most effective when established in local areas. If Youth Advocacy does not begin at the local neighbourhood level then young people will remain powerless.

- Youth Advocacy, by definition, operates on a conflict model that does not take responsibility for young people.

- Youth Advocacy provides the opportunity to young people to take responsibility—not for young people, but by and with young people.

- Youth Advocacy is a community development process which resources the local areas responsible for the delivery of youth services in education, law, employment, housing, health, transport and recreation.

- Youth Advocacy enhances collective development of young people, and workers with young people.

- To create a climate of Youth Advocacy we begin by establishing workers with youth networks at local and regional levels. Some workers establish strategies that will enable young people to participate in issues of relevance to them.

- Youth Advocacy is a long-term development and will not be put into an expedient time frame that suits politicians, professionals or parents at the expense of young people's development. It is essential to move at a pace conducive to the physical, psychological and emotional change that young people experience.

Youth Legal Advocacy

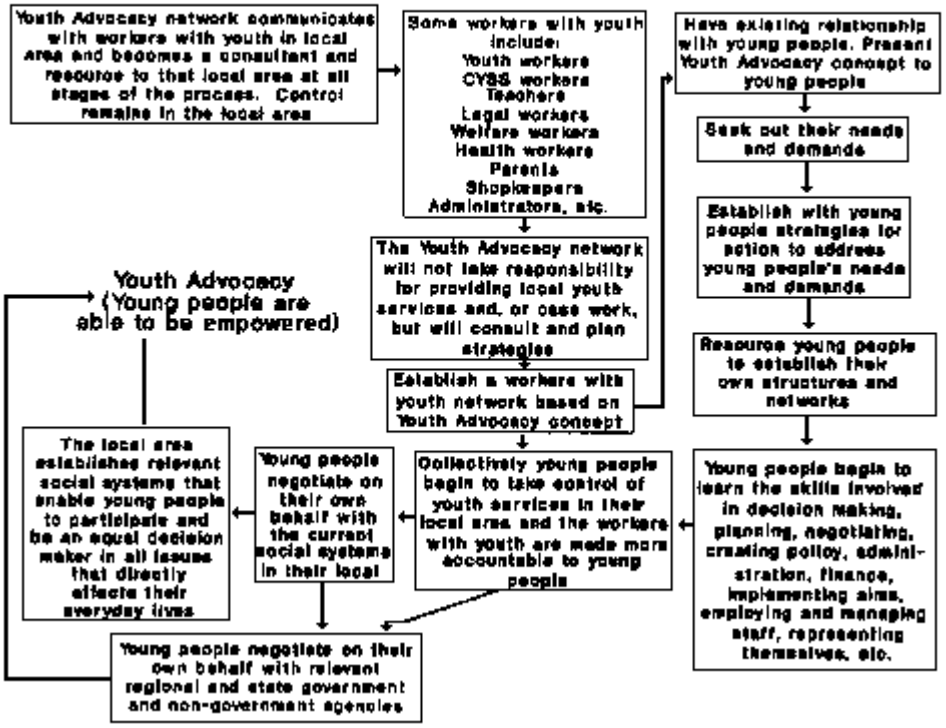
Youth Legal Advocacy interprets the young person's needs and feelings into a legal perspective and acts with instruction from the young person as their legal voice to parents, courts, tribunals, hearings, law enforcement agencies, other government and non-government authorities that have a mandate with young people (*see* Figure 1).

Empowerment

Empowerment of young people is when they have the major say over all the things that affect their everyday lives. Young people are rarely recognised as a group with the right to have their views considered or their interests independently represented at any level of decision making. Be it in Parliament where changes of legislation are made, in courts of tribunals where decisions are made about their future, at home where more often than not they have to obey their parents, and at schools where they are told what is best for them.

Figure 1

Flow chart: Creating a Climate for Youth Advocacy



The denial of access to information and tangible decision making by the majority of people in our society, are clear indications that collectively we are not empowered. Establishing empowerment as the major objective in the education process of young people is essential. When young people taste the processes and implications of empowerment they will be in a good position to reflect the principles of human rights.

Inequality is a foundation stone of our society. Substantial injustice exists in income security, housing, health, education, transport, property, recreation, gender, race, class, information and decision making. Our society has established structures that are dehumanising; and then wonders why young people are negative and ambivalent. People have not come to terms with each other, are reluctant to share their resources, and have become skilled in reactive codes of behaviour. Society gives scant regard to human rights development, and when challenged reacts. To be challenged, or in conflict may lead to struggle which at times is very difficult. Yet through challenges, we all learn a lot about ourselves and about life. Why then do we avoid conflict? Human nature? No, it's our conditioning which has not equipped us to struggle. We have not learned our human rights, nor how to exercise them. The principles of human rights are far better reflected by people who challenge people. The majority of us hold back, we do not say what we really feel, we retain our knowledge and fail to exercise a fundamental human right, the right to be heard, and the right to participate.

Young people need to be included in the decision making processes of life issues that affect them. Young people need to experience taking responsibility to know the potential of empowerment. If young people are shown, learn and are encouraged by adult society to take control over their own lives, then there is every chance that they will be empowered adults.

Brief Outline of Victorian Youth Advocacy Network

The Victorian Youth Advocacy Network is an independent non-government statewide organisation that focuses on young people and their human rights. It was formed in December 1985 after formerly being known as the Victorian Youth and the Law project. The Network was established as an outcome of extensive statewide consultations and overseas research which clearly stated that youth advocacy needed to be established. Its origins came from legal workers and youth workers involved in the Community Legal Centre movement in Melbourne, and young people.

They were all concerned about the way legal issues and legal process were addressed in relation to young people. There were eighteen Community Legal Centres, plus the Victorian Legal Aid Commission, the Aboriginal Legal Service, and various legal advice and referral services provided through Citizens Advice Bureaux in Victoria during 1983. Even though there appeared to be many options for young people to gain legal assistance, the existing structures of legal aid were unable to meet the demands of young people who were seeking more than legal advice and representation. They wanted to participate in the legal process and gain access to legal knowledge that would empower them in their everyday lives.

Current aims of the Network

The aims of the network are, where possible to implement the concept of Youth Advocacy in various local areas throughout Victoria with particular emphasis on resourcing young people and workers with young people to develop:

- practical understanding of their human and legal rights;
- understanding of the legal and social consequences of drug and alcohol abuse;

- understanding of legal issues identified by them as affecting their everyday lives;

- capacity to make full use of the administrative, industrial, and legal methods available to them to ensure that they are not treated unjustly;

- participation in the decision making processes that affect their everyday lives, especially participation by those young people most disadvantaged or most at risk of becoming entangled in the criminal justice system; and

- to establish programs and structures that protect and develop young people's human rights at a local, regional and state level.

Structure

The Network is administered by a Management Committee which is elected at an annual general meeting by its membership. The Management Committee is responsible for overall planning, direction and implementation of programs, staff management, various sub-committees and financial accountability.

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee is comprised of young people from local areas involved in the Network. The Committee is accountable to young people in local areas and provides a voice for young people in the Network's structures. It aims to resource and support young people on all aspects of management responsibilities and skills required to operate the Network.

By late 1989 the Youth Committee will form a minimum of 50 per cent of the Management Committee.

Local areas that are part of The Network are: Morwell, Churchill, Dandenong, Doveton, Richmond, Broadmeadows, Camberwell, Fitzroy, Heidelberg, Sunbury/Bulli, Flemington, Footscray, Williamstown, Northcote, Brunswick, Collingwood, Frankston, Bacchus Marsh, Melton, Moe, Wangaratta, Diamond Creek/Hurstbridge, Colac, Ballarat.

In these local areas young people are, in the main, in control of their own organisations, and direct their own programs. The majority of young people involved are under the age of 18 years and some groups employ their own salaried youth workers.

State Youth Advocacy Conference

An annual state youth advocacy conference is planned, organised and run by the Youth Committee. The Network's operating mandate is established at the conference. The conference in 1989 was held on the Queen's Birthday weekend where more than 165 young people participated, and thirty-five workers with youth were available as resources, but had no voting rights. Various human rights issues were addressed and twenty-three workshops were held.

Other activities of the Youth Advocacy Network

- Production of a quarterly newsletter;

- participation in National Youth Advocacy Conference;

- production of a 24-hour Youth Lawline Kit;

- focus on substance use and abuse issues;
- establishment of a Young People's Public Transport Needs Study;
- provision of a local area resource worker;
- provision of legal information on issues relevant to young people, such as recent legislation of *Children and Young Persons Act 1989, Crimes (custody and investigation) Act 1988, Crimes (fingerprinting) Act 1988, Education (work experience) Act 1989;*
- provision of a resource library on youth and law issues;
- provision of a project workers pool to resource local areas in various knowledge and skills development programs;
- participation and training of various statewide groups and organisations in youth empowerment processes; and
- employment of a small team of salaried workers made up mainly of part-time workers and trainees.

Funding sources

The Network has broadened its funding base in recent times having had a chequered history. Its recent expansion lifted its public profile which is stimulated by substantial increase in involvement of young people at all levels of its activity.

Current funding is received from:

- Youth Affairs Division, Department of Labour, Victoria;
- Health Department, Victoria;
- Brotherhood of St Laurence; and
- Transport Department.

Youth Advocacy Action

Preventing youth crime only partly answers the social and economic inequities experienced by many young people. The double standard set by the adult controlled society they live in causes them to become confused, have less sense of self-worth and this creates a need to belong and become recognised. Often anger, frustration and unhappiness results in acting out which leads to criminal behaviour.

Young people then learn that this society sets standards that blame the individual rather than addressing the underlying causes. Current social systems show many young people how careless and powerless adult structures are.

Young people have the capacity, the energy and the right to take responsibility and experience decision making in the life issues that affect them. Young people also have the right to be taught life skills and social skills so that they can become empowered adults.

Adults have so little trust of themselves or their young people that they are not prepared to take risks and consequently fail to create opportunities for young people to take responsibility.

Flemington Youth Empowerment Project (YEP)

The Flemington Youth Empowerment Project is an exciting new initiative based on the concept of Youth Advocacy. Since its inception in August 1986 it has established itself as a very influential organisation in the Flemington area and in the wider youth affairs sector.

Flemington is a northern inner urban area densely populated with large numbers of economically disadvantaged families and high unemployment. The area is typical of most inner urban areas in large cities, having a large migrant population including Turks, Spaniards and Indo-Chinese. The majority of families live on large public housing estates that are high-rise and low-rise concrete jungles.

The aims of the projectm are:

- to provide young people with as much information as possible on services available to them;
- to involve young people in determining their own recreational activities;
- to educate and train young people in life rights;
- to train young people so they can support, inform and educate other young people and refer to each other in crisis situations; and
- to encourage young women and young men to assert their rights as independent people.

The Management Group consists of young people and parents of participants. At this stage twenty-one people are involved in this capacity: three parents and eighteen young people. The young people are representatives of larger peer groups within the Flemington area covering a wide range of nationalities, gender and age. It is the role of these representatives to inform their larger peer groups of projects that the Youth Empowerment Project is implementing in order to inform and involve other young people.

The Flemington YEP:

- gained funding from private trust and government grants often generated by young people who formed their own delegations to funding sources;
- employed their own youth workers;
- ran their own drop-in youth centre;
- trained young women in a health right education program and paid them to educate other young women;

- established a recreation fund and provided grants to young people to run a variety of recreational programs;
- established a life rights program and distributed a variety of legal education materials to schools and natural meeting places in Flemington area;
- produced a youth Lawline right card for young people when dealing with the police;
- jointly established a youth Lawline, a 24-hour telephone emergency service for young people who have been arrested by police and are in need of a lawyer to be in attendance at the police station, or those seeking legal assistance when in crisis;
- provided a resourcing role to other local areas wanting to establish similar youth advocacy programs;
- ran various workshops at state and national youth affairs conferences;
- holds various workshops to learn about assertiveness, decision making, management operations, financial management and fundraising;
- provides input into youth policy of the Melbourne City Council;
- is in the process of producing 'Where You Stand', a work kit for young people in the Flemington area. The kit is designed to inform young people of their employment rights, for example; and
- participates in the Network's management structures.

Comments

A contributing factor in YEP's achievements is that the workers with youth in their area and their own youth workers resource and support the young people to take responsibility. The workers also create choices with young people, but are not the decision makers in the YEP's operations, only young people are. It is also interesting to note that many of the young people involved are wards of the state or in foster care.

Another side effect worth mentioning is that their treasurer Tanner, a fifteen-year-old Turkish boy was taught how to keep financial books, invest funds and prepare budgets. More than twelve months ago he became a financial adviser to more than twenty-eight Turkish families living in the high rise Public Housing Estates of Flemington. Tanner is now seventeen but continues to advise them on such matters as investment of monies and budgets.

Alphaline

By 1984 many young people in Brunswick, a northern inner suburb of Melbourne were most concerned about the treatment they were given when dealing with the police. They had been expressing their concerns for some years, but no matter what attempts had been made, some young people were demanding more tangible legal support. A small number of local youth workers, and some legal workers from the Fitzroy Legal Service began to meet with these young people.

The young people then created their own group called Alpha Task Force. They chose this name as it reflected their intended action: Against Lawless Police Harassment Action Task Force. As a consequence funding was obtained from the Division of Youth Affairs, Victoria, to establish Alphaline, a 24-hour, seven days a week emergency telephone service for young people who are arrested and taken to a police station. The service is operated by the Fitzroy Legal Service under the direction of Alpha Task Force. Over thirty lawyers volunteer their time by staffing a roster, and use a resource kit which includes a telephone bleeper, instruction guidelines and Client Information Forms, referral agency and listings. Alphaline also provides an information card which provides instructions to young people if they are arrested by the police and taken to a police station. Alphaline has been used heavily by young people, is popular with them, and other telephone services of this type have begun to operate in other local areas in Victoria. The Alphaline card was designed by young people. An important resource of the Alphaline venture are the Brunswick Municipal Youth Workers who have established an administrative resource for the planning and implementation of various youth work initiatives in the Brunswick area.

This 24-hour, seven day a week emergency telephone service for young people arrested and taken to the police station, came under continuous attack from the conservative adult sections of society that exist in our society. The Victorian Police Force refused to cooperate, claiming that the plastic information card provided to young people, gives advice unacceptable to the police. The 'Don't Blab' statement highlights the card, and the media had continually published statements from not only the police, but also the Police Association and other critical comments from individuals. Questions concerning the card were raised in Parliament. Much debate occurred at Brunswick City Council about the card. Much of this 'hype' was triggered by the police, and the change in political climate within the Brunswick City Council. As a consequence, the Brunswick Council directed that Alphaline card was not allowed to be distributed on Council property, and that the Council staff were not allowed to distribute the card whilst employed by the Brunswick Council.

Various meetings were called by the young people and the Fitzroy Legal Service, local youth service agencies, and representatives from YACVIC, YDWD, and The Network. The municipal Youth Workers were not allowed to participate! The young people sought to lift the ban and therefore decided to challenge the Council, who were most reluctant to meet with them. The young people drew up a petition and within two weeks gained over 400 signatures, many of which were from local shopkeepers, many other local adults and young people.

The young people then produced a press release which made the whole of the front page of the local newspaper, the 'Brunswick Sentinel'. Eventually, the Brunswick Council agreed to meet the young people, who presented their own case and agreed to review the working of the card with various people, but would not do so until the ban imposed by the Council was lifted. As a consequence the Council re-voted on the issue, but decided, on a very close vote to retain the ban.

Continuous pressure from various State Youth Organisations, VCOSS, Legal Aid Groups and The Network, through the form of letters to Council, media statements, and discussion with politicians occurred.

Since then five other youth law lines have been established, and in recent times most adult sections of society accept services of this type. Some have recently had to close due to lack of a sound funding base. This issue is most relevant when debating juvenile crime in preventative terms, and raises questions about who really are the perpetrators of crime and who really are the victims?