



**SERIOUS HABITUAL OFFENDER/DRUG INVOLVED PROGRAM**

**FINAL REPORT**

**July 31, 1986**

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## THE SERIOUS HABITUAL OFFENDER/DRUG INVOLVED PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

July 31, 1986

NCJRS

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ACQUISITIONS

This report constitutes  
Volume V  
of the SHO/DI Program Information Series.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the final task of Phase II of the Serious Habitual Offender/Drug Involved (SHO/DI) Program, the National Field Manager undertook a data collection and analysis effort to examine the juveniles identified by the SHO/DI criteria as chronic, serious offenders. To do this, the National Field Manager sought to answer three questions about habitual juvenile offenders:

- \* Who are they?
- \* What do they do (in terms of criminal activity)?
- \* What happens to them (within the juvenile justice system)?

Site visits were made from March through July 1986 to all five SHO/DI cities, and detailed information was collected from official police reports and enhanced case profiles. In all, data were compiled on 408 current and past SHO/DI juveniles, who were charged with a total of 5,826 crimes.

The results of this study indicate that the "typical" serious habitual offender is a male, fifteen to seventeen years old, who lives with a single parent--usually the mother. Approximately one out of every five juveniles has been either physically or sexually abused, according to

official law enforcement records. One in every three comes from a home environment where the parents have criminal records. It is not surprising, therefore, that almost 40 percent of these juveniles have a history of running away from home. Also, the majority use one or more of a wide variety of drugs.

The serious habitual offenders identified by the SHO/DI program have substantial records of criminal activity. They average fourteen arrests during their adolescent years. The most frequent charges involve burglary and theft; approximately one in every six arrests involves a crime of violence against a person.

The juvenile justice system seldom sanctions chronic offenders. Attempts at informal handling and rehabilitation have little affect on the repetitive criminal activity of these youth. The system appears to have few tools available that can curb the criminal career of chronic juvenile offenders.

This study illustrates the benefits of utilizing the SHO/DI approach to give focused attention to juveniles who commit repeated serious crimes and to provide the juvenile justice system with a means for handling these offenders. The coordination of interagency efforts embodied in the SHO/DI program balances the need to protect the rights of juveniles with the need to preserve community safety.

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# SERIOUS HABITUAL OFFENDER/DRUG INVOLVED PROGRAM

## FINAL REPORT

July 31, 1986

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Purpose and Scope

This report represents the final of five volumes of materials developed by the National Field Manager of the Serious Habitual Offender/Drug Involved (SHO/DI) Program. Volumes I and II, respectively, include all Informational Commentaries written during Phases I and II of the program. Volume III presents case histories of a select number of SHO/DI juveniles. The SHO/DI Informational Program Guide is contained in Volume IV.

This final report, Volume V, presents the first detailed analysis of the total SHO/DI population. The data were collected to answer the following questions:

- \* Who are these chronic, serious juvenile offenders?
- \* What kinds of criminal offenses do they commit?
- \* What happens to them within the juvenile justice system?

#### 1.2 Program Definition

When the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) first funded the SHO/DI program in

May 1983, it provided one of the first major systematic responses to the growing problem of repeated, serious juvenile crime. Developed as a research, test, and demonstration program, SHO/DI was funded in five cities nationwide: Colorado Springs, Colorado; Jacksonville, Florida; Oxnard, California; Portsmouth, Virginia; and San Jose, California.

SHO/DI is an information and case management program on the part of police, probation, prosecutor, social service, school, and corrections authorities. It enables the juvenile justice system to give additional, focused attention to juveniles who repeatedly commit serious crimes, with particular attention given to providing relevant case information for more informed sentencing disposition. Program emphasis is on coordinated inter-agency efforts.

The SHO/DI approach is designed to develop an integrated agency process that creates a long-term, comprehensive organizational capability for priority utilization of existing resources toward serious habitual juvenile crime and community safety needs. The program is designed using the police department as the central agency for developing and coordinating information among related criminal justice agencies. The program design allows for considerable local discretion in determining how best to enhance the existing juvenile justice system.

### 1.3 Conceptual Model

As the program has been developed and implemented, a series of models has evolved which describe the SHO/DI approach. The Conceptual Model describes the relationship between the rate of criminal involvement and the age of the offender (Figure 1). This model also depicts the various federal programs designed to focus on repeat offenders.

Figure 1 reflects the findings of various research studies which suggest that those youth who repeatedly come into contact with the juvenile justice system are not rehabilitated. They often experience inconsistency in the sanctioning and treatment process, which may partially account for the failure of rehabilitative efforts. The SHO/DI program's coordinated approach among criminal justice agencies, continuous case management, and systematic method of dealing with serious, habitual juvenile crime is intended to increase the consistency of the system in holding juveniles accountable for their actions.

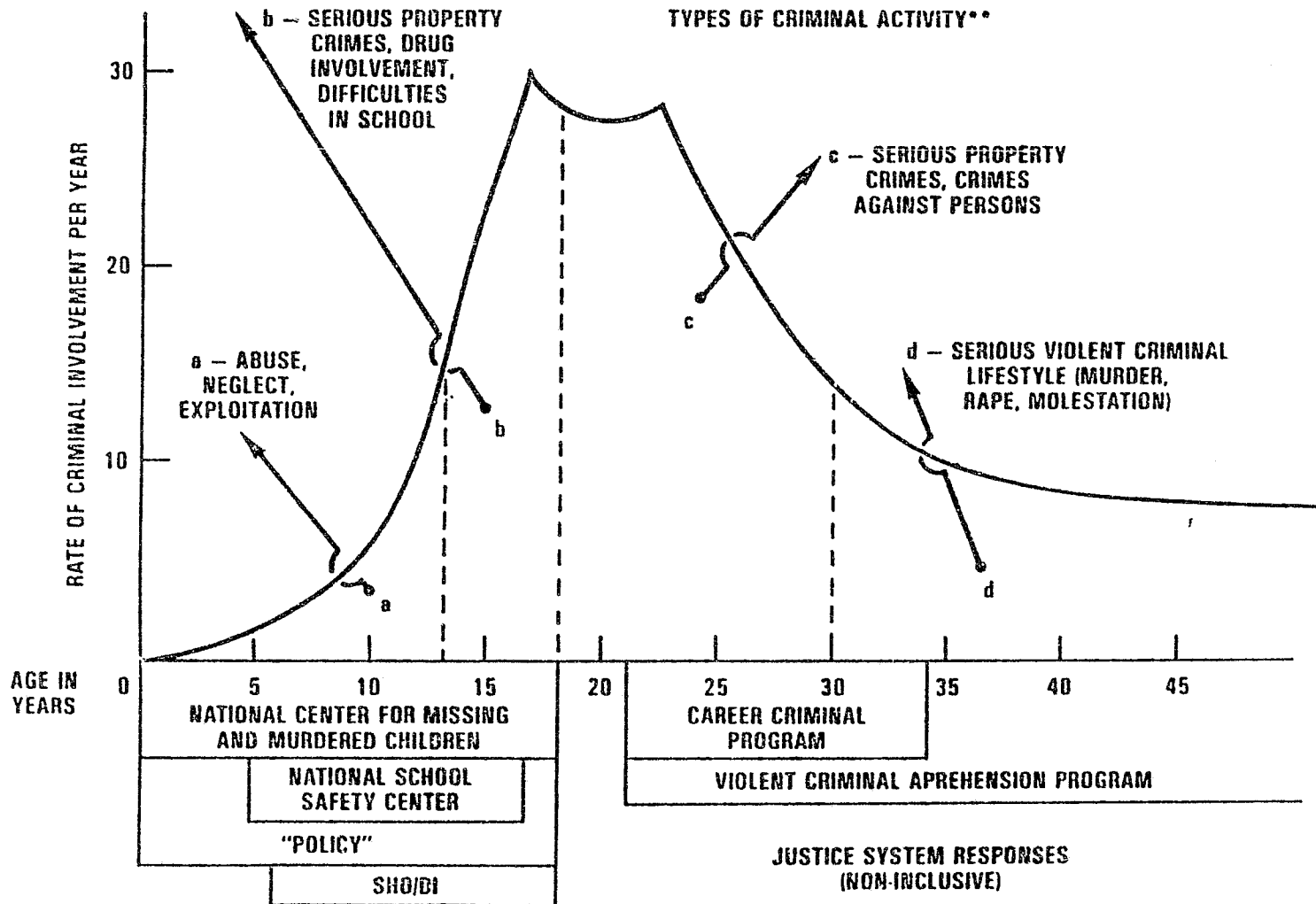
### 1.4 Program Strategy

The SHO/DI program requires police agencies to work in conjunction with other appropriate criminal justice and community service agencies to:

1. Establish an accurate and useable data base focusing on the juvenile habitual offender.

FIGURE 1

# CONCEPTUAL MODEL: SERIOUS HABITUAL CRIMINAL EVOLUTION\*



\*IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT ALTHOUGH THIS TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTS A VERY SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE OFFENDER POPULATION, HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES.

\*\*ALTHOUGH THE TYPES OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY ARE IDENTIFIED ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP, THIS DIVISION IS FOR GENERAL PURPOSES. OBVIOUSLY THERE IS ACTIVITY OVERLAP BETWEEN AGE GROUPS.

2. Develop operationally acceptable standards to identify the serious habitual offender. These standards must be acceptable to police officials, juvenile authorities, prosecutors, court administrators, judges, and appropriate community groups.
3. Develop procedures for the early identification of the SHO/DI juvenile useable to uniformed patrol officers and criminal investigators.
4. Develop and refine, through crime analysis, criminal information files that focus on the method of operation (MO) of the SHO/DI juvenile.
5. Improve the linkage and flow of information between street uniformed patrol, crime prevention, and criminal investigations officers (organizational development).
6. Develop in concert with the prosecutor, court, and aftercare agencies a process to eliminate or reduce pre-trial delays, case dismissals, plea bargaining, and sentence reductions for SHO/DI youngsters.
7. Establish support among appropriate juvenile-related agencies and community groups for the SHO/DI program.
8. Develop a technical assistance cadre to transfer program knowledge, operations, and development to other agencies.

The SHO/DI process was specifically designed to be tailored to individual jurisdictions. Thus, the program can be adapted to fit local practices, laws, and regulations.

#### 1.5 Functional Model

The SHO/DI program builds on the organization development process first created under the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's Integrated Criminal

Apprehension Program (ICAP). The ICAP program sought to provide a more systematic approach to data gathering, analysis, planning, and integration of police activities. Each of the eight major goals of the SHO/DI program falls within the components of the ICAP process. The Functional Model (Figure 2) illustrates how SHO/DI fits into an established ICAP base.

The first four program tasks (establishing a data base, criteria development, early identification, and crime analysis) were established as identification process tasks. They provided the means for identifying chronic, serious juvenile offenders, and served as the basis for achieving the final four objectives, which are more action-oriented and provide the structure to move the juveniles through the system. Together these eight tasks form the process for program implementation.

#### 1.6 Operational Model

While the Conceptual Model (Figure 1) explains the "why" and the Functional Model (Figure 2) explains the "what" of the program, the Operational Model (Figure 3) explains the "how" of the SHO/DI program. The model describes each of the program tasks, the procedures required for each task, and the outcomes which can be expected. (Detailed discussions of these models and other program issues are contained in the Informational Commentaries listed in Appendix A.)

FIGURE 2

ICAP: SHO/DI IMPLEMENTATION  
FUNCTIONAL MODEL

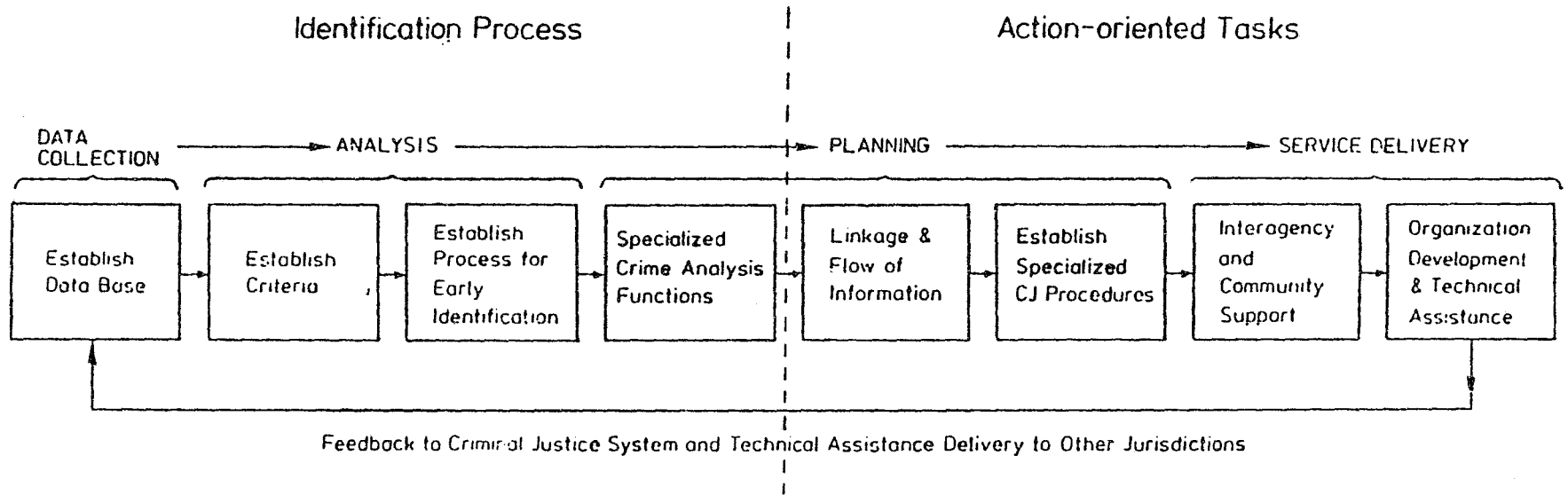
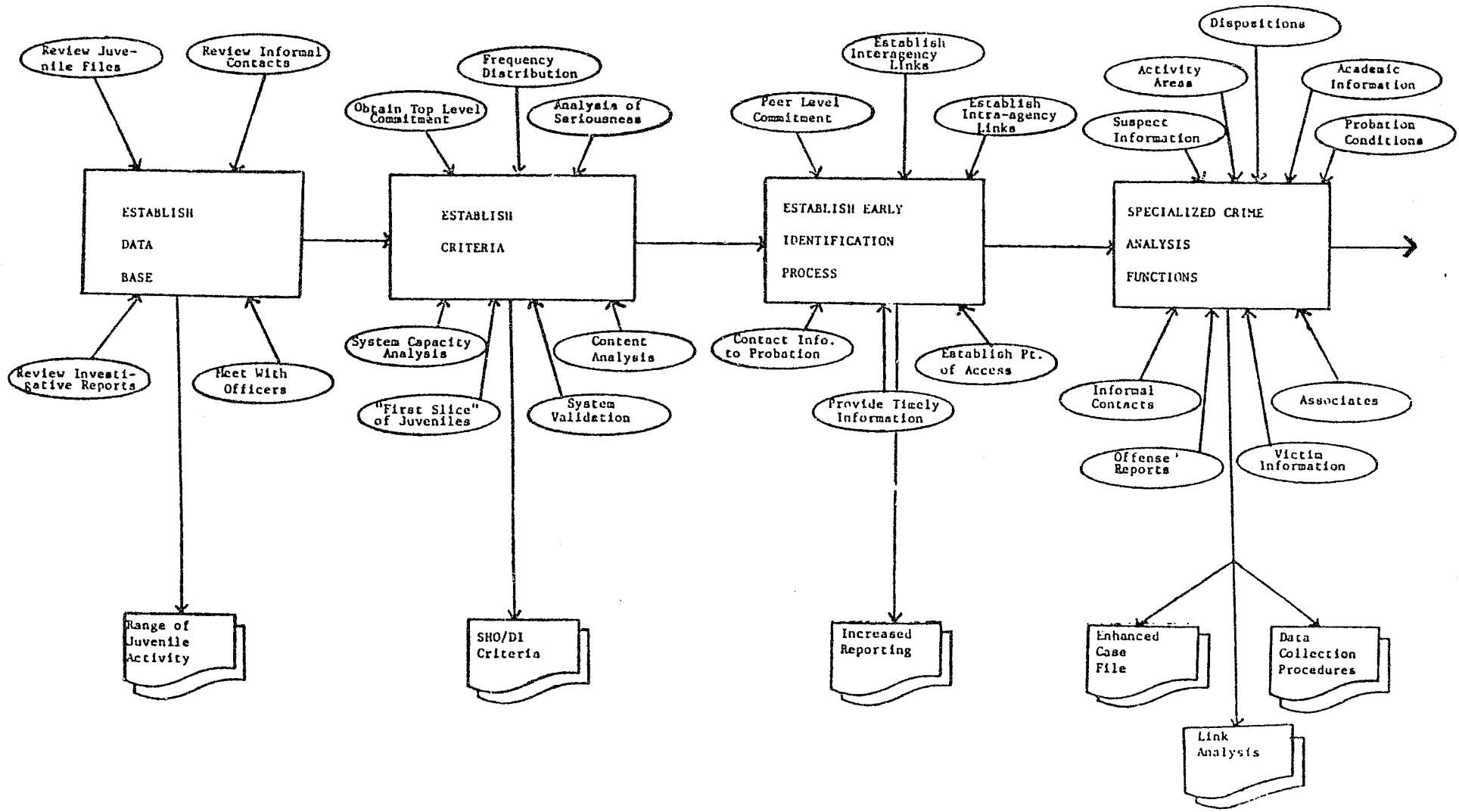


FIGURE 3

SHO/DI OPERATIONAL MODEL

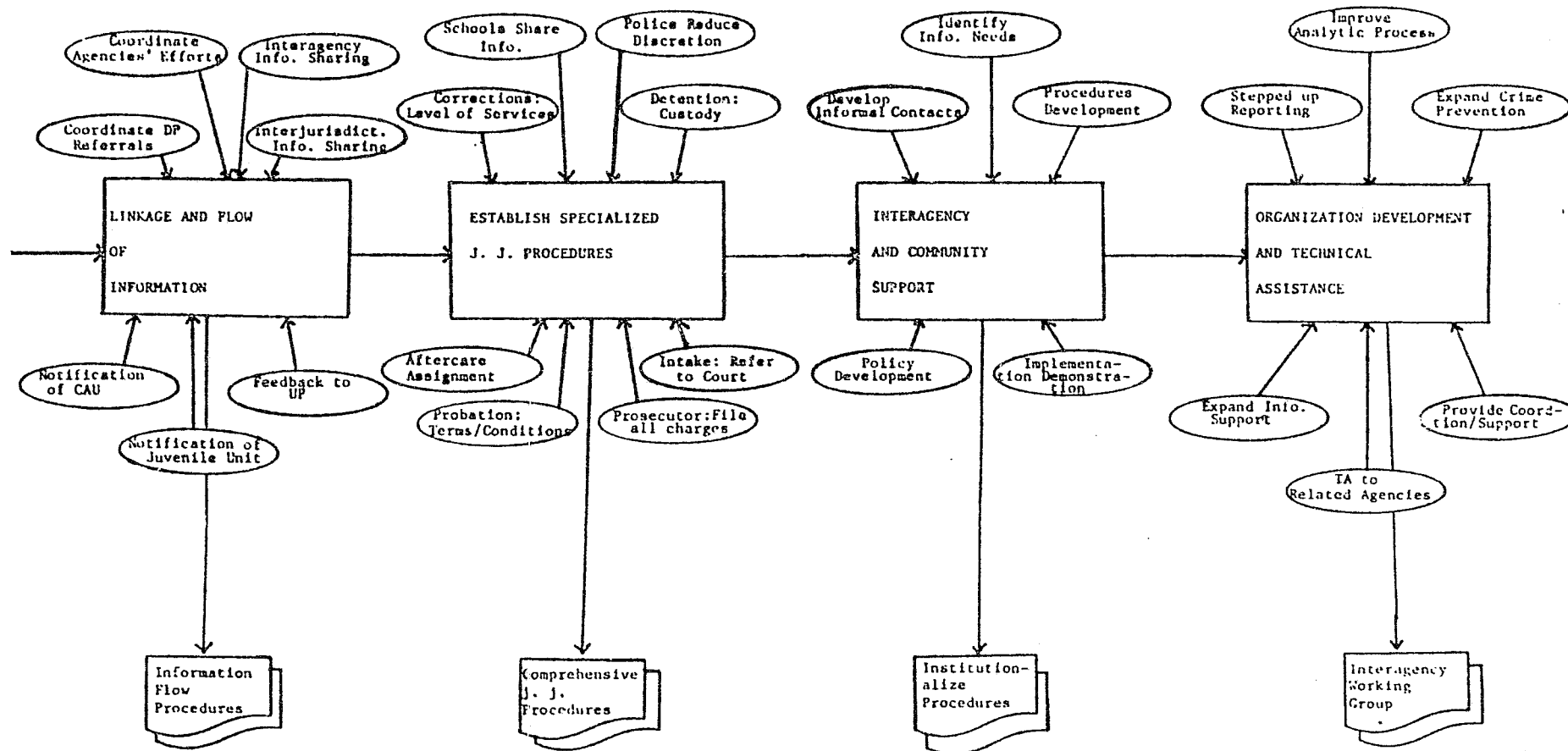


1  
8  
1



FIGURE 3

SHO/DI OPERATIONAL MODEL  
(Continued)



In the majority of the SHO/DI jurisdictions, program data were housed and analyzed in the Crime Analysis Unit. To provide a comprehensive picture of a juvenile's activity, the program recommended that Crime Analysis assess data including offense reports, informal contacts (FIRs), dispositions, and conditions of probation. Academic and school discipline information was also especially helpful, although not all sites had access to it.

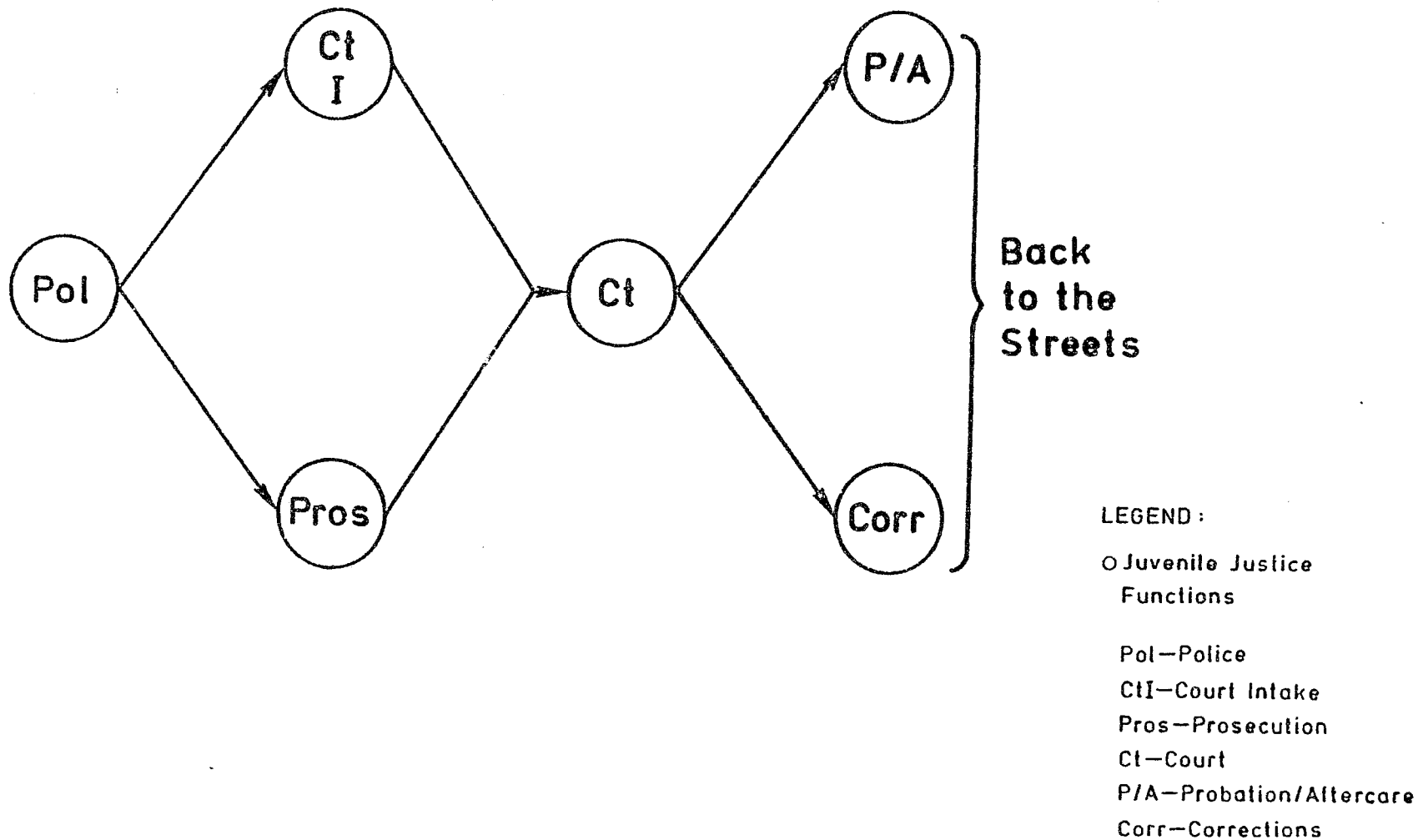
The analysis of this information yielded several products. The first outcome was the identification of specialized procedures for SHO/DI data collection, which enabled the department to develop the enhanced case profiles which were built for each SHO/DI juvenile. Additionally, Crime Analysis used the specialized data for link analysis activities on juvenile offenders.

#### 1.7 Juvenile Justice System Model

Figure 4 depicts the traditional operation of the criminal justice system. The model shows that the law enforcement agency is the initial contact point and that the juvenile moves in a step-by-step progression through the system. The most significant aspect of the traditional model is that the various agencies do not interrelate effectively and often fail to share information on the juvenile.

FIGURE 4

# TRADITIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM FUNCTIONS



The SHO/DI approach to the juvenile justice system is illustrated in Figure 5. This model indicates that the system functions most effectively when an inter-agency network exists which provides for information-sharing and includes agencies such as schools and social services as a part of the network.

#### 1.8 Results Sought

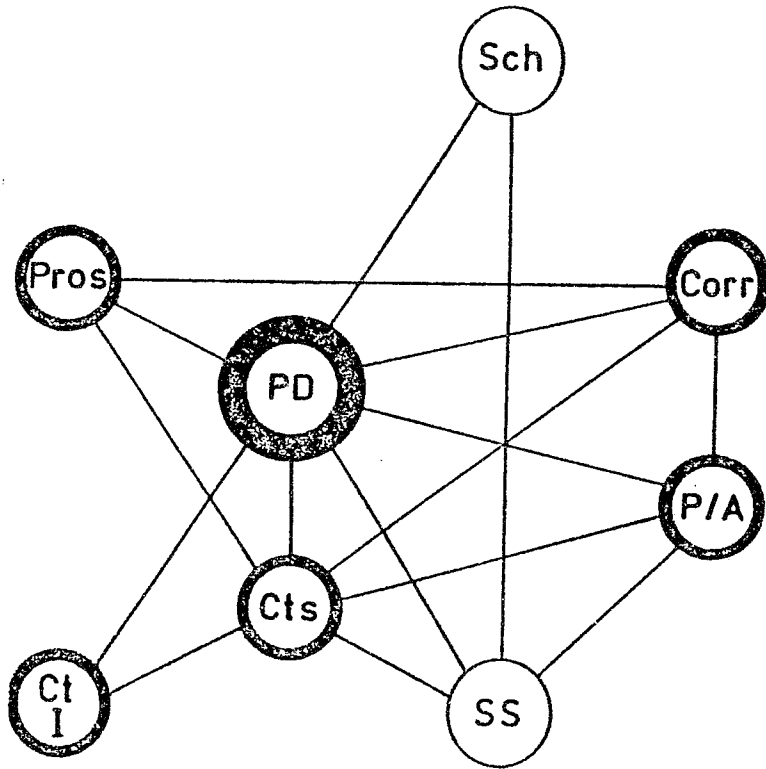
The SHO/DI program was designed to achieve the following results:

1. Provide a structured law enforcement focus on serious crimes perpetrated by habitual juvenile offenders.
2. Reduce the crime frequency and patterns of serious, habitual juvenile offenders.
3. Expedite prosecution and treatment of juveniles who are serious habitual offenders and who chronically threaten the community.
4. Increase cooperation and coordination between police, prosecutorial authorities, courts, aftercare agencies, and community groups.
5. Reduce pre-trial delays, plea bargaining, case dismissals, and sentence reductions.

Each of these intended outcomes relates directly to the ultimate goal of the program--to respond effectively to chronic juvenile offenders and to enhance the safety of the community.

FIGURE 5

# SHO/DI INTERAGENCY NETWORK



LEGEND:

● Traditional  
Justice Agencies

○ Other Juvenile-  
Related Agencies

PD—Police Department

Sch—Schools

Pros—Prosecutor

SS—Social Service

Ct I—Court Intake

Cts—Courts

P/A—Probation/Aftercare

Corr—Corrections

### 1.9 Identifying the SHO/DI Population

As part of the Phase I identification process of SHO/DI, the sites had to define the entire range of juvenile criminal behavior and then identify the particular juvenile crime problem within their jurisdiction so as to determine the focus the program should take in each individual city. Figure 6 presents a matrix of the range of juvenile offending, developed during this step. The matrix illustrates eight basic types of juvenile delinquents.

In the SHO/DI program, efforts were focused on Category 1--serious, habitual, and drug-involved, and Category 2--serious, habitual, but not drug-involved. In addition, it was recognized that juveniles who were serious or habitual offenders of any type must be addressed as well.

FIGURE 6

JUVENILE OFFENDER MATRIX

<u>SERIOUS OFFENDER</u>				<u>NOT SERIOUS OFFENDER</u>			
Habitual		Not Habitual		Habitual		Not Habitual	
Drug-Involved	Not Drug-Involved	Drug-Involved	Not Drug-Involved	Drug-Involved	Not Drug-Involved	Drug-Involved	Not Drug-Involved

1. Serious, habitual, drug-involved
2. Serious, habitual, not drug-involved
3. Serious, not habitual, drug-involved
4. Serious, not habitual, not drug-involved

5. Not serious, habitual, drug-involved
6. Not serious, habitual, not drug-involved
7. Not serious, not habitual, drug-involved
8. Not serious, not habitual, not drug-involved

## 2. SHO/DI DATA BASE

### 2.1 The Juvenile Population

Research has shown that arrests for property crimes peak at age sixteen, and arrests for violent crimes peak at age eighteen. According to crime statistics, juveniles are responsible for large numbers of crimes, but little information is available on specific crimes by specific juveniles. At what age do chronic offenders begin their criminal activity? Are they violent? Are they diverted or adjudicated? What kind of sanctions/dispositions do they receive from juvenile judges? None of these questions has previously been examined by other programs or agencies.

Another area of concern which has not been scrutinized by researchers is child abuse and/or neglect as it relates to future criminal activity. Were chronic offenders physically or sexually abused as children? Were they chronic runaways? Drug and alcohol use is yet another issue. Are chronic juvenile offenders involved in drugs or alcohol? Do they commit drug- or alcohol-related offenses?

Also, practitioners have begun to investigate the presence of juvenile offenders in public schools. A recent court case in California which has led to growing concern has indicated that schools may be held responsible for campus-related assaults involving known juve-



nile offenders. Are chronic juvenile offenders enrolled in public schools? Or, perhaps more importantly, do they attend school?

The purpose of the SHO/DI data analysis was to examine these and other questions as they relate to the SHO/DI population. The National Field Manager staff conducted data collection site visits in all five SHO/DI cities. A total of 408 individual profiles were examined, including all currently active SHO/DI juveniles, inactive SHO/DI juveniles, and former SHO/DIs who are now adults.

## 2.2 Data Collection

The SHO/DI program encouraged considerable local discretion in design and implementation at each site. Because of this individualized approach, there was no standardization of the profiles kept on each SHO/DI juvenile. Each city separately determined which information was to be collected, and with this information, each city developed its own crime analysis files focusing on SHO/DIs.

The individualized program approach described above led to some variations in the type of data collected. For example, in one SHO/DI city, detailed drug-related records were kept; thus information on the types of drugs involved, the use (possession or sale), and the source of the information (arrest report, field inter-

view, self report, etc.) were all readily available. In other cities, the information was not as specific and no record was kept on the source of the information. Due to these factors, the data collection forms were general in nature and were supplemented by extensive notes collected at each site on specific juveniles. This supplementary information was used to develop a series of twelve in-depth profiles which provide, in narrative form, another perspective of the kinds of juveniles who are chronic offenders.

In addition to the variances in the information available in each city, program implementation and practice differed somewhat from one site to another because of other issues which directly affect the national program perspective. The following sections discuss these differences in more detail.

### 2.3 State and Local Laws

In many cases, state and/or local laws cause substantial differences in program practices. For example, by law, some communities require that juveniles be brought to trial within a limited number of days of the arrest, while other jurisdictions state that juveniles must come to trial within one month. In those areas with strict ordinances, the laws enhance the opportunity to bring juveniles to court on every provable charge. In communities without these legal limits, however,

## 2.4 Agency Structure

Program implementation is also significantly influenced by the jurisdictional structure of the city involved. In the five initial SHO/DI sites, this structure ranged from a jurisdiction served by one law enforcement agency, one social service agency, and one school district to a jurisdiction containing multiple law enforcement and social service agencies and school districts. Attempts to build consensus, exchange information, and develop cooperative policies and procedures varied substantially according to the structure of the municipality.

The structure of the community also influenced the program data available to the police department. In those cities where police had to interact with several school districts or multiple courts, information from these agencies was often more difficult to obtain. Consequently, in many cases, police records still have no case disposition information on their juvenile offenders even after three years of SHO/DI implementation.

Just as agency structure affects program implementation, agency practices do also. In most jurisdictions, a district attorney attends all court cases involving juvenile offenses. This provides an opportunity to make full use of the enhanced case file developed by the police department. However, in one of the SHO/DI cities, the prosecutor does not necessarily

trial dates are often delayed time after time while the juveniles continue to commit crimes.

Laws and ordinances affect other areas as well. Certain charges which are classified as felonies in one jurisdiction are only misdemeanors in another. Because SHO/DI criteria are often built on numbers of misdemeanors and felonies, the variance can have a major impact on whether or not juveniles are identified as serious offenders. For example, in one SHO/DI city, escape from placement is a felony; in the other four, a similar escape is usually considered a misdemeanor. Thus, in at least one SHO/DI city, a juvenile can build up a string of felony arrests just for "walking" from court placements.

Auto theft illustrates another difference in jurisdictional law. In some places, distinctions are made between actual auto theft (a felony) and simple joy-riding (a misdemeanor). Yet, in other jurisdictions, the offender receives a felony charge of motor vehicle theft every time a vehicle is taken.

At least one SHO/DI site also regularly reports severe school infractions to the police, and the juveniles are then charged with criminal offenses. Again, this directly affects whether or not the individual is designated as a SHO/DI. Thus, two juveniles with almost identical behavior patterns, who live in different jurisdictions which have different laws and ordinances, may not both be classified as serious offenders.

go to court; instead, the matter is handled between the judge and court intake. Thus, the enhanced case profile may not be used by the judge in determining the disposition of the case.

### 3. DATA ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 Limitations in the Data

The five law enforcement agencies involved in the process started compiling their SHO/DI files literally from scratch. In many cases, even the juvenile records within the police agency were incomplete or inaccessible. Additionally, in some of the cities, little information was available from other agencies; consequently, disposition information was not available, school enrollment and attendance were inaccessible, terms of probation were unknown, and so on.

The difficulties involved in creating the information files are evident in the data available for this analysis. Criminal history information is not always complete. In many cases, dispositions are not noted in the records. These inconsistencies exist because the various agencies dealing with the juvenile offenders code their data in different ways.

Despite these obstacles, the SHO/DI agencies accomplished a great deal in establishing their data base. Much of the work was done "by hand" and required numerous hours spent by law enforcement personnel and volunteers working in the crime analysis units to compile the information.

### 3.2 Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected by the SHO/DI National Field Manager and Administrative Assistant during week-long visits to each of the five cities. Members of the crime analysis units were instrumental in preparing the files for coding and ensuring the completeness and accuracy of the coding process. Whenever available, the following information was collected on each juvenile:

- date of birth
- current age
- date became a SHO/DI
- age became a SHO/DI
- sex
- ethnic group membership
- family living status
- criminal history of father and/or mother
- history of sexual battery
- history of physical abuse
- history of running away
- history of violence
- alcohol and/or drug use
- school enrollment
- school infractions
- criminal charges by type and date
- adjudications by type and date

### 3.3 Results of Data Analysis

The data collected on the 408 past and present SHO/DI juveniles were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The juveniles were viewed as a group; that is, no breakdown by jurisdiction was made.

The results of the analysis are presented in chart form. The quantitative data in the charts are supported by case histories gathered from both agency files and interviews with key personnel. In the case histories, each of the juveniles is given a fictitious name.

### 3.4 Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents the major demographic information on the SHO/DI population. The overwhelming majority of SHO/DIs (97.6 percent) are males. The very small percentage of females in the population engaged in offenses ranging from violent assaults to property crimes to prostitution.

All ethnic groups are represented in the SHO/DI population, including Caucasian, Black, Oriental, Native American, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander. The involvement of a particular ethnic group in criminal activity is related to the overall ethnic character of the community.



TABLE 1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

(in percentages)

Sex

Male . . . . .	97.6 %
Female . . . . .	2.4 %

Race

Caucasian. . . . .	33.5 %
Black. . . . .	34.5 %
Hispanic . . . . .	26.4 %
Other. . . . .	5.6 %

Current Age

Under 13 years . . . . .	2.2 %
13 years . . . . .	2.0 %
14 years . . . . .	4.7 %
15 years . . . . .	13.7 %
16 years . . . . .	18.6 %
17 years . . . . .	26.0 %
18 years . . . . .	18.4 %
Over 18 years . . . . .	14.5 %

Age Became a SHO/DI

Under 13 years . . . . .	6.8 %
13 years . . . . .	7.3 %
14 years . . . . .	14.1 %
15 years . . . . .	24.5 %
16 years . . . . .	27.7 %
17 years . . . . .	18.5 %
18 years . . . . .	.5 %

The SHO/DI population ranges in age from approximately twelve to eighteen years old, with an average age of sixteen. The majority of SHO/DI juveniles (58 percent) are between the ages of fifteen and seventeen.

Juveniles must meet established criteria before they become designated as serious habitual offenders. The youngest person to qualify as a SHO/DI was approximately ten years old. Most juveniles achieve SHO/DI designation between fifteen and sixteen years of age. The case history of Don shows the career of a very young and active serious habitual offender.

Don is only eleven years old, but he has the criminal history of an adult. At this young age, over thirty institutions have refused to house him. He does as he pleases, acting physically aggressive and avoiding discipline. School records reveal that he has been considered a "seriously emotionally disturbed" child and has been placed in special classes as a result. One school evaluation referred to him as "the worst case" that had ever been seen at the school.

In spite of his age, Don has committed five felonies and innumerable misdemeanors. His criminal history began at age ten when he was cited for possession of marijuana at school. He was counseled, warned, and released. A few months later, Don was picked up as a runaway. He had run away from home before; his grandmother reported to the police that his mother was unfit to take care of him. No action, however, was taken on this report.

One month after being returned home, Don was apprehended by a neighbor while trying to drive away in a stolen car. Just three days later, police officers arrested Don for tampering with another car. He was also found to have several items stolen from a department store in his possession. Five days after that he was cited for the first of two school incidents in which he grabbed a female classmate in the genital area and placed her hand on his genitals. Within that same week, Don stole some equipment from

a store and also stole a car. Two days later he shoplifted additional items from a department store.

The various incidents described above led to an adjudication. The petition against Don was not sustained because, supposedly, "he did not know the wrongfulness of his acts," since he was only ten years old at the time.

### 3.5 Family Characteristics

The typical SHO/DI lives with only one parent (52.1 percent). In most of those cases the juvenile lives only with the mother, who is also the head of household (Table 2).

The various profiles developed during this research show that the single parent often has difficulty controlling the child. There are many instances where the mother has informed authorities that her child is "beyond control."

The single parent is also often expected to enforce court dispositions requiring the SHO/DI to limit his or her association with other juveniles or to observe curfew hours. Parents are seldom able to enforce these requirements. Given these problems, it is interesting to note that some children who do not adjust to group placement are returned home by the court. A child who fails in a group environment is also not likely to succeed when he is returned home.

TABLE 2

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

(in percentages)

Lives With

Both parents . . . . .	28.3 %
Mother only. . . . .	41.0 %
Father only. . . . .	11.1 %
Guardian . . . . .	10.3 %
Other. . . . .	9.3 %

Family Criminal History

Mother Has Criminal History. . . . .	33.4 %
Father Has Criminal History. . . . .	38.5 %

Additional adjustment problems occur when a juvenile is part of a family with a criminal history. In fact, over one third of all SHO/DIs are members of families where one or both of the parents have criminal histories.

Fred is a SHO/DI who has a "confused" family background. He is the fourth of eight children born to one biological mother and five different fathers. Fred's mother's first marriage produced one child; she and her second husband had three more children. She then had four additional children, including Fred, through three common-law relationships. Fred's father, an illegal alien, was deported prior to Fred's birth; there has been no contact with him since that time. Currently Fred's mother lives with yet another common-law husband.

According to police reports, several members of the family have criminal histories, including at least two of the "fathers." Fred's mother has been arres-

ted for the sale of heroin and one of his sisters was arrested for possession of heroin. A brother has been convicted and incarcerated for theft and battery. The significant figures parading through Fred's life have exhibited antisocial values and behaviors. Additionally, he has had very little parental supervision, either from his mother or from the variety of father figures with whom he has come into contact.

### 3.6 History of Abuse and Running Away

Table 3 describes incidences of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and runaway reports for the SHO/DI population. Given the family history of the SHO/DI group, it is not surprising that, according to formal police records, 23 percent have been abused.

TABLE 3

#### HISTORY OF ABUSE AND RUNAWAY

(in percentages)

Physically Abused as a Child. . . . .	17.7 %
Sexually Abused as a Child. . . . .	5.4 %
History of Runaway from Home. . . . .	39.4 %

There is every reason to believe, however, that the actual incidence of abuse is even higher than indicated in reports, and police and social service professionals generally express a belief that the overwhelming major-

ity of serious habitual offenders have been physically abused. The following case tells the story of one such juvenile.

Jerry is an abused child who is the second of three children. His mother has a history of mental instability. From all indications, Jerry's entire childhood was unstable, abusive, and quite chaotic, and harsh physical punishment was frequent. According to Jerry, his mother would often "pick up a belt and start swinging," and he stated that he was often beaten by both parents.

When he was eight years old, his parents were divorced and Jerry and his siblings resided with their mother. However, her mental instability increased due to the financial and emotional strain she experienced after the separation. Consequently, when Jerry was fourteen, he went to live with his father.

At the time, his father was living with another woman with whom Jerry did not get along; the situation was rocky from the start. Jerry's father continued the extensive physical punishment, and matters were compounded when Jerry got into trouble in school. His father also accused him of sexually molesting his younger sister, and Jerry finally ran away. As a result of the alleged molestation, Jerry's father still refuses to let him return home, and he has never been back.

Another SHO/DI juvenile's mother was charged with child abuse shortly after her son committed a theft at a department store. He stated that his mother forced him to "steal and smoke marijuana by hitting and scratching" him and by "threatening to slice [him] up with a razor."

A particular type of abuse is sexual abuse; incidences of sexual abuse were formally reported among 5.4

percent of the SHO/DI population. In the opinion of professionals in juvenile justice, sexual abuse is reported less frequently than physical or emotional abuse.

Almost 40 percent of the SHO/DI group has run away from home at least one time. Many run away on a regular basis. The typical runaway stays away from home for a couple of days; he runs to friends or other family members, who hide him from his parent(s). While gone from home, these juveniles do not attend school and also have the opportunity to commit additional crimes.

Terry is a typical runaway. He is the product of a broken home. Although strongly attached to his mother, he cannot live with her since she has remarried. Terry does not get along with his stepfather, and his mother believes that her marriage would be jeopardized if Terry were to live with her. As a result, Terry lives with his father and his father's third wife in a mobile home in the city.

In May of one year, Terry ran away from home. He was returned, but the next month he was again reported missing. He was found and returned once more, but four days later ran away again. No formal action was taken by any agency for these incidents. The following month, Terry was reported to be missing, but was later found. After several more contacts with the justice system, he was removed from his father's home and placed in a foster home. The next day, he ran away from the foster home and was found the following day at his grandmother's house. He was returned to the home, but left again the next month.

### 3.7 Substance Abuse

Table 4 shows reported drug and alcohol use among the SHO/DI population. Slightly over one half of the juveniles use drugs and/or alcohol; the type and quantity varies greatly and occurs in no predictable patterns. Section 4.5 discusses drug use within the population in more detail.

TABLE 4

#### REPORTED SUBSTANCE USE

(in percentages)

Uses Drugs Only . . . . .	20.4 %
Uses Both Drugs and Alcohol . . . . .	21.2 %
Uses Alcohol Only . . . . .	10.2 %
No Reported Drug or Alcohol Use . . . . .	48.2 %

### 3.8 School Status

About one fifth of the SHO/DI population is attending public school on a somewhat regular basis (Table 5). The typical SHO/DI (often a chronic runaway) has a long history of unauthorized absences from school and drops out of school altogether by approximately age fifteen.



TABLE 5

SCHOOL STATUS

(in percentages)

Enrolled in Public School . . . . .	21.2 %
Enrolled--Not Attending . . . . .	4.4 %
Not Enrolled. . . . .	70.6 %
No Information Available. . . . .	3.8 %

This lack of school attendance, when coupled with the family experiences of these juveniles, points to a group of children who are deprived of the benefits provided by the family and school units as socializing institutions. It is, therefore, not surprising that SHO/DI juveniles quite often have poor academic records and serious behavior problems.

Terry, the juvenile described earlier as a runaway, also exhibits difficulty in school. His problems were identified early on, as the school district placed him in a self-contained classroom for emotionally disturbed children. However, as is often the case, Terry continued to misbehave in school just as he did at home and on the street.

When Terry was twelve, his father moved the family out of his home state. His disturbing behavior accelerated rapidly. Early in the year he tried to choke a teacher; two weeks later, he was charged with aggravated assault/battery. Neither case ever went to court.

The incidents continued. One day in September, Terry lost control near the end of the first period. He was placed in the "time-out" room, but did not calm down; instead, he climbed through a window which opened out onto a ledge approximately twenty feet off the ground. Terry crawled along the ledge, shouting into other classrooms as he passed by. Several persons tried to convince him to come inside off the ledge, but he remained until school security personnel coaxed him down. For that incident he was placed in the Juvenile Detention Center for a short time.

Terry, then thirteen years old, continued to get into trouble after his release. Early the next year he was suspended from school for using obscene language in class. Twice more in the following month he was suspended for the same offense. Later he brought alcohol onto the school campus, became intoxicated, and disrupted his class; however, he was not adjudicated for any of these offenses. Just four days later Terry threatened his bus driver and students on the bus with a knife.

Terry's school history is typical of many chronic juvenile offenders. Just seven months prior to the knife incident on the bus, a complete psychiatric evaluation was done on Terry. He was shown to be undersocialized and aggressive, with conduct disorders. Yet he was never placed in the recommended intensive therapeutic setting. Instead, he was repeatedly returned to his home and school, where he continued to offend.

Actually, the incident on the bus did lead to an adjudication. The outcome? He was simply placed on community control.

#### 4. THE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY OF CHRONIC JUVENILE OFFENDERS

##### 4.1 Factors Affecting Crime Statistics

In looking at the various crimes committed by serious, habitual juvenile offenders, the most significant figure that comes to light is the level of criminal activity. The 408 SHO/DI juveniles who were analyzed for this study have been charged with a total of 5,826 crimes. Tables 6 and 7 summarize criminal activity of the SHO/DI population.

TABLE 6

##### SHO/DI CHARGES

<u>Seriousness of Crime +</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Felony Charges	2,132	36.2
Misdemeanor Charges	3,694	62.7

<u>Type of Crime *</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Crimes Against Persons	950	16.1
Crimes Against Property	3,432	58.3

+ Does not include status offenses.

\* Does not include violation of probation, trespassing, concealment, climbing on property, failure to disperse, violation of supervision, violation of after-care, etc.

TABLE 7

DETAILED CHARGES

<u>Part I Crimes</u>	<u>Number</u>
Murder and Manslaughter. . . . .	8
Rape . . . . .	11
Robbery. . . . .	169
Assault (Aggravated) . . . . .	90
Burglary . . . . .	1,274
Larceny and Theft. . . . .	1,408
Auto Theft . . . . .	392
Kidnapping . . . . .	18
<u>Part II Crimes</u>	
Battery and Other Assaults . . . . .	436
Forgery. . . . .	9
Fraud. . . . .	2
Stolen Property--Buying & Receiving. . . . .	163
Weapons--Carrying & Possession . . . . .	70
Prostitution . . . . .	5
Offenses Against the Family. . . . .	20
Possession of Illegal Substance. . . . .	234
Illegal Substance for Sale . . . . .	4
Violation of Liquor Laws . . . . .	17
Escape . . . . .	315
Arson. . . . .	42
Criminal Mischief. . . . .	121
Violation of Community Control . . . . .	42
Loitering. . . . .	22
Prowling . . . . .	30
Beyond Control . . . . .	62
Trespassing. . . . .	211
Drunk in Public. . . . .	65
Providing False Information to Police Officer. . . . .	54
Damage to Property . . . . .	39
Vandalism. . . . .	93
Harassment . . . . .	30
Joyriding. . . . .	25
Other Charges. . . . .	400
(including Possession of Burglary Tools, Possessing Contraband, Throwing Deadly Missiles, Defrauding an Innkeeper, Tam- pering, etc.)	

It is significant to note that both researchers and practitioners in the field of law enforcement agree that a great deal of crime is unreported each year. The statistics included in this report cover only those crimes actually reported to the law enforcement agencies.

It is important to remember that juveniles are often handled informally by law enforcement officers who feel it is a waste of their time to formally process these cases. Even before the officer's paperwork is complete, the juvenile can be out of the system--if he enters the system at all--and committing other offenses. This factor also leads to the under-reporting of crime data.

Another point to consider in reviewing juvenile crime information is that juveniles are often charged only with the most serious crime committed in a string of offenses. For some SHO/DIs, as many as four crimes may be dropped for every one on their record. Given the numerous offenses that are not included in juvenile files, researchers may never develop a complete picture of juvenile criminal involvement.

#### 4.2 Crimes Against Persons

The SHO/DI juveniles included in this study were involved in many different violent crimes, ranging from

assault to murder. Some individuals, like the juvenile described below, seem to almost enjoy terrorizing people.

Keith represents the "classic" case of the violent, serious chronic offender. Professionals in various agencies were convinced that Keith was extremely dangerous and, in fact, would hurt someone someday. Yet, even with all the warning signs, he continued to be treated as a "typical" juvenile offender--with emphasis on rehabilitation and protection of the child and family. Keith was not rehabilitated; his criminal activity peaked with the murder of a store owner.

Keith was an abused child. As his physical and psychological abuse persisted, instead of becoming beaten and submissive, he began to identify with the role of the aggressor. Rather than being intimidated, he intimidated and manipulated others. Keith's violent behavior first became evident when he and a friend tortured a baby lamb to death. This trait manifested itself again and again when Keith would attack other juveniles, showing no concern for them but only fear that he would be punished for his actions. With each incident, the agency involved--school, police, or probation--documented the danger he posed. Like a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces were all there, but they were never put together as a comprehensive whole to be acted upon until it was too late and an innocent life was lost. The consequence of the system's failure to deal effectively with Keith was murder.

Figure 7 presents the offense history of another juvenile involved in serious violent crime. This individual committed several robberies and assaults over a five-year time frame.

Sexual assault is another type of violent crime against persons committed by serious habitual offenders.

FIGURE 7

MULTIPLE OFFENDER HISTORY--VIOLENCE

<u>Date of Arrest</u>	<u>Criminal Offense</u>
April 1981	Residential Burglary
November 1981	Attempted Theft
March 1982	Strong-arm Robbery
October 1982	Residential Burglary
October 1983	Trespassing
November 1983	Aggravated Assault Carrying a Concealed Weapon Resisting Arrest with Violence
August 1984	Aggravated Battery
October 1984	Violation of Community Control
December 1985	Strong-arm Robbery
January 1986	Battery in Detention Facility

While the number of sexual assaults committed by SHO/DIS is relatively small, the impact on the victims is great.

Victor is typical of the SHO/DI who is involved in sexual assaults. In a period of less than one year he committed sexual assaults on three children--the second committed while he was on probation.

The victim of the first assault was Victor's young cousin, who was too scared to tell anyone what had happened until he had to be hospitalized for a rectal infection. Less than a year later, Victor was again arrested on two additional charges of sexual assault. The children involved were a seven-year-old boy and his five-year-old sister. Victor was not yet fifteen.

Bob, a pedophile, is another sexual offender. His first contact with the police involved possession of drugs and carrying a concealed weapon. This was only the first of several instances where Bob was caught with drugs and weapons.

When Bob was fifteen, he kidnapped and sexually assaulted an eleven-year-old boy. Bob saw the boy walking near some railroad tracks, chased him, knocked him down, and sodomized him. He was placed on probation, but just one month after concluding that probationary period, he committed another first-degree sexual assault. Bob was then seventeen; the victim of the second sodomy was a thirteen-year-old boy.

#### 4.3 Crimes Against Property

The juveniles in the SHO/DI group were charged with a total of 3,432 property crimes (see Table 6). Some SHO/DIs limit their entire careers to crimes such as burglary, larceny, and theft. Tom is one such non-violent offender who is extensively involved in property crimes.

Tom was first arrested, for shoplifting, when he was ten years old. Between the ages of ten and fifteen, he was charged with thirty-five more crimes, mostly felony burglaries. After escaping at age fourteen from a juvenile facility, Tom joined with other escapees and run-aways to form a burglary ring.

He has developed an MO of breaking windows with rocks or prying doors open with a screwdriver to gain entry. He usually takes cash, stereo equipment, VCRs, TVs, and food. He eats and drinks on the premises and usually ransacks the residences, causing extensive damage.



A summary history of another SHO/DI juvenile is included in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8

MULTIPLE OFFENDER HISTORY--PROPERTY CRIMES

<u>Date of Arrest</u>	<u>Criminal Offense</u>
July 1980	Theft
	Assault
August 1980	Trespassing
	Criminal Mischief
December 1980	Harassment
February 1981	Burglary
	Theft
May 1981	Theft (2 counts)
June 1981	Theft
	Burglary
July 1981	Motor Vehicle Theft (2 counts)
	Burglary (2 counts)
December 1981	Assault
May 1984	Theft
June 1984	Burglary
November 1984	Burglary
December 1984	Criminal Mischief (2 counts)
February 1985	Burglary
	Theft
April 1986	Theft

#### 4.4 Property Crimes and Crimes Against Persons: An Eclectic Approach

Some juveniles combine property crimes with other types of crime. Doug is one such habitual offender who combines arson with violence and property crimes. He was first arrested and charged with harassment when he was eleven years old.

At age thirteen, Doug set a fire in a storage/carport facility. He appeared to be quite fascinated by the fire and brought papers in from the outside to keep it going. Two days later, he built a fire on the floor of a garage where he and other juveniles also burglarized a car.

Two months after these incidents, Doug tried to buy some car stereo equipment with a stolen credit card. While skipping school about a week thereafter, he stole liquor during a burglary. Two months following that offense, Doug started a fight on his way to school with a child who was a stranger and had done nothing to provoke the incident.

Less than a month after that fight, Doug stole from a convenience store and was involved in a high-speed chase. On the same day, he and some friends broke into a juvenile detention facility where they had been held previously. They physically restrained an employee, ransacked offices, and took their case files since they were suspects in the chase.

Doug was most recently charged with menacing, a felony offense. The victim stated that Doug threatened to stab her, but instead grabbed a wooden walking cane and raised it toward her in an attempt to hit her. He then shoved her to the ground, kicked her car, put holes in her apartment wall, and pulled her screen door from its hinges.

Figure 9 presents information on another juvenile who has been involved in a wide range of criminal activity, ranging from sexual assault to robbery and burglary.

FIGURE 9

MULTIPLE OFFENDER HISTORY--  
CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY AND PERSONS

<u>Date of Arrest</u>	<u>Criminal Offense</u>
April 1982	Sexual Assault on a Child
July 1983	Theft
August 1983	Motor Vehicle Theft
October 1983	Motor Vehicle Theft
April 1984	Burglary (2 counts)
May 1984	Burglary/Criminal Mischief
October 1984	Theft/Aggravated Robbery
	Burglary (2 counts)
March 1985	Motor Vehicle Theft
March 1986	Trespassing

4.5 Narcotics Violations, Escape, and Violation of Probation

Drug and alcohol abuse is a common problem among the SHO/DI population. Over fifty percent of the juveniles classified as SHO/DIs have a history of drug and alcohol abuse (see Table 4); many began to use drugs at

an early age. These youth often use many different drugs, including toluene, PCP, LSD, and marijuana. Law enforcement officers describe numerous cases, such as the one below, where juveniles took so many drugs that their "brains were fried."

For Gary and several of his friends, the New Year's Eve activities began soon after dark. They loitered around a convenience store looking for someone who would purchase liquor for them. Eventually an individual agreed to buy them several cases of beer. The boys' original plan was to go to the local bowling alley to "pick up some girls." First, however, the juveniles began drinking by playing a game of "tops" on a tower near the freeway. This involved throwing down a pack of cigarettes, and if it landed on edge the player was rewarded with a can of beer which he immediately had to gulp down. Most of the alcohol, some marijuana, and large doses of LSD were consumed in this way.

Gary and his friends then wandered along the freeway until they came to a local cemetery. According to Gary, he was so messed up by the drugs and alcohol that he could not remember how the juveniles actually entered the cemetery or ended up near the mausoleums. For one reason or another, the youngsters began to kick at the marble cover of one of the mausoleums until it broke. Then they used the pieces of marble to break open another crypt. Once the cover was broken, the boys pulled out the coffin. According to reports, Gary reached in, took out the skull, and started to utter Satanic messages. Then he took the skull and threw it to the concrete, shattering it. For Gary, this incident was the latest in a series of offenses associated with very heavy use of drugs and alcohol.

Escape and violation of probation are crimes that occur when juveniles "walk away" from a non-secure

placement facility or fail to observe probation rules such as set curfew hours or a judicial order to prohibit association with certain other juveniles. The total SHO/DI population has been charged with 315 charges of escape (see Table 7). Figure 10 illustrates the history of an offender with multiple escapes.

FIGURE 10

MULTIPLE OFFENDER HISTORY--ESCAPES

<u>Date of Arrest</u>	<u>Criminal Offense</u>
March 1981	Burglary (2 counts)
October 1981	Possession of Stolen Property
August 1982	Arson in Facility
March 1983	Theft/Criminal Mischief
April 1983	Theft (2 counts)
May 1983	Theft (4 counts)/Trespassing
June 1983	Aggravated Assault/Theft/Escape
August 1983	Theft (2 counts)
August 1984	Theft
September 1984	Trespassing/Theft (2 counts)/ Battery in Detention Facility
October 1984	Battery in Detention Facility
November 1984	Escape
July 1985	Theft (2 counts)
August 1985	Escape/Burglary/Aggravated Battery
November 1985	Battery in Detention Facility
February 1986	Battery in Detention Facility/Escape

## 5. THE OUTCOME OF CHRONIC JUVENILE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

### 5.1 Arrests and Diversions

Juveniles in the SHO/DI program have committed an average of fourteen crimes each. This raises the question of what happens to the juvenile who repeatedly commits crime. One of the criticisms of the juvenile justice system today is that it allows chronic, serious offenders to be diverted time and time again with few, if any, sanctions imposed for criminal behavior. In some instances, as the following profile illustrates, this criticism is justified.

Bill is a juvenile who was arrested in connection with the stabbing death of an eighteen-year-old male. At the time of his arrest, Bill had already been involved with the juvenile justice system in numerous instances, yet he had never been adjudicated on any offense. Instead, all of his prior offenses had been resolved at the intake level.

When Bill was just eleven years old, he was charged with petit theft. The next day the offense was settled at intake. Three years later he was arrested and charged with burglary, conspiracy, and possession of a switchblade. Less than a week later, the case was settled at intake. Two days after those incidents, Bill was picked up and charged with public drunkenness. The case was handled informally. A month later he was charged with disturbing the peace; again the case was handled informally.

At the age of fifteen, Bill was charged with possession of alcohol, marijuana, and a dangerous weapon. Two weeks later, Bill was again charged with those three offenses. He was placed on informal

supervision, which was dismissed three months later, but during that period Bill was once charged with violation of the supervision. The incident was handled at intake.

Six months after his informal supervision was dismissed, he was charged with school trespass, possession of a knife, and possession of alcohol. Again the matter was handled at intake. Less than three months later, Bill stabbed two young men. One of them died a few hours later.

Bill's case provides an example of some of the difficulties associated with discretionary justice. Bill was apprehended a total of nine times on sixteen charges, yet until he was charged with homicide no petition against him was sustained.

Many times juvenile judges are blamed for the lack of accountability or punishment for serious juvenile offenders. In fact, quite often the judges never see these offenders; the cases are either settled at intake or diverted out of the juvenile justice system. The effect of diversion from the formal system can also be demonstrated by this SHO/DI's history.

Patrick was first picked up at age seven for petit larceny. The matter was settled out of court. Two months later he was found alone and lost in the business district of the city. During the next two years, Patrick ran away repeatedly from various juvenile shelters and his parents' custody.

His criminal activity also increased. Within a few months, Patrick stole tools from a truck, burglarized a business, broke a store window, and attempted to break into two stores. All of these

offenses were settled at intake. During a four-day crime spree following those incidents, Patrick was charged with arson, burglarizing a vehicle, residential burglary, and two counts of petit larceny. Again, all offenses were handled at intake. The next day, he was charged with yet another count of burglary of a vehicle. The case was closed after intake.

During the next few months, Patrick was charged with auto theft, damage to property, criminal mischief, retail theft, and burglary of a business.

By his tenth birthday, Patrick had accumulated twenty-three formal contacts with the juvenile justice system. Obviously he had never been rehabilitated--nor, in fact, had he ever even been adjudicated.

Patrick continued his criminal activities. By age thirteen, he had over fifty formal contacts with the system, but he had only been adjudicated twice. Anyone looking at his adjudication record would not be aware of the numerous times his cases were diverted or dropped, or closed after counseling.

Figure 11 provides another example of a juvenile with repeated contacts with the system. This juvenile committed nine crimes in less than two years, and he was neither sanctioned for his actions nor rehabilitated from further criminal activity.



FIGURE 11

PROFILE OF DISPOSITIONS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
3/82	Petit Larceny	Handled Informally
7/82	Misdemeanor	Handled Informally
8/82	Criminal Mischief	Nolle Prossed
10/82	Burglary Retail Theft	Closed without Sanction Handled Informally
9/83	Grand Theft	Nolle Prossed
10/83	Residential Burglary Auto Theft	Dismissed Nolle Prossed
11/83	Residential Burglary	Nolle Prossed

5.2 Dispositions

Yet another factor to consider in any discussion of adjudications is the wide range of dispositions given to chronic offenders, as summarized in Figure 12.

It is interesting to note how approaches to dispositions vary among the SHO/DI sites. In some jurisdictions, the diversions and dispositions are simple and straightforward; for example, juveniles may be sentenced to six months' probation or twenty-five hours of community service, or \$200 restitution. In other cities, judges use a more eclectic approach in their dispositions. Figure 13 provides an example of how this kind of approach is used with regard to one SHO/DI juvenile.

FIGURE 12

RANGE OF CHARGE OUTCOMES

<u>Non-Adjudicated</u>	<u>Adjudicated</u>
1. Warned and Released	1. Fine
2. Counseled and Released	2. Restitution
3. Dismissed--No Useful Purpose	3. Probation/Supervision/Community Control
4. Closed without Sanction	4. Required Attendance at Rehabilitation Programs
5. Informal Probation	5. Community Service
6. Settled at Intake	6. Suspended Sentence
7. Reduced to Lesser Charge	7. Mandatory Work/School Attendance
8. Mandatory School Attendance	8. Ward of Court
9. Diverted/Referred to Other Agency	9. Placement in Non-Secure Facility
10. Arbitration/Mediation	10. Commitment in Secure Facility
11. Restitution	11. Time Added to Placement or Commitment
12. Community Service	12. Mandatory Counseling
	13. Eclectic Dispositions*

\* Involve several sanctions, including fine, restitution, probation, placement, commitment, and/or community service.

FIGURE 13

EXAMPLE OF AN ECLECTIC APPROACH TO DISPOSITIONS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
10/81	Vandalism	5 weekends in secure facility for juveniles, plus \$49.95 restitution
7/82	Petit Theft	
4/84	Curfew Violation	Probation plus fifteen days in a juvenile placement facility
7/84	Curfew Violation	
5/85	Attempted Burglary	30 days in a juvenile placement facility, plus 90 days in a restitution project, plus 200 hours of community work, plus \$136.00 restitution
6/85	Burglary	
6/85	Burglary--2 counts	78 days placement in a juvenile facility plus \$136.00 restitution
8/85	Petit Theft	

5.3 Adjudications

It is interesting to note that, based on the seriousness of the offense, the figures on adjudication rates do not indicate a large percentage difference. As Table 8 illustrates, the frequency of adjudication varies little between misdemeanor and felony charges.

Instead, what sometimes appears to happen is that after a given number of crimes, the juvenile reaches a saturation point in the system. This point may be based

TABLE 8

ADJUDICATIONS OF FELONY AND MISDEMEANOR CHARGES

(in percentages)\*

	<u>Adjudicated</u>	<u>Not Adjudicated</u>
Felonies	60.2 %	37.6 %
Misdemeanors	57.2 %	41.8 %

\* This table is based only on those charges for which case disposition information is available.

on relationships between a number of factors, including the juvenile's present age, the types of crimes he commits, the perceived success or failure of rehabilitation efforts, and the alternatives still available for the court. Prior to the saturation point, the juvenile may be diverted out of the justice system time after time, or he may be treated rather lightly even for a serious offense. The case history of Bob demonstrates this problem.

Bob's first offense involved a kidnapping and first-degree sexual assault. As part of a plea bargain agreement, the sexual assault charge was reduced to second degree. The judge handling the case put Bob on two year's probation and ordered him to attend school regularly, to make every effort to find a job, and to observe a 9:00 p.m. curfew. No additional penalty was imposed. One month after the probationary period ended, Bob was again charged with sexual assault of a young boy.

When the breaking point is finally reached, the next case goes to court. The charge may be a misdemeanor or a felony; it may be a crime against a person or against property. What it represents is a threshold. The system has tried a number of alternatives (or diversions), and now the offender must shoulder the responsibility for his behavior. Example of this kind of history are presented in Figures 14 and 15.

FIGURE 14

MULTIPLE DIVERSIONS PRIOR TO COMMITMENT

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Case Outcome</u>
11/82	Petit Theft	Counseled, warned, released
1/83	Auto Theft/Grand Theft	Diverted to Youth Services
11/83	Malicious Michief to Vehicle	Counseled, warned, released
12/83	Use of Illegal Drugs	Counseled, warned, released
11/84	Battery/Use of Illegal Drugs	80 hours of community work plus 10 days placement in juvenile facility
10/85	Possession of Illegal Drugs	Dismissed (no useful purpose)
10/85	Cultivating Marijuana	10 days placement in juvenile facility
2/86	Under Influence of a Controlled Substance	Commitment to juvenile facility

FIGURE 15

DIVERSIONS TO COMMITMENT

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Case Outcome</u>
1/81	Attempted Robbery	Released to parents
8/81	Vandalism	
11/82	Battery	
7/82	Inhaling Toluene	* See below
	Possession of Marijuana	Dismissed
	Inhaling Toluene	
	Drunk in Public	
9/82	Grand Theft	* See below
10/82	Inhaling Tolune	Released to parents
	Petit Theft	+ See below
11/82	Violation of Probation (ran away from home)	+ See below
	Escape	Dismissed
12/82	Inhaling Toluene	6 months in drug treatment facility
7/83	Violation of Probation (using drugs & escape)	10 days in non-secure facility
8/83	Violation of Probation (left drug treatment)	Home probation and 60 days in non-secure facility
11/83	Vandalism	Warned
12/83	Possession of Marijuana	Dismissed
12/83	Burglary	5 years commitment to a secure facility
	Robbery	
1/84	Inhaling Toluene	
2/84	Burglary	
	Inhaling Toluene	

\* Home Probation, 50 days  
in non-secure facility,  
40 hours community work

+ Five weekends in non-  
secure facility, 20  
hours community work

#### 5.4 The Pieces of the Puzzle

Juvenile justice is realized when the juvenile offender is properly processed through the judicial and correctional systems and as an adult remains at liberty without further criminal violations. This implies that the various components of the justice system--police, prosecutor, judge, probation, correctional counselor, and parole--must function as a unit which will enable the consistent application of the judicial/correctional process. An on-going issue in the juvenile justice system is the breakdown in communication between each of the components, as well as the tradition of these segments not working collectively to assure swift, fair, and sure correction of the serious, habitual juvenile offender. In fact, it is the lack of communication among and between the components that has made the juvenile justice system a "non-system."

Even given the successful implementation of the SHO/DI approach, there are still missing pieces. Table 9 illustrates this point. During the data collection process, information was analyzed on 5,881 charges. Yet adjudication information was available on only 60 percent of those charges. Evidently, police are still unable to access information from other juvenile-related agencies in many cases.

The case histories and quantitative data presented on the previous pages demonstrate the difficulty in re-

TABLE 9

ADJUDICATION INFORMATION

(in percentages)

Adjudicated . . . . .	35.0 %
Not Adjudicated . . . . .	25.0 %
Adjudication Withheld . . . . .	0.9 %
Adjudication Information. Not Available . . . . .	39.1 %

sponding to habitual juvenile offenders. Basic to this problem is that the juvenile justice system, which was built on the premise that all juveniles can be successfully rehabilitated, was never designed to address those offenders who repeatedly commit crimes and are not rehabilitated.

Another difficulty arises when agencies uphold the philosophy of protecting juveniles by protecting their records from disclosure. Consequently, agencies often do not fully share information with one another. For a serious juvenile offender, pieces of his behavioral history may be spread out among several agencies with no single comprehensive, accurate picture of his entire range of behavior.

Cooperation is a necessity among these agencies, and a valuable by-product of the exchange of information



may be the recognition that all of the components are working toward the same goal. In most states, the juvenile justice system is composed of the police, prosecutor, probation, parole, service agencies, and judge, and these agencies together must hold juveniles accountable for their actions. In order for the program to be truly successful, all components must work in concert to develop formalized, coordinated policies and procedures to address serious, habitual juvenile offenders.

## 6. CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Summary of Results

As stated at the outset, the purpose of this report was to examine the kind of juvenile identified as a chronic, serious offender. In order to do this, information on the entire SHO/DI population from all five sites was sought. The data collection effort focused on three questions about SHO/DI juveniles:

- \* Who are they?
- \* What do they do (in terms of criminal activity)?
- \* What happens to them (within the juvenile justice system)?

These questions provided the framework for the data collection. All information was compiled and analyzed in aggregate form, hence no data are available on the SHO/DI population of any one city.

In order to find out who these SHO/DI juveniles actually are, detailed background information was analyzed, including demographic data, family history, parental criminality, school status, and where possible, histories on the juveniles as victims. Overall it was found that the "typical" SHO/DI is a male, fifteen to seventeen years old, who lives with a single parent (usually the mother). He has a 21 percent likelihood of being enrolled in school, but, if enrolled, probably has a very high truancy rate. He also has a 20 percent

chance of having been abused (physically or sexually) as a young child.

In answer to the question of what crimes juvenile offenders commit, it was found that the overwhelming majority of SHO/DI criminal activity focused on property crime. Approximately 46 percent of all arrests involved burglary and/or theft. Auto theft and joyriding comprised another 7.1 percent of all charges against SHO/DI juveniles.

Analysis indicates that 16.1 percent of all charges involved crimes against persons. Over one fourth of all arrests were characterized as victimless charges, including probation violations, substance possession or use, giving false information to police officers, and escape from placement facilities.

These juveniles average fourteen arrests during their adolescent years. This arrest rate, however, does not reflect the true range of criminal activity. Many offenses are handled informally by police officers and are not reported. Additionally, juveniles are often charged only with the most serious in a string offenses; consequently, using only formal arrest report information, it is impossible to develop a comprehensive, accurate picture of juvenile criminal involvement. Serious crimes against persons, on the other hand, tend to elicit an expeditious, sure response from the system.

In examining what happens to juvenile offenders, the answer often is not known--or shared--among the various actors in the criminal justice system. The 408 juvenile files analyzed included nearly 6,000 charges. Final disposition information, however, was available for only 60 percent of those arrests (Section 3.1 discusses limitations of the data in detail).

The two most frequent charges against SHO/DI juveniles involved burglary and theft. In those cases where adjudication information is available, approximately 62 percent of all burglary charges were adjudicated. The adjudication rate for theft was much less (48.8 percent). Overall, the data support the theory that the greater the seriousness of the crime, the higher the rate of adjudication.

## 6.2 Program Implications

In reality, juvenile crime is not different from other types of crime. Burglary, larceny, felonious assault, or robbery have the same consequences for the victim or the community regardless of the age of the offender. Juvenile crime is the invention of legislatures in the United States which have created boundary ages between juvenile and adult courts.

For the majority of youthful offenders, the juvenile justice system may be the appropriate response. However, numerous studies have shown that a dispropor-

tionate amount of serious crime is committed by a small number of very active juveniles. In the case of these chronic offenders, the juvenile justice system obviously is not working. These youth have usually had numerous contacts with law enforcement agencies and have learned how to use the system to their advantage. The usual system response to juvenile offenders is to treat first offenses, even serious first offenses, very lightly. Aside from the fact that this does nothing to deter future criminal activity, it also indicates to the juvenile delinquent that the system is ineffective--that, in fact, he has nothing to fear.

What, then, does the juvenile stand to lose by committing crimes? Very little. In what way is the juvenile rehabilitated? Not at all. Additionally, current practices in the juvenile justice system sometimes fail to recognize the legitimate needs of the victim and the community. When these offenders are not handled effectively, the victim not only feels no sense of justice, but also may be subjected to further abuse by the delinquent.

The SHO/DI program is designed to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the entire juvenile justice system. In fact, implementation of the SHO/DI program will lead to the creation of a systems response that will ensure an appropriate response to juvenile chronic offenders.

## APPENDIX A

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