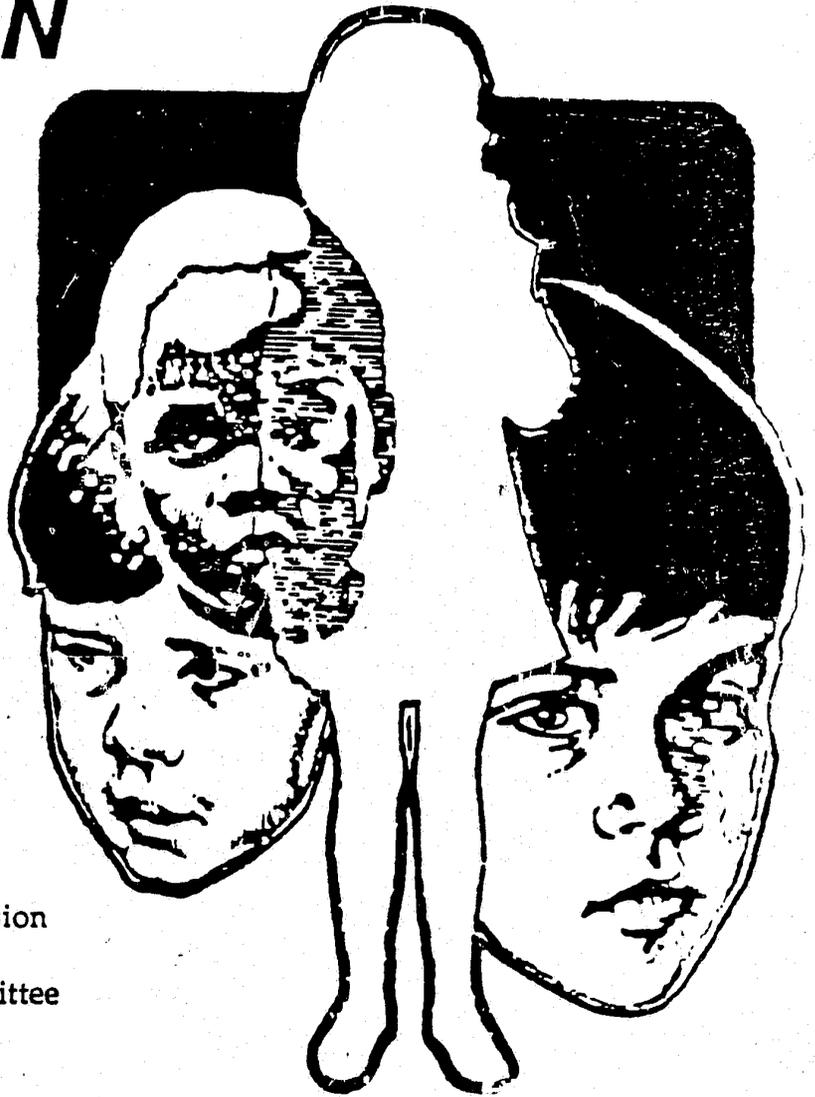


**A NEEDS ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
AT-RISK
JUVENILE DELINQUENT
POPULATION
OF RHODE ISLAND**

12-22-92
MPL

138137

PRINT



Submitted to:
The R.I. Governor's Justice Commission
and
The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee
by:
The University of Rhode Island
College of Resource Development
Urban Field Center

JANUARY, 1990

The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations



Governor's Justice Commission

JJAC Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

MEMBERS

Marion F. Avarista, Chair

Dolores Murphy, Vice Chair

Eric Banch

Rep. Melvoid J. Benson

Serge Bouyssou II

Michael J. Capalbo

John J. Carr

Alberta Catalozzi

Tonya Chiavaroli

Charles Fitzgerald

Robin L. Hoffmann

Joanne McGunagle

Lidia Oster

Francine Pallante

Peggy Perez

Br. Michael Reis

George Simone

Earl N. Smith III

Chief William Tocco, Jr.

Denise Zolnierz

STAFF

David J. LeDoux

Juvenile Justice Specialist



The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) is a permanent subcommittee of the Governor's Justice Commission, the state's planning and coordinating agency for criminal and juvenile justice. As the State Advisory Group, the JJAC develops program priorities for funding under the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act. In addition, the Committee plans and implements statewide and regional conferences, seminars and workshops, and monitors for compliance to statutory regulations of the JJDP Act. Finally, the JJAC proposes improvements to the juvenile justice system to the Governor, General Assembly, and other policy makers.

222 Quaker Lane, Suite 100 • Warwick, RI 02886

Tel (401) 277-2620 • Fax (401) 277-1294

A
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
AT-RISK JUVENILE DELINQUENT POPULATION
OF
RHODE ISLAND

F I N A L R E P O R T



NOTES
AUG 24 1992
ACQUISITIONS

Submitted to
The Governor's Justice Commission
and
The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

By
The University of Rhode Island
College of Resource Development
Urban Field Center

January, 1990

138137

**U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice**

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material has been granted by

Juvenile Justice Advisory
Committee

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Table of Contents.....	(i)
List of Tables.....	(ii)
Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee.....	(iii)
Governor's Justice Commission and U.R.I. Urban Field Center Staff.....	(iv)
Study Highlights.....	(v)

PREFACE.....	(1)
CHAPTER I Identification of Pre-delinquent Youth: Developing Prevention and Intervention Strategies.....	(3)
CHAPTER II Theories and Characteristics of Juvenile Delinquency: A National Perspective.....	(11)
CHAPTER III Juvenile Delinquency in Rhode Island: Dimensions of the Problem.....	(27)
CHAPTER IV Directory of Resources for At-risk and Delinquent Youth in Rhode Island: An Overview.....	(49)
CHAPTER V Rhode Island's Programmatic Needs for At-risk Juveniles: A Discrepancy Analysis..	(57)
CHAPTER VI Findings and Strategies.....	(71)

References.....	(75)

APPENDIX A Management Plan	
APPENDIX B Study Team: Professional Profiles	

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
Table 1	Juvenile Offender Arrests by Sex and Race, (Distribution of Felony and Misdemeanor Offenses) Comparison of years 1984 and 1986..... (28)
Table 2	Number of Juvenile Offender Arrests, (Distribution of Felony and Misdemeanor Offenses) Comparison of number and percent changes for each offense from 1984-1988..... (29)
Table 3	Juvenile Offender Arrests by Age, (Distribution of Felony and Misdemeanor Offenses) Comparison of years 1984 and 1986..... (30)
Table 4	Rhode Island Juvenile Offense Statistics by race, 1988..... (31)
Table 5	Matrix of Delinquency Indicators..... (68)
Table 6	Number of Agencies Providing Services in Three Selected Areas..... (69)

RHODE ISLAND
 JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 OF THE
 GOVERNOR'S JUSTICE COMMISSION

Marion F. Avarista
 JJAC Chairperson,
 Director, Travelers Aid Society

Dolores Murphy
 JJAC Vice-Chairperson
 Intake Unit, Family Court

Mary A. Parella
 Executive Director
 Governor's Justice Commission

Robin Blackburn
 Youth Representative

Joanne Pandozzi
 Cranston Community Action
 Program

John Carr
 Family Services of Pawtucket

Michael Reis
 Tides Family Services

Robert Clark
 Boys and Girls Club
 of Providence

George Simone
 Retired Probation Officer

Jason Farrell
 Juvenile Correctional

Nancy Stevens
 Rumford Morning School

Victoria Gailliard
 Davis Vocational

William P. Tocco, Jr.
 Johnston Police Department

Raymond Harrison
 Legislative Council-State House

Susan Wallace
 Caritas House

Patrick Murphy
 Second Division District Court

Denise Zolnierz
 Youth Representative

Staff
 David J. LeDoux
 Governor's Justice Commission

Norman Dakake
 Governor's Justice Commission

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
URBAN FIELD CENTER

STUDY TEAM

Marcia Marker Feld, Ph.D.
Executive Director/
Study Director

Gayla J. Gazerro
Associate Director for Planning

Mark Motte
Principal Consultant and Writer

Pao Kue
Research Assistant/
Resource Directory

STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

This summary introduces the major concepts and findings of the report. First, the goals and overall purpose of the project are presented, then the major indicators of youth at-risk of delinquency are discussed. The final sections of the Study Highlights present the key findings of the report and summarize the major strategies for addressing the needs of youth at-risk of delinquency in Rhode Island.

GOAL OF THE STUDY: To establish juvenile delinquency prevention as a priority for the legislature, judiciary, law enforcement agencies, school administrators, educators, labor unions, parents and Rhode Island youth, and among private, public and nonprofit organizations, as an issue of fundamental importance to the statewide social change agenda.

SPECIFIC GOAL: To conduct a comprehensive community based indicator analysis and needs assessment that will identify at-risk youth populations and assess the findings in terms of effective delinquency reduction policy directions.

PURPOSE: The study was designed to assist the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee and the Governor's Justice Commission, as well as the agencies they support, to better identify young people in Rhode Island who are at-risk of delinquent behavior. The study identifies characteristics of at-risk youth and provides a baseline for a comprehensive approach for reducing the state's delinquency problem.

OUTCOME: The outcome is a report which identifies at-risk indicators and assesses national and local information which will lead to the development of a directory listing the programs and services that address the needs of delinquent and pre-delinquent youth in Rhode Island.

Summary of At-risk Indicators

The study shows that in Rhode Island, identification of pre-delinquent behavior can be made through the application of linked indicators. These analytic indicators are of two types: analytic and descriptive. Analytic indicators identify the underlying or structural reasons for behavior. Descriptive indicators characterize symptomatic behavior. The indicators identified through this research include:

Analytic At-Risk Indicators:

Two powerful indicators of potential delinquency include poverty and weak family structure. Other analytic factors include educational deficits; sexual, psychological and physical abuse; and substance abuse.

Descriptive At-Risk Indicators:

Several descriptive indicators were identified in relation to poverty and weak family structure. They include:

Poverty

Low Self-Esteem
Alienation From School/Family
Teen Pregnancy
Stress Related Illness and Pathologies
Disregard for Mainstream Values and Institutions
Low Educational Aspirations/Goals

Low Career Aspirations/Expectations
Homelessness
High Rate of Family Mobility
Family Criminal Behavior
Sense of Powerlessness

Weak Family Structure

Low Self-Esteem
Loneliness
Lack of Bonding
Cult Membership
Teen Pregnancy
"Hanging Out"
Lack of Limit Setting At Home
Lack of Parental Support
Lack of Parental Supervision
Lack of Values/Morals
Running Away From home
Alienation From School/Family
Emotional/Psychological Disturbance
Negative Peer Group Associations
Violent/Confrontational Behavior

Key Findings

- o Intergenerational trends relating to under-achievement in education, low economic status and persistent delinquent behavior in families still exists.
 - o Few programs exist which deal directly with families of at-risk and delinquent youth.
 - o Most services and programs have a single focus; they address one symptom of a child's problems rather than providing comprehensive assessment and services.
 - o There is insufficient emphasis on early identification and prevention of pre-delinquent behavior.
 - o Intervention occurs too late and/or in isolation from individuals and institutions which impact a child's development.
 - o The dimensions of the state alcohol and drug abuse problem is not yet fully recognized.
 - o The information relating to juvenile delinquents is incomplete, not systematically or comprehensively collected and not centralized.
-
-

- o Too few programs exist in the areas of prevention, intervention and treatment.
- o Few State or State-funded programs directly address the structural problems associated with poverty and its effects on self-esteem and life aspirations.
- o People living below the poverty level feel that they have few economic opportunities open to them and as a result turn to crime.
- o Schools and community groups are ill-equipped to address the complex social and personal problems that students bring with them to school.
- o The criminal justice system has few referral alternatives for young offenders; most receive little or no rehabilitation.
- o There is lack of funding of agencies charged with providing education, guidance and treatment to young people at risk of delinquency
- o Society provides few positive adult role models.
- o There are limited youth-centered community resources to provide recreational, cultural and educational uses of "free time."
- o There are too few places for confused, frustrated or drug-dependent young people to turn for help.
- o Too few shelters and child-focused social service agencies are available.
- o Limited help is available to young, single mothers relating to parenting skills, nutritional programs or educational/retraining guidance.
- o There is a general lack of information about what services are available, particularly information for the youth themselves.

Key Strategies

The following strategies are recommended by the Study Team. They were developed from an analysis of discrepancies between the needs of at-risk and delinquent Rhode Island youth and the services which are currently available to them. Many are derived from comments made by participants in the conference and community focus groups. The strategies address three key action

areas: Program Development; Professional Training; and Funding.

Program Development:

- o Evaluate at-risk youth at an early age; take an holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing juvenile delinquency.
- o Involve a child's family at every stage of a prevention or intervention program.
- o Emphasize prevention strategies by addressing the social and economic conditions which lead to criminal behavior.
- o Include alcohol and drug abuse awareness in all educational and prevention programming, particularly in the early school grades.
- o Attend to the recreational and extra-curricular needs of young people and provide adequate creative uses for their nonschool-based time.

Professional Training:

- o Train professionals to develop programs which reach out to families in their own settings.
- o Train professionals in the special needs of culturally diverse groups in Rhode Island and to upgrade their skills.
- o Provide in-service professional training for staff involved with teaching parenting skills.
- o Provide in-service professional training for teachers relating to drug prevention education.

Funding:

- o Provide funding for training, hiring and retaining quality human and social service personnel throughout the State's juvenile service field.
 - o Provide funding for programs which emphasize early prevention and intervention programs targeted at at-risk juvenile populations.
 - o Provide funding for community-based programs in the cities and towns which have the most significant at-risk populations in the state.
-
-

PREFACE

This study was designed to assist the Governor's Justice Commission (GJC) and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC), as well as the agencies they support, to better identify young people in Rhode Island who are at-risk of delinquency. Timely identification of delinquency is a prerequisite of successful programs which will target high-risk youth before deviant behavior becomes entrenched.

This study, based upon a Needs Assessment, has been conducted by the University of Rhode Island's Urban Field Center in Providence. The study identifies characteristics of at-risk youth and provides a baseline for a comprehensive approach for reducing the state's delinquency problem. The study has encompassed contemporary applied research methods on the delinquency issue through a literature review; has determined a list of indicators of at-risk youth with community review; has surveyed current Rhode Island delinquency prevention service providers; and has undertaken a discrepancy analysis of program needs for at-risk juvenile delinquents, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. In addition, a Directory of Resources has been developed.

A major component of this study has been the work of a community-based, culturally sensitive group, consisting of law enforcement personnel, educators, parents, community service providers, business, government, family court officials, the judiciary, youth advocacy organizations, and at-risk youth. The role of this group has been to research community-based

information in the development of indicators of at-risk youth and to help survey existing programs and to identify needed resources that will help to reduce the incidence of delinquency in Rhode Island. This group has met in a statewide conference and in small focus group sessions to review and enhance Field Center research, as well as to react to findings and recommendations of the proposed study. We would like to thank each of the group members for their participation in and contribution to this study.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to Mary A. Parella, Executive Director, Governor's Justice Commission and Marion F. Avarista, Chair, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee for their continued interest and comments.

Marcia Marker Feld, Ph.D, Study Director
Gayla Gazerro, Associate Director for Planning
Mark Motte, Principal Consultant and Writer
Pao Kue, Research Assistant/Resource Directory

CHAPTER I

IDENTIFICATION OF PRE-DELINQUENT YOUTH:
DEVELOPING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIESBackground to the Delinquency Problem in Rhode Island

The dimensions of the delinquency problem are well-documented. That juvenile delinquency is a major problem, demanding the focused attention of policy makers and judicial experts, is beyond dispute. There was a 25 percent increase in reported juvenile crime in Rhode Island in just three years, 1984 to 1986. Crime among female juveniles increased 28 percent. Arrests involving the carrying of weapons increased from 118 to 151 cases; arrests involving drunkenness increased from 31 to 61 cases; arrests involving vandalism increased from 694 to 923 cases.

While the dimensions of the problem are documented, less clear are the factors associated with delinquency; the currently unmet needs of at-risk youth; the policies which would sensitively, but responsibly, respond to these needs; and the prevention and intervention programs that would ultimately help to address the causes of delinquency. Society often concerns itself with the visible manifestations of social problems: the symptoms of underlying community processes. The purpose of this study is identify the complex factors associated with the delinquency problem in Rhode Island, to better understand its locally-based causes, and to identify appropriate responses for their resolution.

Effective solutions to a problem as complex as juvenile delinquency cannot be developed until an understanding of the more complete situation is determined. All too often, planning for the prevention of juvenile delinquency is done in a vacuum. Rarely are all the factors which underlie the problem taken into account in planning for prevention strategies. Juvenile delinquency program planning must depend upon a sound information system which can provide a basis for identifying at-risk youth and, subsequently, the most appropriate forms of intervention. Juvenile delinquency planning, then, requires an understanding of the community context in which at-risk youths live, attend school and work. This study utilizes a broad based interdisciplinary planning process which is community-based and comprehensive in scope.

The Study Team is interdisciplinary in nature and includes assistance from policy specialists, urban planners and juvenile delinquency prevention experts. Community-based service agencies, community leaders and concerned citizens were asked to participate in setting the research agenda, in the identification of community-based data, in the organization and development of the indicators and in the recommendations of the study.

This chapter outlines the study's plan of operation, its goals, objectives and activities undertaken.

General Goal:

To establish juvenile delinquency prevention as a priority for the legislature, judiciary, law enforcement agencies, school administrators, educators, labor unions, parents and Rhode Island's youth, and among private, public and nonprofit organizations, and as an issue of fundamental importance to the statewide social change agenda.

Specific Goal:

To conduct a comprehensive community based indicator analysis and needs assessment that will identify at-risk youth populations and assess findings in terms of effective delinquency reduction policy directions.

Objectives and Activities Completed For This Study:

Objective A:

To conduct a document review of existing local and national research on the delinquency issue to develop a list of indicators, both descriptive and analytic, as a basis for identifying factors associated with delinquency; as part of this research, to meet with juvenile justice personnel, educators, community organizations, parents, and juvenile offenders to assess the relevance of the indicators identified to the real world situation in Rhode Island.

Activities completed for this objective include:

1. Conduct a document review of applied research and published materials in the field of juvenile delinquency, its likely causes and characteristics.

2. Survey published and unpublished case studies and locale-specific research relating to delinquency prevention programming from across the United States and Rhode Island.
3. Meet with juvenile justice, sociological, and educational experts, in both formal and informal settings, to brainstorm the locally significant forces which shape the profile of juvenile delinquents in the state of Rhode Island.
4. Utilizing the outcomes of activities 1) through 3), develop preliminary statements concerning: the locally derived factors associated with delinquency among at-risk youth; typical at-risk profiles; and alternative reduction strategies and possible program directions.
5. Create a public awareness strategy through meetings, press releases, and workshops which will focus the attention of diverse state communities upon the issues of juvenile delinquency causes, characteristics and prevention programs.

Objective B:

To conduct a comprehensive indicator analysis and needs assessment which will identify the locally based factors associated with the at-risk youth population and determine the nature and characteristics of a response that will directly serve in the reduction of first time offense and recidivism rates in the state of Rhode Island.

Activities completed for this objective include:

1. Identify a set of indicators, through primary data analysis and the findings of activities operationalized under Objective A, which begin to isolate the local causes significant to the incidence of delinquency.
2. Develop a demographic and socioeconomic profile of the target population of youth at risk of delinquency, based upon the indicator analysis.
3. Prepare an interim monograph (Update and Preliminary Report) which defines the at-risk population and identifies the early predictors of delinquent behavior.
4. Hold meetings to disseminate information, receive input and generate feedback on the preliminary issue identification and indicator analysis.

Objective C:

To inventory all agencies, their programs and activities, which are directed toward juvenile delinquents in the state; as part of this research, to meet with juvenile justice personnel, educators, community organizations, parents, and juvenile offenders to document the nature and contribution of such programs.

Activities completed for this objective include:

1. Inventory, through primary and secondary sources, the agencies and programs in local operation which are directed toward juvenile delinquency reduction.
2. Access local networks of multi-service centers and human service agencies which provide integrated, holistic delinquency-related programs.
3. Interview a diverse sample of care and administrative professional representatives from the agencies identified in Activities 1) and 2) to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative approaches.
4. Publish the list of agencies and organizations, by service function, as a Services Directory, within the documentation of the Final Report.

Objective D:

To act as staff to the Governor's Justice Commission in forming a community based, culturally sensitive, issue focused Rhode Island Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Group consisting of parents, community service providers, business, government, family court officials, youth advocacy organizations, educators, and public and private agencies, to focus on delinquency prevention; to assist the GJC in hosting "key informant" focus group sessions and conferences.

Activities completed for this objective include:

1. Act as staff to the Governor's Justice Commission in forming a culturally sensitive, community based Rhode Island Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Group, to include representatives of diverse legislative, legal, educational, business, and human service delivery organizations, as well as parents and interested parties.
2. Organize and host "key informant" focus group sessions of professionals and experts in juvenile-related fields, as well as hold half-day working conferences.

Objective E:

To prepare preliminary and final reports of the document review, indicator analysis, and needs assessment, which are culturally sensitive, cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional delinquency prevention studies; to integrate this research into the overall GJC delinquency prevention plan, to promote community based policy directions; and to assist in the statewide dissemination of the reports.

Activities completed for this objective include:

1. Provide timely information sharing among Group members, the Governor's Justice Commission and the URI Urban Field Center through the circulation of meeting minutes and research updates.
2. Prepare the Preliminary and Final reports, with adequate supporting documentation, and ensure that they reflect the diverse range of input of the culturally sensitive, community based mission of this delinquency prevention study.
3. Disseminate Preliminary and Final reports to legislators, members of the judiciary, educators, social service agencies, and concerned parties throughout the state of Rhode Island and elsewhere.

An Update and Preliminary Report was submitted to the Governor's Justice Commission and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee on June 30, 1989. The report reflected the findings of the literature review and a preliminary statement of the

indicator analysis and needs assessment, based upon secondary data analyses and interviews with at-risk youth populations and professional judicial, sociological, and educational experts in numerous focus group sessions. This Final Report reflects the outcomes of the entire research process, including: feedback input from the Group; refined target population identification; the community based indicator analysis; refined problem definition; the needs assessment; and suggested policy directions.

A management plan to ensure the proper and efficient administration of the project was developed with a timeframe for the completion of each of the above activities and is included in this report as Appendix A.

The U.R.I. Urban Field Center's Role in this Study

For over a decade, the University's Urban Field Center has reflected an interdisciplinary approach to problem solving and promoting social change. Its specialties currently encompass education, social services and demographic planning and policy analysis.

Focusing upon urban education and human services planning, public policy analysis, and the study of at-risk youth, Dr. Marcia Marker Feld, Executive Director and Principal Investigator, has worked on projects funded by local, state, federal, and private agencies and foundations. The Urban Field Center has earned numerous regional and national awards for its applied research in the fields of urban education and human

services policy and designing models for ameliorating the problems of at-risk youth.

Recently, the Urban Field Center has conducted in-depth indicator analyses and needs assessments in a number of New England communities. Comprehensive studies of student populations -- in terms of demographic and socioeconomic profiles, as well as educational and facilities needs -- in North Kingstown, Providence, Stamford, Connecticut, and Brookline, Massachusetts yielded recommendations which have since been implemented by these school districts. Previously, the Center conducted a three year management training program for the RI Department of Human Services.

On-going, "hands on" programs operated by the Urban Field Center staff involved with at-risk populations on a day-to-day basis are: the Providence Dropout Prevention Collaborative; the URI/Providence Public Schools Partnership; Project Discovery; the Guaranteed Admissions Program; the school-based Students As Mediators Program; and the Ocean State Center's programs in law-related education. These programs offer innovative, culturally sensitive, community-based programming to diverse at-risk youth populations in Providence and throughout Rhode Island.

The Urban Field Center staff who constituted the Study Team for the JJAC- and GJC-sponsored juvenile delinquency prevention project are profiled in Appendix B.

CHAPTER II

THEORIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:

A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

The purpose of the literature review found in this chapter is to provide information, from a national perspective, relating to understanding juvenile delinquency and identifying young people at risk for juvenile delinquency. The underlying goal is to provide a rich resource base to guide the applied research undertaken by the Study Team as it explores the locally-driven factors affecting delinquency.

The intended outcome of this review of established and recent national research is to encourage all those involved in delinquency prevention and intervention to approach their decision-making in an informed manner, and to work toward a reduction in the incidence of delinquent behavior among Rhode Island's youth. Toward this end, the Study Team reviewed the conceptual literature which attempts to explain the underlying factors associated with delinquency.

Contemporary Delinquency Theory

There are three broad categories in which explanations of the causes of delinquency can be placed. The first is historically embedded in Western society, but lacks rigorous scientific bases -- propositions such as "keep them busy and they will stay out of trouble" or "keep them away from temptation and they will be alright" typify what can be called the Individual-

Based Theories. The second category includes those theories which explain delinquency as an observed determinant or function of some other form of behavior. For example, dropout and delinquency; unemployment and delinquency; or broken homes and delinquency. Finally, the third category includes all theories which link delinquency to broader social theories which may be used to describe many other forms of behavior. For example, labeling, subcultural, empowerment and opportunity, bonding and control theories. An assessment of each of the three categories is provided below.

Individual-Based Theories

Few recent studies or programs have focused on biological determinants of delinquent behavior. For this reason, their treatment here is brief. In 1970, Don Gibbons concluded his examination of such biological explanations as follows:

"The plain fact is that the many years of biogenic exploration of delinquency have not yielded any valid generalizations about biological factors in deviance" (Gibbons, 1970, p. 75).

A 1977 review commissioned by the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention was summarized in the introduction to Preventing Delinquency: A Comparative Analysis of Delinquency Prevention Theory:

"The paper on biological factors in crime and delinquency provides an extensive review of the available research literature. On balance, the author concludes that this literature offers few strong policy suggestions for prevention programming. Biological factors seem to always be mediated by social processes which are more amenable to social intervention. Thus, it is not the biology of the hyperactive child which "causes" delinquency, but the inappropriate social response

of parents, teachers and others to the behavior of these children. Early diagnosis of medical or nutritional problems coupled with humane and constructive social responses can generally eliminate the potential for biological differences to become defined as delinquency. Despite the overall negative character of the review of biological research on delinquency, this paper is quite important because of the continued 'rediscovery' of alleged biological causes of crime. In most cases the 'rediscoveries' are not supported by firm research findings or they represent ideas long since discredited in the scientific literature" (NIJJDP, 1977, p. 9).

Probably the most widely used means for diagnosing "pre-delinquents" under this theory have been impressionistic assessments by teachers, parents, and others in day to day contact with young persons. Occasionally, those making the assessments have received checklists to help them identify "problem kids". An extreme illustration comes from a U.S. Children's Bureau project in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1943. Parents, schools, churches, neighborhood organizations, police and social agencies were urged to refer children in need of treatment. To make their selection more systematic, the following list (cited by Hakeem, 1966, p. 458) of precursors to delinquency was provided:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Bossiness | Effeminate Behavior (in Bullying boys) |
| Cheating | Fabrication |
| Crying | Fighting |
| Deceitfulness | Gambling |
| Dependence | Hitching Rides |
| Impudence | Disagreeability |
| Disobedience | Inattentiveness |
| Drug Use | Nail biting |

This is but a sample of a very long list of general characteristics and it is difficult to imagine finding even one child who exhibited none of these supposed pre-cursors to delinquency.

No matter what diagnostic device is used, the assumption is that there are personality differences between delinquents and non-delinquents. Evidence accumulated over a 40-year period does not support this assumption.

In 1950, Karl Schuessler and Donald Cressey reviewed 113 studies of personality differences between criminals and non-criminals. These investigators concluded that:

"The doubtful validity of many of the obtained differences, as well as the lack of consistency in the combined results, makes it impossible to conclude from these data that criminality and personality elements are associated" (quoted by Gibbons, 1970, p. 79).

In 1967, Gordon Waldo and Simon Dinitz reviewed another 94 studies completed between 1950 and 1965. Although a few of the studies claimed statistically significant differences between criminals and non-criminals on personality inventories, the reviewers did not find these persuasive. They noted, for example, that one item on a commonly used inventory is "I have never been in trouble with the law." Commenting on the results of the two reviews, Gene Kassebaum wrote:

"It is striking then that two reviews of published studies of personality differences between the law-violating and the law-abiding, which taken together reviewed 207 studies ranging over several decades of research, are unable to provide any firm basis for the claim that there are distinguishable and characteristic features in the personality of the offender" (1974, p. 52).

In a more recent study, each of several personality factors from the California Personality Inventory was found to be unrelated to any criminal offense (Bailey and Lott, as cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts 9 (3): 99-100, 1976).

Edwin Schur has pointed out that in the studies claiming to find personality differences between officially identified delinquents and non-delinquents:

"There is no way of determining whether any personality 'findings' represent 'causes' of the delinquency or have developed as a consequence of the youth's involvement in delinquency. . . . Furthermore, where the individual's delinquency involvement is known to the investigator, the dangers of circularity and prejudgment in diagnosis are very great" (1973, p. 40).

Individual-Based theories distinguish between positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement and punishment of behavior. Such theories state that acts that are rewarded (positively reinforced) are more likely to be repeated than either acts whose non-commission is rewarded (negative reinforcement) or acts that are punished. The most effective reinforcements are intermittent, rather than automatic; that is, a subject must perform a given act an unpredictable number of times before reward or punishment is forthcoming. Beginning with Pavlov's success in conditioning a dog to salivate, experiments involving simple behaviors in the laboratory have consistently supported this theory.

By this logic, delinquency can be regarded as a consequence of an imbalance of rewards and punishments that makes deviant behavior no less attractive (or more threatening) to an actor than conforming behavior. Enacting and publicizing more severe penalties for certain offenses should deter persons from committing them. Research has shown repeatedly, however, that the relationship between severity and certainty of punishment is either weak or nonexistent (Akers, 1977).

Social Interaction Theories

Edwin H. Sutherland's aim was to construct a theory that would explain every instance of criminal activity. A product of his efforts was differential association theory. It depicts delinquency and crime as behavior learned in social interaction, principally within intimate personal groups. The learning of criminal behavior includes both techniques and attitudes. Groups transmit definitions of legal codes that vary from favorable to unfavorable, and a person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favoring violation of the law.

The associations a person has vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity; these four factors in combination determine how great the impact of any given association will be on an individual (Sutherland and Cressey, 1970). Although the propositions have received credit for directing attention to the role of social learning in criminal behavior, they also have received criticism for being overly vague. Moreover, the level of analysis that the theory addresses has little utility in predicting delinquency. Two questions it leaves unanswered are:

- Why do some young persons and not others wind up having frequent, lasting, and intense inter-action in prodelinquent groups?
- What makes the difference between times when young persons engage in delinquent behavior and times when they obey conventional norms?

Answers to these questions come from labeling, strain, and bonding theories. Schools may inadvertently create prodelinquent groups by practices that not only negatively label a portion of students, but put those who are similarly labeled together in special classes for "slow learners" or "probable troublemakers."

From strain theory comes conjecture that young persons who are similarly excluded from legitimate opportunity may flock together not only for company in their misery but because a gang may be the only source of illegitimate opportunity (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960, pp. 145-148). And bonding theorists contend that membership in gangs and heightened susceptibility to their influence are consequences of a breakdown in mainstream affiliations.

Drawing on theoretical work by Erving Goffman, William Sanders has proposed as another driving force the need for action that will back up and identify claims to peers. While adults can turn to hazardous occupations or gambling to demonstrate they truly possess courage, "coolness," or "smartness," youth have relatively few legitimate avenues for establishing the genuineness of their verbal performances. Faddish forms of taking risks within the law and opportunities to engage in civil disobedience for a cause come and go. In contrast, stealing, joy-riding, and violence present timeless ways for youth with little status at home or at school to prove to others that they possess valued character traits (Sanders, 1976, pp. 55-61).

Research findings provide additional insights into the connection between peer groups and delinquency. First, although the relationship between delinquent behavior and having delinquent friends has been replicated repeatedly, researchers who have investigated causal direction have concluded that associating with other delinquents is partly a product of prior delinquency (Elliott and Voss, 1974, pp. 159-167; Hirschi, 1969,

pp. 145-152). Second, Elliott and Voss reported that commitment to delinquent peers is a far better predictor of subsequent delinquency than is amount of contact. Similarly, Hirschi concluded from his study that, when gangs recruit members who still have strong mainstream attachments, they rarely are successful in getting them to commit delinquent acts (Hirschi, 1969, pp. 159-161). A subsequent study designed to test Hirschi's conclusion found not only that family support and having delinquent friends were related to delinquency, but that the influence of delinquent peers on a subject's delinquency was greater when family support was low than when it was high (Poole and Regoli, 1979).

Having already engaged in delinquent behavior, a young person is more likely to associate with delinquent peers and, in some localities, to join a delinquent gang. Having weakened conventional attachments, the person is likely to become more committed to peers. The associations and heightened commitment, in turn, increase the probability of further delinquency. The relationship between delinquent behavior and involvement with delinquent peers appears to be reciprocal. The pattern that emerges is one of alienation from school and home; followed by misconduct and increased interaction with and commitment to delinquent peers; followed by more delinquent behavior.

Social Structure Theories

The previous sections of this chapter have examined explanations of delinquency focusing first on individual youth,

then on interaction. The emphasis of this section is on institutionalized features of the larger community, especially as shown through policies and practices of organizations and social groups, and how these groups affect interaction patterns of youth. This section moves the analysis towards increasingly more fundamental causes of delinquency.

Empirical research on labeling theory has indicated repeatedly that the judicial labels conferred on youth are based not just on offenses committed but on social factors. Apprehension, booking, and referral to the court occur on a selective basis. A number of studies have found that selection at each step is influenced strongly by such non-offense-related factors as class, sex, race, learning disabilities, and attitude, although there is evidence that by the 1970s the influence of race had diminished (Wilson, 1978). Most theorists argue, however, that some young persons stand a disproportionate chance of receiving derogatory judicial labels for reasons other than the extent of their misconduct (Goldman, 1963; Willie, 1983).

Evidence gathered in the last fifteen years and appearing in Gove (1980) indicates that official labeling by the justice system, the military, or mental health agencies is not a major cause of the development of deviant identities and lifestyles. One conclusion is that negative labels have serious consequences only when introduced into a setting that is salient to an actor and in such a way that the actor's opportunities in that setting are restricted.

Marvin Wolfgang and Franco Ferracuti have described a preference for resorting to violence in a variety of situations as a dominant subcultural theme. In situations where members of the dominant culture would feel guilty if they responded with violence, members of the subculture may find themselves in trouble with their associates if they do not. Albert Cohen (1969) has viewed differences in approved ways to achieve status as a major disparity between lower and middle-class beliefs. Lower class youths may try to make good (according to middle class standards), but are likely to become frustrated and then seek status through illegitimate avenues.

Research to test subcultural theories has shown that lower class youth are: more likely than middle-class youth to have trouble achieving status through legitimate means; somewhat less accepting of middle-class proscriptive (but not prescriptive) norms; and less likely to associate guilt with violence. However, a theme of recent federally-sponsored research is that many subcultural differences have been overstated (NIJJDP, 1977, pp. 65-68). This conclusion is amplified by evidence that lower class youth disapprove of delinquent behavior, as do many adjudicated delinquents, and that ties with criminal parents are not always associated with delinquent behavior by their children.

The issue of whether socioeconomic status and race affect the incidence of delinquency was addressed by Willie (1983) in a case study of Washington, DC. In his examination of the capital city's census tracts, Willie discovered that as socioeconomic status decreased, juvenile delinquency rates tended to increase.

More significantly, Willie identified race as insignificant as an independent variable in causing delinquency. Any correlations made between race and delinquency are simply expressions of a more underlying causal association, that between poverty and delinquency. The Washington, DC research project showed that the association between race and delinquency disappeared once the effects of socioeconomic status were held constant. The conclusion of Willie's research is that the difference in juvenile delinquency rates in white and nonwhite populations would disappear were the circumstances of life similar for white and nonwhite individuals. Poverty therefore emerges as a powerful creator of circumstances leading to delinquent behavior in young Americans.

The 1980s has seen much research on the association between drugs and delinquency. A debate continues as to whether drugs cause delinquency (Gropper, 1985), whether delinquency leads to drug use (Santo et al, 1980), or whether delinquency and drug abuse are different behavioral manifestations of a "deviance syndrome" resulting from common etiological factors (Kandel, 1985). Understanding the links between delinquency and drug use are made more difficult because the majority of American teenagers commit minor delinquent offenses, such as shoplifting and vandalism, and try alcohol or marijuana before leaving high school (Hawkins et al, 1986).

Hawkins et al (1986) point out that the "normal" rebelliousness associated with adolescent experimentation with drugs and delinquent behavior is quite different from drug abuse

and serious delinquency. Hawkins argues that, despite differences in the age of onset of drug abuse and persistent delinquent behavior, serious drug and delinquency problems emerge from common etiological roots. Recent studies reveal similar risk factors for delinquency and adolescent drug abuse. These risk factors are:

- o early variety and frequency of antisocial behavior in the early grades of elementary school;
- o parent and sibling drug use and criminal behavior;
- o poor and inconsistent family management practices;
- o persistent family conflict;
- o family social and economic deprivation;
- o school failure;
- o low degree of commitment and attachment to school;
- o negative peer influences;
- o poor bonding and high levels of alienation;
- o weak neighborhood attachments and community disorganization;
- o high rates of family mobility; and
- o constitutional and personality factors (physiological problems such as central nervous system disorders or cognitive disorders, and personality problems such as "sensation seeking" propensities).

As formulated by Robert Merton, strain theory posits that, in modern western society, the same worthwhile goals tend to be held out as desirable to everyone. This becomes a problem because legitimate avenues for achieving those goals are not open equally to all. The combination of equality of goals and inequality of opportunity regularly makes it impossible for some segments of the population to play by society's rules and still

get what they want. As a consequence, some people turn to illegitimate means to achieve culturally prescribed goals, while others may reject both the goals and the means and retreat socially, either by removing themselves physically or by using alcohol and drugs. Thus, a disjunction in the social structure is a cause of crime and delinquency.

Cloward and Ohlin subsequently applied Merton's formulation to explain lower class gang delinquency, depicting the gang as a source of illegitimate opportunities for success. They introduced a new element into the theory by noting that some youth are denied access to gangs and are thereby cut off from illegitimate, as well as legitimate, opportunity (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960).

Bonding theorists maintain that most people stay out of trouble most of the time because they are bonded to the conventional norms of society through their affiliations with a variety of entities. Familial, education, religious, and economic sectors of society function as vehicles through which bonds to the moral order are maintained. As long as ties to home, school, church or workplace remain strong, an individual is likely to conform to the rules. Refining earlier work of Nye and others, Hirschi (1969) described four control processes through which conformity is maintained.

To be effective, the four control process -- commitment, attachment, involvement, and belief -- must operate through affiliations with group and organizational representatives of convention. The stronger the ties, the greater the control. The

closeness of an affiliation in any one sector is likely to fluctuate, but most people have a multiplicity of important mainstream ties. During periods when there is no stake worth protecting in, for example, the work place, the family and other community memberships remain as sources of control. Freedom to engage in misconduct comes only when all important affiliations are in a disintegrated state at once. For most adults, their sheer number of ties makes this an extremely rare occurrence. At least one control process will usually be present to ensure conformity.

This is not true for youths who, typically, have far fewer involvements with society's institutions than adults do. The only important conventional affiliations for most young persons are school (and the peers they associate with at school and in their neighborhood) and family. When these deteriorate, there usually is nothing left.

A recent article in Time Magazine (June 12, 1989), with contributions by scholars, notes the contributory factors of a crumbling social service system and dysfunctional family life to rising delinquency rates, and the inability of traditional institutions to cope with ever more violent delinquent behavior. But several scholars quoted by Time felt that higher delinquency rates were not attributable primarily to weak families, poor neighborhoods, or with under-funded government agencies or community-based organizations. Rather, Time apports much of the blame to broader social value systems. Arnold Goldstein of Syracuse University notes, "In American society today, the

emphasis is less on caring for others than on getting money and instant gratification... We are a nation whose role models, Presidents and leaders on Wall Street have set a tone in the country - 'I'm going to get mine'." Grabbing the spoils without considering others has become a mainstream value. Says Robert Coles of Harvard University, "Our culture accentuates instinct instead of inhibiting it."

These ideas of greed, instant gratification, materialism and violent solutions to problems are transmitted through and reinforced by television, rock music and other electronic media. Time's analysis suggests that by the age of sixteen, a young person will have witnessed "an estimated 200,000 acts of violence, including 33,000 murders" on television, video and at the movies. Any state's policy for delinquency prevention must surely take into account the harsh reality of a society whose values are perhaps more violent and less constrained by moral codes than ever before.

CHAPTER III
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN RHODE ISLAND:
DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM

The following chapter comprises a statistical summary of the delinquency problem in Rhode Island and provides an analysis of the factors associated with delinquency and at-risk youth. The statistical summary data is presented in a sequence which tracks a juvenile from the time he or she enters the system (arrest) through probation. The analysis of factors associated with at-risk and delinquent youth is based upon the findings of the Study Team gained through interviews with delinquency experts, statewide conferences and community focus groups.

Statistical Summary: Juvenile Delinquency in Rhode Island

The data used for this overview of the dimensions of the delinquency problem is based upon the latest available figures from the Governor's Justice Commission's Statistical Analysis Center.

1. Juvenile Arrests:

- o According to the F.B.I.'s Uniform Crime Reporting system, juvenile arrests increased by nearly 25% between 1984 and 1986 (Table 1). Since the peak year of 1986, juvenile crime arrests have decreased: by 13.8% in 1987 and by 6.2% in 1988 (Table 2).
 - o In the peak year, 1986, males accounted for 7,243 of the 9,674 juvenile arrests (or 74.9%), while females accounted for 2,431 arrests (or 25.1%) (Table 1).
 - o In 1986, the age groups with the largest numbers of juvenile arrests were ages 13-14 (2,091) and age 17 (2,302) (Table 3).
 - o In 1988, 86.2% of all juvenile crimes were committed by whites, while 13.5% were committed by blacks (Table 4).
-

TABLE-1

=====

JUVENILE OFFENDER ARRESTS BY SEX AND RACE
(Distribution of Felony and Misdemeanor Offenses)

Comparison of years 1984* and 1986

OFFENSE	TOTALS		MALE		FEMALE		WHITE		BLACK		OTHER	
	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986
Murder	3	2	3	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0
Rape	20	15	20	15	0	0	18	12	2	3	0	0
Robbery	48	76	42	69	6	7	26	39	21	37	1	0
Assault	196	196	157	156	39	40	172	133	24	33	0	0
Burglary	726	756	667	695	59	61	643	689	83	65	0	2
Larceny	1,403	1,576	997	1,119	406	457	1,185	1,377	217	190	1	9
Motor Vehicle Theft	110	146	100	133	10	13	81	122	29	24	0	0
Other Assaults	312	509	236	387	76	122	254	429	58	79	0	1
Arson	44	58	44	58	0	0	41	52	3	6	0	0
Forgery	10	12	7	8	3	4	10	12	3	0	0	0
Fraud	11	44	8	32	3	12	11	38	0	6	0	0
Embezzlement	4	14	2	7	2	7	4	14	0	0	0	0
Stolen Property	252	253	211	213	41	40	210	217	41	36	1	0
Vandalism	694	923	652	868	42	55	640	857	52	66	2	0
Weapons: Carrying	118	151	113	145	5	6	104	141	14	10	0	0
Prostitution	21	1	1	0	20	1	13	1	8	0	0	0
Sex Offenses	57	41	53	38	4	4	53	40	3	1	1	0
Drug Abuse	318	365	265	303	53	62	305	347	13	18	0	0
Gambling	1	2	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Offenses: Children-Family	65	230	38	133	27	97	63	211	2	19	0	0
Driving Under Influence	38	31	36	30	2	1	37	30	1	1	0	0
Liquor Laws	218	578	181	480	37	98	214	566	4	11	0	1
Drunkenness	31	61	30	59	1	2	30	59	1	2	0	0
Disorderly Conduct	546	606	420	467	126	139	521	576	25	30	0	0
Vagrancy	18	23	16	20	2	3	18	21	0	2	0	0
All Other	1,088	1,154	771	819	317	335	965	1,074	121	74	2	2
Suspicion	524	552	423	447	101	105	492	523	32	27	0	2
Curfew Violation	96	125	61	80	35	45	93	125	3	0	0	0
Runaways	793	1,174	313	458	480	716	759	1,086	34	88	0	0
TOTALS	7,765	9,674	5,368	7,243	1,897	2,431	6,965	8,829	792	828	8	17
% Increase: 1984* Vs 1986		+25%		+23%		+28%		+27%		+5%		+113%
*Baseline Year												

Source: Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation
1984, 1986

TABLE-2

=====

NUMBER OF JUVENILE OFFENDER ARRESTS
(Distribution of Felony and Misdemeanor Offenses)

Comparison of number and percent changes
for each offense from 1984-1988.

OFFENSES	1984		1985		1986		1987		1988	
	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change
Murder	3		3	0.0	2	-33.3	0	-200.0	1	100.0
Rape	20		24	20.0	15	-37.5	13	-13.3	12	7.7
Robbery	48		53	10.4	76	43.4	39	-48.9	40	2.6
Assault	196		240	22.4	196	-18.3	214	9.2	216	1.0
Burglary	726		837	15.3	756	-9.7	640	-15.3	402	-37.2
Larceny	1403		1566	11.6	1576	0.6	1487	-5.6	1223	-17.8
Motor Vehicle Theft	110		131	19.1	146	11.5	175	19.7	242	38.3
Other Assaults	312		463	48.4	509	9.9	481	-5.5	503	4.4
Arson	44		101	129.5	58	-42.6	27	-53.4	46	70.4
Forgery	10		18	80.0	12	-33.3	10	-16.7	6	-40.0
Fraud	11		33	200.0	44	33.3	32	-27.3	28	-12.5
Embezzlement	4		4	0.0	14	250.0	9	-35.7	12	33.3
Stolen Property	252		216	-14.3	253	17.1	181	-28.5	210	16.0
Vandalism	694		878	26.5	923	5.1	701	-24.1	632	-9.8
Weapons: Carrying	118		134	13.6	151	12.7	104	-31.1	104	0.0
Prostitution	21		9	-57.1	1	-88.9	16	1500.0	10	-37.5
Sex Offenses	57		58	1.8	41	-29.3	42	2.4	36	-14.3
Drug Abuse	318		414	30.2	365	-11.8	348	-4.7	487	39.9
Gambling	1		1	0.0	2	100.0	4	100.0	2	-50.0
Offenses: Children-Family	65		144	121.5	230	59.7	202	12.2	202	0.0
Driving Under Influence	38		24	-36.8	31	29.2	32	3.2	30	-6.7
Liquor Laws	218		309	41.7	578	87.1	516	-10.7	364	-29.5
Drunkenness	31		58	87.1	61	5.2	56	-8.2	29	-48.2
Disorderly Conduct	546		561	2.7	606	8.0	390	-35.6	483	23.8
Vagrancy	18		57	216.7	23	-59.6	10	-56.5	10	0.0
All Other	1088		1186	9.0	1154	-2.7	1243	7.7	1178	-5.2
Suspicion	524		496	-5.3	552	11.3	545	-1.3	369	-32.3
Curfew Violation	96		86	-10.4	125	45.3	98	-21.6	129	31.6
Runaways	793		1114	40.5	1174	5.4	728	-38.0	819	12.5
TOTALS	7765		9218	18.7	9674	4.9	8343	-13.8	7825	-6.2

Source: Uniform Crime Report, Federal Bureau of Investigation
1984-1988.

TABLE-3

=====

JUVENILE OFFENDER ARRESTS BY AGE
(Distribution of Felony and Misdemeanor Offenses)

Comparison of years 1984* and 1986

OFFENSE	TOTALS		UNDER 10		10-12		13-14		15		16		17	
	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986
Murder	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Rape	20	15	3	1	5	1	5	4	1	3	2	2	4	4
Robbery	48	76	0	0	5	4	8	4	6	23	15	20	14	25
Assault	196	196	6	4	11	14	43	34	39	34	51	56	46	54
Burglary	726	756	15	24	58	63	193	191	135	166	159	139	166	173
Larceny	1,403	1,576	39	56	141	172	417	406	267	341	285	318	254	283
Motor Vehicle Theft	110	146	0	0	6	2	24	16	20	39	28	50	32	39
Other Assaults	312	509	6	12	18	37	91	109	57	101	60	120	80	130
Arson	44	58	7	19	9	14	11	9	3	7	11	3	3	6
Forgery	10	12	2	0	1	0	2	0	2	6	0	4	3	2
Fraud	11	44	0	0	0	0	3	8	2	6	3	17	3	13
Embezzlement	4	14	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	6	3	4
Stolen Property	252	253	2	7	6	15	46	49	54	42	80	56	64	84
Vandalism	694	923	38	39	96	106	184	244	117	185	121	176	138	173
Weapons: Carrying	118	151	0	3	5	6	20	28	20	29	34	44	39	41
Prostitution	21	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	6	0	11	1
Sex Offenses	57	41	3	0	12	2	16	11	11	10	8	12	7	6
Drug Abuse	318	365	0	0	4	4	26	21	58	59	77	104	153	177
Gambling	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Offenses: Children-Family	65	230	1	1	4	1	12	74	17	66	14	63	17	25
Driving Under Influence	38	31	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	0	10	11	22	19
Liquor Laws	218	578	2	1	1	1	13	34	26	97	84	178	93	268
Drunkenness	31	61	0	0	0	0	9	11	6	10	4	19	12	21
Disorderly Conduct	546	606	6	16	33	24	123	105	125	130	117	176	142	155
Vagrancy	18	23	0	1	0	0	9	3	6	6	1	8	2	5
All Other	1,088	1,154	13	27	96	87	279	275	227	230	222	256	251	279
Suspicion	524	552	6	8	46	26	109	113	104	104	138	130	129	141
Curfew Violation	96	125	3	0	7	6	25	29	33	30	20	32	19	38
Runaways	739	1,174	7	18	51	87	294	321	171	359	172	255	98	134
TOTALS	7,765	9,674	159	237	616	671	1,964	2,091	1,504	2,121	1,715	2,252	1,807	2,302
% Increase: 1984* Vs 1986		+25%		+49%		+9%		+6%		+41%		+31%		+27%
*Baseline Year														

Source: Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation
1984, 1986

TABLE-4
=====

RHODE ISLAND JUVENILE OFFENSE STATISTICS
BY RACE, 1988.

OFFENSE	WHITE		BLACK		INDIAN		ASIAN		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Murder	0	0	1	100.0	0	0	0	0	1	100
Rape	11	91.7	1	8.3	0	0	0	0	12	100
Robbery	18	45.0	22	55.0	0	0	0	0	40	100
Assault	160	38.5	48	11.5	0	0	0	0	208	100
Burglary	355	89.6	38	9.6	0	0	3	0.8	396	100
Larceny	1,024	85.5	163	13.7	0	0	6	.5	1,193	100
Motor Vehicle Theft	179	74.0	60	24.8	0	0	3	1.2	242	100
Other Assaults	382	77.2	113	22.9	0	0	0	0	495	100
Arson	41	93.2	3	6.8	0	0	0	0	44	100
Forgery	6	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	100
Fraud	27	96.4	1	3.6	0	0	0	0	28	100
Embezzlement	11	91.7	1	8.3	0	0	0	0	12	100
Stolen Property	181	87.0	27	13.0	0	0	0	0	208	100
Vandalism	546	89.8	62	10.2	0	0	0	0	608	100
Weapon:Carrying	92	91.1	9	8.9	0	0	0	0	101	100
Prostitution	6	60.0	4	40.0	0	0	0	0	10	100
Sex Offense	30	85.7	5	14.3	0	0	0	0	35	100
Drug Abuse	340	70.0	145	29.8	0	0	1	.2	486	100
Gambling	2	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	100
Offenses: Children-Family	181	91.0	18	9.0	0	0	0	0	199	100
Driving Under Influence	29	96.7	1	3.3	0	0	0	0	30	100
Liquor Laws	353	98.3	5	1.4	0	0	1	.3	359	100
Drunkenness	29	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	100
Disorderly Conduct	414	88.3	55	11.7	0	0	0	0	469	100
Vagrancy	7	70.0	3	30.0	0	0	0	0	10	100
All Other	1,021	87.5	142	12.2	0	0	4	.3	1,167	100
Suspicion	337	91.8	20	5.5	0	0	10	2.7	367	100
Curfew Violations	116	96.7	4	3.3	0	0	0	0	120	100
Runaways	718	89.6	82	10.3	1	.1	0	0	801	100
Totals	6,616	86.2	1,033	13.4	1	.0	28	.4	7,678	100

Source: Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation
1988

- o In 1988, juveniles were arrested for committing property crimes more than for any other type of crime.
- o In 1988, Rhode Island law enforcement officers arrested more juveniles, proportionately, than United States law enforcement personnel did as a whole, in 6 out of 8 of the serious crime categories. The only serious crime categories in which Rhode Island had lower percentage rates were in the robbery and arson categories.
- o When comparing the violent and property crime categories, Rhode Island exceeded the United States percentage totals by 3.1% and 6.5%, respectively. Violent crimes are classified as homicide, rape, robbery and assault. Property crimes are classified as burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson.

2. Juveniles in Court

- o During 1988, the Family Court system processed 7% more cases than in 1987. A total of 8,856 charges were processed in 1987 versus 9,433 for 1988.
- o Charges for violation of probation and status offenses continued to increase during 1988 (by 2%).

3. R.I. Training School

- o The average on-grounds population of the Rhode Island Training School increased from 197 to 208 (or by 4%) between 1987 and 1988.
- o Since 1981, the rate of juvenile intake has risen by 50% at R.I.T.S.

4. Recidivists

- o Approximately 3,402 juvenile delinquents were processed through the Family Court system in 1984. Of these, 894 or 26% were recidivists (the most recently documented figure for recidivism is for 1984).

5. Child Abuse Computerized Program

- o The CANTS (Child Abuse & Neglect Tracking System) received 9,678 calls in 1987 and 10,521 calls in 1988, an increase of 8%.
- o In 1986, The Department for Children and Their Families (DCF) received 2,234 "early warning calls" meaning that swift action was necessary by DCF staff. An average of 186 calls per month in the early warning category were handled by DCF in 1986.

6. Probation

- o Investigations between 1982 and 1984 decreased dramatically, going from 2,493 investigations down to 812; a 207% drop. Increased cooperation and more thorough case discussions between prosecutors and public defenders is believed to be a key factor for this occurrence. Since the mid-1980s, the number of juvenile probation cases has increased slightly; from 1,874 in 1987 to 1,905 in 1988 (or by 2%).

7. 1988 Juvenile Crime Summary

- o Table 4 presents a summary of juvenile arrests in 1988.
- o The total number of arrests, 7,678, was down -20.6% from the 1986 peak of 9,674.
- o Whites accounted for 86.2% of all juvenile criminals; Blacks for 13.5%; Indians and Asians for 0.3%.
- o Many crime categories for juvenile offenses showed decreases between 1986 and 1988; for example, rape was down from 15 to 12 cases, larceny was down from 1,576 to 1,193 cases, vandalism was down from 923 to 608 cases, and sex offenses were down from 57 to 35 cases.
- o There are a number of disturbing exceptions to the underlying downward trend in juvenile offenses; drug abuse offenses rose from 365 to 486 cases, motor vehicle theft rose from 146 to 242 cases and prostitution rose from 1 to 10 cases.

8. Supplemental Juvenile Statistics (1980 Census)

- o Slightly more than 25% of the state's population is juvenile in age (The 1980 U.S. Census showed that 243,170 out of 947,154 R.I. residents were under 18 years of age). Rhode Island law considers anyone under the age of 18 to be a juvenile.
 - o Providence, with 38,375 individuals aged under eighteen, has the largest juvenile population in Rhode Island. Second and third highest are Pawtucket and Cranston with juvenile populations of 18,539 and 17,401, respectively. The City of Warwick has the fourth highest juvenile population, with 15,496.
-
-

Factors Which Characterize At-Risk and Delinquent Youth
in Rhode Island

The following analysis discusses the factors which characterize young Rhode Islanders at risk for delinquency. The analysis is presented in three sections, according to the sources from which they were derived:

1. Factors identified by participants in a statewide conference entitled, "Preventing Juvenile Delinquency: Identifying At-risk Youth" held at the Marriott Hotel in Providence on February 16, 1989;
2. Factors appended to the conference findings by juvenile delinquency experts, practicing professionals, academics and at-risk students themselves during focus group sessions conducted by Urban Field Center staff;
3. Factors prioritized and refined by the Study Team after exhaustive consultations with members of the statewide Delinquency Prevention Group and GJC staff, reflecting the core delinquency factors identified most frequently and most strongly by study participants.

1. Conference Findings

The following factors, organized in five categories that were identified by conference participants, are presented in the order in which they were raised and discussed.

(a) Individual

- Low self-esteem
 - Lack of a sense of belonging to family, peer group, society
 - Low ambition
 - Poor impulse control
 - Lack of bonding to positive adult role models
 - No coping skills
 - Truancy
 - No place to go, so they just "hang out"
 - Cannot get money; drugs are a way to get money quickly
 - Never rewarded for good behavior
 - Loners
 - Problems begin very early in child's life, but go unnoticed until it is too late to intervene successfully
 - Emotionally disturbed
-

(b) Family

- Disfunctional family
- No moral value system
- Lack of parental supervision, including:
 - No limit setting
 - Children misbehaving to win scant attention
 - Inconsistent application of rules in the home
- Substance abuse
- Physical abuse and mental/psychological abuse
- Poor parenting skills
- No reasonable role norms; parents do drugs/break the law
- No communication
- Lack of support systems for families under economic stress
- Parent illiteracy and low education levels contributing to inter-generational disadvantages
- Both parents work; there is a lack of nurturing
- Too much "idle time"
- Latch-key children
- No family goals or ambitions; tough day-to-day existence
- Families may not realize seriousness of problems; if they do, they may not know how or where to get help

(c) Cultural

- Drugs are freely available and profitable
- Violent and permissive society
- Violent neighborhoods
- T.V./Movies legitimate violent solutions to problems; T.V. is the baby-sitter of the 80's; easy and free
- No religion
- A growing single parent culture: divorce/teen pregnancy
- Public assistance can lead to family separation
- Materialistic rather than humanistic value system
- Child care is a low priority
- Ethnic and racial groups have too few positive role models
- No value placed on education in many segments of society
- Language barriers may be a problem
- Minority groups may have rebellious attitudes
- Racism, discrimination from majority population
- Diabolistic/anti-religious cults
- Social service system overload is a low political priority
- Youth centered society makes kids believe they should have everything now; they do that through dealing drugs
- Lack of community activities; lack of community network

(d) Socioeconomic

- Transportation is costly and unavailable
- Crime surrounds youth living in poverty
- Limited access to good health care or mental health services

-
- Welfare families may become dependent; it is difficult to break free
 - Recreational facilities are too costly
 - Both poverty and drugs surround kids in poor neighborhoods; the latter seem to be a "quick fix" antidote to the former
 - Low income and unemployment lead to low self-esteem
 - A feeling of being "cut out of the system" leads to bitterness and alienation.
 - Obtaining success through education is not presented as a viable goal.
 - Crime and drugs are ever-present, easy options

(e) Institutional: Schools, Courts and Public Agencies

- Learning disabilities
- Attention deficits
- Lack of guidance services
- Lack of space in schools, courts and human service agencies
- No belief system in schools among generations of families
- Truancies go unreported, are reported too late to take action, or are not followed up on
- Academic failure is allowed to proceed too long unchecked
- Schools are not made comfortable places for parents
- Delinquent kids in regular classrooms can acquire peer - group status from being disruptive.
- Teachers become cynical or depressed; they may use reactionary "crowd control" techniques
- Lack of problem-solving/analytic skills among disadvantaged youths
- Lack of legal sanctions to deter kids from dealing drugs
- Courts are overwhelmed with youth cases

These indicators provided the basis for further research designed to refine the problem-identification process and to clarify and prioritize the characteristics associated with at-risk and delinquent youth in Rhode Island. The first phase of this additional research involved a series of "focus groups", facilitated by the Study Team, and consisting of professionals knowledgeable about juvenile delinquency.

2. Focus Group Findings

The second phase of the Study Team's primary data collection exercise involved an in-depth review of the indicators developed at the February 16, 1989 conference.

A questionnaire was developed to serve as the basis for gaining information from these focus groups; participants were asked to review the conference findings and to identify the most significant indicators for describing the juveniles they encounter in their professional lives.

During the period May through August, 1989, the Study Team conducted six focus groups with teenage members of the Fox Point Boys and Girls Club, Providence and with professionals who work with delinquent and at-risk youth in Rhode Island.

The objectives of the focus groups were as follows:

- o to more accurately enumerate the indicators of at-risk youth in Rhode Island;
- o to identify the most significant underlying causes of juvenile delinquency;
- o to identify commonly occurring themes in the descriptions of delinquent and at-risk youth provided by professionals in diverse youth-oriented fields;
- o to gain insights into delinquent behavior from a youth perspective;
- o to prepare a working document for a Spring, 1990 summer conference on better identifying at-risk youth.

Professionals were drawn from a number of youth-oriented fields and interviewed in groups of ten to twenty. The teenage group from the Fox Point Boys and Girls Club was selected to represent different ages (twelve to seventeen years), racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

The focus groups were as follows:

- o directors, administrators and counselors of several Boys and Girls Clubs in Rhode Island;
- o Family Court juvenile intake supervisors, probation officers and social workers;
- o youths of different ages and backgrounds from the Fox Point Boys and Girls Club, Providence;
- o police officers from Johnston and Pawtucket with responsibility for juvenile crimes;
- o educators involved in a U.R.I. graduate course relating to law-related education; and
- o professionals involved in the D.C.F. Youth Diversionary Program and Comprehensive Emergency Services.

A set of general questions was prepared in advance of each focus group session, however the Study Team acted as facilitators rather than interviewers. At the beginning of each meeting, the goals and objectives of the study were explained, an oral presentation of the research findings was given and copies of the Conference Summary were circulated (except during the youth session).

Adult focus group participants were invited to identify the analytic and descriptive indicators that best characterized the youths they worked with, to provide common profiles of at-risk and delinquent juveniles and to explain why they thought young people turned to crime. A similar strategy was employed for the focus group with youths, but a more structured approach was taken. Facilitators introduced topics for discussion -- neighborhood and community characteristics, what they wanted from life and how they would obtain it, the school environment, family problems, drugs, theft and other crimes -- and asked the youths

to deal with each in turn. The final task which the youths were asked to address was to describe a friend or acquaintance who had been in trouble with the police and/or the courts, detailing their neighborhood, family, close friends, peer group, recreational pastimes, school experiences and why they got into trouble.

Findings of the Five Professional Focus Groups

The adult focus groups strongly affirmed the linkages between socio-economic status and juvenile delinquent behavior that were identified in the literature review (for example, in the work of Willie, 1983). Poverty and its impacts upon family structure and family life was almost universally viewed as the key driving variable, the most powerful explanatory factor in causing delinquency in Rhode Island. The adult groups whose work is primarily with adjudicated delinquent youth (including the police officers, Family Court intake supervisors, probation officers, D.C.F. affiliates and social workers) and the focus group whose work is largely with non-adjudicated youth (the Directors of the Boys and Girls Clubs) identified the following factors as most significant in causing delinquency:

- o poverty and the stresses it causes in families, including low levels of aspiration, low self esteem and an inability to perceive the attainment of desirable life goals through legitimate means;
 - o weak family structure, including lack of parental supervision in the home (especially in single-parent families and when both parents work), absence of limit setting, poor discipline, weak inculcation of societal norms and values, and non-constructive, non-creative uses of free time;
 - o low levels of educational attainment, reflecting an absence
-

of educational goals in many families, lack of caring and understanding among teachers, the availability of numerous unskilled jobs which may seem appealing to teenagers eager for money and material possessions, poor curriculum appeal, and the inability of the public educational system to 're-capture' children once they have failed to read, write or learned to think rationally and analytically: students who have failed educationally in the early grades and who receive little or no support at home or at school become outsiders within the system and therefore are most at risk of truancy or leaving school altogether, seeking recognition elsewhere, often among young delinquents.

- o the culture of crime, encompassing the community, neighborhood and family pressures placed on young people to conform to crime-oriented values. Police and social workers in particular noted the tendency for criminal activities to "run in families", especially very poor families, and that such family members "expect to get arrested and, from time to time, incarcerated -- it's all part of their 'normal' routine."

Middle class children also commit crimes, but the focus group professionals noted that these crimes are "one-shot, non-repeat" in nature and most commonly involve drinking, joy riding or shop lifting. Once they have encountered the criminal justice system, they are "unlikely to want to get involved with it again". One social worker suggested, "The system's deterrence value really only works with the kids who have grown up with fundamental values of which behaviors are right and wrong -- the system has pretty much labelled them 'good kids' and everyone knows they will get a second chance."

- o an atmosphere of stress and violence, including mental and physical abuse inflicted primarily on children of under-educated, economically disadvantaged families. Confrontational and even violent responses to problems become normal 'solutions' for children of such families.

Without the values accepted by mainstream society (the basic concepts of right and wrong behavior), without regard for the criminal justice system or knowledge about either their basic rights or their responsibilities, without the ability to mediate difficulties with others, and without the mechanisms to seek long-range solutions to pressing problems, young people may resort to delinquent behavior.

- o the "system's" inability to cope, which, in turn, obstructs meaningful prevention of and intervention in delinquent behavior. Many elementary and middle schools have no guidance counselors or social workers; many high school counselors are over-burdened with routine administrative responsibilities. There are insufficient funds to operate

constructive after-school programs, so students merely "hang out" after school closes. State social service agencies, community-based organizations (CBOs) and the criminal justice system have insufficient resources or personnel to deal with youth cases on an individual basis; many professionals feel they are doing little more than "processing" their clients. There are inadequate linkages between the families of delinquent youths and the institutions which educate, treat or adjudicate them. There are few institutional mechanisms for tracking delinquent youths or for measuring the relative merits of different interventions. Schools, CBOs and the courts are not equipped to counter the onslaught of drugs, with which much delinquent behavior has become associated in the past decade. Federal programs have de-emphasized the role of government in planning and funding social programs; the emphasis has been placed squarely back on families, many of which lack the necessary structures to prevent delinquent behavior without external support.

Findings of the Focus Group With Fox Point Youths

During the session with young people from the Fox Point Boys and Girls Club, teenagers were asked to think about and discuss the following issues:

- o Why do kids commit crimes?
 - o What kind of kids commit crimes?
 - o What kind of crimes do kids commit?
 - o Why do they commit these types of crime?
 - o Are these kids any different from you?
 - o What neighborhoods do these kids come from?
 - o What are these neighborhoods like?
 - o What do you think of when you think of these kids' families?
 - o Are these families like other kids' families?
 - o How would you describe these families?
 - o Do these families care about their kids?
 - o What kind of friends do these kids have?
-

- o What sorts of things do these kids do together?
- o Do you think that these kids think differently about life than you?
- o What do kids want out of life?
- o How do you think you will get the things you want?
- o Do these kids go about getting the things they want in the same way?
- o What do you think about the police and the law?
- o Do these kids agree with you about the police and the law?
- o Do you think you are happier than the kids who get in trouble with the police or who go to the courts?
- o Why do you think you are happier/less happy?
- o What do you think of school?
- o How well do these kids do in school?
- o What do they think of school?
- o How do they get on with teachers?
- o What do the teachers think of them?
- o Which people could help to stop kids from getting into trouble?
- o What can these people do to keep kids out of trouble?
- o At what age do you think kids start to get into trouble?
- o Why does it start at this age?
- o What happens to the kids who get into trouble when they are older?

A common thread which runs through the Fox Point youths' understanding of contemporary youth problems is drugs. The young people described how drugs are freely available in Providence. Many young teenagers use them; many young teenagers deal them. According to participants in this focus group, all youths want the same things: material possessions, particularly cars.

Dealing drugs affords them the opportunity to make hundreds of dollars in just one day, and makes owning a car at the age of sixteen a reality to kids whose parents could not possibly afford to buy one for them.

All the teenagers in the focus group said that it was hard to wait for the things they wanted. Staying in school, doing well in classes and planning for a future presented problems because little status is acquired by working for good grades. The "pay off" for striving for academic success seemed distant and elusive, while the temptation and excitement of dealing drugs were incentives to abandon school and achieve both material possessions, influence among peers and status at an early age.

The focus group teenagers claimed that they did not get involved with dealing drugs or other crimes because their parents cared about them, had instilled strong values about right and wrong, and had explained the importance of education for achieving success. The parents of youths who become involved in delinquent activities were perceived to be uncaring, absent from the home and frequently involved in crime themselves. Some kids, it was claimed, learn about drugs, house-breaking and other crimes from parents and siblings; many deal drugs with or for their parents. Kids turn to drugs not only for the material gains, but for the "high" of instant gratification and to escape from the loneliness, confusion and uncertainty that characterize their lives. Good parents were seen as crucially important to the life chances of youths who grow up in very poor neighborhoods. Youths who come from the poor, urban areas of

Rhode Island have no support mechanisms if their families fail them.

Teachers were universally viewed as insensitive and condescending. The influence of educators on most of the kids' behavior -- delinquent, at-risk and mainstream -- was viewed as minor or insignificant. Strong, supportive families were seen as the key to staying out of trouble. When kids are brought up by parents who are not involved in every aspect of their lives and who fail to inculcate values about rights and responsibilities, delinquency results. In the absence of parental interest, kids turn to peer groups for advice, and the attractive peer groups are those that offer excitement and confer status. These are the peer groups that reject school, reject mainstream values and offer instead the escapism and money associated with drugs.

Schools, social work offices, police stations and courtrooms were not taken seriously by even the law-abiding youths. The controlling, authoritative atmosphere of the adult world were seen as irrelevant to the lives of young people. The unadjudicated youth of the focus group argued that the at-risk and delinquent teenagers were not affected by teachers, policemen, judges, probation officers or social workers. For young criminals, such professionals were little more than inconveniences in the scheme of their illegal activities. A certain status is conferred by being arrested, while few youths are incarcerated for prolonged periods. The Fox Point Boys and Girls Club focus group participants noted that delinquent kids know "the system" and its procedures. They believe that the

system cannot harm them and that it certainly will not change them.

Despite the allure of the criminal subculture in which many of the focus group youths lived, most argued that they were happier than the delinquent kids they had met. Most felt that they would get married and have children, buy a house and car, take vacations and hold down a regular job. Their delinquent colleagues would not have any of these things because they would not change or grow; they would get ill or die from drugs, or end up in prison for most of their adult lives. While several more years in school was not an appealing prospect for the youths from the Fox Point Boys and Girls Club, loving parents, strong values, mainstream ambitions and respect for the law kept them in the classroom and out of trouble.

3. Refining the Indicators of Youth At-Risk For Delinquency

The final phase of the Study Team's post-conference research, was to refine the indicators identified through the literature review, the conference and the focus groups in order to prepare a "definitive" list of the Rhode Island-specific factors associated with juvenile delinquency.

There are two types of indicators which help researchers to understand and characterize young people who are at-risk for delinquency. The first are analytic indicators. These help to explain the underlying factors or influences which lead to delinquent behavior; they identify environments, conditions or relationships (between a youth and his/her environment or between

a youth and other individuals) which place young people at risk. The second type of indicators are descriptive in nature. These indicators describe behaviors or tendencies which are symptomatic of underlying problems; they are the tangible outcomes of the causal factors.

It is important to distinguish between analytic and descriptive indicators because policies designed to address the problem of delinquency are applied at different stages in its development. Prevention strategies (which were clearly preferred by a consensus of the professionals who participated in both the conference and the focus groups) can only be effective when analytic indicators adequately explain the pre-conditions of delinquent behavior (that is, before the more visible signs of delinquency become manifest). Intervention strategies, which make up the most prevalent delinquency programs existing in Rhode Island, usually address one or more of the descriptive indicators which characterize at-risk youth (that is, they intervene in a process which has been continuing often for a number of years and which has already led to easily identifiable signs of delinquent or pre-delinquent behavior). Most of the professionals who participated in the research phases of this study agree that a better understanding of at-risk youth lies in the analytic indicators. From these might come a genuine shift away from intervention toward prevention in policies geared toward reducing juvenile crime in Rhode Island.

From the three sources employed in this study -- a comprehensive literature review, a working conference and

professional and youth focus groups -- the following indicators emerge as most significant in the state of Rhode Island:

Analytic Indicators

- o Poverty
 - o Poorly educated and/or illiterate family members
 - o Criminal activity in the family
 - o Criminal activity in the neighborhood
 - o Loneliness, isolation and alienation
 - o Never rewarded for good or positive behavior
 - o Dysfunctional family with little or no communication
 - o Lack of parental support
 - o Lack of parental supervision and/or both parents rarely in the home
 - o Lack of limit setting in the home
 - o Absence of family goals or ambitions
 - o Lack of family values or morals
 - o Substance abuse in the home
 - o Substance abuse in the neighborhood and wider society
 - o Violence in the home
 - o Violence in the neighborhood and wider society
 - o Racism and other forms of discrimination
 - o Educational and criminal justice systems overload
 - o Lack of constructive activities in the home
 - o Absence of a community network
 - o Over-worked, over-stressed teachers
 - o Over-worked social workers or guidance counselors
-

Descriptive Indicators

- o Low self-esteem
- o Lack of a sense of belonging to family, peer group and/or society
- o Lack of bonding to positive adult role models
- o No place to go; just "hang out"
- o Inability to think long-term; wanting everything now
- o Truancy/Dropping out
- o Violent and/or confrontational behavior
- o Poor impulse control
- o Poor coping skills
- o Short attention span
- o Signs of being emotionally disturbed
- o Involvement with drugs (using and/or dealing)
- o Teen pregnancy
- o Membership in cults
- o Declining academic performance
- o Stress
- o Disrespect for mainstream values and institutions
- o Involvement in criminal activities

The final chapters of this report describe current services for at-risk and delinquent youth (Chapter IV), assess the extent to which these services address the needs associated with the above indicators (Chapter V), and describe broad strategies for improving service delivery for at-risk youth in Rhode Island (Chapter VI).

CHAPTER IV
DIRECTORY OF RESOURCES FOR AT-RISK AND DELINQUENT YOUTH
IN RHODE ISLAND: AN OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the agencies currently available to serve at-risk and delinquent youth in Rhode Island. The summary is organized into three sections: Prevention Programs, Intervention Programs and Rehabilitation Services. Every agency that responded to a detailed questionnaire requesting information about their target populations and service characteristics is included in the Directory, together with its geographic service area. Several agencies did not return questionnaires to the Study Team; in these cases only limited information is presented.

Each of the three general categories of program is subdivided into substantive fields, designated according to the type of service provided. Each program has an entry code with which it can be cross-referenced for detailed information in the Directory of Resources for At-Risk and Delinquent Youth in Rhode Island which accompanies this Final Report.

Prevention Programs

	Program Area Served
Education:	
1.11 Central Falls Police Department	Central Falls
1.25 Family Service, Inc.	East Bay
1.26 Hartford Park Community Center	Hartford Park
1.31 Newport School Department	Newport
1.32 Ocean State Center for Law and Citizen Education	State-wide
1.33 Olneyville Boys and Girls Club	Providence
1.35 Providence School Department	Providence
1.37 RI Legal/Education Partnership	State-wide
1.40 Rhode Island Supreme Court	State-wide
1.43 Socio-Economic Development Center for Southeast Asian (SEDC)	State-wide
1.44 Sojourner House	State-wide
1.48 Travelers Aid Run Away Youth Program	State-wide
1.50 Warren School Department	Warren
1.51 Warwick Public School	Warwick
1.53 Washington Park Community Center	Washington Park
1.55 Woonsocket Senior High School	Woonsocket
Recreation:	
1.03 Big Brothers of Rhode Island, Inc.	State-wide
1.04 Big Sister of Rhode Island	State-wide
1.05 Boys and Girls Club of Cumberland/Lincoln	Cumberland/Lincoln
1.06 Boys and Girls Club of East Providence	E. Providence
1.07 Boys and Girls Clubs of Newport County	Newport County
1.08 Boys and Girls Club of Pawtucket	Pawtucket
1.09 Boys and Girls Clubs of Providence	Providence
1.10 Boys and Girls Clubs of Warwick	Warwick
1.19 Coventry Police Department	Coventry
1.24 East Greenwich Police Department	East Greenwich
1.26 Hartford Park Community Center	Hartford Park
1.27 John Hope Settlement House	Providence
1.28 Joslin Community Development Corp.	Olneyville, Joslin, Manton, Mt. Pleasant
1.36 RI Educational Enrichment Program	Providence
1.53 Washington Park Community Center	Washington Park
1.56 YMCA Parent Child Center	Providence
Drug and Alcohol:	
1.01 Action, Rhode Island	Northwestern RI
1.02 Alcoholism Services of Cranston, Johnston, and Northwestern RI	Northwestern RI
1.12 Channel-One, Central Falls	Central Falls
1.13 Channel-One, Warwick	State-wide, Kent City

1.14	Child and Family Service of Newport County	Newport County
1.15	CODAC	State-wide
1.16	CODAC East	East Bay
1.17	Community Counseling Center	Pawt., Central Falls
1.18	Counseling and Intervention Services	kent County
1.21	Cranston Human Ecology	State-wide
1.22	Diocesan Office for Youth Ministry	State-wide
1.23	East Bay Human Resource Corp.	East Bay
1.28	Joslin Community Development Corp.	Olneyville, Joslin, Manton, Mt. Pleasant.
1.29	Junction Human Service Corp.	State-wide
1.30	New Vision for Newport County	Newport County
1.34	Pawtucket Alcohol Counseling Services	Pawt., Northern RI
1.39	Rhode Island Student Assistance Programs	State-wide
1.41	Road Counseling Program	Northern RI
1.42	Smith Hill Center	Providence
1.43	Socio-Economic Development Center for Southeast Asian (SEDC)	State-wide
1.47	Stopover Shelters of Newport County, Inc.	Newport County
1.48	Travelers Aid Society	State-wide
1.52	Warwick Substance Abuse Prevention	Warwick

Employment:

1.27	John Hope Settlement House	Providence
1.28	Joslin Community Development Corp.	Olneyville, Joslin, Manton, Mt. Pleasant.
1.45	South County Community Action, Inc.	South County
1.48	Travelers Aid Society	State-wide
1.49	Tri-Town CAP	Nb. Western RI and part of Northern RI.
1.51	Warwick Public School	Warwick
1.54	Woonsocket School Department	Woonsocket

Sexual Abuse:

1.20	Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
1.38	Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center	State-wide
1.46	St. Mary's Home for Children	State-wide

East Bay- Barrington, Bristol, East Providence, Warren.

Kent County- Coventry, East Greenwich, Warwick, West Warwick.

Metropolitan Providence - Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence.

Newport County - Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton.

Northwest RI - Cranston, Foster, Glocester, Johnston, North Providence, Scituate,
Smithfield.

Northern RI - Burrillville, Cumberland, Lincoln, North Smithfield, Woonsocket.

Washington County - Charlestown, Block Island, Exeter, Hopkinton, Narragansett, North
Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, Westerly.

Intervention Programs

Emergency and Crisis Intervention:	Program Area Served:
2.02 Capitol Hill Interaction Council	State-wide
2.03 Child and Family Services of Newport County	Newport County
2.04 Community Counseling Center	Pawtucket and Central Falls
2.06 Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
2.11 John Hope Settlement House	Providence
2.14 Kent County Mental Health Center	Kent County
2.16 Newport County Community Mental Health Center	Newport County
2.22 Providence Center for Counseling and Psychiatric Services, Inc.	State-wide
2.23 Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center	State-wide
2.40 Washington County Comm. Mental Health, Inc.	Washington County
2.45 Woonsocket Family and Child Service	Woonsocket
 Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting Program:	
2.01 Blackstone Vally Community Action Program	Pawtucket, C. Falls, Cumberland and Lincoln
2.06 Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
2.09 Family Services, Inc.	Charlestown, Hopkinton, Richmond, and Westerly
2.14 Kent County Mental Health Center	Kent County
2.17 Northwest Community Nursing and Health Serv	Northwestern RI
2.20 OIC of Rhode Island	Providence
2.21 Providence Ambulatory Health Care Foundation.	Providence
2.26 Self-Help	E. Providence, Barrington
2.36 Tri-Town Community Action	No. Western RI, Burrville
2.38 Urban League of Rhode Island	Providence
2.39 Visiting Nurse Servc. of Greater Woonsocket.	Woonsocket, No. Smithfield-
2.44 Women and Infant Hospital.	State-wide
2.46 Young Parents Program	Newport and Washington County...
 Counseling:	
2.02 Capitol Hill Interaction Council	State-wide
2.04 Community Counseling Center, Inc.	Pawtucket and Central Falls
2.09 Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
2.10 Family Service Society	Pawtucket
2.15 New Visions for Newport County	Newport County
2.22 Providence Center for Counseling and Psychiatric Services, Inc	State-wide
2.33 Tides Family Services.	Kent County
2.35 Travelers Aid Society of RI.	State-wide
2.37 Turning Point	State-wide
2.40 Washington County Comm. Mental Health, Inc	Washington County
2.42 Westerly High School (Academic Intervention).	Westerly High School

Drug/Alcohol Abuse Intervention:

2.02	Capitol Hill Interaction Council	State-wide
2.10	Family Service Society	Pawtucket
2.15	New Visions for Newport County	Newport County
2.24	Rhode Island Student Assistance	State-wide
2.25	Road Counseling Program	Northern RI
2.35	Travelers Aid Society of RI (Referral)	State-wide

Host Home, Shelter, Independent Living Program:

2.03	Child and Family Services of Newport County	Newport County
2.05	Community For People, Inc.	State-wide
2.06	Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
2.11	John Hope Settlement House	Providence
2.12	Junction Human Service Corporation	Providence, N. Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls.
2.14	Kent County Mental Health Center	Kent County
2.18	Ocean Tides	State-wide
2.20	OIC of Rhode Island	Providence
2.22	Providence Center for Counseling and Psychiatric Services, Inc.	State-wide.
2.27	South County Community Action	Washington County and Jamestown.
2.28	St. Aloysius Home	Smithfield
2.29	St. Mary's Home For Children	State-wide
2.30	Stopover Shelter of Newport County, Inc.	Newport County
2.31	Tannerhill	State-wide
2.32	The Key Program, Inc.	State-wide (Through DCF)
2.34	Transition House, Inc.	State-wide (Through DCF)
2.35	Travelers Aid Society of RI	State-wide
2.37	Turning Point	State-wide
2.40	Washington County Comm. Mental Health, Inc	Washington County
2.41	Washington Park Children's Shelter	State-wide
2.43	Whitmarsh Corporation	Providence
2.45	Woonsocket Family and Child Service	Woonsocket

Legal Support:

2.06	Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
2.07	Dept. for Children and Their Family (Juv. Probation)	State-wide
2.08	East Greenwich Juvenile Hearing Board	East Greenwich
2.09	Family Services, Inc.	East Bay
2.12	Junction Human Service Corporation	Providence, N. Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls.
2.13	Justice Assistance	State-wide
2.18	Ocean Tides	State-wide
2.19	Office of The Child Advocate	State-wide
2.20	OIC of Rhode Island	Providence
2.27	South County Community Action	Washington County and

2.30	Stopover Shelters of Newport County, Inc.	Jamestown. Newport County
2.33	Tides Family Services	Kent County

Sexual Abuse Intervention:

2.22	Providence Center for Counseling and Psychiatric Services, Inc.	State-wide
2.23	Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center	State-wide

East Bay- Barrington, Bristol, East Providence, Warren.

Kent County- Coventry, East Greenwich, Warwick, West Warwick.

Metropolitan Providence - Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence.

Newport County - Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton.

Northwest RI - Cranston, Foster, Gloucester, Johnston, North Providence, Scituate,
Smithfield.

Northern RI - Burrillville, Cumberland, Lincoln, North Smithfield, Woonsocket.

Washington County - Charlestown, Block Island, Exeter, Hopkinton, Narragansett, North
Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, Westerly.

REHABILITATION/TREATMENT

Drug, Alcohol

Abuse Treatment:

	Program Area Served:
3.01 Alcoholism Services of Cranston, Johnston, and Northwestern RI	Northwestern RI
3.03 Capitol Hill Interaction Council	State-wide
3.04 Caritas House	State-wide
3.05 CODAC East	East Bay
3.06 Community Counseling Center	Northern RI
3.07 Counseling and Intervention Services	State-wide
3.10 Directions Drug Abuse Treatment Program	Kent County
3.11 East Bay Human Resource Corp	East Bay
3.12 East Bay Mental Health Center	East Bay
3.15 Good Hope Center	State-wide
3.16 Junction Human Service Corporation.....	Providence, N. Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls.
3.20 New Visions for Newport County	Newport County
3.22 Northern RI Community Mental Health Center	Northern RI
3.24 RI Department of Mental Health.....	State-wide
3.26 Road Counseling Program	Northern RI
3.27 South County Child and Family Consultant, Inc.	State-wide
3.30 SYMPATICO	State-wide
3.31 Talbot House, Inc.....	State-wide
3.33 Tri-Hab House	State-wide
3.35 Washington County Community Mental Health	Washington County

Sexual, Physical Abuse Treatment:

3.04 Caritas House	State-wide
3.08 Cranston Community Action	Northwestern RI
3.09 DCF Training School (for offender)	State-wide
3.23 Providence Center for Counseling and Psychiatric Services, Inc.....	State-wide
3.27 South County Child and Family Consultant, Inc.....	State-wide
3.29 St. Mary's Home For Children	State-wide
3.34 Turning Point	State-wide

Mental Health Service:

3.12 East Bay Mental Health Center	East Bay
3.14 Family Service, Inc	State-wide
3.17 Kent County Community Mental Health	Kent County
3.18 Mental Health Services of Cranston, Johnston, and Northwestern RI	Northwestern RI
3.21 Newport County Community Mental Health	Newport County
3.22 Northern RI Community Mental Health Center	Northern RI
3.23 Providence Center for Counseling	

	and Psychiatric Services, Inc.	State-wide
3.24	RI Department of Mental Health	State-wide
3.35	Washington County Community Mental Health	Washington County

Treatment for Behavioral Problem:

3.02	Behavior Research Institute	State-wide
3.06	Community Counseling Center	Pawtucket and Central Falls.
3.13	Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives, Inc.	State-wide
3.19	Narragansett School System.	Southern Rhode Island
3.23	Providence Center for Counseling and Psychiatric Services, Inc.	State-wide
3.25	RI Youth Guidance Center	State-wide
3.28	Spurwink School II	Lincoln Schools and Through DCF.
3.29	St. Mary's Home For Children	State-wide
3.32	Transition House, Inc.	State-wide
3.35	Washington County Community Mental Health	Washington County

East Bay- Barrington, Bristol, East Providence, Warren.

Kent County- Coventry, East Greenwich, Warwick, West Warwick.

Metropolitan Providence - Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence.

Newport County - Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton

Northwest RI - Cranston, Foster, Glocester, Johnston, North Providence, Scituate,
Smithfield.

Northern RI - Burrillville, Cumberland, Lincoln, North Smithfield, Woonsocket.

Washington County - Charlestown, Block Island, Exeter, Hopkinton, Narragansett, North
Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, Westerly.

CHAPTER V

RHODE ISLAND'S PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS FOR AT-RISK JUVENILES:
A DISCREPANCY ANALYSISIntroduction

The research findings of the needs assessment for at-risk and delinquent youth in Rhode Island have yielded six areas of concern, of which five provide a basis for action for policy makers and program providers. The study has presented three key components of the research: the characteristics of youth at risk for delinquency (Chapter II); the indicators by which these youths might be identified (Chapter III); and the programs and services which best address problems in each of the areas of need (Chapter IV). The five areas of need identified by the research are: poverty; weak family structure; educational deficits; sexual, psychological and physical abuse; and substance abuse.

The research has also identified a sixth area of concern: problems in the systems which service youth. This area of concern is somewhat different from the first five, because its indicators describe problems which characterize society's institutions. Institutional responses to delinquency -- responses from schools, the criminal justice system or community-based organizations -- may either fail to address the problems of at-risk and delinquent youth or, perhaps more importantly, actually contribute to the problems.

The following six sections of this chapter describe the characteristics, indicators and examples of existing agencies which target the five key areas of need, as well as provide some

insights into the sixth area, problems in the systems which service youth. (A complete presentation of existing agencies servicing at-risk Rhode Island youth, outlined in Chapter IV, is contained in the accompanying volume, Directory of Resources for At-Risk and Delinquent Youth).

Areas of Concern

o POVERTY

Characteristics:

Poverty and the stresses it causes in families including low levels of aspiration, low self-esteem and an inability to perceive the attainment of desirable life goals through legitimate means.

Indicators:

Low self-esteem
Alienation
Teen pregnancy
Stress
Disregard for mainstream values and institutions
Low educational aspirations/goals
Low career aspirations/expectations
Homelessness
Family criminal behavior
Powerlessness

Agencies/Organizations:

DCF Training School For Youth
Stopover Shelter of Newport, Inc.
Socio-Economic Development Center for Southeast Asians (SEDC)

o WEAK FAMILY STRUCTURE

Characteristics:

Weak family structure, including lack of parental supervision in the home; absence of limit-setting; poor discipline; weak inculcation of mainstream societal norms and values; non-constructive, non-creative uses of free time; youth driven by unsupportive families to seek peer groups where they can acquire recognition and status; community or neighborhood and family pressures placed on young people to conform to crime-orientated values.

Indicators:

Low self-esteem
Lack of bonding
Emotional/Psychological disturbances
Cult membership
Negative peer group associations
"Hanging out"
Violent confrontational behavior
Lack of limit setting in the home
Lack of parental support
Lack of parental supervision
Loneliness
Lack of values/morals
Running away from home

Agencies/Organizations:

Community Counseling Center, Inc.
Cranston Community Action Programs
Family Service Society
✓ DCF Training School For Youth
Pawtucket Boys Club Group Home
South County Child And Family Consultants, Inc. St.
Mary's Home For Children

Stopover Shelter of Newport, Inc.

Tides Family Services

Traveler's Aid Society of Rhode Island

Boys and Girls Clubs of Providence

Boys and Girls Clubs of Warwick

Sophia Little Home, Inc.

Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives, Inc.

YMCA Parent Child Center

Hartford Park Community Center

o EDUCATIONAL DEFICITS

Characteristics:

Low levels of educational attainment reflecting an absence of educational goals in many families; lack of caring and understanding among teachers; the availability of numerous unskilled jobs which may seem appealing to teenagers eager for money and material possessions; poor curriculum appeal, and the inability of the public educational system to 're-capture' children once they have failed to read, write or learn to think rationally and analytically; students who have failed educationally in the early grades and who receive little or no support at home or at school become "outsiders" or leave school altogether, seeking recognition elsewhere -- often among young delinquent peer groups.

Indicators:

Low educational aspirations/goals
 Truancy/dropping out
 Poor impulse control
 Declining academic performance
 Teen pregnancy
 Poor coping skills
 Inability to think long-term
 Stress
 Poorly educated/illiterate family members
 Retained in-grade

Agencies/Characteristics:

Westerly High School -----	Dropout
Woonsocket Senior High School	Prevention
Providence School Department	Programming/
Newport School Department	Interventions
Warwick School Department -----	

Washington Park Community Center
 Alternate Learning Project (ALP) Providence
 South County Community Action
 Sophia Little Home, Inc.
 Ocean State Center For Law and Citizen Education
 Rhode Island Legal/Education Partnership
 Sojourner House
 Spurwink School II
 Hartford Park Community Center
 Project Success, Mount Pleasant High School, Prov.
 DaVinci Center Case Management Program
 Youth Development Initiative

o SEXUAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE

Characteristics:

An atmosphere of stress and violence, including mental and physical abuse, inflicted primarily on children of

under-educated, economically disadvantaged families; sexual violence inflicted on children of all income groups; confrontational and even violent responses to problems become normal 'solutions' for children of such dysfunctional families.

Without the values accepted by mainstream society (the basic concepts of right and wrong behavior), without regard for the criminal justice system or knowledge about either their basic rights or their responsibilities, without the ability to mediate difficulties with others, and without the mechanisms to seek long-range solutions to pressing problems, young people may resort to the more violent forms of delinquent behavior they have learned from their parents; sexual abuse by parents may cause long-term psychological and emotional problems which may also lead to delinquency, as well as the inability to bond normally with peers or to form healthy emotional and sexual relationships.

Indicators:

Low self-esteem
Lack of bonding
Alienation
Emotional/psychological disturbances
Poor coping skills

Agencies/Organizations:

Washington County Community Mental Health Center DCF
Youth Training School

St. Mary's Home For Children

Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives, Inc.

Cranston Community Action

The Providence Center For Counseling and Psychiatric
Services, Inc.

Transition House, Inc.

o SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Characteristics:

A common thread which runs through youth interviewees' understanding of contemporary problems is that alcohol and illegal drugs are freely available in Providence; many young teenagers use them and/or deal them; according to participants in the youth focus group conducted for this study, all youths want the same things: material possessions, particularly cars and jewelry; dealing drugs affords the opportunity to make hundreds of dollars in just one day, and makes owning a car at the age of sixteen a reality to kids whose parents could not possibly afford to buy one for them. All the teenagers in the focus group said that it was hard to wait for the things they wanted; staying in school, doing well in classes and planning for a future presented problems because little status is acquired by working for good grades; the "pay off" for academic conscientiousness seemed distant and elusive, while the temptation and excitement of dealing drugs were incentives to abandon school and attain material possessions and influence among peers at an early age.

Indicators:

Low self-esteem
Poor coping skills
Short attention span
Disrespect for mainstream values and institutions
Truancy/dropping out

Agencies/Organizations:

DCF Training School For Youth

Washington County Community Mental Health Center, Inc.

The Providence Center For Counseling And Psychiatric
Services, Inc.

Newport County Community Mental Health Center, Inc.

Boys And Girls Clubs of Warwick

New Visions For Newport County, Inc.

Stopover Shelter of Newport County, Inc.

Caritas House

Capitol Hill Interaction Council

Family Service Society

Sympatico

R.I. Department of Mental Health, Retardation and
Hospitals (MHRH)

Junction Human Service Corporation

Channel One, Central Falls

Youth Development Initiative

o PROBLEMS IN THE SYSTEMS WHICH SERVICE YOUTH

When young people with the problems described in the previous section encounter the institutions which society has designated to respond, many existing problems may be reinforced or new ones created. Foremost among the problems associated with schools, courts, social services and community based

organizations is what focus group participants called, the "system's" inability to cope.

Many elementary and middle schools have no guidance counselors or social workers: many high school counselors are over-burdened with routine administrative responsibilities. There are insufficient funds to operate constructive after-school programs so students merely "hang out" after school closes. State social service agencies, community-based organizations (CBOs) and the criminal justice system have insufficient resources or personnel to deal with youth cases on an individual basis. Many professionals feel they are doing little more than "processing" their clients.

There are inadequate linkages between the families of delinquent youths and the institutions which educate, treat or adjudicate them. There are few institutional mechanisms for tracking delinquent youths or for measuring the relative merits of different interventions. Lack of standardized evaluation techniques means that it is almost impossible to determine which interventions have been successful and which have been failures.

Schools, CBOs and the courts are not equipped to counter the onslaught of drugs with which much delinquent behavior has become associated in the past decade. Federal programs have de-emphasized the role of government in planning and funding social programs. The emphasis has been placed squarely on the backs of families, many of which lack the necessary structures to prevent delinquent behavior without external support.

The following matrix (Table 5) summarizes the indicators which describe at-risk and delinquent youth in each of the five key areas of need identified by this report: poverty; weak family structure; educational deficits; sexual, psychological and physical abuse; and substance abuse.

The matrix clearly illustrates the strong associations among the indicators in all five areas of need, and demonstrates the complex pattern of problems experienced by predelinquent and delinquent youths in many aspects of their lives. Both the national and the Rhode Island-based research suggests that delinquency emerges as a series of outcomes (or negative responses) to several underlying factors. These factors -- poverty; weak family structure; educational deficits; sexual, psychological and physical abuse; and substance abuse -- are most damaging when they are mutually reinforcing. When they occur together, these factors compound the likelihood of a young person becoming delinquent.

Discrepancies Between Services Provided and the Needs of At-risk and Delinquent Youth

A discrepancy analysis defines the gaps that exist between available programs and the services required to address the needs expressed by a given population, in this instance, at-risk and juvenile delinquent youth in Rhode Island.

The matrix in Table 5 illustrates the numerous factors which characterize at-risk and delinquent youth in Rhode Island. Most programs in the state, however, address only one or very few indicators; that is, they focus usually on one symptom of at-risk

or delinquent behavior and apply an intervention strategy to it. Table 6 shows that there are several programs with a single programmatic focus in each of the three phases of service delivery (Prevention, Intervention and Rehabilitation), but few with an holistic or comprehensive approach to understanding and intervening in an at-risk youth's life.

Chapter VI presents the findings of the analysis of the "gaps" between locally-identified indicators of youth at risk for delinquency and the programs currently in place; the chapter also outlines strategies which state and non-profit agencies could adopt to begin to more effectively address the needs of at-risk youth in Rhode Island.

TABLE-5

=====
 This matrix indicates the interrelatedness of the indicators underlying or characterizing areas of need. The common indicators will produce a pattern of complex common association which together identify predelinquent behavior.

LOCALLY BASED INDICATORS OF TARGET POPULATION	-----AREAS OF NEED-----				
	POVERTY	WEAK FAMILY STRUCTURE	EDUCATIONAL DEFICITS	SEXUAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE	DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE
*Low Self-Esteem	X	X	X	X	X
*Alienation From School/Family	X	X		X	
Teen Pregnancy	X	X	X		
Stress Related Illness and Pathologies	X		X		
Disregard for Mainstream Values and Institutions	X				X
Low Educ. Aspiration/Goals	X		X		
Low Career Aspiration/Expectation	X				
Homelessness	X				
*High Rate of Family Mobility	X		X		
*Family Criminal Behavior	X			X	
Sense of Powerlessness	X				
*Lack of Bonding		X		X	
*Emotional/Psychological Disturbance		X		X	
Cult Membership		X	X	X	
Negative Peer Group Associations		X			
"Hanging Out"		X			
*Violent/Confrontational Behavior		X			
*Lack of Limit Setting At Home		X			
*Lack of Parental Support		X			
Lack of Parental Supervision		X			
*Loneliness		X			
Lack of Values/Morals		X			
Running Away From Home		X		X	X
Truancy/Dropping out			X		X
*Poor Impulse Control			X		
*Declining Academic Performance			X		
Learning Disability			X		
*Poor Coping Skills			X	X	X
Poorly Educated/Illiterate Family			X		
Retained In Grade			X		
Inability to Think Long-Term			X		
*Short Attention Span			X		X

* Early Age Indicators (0-9). Indicators are grouped primarily by areas of need.

TABLE-6

=====

The Number of Agencies Providing Services
in The Following Selected Areas.

PROGRAM AREA	SECTION-1 PREVENTION NUM. OF AGENCY	SECTION-2 INTERVENTION NUM. OF AGENCY	SECTION-3 TREATMENT NUM. OF AGENCY
Adolescent Pregnancy		13	
Behavioral Problem			10
Counseling		11	
Drug and Alcohol	23	6	20
Education	16		
Emergency & Crisis Int.		11	
Employment	7		
Host Home, Shelter, ...		22	
Legal Supports		12	
Mental Health Services			9
Recreation	16		
Sexual Abuse	3	2	7

CHAPTER VI
FINDINGS AND STRATEGIES

This chapter describes the discrepancies which exist in Rhode Island juvenile delinquency programming and identifies strategies for addressing them. These deficiencies in the systems which service youth were identified both by the Study Team in its applied research and by contributors from diverse professional and community groups who made input at the following sessions:

- o The GJC/URI conference entitled, "Preventing Juvenile Delinquency: Identifying At-risk Youth".
- o Focus groups and key informant sessions conducted by URI Urban Field Center staff.
- o Regional Listen-Ins conducted throughout Rhode Island by the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee.

Findings

The findings of the study are as follows:

- o Little success has been achieved in breaking inter-generational trends relating to under-achievement in education, low economic status and persistent delinquent behavior in families.
 - o Few programs exist which deal directly with the families of at-risk and delinquent youths, whether the problem manifested is running away from home or physical abuse.
 - o Most services and programs have a single focus; they address one symptom of a child's problems rather than providing a comprehensive assessment of the issues impacting his or her life. As a consequence, most intervention and rehabilitation efforts fail to provide viable alternatives to existing behavior patterns.
 - o There is insufficient emphasis on early identification and prevention of predelinquent behavior; with most existing programs, once a child is understood to be "at-risk", there are few meaningful ways to alter the course of a child's
-

path to delinquency -- interventions simply occur too late and/or in isolation from the actors and institutions which most impact a child's development.

- o The dimensions of the state's drug and alcohol abuse problem is not yet fully recognized. As a result, there are too few programs in the areas of prevention, intervention and rehabilitation to counter drug and alcohol abuse and its impacts on delinquency.
 - o Few State or State-funded programs directly address the fundamental structural problems associated with poverty and its effects on self-esteem and life goals; many Rhode Islanders living below the poverty level feel that they have few legitimate economic opportunities open to them and thus have a greater propensity to turn to crime.
 - o The schools and community groups, particularly in the urban areas of northern Rhode Island, are ill-equipped to address the complex social and personal problems which students bring with them to school.
 - o The criminal justice system has few referral alternatives for young offenders; incarceration is the most likely outcome for recidivists -- most of whom will receive little or no meaningful rehabilitation.
 - o There is chronic under-funding of the agencies charged with providing education, guidance and treatment to young people at risk of delinquency.
 - o Society provides few positive adult role models or community mentors for young people to counter the pervasive sub-culture of drugs and crime in which many live.
 - o There are limited youth-centered community resources to provide adequate recreational, cultural and educational uses of "free time".
 - o There are too few places for confused, frustrated or drug-dependent young people to turn to for help when they can no longer cope with pressures at home or in the community -- too few shelters and child-focused social service agencies.
 - o Limited help is available to young single mothers relating to good parenting skills, nutritional programs or educational/retraining guidance; there is also little coordination of services that deal with this area.
 - o There is a general lack of information about what services are available for at-risk youth, particularly information for the youth themselves.
-

Strategies

The following strategies were developed from an analysis of discrepancies between the needs of at-risk and delinquent youth in Rhode Island and the services which are currently available to them. Many of these recommendations are derived from comments made by participants in the conference and community focus groups, while others are derived from the Study Team's analysis. The strategies address three key action areas: program development; professional training; and funding.

o PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

1. Evaluate at-risk youth at an early age; take an holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing juvenile delinquency by addressing a child's social, educational, health and nutritional needs simultaneously.
2. Involve a child's family at every stage of a prevention or intervention program; maintain a focus on the family as the principal social unit through which delinquency can be both understood and addressed.
3. Place less blame on the offender and de-emphasize punitive outcomes in the criminal justice system; emphasize prevention strategies by addressing the social and economic conditions which lead to criminal behavior.
4. Attend to the recreational and extra-curricular needs of young people and provide adequate creative uses for their nonschool-based time.
5. Include drug and alcohol abuse awareness in all educational and prevention programming, particularly for children in the early school grades.

o PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

1. Train professionals to develop programs which reach out to families in their own settings.
 2. Train professionals in the special needs of culturally diverse groups in Rhode Island.
-

3. Provide in-service professional training for staff involved with teaching parenting skills.
4. Provide in-service professional training for teachers relating to drug and alcohol abuse prevention education.

o FUNDING

1. Provide funding for training, hiring and retaining quality human and social service personnel throughout the State and State-funded juvenile service field.
 2. Provide funding for programs which emphasize early prevention and intervention programs targeted at at-risk juvenile populations.
 3. Provide funding for community-based programs in the cities and towns which have the most significant at-risk populations in the state.
-

References

- Akers, Ronald L. Deviant Behavior: A Social Learning Approach. 2nd edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc. 1977
- Bailey, William C. and Ruth P. Lott. "Crime, Punishment, and Personality: An Examination of the Deterrence Question." Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology 67 (1):99-109. Cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts 9(3):358-359. 1976
- Cloward, Richard A. and Lloyd E. Ohlin. Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. 1960
- Cohen, Albert K. Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang. 1955 New York: Free Press.
- Diaz, William A., Joseph Ball, Nancy Jacobs, Loren Solnick and Albert Widman. The Youth Entitlement Demonstration: Second Interim Report on Program Implementation. New York: Manpower Development Research Corporation. 1980
- Elliott, Delbert S. and H. Voss. Delinquency and Dropout. 1974 Lexington, KY: Lexington Books.
- Gibbons, Don C. Delinquent Behavior. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. 1970
- Gropper, B.A. "Probing the Links Between Drugs and Crime" 1985 in Research in Brief. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice.
- Hakeem, Michael. "A Critique of the Psychiatric Approach to the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency." In Juvenile Delinquency, 453-466. Rose Giallombardo, ed. New York: John Wiley and Sons. 1966
- Hawkins, J. David, Denise M. Lishner, Jeffrey M. Jenson and Richard F. Catalano. "Delinquents and Drugs: What The Evidence Suggests About Prevention and Treatment Programming.: Paper presented at the NIDA Technical Review on Special Youth Populations, July 16-17, 1986, Rockville, MD. 1986
- Hawkins, J. David and Joseph G. Weis. The Social Development Model: An Integrated Approach to Delinquency Prevention. Seattle, WA: Center for Law and Justice, University of Washington. 1980
- Hirschi, Travis. Causes of Delinquency. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 1969

- Kandel, D.B. "On Processes of Peer Influences in Adolescent Drug Use: A Developmental Perspective", in Alcohol and Substance Abuse in Adolescence, Vol. 4, No. 3. 1985
- Kassebaum, Gene. Delinquency and Social Policy. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. 1974
- National Institute of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Preventing Delinquency: A Comparative Analysis of Delinquency Prevention Theory, Vol. I. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice. 1977
- Poole, Eric D. and Robert M. Regoli. "Parental Support, Delinquent Friends, and Delinquency: A Test of Interaction Effects." Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology 70(2):188-193. Cited in Criminal Justice Abstracts 11(4):507-508. 1979
- Sanders, William B. Juvenile Delinquency. New York: Praeger 1976
- Santo, Y., Hooper, H.E., Friedman, A.S. and Conner, W. "Juvenile Criminal Behavior of Adolescent Nonheroin Polydrug Abusers in Drug Treatment Programs", in Contemporary Drug Problems, Vol. 9, No. 3. 1980
- Schur, Edwin M. Radical Nonintervention: Rethinking the Delinquency Problem. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall 1973
- Sutherland, Edwin H. and Donald R. Cressey. Principles of Criminology. 8th edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott. 1970
- TIME, various authors, June 12. 1989
- U.S. Department of Justice (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention). Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies. 1980
- Wiatrowski, Michael D. "Tracking and Delinquency: Toward an Integration of Educational and Delinquency Research." Baltimore: John Hopkins University, Center for Social Organizational of Schools. 1980
- Willie, Charles V. Race, Ethnicity, and Economic Status: A Theoretical Analysis of Their Relationship. Bayside, NY: General Hall, Inc. 1983
- Wilson, William J. The Declining Significance of Race. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1978

APPENDIX A
MANAGEMENT PLAN

APPENDIX B

THE STUDY TEAM: PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

Professional Profiles of
The Study Team

Dr. Marcia Marker Feld, Ph.D. is Professor of Community Planning and Area Development (CPAD), at The University of Rhode Island. She has been the Executive Director of the national award winning University/School Pairing Project since 1978, which won a grand prize from CASE for University/School Partnerships. In these roles, Dr. Feld has worked closely with the Providence School Department administrators, particularly in revising the desegregation plan for Providence. Within the Rhode Island Department of Education, she has worked closely with the Affirmative Action Civil Rights Office. Dr. Feld brings to this project substantive expertise in such functional areas as government and law-related education, community development and urban planning, curriculum development in political systems, and education and human services. Dr. Feld has been Executive Director of the Urban Field Center of The University of Rhode Island, located in Providence, since 1975. Recently she was study director of the nationally acclaimed Providence Dropout Prevention Plan. Prior to her work at the University of Rhode Island, Dr. Feld was Executive Director of the Metropolitan Planning Project, the first voluntary city-suburban desegregation plan developed for the Boston, Massachusetts metropolitan area.

Gayla Gazerro, Associate Director for Planning and Evaluation holds a B.A. in Urban Studies from Rhode Island College, with a minor in Sociology. She has continued her education at The University of Rhode Island, where she has earned graduate credits in Community Planning. She has served as Program Coordinator for the Center's dropout prevention program, where she gained experience in statistical analysis, program evaluation, workshop and conference coordination, and research skills relating to the award-winning Dropout Prevention K-12 Strategies Plan. Prior to this, Ms. Gazerro was an on-site program coordinator at Providence's Hope High School, acting as liaison for The University of Rhode Island/ Providence School Department Partnership Program, and providing support services to administrators, teachers and students. She has also conducted research on various planning projects, including the Roger Williams Park Master Plan Update and a study of the Stamford, Connecticut public school system and has been Research Associate on research projects for Winsor Associates of Providence and Analytics, Inc. of Newton, Massachusetts.

Pao Robert Kue currently holds the position of Research Assistant for Planning and Evaluation, URI Urban Field Center. He is a graduate of The University of Rhode Island with a B.A. in Urban Affairs and a concentration in policy formation. As an intern with the Urban Field Center's University/School Partnership Program, he assisted in program development and various research projects. Pao received the Career Expo Scholarship Award in 1987 and 1988. President of the University's Asian Students' Association, he conducted research on Southeast Asian Refugees. Pao is fluent in both Hmong and Laotian.

Mark Motte, MCP has been a planning and policy consultant with the URI Urban Field Center for five years. He is a Ph.D. candidate in Urban Planning at Rutgers University. Mr. Motte holds a Master of Community Planning from The University of Rhode Island and a Bachelor of Arts in Geography from London University, England. His consulting work with the Urban Field Center includes grant writing, program evaluating, report writing and conducting youth-oriented research studies for the Providence Dropout Prevention K-12 Strategies Plan and A Needs Assessment for At-Risk Juvenile Delinquents. Mr. Motte has been the Senior Research Associate on planning research studies and projects in North Kingstown, Providence, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York for Winsor Associates, an Architectural/Planning firm; the Governor's Justice Commission; and Analytics, Inc., a Planning, Policy and Management Consulting firm. Mr. Motte has also served as a policy consultant to the Providence Foundation and the Ocean State Center for Law and Citizen Education.
