

# Federal Probation

Divided by a Common Language: British and American Probation Cultures ..... *Todd R. Clear*  
*Judith Rungay*

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*David J. Hartmann*

Criminalizing Hate: An Empirical Assessment ..... *Eugene H. Czajkowski*

Supervision: An Empirical Analysis With Applications ..... *Keith W. Coopridge*

Married Reduce the Likelihood of Criminality? The Literature ..... *Kevin N. Wright*  
*Karen E. Wright*

The Boundaries of Mental Health Services: An Approach to Inmate Mental Health ..... *Margaret M. Severson*

Statements and Reform in Juvenile Justice: The "Balanced Approach" ..... *Gordon Bazemore*

Looking at the Law—Counting the Days: When Does Community Supervision Start and Stop? ..... *Toby D. Slawsky*

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# Federal Probation

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## This Issue in Brief

**Divided by a Common Language: British and American Probation Cultures.**—American and British probation officers speak the same language but—according to authors Todd R. Clear and Judith Rumgay—have very different approaches to their jobs. The authors explore the important differences between the two probation traditions and their impact on the development of probation supervision in both countries.

**Alternative Incarceration: An Inevitable Response to Institutional Overcrowding.**—Authors Richard J. Koehler and Charles Lindner discuss alternative incarceration programs—programs for offenders who do not require the total control of incarceration, but for whom probation is not an appropriate sentence. The authors highlight New York City's Supervised Detention Program, a program which provides an alternative to pretrial jail incarceration, as an illustration.

**Variations in the Administration of Probation Supervision.**—Authors Robert C. Cushman and Dale K. Sechrest explore the reasons for the great diversity in the operations of probation agencies, including differences in caseload size and services provided. They document variations in felony sentencing and use of probation for 32 urban and suburban jurisdictions using data primarily collected by the National Association of Criminal Justice Planners.

**An Evaluation of the Kalamazoo Probation Enhancement Program.**—Noting that few studies have evaluated halfway houses designed exclusively for probationers, authors Kevin I. Minor and David J. Hartmann report on a study of a probation halfway house known as the Kalamazoo Probation Enhancement Program (KPEP). Findings reveal that while relatively few residents received successful discharges from KPEP, those who did were less likely than those who received unsuccessful discharges to recidivate during a 1-year followup period.

**Criminalizing Hate: An Empirical Assessment.**—Author Eugene H. Czajkoski focuses on a fairly new phenomenon in the criminal justice taxonomy, hate crime. He discusses the recent movement to

criminalize certain forms of hate and examines data officially reported by the State of Florida regarding the first full calendar year of operation of its hate crime law.

**Pretrial Bond Supervision: An Empirical Analysis With Policy Implications.**—Author Keith W. Coopridier discusses policy and operational implications derived from an empirical analysis of bond supervision data obtained from a county-based pretrial release program. He analyzes the use of electronic monitoring and describes patterns of success and failure on bond supervision.

### CONTENTS

Divided by a Common Language: British and American Probation Cultures . . . . .	Todd R. Clear Judith Rumgay	3
139810		
Alternative Incarceration: An Inevitable Response to Institutional Overcrowding . . . . .	Richard J. Koehler Charles Lindner	12
139811		
Variations in the Administration of Probation Supervision . . . . .	Robert C. Cushman Dale K. Sechrest	19
139812		
An Evaluation of the Kalamazoo Probation Enhancement Program . . . . .	Kevin I. Minor David J. Hartmann	30
139813		
Criminalizing Hate: An Empirical Assessment . . . . .	Eugene H. Czajkoski	36
139814		
Pretrial Bond Supervision: An Empirical Analysis With Policy Implications . . . . .	Keith W. Coopridier	41
139815		
Does Getting Married Reduce the Likelihood of Criminality? A Review of the Literature . . . . .	Kevin N. Wright Karen E. Wright	50
139816		
Redefining the Boundaries of Mental Health Services: A Holistic Approach to Inmate Mental Health . . . . .	Margaret M. Severson	57
139817		
On Mission Statements and Reform in Juvenile Justice: The Case of the "Balanced Approach" . . . . .	Gordon Bazemore	64
139818		
Departments		
Looking at the Law . . . . .		71
Reviews of Professional Periodicals . . . . .		76
Your Bookshelf on Review . . . . .		85
It Has Come to Our Attention . . . . .		94

# On Mission Statements and Reform in Juvenile Justice: The Case of the "Balanced Approach"

BY GORDON BAZEMORE, PH.D.

*Assistant Professor, School of Public Administration, Florida Atlantic University*

**A**T THEIR best, agency mission statements in criminal justice set internal goals and priorities for staff and create a common standard for evaluating individual and agency effectiveness. For the outside world, a good mission statement should leave little doubt about the fundamental purpose of the agency and should clarify in the public mind what tasks and service outcomes the agency is responsible for. Equally important, a good mission statement places clear limitations on what the public should expect from an agency.

At their worst, mission statements give little guidance to staff and managers, confuse the public about the agency's goals, and create false or unachievable expectations. Often, vaguely worded mission statements (e.g., "to protect and serve") may be used to disguise hidden agendas or mask failure to develop clear objectives.

According to many critics, the traditional mission statement of juvenile justice to act "in the best interests of the child" has often been used to cover layers of abuse of due process rights of children while offering little in return that could be described as in their best interest (e.g., Feld, 1991). On the other hand, juvenile justice agencies have sometimes been held to unrealistic expectations due to the vagueness of their mission. Asked to fulfill legalistic and social welfare objectives, juvenile justice is often placed in the role of being "all things to all people." This ambiguity in mission has also made juvenile justice vulnerable to political pendulum swings and fads which probably add to the confusion of staff and the public about priorities and objectives (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, pp. 47-50).

While some might argue that vagueness in mission statements is deliberate and serves to protect the status quo, a number of juvenile justice policymakers and agency managers now view an effective new mission statement as essential to the reform of policies and practices in their agencies. By setting new objectives for the agency, mission statements can guide the way to reform. To do so, however, the mission statement must at a minimum specify:

- 1) *what* activities, behaviors, and practices must change in order to meet the new objectives;
- 2) *who* must change (clients, staff, managers) and the role of each system actor in the reform;
- 3) *how* resources must be reallocated or new resources created based on partnerships with other agencies and community organizations.

While one might choose among several justice agencies in illustrating these points about mission statements, this article will draw on the author's experience with juvenile justice reform. Specifically, I will examine recent efforts to implement the "Balanced Approach" for community supervision of juvenile offenders as a "case study" in how a new mission statement may be adopted only symbolically or may be used to bring about change in an agency.

## *The Balanced Approach as a New Mission*

One of the most promising attempts to state a clear and coherent mission for community supervision in juvenile justice in the past two decades can be found in an article appearing in the *Journal of Juvenile and Family Court Judges* which proposes a "Balanced Approach" for probation (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988). As a response to the long-term failure of the juvenile court to fulfill its traditional treatment mission and also to the punitive trends of the past decade, the Balanced Approach specifies a distinctive role and unique objectives for juvenile probation and parole.

As outlined in the journal article and elaborated in a subsequent article (Armstrong, Maloney, & Romig, 1990), the Balanced Approach sets forth three practical objectives as part of a revitalized mission for community supervision of juvenile offenders: accountability, community protection, and competency development.

Simply stated, **Accountability** in the Balanced Approach refers to the requirement that offenders "make amends" for the harm resulting from their crimes by repaying or restoring losses to victims and the community ("when an offense occurs, an obligation by the offender incurs"). **Competency Development** requires that youth who enter the juvenile justice system should exit the system "more capable of being productive and responsible in the community." The **Community Protection** objective explicitly acknowledges and endorses a long-time public expectation that juvenile justice must place equal emphasis on ensuring public safety at the lowest possible cost using the least restrictive level of supervision possible to protect the community (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, p. 59).

Tying these three objectives together is the concept of "balance," or the idea that no one objective can take precedence over any other without creating a system

that is "out of balance." For example, attention to competency needs serves to temper excessive concern with prompt repayment to victims (accountability) if, for example, the latter interferes with a juvenile's educational needs. Balance is achieved in dispositions for each offender through "individualization" which assumes that differences between individual youth require specialized rather than standardized sanctioning, supervision, and treatment responses (Palmer, 1975; Armstrong, Maloney, & Romig, 1990).

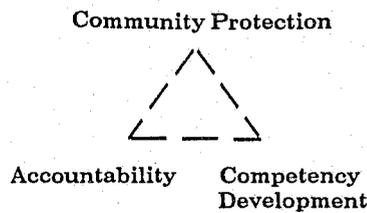


FIGURE 1. THE BALANCED APPROACH  
(Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988)

Taken together, these objectives provide both a coherent philosophy—symbolized by a triangle (see figure 1)—for community supervision and a way of prioritizing activities and organizing resources. Ideally, these outcomes also work together in a balanced system to make juvenile justice more responsive to local needs and concerns while at the same time asking the community to take ownership and participate in solving its own delinquency problem (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, pp. 13-14).

Perhaps the most attractive feature of the Balanced Approach as a juvenile justice mission is its broad appeal to widely shared, traditional values about youth and their role in the community and its potential for changing the image of juvenile justice. Unlike policy and program innovations of recent decades such as diversion and various delinquency prevention initiatives which often failed to win local support and were thus often never properly implemented (Lab, 1982, pp. 127-133), the Balanced Approach appears to be rooted in and responsive to traditional values in many American communities (e.g., making amends to victims and the public; the work ethic). As a result, the model appears to be more easily sold and accepted than other concepts. Since publication of the journal article, the Balanced Approach has been adopted as the official mission for juvenile justice in several states and numerous local community supervision agencies and has been discussed extensively as a model for juvenile corrections by other national advocacy groups (e.g., Barton & Streit, 1991).<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the strong "marketing" value of the Balanced Approach has its negative side for those who

view these principles as a new way of doing business in juvenile justice. The temptation is often great for agencies to adopt an approach with such broad public appeal without consideration of the implications of its objectives for new policy and practice. As a trainer and technical assistance consultant working with courts and other juvenile justice agencies wishing to improve restitution practices and initiate youth employment alternatives, I have had the opportunity to observe "up close" implementation of the Balanced Approach in several jurisdictions across the country in the past 2 or 3 years.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, on numerous occasions I have wondered if some of the practitioners and policymakers who claim to have adopted the Balanced Approach in their agencies are talking about the same set of concepts outlined in the Maloney and Armstrong statements. While the Balanced Approach authors clearly call for fundamental changes in juvenile community supervision, a number of agencies seem to have adopted the symbols of this mission statement without making the substantive modifications in staffing, resource allocation, sanctioning, and supervision policy and practice implied.

#### *Who is "Unbalanced" and How Are "Balanced" Systems Different?*

Even the best researchers would be hard-pressed to find many juvenile justice administrators willing to admit, even in an anonymous survey, that they support "unbalanced" systems and do not believe in community protection, holding offenders accountable to victims, or trying to increase offender competency. One would have to look harder still, however, to find concrete examples of the practices advocated by the Balanced Approach in most community supervision units.

Fortunately, a few probation departments or components of supervision units do provide promising, positive examples of these practices. Combining work experience and restorative justice sanctions for young offenders, programs and supervision units in parts of Oregon and selected jurisdictions of a few other states like Massachusetts, California, and Pennsylvania seem to stand apart from traditional juvenile probation in the priority being given to competency development and accountability outcomes (Bazemore, 1991). Further, by carefully "programming" offenders' free time in the community using close adult supervision, often in group settings, these community-based programs ensure public protection in ways not possible using standard casework probation approaches and without use of incarceration (Klein, 1991). These agencies are also unique in the way the three Balanced Approach principles are operationalized in new activities for probation.

Observing the probation or community supervision process in these locales, one would typically see youth

actively involved with adult supervisors in productive work projects with clear value to the community while earning money to pay back their victims (and some to keep) (Jenkins, 1988; Mosier, 1988). One would be less likely to observe delinquent clients passively receiving counseling or being reprimanded by probation officers for failing to obey rules of supervision. Observing staff in juvenile justice agencies that have adopted the Balanced Approach, one would be less likely to find caseworkers sitting behind desks completing court paperwork or admonishing young offenders about curfews missed, office visits missed, or violations of other standard court rules unrelated to the objectives of the Balanced Approach. Rather, one would see these adults working with young offenders on community projects supported by local businesses and other public agencies (Bazemore, 1991), perhaps meeting with an offender and his victim to arrive at a fair restitution settlement, or working with an employer group and civic organization to develop new work experience and educational opportunities for offenders. When a youth in these departments has violated community supervision by committing a new offense or is failing to comply with requirements as agreed (e.g., has been absent from a work crew or failed to make a restitution payment), a "progressive response system" gives staff in these agencies a variety of options for intermediate sanctions without the use of confinement (and also provides for positive incentives for youth doing well).

At their best, these Balanced Approach programs present to the public a new image of offenders and a new image of the juvenile justice system. Most have at least begun to create new roles for community supervision workers and to reallocate resources to support new sanctioning and supervision activities which operationalize the external (community) and internal (agency) message of the mission statement. Generally, one would not have difficulty recognizing differences between these agencies and traditional supervision units in their assumptions about offenders, the role of community supervision, and desirable supervision activities. Further, one would not be likely to hear "accountability" used to mean punishment rather than restoring victims, "competency" development confused with treatment/services, or community protection used as a codeword for incarceration.<sup>3</sup> The specific sanctions, supervision techniques, and services offered by these programs and agencies give concrete meaning to (operationalize) accountability, public safety, and competency objectives and highlight the contrast between the Balanced Approach and current practices of most surveillance and traditional treatment/services-oriented community supervision approaches.

More commonly, however, state and local juvenile justice agencies claiming to have adopted the Balanced Ap-

proach often look scarcely different in their approach to sanctioning and supervision practices than any traditional probation department. My first hint of the scope of misunderstanding about the Balanced Approach came in 1989 at a training workshop on restitution and offender employment in which a senior administrator in a large juvenile corrections system announced that her agency had been "doing the Balanced Approach for the last five years." At the time that agency held some 9,500 youths in secure facilities and appeared to be doing little in the way of getting victims of these youths reimbursed for the harm done to them. Could it be that this system was somewhat "out of balance" and had become tilted drastically in the direction of community protection to the detriment of accountability and competency development?

Another disappointment came in my own state soon after I began working with a group developing training curricula on the Balanced Approach in delinquency case management (Florida adopted the Balanced Approach in 1989 as the official mission for juvenile community control, now called case management). It was disheartening in one of the first curriculum design meetings to hear one of the better senior supervisors say that in his view the Balanced Approach "has not been a problem because I just tell my counselors to take all the things they've been doing all along with their cases and group them under some new 'laundry lists' (i.e., competency development, accountability, and public safety)." Later, I found examples of predispositional reports which listed "submit to daily urine screen" as a **competency development** objective and "obey curfew" as an **accountability** objective. To be fair, juvenile justice staff I have met are in fact dedicated to providing positive alternatives to the youth they supervise and are generally sensitive to victims' needs; most also remain enthusiastic and are committed to the Balanced Approach. And Florida is definitely *not* alone in the problem of pouring old wine into the new Balanced Approach bottles; most states and jurisdictions I have visited have their own "laundry lists."

Most probation departments, for example, now endorse the restorative sanctions required for accountability. But while judges have learned to regularly order restitution and service hours (often in inappropriate amounts not linked to the harm caused by the actions of the offender), they have often done little to ensure that youth have the means and supervision to complete these orders. Accountability or restorative justice gets low priority when it comes to resource allocation, and most probation departments still struggle to collect even token restitution and feel burdened with monitoring community service placements (Bazemore, 1992).

Competency development, though envisioned by the Balanced Approach authors as a way to ensure that

youth caught up in the juvenile justice system begin to take on positive, productive roles in the community (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, p. 7), seems to have been interpreted by some simply as a call for more treatment or services. While the Balanced Approach certainly presumes that youths will be assessed and receive services as needed for identified problems such as drug abuse and family dysfunction, competency development must go beyond simply *correcting problems* (as is the mandate of the traditional treatment agenda). Competency development as an outcome must be assessed not by the number of counseling sessions or even remedial classes attended by an offender (one sometimes wonders if these activities address the competency needs of the offender or the counselor and remedial teacher) but by measurable gains in social skills, productive contributions to the community, and successful experiences in learning to work with others in meaningful roles.<sup>4</sup> These are clearly problems in conceptualization and operationalization of (or failure to operationalize) the Balanced Approach. If the Balanced Approach is to have any chance of getting community supervision beyond "business as usual," advocates must clarify what outcomes are in fact intended by the three objectives, how these outcomes are to be measured, and what activities are most likely to get us there.<sup>5</sup> Otherwise we can expect to continue to see probation officers recommending curfews to help youth be more "accountable" and probation officers measuring competency improvement by the number of times a client attended a counseling session. Such clarification is necessary even if it means—and it undoubtedly will—losing the support of some who really do view accountability as locking up thousands of offenders. Through this process, Balanced Approach advocates will also gain new allies (who may have opposed the approach because they thought accountability meant punishment).

Operationalization of Balanced Approach objectives is an issue that can be addressed through training and dialogue which may lead to refined strategies for implementation and the development of new and creative ways of achieving the three objectives. When its key principles are operationalized well, the Balanced Approach, like any good mission statement, sets forth clear and practical objectives for offenders and signals staff that these objectives should receive priority. Good operationalization, however, does not change priorities, develop resources, or reallocate existing resources.

A common fundamental problem with mission statements as a tool in achieving agency reform is who they target for change. That is, when they go beyond symbols and public relations, mission statements often seem to address *client outcomes* only—and at best are interpreted as applicable primarily to the behavior

and practice of line staff. Thus, narrowly interpreted, the Balanced Approach states general offender outcomes to be achieved and sets forth new activities as requirements for successful completion of supervision. More broadly viewed however, the Balanced Approach demands changes in the activities and priorities of agency *managers* and the *community*—as well as offenders and staff.

Thus, recommendations for implementing the Balanced Approach which follow below primarily address the responsibilities of juvenile justice administrators. These recommendations assume that the Balanced Approach *is significantly different* in the vision it suggests for juvenile justice and implies both internal changes in organizational priorities as well as changes in external relationships between juvenile justice agencies and community institutions. To ensure that this revolutionary conceptualization leads to real change, however, managers must take deliberate steps to direct or redirect resources and alter incentive structures to support the new activities required by the Balanced Approach. They must also proactively engage the community in ways not common in juvenile justice agencies in the past.

#### *Mission Statements and Internal Change*

It is easy for chief probation officers and other juvenile justice managers to issue directives. Certain activities presumed to increase competency, for example, may be required of offenders on community supervision, and staff may be directed to develop checklists to ensure that these activities are assigned and monitored. It is more difficult, however, for managers in casework-driven departments to allocate time for staff to develop new competency-building activities and programs for offenders. It is relatively easy for managers to say that restitution will be ordered/recommended for every offender with an identifiable victim. It is more difficult to allow staff time to work with youth and the community to ensure that restitution is paid and even more difficult (and necessary) for managers to persuade employers and other agencies to help develop work options for offenders who do not have a source of income for victim payment. While it is not difficult for managers to encourage staff to take actions necessary to meet Balanced Approach objectives, developing incentives for staff members who demonstrate success in these efforts (e.g., to link staff members' evaluations to number of employers they convince to agree to hire young offenders, number of their cases who completed restitution orders, or creativity in developing new means of supervising more serious offenders in the community) requires more initiative and leadership.

The problem of mission statements as a tool for reform, in other words, is bigger than inappropriate staff "laundry lists" for offenders. Even well-crafted

mission statements like the Balanced Approach will not result in real change unless and until agency managers are willing to set internal priorities which support new objectives. If operationalization has been carefully thought through, this should mean reallocation of resources and new reward structures which support new programs and practices.

It should also mean deemphasizing some other traditional activities and practices which do nothing to achieve the new objectives. For example, a wide array of what have become "boilerplate" sanctions and requirements of court orders such as curfews, office visits, and other activities vaguely associated with surveillance, as well as a standard list of traditional treatment activities (e.g., counseling), are often mandated for every youth on community supervision. If such tasks do not clearly relate to Balanced Approach objectives, however, they—as well as purely punitive requirements—should no longer be the responsibility of probation staff (and in fact may need to be discouraged). In place of many of these traditional activities, managers serious about the Balanced Approach should develop new programs, activities, and staff positions more consistent with accountability, competency development, and community protection. Could an employment or work experience project be substituted for new caseworker positions or a counseling program? While ending or deemphasizing traditional practices in probation and justice agencies generally may result in hurt feelings of some staff and disappointed contracting agencies, few major changes have been brought about without some organizational disruption and risk-taking. And generally speaking, managers do not *need* to adopt a new mission like the Balanced Approach if traditional practices are working so well that they cannot be sacrificed.

Although such choices may not always be necessary, most agency directors will recognize from a workload perspective that they will not get something for nothing from staff. For most probation employees, being asked to develop jobs, begin cultural competency groups, or set up a rational system for collecting restitution is likely to provoke resistance unless there are cutbacks in (or elimination of) requirements for office visits, curfew checks, and various paperwork tasks. Further, even in a climate of unlimited funding, too many services and supervision activities may serve to confuse staff (not to mention youth and the community) about what the real priorities are. The beauty of the Balanced Approach is its simplicity in guiding staff members about how they should prioritize activities in a limited time schedule and reassuring them that their performance will be evaluated on how well they meet the specified objectives. If probation and parole professionals attend to the tasks of getting clients to

make measurable advances in competency, assist them in being accountable to their victims, and ensure that they do not engage in behaviors that threaten public safety, they have already accomplished far more than ever occurs in most departments oriented toward the casework model. The Balanced Approach should not be diluted by grafting new objectives and activities onto existing practices.

These limitations do not imply that the Balanced Approach abandons pursuit of rehabilitative outcomes in juvenile justice in favor of narrowly legalistic or technocratic models of justice administration. Rather it assumes, based on some rather sound theory and research in criminology (see note 1), that pursuing activities that foster accountability and competency development should have a higher likelihood of keeping offenders from coming back to the juvenile justice system or becoming involved in adult crime than the surveillance and treatment services activities prescribed in the past (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, pp. 2-11). Further, in the emphasis on community outreach, capacity building, and partnerships, the approach actually may expand the impact of the juvenile justice system in exchange for less emphasis on traditional treatment service tasks.

#### *Mission Statements and External Change*

The second set of recommendations for using the Balanced Approach mission statement to bring about reform in community supervision practices concerns the external audience of the statement, the community. Externally, an important message of the Balanced Approach to the public is that juvenile probation (and juvenile justice generally) cannot be "all things to all people"; while juvenile justice is capable of meeting some objectives well (e.g., ensuring that youths pay restitution and make gains in measurable competencies), it cannot do everything (cure the psychological problems of every offender; reduce recidivism). The agency director must take action on this front as well to ensure that this and other messages of the Balanced Approach are delivered to the community. Equally important, managers must ensure that changes occur in the agency's responsiveness to community needs and, likewise, get community institutions to begin to recognize their responsibility for and some ownership of the delinquency problem.

Juvenile justice administrators often complain that they have few options in creatively addressing Balanced Approach outcomes. Managers frequently insist, for example, that competency development is difficult because of limited justice system influence on schools, employers, and most community agencies. Administrators are *right* in insisting that juvenile justice alone can't do much about helping youth de-

velop a legitimate identity when, by virtue of being there, youth under court supervision are defined as "bad kids." Competency development requires creating new roles and opportunities for at-risk and delinquent youth in the world of work, education, and the community (Pearl, Grant, & Wenk, 1978).

Administrators are *wrong*, however, in assuming that they have no influence with these socializing institutions. Many educators and employers, for example, recognize their own self-interest in finding new ways to engage youth in productive activity that can lead to skill development, increases in learning, and general interest in education and conventional activities. Further, most can identify with the goals of accountability and public protection and will often be able to provide creative input and assistance in achieving these objectives. Those juvenile justice administrators who have been successful in operationalizing the Balanced Approach principles have in fact taken on new leadership and entrepreneurial roles in reaching out to businesses, educators, and directors of a range of agencies—not limited to youth service organizations (e.g., public works agencies, civic and conservation groups). By asking for their participation in new partnerships for youth development and community revitalization (Bazemore, 1991, pp. 35-36), juvenile justice managers begin to play a capacity-building and educative role in local communities (Jenkins, 1992).

While relaying the initial message that juvenile justice cannot be the sole service provider for at-risk youth, managers can also affirm that they should not be *limited* to this role—(nor should youth, who can also be viewed as a community *resource*, be limited to the role of "service recipient"). This is not an appeal for managers to become cold, non-nurturing bureaucrats; rather the intent is to suggest that the Balanced Approach demands involvement of the "socializing institutions" (e.g., schools, work) and that this involvement demands that managers play a proactive role (cf., Radin & Benton, 1988, p. 29).

What real "clout" do agency managers have beyond the simply educative and collaborative roles suggested above? First, juvenile justice administrators often control large budgets that include contracts for services ranging from construction to drug treatment to food preparation. Through this "power of the purse," managers might, for example, require that treatment service providers adhere to performance-based objectives consistent with competency development or develop ways to engage youth they serve in decisionmaking and/or community service activities. Others have suggested that juvenile department directors could even require (or recommend) that food and maintenance service contractors agree to train and hire certain

numbers of young offenders (Jenkins, 1992). Juvenile justice administrators could also negotiate agreements with school officials to support certain of their policies and initiatives in return for agreements to offer academic credit for juveniles on community supervision who successfully complete educative, conservation, service, or civic improvement projects.

Finally, managers need to be aware that operationalization and implementation of the Balanced Approach need not occur in an information and organizational vacuum. Assuming adherence to some basic principles and general clarity about what activities do *not* represent the Balanced Approach, it should be understood that exact implementation of Balanced Approach objectives should be largely a local decision based on the unique resources and needs of individual communities (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, pp. 13-19). Thus, the first guideline is to turn to community leaders for ideas about how they see competency development, accountability, and public protection objectives being actualized given the local environment. Specifically, civic, public agency, and business leaders could be asked what work and service activities in the community might allow for youth involvement (Bazemore, 1991, pp. 36-37).

Second, to develop activities intended to provide youth with a sense of competency and an understanding of accountability, adults need to ask young people themselves. In a real sense, youth are more qualified than we are to tell us what activities they and other young people will be likely to take seriously; simply providing this input to juvenile justice practitioners in planning activities may itself provide the first chance for many youth to demonstrate competency in an activity valued by others.

Finally, agency managers should be aware that delinquency theory and research can often be brought to bear in the sanctioning and supervision activities chosen to operationalize the Balanced Approach. Rather than arbitrarily grouping activities under the heading of competency development, for example, managers might consult control theory (e.g., Hirschi, 1968) and the positive youth development literature (e.g., Polk & Kobrin, 1972; Pearl, Grant, & Wenck, 1978) for guidance in choosing activities that might be expected to strengthen "bonds" to conventional peers and adults. Viewed as more than an academic exercise, application of theory and research can also aid managers in *eliminating* services and activities that may be expected to have little influence on Balanced Approach objectives and can help in linking each activity to an expected performance outcome.

In summary, the Balanced Approach articulates a clear and distinctive vision and a new mission for community supervision of juvenile offenders and for

juvenile justice generally. While some have assumed that this conceptualization is merely a restatement or reaffirmation of the traditional treatment mission of the juvenile court or an attempt to merge this perspective with punitive sentiments of the past decade, I have argued that understanding and consistent operationalization of Balanced Approach objectives will clearly distinguish agencies utilizing this approach from those who continue in the traditional vein. At once comprehensive in scope and also restrictive in the specific objectives implied for juvenile probation, the Balanced Approach as a mission statement can also send a strong internal and external message about what should and should *not* be expected of community supervision. The challenge for managers wishing to use the Balanced Approach as a mission statement for juvenile justice reform is to ensure that adoption of the objectives of this statement are translated into action by rethinking internal priorities and the relationship between juvenile justice and community organizations.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Although the linkage is seldom explicitly stated, most of the ideas in the Balanced Approach are firmly grounded in criminological, criminal justice, and youth development theory. Competency development as a requirement for normal growth has been a major emphasis in the social-psychological literature generally and cuts across several theoretical traditions in criminology including strain, social control, social learning, and labeling theory. Developing a sense of competency is certainly linked, for example, to the "bond" to legitimate society and commitment to conformity posited as essential to avoidance of delinquent behavior in control or containment theory (Hirschi, 1968; Polk & Kobrin, 1972). Accountability, though addressing the needs of victims and restorative justice, demands that offenders make amends and also has strong implications for rehabilitation and reduced recidivism (Galaway & Hudson, 1990; Schneider, 1986). Recent discussions emphasize the need for "healing" between victims, offenders, and the community (Zehr, 1990). Finally, prescriptions for community protection in the Balanced Approach are grounded in a body of literature in criminal justice spanning the past two decades which encourages development and use of graduated, intermediate community-based alternatives to use of incarceration which ensure public safety through careful structuring of offenders' time (Klein, 1991; Petersilia & Turner, 1990). Thus, unlike many new juvenile justice interventions of the past two decades—especially popular fad programs such as "Scared Straight" and boot camps—the Balanced Approach has both a theoretical and research basis (see Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, pp. 37-46, for a review of some of the research pertinent to the Balanced Approach).

<sup>2</sup>This experience occurred over several years as co-director of OJDP's Restitution Education, Specialized Training and Technical Assistance (RESTTA) program and later as curriculum development specialist with Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services through Florida Atlantic University.

<sup>3</sup>The operational meaning of accountability, for example, is clarified in a number of works on restitution and restorative justice sanctions (Schneider, 1985; Bazemore, 1992), while competency development is distinguished from treatment as an active, productive enterprise in which offenders develop skills through productive meaningful work (Bazemore, 1991). Even a cursory reading of the Balanced Approach authors' discussion of community protection should make clear that their view of public safety envisions a wide variety of creative intermediate sanctions (and positive incentives) with confinement as a last

resort (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988, pp. 28-35; see also Klein, 1991).

<sup>4</sup>While a competency development focus, like the accountability objective, in no way prohibits provision of treatment or services as required, the assumption that all youth need to be "treated" (and failure to identify and build on *existing* competencies of young offenders) has done much to divert attention and resources away from developing alternative ways for young people to enhance and demonstrate existing competencies. Where traditional treatment models assume an offender whose problems and deficiencies demand only services and guidance, a competency development approach assumes that most offenders are capable of some healthy, productive activity given access to conventional roles and experiences.

<sup>5</sup>It should be noted that Armstrong, Maloney, and Romig have made a good start in this direction in the two articles referenced here. Some of their statements need to be further clarified to avoid misunderstanding with additional emphasis placed on distinguishing Balanced Approach sanctioning and supervision practice from traditional community supervision of juvenile offenders.

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