U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

OJJDP

A Program of the
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

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U.S. Department of Justice

July 1, 1993

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Introduction

The serious and violent crime rate among juveniles has increased sharply in the past few years. Juveniles account for an increasing share of all violent crimes in the United States. A small portion of juvenile offenders account for the bulk of all serious and violent juvenile crime. Simultaneously, the number of juveniles taken into custody has increased, as has the number of juveniles waived or transferred to the criminal justice system. Admissions to juvenile facilities are at their highest levels ever, and an increasing percentage of these facilities are operating over capacity. Unfortunately, the already strained juvenile justice system does not have adequate fiscal and programmatic resources to identify serious, violent, and chronic offenders and to intervene effectively with them.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has developed a comprehensive strategy for dealing with serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders.* This program can be implemented at the State, county, or local levels. The program background, rationale, principles, and components are set forth in this strategy paper.

Prior to developing this new program, OJJDP reviewed relevant statistics, research, and program evaluations. This review was conducted to develop a clearer understanding of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile delinquency issues, trends, and effective delinquency prevention, treatment, and control approaches. Detailed information on statistics, research, and program evaluation information is set forth in the appendix. A brief overview follows.

Statistics

Violent Delinquent Behavior

Violent juvenile crime has been increasing. Nationwide self-reported measures of delinquent behavior indicate an increase in certain violent acts: aggravated assault and robbery (Osgood et al., 1989). National victimization surveys show that the rate of juvenile victimization for violent offenses has also increased during the latter part of the 1980's (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1993).

Arrests and Crime Rates

Juvenile arrests are increasing, particularly for violent offenses. Juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased 41 percent from 1982–1991. In 1991, the juvenile arrest rate for violent offenses reached its highest level in history. In the 10-year period between 1982 and 1991, the number of juvenile arrests for murder increased by 93 percent and aggravated assault arrests increased by 72 percent (Snyder, 1993). (See figure 1 for violent crime index arrest rates from the FBI's *Uniform Crime Reports* for the period 1965 to 1991.)

Gang Crime and Drugs

The national scope and seriousness of the youth gang problem have increased sharply since the late 1970's and early 1980's. Gang violence has risen drastically in a number

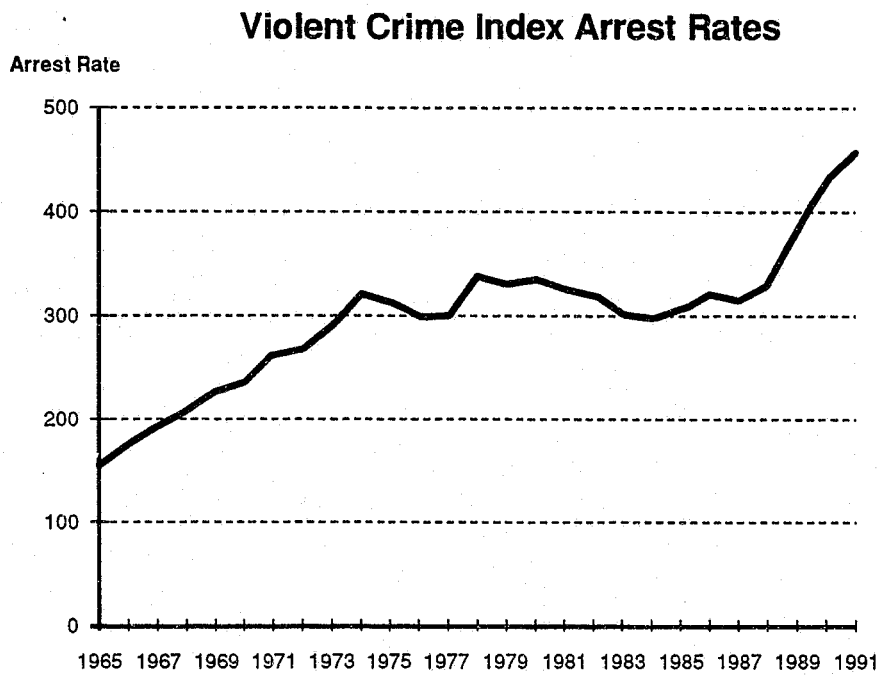
*Which juveniles are determined to be serious, violent, or chronic offenders is an important matter. The consequences of being placed in one of these categories are critical to the allocation of scarce treatment resources. In some jurisdictions, identification of a juvenile as a serious, violent, or chronic offender determines how a juvenile is "handled" in the system, for example, whether a juvenile is subject to established minimum periods of secure confinement or subject to criminal court jurisdiction. Generally, such determinations are made at the State and local levels.

OJJDP has developed the following definitions of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders for purposes of this program. Definitions used in various research and statistics-gathering efforts often vary.

Juvenile refers to a person under the age established by a State to determine when an individual is no longer subject to original juvenile court jurisdiction for (any) criminal misconduct. While this age is 18 in a majority of jurisdictions, it ranges from 16 to 19 years of age. **Serious Juvenile Offenders** are those adjudicated delinquent for committing any felony offense, including larceny or theft, burglary or breaking and entering, extortion, arson, and drug trafficking or other controlled dangerous substance violations. **Violent Juvenile Offenders** are those serious juvenile offenders adjudicated delinquent for one of the following felony offenses—homicide, rape or other felony sex offenses, mayhem, kidnapping, robbery, or aggravated assault. **Chronic Juvenile Offenders** are juveniles adjudicated delinquent for committing three or more delinquent offenses. These definitions include juveniles convicted in criminal court for particular offense types.

An informative discussion of the research and issues involved in formulating a working definition of these and related terms is found in Mathias, 1984, chapter two, "Strategic Planning in Juvenile Justice—Defining the Toughest Kids."

Figure 1



Arrest Rate = Arrests per 100,000 youth ages 10–17
Source: FBI *Uniform Crime Reports*

of large cities. Moreover, gangs have emerged in many middle-sized and smaller cities and suburban communities across the country. Youth gangs are becoming more violent, and gangs increasingly serve as a way for members to engage in illegal money-making activity, including street-level drug trafficking (Miller, 1982; Spergel et al., 1991).

Juvenile Court

Juvenile court caseloads are increasing, largely as a result of increasing violent delinquency. From 1986 through 1990, the number of delinquency cases actually disposed by juvenile courts increased 10 percent. During the same period, juvenile courts disposed of 31 percent more violent cases, including 64 percent more homicide and 48 percent more aggravated assault cases (Snyder et al., 1993a).

Confinement

Admissions to juvenile detention and corrections facilities are increasing, resulting in crowded facilities with attendant problems such as institutional violence and suicidal behavior. Admissions to juvenile facilities rose after 1984, reaching an all-time high in 1990 with the largest increase in detention (Krisberg et al., 1992). Forty-seven percent of confined juveniles are in detention and correctional facilities in which the population exceeds the facility design capacity. More than half of the detained and incarcerated population in 1991 were held for nonviolent offenses (Parent et al., 1993).

(See figures 2, 3, and 4 for published statistics on juvenile confinement in public facilities and figure 5 for detained delinquency case trends by race and offense for 1985 and 1989.)

Waivers and Imprisonment

Juvenile cases handled in criminal courts have increased, resulting in increased numbers of juveniles placed in crowded adult prisons. The number of juvenile cases handled in criminal courts is unknown, but it is estimated to be as many as 200,000 cases in 1990 (Snyder, 1993b). Judicial waivers to criminal court increased 78 percent between 1985 and 1989 (Snyder et al., 1993a). Between 1984 and 1990, the number of annual admissions of juveniles to adult prisons increased 30 percent, from 9,078 to 11,782 (OJJDP, 1991, 1993).

Research

Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

Evidence continues to mount that a small proportion of offenders commit most of the serious and violent juvenile crimes. The Philadelphia birth cohort study (Wolfgang,

Figure 2

U.S. Juveniles in Custody in Public Juvenile Facilities 1-Day Counts by Reason for Custody and Sex 1991

Public Facilities

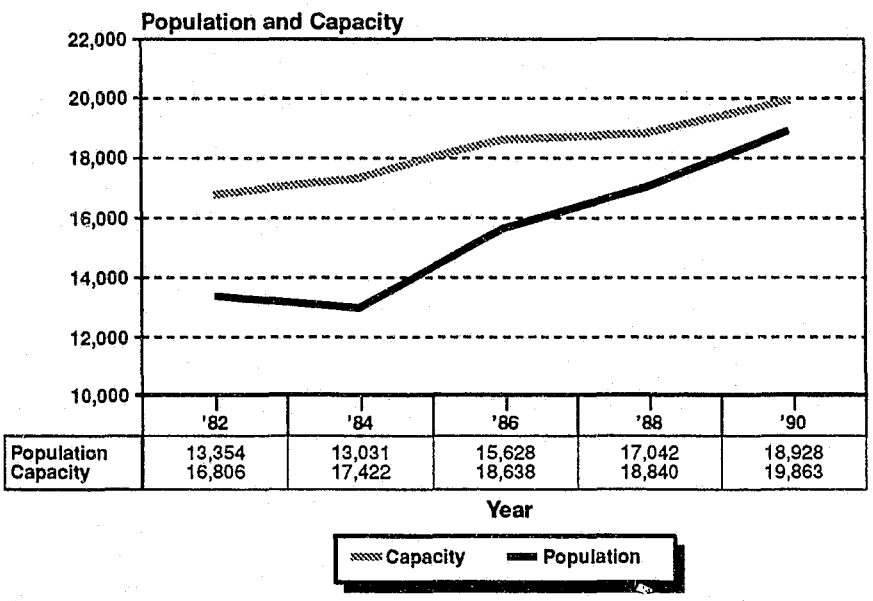
	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
	(N=57,661)	(N=51,282)	(N=6,379)
Delinquent Offenses	**95%**	**97.3%**	**80.7%**
1. Violent	19	20.5	10.3
2. Other Personal	12	12.1	9.4
3. Serious Property	24	24.4	17.1
4. Other Property	12	12.5	12.9
5. Alcohol Offenses	1	1.0	1.0
6. Drug-Related Offenses	10	10.4	5.3
7. Public Order Offenses	4	4.4	5.4
8. Probation/Parole Violations	8	7.2	12.9
9. Other	5	4.8	6.4
Status Offenses	**3**	**1.8**	**12.9**
Nonoffenders	**1**	**0.7**	**4.2**
Voluntary Commitments	**1**	**0.2**	**2.2**

Offense categories include the following offenses:
- Violent: murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault.
- Other Personal: negligent manslaughter, assault, sexual assault.
- Serious Property: burglary, arson, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft.
- Other Property: vandalism, forgery, counterfeiting, fraud, stolen property, unauthorized vehicle use.
- Public Order: alcohol offenses, drug-related offenses, public order offenses.
- Status: offenses not considered crimes if committed by adults.
- Nonoffenders: dependency, neglect, abuse, emotional disturbance, retardation, other.

Source: 1991 Census of Public and Private Juvenile Detention, Correctional and Shelter Facilities: Census day 2/15/91.

Figure 3

U.S. Public Detention Centers Capacity and Average Daily Population 1982–1990

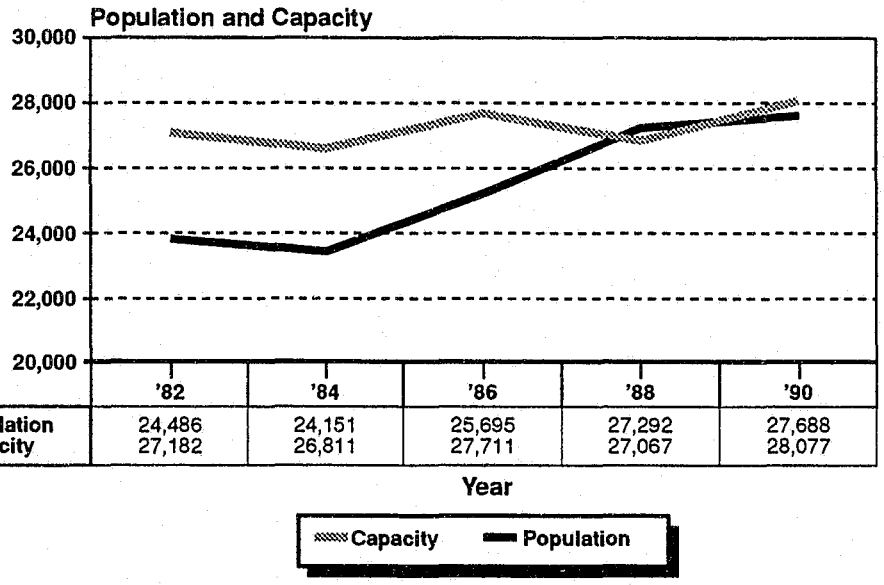


	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90
Population	13,354	13,031	15,628	17,042	18,928
Capacity	16,806	17,422	18,638	18,840	19,863

Source: 1983–1991 Census of Public Juvenile Detention, Correctional and Shelter Facilities.

Figure 4

U.S. Public Training Schools Capacity and Average Daily Population 1982–1990

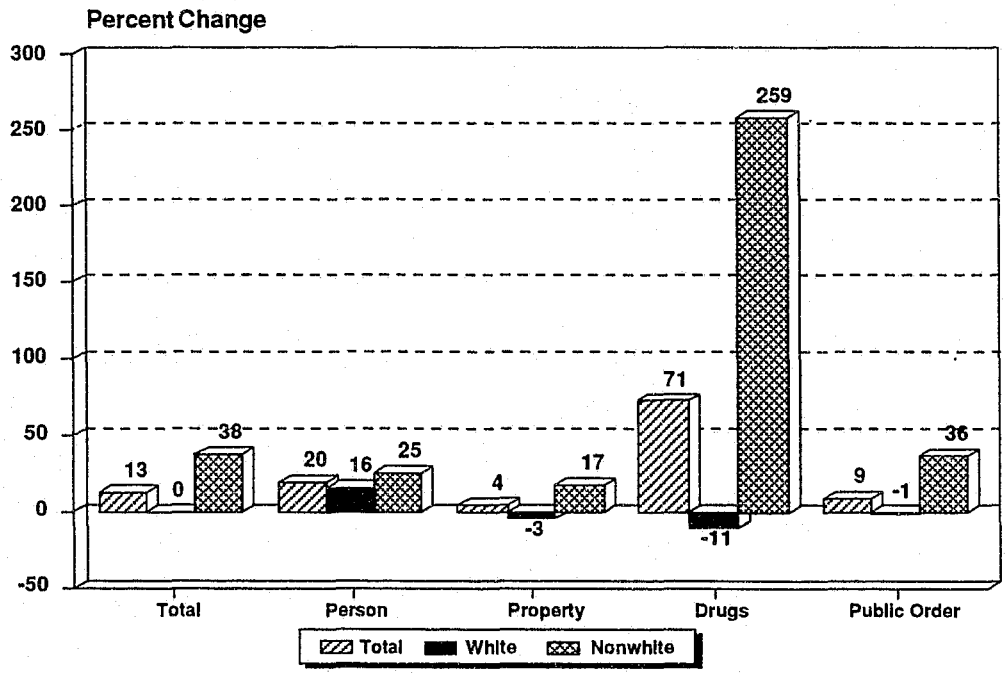


	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90
Population	24,486	24,151	25,695	27,292	27,688
Capacity	27,182	26,811	27,711	27,067	28,077

Source: 1983–1991 Census of Public Juvenile Detention, Correctional and Shelter Facilities.

Figure 5

Detained Delinquency Case Trends by Race and Offense,1985 and 1989



Source: National Center of Juvenile Justice, a special analysis of 1989 data from the National Juvenile Court Data Archive.

Figlio, and Sellin, 1972), found that "chronic offenders" (five or more police contacts) constituted 6 percent of the cohort and 18 percent of the delinquents. They were responsible for 62 percent of all offenses and about two-thirds of all violent offenses. Other studies have found similar results (Strasburg, 1978; Hamparian et al., 1978; Shannon, 1988; Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1992).

Analysis of self-reported measures of violent offending employed in the National Youth Survey (NYS) for the period 1976 to 1980 indicates that from ages 12 to 17, about 5 percent of juveniles at each age were classified as "serious violent" (a combination of both serious and violent offense categories) offenders. "Serious violent" offenders, on average, commit 132 delinquent offenses annually with 8 of them being "serious violent" offenses. Most serious and violent juvenile careers last about 1 year, and nearly 10 percent of "serious violent" offenders have a career length of 5 years or more (Elliott et al., 1986).

Causes of Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Crime

Recent research has documented the behavioral pathways and factors that contribute to serious, violent, and chronic juvenile crime. OJJDP's Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency conducted a longitudinal study in three sites using common measures and oversampling of high-risk youth. The major factors influencing delinquency were identified as delinquent peer groups, poor school performance, high-crime neighborhoods, weak family attachments, and lack of consistent discipline and behavioral monitoring. The study identified three developmental pathways to chronic delinquency—overt pathway (from aggression, to fighting, to violence), covert pathway (from minor covert behavior, to property damage, to serious delinquency), and authority conflict pathway (from stubborn behavior, to defiance, to authority avoidance) (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1992). This research provides the basis for designing prevention programs and intervention strategies.

Behavioral factors that contribute to serious, violent, and chronic juvenile crime:

- Delinquent peer groups.
- Poor school performance.
- High-crime neighborhoods.
- Weak family attachments.
- Lack of consistent discipline.
- Physical or sexual abuse.

A link has also been found to exist between childhood victimization and delinquent behavior. Greater risk exists for violent offending when a child is physically abused or neglected early in life. Such a child is more likely to begin violent offending earlier and to be more involved in such offending than children who have not been abused or neglected (Widom, 1989; Smith and Thornberry, 1993).

Program Evaluations

Effective intervention strategies and programs for serious, violent, and chronic delinquents have been documented. A comprehensive delinquency prevention program model, called the "social development model," has been demonstrated to be effective in preventing serious and violent juvenile delinquency (Hawkins and Catalano, 1992). This model specifies programs that enhance protective factors, or buffers, against delinquent behavior for implementation at key points in the chronological or social development of the child. Interventions must begin early in family life.

A wide array of intervention models for delinquent juveniles has been found to be effective in treating and rehabilitating offenders. Intensive Supervision Programs have been found to be effective for many serious and violent juvenile offenders, obviating the need for secure incarceration (Krisberg et al., 1989a). OJJDP has also developed an intensive aftercare model designed to successfully reintegrate high-risk juvenile parolees back into the community (Altschuler and Armstrong, 1992).

Evaluations demonstrate that innovative programs, including secure and nonsecure community-based programs, can be used effectively as alternatives to incarceration for many serious and violent juvenile offenders. Examples of these types of programs include a day treatment and education program operated by Associated Marine Institutes (AMI); the Florida Environmental Institute's (FEI) wilderness camp for juveniles who would otherwise be sent to adult prisons; and intensive family-based, multisystemic therapy (MST) programs, which have been effective with serious juvenile offenders in several localities (Krisberg, 1992). OJJDP's Violent Juvenile Offender Program demonstrated that most violent juvenile offenders could be successfully rehabilitated through intensive treatment in small secure facilities (Fagan et al., 1984, 1984a). Other effective community-based programs include the Broward County, Florida, Home Detention Program; the Juvenile Alternative Work Service programs in Orange County and Los Angeles, California; the Seattle, Washington-based Homebuilders program; and the KEY Outreach and Tracking program in Massachusetts (National Coalition of State Juvenile Justice Advisory Groups, 1993).

Many States are successfully closing their large congregate care training schools and replacing them with secure and nonsecure community-based residential programs and nonresidential alternatives. Massachusetts was the first State to close its training schools in the 1970's and replace them with a network of decentralized community services and a few small secure-care units for violent juvenile offenders. As a consequence, Massachusetts has saved about $11 million per year (Krisberg et al., 1989). Utah, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Florida have also closed training schools and begun to implement community-based systems (Lerner, 1990).

A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

General Principles

The following general principles provide a framework to guide our efforts in the battle to prevent delinquent conduct and reduce juvenile involvement in serious, violent, and chronic delinquency:

- **Strengthen the family** in its primary responsibility to instill moral values and provide guidance and support to children. Where there is no functional family unit, a family surrogate should be established and assisted to guide and nurture the child.
- **Support core social institutions**—schools, religious institutions, and community organizations—in their roles of developing capable, mature, and responsible youth. A goal of each of these societal institutions should be to ensure that children have the opportunity and support to mature into productive law-abiding citizens. A nurturing community environment requires that core social institutions be actively involved in the lives of youth. Community organizations include public and private youth-serving agencies; neighborhood groups; and business and commercial organizations providing employment, training, and other meaningful economic opportunities for youth.
- **Promote delinquency prevention** as the most cost-effective approach to dealing with juvenile delinquency. Families, schools, religious institutions, and community organizations, including citizen volunteers and the private sector, must be enlisted in the Nation's delinquency prevention efforts. These core socializing institutions must be strengthened and assisted in their efforts to ensure that children have the opportunity to become capable and responsible citizens. When children engage in "acting out" behavior, such as status offenses, the family and community, in concert with child welfare agencies, must take primary responsibility for responding with appropriate treatment and support services. Communities must take the lead in designing and building comprehensive prevention approaches that address known risk factors and target other youth at risk of delinquency.
- **Intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs** to successfully prevent delinquent offenders from becoming chronic offenders or progressively committing more serious and violent crimes. Initial intervention efforts, under an umbrella of system authorities (police, intake, and probation), should be centered in the family and other core societal institutions. Juvenile justice system authorities should ensure that an appropriate response occurs and act quickly and firmly if the need for formal system adjudication and sanctions has been demonstrated.
- **Identify and control the small group of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders** who have committed felony offenses or have failed to respond to intervention and nonsecure community-based treatment and rehabilitation services offered by the juvenile justice system. Measures to address delinquent offenders who are a threat to community safety may include placements in secure community-based facilities or, when necessary, training schools and other secure juvenile facilities.

Under OJJDP's comprehensive strategy, it is the family and community, supported by our core social institutions, that has **primary** responsibility for meeting the basic socializing needs of our Nation's children. Socially harmful conduct, acting-out behavior, and delinquency may be signs of the family being unable to meet its responsibility. It is at these times that the community must support and assist the family in the socialization process, particularly for youth at the greatest risk of delinquency.

Key Principles for Preventing and Reducing Juvenile Delinquency

- Strengthen families.
- Support core social institutions.
- Promote prevention strategies and programs.
- Intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs.
- Identify and control the small percentage of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders.

The proposed strategy incorporates two principal components: (1) preventing youth from becoming delinquent by focusing prevention programs on at-risk youth; and (2) improving the juvenile justice system response to delinquent offenders

through a system of graduated sanctions and a continuum of treatment alternatives that include immediate intervention, intermediate sanctions, and community-based corrections sanctions, incorporating restitution and community service when appropriate.

Target Populations

The **initial target population** for prevention programs is juveniles at risk of involvement in delinquent activity. While primary delinquency prevention programs provide services to all youth wishing to participate, maximum impact on future delinquent conduct can be achieved by seeking to identify and involve in prevention programs youth at greatest risk of involvement in delinquent activity. This includes youth who exhibit known risk factors for future delinquency; drug and alcohol abuse; and youth who have had contact with the juvenile justice system as nonoffenders (neglected, abused, and dependent), status offenders (runaways, truants, alcohol offenders, and incorrigibles), or minor delinquent offenders.

The **next target population** is youth, both male and female, who have committed delinquent (criminal) acts, including juvenile offenders who evidence a high likelihood of becoming, or who already are, serious, violent, or chronic offenders.

Program Rationale

What can communities and the juvenile justice system do to prevent the development of and interrupt the progression of delinquent and criminal careers? Juvenile justice agencies and programs are one part of a larger picture that involves many other local agencies and programs that are responsible for working with at-risk youth and their families. It is important that juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention programs are integrated with local police, social service, child welfare, school, and family preservation programs and that these programs reflect local community determinations of the most pressing problems and program priorities. Establishing **community planning teams** that include a broad base of participants drawn from local government and the community (e.g., community-based youth development organizations, schools, law enforcement, social service agencies, civic organizations, religious groups. parents, and teens) will help create consensus on priorities and services to be provided as well as build support for a comprehensive program approach that draws on all sectors of the community for participation.

Evidence suggests that a risk reduction and protective factor enhancement approach to prevention is effective. Risk factors include the family, the school, the peer group, the community, and characteristics of juveniles themselves. The more risk factors present in a community, the greater the likelihood of youth problems in that community as children are exposed to those risk factors. Prevention strategies will need to be comprehensive, addressing each of the risk factors as they relate to the **chronological development** of children being served.

Research and experience in intervention and treatment programming suggest that a highly structured system of graduated sanctions holds significant promise. The goal of graduated sanctions is to increase the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system in responding to juveniles who have committed criminal acts. The system's limited resources have diminished its ability to respond effectively to serious, violent, and chronic juvenile crime. This trend must be reversed by empowering the juvenile justice system to provide accountability and treatment resources to juveniles. This includes gender-specific programs for female offenders, whose rates of delinquency have generally been increasing faster than males in recent years, and who now account for 23 percent of juvenile arrests. It will also require programs for special needs populations such as sex offenders, mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled delinquents.

The graduated sanctions approach is designed to provide immediate intervention at the first offense to ensure that the juvenile's misbehavior is addressed by the family and community or through formal adjudication and sanctions by the juvenile justice system, as appropriate. Graduated sanctions include a range of intermediate sanctions and secure corrections options to provide intensive treatment that serves the juvenile's needs, provides accountability, and protects the public. They offer an array of referral and dispositional resources for law enforcement, juvenile courts, and juvenile corrections officials. The graduated sanctions component requires that the juvenile justice system's capacity to identify, process, evaluate, refer, and track delinquent offenders be enhanced.

The Juvenile Justice System

The juvenile justice system plays a key role in protecting and guiding juveniles, including responding to juvenile delinquency. Law enforcement plays a key role by conducting investigations, making custody and arrest determinations, or exercising discretionary release authority. Police should be trained in community-based policing techniques and provided with program resources that focus on community youth, such as Police Athletic Leagues and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program.

The traditional role of the juvenile and family court is to treat and rehabilitate the dependent or wayward minor, using an individualized approach and tailoring its response to the particular needs of the child and family, with goals of: (1) responding to the needs of troubled youth and their families;

(2) providing due process while recognizing the rights of the victim; (3) rehabilitating the juvenile offender; and (4) protecting both the juvenile and the public. While juvenile and family courts have been successful in responding to the bulk of youth problems to meet these goals, new ways of organizing and focusing the resources of the juvenile justice system are required to effectively address serious, violent, and chronic juvenile crime. These methods might include the establishment of unified family courts with jurisdiction over all civil and criminal matters affecting the family.

A recent statement by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) succinctly describes the critical role of the court:

> The Courts must protect children and families when private and other public institutions are unable or fail to meet their obligations. The protection of society by correcting children who break the law, the preservation and reformation of families, and the protection of children from abuse and neglect are missions of the Court. When the family falters, when the basic needs of children go unmet, when the behavior of children is destructive and goes unchecked, juvenile and family courts must respond. The Court is society's official means of holding itself accountable for the well-being of its children and family unit. (NCJFCJ, "Children and Families First, A Mandate for Change," 1993)

Earlier, NCJFCJ developed 38 recommendations regarding serious juvenile offenders and related issues facing the juvenile court system. These issues included confidentiality of the juvenile offender and his or her family, transfer of a juvenile offender to adult court, and effective treatment of the serious juvenile offender (NCJFCJ, 1984).

Finally, juvenile corrections has the responsibility to provide treatment services that will rehabilitate the juvenile and minimize his or her chances of reoffending. Juvenile courts and corrections will benefit from a system that makes a continuum of services available that respond to each juvenile's needs.

The juvenile justice system, armed with resources and knowledge that permit matching juveniles with appropriate treatment programs while holding them accountable, can have a positive and lasting impact on the reduction of delinquency. Developing effective case management and management information systems (MIS) will be integral to this effort. OJJDP will provide leadership in building system capacity at the State and local levels to take maximum advantage of available knowledge and resources.

Delinquency Prevention

Most juvenile delinquency efforts have been unsuccessful because of their negative approach—attempting to keep juveniles from misbehaving. Positive approaches that emphasize opportunities for healthy social, physical, and mental development have a much greater likelihood of success. Another weakness of past delinquency prevention efforts is their narrow scope, focusing on only one or two of society's institutions that have responsibility for the social development of children. Most programs have targeted either the school arena or the family. Communities are an often neglected area. Successful delinquency prevention strategies must be positive in their orientation and comprehensive in their scope.

The prevention component of OJJDP's comprehensive strategy is based on a risk-focused delinquency prevention approach (Hawkins and Catalano, 1992). This approach states that to prevent a problem from occurring, the factors contributing to the development of that problem must be identified and then ways must be found (protective factors) to address and ameliorate those factors.

Research conducted over the past half century has clearly documented five categories of causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency: (1) individual characteristics such as alienation, rebelliousness, and lack of bonding to society; (2) family influences such as parental conflict, child abuse, and family history of problem behavior (substance abuse, criminality, teen pregnancy, and school dropouts); (3) school experiences such as early academic failure and lack of commitment to school; (4) peer group influences such as friends who engage in problem behavior (minor criminality, gangs, and violence); and (5) neighborhood and community factors such as economic deprivation, high rates of substance abuse and crime, and low neighborhood attachment. These categories can also be thought of as risk factors.

To counter these causes and risk factors, protective factors must be introduced. Protective factors are qualities or conditions that moderate a juvenile's exposure to risk. Research indicates that protective factors fall into three basic categories: (1) individual characteristics such as a resilient temperament and a positive social orientation; (2) bonding with prosocial family members, teachers, and friends; and (3) healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior. While individual characteristics are inherent and difficult to change, bonding and clear standards for behavior work together and can be changed. To increase bonding, children must be provided with opportunities to contribute to their families, schools, peer groups, and communities; skills to take advantage of opportunities; and recognition for their efforts to contribute. Simultaneously, parents, teachers, and communities need to set clear standards that endorse prosocial behavior.

The risk-focused delinquency prevention approach calls on communities to identify and understand what risk factors their children are exposed to and to implement programs that counter these risk factors. Communities must enhance protective factors that promote positive behavior, health, well-being, and personal success. Effective delinquency prevention efforts must be comprehensive, covering the five causes or risk factors described below, and correspond to the social development process.

Risk Factors

- Individual Characteristics.
- Family Influences.
- School Experiences.
- Peer Group Influences.
- Neighborhood and Community.

Individual Characteristics

Our children must be taught moral, spiritual, and civic values. The decline in inculcating these values has contributed significantly to increases in delinquent behavior. Therefore, opportunities for teaching positive values must be increased.

Youth Leadership and Service Programs can provide such opportunities and can reinforce and help internalize in children such positive individual traits as discipline, character, self-respect, responsibility, teamwork, healthy lifestyles, and good citizenship. They can also provide opportunities for personal growth, active involvement in education and vocational training, and life skills development.

A Youth Leadership and Service Program could consist of a variety of components targeted to the needs of grade school, junior high, and high school youth. Elementary and junior high school children could be assisted in achieving healthy social development through instillation in them of basic values. High school–aged youth could be supported in the development of leadership skills and community service in preparation for adulthood. The components of a Youth Leadership and Service Program may include the following types of program activities:

- Youth Service Corps.
- Adventure Training (leadership, endurance, and team-building).
- Mentoring.
- Recreational.
- Summer Camp.
- Literacy and Learning Disability.
- Law-Related Education.

A variety of prevention programs address individual growth and development, including:

- Head Start.
- Boys and Girls Clubs.
- Scouting.
- 4–H Clubs.

Recreational Activities.

- Leadership and Personal Development.
- Health and Mental Health.
- Career Youth Development.

Family Influences

The family is the most important influence in the lives of children and the first line of defense against delinquency. Programs that strengthen the family and foster healthy growth and development of children from prenatal care through adolescence should be widely available. These programs should encourage the maintenance of a viable family unit and bonding between parent and child, and they should provide support for families in crisis. Such programs should involve other major spheres of influence such as religious institutions, schools, and community-based organizations. By working together, these organizations will have a pronounced impact on preserving the family and preventing delinquency.

To have the greatest impact, assistance must reach families **before** significant problems develop. Therefore, the concept of **earliest point of impact** should guide the development and implementation of prevention programs involving the family. Researchers in the area of juvenile delinquency and the family have found that the following **negative family involvement factors** are predictors of delinquency:

- Inadequate prenatal care.
- Parental rejection.
- Inadequate supervision and inconsistent discipline by parents.
- Family conflict, marital discord, and physical violence.
- Child abuse.

The following programs directly address negative family involvement factors and how to establish protective factors:

- Teen Abstinence and Pregnancy Prevention.
- Parent Effectiveness and Family Skills Training.

- Parent Support Groups.
- Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters.
- Family Crisis Intervention Services.
- Court Appointed Special Advocates.
- Surrogate Families and Respite Care for Families in Crisis.
- Permanency Planning for Foster Children.
- Family Life Education for Teens and Parents.
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Services.

School Experiences

Outside the family, the school has the greatest influence in the lives of children and adolescents. Through the school, the hopes and dreams of youth are profoundly influenced.

Many of America's children bring one or more of the aforementioned risk factors to school with them, and these factors may hinder the development of their academic and social potential. School prevention programs, including traditional delinquency prevention programs not related to the school's educational mission, can assist the family and the community by identifying at-risk youth, monitoring their progress, and intervening with effective programs at critical times during a youth's development.

School-based prevention programs may include:

- Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Education.
- Bullying Prevention.
- Violence Prevention.
- Alternative Schools.
- Truancy Reduction.
- School Discipline and Safety Improvement.
- Targeted-Literacy Programs in the Primary Grades.
- Law-Related Education.
- Afterschool Programs for Latchkey Children.
- Teen Abstinence and Pregnancy Prevention.
- Values Development.
- Vocational Training.

Providing youth with structured opportunities to develop skills and contribute to the community in nonschool hours is particularly important for at-risk youth who have lower levels of personal and social support. Communities need to develop strategies and programs, such as those recommended by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, to address this need.

Peer Group Influences

Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency confirms that associating with delinquent drug-using peers is strongly correlated with delinquency and drug use. These relationships are mutually reinforcing. Membership in a gang is strongly related to delinquency and drug use. Those who remain in gangs over long periods of time have high rates of delinquency, particularly during active gang membership.

Peer leadership groups offer an effective means of encouraging leaders of delinquency-prone groups to establish friendships with more conventional peers. These groups have been established in schools, at all levels, across the country. As noted above, school-based afterschool programs for latchkey children also provide the same function for children at high risk for negative influences. Crime prevention programs that educate youth on how to prevent juvenile violence and crime and provide opportunities for youth to actually work on solving specific community delinquency problems are another effective way of encouraging peer leadership.

Promising approaches have been identified for combating juvenile gangs. "Community mobilization" appears to be effective in cities with chronic gang problems and in cities where the gang problem is just beginning. Other promising preventive options include efforts to dissolve associations with delinquent peers and develop alternative behaviors that promote moral development and reject violence as a means of resolving interpersonal disputes. Opportunities to achieve success in conventional, nondelinquent activities are also imperative.

The following programs reflect these principles:

- Gang Prevention and Intervention.
- Conflict Resolution—Peer Mediation.
- Peer Counseling and Tutoring.
- Self-Help Fellowship for Peer Groups.
- Individual Responsibility Training.
- Community Volunteer Service.
- Competitive Athletic Team Participation.
- Teens, Crime, and the Community.

Neighborhood and Community

Children do not choose where they live. Children who live in fear of drug dealers, street violence, and gang shootings cannot enjoy childhood. Children are dependent on parents, neighbors, and police to provide a safe and secure environment in which to play, go to school, and work. Community policing can play an important role in creating a safer environment. Community police officers not only help to reduce

criminal activity but also become positive role models and establish caring relationships with the youth and families in a community. Onsite neighborhood resource teams, composed of community police officers, social workers, health-care workers, housing experts, and school personnel, can ensure that a wide range of problems are responded to in a timely and coordinated manner.

Also required are innovative and committed individuals, groups, and community organizations to work together to improve the quality of life in their communities and, if necessary, to reclaim the communities from gangs and other criminal elements. Such groups include youth development organizations, churches, tenant organizations, and civic groups. The private-sector business community can make a major contribution through Private Industry Councils and other partnerships by providing job training, apprenticeships, and other meaningful economic opportunities for youth.

Neighborhood and community programs include:

- Community Policing.
- Safe Havens for Youth.
- Neighborhood Mobilization for Community Safety.
- Drug-Free School Zones.
- Community Organization–Sponsored Afterschool Programs in Tutoring, Recreation, Mentoring, and Cultural Activities.
- Community and Business Partnerships.
- Foster Grandparents.
- Job Training and Apprenticeships for Youth.
- Neighborhood Watch.
- Victim Programs.

The Carnegie Council (1992), following an extensive study of adolescent development, concluded that community-based youth programs, offered by more than 17,000 organizations nationwide, can provide the critical community support necessary to prevent delinquency. This can be done, the Council concluded, through community organizations' contributions to youth development in conjunction with family- and school-focused efforts. Communities must be created that support families, educate adolescents for a global economy, and provide opportunities to develop skills during nonschool hours. The Council found that many adolescents are adrift during nonschool hours and can be actively involved in community-based programs that provide opportunities to develop a sense of importance, well being, belonging, and active community participation. Through such programs, risks can be transformed into opportunities.

Graduated Sanctions

An effective juvenile justice system program model for the treatment and rehabilitation of delinquent offenders is one that combines accountability and sanctions with increasingly intensive treatment and rehabilitation services. These graduated sanctions must be wide-ranging to fit the offense and include both intervention and secure corrections components. The intervention component includes the use of immediate intervention and intermediate sanctions, and the secure corrections component includes the use of community confinement and incarceration in training schools, camps, and ranches.

Each of these graduated sanctions components should consist of sublevels, or gradations, that together with appropriate services constitute an integrated approach. The purpose of this approach is to stop the juvenile's further penetration into the system by inducing law-abiding behavior as early as possible through the combination of appropriate intervention and treatment sanctions. The juvenile justice system must work with law enforcement, courts, and corrections to develop reasonable, fair, and humane sanctions.

Graduated Sanctions require a broad continuum of options:

Intervention → immediate intervention
→ intermediate sanctions

Secure Corrections → community confinement
→ training schools
→ aftercare

At each level in the continuum, the family must continue to be integrally involved in treatment and rehabilitation efforts. Aftercare must be a formal component of all residential placements, actively involving the family and the community in supporting and reintegrating the juvenile into the community.

Programs will need to use Risk and Needs Assessments to determine the appropriate placement for the offender. Risk assessments should be based on clearly defined objective criteria that focus on (1) the seriousness of the delinquent act; (2) the potential risk for reoffending, based on the presence of risk factors; and (3) the risk to the public safety. Effective risk assessment at intake, for example, can be used to identify those juveniles who require the use of detention as well as those who can be released to parental custody or diverted to nonsecure community-based programs. Needs assessments will help ensure that (1) different types of problems are taken into account when formulating a case plan; (2) a baseline for

monitoring a juvenile's progress is established; (3) periodic reassessments of treatment effectiveness are conducted; and (4) a systemwide data base of treatment needs can be used for the planning and evaluation of programs, policies, and procedures. Together, risk and needs assessments will help to allocate scarce resources more efficiently and effectively.

A system of graduated sanctions requires a broad continuum of options.

Intervention

For intervention efforts to be most effective, they must be swift, certain, consistent, and incorporate increasing sanctions, including the possible loss of freedom. As the severity of sanctions increases, so must the intensity of treatment. At each level, offenders must be aware that, should they continue to violate the law, they will be subject to more severe sanctions and could ultimately be confined in a secure setting, ranging from a secure community-based juvenile facility to a training school, camp, or ranch.

The juvenile court plays an important role in the provision of treatment and sanctions. Probation has traditionally been viewed as the court's main vehicle for delivery of treatment services and community supervision. However, traditional probation services and sanctions have not had the resources to effectively target delinquent offenders, particularly serious, violent, and chronic offenders.

The Balanced Approach to juvenile probation is a promising approach that specifies a clear and coherent framework. The Balanced Approach consists of three practical objectives: (1) Accountability; (2) Competency Development; and (3) Community Protection. Accountability refers to the requirement that offenders make amends to the victims and the community for harm caused. Competency Development requires that youth who enter the juvenile justice system should exit the system more capable of being productive and responsible citizens. Community Protection requires that the juvenile justice system ensure public safety.

The following graduated sanctions are proposed within the Intervention component:

Immediate intervention. First-time delinquent offenders (misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies) and nonserious repeat offenders (generally misdemeanor repeat offenses) must be targeted for system intervention based on their probability of becoming more serious or chronic in their delinquent activities. Nonresidential community-based programs, including prevention programs for at-risk youth, may be appropriate for many of these offenders. Such programs are small and open, located in or near the juvenile's home, and maintain community participation in program planning, operation, and evaluation. Community police officers, working as part of Neighborhood Resource Teams, can help monitor the juvenile's progress. Other offenders may require sanctions tailored to their offense(s) and their needs to deter them from committing additional crimes. The following programs apply to these offenders:

- Neighborhood Resource Teams.
- Diversion.
- Informal Probation.
- School Counselors Serving as Probation Officers.
- Home on Probation.
- Mediation (Victims).
- Community Service.
- Restitution.
- Day-Treatment Programs.
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment (Outpatient).
- Peer Juries.

Intermediate sanctions. Offenders who are inappropriate for immediate intervention (first-time serious or violent offenders) or who fail to respond successfully to immediate intervention as evidenced by reoffending (such as repeat property offenders or drug-involved juveniles) would begin with or be subject to intermediate sanctions. These sanctions may be nonresidential or residential.

Many of the serious and violent offenders at this stage may be appropriate for placement in an Intensive Supervision Program as an alternative to secure incarceration. OJJDP's Intensive Supervision of Probationers Program Model is a highly structured, continuously monitored individualized plan that consists of five phases with decreasing levels of restrictiveness: (1) Short-Term Placement in Community Confinement; (2) Day Treatment; (3) Outreach and Tracking; (4) Routine Supervision; and (5) Discharge and Followup. Other appropriate programs include:

- Drug Testing.
- Weekend Detention.
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment (Inpatient).
- Challenge Outdoor Programs.
- Community-Based Residential Programs.
- Electronic Monitoring.
- Boot Camp Facilities and Programs.

Secure Corrections

The criminal behavior of many serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders requires the application of secure sanctions to hold these offenders accountable for their delinquent acts and to provide a structured treatment environment. Large congregate-care juvenile facilities (training schools, camps, and ranches) have not proven to be particularly effective in rehabilitating juvenile offenders. Although some continued use of these types of facilities will remain a necessary alternative for those juveniles who require enhanced security to protect the public, the establishment of small community-based facilities to provide intensive services in a secure environment offers the best hope for successful treatment of those juveniles who require a structured setting. Secure sanctions are most effective in changing future conduct when they are coupled with comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation services.

Standard parole practices, particularly those that have a primary focus on social control, have not been effective in normalizing the behavior of high-risk juvenile parolees over the long term, and consequently, growing interest has developed in intensive aftercare programs that provide high levels of social control and treatment services. OJJDP's Intensive Community-Based Aftercare for High-Risk Juvenile Parolees Program provides an effective aftercare model:

> The Intensive Aftercare Program incorporates five programmatic principles: (1) preparing youth for progressive responsibility and freedom in the community; (2) facilitating youth-community interaction and involvement; (3) working with both the offender and targeted community support systems (e.g., families, peers, schools, and employers) to facilitate constructive interaction and gradual community adjustment, (4) developing needed resources and community support; and (5) monitoring and ensuring the youth's successful reintegration into the community.

The following graduated sanctions strategies are proposed within the Secure Corrections component:

Community confinement. Offenders whose presenting offense is sufficiently serious (such as a violent felony) or who fail to respond to intermediate sanctions as evidenced by continued reoffending may be appropriate for community confinement. Offenders at this level represent the more serious (such as repeat felony drug trafficking or property offenders) and violent offenders among the juvenile justice system correctional population.

The concept of community confinement provides secure confinement in small community-based facilities that offer intensive treatment and rehabilitation services. These services include individual and group counseling, educational programs, medical services, and intensive staff supervision. Proximity to the community enables direct and regular family involvement with the treatment process as well as a phased reentry into the community that draws upon community resources and services.

Incarceration in training schools, camps, and ranches. Juveniles whose confinement in the community would constitute an ongoing threat to community safety or who have failed to respond to community-based corrections may require an extended correctional placement in training schools, camps, ranches, or other secure options that are not community-based. These facilities should offer comprehensive treatment programs for these youth with a focus on education, skills development, and vocational or employment training and experience. These juveniles may include those convicted in the criminal justice system prior to their reaching the age at which they are no longer subject to the original or extended jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system.

Expected Benefits

The proposed strategy provides for a comprehensive approach in responding to delinquent conduct and serious, violent, and chronic criminal behavior, consisting of (1) community protection and public safety, (2) accountability, (3) competency development, (4) individualization, and (5) balanced representation of the interests of the community, victim, and juvenile. By taking these factors into account in each program component, a new direction in the administration of juvenile justice is fostered.

Delinquency Prevention

This major component of the comprehensive strategy involves implementation of delinquency prevention technology that has been demonstrated to be effective. Prevention strategies within the major areas that influence the behavior of youth (individual development, family, school, peer group, and community) parallel the chronological development of children. Because addressing these five areas has been found to be effective in reducing future delinquency among high-risk youth, it should result in fewer children entering the juvenile justice system in demonstration sites. This would, in turn, permit concentration of system resources on fewer delinquents, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the graduated sanctions component and improving the operation of the juvenile justice system.

Graduated Sanctions

This major component of the comprehensive strategy is premised on a firm belief that the juvenile justice system can effectively handle delinquent juvenile behavior through the judicious application of a range of graduated sanctions and a full continuum of treatment and rehabilitation services. Expected benefits of this approach include:

- **Increased juvenile justice system responsiveness.** This program will provide additional referral and dispositional resources for law enforcement, juvenile courts, and juvenile corrections. It will also require these system components to increase their ability to identify, process, evaluate, refer, and track juvenile offenders.
- **Increased juvenile accountability.** Juvenile offenders will be held accountable for their behavior, decreasing the likelihood of their development into serious, violent, or chronic offenders and tomorrow's adult criminals. The juvenile justice system will be held accountable for controlling chronic and serious delinquency while also protecting society. Communities will be held accountable for providing community-based prevention and treatment resources for juveniles.
- **Decreased costs of juvenile corrections.** Applying the appropriate graduated sanctions and developing the required community-based resources should reduce significantly the need for high-cost beds in training schools. Savings from the high costs of operating these facilities could be used to provide treatment in community-based programs and facilities.
- **Increased responsibility of the juvenile justice system.** Many juvenile offenders currently waived or transferred to the criminal justice system could be provided opportunities for intensive services in secure community-based settings or in long-term treatment in juvenile training schools, camps, and ranches.
- **Increased program effectiveness.** As the statistical information presented herein indicates, credible knowledge exists about *who* the chronic, serious, and violent offenders are, that is, their characteristics. Some knowledge also exists about *what* can effectively be done regarding their treatment and rehabilitation. However, more must be learned about what works best for whom under what circumstances to intervene successfully in the potential criminal careers of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders. Followup research and rigorous evaluation of programs implemented as part of this strategy should produce valuable information.

Crime Reduction

The combined effects of delinquency prevention and increased juvenile justice system effectiveness in intervening immediately and effectively in the lives of delinquent offenders should result in measurable decreases in delinquency in sites where the above concepts are demonstrated. In addition, long-term reduction in crime should result from fewer serious, violent, and chronic delinquents becoming adult criminal offenders.

Appendix

Statistics, Research, and Program Evaluations

This appendix reviews statistics, research, and program information regarding chronic, serious, and violent juvenile crime. The purpose of this review was to assist the development of a major Federal initiative that targets the subject group.

Statistics

Delinquent Behavior Trends

National Crime Survey data indicate that between 1988 and 1990 victimizations of youth ages 12–18 for rape, robbery, and assault increased 7.5 percent, from 1,391,791 victimizations in 1988 to 1,496,416 offenses in 1990 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1993).

The only source of national self-reported delinquency is the "Monitoring the Future" study, an annual survey of High School Seniors. This survey of 17-year-olds between 1975 and 1985 indicated a noticeable increase in assault rates and a sharp increase in robbery rates from 1981 to 1985. Measures of other forms of delinquency showed a stable or erratic trend during the study period (Osgood et al., 1989).

Analysis of self-reported measures of violent offending employed in the NYS, covering the period 1976 to 1980, indicates that (Elliott, 1986:483–503):

- From ages 12 to 17, approximately 5 percent of juveniles at each age were classified as serious violent offenders.
- Approximately 35 percent of males were classified as serious violent offenders for at least 1 year by the age of 21, compared with 11 percent of females.
- On the average, serious violent offenders commit eight serious violent offenses annually.
- On the average, each of these individuals commit 132 delinquent offenses annually, compared with 54 for serious nonviolent offenders.
- The mean length of serious violent careers is about 1 year.
- Nearly 10 percent of serious violent offenders have a career length of 5 years or more.
- Eighty-four percent of the most serious offenders had no official record.

Arrest Trends

In 1991 there were an estimated 2.3 million arrests of juveniles. More than 100,000 of these arrests were for violent crimes, and more than 700,000 were for serious property crimes. These arrests represented 16 percent of all arrests, 33 percent of all burglary arrests, 26 percent of all robbery arrests, 16 percent of all rape arrests, 14 percent of all aggravated assault arrests, and 14 percent of all murder arrests (Snyder et al., 1993).

Juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased 41 percent from 1982–1991. Violent crimes with the greatest proportionate increase were murder (93 percent) and aggravated assault (72 percent). Arrests of juveniles for forcible rape increased 24 percent and robbery increased 12 percent during the 10-year period (Snyder, 1993).

Evidence exists that juveniles account for an increasingly larger share of violent crimes. The number of Violent Crime Index arrests of youth under age 18 increased 50 percent between 1987 and 1991 compared with a 25 percent increase for persons age 18 and older. Youth arrests for murder increased 85 percent compared with 21 percent for adults; youth rape arrests rose 16 percent compared with 7 percent for adults; youth robbery arrests rose 52 percent compared with 20 percent for adults; and youth aggravated assaults increased 52 percent compared with 29 percent for adults. As a result of this growth in recent years, youth share of arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses has increased. In 1987 youth arrests accounted for less than 10 percent of all murder arrests but by 1991 youth arrests were 14 percent of the murder arrests. While the youth share of rape arrests remained constant between 1987 and 1991, the youth share of robbery arrests rose from 22 percent to 26 percent, and their share of aggravated assault arrests went from 13 percent to 14 percent. In 1991 the youth arrest rate for Violent Crime Index offenses reached its highest level in history (459 youth arrests per 100,000 youth ages 10–17) (Snyder, 1993).

Juvenile Court Trends

The number of delinquency cases processed by juvenile courts increased 10 percent from 1986 through 1990. This translates into 50 cases for every 1,000 juveniles in the population. The delinquency case rate increased steadily from 1986 through 1990, so that by 1990 the rate was 13 percent greater. The number of cases involving Violent Crime Index offenses increased 31 percent between 1986 and 1990, including 64

percent more criminal homicide cases, 48 percent more aggravated assault cases, and 9 percent more robbery cases. In 16,900 delinquency cases handled in 1990, the juvenile court waived its jurisdiction, transferring the cases to criminal court—an increase of 65 percent in the number of cases waived. This does not include juveniles' cases filed directly in criminal court as a result of prosecutorial discretion or legislative exclusion. Among cases waived to criminal court in 1990, 46 percent were property cases, 35 percent were person offense cases, 14 percent were drug cases, and the remaining 6 percent were public order cases. Although drug cases did not account for a large portion of waived cases, the number of drug cases waived to criminal court increased 282 percent (from 600 to 2,300 cases) between 1986 and 1990, a greater percent change than any other offense category (Snyder et al., 1993a).

Confinement Trends

The number of admissions into public and private juvenile custody facilities has increased 19 percent over the past decade—from 638,309 to 760,644 facility admissions (Krisberg et al., 1992). In 1978 there were 2,220 juvenile facility admissions for every 100,000 juveniles in the population; by 1988 the admission rate had increased 34 percent to 2,974. The vast majority of admissions in 1988 were public facility admissions (81 percent), although private facilities experienced a greater increase from 1978 through 1988 in the number of admissions (104 percent compared with a 9-percent increase for public facilities). Detention center admissions accounted for 81 percent of public facility admissions in 1988 and, although the detention center proportion of admissions was relatively stable, there was an 11 percent increase from 1978 through 1988 in the number of admissions to detention centers. There was also a substantial increase in private detention center admissions (373 percent, from just under 2,000 to more than 9,000).

Criminal Court Handling

Nationwide data are not available to make a reliable estimate of the number of juveniles handled in criminal courts annually.* The only national study in this area was conducted by White (1978) and his colleagues, who estimated that during 1978 more than 9,000 juveniles were judicially waived to criminal court; 2,000 were referred to criminal court under concurrent jurisdiction provisions; and an additional 1,300 were criminally charged under excluded offense provisions. An additional 250,000 youth under the age of 18 faced criminal court charges due to lower ages of criminal court jurisdiction in 11 States.

Since 1978, at least three States have enacted new statutory provisions to exclude serious offenses from juvenile court jurisdiction. Five States have enacted concurrent jurisdiction legislation that gives the prosecutor authority to file certain types of cases directly in criminal court. None has lowered its upper age limit for juvenile court jurisdiction.** The National Center for Juvenile Justice has estimated that approximately 176,000 youth ages 16 and 17 were referred to criminal courts in 1990 due to lower ages of criminal court jurisdiction (Snyder, 1993b). In 1990 an estimated 17,000 juveniles were transferred to criminal court through judicial waiver or under concurrent jurisdiction provisions (Snyder et al., 1993a). If the estimated 17,000 transfers are combined with the 1990 estimated 176,000 cases of 16- and 17-year-olds handled in criminal courts due to age-related exclusions and a few thousand excluded offense cases, then about 200,000 cases involving youth below the age of 18 may have been handled by criminal courts in 1990.

Imprisonment Trends

Between 1984 and 1990, the number of annual admissions of juveniles to adult prisons increased 30 percent, from 9,078 to 11,782. Data from the 1987 National Correctional Reporting Program, which provided information on juvenile prison admissions for a sample of States, indicated that about 8 percent were convicted of murder or manslaughter; 40 percent were convicted of a personal offense (typically a robbery—18 percent); 48 percent were convicted for a property offense (more than half of those convicted for a property offense had burglary as their most serious commitment offense); and about 5 percent were sentenced to prison for a drug crime (OJJDP, 1991, 1993).

Female Delinquency

Over the 27-year period from 1965 to 1991 arrest rates for females ages 10–17 have remained substantially lower than the rates for males (Snyder, 1993). Between 1987 and 1991 the increase in the number of robbery arrests involving females under age 18 was greater than the increase for male youth (88-percent increase for females compared with a 49-percent increase for males). Female arrests for Property Crime Index offenses increased more than male arrests for all offenses except arson. Overall, Property Crime Index arrests increased 14 percent for females compared with 7 percent for

* The General Accounting Office is currently conducting a study of juvenile waivers to criminal courts as required by the 1992 Amendments to the JJDP Act.

** Eighteen States now have excluded offense provisions for serious or violent crimes; 12 have concurrent jurisdiction legislation. Fifteen is the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction in 3 States, 16 in 8 States, 17 in 39 States and the District of Columbia, and 18 in 1 State (Wyoming) (National Center for Juvenile Justice, 1993).

males. In 1991 females accounted for 23 percent of all youth arrests, 12 percent of Violent Crime Index arrests, and 22 percent of Property Crime Index arrests. For both males and females the volume of juvenile court cases increased 10 percent between 1986 and 1990 (Snyder et al., 1993a). The growth in person offense cases was comparable for males and females (29 percent and 32 percent respectively). For property cases, however, the growth in case volume among females was nearly double the increase among males (13 percent compared with 7 percent). In 1990 females accounted for 19 percent of delinquency cases processed and about the same proportion of person offense and property offense cases. Females, however, accounted for a somewhat smaller proportion of drug cases (13 percent). Female delinquency cases were less likely to involve detention during court processing than were cases involving males (17 percent compared with 24 percent in 1990). Between 1978 and 1988 the number of female admissions to public and private juvenile custody facilities increased 18 percent, about the same as for males (Krisberg et al., 1992).

Research

Youth Gangs

In the late 1970's, Walter Miller conducted the first nationwide study of youth gangs (Miller, 1975, 1982). The study found youth gang problems in half of the Nation's large (more than 1 million population) metropolitan areas. The 10 largest gang-problem cities contained about half the gangs. Miller estimated that 300 U.S. cities and towns contained about 2,300 youth gangs, with nearly 100,000 members. About 3,400 youth gang-related killings were reported for about 60 cities during a 13-year period ending in 1980. Miller's major conclusions were:

- By 1980 there were more gang members in the United States than at any time in the past.
- Youth gangs were active in more cities than at any other time.
- Gang crime was more lethal than any time in history; more people were shot, stabbed, and beaten to death in gang-related incidents than during any previous decade.
- Members of gangs and other groups were more heavily armed than any time in the past. Such groups have always used weapons, but the prevalence and sophistication of firearms used in the 1970's was unprecedented.
- The amount of property destruction by gangs through vandalism and arson of schools, residential and commercial buildings, and automobiles was more extensive and costly than in any previous decade.

Research designed to estimate the numbers and characteristics of youth gangs in the United States has not been conducted since Miller's study. However, Spergel and his colleagues (Spergel et al., 1990, 1991) completed a nationwide assessment of promising approaches to preventing and intervening in youth gangs. In the course of this research Spergel made the following observations:

- The scope and seriousness of the youth gang problem nationally is not clearly or reliably known. Police officials in 35 emerging and chronic gang-problem cities estimated the presence of 1,439 gangs and 120,636 gang members.
- Based on law enforcement and media reports, criminal youth gangs or gang members are to be found in nearly all 50 States.
- Evidence exists of a general increase in gang-related violence in several cities, particularly on the west coast.
- Gang members with arrest records are responsible for a disproportionate amount of violent crime. At the same time, the proportion of total violent crime committed by gang members is very low.
- Gang violence is concentrated in certain categories of violent crime, such as homicide and aggravated assault, and is concentrated in certain neighborhoods.
- Historically, youth gangs have rarely engaged in drug dealing, especially hard drugs. Recently, some youth gangs have become involved in street sale of drugs.
- The age range of gang members has expanded in recent decades. Members remain in gangs longer. Extreme gang violence is concentrated in the older teen and young adult range. The average age of the arrested gang offender is 17–18. The average age of the gang homicide offender is 19–20.
- Several observers suggest a close relationship between youth gangs and organized crime. Youth gang structures, or cliques within gangs, are sometimes seen as subunits of organized crime and are employed for purposes of drug distribution, auto theft, extortion, and burglary.

Spergel's research revealed that five basic strategies have evolved in dealing with youth gangs: (1) **suppression**, (2) **social intervention**, (3) **social opportunities**, (4) **community mobilization**, and (5) **organizational development or change. Community mobilization**, including improved communication and joint policy and program development among justice, community-based, and grassroots organizations, appears to be an effective primary strategy in both emerging gang problem cities and in those with chronic gang problems.

Criminal (Adult) Court Versus Juvenile Court

Four noteworthy studies of juveniles handled by the criminal justice system have been conducted.

Hamparian and White's (et al., 1982) study was conducted nationwide. They found:

- Most juveniles referred to adult courts for trial were not charged with personal offenses.
- Most youth tried in adult courts were convicted or pled guilty.
- Youth tried in adult courts were more likely to receive community sentences (probation or fine) than incarceration, except for the excluded offense category.
- Youth convicted as adults and sentenced to adult corrections facilities could probably expect to do more time than they would under juvenile dispositions.

The research team concluded that:

"Our research to date revealed that adult courts in 1978 ordered fines and probation in half of the cases initiated against juveniles through judicial waiver or prosecutorial mechanisms. Further, where confinements were ordered, **maximum** sentences did not exceed 1 year in over 40 percent of the cases. All of these sanctions are normally within juvenile court dispositional powers (Hamparian et al., 1982:228)."

OJJDP funded a subsequent study (White et al., 1985) comparing the outcomes of cases involving juveniles charged with "dangerous" offenses (murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, and burglary) in the juvenile justice system with similar cases against young defendants in the criminal justice system. Comparisons were made in nine selected sites during 1980–81. Major findings:

- Juvenile courts waived about 5 percent of the dangerous cases filed with them.
- Adult courts were slightly more likely to find offenders guilty (77 percent versus 70 percent).
- Adult courts were more than twice as likely to incarcerate the young adults as were juvenile courts to incarcerate juveniles.
- Confined young adults served considerably more time in adult prisons than did juveniles in reformatories.
- Young adults recidivated 1 1/2 times more often than did juveniles.
- The best mechanism for discriminating between those juveniles who should be tried as adults and those who should be tried as juveniles appears to be judicial waiver.

Snyder and Hutzler (1981) analyzed the handling of 360,000 juvenile cases in 10 States in 1979 and compared the flow of 1,000 adult felony cases through the adult criminal system and 1,000 serious (UCR Part I) offenders over 15 years of age through the juvenile court system. They found:

- Most violent, serious, and repeat juvenile offenders are handled by the juvenile justice, rather than criminal justice, system.
- The more serious his present offense is and the more prior delinquency referrals a juvenile has, the more likely it is that he or she will be waived to criminal court, or, if adjudicated delinquent, institutionalized.
- The juvenile court deals most severely with violent, repeat offenders.
- Although the juvenile court is less likely to incarcerate, it is much more likely to impose some sanction or supervision upon persons over 15 referred for serious offenses than is the criminal justice system upon adults referred for felonies.

Fagan (1991) compared the severity and effectiveness of juvenile and criminal court sanctions for 1,200 adolescent felony offenders, ages 15–16, arrested for robbery and burglary during 1981–82 and 1986–87, in matched counties in adjacent States where they were handled in the juvenile justice and adult systems, respectively, because of different legislative requirements.

The results showed that sanctions were more certain and about as severe in the juvenile court as in the criminal court. Recidivism rates were lower for adolescents sanctioned in the juvenile court. They were rearrested less often, at a lower rate, and after a longer crime-free interval. Adolescents sanctioned in the criminal court had higher crime rates.

Chronic Juvenile Offenders

The Philadelphia birth cohort study (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin, 1972) found that "chronic offenders" (five or more police contacts) constituted 6 percent of the cohort and 18 percent of the delinquents. They were responsible for:

- 62 percent of all offenses.
- 68 percent of the UCR Index offenses.
- About two-thirds of all violent offenses:
  —61 percent of homicides.
  —75 percent of rapes.
  —73 percent of robberies.
  —65 percent of aggravated assaults.
  —66 percent of the offenses that involved injuries.

A 15-year followup of a 10-percent sample of the original Philadelphia birth cohort (Wolfgang, Thornberry, and Figlio, 1987) examined the cohort's police records through age 30. This study provided important information on the extent to which chronic juvenile offenders maintained their deviant careers through their early adult years. The study found that offenses increased in seriousness into adulthood, arrests declined steadily after age 18 (providing initial documentation of the "maturation process"), and about one-quarter of the adults had no records as juveniles.

The replication study focused on the cohort of some 28,000 children born in Philadelphia in 1958 who attended school there between the ages of 10 and 17. Cohort II males were much more likely than Cohort I to commit a violent index offense and showed a much higher probability of committing additional violent offenses. The offense rate of Cohort II members was higher and their delinquencies were more serious than those of the earlier cohort. The females studied in Cohort II showed less significant chronicity than did males (Tracy, Wolfgang, and Figlio, 1985).

The greatest immediate contributions of this research were its substantiation of the Cohort I findings regarding chronicity among males and its documentation of the increasing severity of delinquency among Philadelphia youths.

Shannon (1988, 1991, forthcoming) studied three youth cohorts born in 1942, 1949, and 1955 in Racine, Wisconsin. His research was designed, in part, to serve as a comparison to Wolfgang's and his colleagues' Philadelphia study. Central to Shannon's research was the question whether similar patterns of chronicity might be found in smaller metropolitan areas. Although he found slightly less concentration of crime among chronic offenders, the findings regarding criminal patterns were very similar to those of the Philadelphia research: from 8 percent to 14 percent of each cohort was responsible for 75 percent of all felonies. He also found that Racine youths' police contacts for serious crimes peaked earlier than was the case among Philadelphia juveniles.

Hamparian and her colleagues conducted a cohort analysis of 1,200 youth born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1956–60 who had at least one violent arrest. This study found that violent juvenile offenders were a very small proportion (2 percent) of the total cohort; juvenile offenders did not typically progress from less to more serious crime, making it difficult to predict violent behavior; fewer than 10 percent of the cohort delinquents began their careers with a status offense; and recidivism increased following institutional confinement (Hamparian et al., 1978).

Hamparian conducted a followup study of the violent subgroup of the cohort into their mid-20's. It showed that:

- Almost 60 percent of these individuals were arrested at least once as a young adult for a felony offense.
- The first adult arrest was very likely to be prior to age 20.
- Youths who were subsequently arrested as adults tended to have more arrests as juveniles, to have begun their delinquent acts earlier, to have continued them late into their juvenile years, and to have been involved in the more serious type of violent offenses as juveniles. They tended to have been committed at least once to a State juvenile correctional facility.
- A clear continuity exists between juvenile and adult criminal careers (Hamparian et al., 1985:3–4).

Snyder (1988) found that juveniles with four or more referrals made up 16 percent of offenders but were responsible for 51 percent of all juvenile court cases—61 percent of murder, 64 percent of rape, 67 percent of robbery, 61 percent of aggravated assault, and 66 percent of burglary cases.

These studies documented the size of the chronic and violent offender subset, the severity of their offenses, and the relationship of juvenile to adult criminal careers, providing the basis for targeting these offenders for delinquency prevention efforts and specialized juvenile justice system intervention.

Causes of Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Crime

A number of studies have documented the fact that chronic juvenile offenders tend to start their careers early and often continue them into adulthood (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin, 1972; Hamparian et al., 1978; Farrington, 1983; Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1986; Wolfgang, Thornberry, and Figlio, 1987; Shannon, 1988). More recently, several scholars have concentrated their attention on factors related to early onset of delinquent careers (Wilson and Hernstein, 1985; Farrington and West, 1990; Farrington et al., 1990; Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990; Farrington and Hawkins, 1991; Nagin and Farrington, 1992).

However, the most significant theoretical contribution to understanding the onset and maintenance of delinquent careers, and more important, delinquency prevention generally, has been made by the "social development" theory, pioneered by Hawkins (1981). This theoretical approach has been extended and elaborated recently by Elliott and Menard, 1988; Loeber and LeBlanc, 1990; Loeber et al., 1991; Hawkins et al., 1986; and Huizinga et al., 1991.

OJJDP's Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency, conducted by Huizinga (Denver), Loeber (Pittsburgh), and Thornberry (Rochester) has examined a broad array of correlates and causal factors. This comprehensive study employed common measures in the three sites and oversampled high-risk youth. Findings from this landmark research (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1992) include the following.

- Most chronic juvenile offenders start their criminal career prior to age 12.
- Early onset offenders tend to come form poorer, inner-city disadvantaged neighborhoods.
- Coordination is often lacking among different agencies in their efforts to curtail the emerging delinquent career of early-onset offenders.
- Three pathways to chronic delinquency can be distinguished:

  Overt pathway—From aggression, to fighting, to violence.

  Covert pathway—From minor covert behavior, to property damage, to serious delinquency.

  Authority conflict pathway—From stubborn behavior, to defiance, to authority avoidance.
- While relatively few in number (15 percent of the Rochester sample), chronic violent delinquents self-reported committing 75 percent of all violent offenses.
- Any successful effort to reduce youth violence and juvenile delinquency clearly must deal with hard-core, chronic offenders.
- No current ability enables us to **accurately** predict **who** will be chronic offenders. The most promising approach is to use our knowledge of developmental pathways to identify youth already moving towards chronic offending.
- Characteristics of chronic violent offenders:

  Family—The offenders are less attached to and less monitored by their parents.

  School—The offenders have less commitment to school and attachment to teachers.

  Peers—They have more delinquent peers and are more apt to be gang members.

  Neighborhood—They are more likely to reside in poor, high-crime-rate areas.

The authors drew the following inferences:

- Because there is no single cause of youth violence, intervention programs need to be comprehensive, dealing with the above multiple causes of delinquency.
- Particular attention needs to be focused on peer networks.
- Delinquent behavior should not be left unattended because it leads to the deterioration of prosocial skills and to the acquisition of other problem behaviors.
- Because of the co-occurrence of problem behaviors and their interlocking relationships, the transition to adulthood for chronic offenders is questionable.
- Intervention and treatment are imperative.

The study directors offered the following objectives for treatment programs:

- A clear need exists for integrated and holistic treatment programs.
- Treatment programs need to be tailored to the unique set of risk and causal factors associated with each youth.
- Service delivery systems need to be tightly integrated because of the co-occurrence and "stacking" of problem behaviors.
- Treatment programs, it appears, often need to start early.

Conditions of Confinement

In a 1991 national study of conditions of confinement in juvenile detention and correctional facilities (Parent et al., 1993), institutional crowding was found to be a pervasive problem. Thousands of juvenile offenders, more than 75 percent of the confined population, were housed in facilities that violated one or more standards related to living space (facility design capacity, sleeping areas, and living unit size). Between 1987 and 1991, the percentage of confined juveniles living in facilities in which the daily population exceeded design capacity increased from 36 percent to 47 percent. Crowding was found to be associated with higher rates of institutional violence, suicidal behavior, and greater reliance on the use of short-term isolation. Sixty-five percent of all juvenile correctional administrators interviewed said their facilities had crowding problems.

The study found that the percentage of minority juveniles in detention and correctional facilities is increasing. Between 1987 and 1991, the minority population in detention and correctional facilities grew from 53 percent to 63 percent of the confined population.

The study also found that many confined juveniles are held in public facilities that are under court orders or consent decrees. Twenty-three percent of juveniles held in public facilities were confined in a facility under a court order or consent decree. Juveniles in public training schools and reception centers were much more likely to be confined in a facility under a court order or consent decree (34 percent and 65 percent respectively), compared with public detention centers (8 percent). More than 50 percent of detention centers reported they were under court orders or consent decrees for crowding (Parent et al., 1993).

This study was required by Congress in the 1988 amendments to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act. It is the first such nationwide investigation of conditions in secure juvenile detention and correctional facilities. Using nationally recognized correctional standards, the research team assessed how juvenile offenders' basic needs are met, how institutional security and resident safety are maintained, what

treatment programming is provided, and how juveniles' rights are protected.

Program Evaluations

In 1971 Massachusetts closed its training schools and replaced them with a network of decentralized community-based services and a few, small secure-care units for violent juvenile offenders. This constituted the most sweeping reform in youth corrections in the United States since the establishment of juvenile training schools and juvenile courts in the 19th century. Massachusetts demonstrated that juvenile corrections need not be centered around large training schools.

Several evaluations of Massachusetts' community-based programs have found them to be effective. The initial study, conducted by Ohlin and his colleagues (Coates, Miller, and Ohlin, 1978) did not find dramatic differences. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency conducted a 10-year followup study in 1984–85. Designed to examine the effectiveness of current youth services for delinquent youth, it compared the Massachusetts' juvenile corrections programs with those of California. It revealed that youth who spent 5 months in a Massachusetts program followed by supervision in the community had a rearrest rate of 51 percent, while youth who spent 14 months in a California institution had a rearrest rate of 70 percent. Of those released from Massachusetts correctional programs, only 23 percent were reincarcerated while 62 percent were reincarcerated in California. This study also found that youth under community-based supervision in Massachusetts accounted for a small fraction of crimes in the State, and that there was a tendency over time for these youth to commit less serious crimes (Krisberg, Austin, and Steele, 1989).

Other States have followed Massachusetts' lead in closing large training schools and replacing them with community-based programs. Pennsylvania has closed its training school and provided a combination of programs run by the State and private organizations. Utah has opted for community-based programs in lieu of training schools. Maryland has closed one training school and reduced the population of the remaining one. Florida has reduced its training school population and developed a variety of community-based programs (Lerner, 1990).

In the early 1980's, Utah closed its single large juvenile institution in favor of a community-based approach to juvenile corrections. Small secure units were built for chronic and violent juvenile offenders, who averaged 30 prior convictions. These maximum security treatment facilities housed 30–40 youth per facility. Three evaluations have found the small secure facilities to be effective. One of these studies found that only 6 percent of released offenders were charged with violent crimes during a 12-month followup period. Most of the felony crime was property oriented (Krisberg, 1992).

A national assessment of community-based interventions for the serious juvenile offender was conducted in the early 1980's (Altschuler and Armstrong, 1984). The study was designed to identify programs which, in the view of State and local authorities, effectively provided services to the target group. It found that programs perceived by authorities to be effective were characterized by case management, extensive aftercare, active client program involvement, control and security, education, and counseling. Those programs perceived as effective for more serious juvenile offenders established and maintained security through smaller numbers of clients, adequate staff, and program content rather than through dependence on high levels of mechanical and physical constraints. All of the effective residential programs used graduated systems of control and supervision and placed greater degrees of responsibility on youth as they moved toward complete reintegration into the community.

In 1985 the RAND Corporation examined the effectiveness of private-sector programs for dealing with serious juvenile offenders. One of these, Ohio Paint Creek Youth Center (PCYC), funded by OJJDP as a private-sector alternative, provides residential services for up to 34 male youth ages 15–18 who have been convicted of first- or second-degree felonies. PCYC was found to effectively combine treatment, education, employment, life skills, and specialized counseling and support services into one coordinated approach, in addition to providing staff and residents with a secure setting through intensive staff and peer supervision and influence (OJJDP, 1988).

The Unified Delinquency Intervention Services (UDIS) Program, a Chicago experiment designed and funded by the State of Illinois, provided a system of "graduated sanctions" for chronic inner-city juvenile offenders. Level I sanctions consisted of less drastic interventions, such as arrest and release, temporary detention, and informal supervision. Level II comprised the UDIS program, consisting of community-based services provided for those who recidivated at Level I. Level III, for those who failed at the second level, consisted of commitment to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

In 1979 Murray and Cox conducted a followup study of the "suppression effects" of each level of sanctions. This research sought to determine the effectiveness of each type of sanction in reducing recidivism and suppressing additional crimes. It reveals that:

- Both the UDIS program and incarceration through the Department of Corrections had a substantial impact on postprogram arrests, court appearances, and violent offenses among the chronic offenders.

- The effects of least drastic interventions, such as arrest and release, temporary detention, and supervision on chronic offenders were minimal.
- The costs of the UDIS program and Department of Corrections programs were about the same (Murray and Cox, 1979).

This research added to the body of knowledge that community-based programs can be effective in treating high-risk offenders. At the same time, it supported program development for chronic, violent juveniles by demonstrating that programs that incorporate a system of graduated sanctions have a higher likelihood of success.

OJJDP's Violent Juvenile Offender Research and Development Program, Part I, was established in 1981. It was designed to test the capability of the juvenile justice system to deal with the chronic, serious, violent offender in an innovative fashion as compared with traditional juvenile justice and adult court intervention. A specific goal of the effort was to test an intervention model for the treatment and reintegration of violent juvenile offenders, designed to reduce violent crimes through an individually-based case management strategy with strong emphasis on planned, integrated aftercare.

A total of 244 males were assigned to treatment or "control" groups. Those provided treatment had been charged with an average of nearly eight prior offenses, resulting in an average of more than three prior adjudications each. One-fourth had previously been incarcerated.

Evaluation results (Fagan et al., 1984, 1984a, 1987) showed that:

- The case management approach helped identify appropriate treatment and ensured a consistent reward structure.
- Case managers felt that the violent offenders whose treatment they managed made progress in virtually all treatment areas while still in the program.
- Treatment youth showed the most consistent progress in strengthened family relations.

Had the funded jurisdictions not experienced implementation problems, there is every reason to believe that this program would have been successful. The evaluation showed program effectiveness where implementation progressed smoothly, and many of the program elements have been found to be successful in other studies. These include:

- Case management systems to ensure a consistent reward structure and appropriate treatment.
- Comprehensive diagnostic assessment and availability of a variety of services to meet individual needs.
- A correctional system of graduated sanctions.
- Small residential treatment settings.
- A multiphased approach to gradually moving serious offenders from more secure settings back into the community, with postprogram reintegration services.

Another OJJDP-funded program, the Serious Habitual Offender Program, began in 1983. This program was based largely on the results of the studies by Wolfgang, Shannon, and Hamparian. It focused on 20 cities in which police, prosecutors, schools, welfare, and probation workers were organized to gather, maintain, and share information on their worst juvenile offenders—those with three or more serious (UCR Part I) offenses. These "serious habitual offenders" (SHO's) were given priority attention for arrest and prosecution. The strategy was to "throw the book" at them and, through escalating penalties, to lock them up through their crime-prone years. In the 20 cities, SHO's included less than 2 percent of all arrested juveniles. Oxnard, California, has probably had the most success with the strategy. Recent claims attribute to the program a 38-percent drop in violent crimes (including a 60-percent drop in murders) and a 29-percent decrease in burglaries (Methvin, 1991:4).

See Krisberg (1992) and Greenwood and Zimring (1985) for other evaluations of community-based alternatives to large training schools.

Summary

This brief review of statistics, research, and program evaluations highlights the scope and magnitude of the serious, violent, and chronic juvenile delinquency problem. The statistics indicate that juveniles responsible for serious and violent delinquency are presenting a growing problem for overloaded juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. This is all the more troubling when considered in light of the fact that the size of the juvenile-aged population will continue to increase in the 1990's as a result of the "baby boom echo." Consequently the volume of juvenile crime can be expected to increase and, coupled with evidence that juvenile crime is becoming more violent, the public perception of a crisis in juvenile crime can be expected to grow.

The research demonstrates that a small proportion of juveniles accounts for the bulk of serious and violent juvenile delinquency. Recent research has shed light on factors that push juveniles down pathways to chronic delinquency. The link between child abuse and neglect and later serious, violent, and chronic delinquency offers an additional target for delinquency prevention programs.

Our review of the program evaluation literature focused primarily on the alternatives to large congregate-care correc-

tional facilities, which have not proven to be effective. Examination of the program evaluation literature indicates that nonresidential community-based alternatives to incarceration and small secure confinement options are the most promising alternatives. Programs that appear to work best are also characterized by graduated systems of control and supervision, use of multidisciplinary case management techniques, risk-needs assessments, and highly structured treatment delivery coupled with intensive aftercare.

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