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MISSOURI DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW
and
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

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DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The seeds of the Division of Youth Services were planted in 1889 with the establishment of the Training School for Boys in Boonville and the Training School for Girls in Chillicothe. Much later (1926) the Training School for Negro Girls (at Tipton) was opened. Although little is known of the early operations of these programs, it is safe to assume that the primary focus was on custodial care. During the first half of the 20th century, the Training School for Boys operated with an average population of 400. Determinate sentencing resulted in lengths of stay varying from 9 months to 13 years.

With the ratification of a new state constitution in 1945, the State Board of Training Schools was established, and for the first time a statutory mandate for "rehabilitation and guidance of juvenile offenders" appears. Under this law, the training schools were considered to be educational institutions, rather than penal institutions. In 1948 additional legislation established indeterminate sentencing, age ranges (12 years through 26 years for boys and 12 years through 20 years for girls), aftercare, and merit system authority over the agency's employees. Under the state Reorganization Act of 1974, the Board of Training Schools became the Division of Youth Services within the Department of Social Services -- where it remains to this day. Currently age ranges are 12 through 17 for both boys and girls.

Systematic agency planning began in the early 1970's. Early goals and objectives included the de-emphasis of large rural institutions, the establishment of smaller treatment facilities, and the movement toward geographic regionalization whereby youth could be served within a closer proximity to their home.

During this time period, the Training School for Girls (Chillicothe) was closed, a state-wide court diversion program was established, family therapy was implemented, and five new regional residential treatment facilities were opened (Hogan Street Regional Youth Center, Delmina Woods Youth Center, Camp Pa-He-Tai, Babler Lodge, and the Northwest Regional Youth Center in Lee's Summit).

The 1980's was seeing the continuation of the agency's direction toward regionalization, an expanding continuum of treatment, and the phase-out of large rural institutions. During this period of time, the Training School for Boys (Boonville) was closed and five new residential treatment facilities were opened: Northwest Regional Youth Center in Kansas City (previously at the Lee's Summit location), St. Louis Regional Youth Center, Community Learning Center, the Northeast Regional Youth Center and the Special Treatment Unit.

Today, the direction of the Division of Youth Services is still representative of the early beliefs in regionalization and decentralization. The agency found that with decentralized decision-making and regional programming, an improved quality of services

occurred. This management philosophy also enabled central office managers to become more involved in agency planning and resource development. Not only the quality of service delivery, but also the agency-wide ownership of DYS direction, philosophy, and goals is a by-product of this process.

PREVENTION PROGRAMMING

Juvenile Court Diversion -

This program is designed to encourage development of services to youth at the local level while diverting youth from commitment to the Division of Youth Services. The initial thrust was directed at the rural areas of the state where limited resources impede the development of programs for youth. In recent years, however, urban circuits have been involved in the program. Juvenile Court Diversion operates as a grant-in-aid program. An annual announcement to Juvenile Courts encourages them to submit a project proposal. The division's administrative staff rank project requests based on guideline compliance; need feasibility, previous experience of the project, and other factors known to the division. Traditionally, 23 to 26 (approximately 55 percent) of the judicial circuits receive funding from the Juvenile Court Diversion Program. Typical projects developed by the courts include: intensive probation; community group counseling; individual and family counseling; purchase of group and foster care and alternative educational services; and family preservation services. These programs are intended to divert less serious offenders from DYS and allow the courts to work with youth and families at a lesser cost to the taxpayer. Many more youth and families are served by these resources than those counted as diversions from DYS because of the preventive nature of the program.

McGruff Program -

Beginning in 1985 DYS joined McGruff, mascot of the National Crime Prevention Coalition in the development and performance of safety and juvenile delinquency prevention programs for pre-school and early elementary school children.

The programs, available through DYS, include personal safety, general crime prevention, vandalism/shoplifting prevention, child abuse awareness, and drug abuse prevention. Each region has trained teams assisting local juvenile courts, police departments, and the Division of Family Services in the coordination, development and performance of school programs.

The effort in the prevention field is directed at reaching children during formative years when behaviors and attitudes are learned, questioned, and tested. Reaching young children with positive figures like McGruff, along with open-ended discussion and films, attempts to teach youth to think before acting when faced with negative peer pressure.

ARRAY OF SERVICES

Service Delivery System

Introduction -

In FY'89, the Missouri Division of Youth Services experienced a 30 percent increase in commitments receiving 917 youth compared to 704 in FY'88. The influx of the additional 213 juvenile offenders during FY'89 and the traditional treatment approach of the division to place the majority of commitments in residential care resulted in a growing shortage of beds. The overall increase in commitments resulted in early releases, delayed admittance of new commitments, and operating existing facilities at over-budgeted capacity.

The growing commitment rate, along with the internal measures to reduce overcrowding in residential programs, frustrated juvenile court officials and hindered the division in fulfilling its statutory mandate. In an effort to deal with these problems, the division conducted an independent review of its existing continuum of care. To assist in the review, the American Correctional Association provided funds to allow juvenile corrections professionals to visit Missouri to review and provide input and recommendations to help DYS develop alternatives to residential care. Funding from the American Correctional Association also allowed DYS staff to visit such states as Utah, and Massachusetts, states which have successfully implemented a community-based model, and Kentucky which had developed day treatment services for juveniles.

In the process of identifying successful community-based programming throughout the country, the division learned of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and their interest in working with states in the development of alternatives to traditional institutional services for youthful offenders. After a meeting with division administrators, the judiciary, and legislative leaders, the Clark Foundation agreed to provide funds for a consultant to assist the division in developing a menu of community-based services. During the contract period, the division reviewed the existing continuum of care while making division staff aware of such community-based services as proctor care (residence with a positive role model), tracking (intensive supervision), and day treatment (educational/counseling programming). Through the guidance of Paul DeMuro and Russ VanVleet, two nationally recognized consultants in the juvenile justice field, services were begun utilizing division staff and public universities as providers. All of this was done through the utilization of existing funding.

At the same time the division was moving toward a community-based model, a risk and needs assessment was developed and implemented for evaluating committed youth. The instrument utilized takes into account pertinent factors involving the youth's delinquent history and identifies the general treatment needs of the youth along with the potential threat to public safety they might pose. Through the use of this instrument, the division found that many minor offenders could benefit from non-residential services and thereby avoid a more expensive placement in a residential facility without sacrificing

public safety.

Case Management -

A case management system has been developed to provide for the assessment, treatment planning, coordination and accessing of services, and monitoring and evaluation of the services provided for each youth and their family. At the point of commitment, a service coordinator is assigned to the youth and family and continues to advocate for the youth's family, coordinate services, and provide needed assistance including post-residential supervision. The case management services coordinator also develops community-based partnerships related to job placement, alternative education, and college placement, among others.

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

The division has expanded its array of community-based services to include non-residential, group homes and residential facilities. A brief description of each follows:

Intensive Case Monitoring -

Intensive case monitoring services are provided by a tracker. Contact (via personal visits or telephone calls) is made throughout the day and evenings to monitor the youth's behavior and activities and to provide support and counseling if needed. Trackers are provided by local universities through a contractual agreement with DYS, and through individual contracts. Background checks are completed upon all applicants and training is mandatory prior to matches occurring. Efforts are made to compliment personalities and interests of the youth with that of the tracker.

Day Treatment -

Provides a structured alternative educational program which provides traditional academic courses, G.E.D. classes, career planning, job placement and community service supported by individual, group, and family therapy services. These programs provide a stable, structured learning environment wherein individual attention is provided to each youth during a 12-month school year.

Proctor Care -

Specialized alternative living in which a youth resides with a young adult proctor, usually a college student who serves as a role model, and provide the youth with room, board, tutoring, and social skills development. Proctors may be provided by local universities through a contractual agreement with DYS, much like the Intensive Case Monitoring program, and through individual contracts.

Family Therapy -

Family therapists are employed by DYS to provide family therapy based on a systems approach to adjudicated and non-adjudicated youth. In addition to working with the Division of Youth Services's youth and their families, the family therapy unit accepts referrals from juvenile courts, the child welfare agencies, mental health agencies, and schools, as well as other sources. DYS staff also provide systems training to other agency staff and court personnel.

Jobs Program -

The division, in conjunction with Missouri's Department of Economic Development (DED) provides funds to the 13 DED regional offices. Those offices in turn provide public and private sector jobs to older DYS youth who remain in the community following commitment, or are returning to the community following a residential placement.

Short-Term Program -

The division operates one specialized short-term program which provides an alternative to traditional residential settings. The program is located at Green Gables Lodge near the Lake of the Ozarks. This facility takes groups of 8 to 12 youth through a 5 week close-ended program. Participants include youth who have been recently committed to the division, as well as those who have been unable to respond to a conventional program. The program consists of a group centered treatment approach which includes outdoor education skills aimed at improving self-confidence and self-image. Other components of the program include career education, and life skills training. Upon successfully completing this program, youth are returned to their communities under the division's aftercare program.

90-Day Program -

Several 90-day residential based programs have been implemented. These programs are usually open-ended, curriculum based, and have a structured aftercare program including intensive family therapy. Weekly curriculum modules include a variety of subject matter and seek to enhance the youth's self esteem, knowledge, and coping strategies.

Group Home Programs -

Group homes are the least restrictive of the residential programs operated by the division. The group home setting is typically a large house with the capacity for 10 youth. The staff provide twenty-four hour supervision in a home-like setting. Youth are on a daily schedule with time allowed for both interaction in the community via school, jobs and community projects, and treatment services within the facility, consisting of group, individual, and family counseling. The youth in these programs participate in public schools and vocational programs, or attend facility on-site educational programs or

contractual education services where available.

Residential Facilities -

The division operates 10 programs that provide a moderately structured environment. The programs include 3 park camps located within state parks and operated in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources. They are Watkins Mill, Camp Avery, and Babler Lodge. The remaining programs are Delmina Woods, Bissell Hall, Fort Bellefontaine, Spanish Lake, Twin Rivers, Sears Youth Center, and Sierra Osage.

The youth are divided into treatment groups of 10, with similar staffing patterns as in the group homes to provide 24-hour supervision. A traditional school program is provided by full-time teachers on the site with basic education, G.E.D. programming, and various remedial/special education activities provided.

Additionally, the youth in the Watkins Mill, Camp Avery, and Babler Lodge programs spend a portion of their time working on projects to improve and maintain the grounds in the park. The Department of Natural Resources pays the youth for their work.

The target group for these programs are youth who cannot function as well in community environments and, therefore, require a more structured setting. Typically, these youngsters have participated repeatedly in property offenses. They are not serious offenders, but instead are immature and require continuous structure. In some cases, these are youngsters who have not succeeded in community-based programs.

SECURE CARE

The division operates 4 highly structured secure care programs. All the programs provide educational classes and vocational training on site. Recreational facilities are also provided on campus. Scheduled outings into the community occur often with the purpose of involving the youth in community helping projects.

The target group for these programs includes the more sophisticated offender. Usually these youngsters have longer offense records which may include crimes against people. As a group, these offenders tend to be chronologically older and may also include those who have been unsuccessful in community-based programs. These youth require a higher degree of structure.

All the secure care programs use a group treatment modality with individual and family work provided. The content of the educational program is broadly classified as basic, remedial, special and vocational education. Emphasis is placed on the acquisition of information (knowledge) and skills which meet basic and practical needs of the student. As with the community-based programs, the secure care programs are included in the division's 94-142 Compliance Plan. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) including both youth goals and staff strategies is developed for each youth. Parents are encouraged to

attend these planning meetings.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Community Learning Center -

The division currently operates 2 facilities which are of a unique nature--the first being the Community Learning Center in Springfield, Missouri. This unit, much like the traditional group home, is a structured residential environment for 10 youth. The residents are delinquent or status offenders who have been identified as youth needing special programming due to their limited mental capacities. The Community Learning Center operates its own special school with an education staff provided by the Division of Youth Services. The length of stay in this facility is approximately 9 to 10 months, which by design is longer than the average length of stay in the division as a whole. The treatment program, although conducted in a group environment, involves a great deal of individual counseling and tutoring with basic living skills being interlaced throughout.

Special Treatment Unit -

In 1987 the division opened the Special Treatment Unit. This facility is a closed institution located in a building on the campus of the Fulton State Mental Hospital. It is a cooperative effort between the Department of Mental health and the Division of Youth Services, in that the Department of Mental Health is providing the physical plant and institutional services, however, the staff and program are provided by the Division of Youth Services. This is an 8-bed unit and is designed to service the aggressive, serious emotionally disturbed delinquent youth committed to the agency. This is a locked facility and all institutional services are provided within the facility. The primary treatment modality is individual counseling with psychological and psychiatric counseling available through a contractual arrangement with the University of Missouri-Columbia.

AFTERCARE

Virtually all youth committed to the Division of Youth Services are placed on aftercare status at the point they are returned to the community. Service coordinators insure services are provided when the youth returns to community living.

The primary role of the service coordinator is to provide support that aids the youth in functioning in the community. This support may be of referral, supervisory, or counseling nature. It is the goal of aftercare to provide supervision resources to youth in a community setting which will assist them in making a satisfactory community adjustment. A satisfactory community adjustment is defined as a youth being able to function in a community without becoming involved in activities which would cause him or her to be referred to a court for delinquent behavior.

DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES OFFICES AND FACILITIES

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