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THE BRIDGE AGENCY  
CCCJ PROJECT EVALUATION - 1973

Prepared By: Paul Haire  
May 28, 1974

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May 28, 1974

Mr. Kenneth Monteith  
California Council on Criminal Justice  
720 - 13th Street  
Modesto, CA 95354

Dear Mr. Monteith:

RE: CCCJ Project Evaluation - 1973

Enclosed are two copies of the CCCJ Project Evaluation for the 1973 year for the Bridge Agency, Community Services & Counseling, as prepared by Mr. Paul Haire.

I have not forwarded a copy to your office in Sacramento, as I assume that you will forward one of these copies you are receiving.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact me.

Sincerely,

JOHN M. GALLAGHER  
Agency Director

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO  
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA  
May 28, 1974

Mr. John M. Gallagher  
Director, The Bridge Agency  
Community Services & Counseling  
P.O. Box 2068  
Merced, CA 95340

Dear Mike:

Enclosed, in an original and two copies, is the Bridge Agency's  
1973 Project Evaluation, for the California Council on Criminal  
Justice Grant, Project Year 1973.

If you have any questions concerning any of the material contained  
in this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

PAUL HAIRE, Director  
Drug Outreach Program  
California State University, Fresno

PH/a  
Enclosures

CHAPTER I  
PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

The purpose of the present evaluation is to determine if the Bridge, Community Services & Counseling Center, Merced, California, has fulfilled the objectives set forth in its application for funds to the California Council of Criminal Justice during the year 1973.

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CHAPTER II  
PROJECT OBJECTIVES<sup>1</sup>

The following revised objectives and goals were submitted to the California Council of Criminal Justice to obtain funding during 1973. The programs of the Bridge were set up to achieve these objectives.

- I. To reduce the crisis level of drug abuse in the junior and senior schools through awareness and counseling programs.

Goals in Achieving the Objectives:

1. To reduce by 15 percent the number of juvenile drug arrests in the project area, as the 1971 data is the only available, this figure will be used as a baseline.
2. To receive five juvenile referrals per month from Merced County Probation Department; these juveniles will fall under sections 601 and 602, W & I.
3. To make eight, one-hour presentations on drug abuse prevention and education to residents of Merced County Juvenile Hall per month. This on-going program will include 80 juveniles per month.
4. To spend 80 hours per month in individual and group counseling at the junior and senior high schools in the project area (nine-month school year).
5. To make one-hour presentations on drug abuse prevention and the Bridge project to 950 high school students and 700 junior high students.
6. To receive 25 drug-related client center visits per month.
7. To receive 30 drug-related emergency phone calls per month.

- II. To provide community drug education and awareness programs and provide comprehensive drug information and referral services.

Goals in Achieving the Objective:

1. To expand the existing information and referral 24-hour telephone services to 50 percent of the residents of Merced County.

<sup>1</sup>Continuation of Grant No. 1218 to California Council of Criminal Justice (Bridge).

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2. To make six presentations per month through the Bridge Speaker's Bureau. Presentations will be made to service organizations, private groups, and Merced College classes on the topics of drug abuse prevention and education, the Bridge, youth in crisis, etc.
3. To provide four in-service training programs concerning drug abuse to teachers and administrators during the funding period.
4. To provide staff training to other departments in Merced County as follows: Police - eight hours; Probation - four hours; and Welfare - eight hours. Additional departmental training to be provided as requested.
5. To make 80 referrals per month to other community agencies and persons including the Bridge.
6. In cooperation with the University of the Pacific School of Pharmacy, to analyze two street drug samples per month.
7. To conduct a comprehensive drug use and attitude survey among Merced College students.

- III. To provide free, confidential counseling and crisis intervention, 24 hours a day.

Goals in Achieving the Objective:

1. To expand existing telephone service to 50 percent of the County population.
2. To receive 300 emergency telephone calls per month.
3. To be involved in 65 individual counseling hours per month, 45 of these to involve juveniles.
4. To receive 15 referrals from other agencies and community persons per month (this figure does not include students seen at the junior and senior high school as an independent referral method exists in these cases; nor does this figure include the five Probation referrals per month).
5. To receive 150 client center visits per month.
6. To provide 90 group counseling sessions for juveniles (includes group counseling meeting at the junior high schools).
7. Depending on Probation Department funding, to co-sponsor group family counseling sessions involving Bridge and Probation referrals.

- IV. To train 100 community volunteers.

Goals in Achieving the Objective:

1. To train 60 persons in crisis intervention, including drug abuse; each person will receive 24 hours of training.

CHAPTER III  
BACKGROUND OF AGENCY

Description of the Agency:

The Bridge, a Crisis Intervention and Counseling Center, is located in Merced (28,000), in the County of Merced (104,000). The Bridge was established late in 1971 through the joint efforts of several local agencies as a community self-help program. The Bridge was to be an organization and a place where persons and families from all segments of the community might seek services in the field of drug abuse, emotional, family, and other personal problems. The Bridge was designed to act as a suicide prevention service and to give immediate help for other problems, either directly through its trained personnel, or by referral to an appropriate agency or professional person.

These services are now offered by the Bridge, but there has been an expansion of these services, as the need was found or thought to exist. In order to do this, new means of support or funding had to be found. The original programs, as well as the new ones, will be described in the following pages.

Housing:

The Bridge is located in a single family dwelling on "G" Street, one of the main East/West streets of Merced. The house has a large living room in which meetings or classes of 25 to 30 people can be held. To the right of the entrance is the Director's office. Four counselors or coordinators occupy another large room as their office. There is a room in the back of the house where staff and volunteers receive the calls on "crisis lines" on two

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2. To train 40 people in drug abuse prevention and education through the use of the "Social Seminar"; one-third of these people will be teachers.
  3. To provide monthly in-service training to Bridge volunteers; 25 volunteers involved in two hours of training monthly.
- V. To develop twenty (20) crisis homes.

Goals in Achieving the Objective:

1. The development of the homes will be on the following schedule:
  - 1-3 months: planning, recruitment, and development of training programs.
  - 3-6 months: five homes available.
  - 3-9 months: twelve homes available.
2. Each home will provide space for one or two children.
3. Eight hours of training per home will be provided.
4. One hour in-service training per month per home will be provided.
5. Lengths of stay in any house will be from one to five days.
6. Referrals to be received from Probation and Welfare departments and the community at large.

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phones. The secretary occupies the "breakfast nook". Two other counselors occupy the room off the "living room". A small room off this room is used for counseling or private meetings.

Programs:Phone Service:

The 24-hour crisis telephone service provides trained volunteers who are equipped to give information and referrals, or to merely listen to people needing help on the entire spectrum of problem areas: drug problems, suicide, marriage, family or emotional problems. Referrals are given to all other City, County, and State agencies.

Crisis Home Plan:

This program is to provide a maximum three-day emergency housing for children and youth in an immediate crisis. The people of the Crisis Home are to be trained to do crisis counseling, and, hopefully, resolve the conflict in the young person's life so he or she might return to his natural home.

South Merced Youth Group:

Junior high school age youth meet on Monday and Friday each week at the Scout Hut at McNamara Park for a combined function of business and general rap sessions. Activities and projects are planned during the first segment; then personal concerns are discussed.

Volunteer Training:

Volunteer training consists of a twenty-four hour college level course for credit at Merced College with special emphasis

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on phone counseling given by one of the members of the Bridge Staff. An additional eight hours of training in referral resources and procedures, as well as supervised role playing is added. Volunteer in-service training is provided on a monthly basis.

In-Service Training:

This program is intended to be a two-way communication mechanism with other agencies in Merced. By in-service training for other agencies, the Bridge tries to show them how they might make maximum use of its services and training. The Bridge requests in-service training for itself from other agencies, to gain insight as to the best way to improve its referral services, make use of other areas of expertise and approaches, and to create understanding and rapport among the agencies. These agencies include: Police Department, Mental Health, Castle Air Force Base Medical Staff, Child Protective Services, Probation, and the Emergency Room at General Hospital.

Drop-In Counseling Program:

The counseling center, the Bridge's office on "G" Street, is open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and on Saturday from Noon until 7:00 p.m., to drop-ins who wish counseling or just want someplace to hang out for awhile. One of the staff counselors is always available to anyone who comes in during the hours the Bridge is open.

Curriculum Development:

One of the Bridge staff is a County Curriculum Coordinator for all the school districts in Merced County, in accordance with

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the recommendations of AB 244. The approach of the drug abuse curriculum, worked out by the Bridge staff, has been to work on building the individual's self-concept in order to make decisions about life rather than just give factual information. It is hoped that this curriculum will prepare young people to make decisions about all aspects of living as well as decisions on drugs.

Juvenile Hall:

The Bridge staff has a program at Juvenile Hall. The juveniles are contacted Saturday morning for two hours in discussion groups. Different activities and approaches are made to stimulate discussion. By this means, staff are attempting to build trust relationships with a segment of youth that is otherwise generally distrustful of adults.

Diversion Program:

The Diversion Program diverts first-time adult drug offenders from the criminal justice system, and, hopefully, rehabilitates them. The Bridge is planning to have a half-time counselor-coordinator, a full-time counselor, and a half-time secretary to implement this program for the first six months. The program will have five parts: (a) initial screening; (b) selected testing; (c) drug education; (d) selected educational programs; and (e) counseling.

Community In-Service Training:

The Bridge is coordinating a community In-Service Drug Abuse Training Program. The intent of the program is to provide two weeks of intensive training in community drug programs to a team

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of persons from the community. The Community team is to attend a two-week training session in Berkeley at the "Awareness House". Team members then will meet to develop a community action plan and coordinate the programs.

Funding:

The sources funding the Bridge are local, the City and County of Merced, as well as the State of California. Some of the positions on the following list have just been funded, and this will be treated in the evaluative section of this report.

Position Funded By:

## City of Merced:

Bridge Agency Director  
Counselor (Merced)  
Counselor (Atwater)  
Juvenile Hall Counselor (Part-Time)\*  
Volunteer Coordinator (Part-Time)  
Steno-Clerk

## California Council of Criminal Justice:

Program Coordinator  
Counselor (Merced)

## County of Merced:

County Curriculum Coordinator\*  
County Diversion Counselor/Coordinator\*  
Counselor (Livingston)\*  
Counselor (Los Banos)\*  
Clerk-Typist (Part-Time)\*

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\*Indicates New Program.

CHAPTER IV  
DESIGN

The community has recently focused much attention on evaluative research by asking the basic question: "How well does a social program or project work?"

In the 1930's when the New Deal social welfare programs were set up, program evaluations were not used to any appreciable extent. We know little about the effectiveness of the New Deal social welfare programs, because only the grossest measures are known to exist, such as number of projects funded, persons and families served, and funds expended.

However, the experience of the 1960's in raising doubts about the effectiveness of many social action programs is yielding significant improvements in the lives of the disadvantaged.

This study is designed to determine both the quantitative and qualitative effectiveness of the Bridge. The quantitative study will be based on a comparison of the statistics with Bridge's goals. The qualitative approach will be based on a process-oriented qualitative research model which utilizes personal monitoring and interviewing of community professional personnel.

The qualitative study is especially helpful in noting institutional and individual change, and indicates shifts in the program in response to program efforts, and it has the advantage of regarding the target population as a system, composed of interacting parts, such as criminal justice system, educational system, etc. Such an approach, hopefully, provides information to the program

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enabling modification of agency actions to maximize the impact of the program on relevant targets.

CHAPTER V  
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will be effected by three methods: (1) a comparison of statistics with the Bridge's goal; (2) personal observation or monitoring; and (3) interviewing of "related" professional personnel.

Statistics: From a comparison of statistics of the records kept by the Bridge staff, the following questions will be sought: Did the Bridge reach its goals statistically? Who keeps the statistics? Are they accurate? How are the reports presented?

Monitoring: Observation of the work procedures, methods, and physical layout of the Bridge for a 15 day monitoring period.

The answers to the following questions will be sought: Is there a Board of Directors, and is it representative of all segments of the population? How does the Board operate? Who are the members of the staff and what are their qualifications? What is staff systemization? How are decisions made? Does staff have input in decisions and program planning? What type of supervision takes place? How are staff members and volunteers trained? How is the staff hired? Who answers the phone? Who answers the phone at night and how do the calls come through? What are the means of communication among the staff? How are the statistics kept? Are they accurate? Is the location suitable? Enough room? Furniture? Auxiliary support?

All the staff will be interviewed concerning their positions and functions. Staff meetings and training classes will be attended by the present writer.

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Interviewing: Interviews conducted with the community's professional personnel with whom the Bridge works were held with people from Mental Health, Welfare Department, Schools, Police, Probation; and Juvenile Hall. Volunteers working at the Bridge were also interviewed.

The persons chosen for interviews were selected according to position and - among some holding a given position - at random.

Mental Health: Two of the Psychiatric Social Workers were interviewed, since this group received referrals from the Bridge. Two members of the administration were chosen because of the close association of the whole department with the Bridge.

Welfare Department: Two members of the Child Protective Services were interviewed.

Schools: The Principals, Counselors, and one teacher chosen at random from each of the Junior High Schools were interviewed, since these are the schools which the Bridge has served regularly and for the longest period of time (in third year) plus two principals and two teachers randomly chosen from the grade schools. The Bridge has very little contact with the grade schools.

Police: The Chief, Captain in charge of day, Lieutenant in charge of night watch, Sergeant in charge of Juvenile Division, Lieutenant in charge of Public Relations, Sergeant of Police Community Aid, and two officers randomly chosen were all interviewed. This provided interviews with most of the departments which have relationship with the Bridge.

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Probation: Director and three workers chosen at random were interviewed.

Juvenile Hall: Director and two attendants chosen at random were interviewed.

The interviews were conducted with each person in the "related" population and Bridge Volunteers and consisted of open-ended questions. The responses of this "related" population will be grouped according to categories. The following questions will be asked of each group:

Mental Health and Welfare Personnel:

1. Do you know of the Bridge?
2. Have you used the Bridge for referrals? If not, why not? What kind?
3. Has the Bridge given in-service training? Was it helpful?
4. Has the staff of the Bridge referred clients to you?
5. Has the Bridge fully cooperated with you when you requested their services?
6. Is there any way or area in which the Bridge can be a service to you that is not being done at the present?
7. Is there need for an agency such as the Bridge?

School Personnel:

1. What is the Bridge and what service does it provide for the school?
2. Does the Bridge have regular introduction orientation with the students in class?
3. Are there regular group counseling sessions at the school?
4. Does the staff at the Bridge respond when a student wishes to speak with them?
5. Do Bridge staff members respond to teacher's emergency calls?
6. Does any meaningful relationship exist between the Bridge staff and the classroom teachers?
7. Is student drug behavior influenced by the teaching sessions and counseling given by the Bridge staff?
8. Have you attended a "Social Seminar"?

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9. Has in-service training proved beneficial to the teaching staff?
10. Are the members of the Bridge staff capable of establishing a positive relationship with the student?
11. Do you approve of the relationship between the school and the Bridge?
12. Could you suggest a better way of providing the student with the same information and counseling?
13. Are there other ways or areas where the Bridge can serve the school which it is not doing?
14. Have students who have been referred to a counselor of the Bridge, shown a change in behavior, school work, and general attitude?

Police and Probation Personnel:

1. Do you know of the Bridge?
2. Have you used the Bridge for referrals? If not, why not?
3. Has the Bridge given in-service training to you? Was it helpful?
4. Are the members of the Bridge staff cooperative in dealing with you and members of your organization?
5. Are the members of the Bridge staff qualified for their positions?
6. Is there any way the Bridge can assist you that it is not doing at the present time?
7. Has there been recidivism among those referred to and counseled by the Bridge staff?
8. Is the Bridge helping in other ways?

Juvenile Hall Director and Attendants:

1. Does the Bridge staff visit weekly?
2. Do they relate well with the young people?
3. Does the Bridge staff relate well with the Hall's staff?
4. Does the Bridge's program seem to aid the young people?
5. Is it helpful to have the Bridge make this presentation?
6. Could you suggest a better way of presenting the same material to the young people?

Volunteers of the Bridge:

1. How did you find out about the Bridge?
2. How were you recruited as a volunteer?
3. Did the training sessions adequately prepare you to do your work as a volunteer?
4. Did you or did you not attend on-going advanced training?
5. Is the Bridge staff available for consultation?
6. Can you choose the hours you work at the Bridge?
7. Are there any difficulties in the work situation; if so, is there a process to let it be known?

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8. Are you given sufficient resource information about the community to respond to inquiries?
9. Does your training at the Bridge help you in working with people in the community other than when you are working at the Bridge?
10. Do you have any "clients" that call you back on the crisis line?
11. Is there any Bridge policy that you find difficult to accept?
12. What do you think of the personal help from the staff you receive in regards to your phone counseling?
13. Do you think you get support from the staff in your work as a volunteer?
14. If married, how does your spouse feel about you volunteering at the Bridge?

CHAPTER VI  
COMPARISON OF STATISTICS AND BRIDGE'S GOALS

Project Objective I

Goal I: Although drug arrest data is not available for the entire Project area (10 mile radius of Merced), the Merced City Police drug arrests for juveniles have been reduced by a high percent. During the year 1973, there were 11 arrests compared to 54 in 1972, and 68 in 1971. Although there are other positive factors affecting the reduction in arrests, it is statistically apparent that the Bridge is a significant variable in the arrest rate reduction.

Goal II: In the first ten months of 1973, out of 1,936 referrals by the Probation Department, only 11 were made to the Bridge as 601 and 602 referrals. The final count for the year was 19 referrals, or 32 percent of the objective. The referrals for November (three) and December (five), showed an upturn which indicated the success of the in-service program which the Bridge ran in November for the intake workers at the Probation Department. However, in the past, a deterrent to this program seemed to revolve around personnel attitudes. Lack of time and over-extension in other areas prevented more active recruitment of 601 and 602 referrals, while some Probation personnel preferred to offer this kind of service themselves. Greater effort could be made to secure more of these referrals by overcoming these difficulties.

Goal III: The goals of the third objective, eight one-hour presentations a month to 80 juveniles a month, was reached monthly

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for the year. Although the Objective itself was reached, there was an auxiliary goal that was not reached. The members of the Bridge staff were unable to form relationships with the young people in the Hall, because the person making the presentation since August was a part-time worker. The presentation is the only work done by this worker for the Bridge who is also a part-time employee of the Hall. The regular Bridge staff did not have contact with the young people, and, consequently, there was limited follow-up after they left the Hall.

Goal IV: The goal of this objective was to spend 80 hours in individual and group counseling at the school. This goal was unrealistically high, since there were only two Bridge counselors working part-time at the schools. Twenty (20) hours of counseling a week is an exceptional goal for part-time counselors. Few high school or junior high school counselors would spend that much time counseling, even while working full-time. This goal should be realistically revised downward. For the full year, 301 hours were spent in individual and group counseling with 2,288 students accounting for 42 percent of the goal.

Goal V: The Bridge staff was able to make one-hour presentations to 1,049 high school students and 2,113 junior high school students on drug abuse prevention. This was far above the designated goal.

Goal VI: Despite the present, somewhat inaccessible, location, there was an average of twenty-five drug-related client center visits per month as the goal stated. This goal was fulfilled.

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Goal VII: The crisis phone line is used by those using drugs and those wishing information on drugs. Drug related calls were double the number anticipated.

Project Objective II

Goals I-VI: The Bridge's information and referral service has been disseminated to areas covering over 50 percent of the residents of Merced County. Advertising by mail and speaking engagements were also utilized. In-service training was given to teachers, police, probation and welfare, fulfilling most of the goal desired. There were 10 percent less referrals than expected, even though the amount of phone calls reached the projected goal.

Project Objective III

Goal I: The Bridge 24-hour Crisis Telephone Service has been expanded to reach 50 percent of the County's population. The Bridge staff also accepts collect calls from the entire County.

Goal II: The number of crisis line telephone calls exceeded the 30 per month established as the goal. Advertisement of the crisis line was, therefore, successful.

Goal III: The staff had over 65 individual counseling hours per month, of which 45 involved juveniles.

Goal IV: The Bridge received 248 referrals from other agencies. There were 56 from the Probation Department, and, according to Police witnesses, 41 from the Police Department, an average of over three per month.

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Goal V: The goal for client center visits was 50 percent realized. The most obvious reasons are the location of the center, hours available for visits, and physical limitations of space for counseling.

Goal VI: The number of group counseling sessions (127), was 41 percent above the year's projection and reached 1,517 persons. The number reached is very large for a nine-month period, considering the fact that there were only four full-time employees at the Bridge during this period.

Goal VII: Group family counseling sessions, involving Bridge and Probation referrals, were not conducted due to lack of Probation Department funding for this purpose.

There was, however, one group attempted by Murl Silvey, Probation Officer, and David Hodges, Bridge staff, with 12 boys, 10 of whom were on probation. The group began April 17, 1973, met nine times, and terminated June 5, 1973. Of the 12, three had subsequent retentions, all on 381's or glue-sniffing. The final report is dated December 1, 1973.

Project Objective IV

Goal I: The training of community volunteers has surpassed the Bridge's objective, with 71 people trained.

Goal II: Fifty-two (52) people completed the Social Seminar; with 19 of this group being teachers. This represented 142 percent of the goal.

Goal III: The only part of objective four that the Bridge has not fulfilled is the number of volunteers who continue to

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work at the Bridge.

The lack of a full-time Volunteer Coordinator affects the ability of the project to sustain a larger core of volunteers.

Project Objective V

Goals I-VI: The development of crisis homes has been slow. The Bridge has not been able to fulfill its objective of twenty homes. It has three homes in training with a fourth already licensed, and which will be in training by the early part of 1974. This is another program that is time-consuming for a small agency. The staff has doubled in the last three months of 1973, and has set up two branch offices, one in Livingston, and one in Los Banos. This very fact should make the Bridge more visible and aid the development of programs such as crisis homes and volunteers. The small Bridge staff was involved in so many programs that one, not too essential to the total program, was de-emphasized.

CHAPTER VII  
PROJECT MONITORING

Advisory Board:

The Advisory Board of the Bridge represents many elements of the community. The Police, School System, Probation Department, Mental Health, Welfare Department, youth, students, and the Volunteers of the Bridge itself. This provides the Board with a broad community base, since it touches most of the agencies and elements of the community which the Bridge serves and gives input from a representative of each group at the highest level. There are some remediable, but very obvious lacunas. There is no representative of the Black community or west side of Merced, nor is there a representative of the Mexican-American community. This might be part of the reason why only 11.5 percent of the calls received are from Mexican-Americans, representing 20 percent of the community, and 2.6 percent of the calls come from Black persons who form 8 percent of the community. Sixty-six (66) percent of the calls come from Anglos who form 70 percent of the community. This indicates, that, according to percentages in the community, the Anglos meet 98 percent of their quota, while the Blacks meet only 33 percent and the Mexican-Americans, 55 percent.

The Bridge Advisory Board now consists of 12 members. The Board decided to expand its membership to 20 at its November, 1973, meeting, which creates eight openings on the Board of Directors. Prospective Board members of Mexican-American heritage,

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as well as Black, are being contacted in order to fill those vacancies. Several members of the Board volunteered to implement this at the December 5, 1973, meeting. It should be noted that the Merced City Council is responsible for recruiting and appointing Bridge Advisory Committee members.

The Board meetings were held regularly and attended by at least 70 percent of the membership, and several members of the Bridge staff. These meetings were productive, with each person given the opportunity to contribute.

Staff Hiring:

The Bridge staff is hired after interviews with the Director of the Bridge, a member of the Advisory Board, a City representative, and consultation with the rest of the Bridge staff. At present, each applicant interviewed is given approximately a two-hour interview and a tour of the Agency. The other members of the staff have the opportunity to interview the applicant during this period. After a consensus, the person to be hired is chosen from the applicants, and contacted for employment.

Qualifications of Present Staff:

At the present time (December, 1973) there are eleven members of the staff that deal with clients directly. Eight of these have Bachelor of Arts Degrees, five have Master's Degrees in fields related to their work, and all eleven have received special advanced training for their present assignments. All have graduated from the National Drug Abuse Training Center at California State University, Hayward. No member of the staff has less than two

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years of college or less than three years of experience in counseling or drug abuse. All have had previous experience in other agencies.

Training of Staff:

There are several methods which the staff uses to train itself. There are two-hour weekly meetings held for counselors in which techniques, difficulties, and record keeping are discussed. These meetings, conducted by the Program Coordinator, provide a means of communication on what each is doing.

The entire staff meets weekly to arrange schedules and to resolve general difficulties. Speaker appointments are also arranged, and views are aired. At staff meetings, there was an atmosphere of openness and communication. Final decisions are made by the Director, but in matters affecting the entire group, there is more of a consensus than an order. Periodically, in-service training is conducted by other agencies as a means of helping the staff with referrals to those agencies.

The Bridge Agency differs from most City agencies in that the members must work closely together and sustain greater demands on their time. This required dedication and cooperation among the staff mandates that some of their time must be spent in developing organization and understanding.

The staff is hired because of past experience in the field in which they will work, thereby reducing direct training to a minimum. In-service training is given by the Counselor Coordinator for work in the house itself. The main school counselor gives

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aid in coordinating the counseling in the schools, and staff meetings and counselor meetings are used for further training. The staff is also available for assistance at all times.

The House:

The Agency is located in a family dwelling that is located about 150 feet back from the road on "G" Street. Since this is a main artery, it would seem that there would be many drop-ins. However, the street is a large one, and without sidewalks. There is little pedestrian traffic, which does not encourage drop-ins.

This Agency, family dwelling, is used beyond capacity. One large room, a furnished living room, is empty, but can be used for counseling. All other rooms are full, and lack of space causes difficulties. On one occasion, it was observed that the Director's office was used by one of the counselors, since no other room was available, and the Director could not get to his working materials for several hours. Similar occurrences have taken place with other counselors. More drop-ins would cause even greater difficulty in counseling space.

The Advisory Committee meeting in November dealt with the location of larger quarters. Some members of the staff think that separate housing would be helpful in keeping the philosophy of "voluntary clients". The Diversion Coordinator and Curriculum Coordinator could be housed in a separate building and joined by the Coordinator of 601 and 602 referrals as these are increased from the Probation Department. This would help keep the "forced counseling" separate from the voluntary counseling.

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Statistics:

The Program Coordinator is now in charge of statistics. There has been a constant revision in the keeping of statistics. The monthly and quarterly reports follow the format of the objectives. They are collected from the forms which are completed daily from phone calls, drop-ins, etc. A system of data compilation and reporting has evolved which is increasingly accurate, informative, and available.

Each of the records does identify the client and his presenting social problem so that on recontact, it is available and usable. This is not true of 601 and 602 referrals from Probation. These referrals had to be found among all the calls and drop-ins. This somewhat obscures the fact that there were only a few referrals; (19), only one percent of all the Probation referrals. There was also no follow-up on these referrals to see if they re-entered the Justice System.

Training Classes:

The 24-hour training class is taught by the staff for the community and the staff interviews participants of the class in order to obtain volunteers. All volunteers must take this class before assuming the position of phone counselor. The class deals principally with techniques and problems of phone counseling and some basic psychology. This is taught by lecture, role-playing, and discussion. Drug-related problems are emphasized with a demonstration on the effects and actions under the use of drugs.

The Volunteer's monthly meeting is considered as advanced

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training. In-service training is given by other agencies, such as Mental Health and Welfare, to improve the referrals which the volunteers make. The staff also gives consultation to the Volunteers on special cases.

Drop-in Counseling:

The Bridge is open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. weekdays and Saturday from Noon to 7:00 p.m. for anyone who wishes to drop in. A person can just come in and sit in the living room if they wish, or they may ask for a counselor. On a daily rotating system, one of the Bridge's staff is assigned to take care of these drop-ins. This frees the rest of the staff to carry on their duties while the "duty officer" does paperwork when there are no drop-ins. If the "duty officer" is unavailable, one of the other available staff members takes over. There is a good spirit shown in this type of exchange.

Although the location of the Bridge is not conducive for drop-ins, it still reaches its service-giving objective on this point. It does take an effort for most people to come to the Bridge, but they are obviously willing to make this effort. They know they are welcomed, and time is given, according to their need, by the staff.

Phone Counseling:

The phone counseling service is available 24 hours a day, in the Bridge facility from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and by a transfer system from 11:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. The transfer takes

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eleven seconds, and there were no hang-ups during the four nights in which the phone counseling room was monitored.

The staff receives the phone calls during the hours from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., and 11:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., and the Volunteers from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.. Only volunteers who have attended training sessions answer the phones. The training sessions included 24 hours of class time and two months' apprenticeship with an experienced volunteer.

The staff and volunteers have been observed to answer the phone over 100 times with genuine and respectful empathy. No phone calls were refused or delayed while waiting for a counselor.

There are tapes of different counseling situations made by the staff or an experienced volunteer to which the new volunteers can listen. This gives the volunteers very good experience.

School Counseling:

In each of the six schools wherein the Bridge has regular counseling sessions, the staff are prompt and keeps their assignments faithfully. The types of activities are chosen for the ages of the groups. The "Hassle Game", or role playing, or similar activities take place at these group meetings. The groups, numbering about ten, are directed towards the development of interpersonal relationship skills. The students learn that others have many of the same difficulties as they, and so, do not feel alone in handling their anxieties.

Bridge counselors have been accepted on high school campuses since October, 1973. The counseling service, up to that time, was

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directed to the junior high school students. Since girls, at this age, experience more emotional crisis, more come for groups and individual counseling than boys. Until the present, the principle Bridge school counselor was a woman, which also attracted female students. With the opening of the high schools and the expansion of the program at Yosemite (Continuation) High School, there will now be more males involved in school counseling. The present Bridge counselor at Yosemite High School is Black, which will help the minority students who form a large portion of the student body. The regular school counselor is a white male, giving some balance to the counseling.

In-Service Training:

The In-Service Training consists of explaining the types of assistance the Bridge can give the organization to which they are speaking. These talks are given by well-informed staff members. The fact that the Bridge has a well-trained and well-educated staff comes out clearly in these sessions. Even professional audiences have thought the training helpful. When giving the in-service training to teachers, the instructors were clear and relaxed. Questions were answered and a good exchange took place at the three meetings attended.

Volunteer Training:

The Volunteers are given training in a weekly class at Merced College, which totals 24 hours of class time. The main purpose of the class is to give information on drugs, basic psychology, and phone counseling. The volunteers are also given two months of listening to other volunteers doing phone counseling.

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The recruiting of the volunteers is done carefully. Only those who can relate well with young people and are judged by the Director and staff members as mature enough to help others deal with their problems are asked to be volunteers.

The volunteers are also given monthly training sessions by the staff, and speakers from local agencies discuss other problems that the volunteers might be having. The Bridge staff also instructs the Social Seminar class, concerning drugs, family and interpersonal relationships, which is open to the volunteers, and they are encouraged to take it. The third class offered to the volunteer was a para-professional counseling class taught by one of the Bridge staff. This was to prepare the volunteers for person-to-person counseling.

In answering the phone, the volunteers were found to be empathetic. They are a well-trained, informed group, and are able to refer when needed. They know their community; they talk calmly in a non-threatening and encouraging manner; and they do not rush the caller off the phone.

Crisis Homes:

There are three crisis homes at the present time. This program has proved very difficult and the objective of 20 homes has not been reached. The recruiting is left to the entire staff. A weakness in this system was shown in that one couple had their license, but was never contacted by the staff. This program needs to be reevaluated. Is there a need? How great is it? How can this program be made known to the community? One staff person should have complete charge of the program.

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Diversion Program:

Under this program, first-time adult drug offenders are permitted to go onto a counseling program rather than to an institution. It is a new program, initiated at the end of June, 1973, with only 18 clients by the end of 1973. Most of the clients, 14, came into the program since September, 1973. It has been successful as no one in the group has gone back into the Criminal Justice System. In September, 1973, a definite schedule and process was set up.

There are five main sections of the Program: (1) Initial Screening Interview; (2) Drug Education; (3) Anatomy; (4) Therapeutic (counseling); and (5) Testing. It is a well-organized program with excellent record-keeping. It took only a few minutes to find and present the material about the program, records of participants, determine its present status, and the position of each client.

Juvenile Hall:

The Juvenile Hall Program consists of a two-hour rap session on Saturday morning with the young people in the Hall. The weekly resume kept by the Bridge staff has been reviewed. It has been approved by the Hall Supervisor, but the program, during 1973, did not help the young people get to know anyone but the person already known to them in his capacity as a part-time employee of the Hall itself. Limited records were kept of those who contacted the Bridge after they got out of the Hall.

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Curriculum Development:

This program is set up to aid the school district in fulfilling the State requirements that all schools have a drug abuse program. This program, funded in September, 1973, and the Coordinator has been visiting the 29 school districts in Merced County. The system adopted is to teach valuing and decision-making in order to guide the students to choose enhancing decisions in life and, therefore, the avoidance of drugs. It is a field the Coordinator is well trained in, having used the valuing method during five years of teaching.

The Bridge helped the Merced City Schools get started in this State-mandated program in the Spring of 1973. One of the staff, who possessed a Teaching Credential and was a graduate student at California State University, Fresno, doing field work at the Bridge, in conjunction with teachers from the City Schools system, worked together to compile the basic text. This text was given final revision by a teachers' committee. This was a service of over 400 hours of work, given free, to the City School District, and showed the Bridge's commitment to serve the community. This program is not evaluated, because it has only been in existence for three months.

CHAPTER VIII  
COMMUNITY IMPACT THROUGH INTERVIEWS  
 WITH PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

Mental Health:

The four persons interviewed in the Mental Health Service were two administrators and two psychiatric social workers. All persons interviewed were aware of the Bridge and had made referrals or were aware that referrals were made. These referrals made or approved were drug-related problems; family and home problems; counseling; and non-psychological emergencies.

The Bridge, according to two of the four persons interviewed, acts as a screening process for the Mental Health Service. Those who just want to talk, need support, or who have no serious pathology are taken care of by the volunteers or staff of the Bridge, and only those with severe emotional problems are referred on to the Mental Health program.

The Bridge has given in-service training to the Mental Health personnel on several occasions which has been an aide to the proper use of services. There is now a constant contact so that both agencies are kept informed on ways of helping each other.

Through the use of its emergency phone call service, the Bridge has made referrals to Mental Health which its psychiatric social workers usually consider proper referrals (62 in 11 months). Although there are occasions when the problems referred are not as serious as the volunteers of the Bridge originally thought; these are few. The appropriateness of the referrals which the Bridge

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has made over the yeears have steadily improved, and are consistently good at the present time.

The Bridge and the Mental Health Department are working well together, according to those interviewed. These has been increased contact with different, individual staff members from the two agencies, and one of the Mental Health staff is a member of the Bridge Advisory Committee.

There are several points that were brought up in the interviews which the interviewees wished to have mentioned specifically. One staff member believes that a Spanish-speaking counselor is necessary at the Bridge because of the large Mexican-American population, about 20 percent of the area's population, which is increased when seasonal workers are present, to about 30 percent of the population.

The Mental Health Staff has referred many persons to the Bridge, but they report that they seldom get information back on these clients. Seldom do they even report back that a person came to them by name. They do wish to receive feedback on these persons. Evaluator notes that the feedback is a significant problem with all social service agencies within Merced County. It was also noted that Mental Health had no formal policy or forms by which to make referrals to other agencies.

Those interviewed thought the Bridge had grown from an agency that was trying to do all things without referring any persons to other agencies to one that is fulfilling its specific function and using other agencies, at least Mental Health Department, to fulfill their specific function.

## Chap. VIII (2)

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All four interviewed believe the Bridge Agency is necessary for the area. One administrator quoted a psychiatric nurse as saying that if there was not a crisis phone center like the Bridge's, that it would be the first thing that would need to be set up. They also agreed that the work with youth was needed and kept them from having to fill this need which would take their time away from more severe cases.

Welfare Department: Child Protection Service

Two Social Service Workers of Child Protective Services were interviewed from the Welfare Department. They use the Bridge for referrals on counseling, runaways, school situations, or any sign of drug usage. They believe the Bridge is a competent agency with qualified personnel.

The Bridge has given in-service training to the Child Protective Service and they found it helpful in understanding the Bridge's functions. And, the Bridge is learning more and more, the function of Child Protective Services so they are making more appropriate referrals than they did in 1972. A good spirit of cooperation now exists between the agencies, according to those interviewed.

One of the Social Service Workers would like to see the Bridge expand its services to young children between ages 6 to 10 by setting up activity type groups to work with the children who have difficulty relating to peers. This, he thinks, would be a preventive type of treatment which would help keep these children from entering into the Justice System.

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One of the workers believes that the Bridge's work is actually cutting down their caseload. The group counseling sessions in the schools help the young people realize that others have the same problems. It helps the young people to know there is someone to listen to them and to be concerned about them.

School Personnel:

There were 17 school personnel interviewed. All were aware of the services the Bridge provided for their schools, and, in the case of the grade schools, the assistance given on the production of The Values Approach to Drug Education, Merced City School District, which covers grades one through eight. The first year the Bridge was in operation, the staff gave an orientation to all the students of the Junior High Schools, but it is now necessary to only give this to the sixth grade. The group sessions are announced to the entire school, and it is left to the students if they wish to come. If a student wishes to see a member of the Bridge staff, the Junior High Schools and Yosemite (Continuation) High School have a sign-up sheet, or they may call directly to the Bridge from the number posted. All those interviewed said that when a student called the Bridge, the staff always responded.

According to most interviewed, the relationship between the Bridge staff and the teachers of the different schools, while not a close one, is one of respect and understanding for what the Bridge is accomplishing.

One of those interviewed had taken the Social Seminar class offered by the Bridge staff at Merced College, and two have undergone

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the Volunteer Training course. Both of these teachers are part-time volunteers who have found their schedules too crowded to act as full-time volunteers.

The Bridge policy of giving in-service training to the teachers has varied with each school. At Yosemite, the Continuation High School, the counselor from the Bridge met each teacher in their own classroom and spoke with them there. In the junior high schools, the Bridge staff has presented a yearly orientation of the Bridge's services for the schools' staffs. Most of the teachers and counselors have been able to attend and found the service useful. Some felt they know the services already, so it was just a review, since they have worked with the Bridge on a constant basis for the past year.

When interviewed, the faculty and administration of the junior high schools and continuation high school indicated approval of the relationship between the Bridge and the schools. They are satisfied the Bridge's staff is able to form good relationships with the students. The Bridge's staff is also able to meet the students in a non-threatening encounter. They are able, according to two administrators, to accomplish more in some areas because they are more "non-threatening" than the counselors who are considered by the students as part of the administration. The principals think they have good counselors, and if they had more counselors, they would be able to accomplish more, but the expense would be greater, and the fact that the counselors are part of the school system makes it difficult in some instances.

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The answers to whether the students have improved was a difficult one to document. Lists of students, who had seen the Bridge's counselors more than three times, was shown to the Junior High School counselors, and they commented on them. Each school had three or more students that these counselors judge were positively helped by the Bridge; others stayed even; others were slowed down; and none were affected negatively.

Police Department:

The Police Department, while aware of the Bridge's existence, is not knowledgeable of the programs or policies, and this sometimes results in conflicts. Very mixed feelings were candidly expressed by the officers. According to one Lieutenant, forty cases were referred by the police to the Bridge in 1973, and there was no recidivism among these. Five of the seven policemen interviewed said they had made referrals, but two others said they would never make any because they did not agree with, or trust the Bridge's policies. Most of the referrals made are precriminal situations. These kinds of referrals aid the police because they now have an agency that will take care of these problems without letting the young persons go without any attempt or assistance in changing their lives.

The Police have been given in-service information on the services provided by the Bridge, and on suicide prevention, which most officers found helpful. But they feel there are still points that need to be cleared up. There is a general agreement among the officers that the Bridge could be more cooperative in dealing with

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runaways. One policeman believes that the use of lesser drugs is not discouraged by some members of the Bridge's staff. An attempt was made to clear these misunderstandings up, but more is needed.

The Bridge's staff has taken over from the Police Department the drug lectures in the schools, leaving the police free to handle other important problems. Some in the department do not think the Bridge should be on the campuses at all, because they believe the counselors are sometimes too permissive and not a good influence on the students.

One of the policemen felt that the Bridge should have a Spanish-speaking counselor. He praised them for having just hired two Black counselors, but because of the large Mexican-American population, he feels the need of a Spanish-speaking counselor is very great.

Probation Department:

Five of the staff of the Probation Department were interviewed, including the Chief Probation Officer.

Each of those interviewed, with the exception of the director, have made informal referrals to the Bridge in their former capacities as Intake Officers or as Deputy Probation Officers. They consider the Bridge to be an agency whose counselors, in their in-service training, impart such knowledge as to help them make appropriate referrals.

Despite the close connection between the Bridge and the Probation Department, only 19 referrals of 601 and 602 offenses were made during 1973, and only 15 during 1972. The cause of this

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small number of 601 and 602 referrals may be multiple, according to those interviewed: "try to take care of everything ourselves", "new personnel", "lack of thinking of Bridge when possible referrals arise", or "no habit has been developed".

There was criticism over communication on Bridge feedback from the Probation staff. One officer stated, "we trust them as a public agency, but they don't reciprocate". "We turn over our reports to them, but they act like we were interfering if we ask about someone we sent". When asked if there was any recidivism, one probation officer stated, "I don't know, I don't get feedback even to knowing if the person got there." "They want 'self-motivated persons only', so there are limitations on who we can send." This is another reason why one officer said he did not make some referrals. The evaluator noted that the Bridge's confidentiality policy appears to have caused conflicts among some agencies, while developing positive relationships with clients.

The sharing of information on "Crisis Homes," has also been lacking. According to the Bridge's "Revision or Continuation of Grant, 2nd Year" to the California Council of Criminal Justice, the Probation Department is to use the Crisis Homes also, but the Probation Department had not been notified that there are any homes available.

There was also a lack of communication with the Chief of Probation on the work the Bridge is doing at Juvenile Hall. No reports were made from August until December, 1973. The procedure of the work in Juvenile Hall was also questioned. The Bridge hired

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a part-time worker to give presentations at the Hall. This person was also a part-time worker at the Hall. Since July, this same worker has held regular Saturday sessions. This limited the Bridge staff from the direct contact with the youth in the Hall in order to attract them to counseling at the Bridge after their release.

There was also a criticism of the number of times the Probation Department was mentioned in the "Revision or Continuation of Grant, 2nd Year", without "qualifying adjectives". The Merced County Probation Department currently uses the Bridge Agency as a resource for counseling those youths.<sup>2</sup> The Bridge had 15 of these referrals in 1972 and 17 in 1973. The persons interviewed at the Probation Department felt this small number could hardly support an unqualified sentence. Despite these negative expressions, there still seemed to be a great deal of respect for the Bridge by Probation personnel. It might be summed up in: 'they are there, we want them there, but we want them to improve'.

Juvenile Hall:

Three members of the small Juvenile Hall staff were interviewed, including the Supervisor. They believe that the Bridge staff relates well with the young people and with the Hall's staff. The staff believes the programs presented, especially since August, brought on a helpful change in the attitude of the young people. They said they look forward to having the presentation.

The staff is especially pleased with the present program.

<sup>2</sup>Revision or Continuation of Grant to California Council of Criminal Justice, 1973, p. 15c.

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They have constant input into its makeup and the way the program will be put on. The fact that the staff member worked part-time for the Bridge, and was also a part-time worker at Juvenile Hall, did not come out in any of the interviews with the staff, but was negatively emphasized by professional personnel in the community.

Volunteers:

All 14 of the active volunteers were interviewed. There are several part-time volunteers, but they were interviewed as the counselors of schools rather than volunteers. The volunteers learned about the Bridge from many sources: friends, presentations, staff members, and newspapers. All of them attended the mandatory 24-hour training program and most were asked to be volunteers from the class. This method proved to be the best method of recruiting volunteers. Twelve of the 14 volunteers thought it prepared them well. The two who did not think their training program prepared them, took the same training program as the observer. This training program was an attempt to train volunteers for both the Probation Department and the Bridge; it did not work out well because of lack of time to demonstrate both phone counseling and the one-to-one counseling used by Probation.

All agreed that they were prepared to answer the phone by the time they went through the two months of internship training on the phones and had advanced training in their monthly meetings. The staff was available for consultation and provides advanced classes, such as para-professional counseling.

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The volunteers found most of their work situation satisfactory, choosing their own time, day, etc. A resource book on the community was completed on December, 1973, after months of compiling and editing. This has filled the void in community information needed by the volunteers in making referrals.

The training the volunteers have received at the Bridge, they believe, has helped them in different aspects of their lives, such as "active listening"; "being better able to relate"; "aware of the community"; "work at the Welfare Department". All the answers were given positively and said quickly, which seemed to demonstrate a very positive attitude.

It is a policy for the Bridge not to give out the full name of the volunteers to callers on the emergency line, just their first names. Therefore, the volunteers do not have anyone calling them back, especially since their schedules are not known to callers. There was only one policy that five of the volunteers were not in agreement with, and this is the unwritten policy that the Bridge staff is not to date volunteers. Since volunteers are expected to have social gatherings with the staff, the five volunteers believed this could lead to dating and if they wish to date, there should be no objection.

Some of the volunteers expressed the desire to do more than phone counseling. A number are highly qualified and could do person-to-person counseling or run activity groups. They feel this variety would give more incentive to the volunteers.

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Some of the volunteers feel the close spirit that they had with the staff diminished during the last few months of 1973. This was caused by several factors: the rapid expansion, the many programs the staff is responsible for, and the 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. volunteer work time only gives them contact with the staff that gives them training. The volunteers would like to have more contact.

CHAPTER IX  
CONCLUSION

The Bridge, as an Agency, started toward the end of 1971. It began with John M. Gallagher, M.S., as Director, with the objective to set up a community self-help agency where persons and families from all segments of the community could find services for drug abuse, emotional and family problems. The Bridge tried to accomplish this through a 24-hour crisis line which would act as a suicide prevention service, referrals system, and rap line. People could also drop in for individual or family counseling. There was also opportunity for education and training of different types, especially on drug-related problems.

In 1972, the Bridge changed its location as it tried to develop and upgrade its services. Its close connection with the City of Merced grew as it developed into a well-founded City Agency. It obtained permission to do counseling in the junior high schools and also the continuation high school, Yosemite. The other services also continued to develop.

By the beginning of 1973, the Bridge had trained a group of volunteers to answer the crisis line. The counseling sessions, group and individual, were held regularly in each of the junior high schools one-half day per week. At this time, the Bridge staff conducts four full counseling sessions, group and individual, held regularly in each of the junior high schools on one-half day per week. The Bridge staff consisted of three full-time counselors; one full-time Program Coordinator; one Director; and a part-time secretary who accomplished the following during the year 1973:

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1. Nineteen 601 and 602 referrals from Probation.
2. Ninety-seven one-hour presentations at Juvenile Hall.
3. Three hundred one hours of counseling at the junior high schools.
4. One-hour presentations to 2,113 junior high school students and 1,049 high school students.
5. Seven hundred thirty-eight drug-related calls on the crisis line.
6. Fifty-six guest speaker presentations to adult groups.
7. Five in-service training sessions to teachers and administrators on drug and related problems.
8. Seventeen hours of in-service training to police, probation, and welfare.
9. Eight hundred eighty referrals from crisis phone lines; 576 of these with juveniles.
10. Seventy-one community volunteers were trained in the 24-hour course on drug abuse and related problems, and crisis counseling.
11. Fifty-two community persons were trained in the course, "Social Seminar", a 24-hour course on family and interpersonal relationships.
12. Eighteen hours of in-service training to volunteers at the Bridge.

During this period, the Bridge staff helped the Merced City School District, in setting up a drug education program called The Value Approach to Drug Education. One of the Bridge staff and a field placement student compiled the information that a teacher's committee worked on for three days to bring out in final course curriculum. A former teacher on the Bridge staff did the initial testing of the program on the eighth grade level, teaching several classes daily for a little over two weeks. Over 400 hours

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of preparation went into this work, including weekend seminars in Sacramento and San Jose, California, as well as traveling to Coronado, California, to obtain information from a similar program already in operation for three years.

The overall organization of this Agency was superior, and the dedication of the individuals was demonstrated by their willingness to work overtime to help a client. The staff never refused an extra assignment given at the last minute because of another's sickness, or overcommitment. Weekends were frequently used to gain background education and advanced knowledge in the field of drugs or related problems. Willingness to help others was always in evidence. The salary scale that the counselors were on at the beginning of 1973 was not competitive and would not usually generate this type of dedication. The Director set this model of dedication and achievement.

The educational excellence of the staff was evidenced by its professional growth by the year 1973. During the first nine months of 1973, of the four staff members, two had Master's Degrees and two had Bachelor of Arts, with one of the latter holding a Teacher's Credential. Each of the staff had been trained in Community Drug Programs at Awareness House Training Center in Oakland, California, under the auspices of the United States Office of Education.

In August, 1973, one more person was added to the staff as a counselor to relieve some of the pressure that the staff had on it because of the volume of work that it had built up. The

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new member held a Master's of Counseling Degree and had experience in crisis counseling.

The Bridge staff and Advisory Board saw the needs of the Community and tried to fulfill them. The schools had to meet a new need during the Fall semester of 1973, Multi-Cultural Training. Two of the Bridge staff worked out a program, hired three part-time persons from minority groups, and presented their plans to the school authorities. They approved the plans and had the staff present it to the teachers and administrators of the schools that requested it. The "ghetto attitude" and the culture of the different races were treated in these sessions. The School Districts of the State were instructed by Senate Bill 714 to implement a drug abuse education program. The Bridge staff assisted the Merced City School District in setting up its values approach to drug education, and then offered its service to assist the 25 other school districts within Merced County in setting up the same values system. The offer was accepted, and in September, the Bridge hired a former teacher, who had five years experience in values teaching, to be the "Curriculum Coordinator", for this project. He is now in the process of administering and giving in-service training for this program to the teachers of the school districts of the County.

It should be noted that during the year 1973, the Director met with the High School Administration and Board in an endeavor to work out arrangements for providing the services of the Bridge to the three high school campuses. The success of these meetings

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was a significant breakthrough, as this was the first major social service resource to be utilized on these campuses. This interaction led to the Merced Union High School's District Board of Trustees requesting the Bridge's counseling services on all high school campuses, including North, East, Yosemite, Atwater, and Livingston.

Because of the success of the Bridge programs in Merced, the cities of Livingston and Los Banos sought the Bridge's help in setting up the same system in their areas. The Bridge hired two counselors to fill these positions. The two counselors are in the process of setting up these offices in their respective cities. These counselors have attended additional drug education programs.

The Bridge staff had been attempting to work on a Diversion Program for adult first-time drug offenders, with the Probation Department, since the beginning of 1973. This program was implemented by engaging the services of a counselor to complete the arrangements and direct the Diversion Program. This counselor, with the aid of the staff, set up this program in September, and by December, 1973, there were 18 persons in the program.

The school program had begun to expand in September, 1973. Yosemite Continuation High School asked for a one-half day per week counseling service, expanding the service from a system of coming on campus at the students' request only. The two other high schools in Merced, East and North campuses, voted to invite the Bridge counselors onto campus. In order to fulfill this request, the Bridge hired a Black counselor, just discharged from the Air Force.

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In August and September, the Bridge staff expanded to over double its former size, gaining six new full-time employees. The secretary was made full-time, with a half-day assistant. A part-time person was hired to coordinate the volunteers. This sudden explosion slowed the development of all programs for a short time because of the need of in-service training for the new members of the staff. But, by the beginning of December, all of the staff were working on their own programs and performing their duties fully. The new programs have not been developed completely, but are moving according to plan.

The conclusion of this study must be that the Bridge, as an Agency, has received general acceptance by the professional personnel of the community. The Police Department has reservations concerning some members of the Bridge's staff, but most police are willing to work with the Agency.

This evaluation has been based on the goals that the Bridge had set up for itself, personnel observation of the programs and facilities, and the statements made by other professionals in the community. The goals were reached, but it is difficult to demonstrate the quality of the work done. The personal observation was made of the facilities, programs, and personnel. The observer used the criteria established by the recognized authorities in community centers, such as National Institute of Mental Health<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Evaluating Social Programs, Theory, Practice, & Politics; Ross, P. and Williams, W.; Seminar Press, N.Y., 1972

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This is relatively speaking, a new field; the criteria are, therefore, not complete or definitive, but the organization and the deliverance of services by the Bridge staff do fulfill the criteria to a high degree. The interviews with professionals cooperating with the Bridge contained a similar conclusion. In all three categories of the evaluation, the Bridge established a high degree of confidence. This means of evaluation, like all others, cannot reach all aspects of the organization, or view all its limitations or accomplishments. However, the objectives set forth in its application for funds to the California Council of Criminal Justice during the year 1973, have been fulfilled.

The evaluator felt that this program met its stated objectives during the year 1973. However, the Bridge did more than just meet its objectives in its positive impact on the community, especially in the areas of children's services, crisis intervention, and community drug education. The evaluator was especially impressed by the dynamic staff's response to an almost overwhelming workload, and the high standards of professionalism required by the administrator.

CHAPTER X  
RECOMMENDATIONS

Although many of these recommendations for change have already been operationalized since January, 1974, for the purpose of this 1973 evaluation, they are presented. Also, some suggestions for change are restatements and have already been stated in their respective parts of this report.

Housing

Housing facilities are inadequate. The Bridge's present physical capacity of 1,800 square feet falls short of the minimum 4,000 square feet required to provide adequate office space, counseling rooms, conference and/or group room, and administration space. The housing should, ideally, be under one roof, and centrally located. Client center visits by drop-ins would be increased by centrally locating the Agency, since dividing an area equipped to attract youth who are, as yet, undecided about seeking counseling, is not an ideal situation.

The South Merced Youth Group summer program is being closed for lack of staff. It is recommended that a Satellite Outreach Center in South Merced should be established to offer individual and family counseling, to offer parent training classes, and instruction in values clarification skills as well as acting as a center for community problem-solving. It would be an effective way of saying to the community, "here is a need to meet and help us to meet it."

## Chap. X (2)

Salaries

It is recommended that this Agency's staff, professional and support, receive increases in salaries commensurate with the dedicated work they are doing, which calls for long hours, weekend involvement, and a high degree of competency.

Mexican-American Staff Member

It is recommended that a Mexican-American woman staff member be assigned to work with families of girls contacted through the schools. It has been reported by some professional members of the community that such families are displeased because birth control and abortion information and advice is being given against their wishes. Counseling in their native language could help these situations.

Police and Probation Relations

Greater efforts to improve working relations with both the Police Department and Probation Department is indicated. A communicated spirit of understanding and cooperation, supported by visible efforts to provide feedback to both of these agencies would strengthen the working relationship.

Juvenile Hall

Juvenile Hall member should be identified only with Bridge and should not be an employee of the Hall, as this is a confusion of identity, and so can be an unproductive relationship. An attempt should be made to reach out to youth released from the Hall, rather than wait for their response.

## Chap. IX (3)

Racial Integration

More Mexican-American and Black involvement should be generated at the Board of Director's level, the service staff level, and target group area. Also, there should be a Spanish-speaking staff member available for counseling, group meetings and presentations. Visible, ethnic personnel are an encouragement to ethnic youth seeking help.

Reporting Back to Agencies

Feedback, in the form of periodic progress reports, should be automatically sent to referral source, whether agency or individual. Clients' records should be complete and current.

Police Relations

Police should be reassured that Bridge staff does not offer sympathetic encouragement or support to youth in their use of drugs. Also, a cooperative policy in the case of runaways should be established.

Crisis Homes

Crisis home program should be terminated because it is a drain on staff time and has not evolved as part of Bridge program. Extensive publicity and recruitment efforts met little response. Also, existing homes were not utilized enough to warrant time and energy in recruitment and training of additional crisis home parents. Of course, the crisis home program is an important community service, but it should, more properly, be administered by Child Protective Services, which could, then, make homes available to the Bridge.

## Chap. X (4)

Schools

The signup sheet in two of the schools is not easily visible to anyone seeking help, and in another school, it is embarrassingly visible to anyone passing by. The advertisement to sign up should be visible, but the signup names themselves should not be. A small box and pad could be attached to the bottom of the sign so the signup request could be dropped into it. This would afford visibility and confidentiality.

The objective of three counselors providing 80 hours per week in the schools is unrealistic. This objective should be adjusted downward to exclude Atwater from the Project Area, after Atwater was unable to financially support the Merced CCCJ Grant Project.

Volunteers

This program should be expanded to actively involve greater numbers of trained volunteers. The number of trained volunteers who stay active in the program would suggest that some felt unneeded or their involvement expectations are not being met. It is suggested they be encouraged to run activity groups for developing interpersonal relationships among children ages six to ten. They might tutor students who have developed anti-social behavior because of peer school work. They might be involved in developing a big-brother and big-sister program for the community. Since the volunteers are professionally trained, why not use them for person-to-person counseling sessions? There are already professionally trained persons in the community who might form a part-time volunteer organization which would actually use their professional capabilities.

## Chap. X (5)

Time Opening Changes

With the Bridge providing service to the three high schools as well as the junior high schools, an increase in staff might be inevitable to meet escalating demands. An alternative could be changing of agency hours for drop-ins from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., as almost all drop-ins come to the agency after 3:00 p.m., and the morning hours are rarely used. This would free the "Officer of the Day" to work with increase in high school counseling.

Funding

It is recommended that several services of the Bridge - such as family counseling, children's services, and the 24-hour crisis line - could be more appropriately funded through Short-Doyle Mental Health provisions.

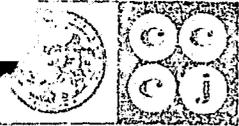
During the past year's research in the community, it has become apparent to this evaluator that a City mechanization for overall county service coordination, as well as inclusive of the City of Merced, would maximize existing resources and loss of time and costly duplication of efforts.

Drug Analysis Service

It is recommended that the Drug Analysis Service be terminated, as it has not been utilized, due to Agency's reluctance to publicize this service, and as it could lead to potential legal problems.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

- No. 1 Continuation of Grant No. 1218 to California Council of Criminal Justice (Bridge)
- No. 2 Revision or Continuation of Grant to California Council of Criminal Justice, 1973, p. 15c.
- No. 3 Evaluating Social Programs, Theory, Practice, & Politics; Ross, P. and Williams, W.; Seminar Press, N.Y., 1972



REGION K

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1748-1

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June 7, 1974

Planning Operations Division  
Office of Criminal  
Justice Planning  
7171 Bowling Drive  
Sacramento, California 95823

Re: OCJP #1248, City of Merced "The Bridge", First Year's Evaluation

Gentlemen:

The enclosed first year's program evaluation shows that objectives are being met.

It also shows that much more work needs to be, and is being done, in inter-departmental working relations. Next year's evaluation will be more quantitative and relate more to impact.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Monteith  
Assistant Program Coordinator

KAM/msc

Encl.

16625

**END**