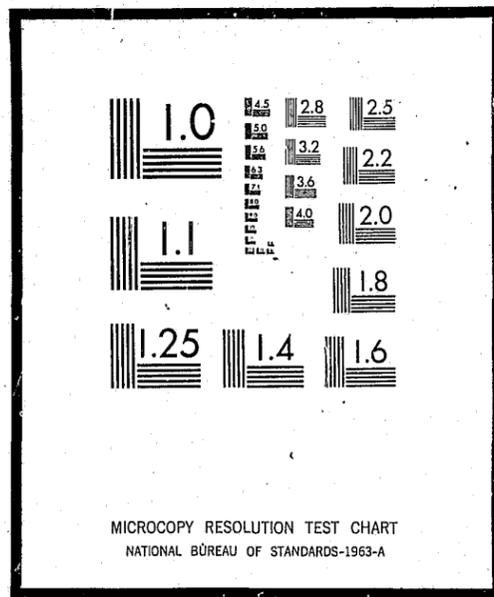


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DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT
YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM

REPORT

Number 13

Selection and Training of Youth Services Program Staff



Youth Services Program
Youth Section
Dallas Police Department

PREFACE

The Youth Section of the Dallas Police Department has instituted a model police diversion program as an integrated component of police operations. Due to the innovative nature of this LEAA funded program a series of reports are being developed to inform other law enforcement, judicial and correctional agencies of the nature, operations and results of the Dallas Police Department's Youth Services Program.

Dallas Police Department

Donald A. Byrd	Chief of Police
Donald F. Steele	Assistant Chief of Special Services
Walter C. Fannin	Deputy Chief of Criminal Investigation Division
B. M. Newman	Captain of Youth Section
R. D. Wilson	Lieutenant - Program Director
T. R. Collingwood	Associate Director-Staff Psychologist

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAM STAFF

The Youth Services Program involved the selection of nine additional police investigators, twelve police youth counselors, one analyst and one staff psychologist. Selection of new staff as well as training for all Youth Section staff was implemented prior to actual operation of the program to ensure maximum efficiency from the beginning. A systematic attempt to select the most qualified candidates, especially for counseling unit personnel, for the positions were made in the initial stages of this project.

SELECTION OF YOUTH INVESTIGATORS

Through the Youth Services Program grant there were nine investigator positions added to the regular Youth Section operations. There were fifteen eligible candidates from the Dallas Police Department Patrol Division for these positions. An interview board consisting of a Youth Section Operations Lieutenant, a Patrol Division Lieutenant, a Criminal Investigation Division Lieutenant, the Staff Psychologist, and the Director of Personnel for the Dallas Police Department screened each candidate in terms of a review of past record and a personal interview. The top nine of the fifteen eligible candidates who successfully passed the interview were selected. The nine investigators were then incorporated into the regular Youth Section operations.

SELECTION OF CIVILIAN COUNSELING UNIT PERSONNEL

The Youth Section Program Counseling Unit civilian staff consists of

one Associate Director-Psychologist, one Research Analyst, and twelve Police Youth Counselors. For each position, there were minimal qualifications. For the Associate Director-Staff Psychologist, the minimal qualifications were a Ph.D. in Counseling or Clinical Psychology, State Certification as a Psychologist and at least one year experience dealing with Youth. For the Research Analyst, basic qualifications were a Bachelor's Degree and at least one year experience in research. For the twelve Youth Counselors, the basic requirements consisted of a Bachelor's Degree in a social service, education, or related field and one to two years experience in that field.

The Staff Psychologist was selected by personal interview and background investigation from a field of three candidates. The Research Analyst was selected by personal interview, background investigation and research skill inventory from a field of nine candidates. All civilian positions were competitive in that besides meeting minimal qualifications, those candidates demonstrating the highest level of skills needed to do the job were selected.

The Police Youth Counselor selection process was the most extensive, in that twelve Counselors were selected from a field of 250 applicants. Most of these were recruited by written position notification sent to colleges near Dallas, Social Services Agencies, community and educational agencies and Civil Service Boards. The Counselor selection process program consisted of five levels. The first level of screening was by experience and basic qualifications. The second level of screening was by skill inventory. The skills inventory measured the physical, intellectual and emotional skills that related to how effective a Counselor needed to be. Physically, the candidates were assessed as to their physical fitness level. Emotionally, their level of interpersonal skills were assessed. Intellectually, their level of problem solving and program development skills were assessed. All

of the skill areas assessed were done with the utilization of five point scales.

The top fifty from the 250 candidates from the first two phases entered the third phase. The third level of screening was by personal interview. The application's performance on the personal interview was also rated on a five point scale. This interview was conducted with the Staff Psychologist, the Project Director, and a representative from the Youth Section of the Dallas Police Department. Those twenty-five candidates who emerged with the highest scores from the first three phases after the interview were then given a complete background investigation. The top twelve with the highest ratings from the four previous phases were then brought before an interview board for final approval by the Deputy Chief of the Criminal Investigation Division, of which the Youth Section was an operational section.

By selecting and deselecting by phases, the most qualified candidates as possible were obtained. Candidates were recruited from a broad background in such areas as special education, physical education and rehabilitation as well as from the more traditional areas of psychology, social work and counseling. It was hoped that with a broad background among the counseling personnel a greater diversity within the program could be achieved.

POLICE OFFICER TRAINING

All officers of the Youth Section (operations investigators, school officers, missing persons and supervisors) received forty hour of training pertaining to the Youth Services Program. The training curriculum was as follows:

- 1) 30 hours of interpersonal skills to enable the officers to relate more effectively to youth and parents in order to get more personal information relevant for disposition decisions.

- 2) 5 hours of training on problem solving and program development to enable the officer to make a more accurate disposition of a youth.
- 3) 5 hours of training on procedures and materials for implementing the Youth Services Program.

The training was accomplished over a two-week time period by outside consultants and the staff psychologist. Following the basic training, Roll Call Training once a month has been initiated as a review and to cover any critical topic areas as needed to ensure efficient functioning of the program.

COUNSELOR TRAINING

The Youth Section Counselors received a total of 250 hours of basic training and orientation over a two-month period prior to the program becoming operational. Additional time was provided for their training since they were coming into the Youth Services Program from outside the Police Department. Their training was broken down into the following curricular areas:

- 1) 24 hours of training devoted to orientation to the Youth Services Program materials and procedures
- 2) 32 hours devoted to orientation to the overall Police Department operations and programs
- 3) 40 hours devoted to orientation to the Youth Section operations and programs
- 4) 32 hours devoted to orientation to the community agencies that they will be working with
- 5) 14 hours devoted to orientation to the County Juvenile Justice System and programs

- 6) Four hours devoted to an orientation to the juvenile law and Penal Code.
- 7) 124 hours devoted to basic counselor skills training broken down as follows:
 - a. 24 hours physical training and physical programs
 - b. 70 hours interpersonal-counselor skills training
 - c. 15 hours problem solving skills
 - d. 15 hours program development skills

Following the basic training and orientation, the Counselors are receiving one hour of skills training per week within an in-service program. Since becoming operational, 24 hours of additional training has been implemented. The training for the Counselors was provided by outside consultants and by the Associate Director-Staff Psychologist. The major focus of training and the thread behind all aspects of training was the Human Resource Development model. It is a model which stresses helper/counselor effectiveness in terms of the functional skills needed to do an effective job. In turn, training focuses upon tangible and usable helper skills and not on theory.

CONCLUSION

The selection and training of staff for the implementation of the Youth Services Program within the Dallas Police Department was the most critical aspect of the program. Of key importance was that civilian social scientists had been brought into the normal day-to-day police function. Past experiences of bringing social scientists within a normal police function has made one point very clear -- that is, that the social scientists must be fully oriented and trained to function within the Police Department and not adjacent to it. As such, the selection of staff was aimed toward selecting those people who could be most functional in their jobs within the program and who would be

willing to work fully within a police setting with police supervision.

END