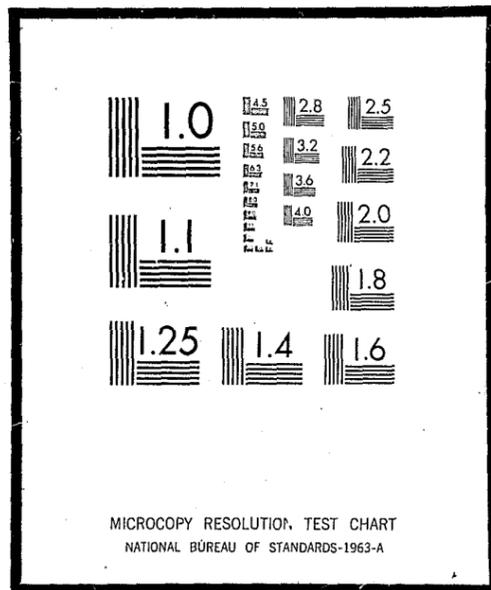


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SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AS A
DELINQUENCY PREVENTION TECHNIQUE

An evaluation of Grants A72-15-41301,
A72-93-41303, A72-135-41304, A72-64-41302
and A72-151-43105 for the Connecticut Planning
Committee on Criminal Administration

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February, 1973

Of all problems in the area of criminal justice, those pertaining to juvenile delinquency treatment and prevention have been the object of the largest variety of attempted solutions. No other facet of criminal justice has reached so deeply into other sectors in an effort to resolve its problems. Delinquency prevention programs are especially given to search far from the specific area of criminal justice. So little is known about the social, psychological and even physiological determinants of delinquency that virtually any type of activity can be interpreted as preventative.

Recently as funds have shifted, somewhat, from social service programs to criminal justice, social action programs have sought funds as delinquency prevention programs. A large number of these programs are constructed around a nucleus of work experience and counselling. With this type of structure, it is assumed that participants will have less time to engage in criminal activity. This minimum structure may then serve as the catalyst for attitudinal change. This theory is supported by police, probation officers, and other child service staff. However, objective, scientific evaluations of this approach to delinquency prevention are few and far between. Aware of this deficiency and questioning its role of funding agent, the Connecticut Planning Committee on Criminal Administration (CPCCA) funded several summer youth employment programs with the stipulation that they be evaluated prior to additional funding. In keeping with this condition, the following is an evaluation of these programs as a delinquency prevention technique.

Summer youth employment grants were made to the five largest cities in Connecticut - Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, Stamford, and Bridgeport. Five \$20,500 awards were made to the housing authority of each city. One of the five subgrantees, Waterbury, was asked to return its funds since it had not started any program activity by late August. Since this was designed to be a Summer Youth Employment project, and some of the delay was the result of poor administration and not of program design, the CPCCA thought it was justified in recalling the funds.

The specific structure of the remaining grants differed from city to city but generally conformed to a basic format. Each project employed approximately 35 juveniles ranging in age from 13 to 18 years. (See Appendix 1) These individuals engaged in maintenance or clerical tasks for 24 hours per week at an hourly rate of \$1.85. (See Appendix 1) Counselling activity was minimal with emphasis put on the employment aspects of the program.

The Hartford program differs significantly from the others both in the clientele served and the extent of counselling services. The Hartford Housing Authority recruited youths living in or near housing projects from the District Juvenile Court. In this way the project director hoped to concentrate on the most intensely delinquent element. Projects in other cities recruited in much the same fashion as they did for Labor Department or HEW grants and no attempt was made to select a particularly delinquent group. The result was two distinct populations - one significantly more delinquent than the other.

The counselling component of the Hartford program was much stronger than that of the other three programs. One hour Guided Group Interaction sessions were conducted as part of the enrollers work program. These sessions were conducted by college students trained by Group Processes, Inc. The other programs provided

little or no counselling; they emphasized the work component. These structural differences in the programs warrant separate treatment in the following experiment.

GOALS

The goal of the Summer Youth Employment Program was to prevent delinquency among youths living in public housing. Work experience and counselling were seen as the vehicles to accomplish this goal. The specific objectives to achieve the goal varied significantly from project to project. The program was seen by some as a means to affect considerable attitude change among the participants that would produce noticeable and lasting change in behavior. Most project directors sought more modest objectives for their programs. They considered work a means to remove the temptation of idle time. This effect, of course, need not manifest itself in attitudinal change nor should it persist beyond the life of the program. In discussions with project directors it became apparent that they considered the latter objectives much more realistic than the former. Eight weeks was hardly sufficient to produce significant attitudinal change. The prevention of delinquency, therefore, will be measured only during that period in which the programs were operational.

PROCEDURE

The evaluation will take the form of an experimental situation. Any such experiment conducted 'in vivo' is subject to the unavoidable presence of uncontrolled variables. The influence of these variables is even more pronounced in this instance, since evaluation was begun long after the project had started. Because evaluation efforts by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration were only recently implemented, the evaluation of these projects did not begin until early August, 1972. By that time, however, the programs were more than half completed. In spite of these difficulties, fairly successful

attempts have been made toward the construction of acceptable empirical conditions.

The hypothesis that employment programs serve as a deterrent to delinquency was investigated by reviewing police records for four groups of juveniles. These groups were composed of:

- 1) Individuals enrolled in the employment programs in Bridgeport, New Haven and Stamford
- 2) A group of individuals not employed in the New Haven program for want of available positions
- 3) Enrollees in the Hartford employment program and,
- 4) Those individuals referred to the Hartford program who were not hired for lack of space

The experimental groups from Bridgeport, New Haven, and Stamford were established from the lists of participants furnished by the project directors. College students and other supervisory staff were excluded from the group since their work was more akin to that of a project director than to that of an enrollee. This group totals 108 individuals and shall be referred to as the 'tri-city experimental group'.

The 'tri-city control group' is composed of 74 individuals who were not able to be placed in the New Haven Program. Since these individuals applied in the same fashion as the experimental group and were rejected only because of lack of facilities, there is no self-selection bias. We assume that these individuals did not gain employment during the experimental period. No interviews were conducted with members of the group to establish whether that is true, but a survey of all Federal, State and local employment services operating in New Haven produced no evidence that these individuals were employed. Given this evidence, the age of the target population and the condition of the job market, it is safe to assume that the control group members were not employed.

The 'Hartford' experimental group is composed of 27 of the 34 listed enrollees. The Hartford program encountered considerable difficulty in retaining individuals for the duration of the program. The delay in acquiring LEAA funds aggravated the problems inherent in dealing with persistently delinquent youths. As a result, several individuals worked only for one or two weeks. It did not seem appropriate to include these individuals in the Hartford experimental group since the program did not structure a significant section of their summer months.

The 'Hartford control group' was constructed from the same list of individuals provided by the Juvenile Court and used in the selection of the experimental group. The distinction between the groups was the result of limited resources and not of any intentional selection process. The 20 members of the control group were essentially comparable to the Hartford experimental group.

All the names in the above groups were submitted to the local police departments in order to determine the extent of police contact. In Stamford, the names of participants were submitted to the Juvenile Court since no juvenile files are kept in the Police Department. The police reported all contacts with the individuals listed. Similar investigations were conducted with adult records to include those individuals sixteen and over.

The experiment consisted of comparing the incidence of police contact in the experimental and control groups during the period of the program. If the program is successful the incidence of police contact should be lower for the experimental groups.

TRI-CITY PROGRAMS

There is some question as to the comparability of the experimental and control groups especially in the case of the "Tri-city" groups. Environment is considered a causal variable in the process of delinquency and the environment of

Bridgeport and Stamford is different from that of New Haven. There are some distinct similarities, however, between the New Haven control group and the 'Tri-City' experimental groups. The vast majority of candidates are residents of low income public housing. This allows one to assume a certain socio-economic homogeneity between the groups. Also, there seems to be a similarity in previous tendencies toward criminality as indicated by police contact statistics. Prior to the program 30 percent of the individuals in the 'Tri-city' experimental group had contact with the police while 31 percent of the Tri-city control had police contacts. The following table illustrates the prior criminality of each program relative to the Tri-city control.

<u>CITIES</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>CRIMINAL HISTORY</u>	
		<u>% with police contacts</u>	<u>Mean number of police contacts</u>
Bridgeport	35*	25%	.74
New Haven	29*	31%	.62
Stamford	44	32%	.45
Control	74	31%	.53

*Sample size often differs from the exact numbers of enrollees due to irregularities in program structures and program or police data.

The percentage of individuals involved with the police is essentially the same for both groups. The frequency of police contact is somewhat greater especially in Bridgeport. This may tend to shed some doubt as to the comparability of the Bridgeport and the Tri-city control groups. Taken together, however, the experimental groups are very similar to the control group in the mean number of police contacts.

Tri-city experimental

.59

Tri-city control

.53

During the summer program the experimental group showed somewhat more delinquency than the unemployed control group. The Tri-city experimental group had 6 percent of its members involved with the police as opposed to 1 percent for the control group. The mean number of incidents for the experimental group was .092 as opposed to .013 for the controls.

Aware of the possible inconsistencies between the control and experimental groups an historical control group was used. The Tri-city experimental group was traced for identical blocks of time during the three previous summers and their contact with the police recorded. Again one cannot be certain that these individuals were not employed, but their age, the job market and several on-site interviews leads one to conclude that they were not. During the past three summers the mean percent of experimentals having police contact was .6 percent, with .006 contacts per individual. During the program 6 percent of the participants had contact with the police with an average of .092 contacts.

The extent to which the summer youth employment activity has served to lessen the delinquency of the experimental relative to the control group is summarized in the following table. The mean number of contacts of the experimental group is divided by the mean number of contacts of the control group. As the resulting scores approach zero, the control group can be said to be more delinquent; as the scores approach one it can be said that the groups are identical; as it deviates from one it can be said that the experimentals are more delinquent than the control group. The criminal history column serves as a benchmark. If the scores for the period of the program (i.e. two right columns) are lower than the scores for that period when the program was not underway - then the program can be deemed a success. If scores during the experimental period are higher, it indicates that the program is a failure.

RELATIVE CRIMINALITY OF TRI-CITY EXPERIMENTAL
AND CONTROL GROUPS

<u>OVERALL CRIMINAL HISTORY</u>	<u>HISTORICAL CONTROL</u>	<u>PARALLEL CONTROL</u>
1.11	12.33	9.2

It is obvious from the above table that the Summer Youth Employment Programs have not lessened delinquency among the participants.¹

HARTFORD PROGRAM

The Hartford groups are significantly different not only in the structure of the programs but also in their amenability to evaluation. More information is available on the employment status of the control group in this instance, since both controls and experimentals are in contact with probation officers. The probabilistic statements vis a vis employment and the lack of a comparable environment which cast doubt on the Tri-city groups are not factors here.

The Hartford control and experimental groups are very similar. All are resident in similar neighborhoods i.e.: in or near Hartford Public Housing. All have been adjudicated by the Juvenile Court and recommended to the employment program. There is some discrepancy in the previous criminal history of the two groups, however.

The Hartford control group had a mean number of 3.40 contacts with the police while the experimental group averaged 5.88 contacts. The experimental group is more prone to delinquency than the control group. This distinction will be controlled, as in the case of the Tri-city groups, by employing the initial relationship of experimental to control as a benchmark.

¹See Robin, Gerald S. "Anti-Poverty Programs and Delinquency", The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science Vol. 60, No. 3 Sept. 1969, p. 323-631

During the program, the controls were engaged in slightly more delinquent activity than the experimental group. Four per cent (1) of the experimentals had police contact for an average of .037 contacts per individual. Ten per cent (2) of the control group had contact with the police for an individual average of .10 contacts. Though the percentage variation is small and the absolute number of contacts only slightly less, relative to the previous discrepancy in criminality, this seems to indicate that the program did have some deterrent effect. This finding is reinforced when a historical control group (i.e.: the experimental group during the same time period for three previous summers) is employed. The mean percentage of individuals involved with the police over the past three summers is 12 per cent (3.6). The mean number of contacts is .135. This is considerably greater than the number of contacts during the Program.

The following table summarizes the relative level of criminality of the two groups before and during the program.

RELATIVE CRIMINALITY OF HARTFORD EXPERIMENTALS AND CONTROLS		
<u>OVERALL CRIMINAL HISTORY</u>	<u>HISTORICAL CONTROL</u>	<u>PARALLEL CONTROL</u>
1.73	.27	.37

The summer program reduced the ratio of experimental to control offenses by about .6. The overall ratio was $\frac{159}{68} = 2.34$ or 1.73. During the summer program this ratio was $\frac{1}{2} = .5$ or .37. In the case of the historical control group, the ratio is $\frac{1}{2} = .5$ or .27. In other words, the experimental group had been 1.73 times as delinquent as the control group. During the program, however, they engaged in approximately 2/3 less delinquency than the control group. Relative to their previous summer experience, the level of delinquency was again reduced by approximately two-thirds. To be sure, police contact data has some limitations.

Not all delinquent activity is recorded and the small number of police contacts makes any variation significant. The variation expressed here is small but consistent and for want of better indicators these findings stand.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is impossible to comment in any generic fashion on the efficacy of employment programs as a crime prevention tool. As the data indicates, there is considerable variation in the effect of programs according to their specific structure. Those projects focusing on 'hard core' delinquents and including a daily counselling component seem to be somewhat successful in preventing delinquency. Those projects which provide only employment for pre-delinquent (i.e.: low income) youth have no deterrent effect. In fact, there is a correlation between employment and increased delinquency. Future programs of this type should:

- 1) Have hard core delinquents as a target population and,
- 2) Contain a counselling component and an attitudinal evaluation of the counselling program

Due to the unfortunate failure of the Capitol Region Education Council's evaluation of the Hartford counselling program², it is essential that some evaluation be undertaken to determine the efficacy of this technique.

In addition to substantive changes in the employment programs, some alterations should be made in the administration of these projects. The inability of Housing Authorities to implement such programs was obvious in all site visits. Waterbury's failure to begin any activity is one example of this deficiency. Hartford, the only program which made efforts to attract 'hard core' delinquents, reported considerable difficulty in managing these individuals. New Haven implemented its program very efficiently but its target population was not sufficiently delinquent to be in great need of this activity or to greatly benefit from it. To adequately

² See Appendix #2

administer these programs Housing Authorities would have to hire child care staff and develop that expertise required to deal with delinquent youth. Since this expertise already exists in state child care agencies, such a policy seems inefficient. Future awards should be made to child care agencies within the criminal justice system.

In the event that awards would be made to Housing Authorities in the future, the CPCCA should initiate an early funding round. The late arrival of funds (August 17) undoubtedly contributed to the difficulties of the Waterbury and Hartford Housing Authorities. It is difficult to organize summer programs when funding is not assured until June 1. It is also a problem for some authorities to obtain funds to sustain a program while funds are being processed through state and local agencies that are not geared for quick processing of requests.

Awards for summer activities should be made no later than March 15 if a project is to be at all well planned and successful.

GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS

I. BRIDGEPORT

The Bridgeport program featured two types of employment - general maintenance work in the P.T. Barnum Housing Project and tutor positions in the Youth Tutoring Youth program directed by the Neighborhood Youth Corp. The 40 enrollees were evenly divided between the two programs. Participants worked 24 hours per week for eight weeks at the hourly rate of \$1.85. Six hours a week was allotted for recreational activities. Additional trips to cultural and athletic events were included.

II. HARTFORD

The Hartford program consisted mainly of ground maintenance work. (e.g.: picking up papers) Enrollees worked 25 hours per week for eight weeks at the hourly rate of \$1.85. Two thirds of the 34 participants in the program participated in one hour Guided Group Interaction sessions daily. The remaining third worked for that additional hour. Trips were scheduled for the fall but due to the recall of funds they were never taken.

III. NEW HAVEN

The New Haven program also focused largely on ground maintenance tasks with a few clerical positions. Enrollees numbered 36 with 8 administrative and maintenance interns. Enrollees worked twenty hours per week at \$1.75 per hour. Interns worked twenty-five hours a week at \$3.00 per hour. Supervised recreation was included and organized trips and tours were made available.

IV. STAMFORD

The Stamford program employed 44 youths in various maintenance activities throughout the housing projects. The participants worked a total of twenty six hours per week for eight weeks at an hourly rate of \$1.85. There were no provisions for counselling or recreation but organized trips were planned.

The following is an excerpt from "An Analysis of the Effects of Guided Group Interaction on the Behavior of Juvenile Delinquents During a Summer Youth Employment Program" by Thomas W. English

METHODS

Subjects

The subjects selected for participation in this project consisted of thirty three male delinquents randomly selected from a list of available Hartford youth. The Director of the Summer Youth Employment Project, in cooperation with authorities of the Juvenile Court in Hartford, was responsible for the selection process. Criteria for eligibility were simply that the youngster

be adjudicated delinquent by the court, be eligible for work, and preferably live in one of the public housing projects.

The original research design called for selection of forty youngsters to be assigned to four groups, two experimental groups who would receive group counseling and two control groups who would receive work experience only. Because of financial cut backs it was necessary to reduce the number of groups to three. Two groups received counseling while the third group acted as a control. For purposes of comparison the two groups receiving counseling have been combined and are referred to in this report as Group A. The control group is referred to as Group B.

Random assignment to the experimental and control groups was controlled by the Project Director. Both groups consisted of adjudicated delinquents between the ages of fourteen and seventeen and their records indicated that the offenses for which they were convicted ranged from such minor offenses as truancy to more serious offenses such as assault. The racial breakdown included twenty seven black, six Puerto Rican, and one white. The socio-economic level of the participants in nearly all cases was within poverty standards.

The work crew supervisors were black college students who had considerable experience supervising inner-city youngsters. Intensive training in Guided Group Interaction techniques was provided by Group Processes, Inc. prior to

the start of the program and on a consulting basis throughout the program.

Treatment

Guided Group Interaction is a unique form of group counseling experience in which the major responsibility for change rests with the participants themselves. The participants in concert with his peers and the leader is able to freely discuss, examine, and understand his problems of living without the threats common to real life situations. G.G.I. assumes that the mutual "give and take" of group discussion stimulates the participant to some understanding of the relationship between what takes place in this learning situation and his immediate problems of living. The relationships encountered and the material discussed are directly related to the participant's critical struggle for adjustment.

G.G.I. was first utilized as an attempt at mass therapy of soldiers during the Second World War (Abrahms and McCorkle, 1946). The method was later employed by Dr. McCorkle in a group therapy program in a state correctional project at High Fields, New Jersey (McCorkle, Elias, and Bixby, 1958). The writings concerning the early development of G.G.I. (McCorkle, 1970) clearly point out that this unique approach is not psychoanalytical but rather that it emphasizes the freedom of the individual to learn and try out new roles that may be transferable to real life situations.

McCorkle (1954, 1958) suggests that G.G.I. can be employed for short periods of time in situations which conventionally would call for prolonged "reformatory treatment". G.G.I. has been deemed successful in both residential treatment centers (Stephensen, 1969) as well as non-residential settings (Montone, 1967). The major criticism to be levied on these and the early studies by McCorkle, et al., is their lack of appropriate control groups for comparison.

Procedures

Subjects assigned to the experimental group (group A) participated in Guided Group Interaction sessions from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m. Monday through Friday in addition to supervised work experience from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. daily. Those in the control group (Group B) participated in supervised work experience from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. daily and did not participate in group counseling activity. The duration of the program was eight weeks during the months of July and August. The G.G.I. sessions were conducted in conference rooms provided by the Hartford Housing Authority.

Procedures for evaluation included three measures: an analysis of the results of personality test scores administered before and after treatment; work crew supervisors ratings throughout the eight week program; and a follow-up on the number of offenses and court referrals upon completion of the program. The results of the first two

measures are reported in this paper while the follow-up has yet to be completed.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to assess personality change was the Personality Factor Series (16 PF) developed by Dr. Raymond Cattell, Research Professor in Psychology, University of Illinois. (A copy of the 16 PF is appended to this report.) In studies extending over the past 15 years, Dr. Cattell and his associates have isolated, through factor analytic research, 16 independent source traits of personality. While the 16 PF correlates well with other more widely used personality measures (LaForge, 1962) it was chosen because the factors are not interpreted from the nature of the subject's statement about himself, but from known correlations between these "mental interiors" and the factors as actually established in behavior. Other advantages of the 16 PF include ease of reading, simplicity, and normalization tables for inner-city "disadvantaged" groups. Examples of the types of measures to be found on the 16 PF profile include: "suspecting vs. trustful", "insecure vs. self-confident", "uncontrolled vs. controlled", and "tense vs. stable". For detailed information on the reliability and validity of the 16 PF see Cattell (1956).

Results

A comparison of the experimental and control groups, for purposes of this report, consists of an analysis of the "gain scores" on two measures: the 16 PF Personality Inventory and the supervisor ratings of progress. The

pre-test, post-test, and "gain scores" on the personality inventory are given in figure 1 and figure 2. A statistical analysis of the results of the personality inventory is given in figure 3. The results of the supervisor ratings are given in figure 4.

Because of absenteeism and attrition, only six subjects from the control groups participated in both the pre-test and post-test measure of personality change. Although twelve of the twenty three members of the experimental group took both the pre-test and post-test measure of personality, only six subjects in this group were selected at random for purposes of comparison.

Group A was compared to Group B on the sixteen independent personality variables. The reader may well note that considerable variation occurred both within and between groups. In a sample this small it is unlikely that, although the groups were assigned at random, the two groups would be similar on such variables. It was for this reason that "gain scores" were compared.

The Mann - Whitney U Test was used as a statistical technique to compare the experimental and control groups. The Mann - Whitney U test represents a "powerful alternative" to the T test for small samples which can be ranked (Popham, 1967).

The only personality factor which showed any change as a result of the counseling treatment was factor Q4 ("tension"). Only factor Q4 which could be equated to a

a general anxiety or tension level was significant, $p < .10$.

Although the work supervisor ratings summarized in figure 4 were not statistically treated, because they represented more subjective evaluations on the part of the supervisors, it appears that there were observed differences. The supervisors in the experimental group not only rated their subjects higher on the scales as compared to the control group but there are also noticeably higher gains (improvement) in the ratings of the experimental group when compared to the control group.

Other comparative measures consisted of general comments and summary statements made by the Project Director and others associated with the program. Such comments will be discussed in subsequent sections of this report. Follow up reports will be completed during the next calendar year.

Discussion

The hypothesis that Guided Group Interaction would positively effect the behavior of the delinquent youth enrolled in the eight week summer program was not conclusively proven. On the basis of supervisor and counselor ratings, the groups receiving counseling unquestionably showed greater improvement in their adjustment and performance when compared to similar ratings made by supervisors and counselors concerning the behavior and performance of those subjects not receiving G.G.I. These ratings were of course highly subjective and those working with the counseled group were aware that they were in an experimental situation.

On the other hand, the lack of significant results obtained from testing can not be taken to mean that G.G.I. had no effect on the participants. The sample tested was a rather small sample. The time lapse, eight weeks, between the pre-test and post-test may have been too short to detect any real change in attitude. There was significant change in the attitude of some members of the group being tested. And, of course, we know that personality tends to remain relatively stable over time.

Perhaps the most revealing observed differences were those reported by the group leaders and Project Director in their summary reports. It was noted that group solidarity was more in evidence among the counseled group. On one occasion, when it appeared that the participants would not

receive their pay checks as promised, the group not receiving G.G.I. walked off the job for several days, while the group receiving G.G.I. discussed the problem in their group sessions.

On the other hand, there were more arguments that ensued among those participating in G.G.I. This desire to bring problems out into the open may have arisen out of the general feeling of frustration detected in the results of the testing and manifest in daily group sessions. This problem orientation on the part of the experimental group was part of the overall plan of the program and is to be considered a natural and healthy situation. The problem seems to have been that sufficient time was not available during the eight week period to work through to reasonable satisfaction the problems, gripes, anxieties, etc. that were evident in group meetings.

END