

# YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU

AKRON, OHIO

AN EVALUATION REPORT



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Richard O'Toole, Ph.D.  
Peter C. Kratcoski, Ph.D.

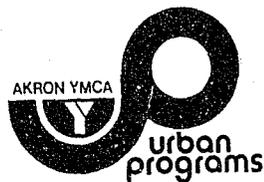
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*Richard O'Toole, Ph.D.*  
*Peter C. Kratcoski, Ph.D.*

A Report of the Youth Services Bureau,  
A Model Cities Project in Akron, Ohio,  
Operated by the YMCA.  
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80 West Center Street  
Akron, Ohio 44308  
Telephone: 376-7711

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## PREFACE

In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recommended that youth service bureaus act as central coordinators of all community services for young people and also provide services lacking in the community or neighborhood, especially ones designed for less seriously delinquent juveniles.

The Commission recommended:

Communities should establish neighborhood youth-serving agencies--youth service bureaus--located if possible in comprehensive neighborhood community centers and receiving juveniles (delinquent and nondelinquent) referred by the police, the juvenile court, parents, schools, and other sources.<sup>1</sup>

The target population recommended for youth service bureaus ideally was to be both delinquent and nondelinquent youth. While anticipating that some cases would normally originate with parents, schools, and other sources, the Task Force expected the bulk of referrals to come from police and juvenile court intake staff. In addition, the report noted: "The youth services bureau should also accept juveniles on probation or parole . . . it should accept 'walk-ins' and parental requests for voluntary service. It should respond to requests for aid from other organizations and individuals."<sup>2</sup>

While a broad range of services and certain mandatory functions were suggested for youth service bureaus, individually tailored work with trouble-making youth was proposed as a primary function. The Task Force intended youth service bureaus to act as central coordinators of all community services for young people and to provide services lacking in the community or neighborhood. In essence, the youth service bureau provides needed services to youths as a substitute for processing them unnecessarily through the juvenile justice system, helping these youths without placing upon them the stigma which so often accompanies formal involvement with the legal system.

While the President's Commission recommended the concept of the youth service bureau, it did not set forth a detailed format for creation of these bureaus. Consequently, youth service bureaus have developed throughout the nation in response to differing community needs, existing youth programs, types of sponsorship, and sources of funding.

The Akron Youth Services Bureau, created in 1970 proceeded with the general mandate offered by the President's Commission to divert youth from the formal juvenile justice system, to make the community aware of the services needed for youth, and to help develop increased communication and cooperation among the various agencies in the community serving youth. In this report, evaluative assessments are made of the progress of the Akron Youth Services Bureau to date in accomplishing these goals.

Following is an outline of the major sections of the evaluation, including a brief methodological statement for each aspect of the research design.

"Highlights of Evaluation Findings" capsules the significant contributions, successes and failures, strengths and weaknesses of the Akron Youth Services Bureau Program.

In the "Recommendations" section, a list of the recommendations made throughout this report is given for quick reference. The circumstances and findings which prompted these recommendations are described in detail in the body of the report.

Chapter I, "Origins and Organizational Structure," presents a short history of the Akron Youth Services Bureau as a basis for understanding the current organization, service program, and relationships with the community. The basic structure of the program, its goals, and programs for their attainment are analyzed, including several recommendations for

change on the basis of the analysis. Data for this part of the study were collected through interviews with the staff and administration of the program, current and past Advisory Board members, and leaders of other Akron area service agencies.

The Akron Youth Services Bureau serves the portion of Akron designated as the Model Cities Area. This section of the city was chosen as a Model Cities target area because census information revealed the existence of high rates of poverty, unemployment, and inadequate housing there. In Chapter II, "Characteristics of the YSB Area," attention is given to crime and delinquency rates in these census tracts.

Chapter III, "Characteristics of the Youths Served and Service Outcomes," describes the YSB clients according to important social characteristics. It then details the types of services they received and the outcomes they experienced as a result of agency treatment. Agency records were analyzed and staff members were interviewed for this longitudinal aspect of the research design. An instrument titled "Youth Services Bureau Diagnostic Inventory" was developed by the evaluators to aid the staff members in their understanding of the clients' strengths and weaknesses and to serve as a basis for program planning for each youth. An analysis of client problems as shown by this instrument is also given in Chapter III.

Chapter IV, "Experimental Study of Delinquency Recidivism," reports the results of the experimental comparison of YSB clients who had been processed by the Summit County Juvenile Court with three control groups of youths selected for experimental purposes: a group of middle class youths, a sample of youths residing in the Model Cities area who had not taken part in the YSB program, and a group of working class youths. This design allows interpretation of the effectiveness of the YSB program as compared to others for adjudicated delinquents.

Chapter V, "YSB Relations with the Community," presents the results of intensive interviews with community agency leaders and findings from mailed questionnaires sent to workers in agencies which interacted with the YSB during the evaluation period.

In Chapter VI, "YSB Cost Analysis," the costs of treatment at the Akron Youth Services Bureau are compared with costs for other service programs.

In Chapter VII, "Record Keeping," the results of work accomplished on the agency's total record-keeping system are discussed and analyzed.

In Chapter VIII, "Summary and Recommendations," detailed recommendations are set forth, together with explanations of the reasons for their formulations.

The original more lengthy report, upon which this monograph is based, included eight appendices, which presented data collection instruments and detailed data.

Appendix A - Discussion of YSB Face Sheet

Appendix B - Summary of Findings of Diagnostic Inventory

Appendix C - Proposed Follow Up Report

Appendix D - Community Resource Questionnaire

Appendix E - Revised Diagnostic Inventory

Appendix F - Family Casework Inventory

Appendix G - Parents' Opinions of the Effectiveness of the Youth Services Bureau

Appendix H - Youths' Opinions of the Effectiveness of the Youth Services Bureau

Information from the original document is available upon request.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVALUATION FINDINGS

According to the Akron Youth Services Bureau's records, 1525 youths were assisted in some way during 1973. Of these, case files were maintained on 634 youths. Of the 634 cases, 100 had records at the Summit County Juvenile Court, while the remainder did not. Fifty-nine per cent of the cases were males, 41% were females. Seventy-nine per cent of the clients were black, 21% were white. The median age for the youths served was 13. The vast majority of the clients lived in the Model Cities target area.

The initial period of YSB development was difficult, with numerous organizational and staff problems. During this period the Youth Services Bureau did not develop credibility in the Akron community. This initial liability is slowly being overcome and the YSB is developing into a viable youth serving agency.

The Akron Youth Services Bureau has developed a program which is responsive to the needs of youths so that services are available when and where they are required and programs are offered in a style acceptable to the youths of the target area. The utilization of personnel indigenous to the target area is necessary if the rapport with the neighborhood youths and adults is to be maintained.

In regard to its coordination role, the Youth Services Bureau has identified gaps in community youth services. However, efforts to fill these gaps and coordinate community services have been minimal. It is recommended that the Youth Services Bureau supply documentation of needs to community planners when services are not available and offer its outreach services to agencies which supply such services when they are needed.

The Youth Services Bureau has extended its services to those areas of Akron which are experiencing population growth. These areas are adjacent to

the original Model Cities target territory. The decision to initiate programs at YSB Satellites I and II was based on sound planning by the administration. Although the decision to close Satellite I (and possibly Satellite II) was grounded on financial considerations, it will result in a decrease in the effectiveness of the program. Every avenue should be pursued to find means to continue to staff Satellite II.

In response to the great number of individual, family, and community problems which bring youths into conflict with the law, the Akron Youth Services Bureau has developed a broad range of service programs to meet these needs, with most clients receiving a variety of these services. The Bureau has also developed a higher education counseling program which provides a connecting link between youths who desire such education and colleges and universities which have the resources to help needy youths through financial aid or work-study programs.

While caution must be exercised in interpreting the findings, an analysis of YSB services and the recidivism of post-delinquent clients showed that group counseling and supplemental education programs appeared to be related to lower recidivism rates and thus to diversion from the juvenile justice system.

A national study found that diversion, the major goal of youth service bureaus, is virtually unmeasurable. Some youth service bureaus have been able to report decreases in delinquency rates since their initiation, but many other factors could also have been involved in such rate changes. This evaluation analyzed rates for target census tracts and found that rates of crime in the YSB target area did not significantly increase or decrease or differ from increases or decreases in the city as a whole during the years compared. However, the major finding from this analysis was that delinquency rates in the target area account for a significant proportion of law violation for the total Akron community.

Continuation of YSB type programs would seem to be warranted based on this need for services.

A systematic comparison of delinquency recidivism for the YSB clients who had records at the Summit County Juvenile Court and three control groups (a sample of youths who lived in the Model Cities area who had never been YSB clients, a sample of middle class youths, and a sample of working class youths) showed that the delinquency recidivism rate for the YSB clients was comparable to that for the middle class sample and significantly lower than the rate for the Model Cities non-YSB sample. The recidivism for the YSB sample was also significantly lower than for a sample of youths who had been referred to the Ohio Youth Commission, and was approximately the same as that for all youths referred to the Summit County Juvenile Court for the year 1973.

The Youth Services Bureau was found to be particularly effective in working with the young offenders, females, whites, and those who had committed less serious offenses. It was relatively unsuccessful in dealing with hard-core, older delinquents. For those YSB clients in the sample who did recidivate, the majority recidivated only once and after a rather extended period of time.

The community resource personnel who were aware of the Youth Services Bureau and had sufficient knowledge of its programs evaluated the agency positively. However, too few of the respondents were adequately informed about the nature and functions of the YSB. An absence of referrals from the Akron Police Department is a major program deficiency. This crucial channel for diversion from the court is not being employed.

The YSB utilized the resources of other community agencies quite frequently. However, these community agencies were not used with maximum effectiveness because the YSB counselors were often not aware of the range of services available in the community or the proper procedures to follow in making referrals.

The per capita cost of providing YSB services was found to be quite reasonable and comparable to service costs of other youth service agencies.

During the course of the evaluation, methods were developed to maximize the effectiveness of the YSB counselors. The problem of staff accountability was eliminated, and there was some evidence that the staff became more effective through a more organized, systematic approach in its work. A well organized, systematically implemented in-service training program would undoubtedly lead to an increase in YSB effectiveness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The initial period of the Youth Services Bureau's development should have been devoted to establishing its credibility in the community and its ability to work with other community agencies. A great deal of planning, public relations, and inter-agency work should have been accomplished before the Youth Services Bureau began to admit clients. Since this initial period was fraught with problems and the Bureau's image in the community suffered, the YSB must conduct a continuing public relations program to inform community agencies, parents, and youths of its services. Agencies which refer youths to the YSB should receive treatment plans for their referrals and follow-up information.

The Youth Services Bureau's goals should include the realization of a significant decrease in juvenile arrests from the YSB target area and a significant decrease in the number of cases referred to the juvenile court. The realization of these goals would be a positive indication that the YSB is performing the function of diverting youths from the juvenile justice system.

The Youth Services Bureau should concentrate its efforts where the greatest need exists. This requires following shifts in the youthful population within the city and opening or closing centers in accordance with the needs of the areas served. The Youth Services Bureau's administrators must continually assess these needs, using the various sources of information available to them.

In its role of coordinator, the YSB has identified some gaps in community youth services. It is recommended that the YSB offer its outreach services to agencies which supply such services when they are available and supply documentation of needs to community planners when services are not available.

The major element in an innovative program such as the Youth Services Bureau is its staff. A great deal of planning and work must go into staff recruitment, in-service training, supervision, and retention. A basic foundation in counseling techniques and use of community services should be a prerequisite for all personnel and regularly scheduled in-service training should be planned for new workers.

The YSB must be able to provide services in a para-professional (streetworker) manner that is appealing to clients and at the same time must interact with other organizations in a professional manner. At the personal level the counselor must be "professional" with professionals and yet maintain relationships with clients in the manner they expect. At the organizational level, the YSB must be innovative, utilizing efficient, accountable procedures according to good organizational principles, but not fall into the bureaucratic morass of being "another agency."

A case management, processing, and record keeping system, including diagnostic work up, recommended services, service recordings, outcomes, and follow up procedures, should be put into operation.

To aid in the solution of the record keeping--labeling problem, it is recommended that different types of records be used for various types of services rendered, according to the following principle: extensiveness of records should never go beyond the potential case service benefits to the client.

Each counselor should be held accountable for case planning, specific services, record keeping, and follow up for a group of clients. Periodic meetings should be held with his supervisor to consult on client problems. At these meetings, the supervisors must assess the counselors' work with their clients, provide professional advice, and conduct in-service training through consultation with the staff.

It is recommended that the YSB develop two mechanisms to improve its referral relationships with other agencies: (1) a case plan for each youth should be developed when a referral is made to a cooperating agency, and (2) a system of feedback on client progress with referring agencies should be developed.

One individual from the YSB staff should be designated as intake supervisor and case assignment manager. This individual would screen cases to determine if they needed extensive services and match the youth with a counselor who could be most helpful to him.

In view of the number of youths who experienced problems in the schools, the YSB must invest even more of its resources in this problem area. Relationships with administrators, teachers, and school counselors must be further strengthened, and staff must receive additional in-service training in dealing with these problems.

The YSB should continue its program of higher education counseling. Funds should be sought to provide additional aid to students once they are admitted to a college or university.

Record keeping represents a paradox for the Youth Services Bureau, but a great deal of attention must be devoted to this function, due to its importance for the maintenance of high quality service standards and for the agency's ability to report its work to referral sources and organizations which oversee and fund its programs. Two guiding values are especially important:

1. The system's major function is to augment quality service-- an innovative agency such as the YSB must implement a good record keeping system without developing a bureaucratic tangle where records become ends in themselves.
2. Record keeping must not contribute to the stigma of youth being helped, so that they are labeled as delinquent or "bad."

Other goals to be considered are:

1. Worker accountability and ease of supervision,
2. Ease in internal and external reporting,
3. Staff time,
4. Confidentiality,
5. Program planning and follow up on each client, and
6. Continuity of service

The Youth Services Bureau's relationships with the police have remained problematic. It is recommended that YSB Advisory Board members and administrators meet with community leaders, planners, and officials of the juvenile justice system to attempt to develop means for a cooperative relationship between the YSB and the police.

The national study found that, "The most significant and critical problem of Youth Service Bureaus throughout the country today can be summed up in a single word, 'funding.'"<sup>3</sup> While the level of funding is critical, continuity is an even larger problem for the YSB. Programming, planning, and staff morale, for example, are dependent upon the ability to carry out long range planning. A long range funding program must be found for the YSB.

The Youth Services Bureau should serve the same geographic areas as its major referral sources, that is, the Akron YSB should become a city-wide agency. Future planning should locate the YSB in a community service center, if possible.

Continued internal evaluation and periodic external evaluation of the YSB program's effectiveness is also recommended. The YSB must be able to demonstrate its effectiveness with sound, hard data even more frequently than long-established agencies. Cost effectiveness must be a part of this evaluation system.

## CHAPTER I: ORIGINS AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

One of the primary objectives of this evaluation was to reconstruct the development of the Youth Services Bureau in Akron. This was accomplished through extensive interviews with various agency administrators, the staff of the Youth Services Bureau, and members of the community who served on the Youth Services Bureau's Advisory Board.

The matter of YSB sponsorship was an early problem. The agencies which were competing for sponsorship had to hastily draw up proposals regarding their plans for administering the program. Consequently, when a church accepted sponsorship of the program it did not have clearly defined objectives, an understanding of the types of personnel needed for the program, job descriptions for the personnel, or a clear cut strategy for utilizing personnel to achieve the program's goals. It must be remembered that this was a period of crisis for Akron, as well as other cities with large minority group populations, and there existed a concern to satisfy all of the parties interested in a Youth Services Bureau, even though their plans and goals for the bureau might have varied. Consequently, the general feeling of the administrators of other community agencies during the first year of the Youth Services Bureau's operation was that it had little credibility, and the administrators were reluctant to utilize its services.

With the entrance of the YMCA and its Director of Urban Programs, the program began to turn around. An evaluation of the Youth Services Bureau for the year 1971 by the City Demonstration Agency of Akron noted the very poor internal record keeping, a lack of a strategy for attaining the Bureau's objectives, a failure to develop and implement project goals, a relatively poor relationship with the public schools and with the police, lack of structured

personnel standards, a need for reorganization of the operating structure, and a lack of staff training.

Based on the above evaluative analysis, the YMCA, through the program's new Executive Director, attempted to implement the following changes:

1. A full time staff person was hired to develop a record keeping system for evaluation purposes.
2. Various efforts were made to develop new programs and to elicit new funding sources. New programs which the YSB initiated, attempted to initiate, or cooperated in included a program on drug abuse prevention, diagnostic services from the Child Guidance Center, the YMCA's Via House, the National Youth Minibike Project, the Open-T Satellite Program, and numerous recreational programs with Akron University and with the East, Central, and West Akron YMCA's, Camp Y-Noah, and the Tallmadge and Firestone Park YMCA's.
3. Efforts were made to establish significant working relationships with referral agencies.
4. A personnel policy was developed and approved by the YSB Advisory Committee.
5. A plan for a self-study was initiated.
6. A plan for developing and attaining long range objectives was formulated by the Director.
7. Plans for staff training were developed and implemented.
8. Two satellite centers were opened for the purpose of attracting youths from areas not immediately adjacent to the Wooster Avenue Center.

As noted in the preface to this report, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice did not design a particular model for the Youth Services Bureaus. Therefore, each community has developed its own model according to its perceived needs and resources. In briefly describing the Akron Youth Services Bureau, the evaluators feel that it will be helpful to that agency and to community officials and planners to compare the Akron program with the findings of a national study of Youth Service

Bureaus.<sup>4</sup> Throughout this report reference will be made to this study as a means of evaluating the Akron Youth Services Bureau. On a state level, the State of California Department of the Youth Authority's evaluation of ten of its bureaus, published in 1973,<sup>5</sup> made available certain facts which are also helpful for purposes of comparison with the Akron Youth Services Bureau.

#### Auspices

The Central YMCA of Akron is the present operating agency for the Akron Youth Services Bureau. The City Demonstration Agency (City of Akron), the Model Neighborhood Commission, and the YMCA are the contractual parties. The agency has its own Advisory Board, made up largely of officials of agencies also concerned with youth problems. The program is funded by combined grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Model Cities, and HUD.

By way of comparison, the California YSB's were established initially by the California State Legislature and were state supported with matching LEAA funds. Since June, 1971, the programs have been totally supported by federal funds due to state budget reductions.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, the Akron YSB has always been dependent upon federal support. The fact that the California programs were originally under official state auspices may have led to a more formal organizational structure and integration with other state agencies dealing with youth. The Akron YSB has always remained independent of any formal supervision by City, County, or State agencies.

Bureaus with closer state ties have added chances for cooperation with other agencies. On the other hand, the advantage of remaining independent is that the likelihood of stigmatization of youths associated with the program is

reduced and the possibilities of gaining local community support are enhanced, since parents and youths who view formal agencies with suspicion may come to a locally controlled youth service bureau voluntarily.

#### Services Provided

The primary goal of the Akron Youth Services Bureau is DIVERSION from the juvenile justice system. This means keeping the predelinquent out of trouble and making sure that the current offender does not return to the formal system. Direct and indirect individual services are required, as well as the coordination of community services to youths and the mobilization of community resources to alleviate youth problems.

The national study of youth service bureaus found that, "Most bureaus provide a variety of direct services, including counseling, advocacy casework, tutoring, job referral, crisis housing, and medical services."<sup>7</sup> The general emphasis of youth service bureaus across the country, and in Akron as well, is to fill gaps in services and to make services available when and where they are required and in a style acceptable to the youths of the target area.

Currently the Akron Youth Services Bureau offers the following types of direct and indirect services to youths in the Model Cities and nearby target areas:

1. Individual counseling,
2. Group counseling, group discussions, and "rapping,"
3. Family counseling and home visits,
4. Educational counseling, including liaison with teachers and school counselors, tutoring, and supplemental education,
5. Recreational activities,
6. Cultural enrichment, including extracurricular educational experiences such as field trips,
7. Vocational and employment counseling,
8. Counseling for higher education,
9. Referral to such agencies and services as Family Services, Fallsview or Portage Path Mental Health Centers, medical facilities, juvenile court probation officers or community workers, Child Welfare Services, Via House, Big Brother or Big Sister program,s or AHEAD for drug education and counseling.

As demonstrated in the case records and in interviews with staff, most clients receive a variety of these services.

The researchers in the national study found three major problems or criticisms of programs which offered direct services. First, there was the criticism that the youth services bureau will simply develop into "just another agency" and that its services will be duplications or conflict with those of other agencies. Second, if the youth services bureau does not have a broad enough base of clients, then it will inevitably lead to the labeling of its clients as "deviants," due to their association with the agency. Third, the agency may become identified with a single specialty program such as employment counseling or recreation.

At the Akron Youth Services Bureau steps have been taken to alleviate each of these problems in providing direct services. In regard to the first problem, because of its advocacy role and its outreach functions, but particularly due to the administration and staff, care has been taken so that the agency does not slowly emerge into a traditional agency. (The evaluators realize that is suggesting defined diagnostic, casework, and record keeping procedures the agency must guard against relinquishing its unique appeal to youths.) Second, the Akron YSB has a broad base of youths and is acutely aware of the delinquent labeling problem in all of its programs and organizational procedures. Third, the agency has actively worked so as not to give the impression that it is a recreational or job counseling agency.

Vocational Counseling. The primary function of the YSB vocational counseling program is to counsel students to remain in school. However, when this fails

the counselors provide employment counseling and placement. In addition, the YSB has been actively involved in securing summer employment for its clients.

Higher Education Program. As a basic aspect of its services to youths, the Akron YSB offers a Model Cities Higher Education Program. The aim of this outreach program is to identify and serve individuals who have the potential and motivation for higher education and to aid them in their efforts to attend a college or university or to develop a skilled trade by attending a suitable trade school. A good deal of counseling is devoted to applying for financial aid, work-study programs, scholarships, grants, loans, and the expenses of higher education in general. The Educational Specialist functions as the prospective students' advocate and as a go-between with the college admissions offices.

#### The Identification of Gaps in Youth Services

According to Sherwood Norman, the major goals of youth services bureaus are: (1) mobilizing community resources to solve youth problems, (2) strengthening existing youth resources and developing new ones, and (3) promoting positive programs to remedy delinquency breeding conditions.<sup>8</sup> In relation to these goals the Akron YSB has attempted to identify gaps in community services to youths and to fill in these gaps both by getting other organizations to provide services to troubled youths and to provide services itself when no other agency can be identified.

The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice recommended coordination of services on behalf of youths. The term coordination, however, has several meanings. It would seem presumptuous to expect a new and relatively politically weak organization such as the YSB to attempt to coordinate the activities of established agencies and organizations

that deal with youth. Instead, the Akron YSB has interpreted its coordination function as identifying gaps in services and then attempting to educate and persuade other groups to perform such services or to push for the establishment of programs, as in its relations with planning and political groups.

Overall, while the California bureaus' achievement of the coordination objective was neither extensive nor systematic, the bureaus' role in achieving more coordinated services began to emerge more fully as the bureaus stabilized.<sup>9</sup> In the Akron YSB there are signs of developing interagency cooperation and coordination. There have been reciprocal referrals out from the YSB to other agencies and agencies have made referrals to the YSB. There has been some cooperation with other agencies in training of personnel and educating the general public to youth programs and youth needs. However, the success in this area is quite limited, and the main reason for this is that the YSB is not a community-wide agency, as are the cooperating agencies.

The California Youth Service Bureaus extended their services to the geographic and political boundaries of the city or county in which they were operating, whereas the Akron YSB limited its services to residents of the geographic area encompassing the Model Cities target area of the city.

#### The Director

The national study found that the YSB directorship requires an individual who is talented in many areas: administration, staff supervision, inter-agency liaison and coordination, public relations, and casework with clients. In order to keep the organization functioning, the Director must also spend a good deal of time securing funding and other resources. This description fits well with the demanding job of the Akron YSB Director.

Staff

Youth service bureau workers are the key ingredients of these programs, for it is largely their relationship with the clients and the community which is the major change agent in the diversion process. The methods and work style of the Akron YSB counselors, like their counterparts across the country, are not those of the staff of the traditional social agency. Their style of communication is the language of the street and they deal with clients in a friendly but straightforward manner without bureaucratic language. The current evaluation findings are very close to those of the national researchers, who stated, "They meet the client 'where he is;' they do it as it has never been done before. Most of the time this is effective in working with clientele; however, on occasion, it leads to misunderstanding and misinterpretation by some public officials and more traditional and established public agencies. The program's strength is also a program problem."<sup>10</sup>

During the major part of the evaluation period, the Akron YSB staff consisted of the following:

Director  
 Social Worker  
 Casework Counselor Supervisor  
 Casework Supervisor  
 Family Counselor Specialist  
 Casework Specialist  
 Casework Counselors (7)  
 Accountant  
 Secretarial-Clerical workers (3)

Of the total of 19 persons employed by the agency over the last few years, ten are male and nine are female, and 17 are black and two are white. The majority (14) are residents of the target Model Cities area.

Physical Facilities

The housing of the YSB main office and two satellites is good and the furnishings, particularly in the main office, are excellent. The three sites were accessible to youths in the target area.

Several authorities have recommended that youth service bureaus be housed in community service centers. This would seem to be an excellent suggestion for the Akron YSB and should be taken into account in future community planning.

Working Hours

The nature of community worker and outreach programs requires that staff be available when and where they are needed. Much counseling activity and scheduling of special programs takes place on weekends and evenings.

Organizational Structure

The evaluation of the organizational structure was undertaken in three steps at three different time periods. During the first evaluation period, the evaluators expressed a concern that the YSB had not developed clear-cut objectives, methods, and a system of allocating resources according to priorities. At the time of the second evaluation it was noted that the structure of the Bureau was sound, and increases were seen in:

1. Referrals to the Youth Services Bureau from other agencies, including the Summit County Juvenile Court and the schools. This resulted from greater visibility, acceptance, and credibility for the YSB, probably due in part to implementation of the earlier evaluation recommendations.
2. Movement toward systematic case treatment and away from only recreational activities and "rap sessions" was noted. This was due in large part to a new emphasis on case management.
3. Attempts to utilize a "team" approach--the YSB working with other agencies for outreach and family counseling.

At the time of the first evaluation of the organizational structure the evaluators questioned the clarity of staff role definitions and in particular the relationship between the professionally trained and the non-professionally trained staff within the YSB structure. At the time of the second study period it was concluded that the Akron YSB staff functions adequately with the target youth population. Their informal and personal approach fits in well with the concept of providing an alternative to the formal system. The non-authoritarian nature of the program also increased the degree of interaction with the youths being served.

In the first evaluation it was recommended that the staff be involved in a continuous in-service training program. By the time of the second evaluation it was noted that many of the counselors had become involved in a training program at the University of Akron. In the final evaluation the investigators still felt that additional staff training was needed and it is suggested that one member of the YSB staff be designated to coordinate staff training.

During the first evaluation there was some concern about the system of supervision and accountability for the staff. The evaluators later noted that the following measures had been designed or implemented to increase supervision and accountability:

1. Firmness in requesting that counselors who had not done so complete the necessary records of treatment plans for each case,
2. Periodic meetings of supervisors and counselors to discuss the treatment plans and their progress,
3. Revision of the case intake form to allow for the recording of treatment plans within the YSB, and
4. In the case of referrals to another agency, a written, structured treatment strategy presented to the cooperating agency to gain cooperation and confidence.

At the time of the initial research it was recommended that diagnostic tools (developed by the evaluators) be used to aid in defining clients' problem areas and plan service programming. At the end of the second study period these instruments had been introduced, and at the final evaluation these had been revised and modified and were still in use.

## CHAPTER II: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE YSB AREA

The area served by the Akron Youth Services Bureau encompasses seventeen census tracts located west of the downtown area. These census tracts were designated as Model Cities target areas after a survey of housing, unemployment, density, educational level, and family income indicated that a large proportion of the population in these tracts was either in or near the poverty level.

This chapter concentrates on presenting the crime and delinquency statistics for this area, and also notes changes in the crime and delinquency rates during the years that the Youth Services Bureau has been in operation. The data are based on A Crime Analysis and Information System for Summit County Ohio conducted by the Center for Urban Studies of the University of Akron for 1971 and 1972,<sup>11</sup> and the Annual Reports of the City of Akron Police Department for the years 1972 and 1973.<sup>12</sup> Any inferences made regarding the influence of the YSB in producing reductions in delinquency rates in these census tracts are of course speculative, since many other factors and agencies work in and influence this area.

In 1971, the Center for Urban Studies began to report on and analyze crime in the city of Akron by census tract. Records were kept on the incidence of the most serious types of crime, including murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, unarmed robbery, armed robbery, aggravated assault, grand larceny, auto theft, and burglary. Statistics were also kept on the arrests made for those crimes cleared by the police and the adult or juvenile status of all offenders.

The seventeen census tracts which comprise the YSB target area accounted for a sizable portion of the total crime in the city of Akron. In 1971, 39% of the armed robberies and 38% of the unarmed robberies occurred in the Model Cities area. One-third of the auto thefts that year also took place there, as did 28% of the aggravated assaults. These figures indicate that the crimes mentioned took place in this area, but were not necessarily committed by area residents. In 1971, 3,172 crimes were reported in these census tracts.

In 1972, 2,845 crimes were reported in these same census tracts, a decrease of 327 crimes (10%) from 1971. The major decrease came in the 266 fewer auto thefts in 1972, but there were also substantial decreases in burglary (-40), unarmed robbery (-39), and armed robbery (-36). The only major increases occurred in the number of aggravated assaults (+53) and rapes (+12). While these figures do not tell one the extent to which the presence of the Youth Services Bureau contributed to the decrease in the number of crimes, they do substantiate that a decrease occurred after the YSB was established in the Model Cities area.

In Table 1, on page 14, the total juvenile arrests within the YSB target area in 1971 and 1972 and increases or decreases in the number of these same serious crimes committed by juveniles are reported.

Table 1  
TOTAL JUVENILE ARRESTS WITHIN THE YSB TARGET AREA  
IN 1971 AND 1972

Offense	1971		1972		Increase or Decrease in Model Cities Area
	No. Reported In Model Cities Area	Per Cent of City Total	No. Reported In Model Cities Area	Per Cent of City Total	
Murder and non- negligent man- slaughter	0	0	0	0	0
Rape	3	17%	3	11%	0
Unarmed Robbery	13	11%	8	11%	-5
Armed Robbery	14	14%	21	12%	+7
Aggravated Assault	1	.5%	2	1%	+1
Grand Larceny	18	15%	15	9%	-3
Auto Theft	77	18%	43	12%	-34
Burglary	173	21%	149	21%	-24

As shown in Table 1, more than 10% of the juveniles arrested for the serious offenses of rape, unarmed robbery, armed robbery, grand larceny, auto theft, and burglary were from the Model Cities area. The total number of arrests of juveniles from the YSB target area in 1971 was 309. For 1972 the total was 241, a decrease of 68 or 19%. The most sizable reductions occurred in auto thefts (-34) and burglary (-24). Again, while this decrease cannot be attributed solely to the presence of the YSB, it did occur after the YSB was established in the area.

In summary, the rates of crime in the YSB target area did not significantly increase or decrease or differ from increases or decreases in the city as a whole during the years compared. Juvenile arrests in the YSB target area consistently accounted for 15 to 20% of the major crimes reported and approximately one-third of all juvenile detentions were of youths from the YSB target area.

A significant reduction in juvenile detentions in the areas served by the YSB should be a long range goal of the Bureau, and it is recommended that an analysis of juvenile arrests and detentions be undertaken in 1974. Not only will this aid in ascertaining shifts and changes in population, but high concentrations of delinquent behavior in certain census tracts will be pinpointed and the YSB administrators can plan for distribution of services and personnel in these areas.

## CHAPTER III: CHARACTERISTICS OF YSB CLIENTS AND SERVICES RENDERED

Clients

Descriptive data on the clients served are very important in understanding the Youth Services Bureau and its programs.\* Records on all clients referred to the agency between November 8, 1972, and May 29, 1974, and in which cases were opened were surveyed for the following descriptive analysis--a total of 634 client records. These data were punched on cards for data processing according to the pre-coded Face Sheet. Whenever possible, the Akron YSB clients were compared in this evaluation report with clients of youth service bureaus in other states.<sup>13</sup>

Case Status

At the time of the survey of agency records, the Akron YSB had 295 open cases and was maintaining records on 339 closed cases.

Clients Served

According to agency records, the Akron YSB served 821 clients in 1972, including approximately 200 youths in a summer employment program administered by the agency. By 1973 this figure had increased to 1525 with the following breakdown: 1228 case services, 78 higher education counseling, and 219 recreational services. The national study found that the "typical

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\*The description of client characteristics is often a very dry and didactic section of a report of this nature. However, since the two most important aspects of the YSB program are its clients and its staff, the evaluators have attempted to show how the clients' characteristics have been important in shaping the Akron YSB and are vital to an understanding of its work and any evaluation of its accomplishments. YSB administrators must utilize these types of data in order to make the program responsive to clients and their service needs.

program" served 350 youths each year.\* The "typical program" in the national survey fielded a staff of five to six regular members and from one to fifty volunteers.<sup>14</sup>

In comparing the staff resources of the Akron YSB with the national survey, two conclusions can be drawn. First, in comparison with the national survey the YSB staff members in Akron carried more than the typical case load of programs across the country. Second, the large increase in the number of cases served from 1972 to 1973 demonstrates that efforts to improve the program have resulted in service to more youths and that there are sufficient youths in the community to justify a program of the scope of the Akron YSB.

Age

The great majority of the youths served by the Akron YSB were ages nine through 17, with the largest numbers age 11 (72) and age 15 (65). The median age for the sample was 13, while the median age of the sample in the national study was 15.5, a somewhat older group. However, it would seem that a program with a preventive focus would also serve younger youths, for national statistics show that delinquency occurs very frequently in the younger age categories.

Race

The majority of the clients served by the Akron YSB were Blacks (512 or 78.9%), while 137 whites (21.1%) received services. The ethnic characteristics of the national sample were as follows: "approximately 60% white; 22% Black; 14% Latin, 4% other or unknown."<sup>15</sup> The Akron clientele is representative of the Model Cities area, the major target area of concentration. Although the majority of the Akron YSB staff members are Blacks,

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\*The authors stated that describing the typical YSB is about as impossible as isolating the "average man." However, from the analysis of 195 questionnaires completed by YSB directors and staff members they were able to construct a composite "typical program."

steps were taken to insure that the agency did not become identified as a "Black Agency" in the target area.

#### Sex

The majority of Akron YSB clients were male (59.7%). The national survey found a 2-to-1 male to female ratio among the clients studied, but the staff members nationally felt that "with encouragement the ratio could be closer to 50-50" as is the case at the Akron YSB. The latest (1973) issue of Juvenile Court Statistics indicates a 3-to-1 male to female ratio in regard to referrals to the juvenile court, which is probably due, in part, to the fact that the courts are less equipped to deal with young girls.<sup>16</sup> In recent years delinquency rates for females have risen higher proportionately to males and the Akron YSB program has been designed to meet the special needs of females.

#### Source of Referral

The sources through which the youths were referred to the YSB are shown in Table 2, on p. 19.

Table 2  
REFERRAL SOURCES FOR YSB CLIENTS

Source of Referral	N	%
Police	3	.5
School	154	24.3
Probation Officer	10	1.6
Parents and Relatives	95	15.0
Private Citizens	76	12.0
Family and Children	9	1.4
Child Guidance	4	.6
Court	7	1.1
Other	250	39.4
Unknown	26	4.1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The 250 cases designated as "other" in Table 2 are those in which clients referred themselves or were encouraged by street outreach workers to come to the YSB for services. The next largest group of referrals (154 or 24.3%) came from the schools, followed by 15% referred by parents and relatives and 12% referred by citizens in the target Model Cities area. The fact that such a small number of referrals (.5%) originated with the police is yet another indication of the need for closer cooperation between the YSB and the police, a need noted elsewhere in this report. In addition, there were few referrals from the juvenile court, due to complications in determining if a child is a resident of the Model Cities Area, as well as court priorities for referral to certain other agencies. Interviews also revealed that the juvenile court staff generally had a good opinion of the YSB, but that the YSB must invest more effort in making the court staff members aware of the YSB programs, if referrals from the court are to increase. The small number of referrals from social service agencies is another indication of the need for an increase in YSB public relations efforts.

The great majority of youths were referred through informal channels, i.e., through the word of mouth knowledge of the YSB which led to self-referrals or the informal relationship of the street worker with the youth, parents, relatives, or neighbors. Only the school as a formal organization accounted for any substantial number of referrals. How many of these youths would have received helping services in the absence of this "friendly referral system?"

In summary, the referral sources of the youths served by the Akron Youth Services Bureau conform to the findings of the national study, which noted: "The overall pattern of referrals suggests that many of the participants and their families were waiting for youth service bureau programs to develop."<sup>17</sup>

#### Clients' Residence in the Akron YSB Area

The Akron YSB is fortunate in having a relatively stable client population with which to work. Over and over the evaluators heard staff members comment about their extended relationships with clients. The indigenous worker utilizes these prolonged relationships with clients and their families to meet clients' needs. The relationship is thus not the formal instrument of the more typical agency but is based upon past friendship. It is the type of relationship with which youth in the community are familiar and in which they feel comfortable. When this is combined with some knowledge from the helping professions, counseling of this type can be very effective.

#### Delinquency Status

The great majority (71%) of the youths served by the Akron YSB were classified by staff members as pre-delinquent, with approximately one in six having experienced some relationship with the juvenile justice system.

#### Intake Over Time

The peak activity months for the Akron Youth Services Bureau were January, February, March, April, and November.

#### School Status

Analysis showed that 70% of the clients were attending school, 16% were not in school, and school status was not available in the remainder of case files. As a reflection of their ages, YSB clients were spread quite evenly through the various school grades. The large majority of the youngsters are attending school and many encounter problems there. The YSB counselors' assessments of their cases revealed that problems in school can be regarded as the most persistent problems youths who come to them for help are experiencing.

Employment Status

For those clients out of school, 79% were not employed, a finding which vividly points out the need for job counseling and employment referrals. In contrast, a surprising percentage of those in school held full-time employment (23%).

Family Income

Counselors had a great deal of difficulty in collecting family income data. The value of collecting such information at all must be questioned. Perhaps this type of data is of concern to some, but since living in the target community itself makes it likely that most of the clients will have a rather low income, it is debatable whether the degree of their deprivation needs to be ascertained.

Family and Living Conditions

Slightly more than half of the youths' parents were married and living together, while about one-third had parents who were divorced or legally separated. In terms of living conditions, slightly more than a third of the youths lived with both parents, and 39% (245) lived with their mothers. Many of the children served by the YSB are living in homes in which there are at least potential problems with adult figures in the family. Many are in need of an adult of the same or opposite sex with whom they can identify. In addition, many of the youths come from fairly large to large families; almost half live in households of six or more individuals.

In the recent Evaluation of Youth Service Bureaus by the State of California Department of the Youth Authority, it was noted that the single service delivered to YSB clients most frequently was family counseling on a short term basis.<sup>18</sup> Often the bureau staff members were instrumental in quelling immediate crisis situations which, once settled, resulted in no further need for services by the client.

Types of Services Provided

Client records were summarized to tabulate the frequency with which the various services were provided. Table 3, below, reports the results of the survey of case records.

Table 3  
SERVICES RECEIVED BY CLIENTS OF THE YSB\*

Service	N	%
Vocational Guidance	44	8
Recreation	174	31
Counseling	72	13
Educational Counseling	102	18
Job Counseling	33	6
Higher Education Counseling	50	9
Other Counseling	94	15
TOTALS	569	100

\*Services were not recorded for some clients, while others received multiple services.

As shown in Table 3, the largest percentage of services provided by the Akron YSB was in the area of recreation (31%). Recreation often led to other types of service, such as educational counseling, rap sessions, or job counseling. These figures do not adequately report the volume or range of agency activities, as will be shown later in this report in the section on record keeping. During the course of the evaluation recording instruments were developed and put into use which will allow a clearer picture of the variety and number of services provided.

#### Discharge Status

A good source of evaluation information, although subject to bias, is the section of the YSB Face Sheet where the worker records the clients' discharge status. The evaluators found that 165 case records listed the behavioral status or location of the client at the time of discharge. Of these youths, 77.6% were judged to demonstrate satisfactory conduct, while 6.1% were evaluated by the counselor as exhibiting unsatisfactory conduct when supervision was discontinued. In roughly a tenth of the cases the clients' whereabouts were unknown when discharged. A much smaller number of clients were under court supervision or had been referred for services to another agency. The fact that only 165 of the 339 closed cases had recorded reasons for severing the case from the YSB caused the evaluators some consternation. It is impossible to judge whether the services provided by the YSB to the 174 youths for whom no information was recorded were adequate, appropriate, or meaningless.

### YSB Counselors' Assessments of Their Clients

#### The Diagnostic Inventory

To assist workers in assessing the problems of the youths with whom they were working, a Diagnostic Inventory was developed and modified for use at the Youth Services Bureau. The counselors were very receptive to the idea and their constructive criticism was helpful. After discussions with the Director and the staff members, the evaluators realized that the first approach of the Diagnostic Inventory was too negative. It was therefore revised to include the identification of strengths which the counselors can utilize in working with the youths.

Basically, the instrument consists of five sections, each composed of statements with appropriate precoded answers. Available responses, to be circled, included: "not a problem," "a slight problem," "a definite problem," and "unsure." A space was also provided for remarks after each item, and this space was enlarged in the revised version of the inventory.

The five sections of the inventory tap information and assessments related to:

- I. Personality and Physical Characteristics
- II. Behavior Profile
- III. Relations with Peers
- IV. Relations with Adult Authority Figures
- V. School and Work Performance

The final page of the Diagnostic Inventory is devoted to "Recommended Services," and a checklist of YSB and appropriate referral services is provided for easy reference and notation.

The evaluators also developed a means to record these data on a "profile" to be used to assess progress or lack of it and for ease in internal assessment of total client needs and internal evaluative procedures.

Use of Diagnostic Inventory

It is recommended that the inventory be completed by the appropriate worker as soon as he knows the youth well enough to make the required assessments. On the basis of these assessments the worker would then be in a position to recommend a service program for the youth and perhaps at that time lay out a tentative program of assistance. The inventory should also prove valuable to the worker in presenting consultation problems to his supervisor and, in turn, helpful to the supervisor in suggesting diagnostic leads, appropriate intervention strategies, goals, and referral sources and procedures.

Additional copies of the inventory should be completed periodically during the course of the counselor's work with the client, in order to reassess basic diagnostic data, recommended services, goals, and programs for the youth. Comparisons of profiles make assessment of client progress in various areas, such as school adjustment, relatively easy.

The proper use of these forms should provide the following benefits:

1. Staff and supervisor consultation time needed for each case can be held to a minimum,
2. The form can be used as a tool to assist in staff training and professional development,
3. The data are easily compiled from the profile for internal reporting and for general administrative evaluation. For example, the administrator could randomly pull profile and follow up data and sort it into appropriate problem categories to see if the agency is having equal success or problems with various types of clients or client problems.
4. An agency profile can be assembled for external reporting of work accomplished,

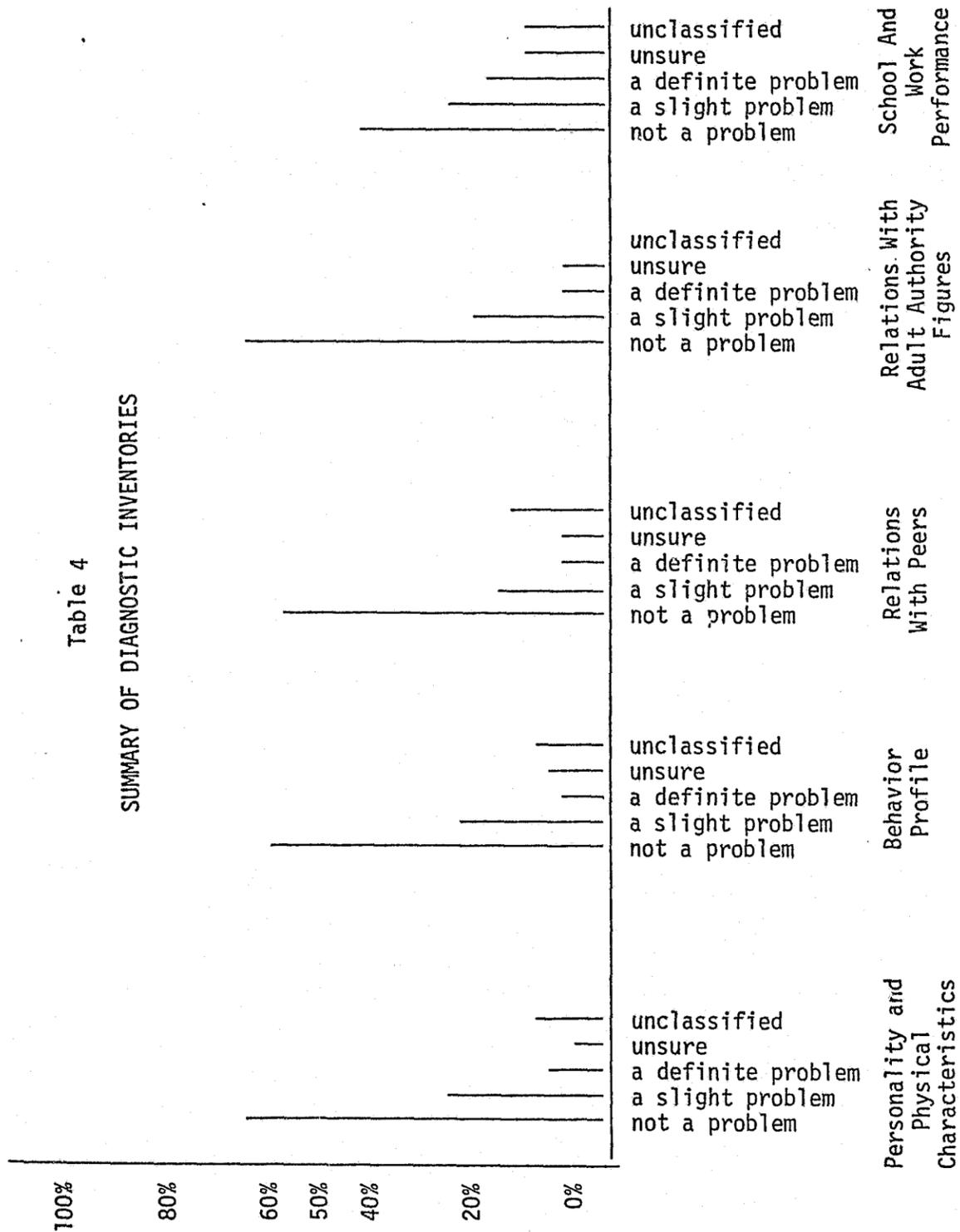
5. For more elaborate and sophisticated evaluative research, the data, having been precoded, can readily be punched into cards for automatic data processing and analysis,
6. These procedures can be employed by the YSB to demonstrate its case to other organizations.

Due to the imperative to complete this evaluation within a specific time period, it was not possible to compile periodic completions of the Diagnostic Inventory for this report, but a summary of the findings of the initial administration of the instrument is given below.

Results

Table 4, on page 28, shows a summary of approximately 200 initial Diagnostic Inventories.

Table 4  
SUMMARY OF DIAGNOSTIC INVENTORIES



Based on the counselors' assessments, it must be concluded that general misbehavior and poor performance in school or at work tend to be areas providing the most problems for the clients. However, the problems of the clients tend to be quite varied, as indicated by the results of the Diagnostic Inventory. The implications of this are that the counselors must develop a range of skills in order to be able to adapt themselves to the specific clients' situations.

YSB Services and Recidivism

In order to analyze the effect of the various services offered by the Akron Youth Services Bureau, the records of post-delinquent clients were studied by the social worker and the evaluators. As shown in Table 5, the 87 cases on which records were available were broken down into recidivists (N-23) and non-recidivists (N-64). The percentage of each group who received a particular type of YSB service was computed so that appropriate comparisons could be made.

A word of caution is perhaps due before analyzing the table. It should not be inferred that a type of service has little value because recidivists and non-recidivists have received an equal proportion of this service. With each client receiving various combinations of services it is difficult to partial out the effects of one type. In addition, there are so many factors influencing recidivism that have not been controlled in this analysis that such a conclusion would be unwarranted. However, the findings were analyzed with the hope that administrators and staff will take a close look at their service offerings and the assignment of resources to each type.

Table 5  
POST-DELINQUENT RECIDIVISM BY TYPE OF YSB SERVICE  
(Percentages)

YSB Services	Recidivists		Non-Recidivists	
	Service Received	Not Received	Service Received	Not Received
Individual Counseling at YSB Center	91	9	92	8
Talking with school counselors	70	30	67	33
Academic tutoring	0	100	30	70
Home visits and family counseling	78	22	78	22
Referral to family services	9	91	5	95
Referral to M.D.	0	100	5	95
Referral to Fallsview or Portage Path Mental Health Cent.	4	96	6	94
Referred back to probation officer or juvenile court community worker	57	43	30	70
Engage in recreational activities	87	13	84	16
Involve in group counseling	39	61	53	47
Help locate employment	52	48	47	53
Try to find foster home in conjunction with County Welfare Services	4	96	5	95
Try to get back in school	57	43	39	61
Engage in group counseling at the YSB Center	43	57	47	53
Involve in extra-curricular educa- tional experiences such as field trips	13	87	36	64
Try to locate in a group residential home such as Via House	0	100	2	98
Referral to Big Brother or Big Sister Program	0	100	0	100
Referral to drug education or counseling (AHEAD)	0	100	8	92
Other	13	87	23	77
Total N - 87				
Recidivists - 23				
Non-recidivists - 64				

Table 5, on page 30, shows that individual counseling was provided in an equal proportion for both recidivists and non-recidivists in a sample of post-delinquent YSB clients. However, a larger percentage of the non-recidivists had been involved in group counseling than those who continued to return to the justice system.

As noted above, a large number of YSB clients had experienced problems in school. In the recidivism longitudinal study it was found that a larger percentage of the non-recidivists had been exposed to YSB educational programs such as academic tutoring and extra-curricular field trips. As noted later in this report, several community resource personnel pointed out that they had observed attitudinal and behavioral changes related to education in the YSB clients with whom they came into contact.

A larger percentage of the recidivists than of the non-recidivists had received employment and job placement counseling and a larger proportion of that group had also received YSB intervention to attempt to get them back in school. An analysis of their backgrounds indicates that the recidivists may have special problems that require more extensive effort on the part of the YSB than is currently being provided. Perhaps for many of these cases referral to other agencies is warranted or as another alternative the YSB staff could work jointly with other agencies on common problems.

While it would logically be hypothesized that greater intensity and greater length of services would be positively related to non-recidivism, analysis of the data showed that there was a slight tendency for recidivists to have received more intensive treatment programs than non-recidivists. This slightly higher intensity of services given to the recidivists may be explained by the fact that the staff members initially recognized the greater problems of the recidivist group and involved them in a more intensive treatment program. With better initial diagnostic data, as recommended by the evaluators, this important

hypothesis could receive a better test.

Duration of services from the YSB seemed to have no relationship to the recidivism or non-recidivism of the clients studied. The non-recidivists had received the medium length of service in a slightly higher proportion, and a correspondingly larger proportion of the recidivists had received services for a short period. There was no difference between recidivists and non-recidivists in the most lengthy duration of services.

#### CHAPTER IV: EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF DELINQUENCY RECIDIVISM

The Akron Youth Services Bureau, like most other youth service bureaus and social service organizations, does not keep records which enable an investigator to determine the effectiveness of its programs. It should be emphasized that the lack of elaborate records was not a matter of failing to establish such a system, but agency policy as a solution to the problem of labeling and stigma. In this chapter the evaluators have outlined the procedures utilized in an attempt to measure diversion of youths. As a prelude to this, various methods of measuring organizational output, success in reaching goals, and the problems attendant to such efforts are explored.

##### Problems in Measuring Effectiveness

It would be easy to say that a particular youth service bureau has reduced the rate of juvenile delinquency by so many percentage points after comparing such rates for two periods of time. But such a conclusion would be a simplification of a highly complex situation. Besides the difficulties in assessing the specific input of one organization to such a rate change, many other, sometimes unknown, factors may result in rate changes, such as changes in laws, enforcement procedures, or simply the way rates are calculated in two different time periods. It is also easy to discuss particular cases with the bureau staff or with other workers and to arrive at the feeling that progress is being made. In a simple cost analysis, if each YSB worker diverted only one or two youths away from a delinquent and then criminal career they would easily pay their own salaries from community costs for law enforcement, judicial proceedings and incarceration, and savings in personal and property damage to the community.

The social sciences have methodological techniques which can be utilized to scientifically test the effectiveness of the Youth Service Bureau program, but the real problem is to be able to adequately employ these methods so that research results are unequivocal. An ideal design is that of the classical experiment where youths referred to or recruited to the YSB would be randomly assigned to an experimental group which would receive program services or to a control group which would not receive such services. Follow-up measurements would then note the amount of delinquent behavior by each group to determine the effect of the experimental variable, the program, on the dependent variable, delinquent behavior. However, the evaluators did not have the control over the situation necessary to implement such a design. In addition, to deny treatment to a randomly selected group of YSB referrals would result in the YSB not fulfilling its mandate from the community. The ideal design should be kept in mind so that the design actually implemented can be compared to it, bearing in mind the problems inherent in this type of study and the time and financial limitations imposed on this investigation.

After consideration of the factors discussed above, the evaluators developed an experimental design which they believed would most appropriately produce data beneficial in analyzing delinquency recidivism among the YSB clients. This study was implemented in cooperation with the staffs of the City Demonstration Agency, the Summit County Juvenile Court, and the Youth Services Bureau.

The major dependent variable for the study was recidivism. The independent variables were <sup>two</sup>~~by~~ types of treatment--Youth Services Bureau services and Summit County Juvenile Court services, including referral to other agencies.

The experimental group (Youth Services Bureau clients who had Summit County Juvenile Court records) was compared with control groups (samples of Model Cities youngsters who were not YSB clients, middle class youths, and working class youths) who were drawn from current Summit County Juvenile Court records on a random basis. The date of the initial referral to the Summit County Juvenile Court was recorded, and a check for recidivism was made six months after the initial referral and again one year after initial referral.

#### Experimental Group (Youth Services Bureau Sample)

A list of Youth Services Bureau clients was checked against statistical file data at the Summit County Juvenile Court to ascertain which YSB clients had been referred to the court. One hundred YSB clients were found to have such referrals. All of these were included in the sample.

#### Control Groups

Model Cities Non-YSB Group. Also utilizing Summit County Juvenile Court records, the statistical files were searched on a random basis to collect a sample of youngsters who met two criteria: they were residents in the census tracts included in the Model Cities neighborhood but had not been recruited or referred as Youth Services Bureau clients. One hundred seventy-nine cases were selected on a random basis.

Middle Class Control Group. Several areas and census tracts were classified as middle class and a random sample was drawn from these areas. Both addresses and census tracts were employed because the latter are often omitted from court data cards. Although the term "middle class" was used to designate this control group, in actuality it ran from middle class into what is generally regarded

as upper class. These procedures produced a middle class control group of 152 cases.

Working Class Control Group. This group was selected from cases referred to the Summit County Juvenile Court in 1973. A check of home addresses and census tract areas was made to assure that these youths would not logically fall into either the Model Cities sample or the middle class sample. The working class sample included 125 cases.

Data Collected On Each of the Four Samples

- A. Demographic--Age, Sex, Race, Census Tract Area, School Grade, and Home Status (with whom does the child live)
- B. Court Record--Month of referral to the Summit County Juvenile Court for each offense, total number of offenses, and, for each offense during the data collection period:
  1. Source of referral
  2. Reason referred
  3. Disposition and Service

These data were coded and punched on IBM cards for analysis.

Following are comparisons of the experimental group and the three control groups.

Age

The experimental and control groups differed slightly in age, with the experimental group having a somewhat larger proportion of younger adolescents than any of the control groups. Analyses of delinquency recidivism indicate that there is a high probability of recidivism for youths who commit their first offense at an early age (10 to 13). There is a statistical correlation between age at first offense and repeated delinquency. On the basis of this finding, a larger proportion of the experimental group (YSB clients) than of the control groups would be likely to recidivate.

Sex

Eighty-six per cent of those in the experimental group were males, and 14% females, compared to a 71%-29% ratio for the control groups. Since approximately 33% of the total cases referred to the Summit County Juvenile Court are females, while only 14% of the cases in the experimental group are females, females are underrepresented in the experimental group, while the control groups are closer to the norm distribution. Since males tend to have a higher recidivism rate than females, the sample is somewhat biased against the experimental group.

Race

Eighty-eight per cent of the youths in the experimental group were Blacks. The middle class (99% white) and working class (65% white) control groups are predominantly white, while the Model Cities non-YSB sample (71% Blacks) is more closely racially comparable to the experimental group.

Home Status

The experimental group (YSB clients) had the highest percentage of youths not living with both parents (63%) of any of the groups. The Model Cities non-YSB control group had the second highest percentage in this regard (53%), while 46% of those in the working class sample and 15% of those in the middle class sample were not living with both parents. The YSB sample had a larger percentage of "mothers only" home situations (50%) than any other group. Of the control groups, 42% of the Model Cities non-YSB youths, 28% of the working class sample, and five per cent of the middle class youths had "mothers only" home situations.

The importance of the family in delinquency prevention has been well documented. Although being a product of a broken home does not necessarily mean that a child will become delinquent, it does place an additional burden

on those individuals and agencies that must offset the negative effects of the lack of two parents to help with the problems of growing up.

The high incidence of broken family situations among the YSB clients would appear to be a factor which would make a lack of recidivism more difficult to achieve.

#### Source of Referral

In general, the referral sources for both the experimental and control groups included parents or walk ins, the schools, neighbors, or other sources. The experimental group and the control groups were, with some exceptions, quite comparable with regard to source of referral. A slightly higher percentage of the experimental group than of the other groups came from "walk-in" referrals, while referrals by the police were highest for the middle class group.

#### Offense Patterns (Reasons Referred)

Table 6, on page 39, reports the offense patterns for the experimental and control groups.

Table 6  
OFFENSE PATTERNS FOR  
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Offense	Experimental Group YSB Clients		-----Control Groups-----					
	N	%	Model Cities Non-YSB		Middle Class		Working Class	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Auto theft	13	5	14	5	1	.5		
Breaking and Entering	22	10	34	11	13	6	13	9
Robbery	10	4	5	2	0	0	3	2
Larceny	31	14	50	17	29	15	15	11
Shoplifting	21	9	34	11	11	6	18	12
Dest. of Prop.	16	7	19	6	11	6	6	4
Assault	27	12	17	6	4	2	6	4
Forcible Rape	1	.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trespassing	5	2	4	1	1	.5	4	3
Intoxication	0	0	5	2	7	4	5	4
Poss. of Drugs	2	1	3	1	25	12.5	2	2
Use of Drugs	0	0	0	0	3	2	4	3
Sale of Drugs	3	1	1	1	6	3	11	1
Prob. Viol.	3	1	3	1	0	0	2	2
Uncritical Judgment	1	.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Delin.	3	1	15	5	17	8	4	3
Curfew	5	2	17	6	17	8	5	4
Runaway	6	2	31	10	16	8	14	10
Incorrigibility	21	9	15	5	11	6	5	4
Sex Offense	4	2	1	1	10	5	0	0
Truancy	19	8	2	1	1	.5	28	20
Other Unruly	4	1	9	3	11	6	2	2
Other	8	3	16	5	5	2	0	0
TOTALS	225	100	295	100	199	100	137	100

The comparisons made in Table 6 are important, in order to establish that the youths in the control groups have been referred to the court for offenses comparable to those of the experimental group. It was found that the groups were quite comparable and that each included youths who became known to the court for a wide array of offenses. The major variations noted included the fact that the middle class sample members were referred to the juvenile court more frequently for drug related offenses than members of the other samples. The members of the YSB experimental group were referred to the court for assault more frequently than members of the other groups, while those in the working class sample had a higher percentage of truancy offenses than other groups. The experimental group (YSB clients) and the control group made up of non-YSB Model Cities youths were very much alike in offense patterns, a fact which increased the comparability of the two groups in the analysis of recidivism.

#### Dispositions of Cases by the Juvenile Court

When the dispositions of the cases of the youths in the experimental group and the control groups were compared, the following major variations in services provided were noted:

1. While roughly a fifth of the Model Cities Non-YSB sample members and members of the experimental group (YSB clients) did not go beyond intake at the court, only six per cent of the middle class sample members received "Intake Only" action.
2. A larger percentage of the Model Cities Non-YSB sample than of the other samples was referred to intake community workers.
3. While 42% of the Model Cities Non-YSB sample, 34% of the YSB clients, and 28% of the working class sample received the disposition of continued on probation or study and treatment, which generally results in probation placement, only 19% of those in the middle class sample received this disposition.
4. By far the largest category of dispositions for the middle class sample (38%) was "adjusted and admonished." Less than half that proportion of the other samples received this disposition.

5. Although there were few dismissals, a similar percentage of the middle class and the YSB samples received this action, while only one per cent of the working class sample and none of the Model Cities non-YSB youths received this disposition.
6. A higher percentage of the YSB clients than of the other three samples received referral to the Juvenile Probation Board.
7. Larger percentages of middle class, working class, and Model Cities non-YSB samples than of the YSB sample were referred to the Lieberman Family Center.
8. Five per cent of the youths in the middle class sample were referred to AHEAD, while youths from the other samples had no referrals there.

With a few exceptions, the types of offenses for which the experimental group and the three control groups were referred to the Summit County Juvenile Court were comparable, but as we have seen above, their dispositions varied a good deal.

#### Recidivism

The Model Cities non-YSB sample had the highest delinquency recidivism rate (one or more additional Summit County Juvenile Court referrals) of the four samples (38%), while the working class sample was lowest in recidivism (15%). The Model Cities non-YSB sample was the most comparable to the experimental group (YSB clients) in background characteristics, types of offenses, and dispositions, yet the recidivism rate for this sample (38%) was higher than for the YSB clients (24%). The middle class sample had a recidivism rate of 19%, somewhat higher than would be expected. The working class sample tended to have a larger proportion of minor offenses than the other samples, and perhaps this accounted in part for the low (15%) recidivism for this group.

An analysis of the 4,847 cases referred to the Summit County Juvenile Court for the year 1973 revealed that 1063 of these youths (21.9%) had at least one additional referral to the court. The YSB client recidivism rate of 24% compares favorably with this figure.

Table 7, on page 43, reports the number of additional offenses committed by the experimental and control groups.

Table 7  
A COMPARISON OF RECIDIVISM FREQUENCY  
YSB, MODEL CITIES NON-YSB, MIDDLE CLASS, AND WORKING CLASS SAMPLES

Sample	No Additional Offenses		One Additional Offense		Two Additional Offenses		Three or More Additional Offenses		Total Recidivism	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
YSB Sample (N-100)	76	76	14	14	5	5	5	5	24	24
Model Cities Non-YSB Sample (N-179)	111	62	30	17	16	9	22	12	68	38
Middle Class Sample (N-152)	123	81	18	12	6	4	5	5	29	19
Working Class Sample (N-125)	106	85	17	14	2	1	0	0	19	15

As shown in Table 7, 76% of the youths in the experimental group (YSB clients) had no additional offenses, and 14% had only one additional offense. Thus 90% of the YSB clients in the sample did not recidivate or had only one additional referral to the Summit County Juvenile Court. This rate compares favorably with that for the middle class sample, where 93% had no additional offenses or only one additional juvenile court referral, and was a higher success rate than for the Model Cities non-YSB sample, where 79% had either no additional offenses or one additional juvenile court referral.

One conclusion which can be drawn from this comparison is that typically once attention was drawn to a youth by his referral to the Summit County Juvenile Court, concerned parties (family, the court, community youth serving agencies) focused on the problems and were quite successful in preventing additional delinquent behavior. The middle class and working class youths in these samples had many stabilizing assets in their backgrounds to lead to a favorable outcome for their cases. Since the success rates on non-recidivism for the YSB sample compare very favorably with rates for the middle class and working class samples, it can be concluded that the YSB was influential as a stabilizing force for these youths.

Table 8, on page 45, compares the time of recidivism for the experimental and control groups.

Table 8

A COMPARISON OF TIME OF RECIDIVISM:  
YSB, NON-YSB MODEL CITIES, MIDDLE CLASS AND WORKING CLASS SAMPLES

Sample	Recidivated in First Six Months		Recidivated in Second Six Months	
	N	%	N	%
YSB Sample (N-24) <sup>1</sup>	6	25	18	75
Model Cities Non-YSB Sample (N-68) <sup>2</sup>	41	60	27	40
Middle Class Sample (N-29) <sup>3</sup>	11	38	18	62
Working Class Sample (N-19) <sup>4</sup>	12	63	7	37

<sup>1</sup>The 24 YSB youths who recidivated committed 55 offenses, for a mean offense rate of 2.3.

<sup>2</sup>The 68 Model Cities non-YSB youths who recidivated committed 128 offenses, for a mean offense rate of 1.88.

<sup>3</sup>The 29 Middle Class youths who recidivated committed 77 offenses, for a mean offense rate of 2.6.

<sup>4</sup>The 19 Working Class youths who recidivated committed 21 offenses, for a mean offense rate of 1.1.

As shown in Table 8, only 25% of those who recidivated in the YSB sample did so within the first six months, while in the case of the Model Cities non-YSB sample and the working class sample almost 2/3 of those who recidivated did so within the first six months, while 38% of the recidivists in the middle class sample committed an offense within the first six months.

An analysis of the Summit County Juvenile Court cases for 1973 revealed that of the 1063 youths who recidivated during that year, 92% (980) did so within the first six months after their first appearance in court that year.

These findings point up the need for the continuation of YSB counseling and services for extended periods of time and use of such tools as the Diagnostic Inventory to record client problems and progress over extended periods of time. The success rate for the YSB client sample in the short term was encouraging, but since the closing dates for cases and the reasons for termination were not spelled out in the YSB case records it was impossible in most instances to discover whether those who recidivated during the second six months were those who had left YSB supervision. This points up the need for more complete case analysis, including recording of the date of termination, reasons for termination, periodic assessments of the cases through use of the Diagnostic Inventory, and, if possible, follow up information on youths even after their cases are closed.

Research and theories dealing with delinquency causation repeatedly emphasize the importance of the family, the school, and the community in delinquency prevention. A child who has firm family support and understanding, even though he may engage in deviant acts on occasion, is likely to survive these experiences without permanent damage. A child who succeeds in school and receives praise and rewards for this success also develops an insulator against serious, prolonged delinquency, while the youth who is failing in school or finding school situations

unrewarding may engage in delinquent acts as a sublimation technique. The same sort of situation develops in the community. If a youth is accepted in the neighborhood, has positive adult support, and obtains recognition through achievement of some type, these are insulators against serious delinquency. If not, the chances of his again committing delinquent acts for recognition increases, and the likelihood that the youth will turn to a deviant peer group for the lost recognition also increases.

The earlier the pattern of delinquency begins, the more difficult it is to alter. If a youth commits delinquent acts at age nine or ten and conditions pushing him toward delinquency do not change, the likelihood is very high that he will continue this behavior.

In the examination of the background characteristics of the four samples presented earlier in this chapter, it was noted that the YSB clients and the Model Cities non-YSB youths were quite similar in demographic and social characteristics. Thirty-seven per cent of the YSB clients and 47% of the non-YSB Model Cities youths lived in homes with both parents, while the remaining majorities did not have two parent home situations. Fifty per cent of the YSB clients and 41.5% of the non-YSB Model Cities youths came from "mother only" home situations. In spite of the many similarities of the two samples, a 14 percentage point difference in recidivism existed between the two groups, with YSB clients' recidivism being 24%, compared to 38% for the non-YSB Model Cities youths. In the light of this finding, the YSB client and non-YSB Model Cities samples were compared on a number of additional characteristics to attempt to factor out the combination of variables which could give insights into the circumstances surrounding recidivation or help determine what YSB strategies had been most successful in preventing recidivism among the YSB clients.

Sex

The Youth Services Bureau seems to have been particularly effective in dealing with female referrals. Only two per cent of the females in the YSB sample recidivated, compared to 40% of the females in the Model Cities non-YSB sample. The figures on recidivism for males (YSB clients-36%; Model Cities non-YSB 30%) did not differ as greatly as the figures for the females.

Race

Although conclusions are tentative because of the small number of whites involved, it appears that the YSB was successful in working with white clients. Of the ten whites in the YSB sample, only one recidivated, compared to a 33% recidivism rate for the whites in the non-YSB sample. Twenty-six per cent of the Blacks in the YSB sample and 40% of the Blacks in the Model Cities non-YSB sample recidivated.

Age

The YSB was quite successful in preventing recidivism among youths in the pre-teen and early teen years.

Home Status

Eighty-nine per cent of those living with both parents in the YSB client sample were non-recidivists, compared to 61% of those with equivalent home situations in the non-YSB Model Cities sample. In the category of "mothers only," 70% in the YSB sample did not recidivate, compared to 60% in the non-YSB Model Cities sample. It might be concluded that the association of these youths with the YSB helped strengthen family support or provided enough support to partially offset the negative consequences of a broken home situation.

Offenses Committed

For both the YSB sample and the Model Cities non-YSB sample there was a concentration of offenses in the serious delinquency categories. Many of these youths would have been subjected to possible prison terms for such offenses as

robbery, larceny, and breaking and entering if they were adults.

The analysis indicated that the YSB was least successful in working with youths who committed serious delinquent offenses. Generally these individuals had a long history of appearances before the juvenile court. Several of the individuals in the two samples were institutionalized with the Ohio Youth Commission during the course of this evaluation. An intensive scrutiny of the cases of the serious offenders in both samples showed that they were also receiving services from other agencies, or were assigned to one of the Summit County Juvenile Court's special programs.

To pursue this analysis more intensely, the YSB cases placed on probation or continued on probation during the course of the evaluation were compared with the cases involved with the Summit County Juvenile Court Community Worker Program for the period October, 1972 to October, 1973. When the YSB sample was initially taken there were 60 dispositions involving 10 individuals in the YSB client sample. These were compared with 74 cases of youths placed with the Community Worker Program. This program is designed to give the regular probation officer assistance in the form of an aide or "community worker." Within six months of the original sample taking all ten of the YSB clients on probation had recidivated (committed at least one additional offense). Sixty-five of the 74 youths in the community worker sample (88%) also recidivated. For the community worker sample, the 65 youths who recidivated committed an average of 3.09 additional offenses, while the recidivists in the YSB sample committed an average of 3.0 additional offenses.

For the hard-core offender it is extremely difficult to prevent recidivism, regardless of the treatment program employed. It must be concluded that the YSB's success with hard-core offenders has been minimal and that its

most effective role in this regard could well be pointing to gaps in existing services and coordinating services for maximum benefit to this type of offender.

In order to make a comparison with an agency other than the Summit County Juvenile Court, a sample of youths referred to the Ohio Youth Commission who had been institutionalized but were currently in the community after-care status was compared with the YSB sample. The youths in the OYC sample had been released from institutionalization for a period of at least six months when the data were gathered. For the OYC sample, of a total of 51 youths 29 recidivated, 16 did not, and for five no information was available. The recidivism rate for this sample was 63%. The recidivism rate of 24% for the YSB sample as a whole compares favorably with this figure. It must be remembered that the OYC sample was made up of serious offenders who were comparable to the 10 YSB clients in the hard-core sample. Several of the OYC sample youths also appeared in the Model Cities non-YSB sample, giving another indication of the need for extension of YSB services to more youths in the target area and coordination of services by community agencies.

## CHAPTER V: YSB RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

In order to function on behalf of youths, indeed, even to receive the necessary funding to remain in existence, the YSB must initiate and maintain relationships with a wide variety of community organizations, publics, and individuals. Relationships with the community are essential for each of the major goals of the YSB and will be discussed in relation to direct and indirect service programs, service brokerage, resource development, and system modification. A secondary goal of relationships with other community individuals and organizations is to provide feedback to the YSB concerning its programs and goals. One aspect of evaluation is to tap the advice of these persons, so that the YSB can incorporate such suggestions.

### Direct Service and Service Brokerage

In order to serve troubled youths, the YSB must establish a reputation and relationships with other organizations which insure self referrals, "walk-ins," referrals by other youths, referrals by parents, and referrals by workers in many types of organizations--schools, the juvenile court, social service agencies, the police, and religious groups. At the same time, because of its own limited resources, the Youth Services Bureau must be able to rely on these organizations for expert professional help and the necessary supportive resources and services required in working with youths.

### Resource Development

The 1967 President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice proposed the development of Youth Service Bureaus partially in recognition of the need for a particular type of organization which could develop and coordinate community resources for troubled youths. Because of its unique relationships to youths, parents, and community organizations,

the YSB assumes this developmental role. Encompassed here is a wide continuum of activities.

#### Systems Modification

The YSB must be able to develop relationships which enable it to hopefully modify the system. This is a tall order for a fledgling, unorthodox, and often powerless organization with limited financial and human resources. However, if it is to make headway in social change, its community image and its working agreements with other organizations are basic ingredients.

#### Evaluative Methods

The goals of the evaluation of community resource utilization were:

1. To measure community assessment of the Akron YSB organization, programs and relationships with the juvenile court, schools, probation, law enforcement agencies, youths, clients, and parents,
2. To assess the nature of working relationships with community resource agencies,
3. To determine community resource opinions concerning YSB goals and program priorities, and
4. To collect the opinions and recommendations of the above named individuals and organizations concerning future development of YSB programs and goals.

The research methods employed to collect these data were interviews with key individuals in the juvenile justice and treatment system and a mailed "Community Resource Questionnaire," sent to service organization personnel.

#### Results

Knowledge of the Youth Services Bureau. The response patterns showed that of persons in positions in organizations who could work with the YSB toward the solution of youth problems, the largest number had a fair knowledge of the agency. A substantial percentage stated that they didn't know much

about the organization, and less than half stated that they had a good knowledge of the Akron Youth Services Bureau.

Relationships with the YSB. When asked about their relationships with the YSB, respondents replied in terms of sharing information concerning client referrals, with the largest number mentioning cooperative effort between their own organization and the YSB. It is interesting to note that all of the respondents who had stated that they had good knowledge of the YSB responded in terms of a positive evaluation of the agency in answering this question. As noted in Chapter I, the agency had difficulty overcoming a poor image formed in its first year of operation.

Community Resource Assessment of YSB Goals. The community agency personnel interviewed stated that they believed the Akron YSB had the following goals:

1. To divert youths from the justice system, including the reduction of juvenile delinquency,
2. To provide direct and indirect services to help youths,
3. To help youths with their psychological and social problems so that they will be well adjusted, and
4. To enable youths to adjust to specific social institutions, such as school and work.

The Role of the YSB in the Community. The large majority of community resource personnel felt that the foremost role of the organization should be direct service to youths. Indirect service to youths and to the related role of coordination of youth services were suggested by the respondents as having the second priority. At the same time, most thought that research and community planning should be given the lowest priority. As previously noted, these were the same priorities that were assigned to these functions by the YSB administrators and staff.

YSB Services. The community agency personnel were asked: "What services should the YSB emphasize?" The rankings are as follows:

1. Individual counseling
2. Educational counseling
3. Family counseling
4. Employment counseling
5. Tutoring
6. Group discussion
7. Referral
8. Recreation
9. Planning
10. Emergency financial aid

Community Resource Evaluation of the YSB. All respondents stated that the YSB staff had been easy to work with, and all but one respondent felt that the staff had demonstrated knowledge about their work. The majority of the respondents who had made referrals to the YSB stated that they received information on clients referred "sometimes" with only a few stating that they "often" received feedback.

YSB Priority for Community Funds. Of the respondents who felt they had sufficient knowledge of the YSB to answer a question concerning YSB priority for community funds, 64% assigned the YSB a high priority, 36% felt that the agency should be given medium priority, and none of the respondents evaluated the program in such a manner that they judged it should have low priority status.

When comparing this evaluative data with findings presented earlier, the following conclusion can be drawn: when respondents were aware of the organization and had sufficient knowledge of the YSB's programs they evaluated the Bureau positively. However, from the standpoint of the community resource personnel, too few were adequately informed about the agency.

Evaluation of the YSB Staff's Reputation With Other Agencies. The evaluators asked the community resource respondents to judge the YSB staff's reputation and/or relationships with other agencies and youths, including the juvenile

court, schools, probation, law enforcement agencies, social service agencies, YSB clients, and youths in general.

The community resource respondents felt that the YSB had the best reputation and/or relationship with the juvenile court, followed by social service agencies, schools, and law enforcement agencies. The majority of respondents rated the reputation of the YSB with clients and youths in the community as "good," with smaller numbers indicating "excellent or average" ratings on this item.

#### Suggestions for YSB Policy

The evaluators felt that the community resource people, because of their knowledge of the YSB and their interest and concern with youth problems, would be in a good position to make suggestions to be utilized in future program planning and development. Therefore, several items were included in the questionnaire which sought their reactions to planning issues: improvement of YSB work, the issue of professional and para-professional staffing, the composition of the Advisory Board, and the geographic area to be served.

Service Policies and Programs. Several respondents noted the need for an expansion of services and the necessary staff and financial resources to carry out its programs. Improved public relations was listed by some as a means to acquire funding and community support.

Goals. Those individuals who addressed the goals of the agency in their suggestions generally called for an expansion of services not only in scope but in terms of the geographic area served by the YSB.

Staffing. In general, suggestions for staffing called for an increase. A slim majority (8) of those who completed the mailed questionnaire felt that the agency should rely on para-professionals and thus continue current staffing patterns. Six individuals suggested hiring more professionals, and one recommended a balance between these types of agency personnel.

Composition of the YSB Advisory Board. Almost all respondents recommended that the Advisory Board include representatives of a wide array of individuals and groups concerned with the problems of youth, including police, youths, Model Cities residents, juvenile court officials, parents, school counselors, Children's Services personnel, and representatives of other social agencies and groups.

Geographic Area Served. During the time of the evaluation, the planning issue arose in regard to the geographic base or target area which the YSB should attempt to serve. The community resource persons recommended by an overwhelming majority that the YSB serve the entire county in the future.

#### Interview Data

In addition to the mailed questionnaire sent to community agency personnel, twelve key community and agency leaders who had extensive experience with the Akron Youth Services Bureau were interviewed. A summary of the interviews conducted in each area follows.

Police. Those who developed the youth service bureau concept envisioned the police as playing a crucial role in the program's development. In order to ascertain the relationships between the Akron Police Department and the Akron Youth Services Bureau, police officers from both the Juvenile Division and the Community Relations Department were interviewed. It was noted earlier in this report that the Youth Services Bureau had received few referrals from the Akron Police Department.

The Community Relations Department staff generally agreed with the goals of the program. The staff members felt that diversion of predelinquents or minor delinquency cases should be emphasized, but that the YSB never did fulfill this role to the degree they had anticipated. In their opinion, it was sidetracked

from a predelinquent diversion program to a youth advocacy and youth recreation program.

The Community Relations Department staff members believed that the YSB program started out on a sour note and continues to have difficulty changing its image in the community. They emphasized the fact that the YMCA sponsorship was a definite improvement. The police rarely referred cases to the YSB because of what appeared to be an anti-police orientation among at least some of the staff members.

The Akron Police Community Relations Department staff members made the following recommendations:

1. They recommend upgrading the staff and employing more professionals.
2. They recommend a decrease in emphasis on all of the present activities except direct services to youth and coordination of youth services.
3. Communication gaps between the YSB administration and the Akron Police Department administration should be removed.
4. The Youth Services Bureau should be a city-wide agency.
5. The staff members should be more diligent in supervising the types of activities which occur at the centers.
6. They would recommend low priority for community funding unless changes are made.

Two members of the Akron Police Juvenile Division were also interviewed. They indicated that they had reservations about the YSB program and have not used it extensively. They had some question about the legal implications of the police referring delinquents to the YSB. Their concern is related to their interpretation of Section 2151.311 of the Ohio Criminal Code. However, if the YSB staff members became more professional and exhibited evidence that they could help youth and prevent delinquency they can anticipate greater use of the YSB and cooperation with YSB administrators in the future.

The Schools. The assessment of the Youth Services Bureau received from personnel on the Akron Board of Education had both positive and negative features. They felt that the YSB program should not be limited to the Model Cities area, that the present administration of the program is excellent, and that the YMCA involvement has led to an improvement in the program. However, they felt that several YSB staff members were not trained and perhaps not motivated to provide the types of services specified in the statement of the YSB goals. While they are in sympathy with the program's aims, there is a feeling among them that the program has not had a profound effect in changing youth attitudes or behavior. It is not that YSB staff members have too often emphasized youth advocacy, which is appropriate, but that they may have failed to emphasize youth responsibility. It was reported that the feedback received by the schools on cases they referred to the YSB had been sketchy.

The Juvenile Court. The Summit County Juvenile Court Judge, Referee, and Intake Supervisor were extensively interviewed. The Judge was in sympathy with the goals of the YSB and felt that a diversion emphasis was sound. However, it is not possible to implement the program strictly according to the recommendations of the President's Commission because each YSB program must develop in accordance with the needs of the community in which it operates. Thus every youth services bureau should be allowed a measure of flexibility.

The Judge felt that the YSB should be independent of the juvenile court. At the same time, he recognized the problem this creates due to the lack of authority the agency actually possesses when attempting to implement its programs. After a hesitant start, he feels that the program has turned around.

The juvenile court staff members interviewed recommended that the East Akron YMCA be made the key center for the YSB. The highest concentration of youth population exists in this area, and this area also has the highest city delinquency rates.

The Akron Youth Services Bureau had a total budget of \$222,706 for the 1973-74 fiscal year. The major portion of this budget was earmarked for salaries and fringe benefits (\$155,145 or 69.7% of the total budget). The YSB Director estimated that \$30,000 would not be used, thus leaving total operating expenses at \$192,706.

If a calculation is made on the basis of the 634 actual case files for this time period, we find a per capita cost of \$304. If the larger figure is used, which includes all of the youths seen by YSB staff for whatever reason during the year (recreation, rap sessions, or one-time counseling), the cost figure is quite different. It was reported by the YSB administration that 1525 individuals had contacts with the YSB in this time period. The per capita cost, based on this figure, is \$126.

Since the extent of YSB involvement with 891 of these cases is unknown, because case files were not completed for these youths, the amount of time and resources devoted to these cases must be estimated. By using a weighted figure and assuming that an average of three months time was devoted to each individual, the evaluators calculated a per capita estimate of  $223 + 634 = 857$  cases.  $\$192,796 \div 857 = \$225.00$ . The evaluators believe that this figure of \$225 is a fairly close estimate of the per capita cost for YSB clients. Regardless of which figures are used, either the high of \$304 or the low of \$126, they compare favorably with other per capita costs for agencies which work with youths in need of services and attention.

The Summit County Juvenile Court processed 4,800 cases in 1973 with a total budget of \$1,303,180. (This figure includes funds received from federal programs, but does not include expenses for maintenance of the Juvenile Court Center.) The per capita cost for the Summit County Juvenile Court cases was \$271.00 per child. The YSB per capita costs compare favorably with this figure.

In 1973, the per capita cost for a youth committed to an OYC institution was \$10,000. Placement of a child in a private boarding school costs \$19.66 per day, or \$7,176 per year. Placement of a youth in a group home costs \$8.19 per day, or \$2,989 per year. Placement of a child in a private boarding home costs \$5.11 per day, or \$1,865 per year. Placement of a child with relatives costs \$3.97 per day, or \$1,449 per year. These figures do not include the additional expense for the salaries of the foster care personnel required to supervise placements at private boarding homes or with relatives. The cost for after-care supervision is \$2.17 per day, or \$792 per year. The supervision is similar to the services provided to the YSB clientele.

#### Cost Effectiveness

If cost alone is considered, and all other direct and indirect benefits derived from the YSB operation are totally disregarded, a strong case can still be made to continue the YSB's work. As noted earlier, it costs \$10,000 per year to keep a child in an OYC institution. The average stay for a juvenile in such an institution is ten months, leading to a cost of \$8,333. After release the youth will generally be placed on after-care supervision for approximately one year, costing the taxpayers an additional \$792. If the youth is released at this point, the total cost for his OYC commitment will be \$9,125. Of the YSB was successful in diverting 21 youths from OYC institutions, it would have saved the taxpayers a sum comparable to its entire 1973 budget. Although it is not possible to estimate with certainty how many youths were so diverted, the evaluation data showed definite signs of decreased recidivism among YSB clients who had been referred to the juvenile court and there were other indications of the YSB being directly or indirectly responsible for diversion from initial juvenile court appearances or improvement in the youth's situation and a lessening of the tensions and circumstances which often lead to delinquent behavior.

## CHAPTER VII: RECORD KEEPING

The question of record keeping focuses attention on a major problem for the Youth Services Bureau. The organization, in order to insure quality case services, supervision of work, internal and external reporting for accountability, needs some type of an efficient record keeping system. Record keeping is a means to an end--good case services--but too often it has led to undesirable latent consequences for social service agencies and their clients. The YSB must do its job, which includes the diagnosis of individual and family problems, but not infringe upon the rights of privacy of youths, contribute to the labeling of youths as deviant, nor invest too great an amount of its scarce resources in the maintenance of records.

Norman warns against the temptation to write long narrative accounts of the child's background and the problems, or of his response to the agency's programs. He provides a straightforward guideline, "The essential information to be recorded is: specifically what home, school, or community conditions create specifically what problems for the youngster, and specifically what can be done to solve, or at least alleviate these problems."<sup>19</sup>

A record keeping system should entail:

1. All basic demographic (age sex, etc.) data and current information (address, telephone),
2. Referral source--so that the agency can provide feedback to the referral source concerning its clients,
3. Diagnostic data,
4. A plan or program for the youth, including periodic progress reports and reassessments,
5. As a part of No. 4 above, the specific action that was taken with the child,
6. Follow up information, and
7. Reasons for closing the case.

Working Toward A Better System

After initially assessing the YSB record keeping system and its internal and external reporting requirements, the evaluators began to experiment with new procedures in cooperation with the YSB staff. Before describing these new procedures, it would be beneficial to describe several of the specific requirements and qualifications which this system had to meet.

The Director emphasized that one of the major aims of the YSB is to provide services without the attendant offshoot of attaching a delinquent label to the child by compiling a thick folder on each client.

The system should be ultimately designed to help clients, to improve the worker's services to clients, and to aid the organization in providing services to all its clients. Any record keeping system is dependent upon those who make it up and utilize it. The specific assets of the persons, the amount of time they can allow for this function, and the amount of case supervision which can be allotted to the maintenance of records must be taken into account.

A recording system should serve the function of a checklist for assessment and treatment procedures and should help those who provide supervision and consultation to workers.

A record keeping system must help to maintain continuity of service. If a worker resigns, then someone else must be able to utilize the records to take up the counseling role where the former worker left off.

## FOOTNOTES

1. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Challenge of Crime in a Free Society, Washington, D.C.: 1967, p. 28.
2. Ibid.
3. Department of the California Youth Authority, National Study of Youth Service Bureaus, 1972, p. 8.
4. Ibid.
5. State of California Department of the Youth Authority, Evaluation of Youth Service Bureaus, November, 1973.
6. Ibid., p. 8.
7. National Study of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit., p. 137.
8. Sherwood Norman, The Youth Service Bureau, A Key to Delinquency Prevention, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Paramus, N.J., 1972, p. 1.
9. Evaluation of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit., p. 20.
10. National Study of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit., p. 176.
11. University of Akron Center for Urban Studies, A Crime Analysis and Information System for Summit County, Ohio, 1971 and 1972.
12. Police Division, City of Akron, Ohio, 1973 Annual Report and 1972 Annual Report, 1974.
13. Evaluation of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit.; Evaluation Research Associates, Evaluation Study of Lower Valley Youth Service Bureau, McAllen, Texas, 1973; William A. Underwood, "Youth Service Bureaus: A New Way For Offenders," Youth Authority Quarterly, Volume 21, No. 3, 1968.
14. National Study of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit., p. 56.
15. Ibid., p. 92.
16. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Juvenile Court Statistics 1973, p. 7.
17. National Study of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit., p. 98.
18. Evaluation of Youth Service Bureaus, op. cit., p. 56.
19. Sherwood Norman, op. cit., p. 7.

**END**