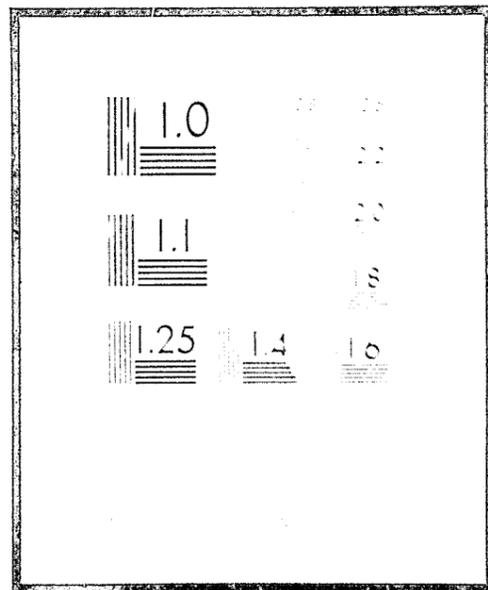


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## Juvenile Justice Update A Second Look At The Juvenile Justice System of Polk County, Iowa

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JUVENILE JUSTICE UPDATE  
A Second Look at the Juvenile Justice System of Polk County, Iowa

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I. A Second Look at Iowa's Juvenile Justice System

Operation of the juvenile justice system in Polk County is largely a function provided by Municipal and County Government, with local law enforcement agencies, some of which possess juvenile bureaus, normally providing initial intake into the system, and the Polk County Juvenile Court, which possesses the legal authority to work with juvenile offenders, at the hub. Providing support services to these agencies, are a variety of public and private agencies, most frequently based in the Des Moines area, and the probation department of the Juvenile Court. Finally, when the gamut of locally-controlled treatment options for juvenile offenders is exhausted, the State provides institutional placement opportunities, sometimes at mental health institutions but more frequently at the two state training schools at Eldora and Mitchellville.

The juvenile justice system does not necessarily exhibit the symptoms of a system operated under what might be termed "systems concepts". This agency, officials working in the juvenile justice system, and others have frequently been critical of the lack of coordination which typifies the system. Although the Committee for Juvenile Justice has shown promise in instigating communication among juvenile justice practitioners, no systematic effort has been undertaken to foster communication, coordination, or to appraise individual agencies of the resources and functions provided by other agencies. Similarly, the division between locally-controlled juvenile courts and the state-controlled rural institutions is significant. Increasingly, there is dissatisfaction with state-run institutions in Iowa (as elsewhere), not only because of the negative effects of institutionalization per se but because the local agencies utilizing the training schools are able to provide little input regarding the policies and operations in the latter.

This dissatisfaction has resulted in discussion of alternatives to the current dual system, but questionable concrete progress. Although the State has sometimes supported de-institutionalization and the strengthening of locally-controlled alternatives to the state-run system, such support has been, at best, intermittent and sporadic. For example, although the State Legislature in 1973 allocated \$850,000 toward the development of adult community-based corrections for the biennium, such monies have not been made available for the development of similar juvenile community-based corrections efforts (apparently to the chagrin of some legislators). Further, although in 1972 there was substantial interest exhibited by a legislative subcommittee in the practices and policies of the State Training School for Girls at Mitchellville -- which ultimately resulted in a substantial change in personnel accompanied by a radical departure from the policies of the past -- any organized continued interest is probably questionable. While the State Department of Social Services subsequently opted to "coeducationalize" the two training schools, directing the superintendents of the schools to prepare for such an eventuality, the legislative action necessary to sanction such a move has not occurred.

Rather than developing alternative systems, then, the State appears entrenched in its system of institutions, in the Polk County area has not replaced departed staff in its field services office, and is not providing incentive to local juvenile courts to develop alternatives to institutionalization, as is the case within adult corrections. The Iowa Crime Commission, in addition to the Legislature and the State Department of Social Services, has shown a notable lack of leadership in Juvenile Justice programming. Although the Crime Commission has made some monies available to juvenile justice agencies, (see table) very little funds have gone into any programs which might be classified as innovative or experimental alternatives. The Simpson Bridge project (operated by Simpson College and the Girls' Training School), Shelter House (in Ames), and the Family Therapy Team (operated by the State Department of

Juvenile Justice Projects Funded in  
Polk County by the Iowa Crime Commission  
1970-1973

	1970	1971	1972	1973
Police School Liaison Officers, Des Moines & Urbandale	\$102,360	\$116,598	\$97,454	
Midac	\$2,700	\$150,000*	\$150,000	
Juvenile Home Classroom		\$15,000		
Youth Bureau, West Des Moines Police Department				\$17,780.45
Police School Liaison Program, Ankeny				\$14,844.75
Total	\$105,060	\$281,598	\$247,454	\$32,624.20

\*Discretionary

Social Services), are notable exceptions to this rule.<sup>1</sup> Further, even though Crime Commission funds for juvenile justice projects might be available, practitioners -- at least those in the Polk County area -- generally apply for those funds only as a last resort because of the numerous roadblocks erected by the State Planning Agency when funds have been sought in the past.

Carle F. O'Neil, a former superintendent of the Boy's Training School at Eldora, indicated at a conference in Des Moines in 1973 his belief that perhaps the greatest need in the Iowa juvenile justice system today is for leadership. We tend to agree with his assessment, particularly as it applies to the lack of leadership -- or organization -- among those desiring alternatives to Iowa's present juvenile justice system. Those supporting the structure of the current system, on the other hand, appear more well-organized than their foes. Carl Parks, Director of Court Services for the Polk County Juvenile Court, has served as a spokesman for the Iowa Juvenile Probation Officers Association which is, by all accounts, organized and potentially influential. Similarly, the Judge of the Polk County Juvenile Court, the Honorable Don L. Tidrick, has been seen as a spokesman for the State Juvenile Court Judges Association, a sub-committee of the Iowa District Court Judges Association. It would probably be fair to say that both these groups have historically supported the status quo in the juvenile justice system, and evolutionary rather than revolutionary change.

Groups supporting more radical change -- and by radical we mean change which may range from simply being more rapid to more fundamental -- are numerous but apparently not very well organized, with some organizations interested only in certain types of youths or programs. The National Organization for Women, for example, has indicated concern for juvenile justice system programming for female delinquents. The American Friends Service Committee has shown interest in the past in juvenile justice system

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<sup>1</sup>The Iowa Runaway Service, initially funded through MCJC, is currently funded with Crime Commission monies, although this funding is temporary due to new LEAA guidelines. The State Planning Agency originally was less than encouraging when approached for funds, and proved more cooperative only when urged to be so through political channels.

reform. The League of Women Voters has been active, as has the Junior League, which spearheaded the development of the VIP Program in Polk County. Segments of the State Legislature have also shown interest, and a Model Juvenile Code is currently being circulated after development by the State Youth Coordinator's Office. The Children's Coalition (also known as the Child Care Coalition or Children's Lobby) has recently formed to press for legislative changes in the child care area and, potentially, the juvenile justice system. The Iowa Civil Liberties Union has also shown continuing interest in legislative changes relating to juvenile justice. In addition to this list there are undoubtedly others, both large and small, maintaining interest in alternatives to current juvenile justice programming.

The simple abundance of these groups, combined with the lack of any forum in which these groups communicate and coordinate their activities (save perhaps the Committee for Juvenile Justice, which includes representatives of some of the groups noted above, but has effected little concrete change), suggests to us that a lack of organization may be impeding the efforts of these groups to alter the juvenile justice system. While we are largely unfamiliar with the inner workings and structures of these groups which might hinder the development of a coalition among them, such a coalition should be possible because the groups' goals, in the abstract, appear similar. Although certain desires of each of the groups would undoubtedly not be ascribed to unanimously, we suspect that accord could be reached on some basic issues.

It appears to us that these groups are faced with two choices. First, they can go on as they have been, singly, in a piecemeal approach to system reform. Such an approach, in our opinion, is not likely to result in substantial changes in the near future, as it has not in the immediate past.

As an alternative, the groups could seek points of agreement in the development of a coalition -- perhaps temporarily setting aside "pet" projects and stances to which the other groups cannot agree -- to effect more rapid change within the system. They could thus seek consensus in pushing for change within the juvenile justice

system, each of the groups mobilizing its resources in bringing pressure to bear on those in a position to effect change.

The development of such a coalition would probably not occur without difficulties. It may, in fact, not be possible. However, to this time no group or individual has exhibited leadership in attempting such an effort. While we have heard enough disenchantment voiced since our inception to believe that perhaps some individuals or groups are upset enough about the juvenile justice system's workings to temporarily put aside their differences in making an organized and concerted effort at changing the system, no group has attempted such an approach.

It appears to us that consensus might be possible in some of the following areas:

- decriminalization of status offenses
- increased use of non-secure alternatives to detention
- the development of community-based alternatives to the State Training Schools
- separation of the judicial and probation functions
- the development of youth service bureaus
- the development of group homes and temporary foster-care homes

Without passing judgment here on the legitimacy of these goals -- sufficient data really don't exist pertaining to most of them to support our taking a position one way or the other, and we'd prefer not to take a philosophical (as opposed to empirical) stance -- we doubt if any of them will come to fruition in the Des Moines area soon without coalition among groups favoring such changes. Again, we believe that sufficient numbers probably exist. What is lacking is leadership and resulting organization. At this point it appears that those favoring changes are butting their heads against the proverbial stone wall erected by those satisfied with the system's current structure. Only through organized attack will the wall be weakened.

## II. Changes in Juvenile Court Programming Since 1973

Since the publication of Volume IV of our interim report, which dealt with the Juvenile Justice System, there have been several changes in Polk County Juvenile Court programming which appear worthy of mention here. The most identifiable of these changes are the following:

1. In the summer of 1973, interested citizens and employees of the Juvenile Court started development of Volunteers In Probation in order to develop stronger citizen involvement in Juvenile Court activities. Juvenile Court personnel have, almost unanimously, embraced the new Volunteers In Probation program, looking at it as a noteworthy addition to available resources. To assist in a development of Volunteers In Probation, the Polk County Board of Supervisors hired a half-time volunteer coordinator for the Juvenile Court, who began employment in October of 1973. Volunteer utilization subsequently started the following January, and currently the program maintains approximately 75 volunteers. Although the program possesses what may be an over-abundance of volunteers from the suburban areas of Polk County, the volunteer coordinator reports that program efforts are being made to establish greater ties within the center city of Des Moines.
2. After a lag of approximately 18 months, the Juvenile Court in July of 1974 reinstated a program it had maintained on an experimental basis in 1972. This program, the Youth Guidance Project, is used as a diversionary program by the Juvenile Court, and is serving as an alternative for youths upon whom formal delinquency petitions would pre-

viously have been filed. This program which operates on a four-week cycle, serving 20 youths per cycle, operates at Moulton School five evenings per week from 5 o'clock to 9 o'clock. The youths and probation officers, all of whom have "volunteered" for the program, may engage in a variety of activities during evening sessions, ranging from tutorials to recreation to panel discussions to films to family counselling. Parents of the youths assigned to the program also participate two nights per week. Using this program, the Juvenile Court has reduced the percentage of youths upon whom it files delinquency petitions, and hopes to fill a service void for other youths who previously did not receive any Juvenile Court intervention. The Youth Guidance Program also marks the first existence of a full-time evaluator for a Juvenile Court program in Polk County.

3. The Juvenile Court has recently procured contractual services from ADAPT, Inc., to deal with the ever-increasing number of youths referred to the Court for drug-related activities. Under this arrangement, the Juvenile Court may refer its drug-related referrals to ADAPT for urinalysis, out-patient small group counselling, and evaluation. A residential program for youths is also being planned, according to officials from ADAPT.
4. Personnel from the Juvenile Court and the Fifth Judicial District Department of Court Services have discussed the development of a community-based residential treatment facility similar to the Fort Des Moines facility operated by the Department of Court Services. Impetus for this facility came originally from the Department of Court Services, whose evaluations indicated a need for a resi-

dential-type facility for young males in need of occupational upgrading and who had been referred to the Juvenile Court for so-called "index" offenses. Work on the planned program has been delayed due to funding difficulties.

### III Analysis of Juvenile Court Data

#### A. Summary of Findings

An analysis of data provided by the Polk County Juvenile Court and the Juvenile Bureau of the Des Moines Police Department was conducted, with primary attention paid to data released since the publication of the Metropolitan Criminal Justice Center's previous publication on the juvenile justice system. It was discovered that several trends noted earlier have abated or undergone reversals, and that some new apparent trends have appeared:

1. After two years of declining referrals, there was a substantial increase in referrals to the Juvenile Court in 1973;
2. Almost all of the increase in referrals to the Juvenile Court in 1973 was accounted for by referrals from law enforcement agencies;
3. An increasing percentage of those referrals coming from law enforcement agencies came from suburban police departments, i.e., departments other than the Des Moines Police Department;
4. For the first time since 1969, there was a decrease in the percentage of referrals from families and relatives to the Polk County Juvenile Court;
5. The Polk County Juvenile Court appears more determined than in the past to handle youths without the filing of an official delinquency petition, particularly in the cases of females referred to the Juvenile Court in recent years, in 1973 the Court filed petitions on fewer females than it had in any year since 1969. This has resulted in a corresponding decrease in the number of females committed by the Polk County Juvenile Court to the State Training School for Girls at Mitchellville;
6. It appears that either there has been a policy change at the Juvenile Court regarding the types of youths on whom delinquency petitions are filed, or there has been a change in the types of youths referred to the Juvenile Court, particularly from law enforcement referrals may be due to two phenomena:
  - a. The implementation of the Court Reform Act in July of 1973 may have had an effect on the types of youths referred from suburban districts to the Juvenile Court; law enforcement agencies in these areas may now be referring some juvenile cases to the Juvenile Court which would previously have been referred to the now-defunct Mayors' Courts or Justices of the Peace;

- b. The establishment of youth bureaus or juvenile officers in some of the suburban departments may have resulted in increased referrals to the Juvenile Court from those areas.

Each of these will be discussed in more detail below.

#### B. Introduction

In this section will be found an update of juvenile justice system data presented in one of this agency's previous publications, "The Criminal Justice System in Polk County, Iowa", Volume IV, Juvenile Justice: Description and Analysis. The time elapsing since publication of that Volume has permitted analysis of two years' additional data, and has allowed the development of new statistics heretofore not developed in Polk County. Specifically, analyses relating to the reasons for the increase in Juvenile Court referrals during 1973, and delinquency rates per 1,000 youths in the delinquency-prone years, are presented here. It is hoped that this information will assist agency personnel and local decision-makers in planning and developing new programs and policies addressing the problem of delinquency in Polk County.

There are two general trends identified in that previous Volume which are addressed to some degree here:

1. The steady increase in the number of females referred to the Polk County Juvenile Court;
2. The increase in the number of referrals from families to the Juvenile Court.

During the past two years there has been an apparent reversal of these trends, with one more trend becoming evident:

An increase in law enforcement referrals from police agencies other than the Des Moines Police Department.

Each of these will be discussed in more detail below.

C. Total Referrals

Table I, below, contains the number of total referrals received by the Polk County Juvenile Court during the years 1971 - 1973. The Table identifies official referrals (in which an official petition of delinquency is filed), unofficial referrals (in which no petition is filed and a youth is handled informally), and total referrals. Reading from the bottom of the Table, it will be noted that in 1971 and 1972, there occurred a decrease in referrals to the Juvenile

TABLE I  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
Total Referrals, 1971-1973

	1971		1972		1973	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Official	389	190	364	131	457	102
% Change	-6.5%	41.8%	-6.4%	-31.1%	25.5%	-22.1%
Total	579		495		559	
% Change	5.3%		-14.5%		12.9%	
Unofficial	964	271	932	337	1503	529
% Change	-6.2%	-0.4%	-3.3%	24.4%	61.3%	57.0%
Total	1235		1269		2032	
% Change	-5.0%		2.8%		60.1%	
Grand Total	1353	461	1296	468	1960	631
% Change	-6.3%	13.5%	-4.2%	1.5%	51.2%	34.8%
Grand Total	1814		1764		2591	
% Change	-1.9%		-2.8%		46.9%	

Court, but that in 1973 an unprecedented 46.9% increase in referrals was received.

This increase in 1973 was alarming for several reasons:

1. It was the largest percentage increase in a 12-year period in which increases in Juvenile Court referrals were the rule rather than the exception;
2. It occurred after two years in which the number of total referrals to the Juvenile Court had decreased, and it appeared that the "juvenile crime wave" in the county was possibly abating;
3. It constituted an unanticipated drain on a juvenile justice system which was already probably overtaxed.

However, looking at the top two columns, it is evident that the Polk County Juvenile Court has increased its effort to handle referred youths without an official petition of delinquency. Whereas there was a 60.1% increase in the number of cases handled unofficially in 1973, there was only a 12.9% increase in official cases. Put another way, although in 1973 there were almost 800 more youths referred to the Juvenile Court than in 1971, fewer petitions of delinquency were filed in 1973 (N=559) than was the case in 1971 (N=579).

It appears that at least a portion of this change is clearly due to a change in practice in handling female referrals. According to Juvenile Court sources, a change in the personnel responsible for intake of alleged female delinquents has resulted in a more concentrated effort to use dispositions other than formal handling. This is evident by examining the difference between 1973 and 1971: although in 1973 there were 170 more female referrals to the Juvenile Court than in 1971, there were 88 fewer delinquency petitions filed on females. As will be noted later, this has also substantially affected the numbers of female delinquents committed by Polk County to the Training School for Girls.

There is one other possibility, however, relating to increased use of informal handling: that the Juvenile Court staff, which has not increased appreciably in size since at least 1969, has become over-burdened to the extent that it is physically unable to handle additional cases officially. This possibility can be viewed as being either beneficial or detrimental. Critics of the juvenile justice system would claim that this reduces the system's involvement in the lives of youths, prevents youths from being labelled as delinquent, and minimizes the scars resulting from a youth's contact with the juvenile justice system. Advocates of the juvenile court system (as well as advocates of the "treatment philosophy" generally), on the other hand, would maintain that the inability to meet increases in delinquency referrals with corresponding increases in staff results

in a Juvenile Court response which, although it is still beneficial, could be improved upon with more sufficient staff resources.

D. Sex of Referrals

Table II was prepared to permit further analysis of a trend identified in previous years: the increasing percentage of female referrals to the Polk County Juvenile Court. The Table indicates that, if nothing else, there has

TABLE II  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
Referrals by Sex,  
1967-1973

		1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Male Referrals	N	1239	1241	1300	1444	1353	1296	1960
	%	86.5	84.1	82.6	78.0	74.6	73.5	75.6
Female Referrals	N	194	235	274	406	461	468	631
	%	13.5	15.9	17.4	22.0	25.4	26.5	24.4
Total	N	1433	1476	1574	1850	1814	1764	2591

been an apparent abatement in the increasing percentage of female referrals to the Court. Coming after a 5-year period in which there was an average 2.6% increase in female referrals each year, 1973 contained a 2.1% decrease in the percentage of females referred to the Court. This decrease, to be sure, is not of such a magnitude as to indicate any startling changes in the referrals coming to the Court's attention; however, it might indicate either that the percentage of females referred to the Court is "leveling off", or that increases in the future will be of a smaller magnitude than those of the past. The latter is most likely the case. Although there are not sufficient data on which to assess a third possibility, it is conceivable that the drop in the percentage of females referred to the Court could be somewhat attributable to the Court's increasing

concentration on youth conduct which would be criminal were they adults -- behavior which, according to past analysis, is far more likely to be performed by males than females.

One final note is appropriate regarding the sex of referrals. According to statistics published by the Federal Government, the national percentage of females referred has historically been higher than the Polk County percentage, with the difference usually being at least five percent. Although the national percentage of females referred has risen while the Polk County rate has increased, we would not be surprised if the discrepancy between the two will become less distinct in the future. This prediction is more speculative than scientific, however. See "Juvenile Court Statistics", published by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Social Statistics.

#### E. Source of Referrals

In order to permit further examination of Juvenile Court referrals in 1971-1973, Table III was constructed, indicating the source of referral of youths referred to the Polk County Juvenile Court. This Table indicates, generally, that although the raw numbers of referrals from sources other than police agencies may have gone up in 1973, the percentage of referrals received from every source but law enforcement declined in 1973. Put in other words, whereas there were 20 more youths referred to the Juvenile Court by parents and families in 1973, the percentage of total Juvenile Court referrals coming from this source decreased from 10.0% in 1972 to 7.6% in 1973. The Table indicates further that fully 87.9% of all referrals to the Polk County Juvenile Court in 1973 came from law enforcement agencies (up from 83.5% in 1972). This 87.9% figure is the highest noted since at least 1962, and suggests that Juvenile Court referrals are more frequently being referred for conduct which would bring them to the attention of law enforcement agencies.

TABLE III  
Source of Referral  
Polk County Juvenile Court

		1971		1972		1973	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Parents	Official	36	59	37	49	40	26
	Unofficial	38	41	49	41	57	73
	Total	74	100	86	90	97	99
		174	9.6%	176	10.0%	196	7.6%
Probation Officer	Official	5	0	6	4	7	2
	Unofficial	1	2	1	1	1	0
	Total	6	2	7	5	8	2
		8	0.4%	12	0.7%	10	0.4%
Police	Official	21	121	301	66	399	67
	Unofficial	889	212	931	275	1385	426
	Total	1210	333	1132	341	1784	493
		1543	85.1%	1473	83.5%	2277	87.9%
Other Court	Official	17	1	7	0	3	2
	Unofficial	12	4	29	5	30	5
	Total	29	5	36	5	33	7
		34	1.9%	41	2.3%	40	1.5%
School	Official	4	4	6	1	4	0
	Unofficial	10	4	9	7	15	11
	Total	14	8	15	8	19	11
		22	1.2%	23	1.3%	30	1.2%
Social Agency	Official	3	1	1	3	0	2
	Unofficial	2	2	1	3	5	4
	Total	5	3	2	6	5	6
		8	0.4%	8	0.5%	11	0.4%
Other	Official	3	4	6	8	4	3
	Unofficial	11	6	12	5	10	10
	Total	14	10	18	13	14	13
		24	1.3%	31	1.8%	27	1.0%

To permit further analysis of this increase in Juvenile Court referrals and the apparent responsibility of law enforcement referrals for this increase, Table IV was constructed. Table IV illustrates the numerical and percentage change of referrals from each source of referral from 1972 to 1973. It illustrates, for example, that there were 804 more law enforcement referrals in 1973 than in

TABLE IV  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
1972-73 Referrals, by Source

	1972		1973		Total		Official			Unofficial					
	1972	1973	1973	Change	% Change	1972	1973	1972	1973	Actual Change	% Change	1972	1973	Actual Change	% Change
Law Enforcement	1473	2277	804	804	54.5%	367	466	99	466	99	27.0%	1106	1811	705	63.7%
Schools	23	30	7	7	30.4%	7	4	-3	4	-3	-42.9%	16	26	10	67.5%
Social Agency	8	11	3	3	37.5%	4	2	-2	2	-2	-50.0%	4	9	5	125.0%
Probation Officer	12	10	-2	-2	-16.7%	10	9	-1	9	-1	-10.0%	2	1	1	-50.0%
Parents	176	196	20	20	11.4%	86	66	-20	66	-20	-23.3%	90	130	40	44.4%
Other Court	41	40	-1	-1	-2.4%	7	5	-2	5	-2	-28.6%	34	35	1	2.9%
Other	31	27	-4	-4	-12.9%	14	7	-7	7	-7	-50.0%	17	20	3	17.6%
Total	1764	2591	827	827	46.9%	495	559	64	559	64	12.9%	1269	2032	763	60.1%

1972, but that only 99 of those 804 referrals were handled officially. It also indicates, relating to official delinquency, that fewer youths referred from

every source but law enforcement were handled officially in 1973 than in 1972. Unofficial delinquency, on the other hand, increased from every source, save probation officers (where the total referrals were so few as to prevent the development of any statistically valid conclusions).

Table V draws from some of the previous tables, and indicates a trend already noted: that the percentage of youths referred from law enforcement agencies increased in 1973 over 1972, and that all other sources accounted for decreases. Most of these changes are not significant, simply because of the small number

TABLE V  
 Polk County Juvenile Court  
 Percent of 1972-73 Referrals Referred, by Source

	Total		Official		Unofficial	
	1972	1973	1972	1973	1972	1973
Law Enforcement	83.5	87.9	74.1	83.4	87.2	89.1
Schools	1.3	1.2	1.4	0.7	1.3	1.3
Social Agency	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.4
Probation Officer	0.7	0.4	2.0	1.6	0.2	0.0
Parents	10.0	7.6	17.4	11.8	7.1	6.4
Court	2.3	1.5	1.4	0.9	2.7	1.7
Other	1.6	1.0	2.8	1.3	1.3	1.0
Total	99.9	100.1	99.9	100.1	100.1	99.9

of referrals emanating from those sources. In the case of parental referrals, however, such may not be true, both because parents and families are the second-most frequent source of referrals to the Court and because the percentage of these referrals had increased steadily since 1969 (with the raw number of referrals increasing since 1966).

In that it is evident that the substantial increase in Juvenile Court referrals in 1973 is almost entirely attributable to law enforcement referrals, Table VI was constructed, presenting the percent of 1973 increase in Juvenile Court referrals attributable to specific sources of referral. The Table indicates that, of 827 additional referrals in 1973, 804 of those referrals came from a law enforcement source (or 97.2%). It also indicates that law enforcement referrals accounted for over 150% of the increase in the official cases in 1973. Put another

TABLE VI

Percent of 1973 Increase in Juvenile Court Referrals  
Attributable to Specific Sources of Referral

	Total		Official		Unofficial	
	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total
Total Change, 1972-73	827	100.0%	64	100.0%	763	100.0%
Law Enforcement	804	97.2%	99	157.7%	705	92.4%
Schools	7	0.8%	-3	-4.7%	10	1.3%
Social Agencies	3	0.4%	-2	-3.1%	5	0.7%
Probation Officers	-2	-0.2%	-1	-1.6%	-1	-0.1%
Parents	20	2.4%	-20	-31.3%	40	5.2%
Other Courts	-1	-0.1%	-2	-3.1%	1	0.1%
Other	-4	-0.5%	-7	-10.9%	3	0.4%

way, had law enforcement referrals stayed the same in 1973 as they had been in 1972, there would have been a reduction in official delinquency in 1973 (assuming that the type of handling given other referrals was not affected by the increase in law enforcement referrals). Law enforcement referrals also accounted for almost all of the increase in unofficial delinquency; 705 of the 763 additional referrals in 1973 emanated from law enforcement sources.

Table VII was constructed to permit a longitudinal view of law enforcement referrals to the Juvenile Court. It illustrates, for example, that 32% of all law enforcement referrals in 1968 were handled officially by the Court. It also indicates, that by 1973, this percentage had dropped to 20.5%. Further, it is evident that females are accounting for a higher percentage of law enforcement referrals to the Court: in 1968, 13.7% of all law enforcement referrals were female, where as in 1972 the figure was 23.2%, and in 1973, 21.7%. The Table also reinforces

TABLE VII  
 Polk County Juvenile Court  
 Type of Handling of Police Referrals  
 1968-1973

		1968			1969			1970			1971			1972			1973		
		B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Official	N	311	62	373	357	42	399	347	90	437	321	121	442	301	66	367	399	67	466
	%	30.9	38.8	32.0	32.5	22.6	31.1	28.3	29.9	28.6	26.5	36.3	28.6	26.6	19.4	24.9	22.4	13.6	20.5
Unofficial	N	695	98	793	742	144	886	881	211	1092	889	212	1101	831	275	1106	1385	426	1811
	%	69.1	61.3	68.0	67.5	77.4	68.9	71.7	70.1	71.4	73.5	63.7	71.4	73.4	80.6	75.1	77.6	86.4	79.5
Total	N	1006	160	1166	1099	186	1285	1228	301	1529	1210	333	1543	1132	341	1473	1784	493	2277
Horizontal %		86.3	13.7		85.5	14.5		80.3	19.7		78.4	21.6		76.8	23.2		78.3	21.7	

the previously-noted in-  
 creasing Juvenile Court  
 interest in utilizing dis-  
 positions other than offi-  
 cial handling for referred  
 youths. This is again  
 particularly true for fe-  
 males, as in 1973 only  
 13.6% of females referred  
 by police agencies were  
 handled officially.

Table VIII presents these data in another way, presenting all sources of referrals. This Table, more than any other, illustrates increased willingness on the part of the Juvenile Court to seek dispositional alternatives without the filing of an official delinquency petition. The only source of referrals for which there was an increase in the percentage of youths handled officially in 1973 was referrals from probation officers. But, as has already been noted, the number of youths referred by probation officers was so small as to prevent any meaningful statistics on these referrals.

TABLE VIII  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
Percent of Referrals Handled Officially, By Source of Referral  
1972-73

	Total Referrals		% Official		% Change
	1972	1973	1972	1973	
Law Enforcement	1473	2277	24.9	20.5	-4.4
Schools	23	30	30.4	13.3	-17.1
Social Agency	8	11	50.0	18.2	-31.8
Probation Officer	12	10	83.3	90.0	6.7
Parents	176	196	48.9	33.7	-15.2
Court	41	40	17.1	12.5	-4.6
Other	31	27	45.2	25.9	-19.3
Total	1764	2591	28.1	21.6	-6.5

Table VIII also notes the continuation of a pattern described in this agency's earlier publication on juvenile justice: the Court's official handling of a higher percentage of referrals from parents and families than from law enforcement. Thus, if a child is referred by his family (or, in 1973, by a probation officer or "other" source), he is more likely to be handled officially than if he were referred

by a law enforcement agency.

F. Referrals From Suburban Areas

Table IX is presented here to analyze more thoroughly the nature of law enforcement referrals to the Juvenile Court in the past five years. Upon superficial analysis, it appeared to us that more law enforcement referrals to the Court were being referred by suburban law enforcement agencies, as opposed to the Des Moines Police Department. Typically, no data precisely addressing this issue have been available in the County, and the results presented here have to be prefaced by the disclaimer that the figures presented here may not be completely accurate. However, a trend can be identified even using the rough figures presented here, and a plea can be made to the local law enforcement agencies and to the Juvenile Court to permit more accurate appraisal of this phenomenon in the future.

Table IX presents a breakdown of the law enforcement referrals to the Juvenile Court during the years 1969-1973. Using these data from the Polk County Juvenile Court and from the Des Moines Police Department Juvenile Bureau, it is possible to approximate the percentage of law enforcement referrals to the Juvenile Court which are coming from law enforcement agencies other than the Des Moines Police Department. Although there are some inconsistencies in the data, they probably possess enough accuracy to identify the type of general change examined here.

Inconsistencies in the data are noted here simply because they are very evident. For example, one undeniable disparity occurred in 1969 when, according to Des Moines Police Department Juvenile records, 202 females were referred to the Juvenile Court and, according to the Juvenile Court, only 186 law enforcement

referrals of juvenile females were received.<sup>1</sup> In 1970, a similar discrepancy is noted, with the Des Moines Police Department Juvenile Bureau claiming to have referred 307 females to the Juvenile Court, and the Juvenile Court claiming to have received 301, or six fewer.

The trend readily apparent in Table IX is contained in the column noting the percent of law enforcement referrals attributable to suburban police agencies. In 1969, only 4.5% of all law enforcement referrals came from suburban areas, whereas in 1973, this percentage had increased to 32.8%. The two bottom columns further identify this trend, and indicate that in every year since 1969, the rate of change in referrals from suburban areas has been greater than the rate of change in the Des Moines Police Department Juvenile Bureau referrals.

This pattern suggests several things. First, it is apparent that there has been a rapid increase in the number of youths referred to the Court from suburban areas, which may mean that there has been a rapid rise in delinquency in those areas. However, it may also be the case that with the establishment of youth bureaus within the police departments of some suburban districts (West Des Moines, Urbandale, and the Polk County Sheriff's Office) has come an increasing number of referrals from those departments. It may be, in fact, that delinquent activity in the suburban areas has not increased at all; rather, it may be the case that significant delinquent activity has been present all along, but that until recently such activity went discovered by law enforcement agencies.

Put another way, it may be that youth bureaus within law enforcement agencies are self-perpetuating. If a juvenile bureau is established, juvenile referrals to

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<sup>1</sup>One legitimate reason for this error may be that the Des Moines Police Department Juvenile Bureau referred some females who were eventually handled as dependency and neglect cases, rather than delinquency cases, with which we are dealing here. However, there is no way to determine whether this is the case. Another is that the police may count two separate referrals of one youth as two referrals, with the Juvenile Court counting it as one.

TABLE IX

Law Enforcement Referrals to  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
1969-1973

	1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Referrals to Juvenile Court By D.M.P.D. Juvenile Bureau	1025	202	1050	307	1045	278	834	296	1209	321
	1227		1357		1323		1130		1530	
Total Law Enforcement Referrals to Juvenile Court	1099	186	1228	301	1210	333	1132	341	1784	493
	1285		1529		1543		1473		2277	
Referrals Attributable to Other Law Enforcement Agencies	74	-16	178	-6	165	55	298	45	575	172
	58		172		220		343		747	
Percent Attributable to Other Agencies	4.5		11.2		14.3		23.3		32.8	
Percent Change in D.M.P.D. Referrals			10.6		-2.5		-14.6		35.4	
Percent Change in other Agencies Referrals			196.6%		27.9		55.9		117.8	

the Juvenile Court will be an immediate result, simply because the objective of the youth bureau is to look into youth crimes. The fact that there has been an increase in referrals from the suburban areas, then, may not necessarily mean that there has actually been an increase in delinquency.

Finally, it may also be possible that some of the suburban police departments have changed the criteria for referring youths to the Juvenile Court. It is well-established that police agencies rarely refer a youth to the Juvenile Court upon first contact with that youth. Because this is so, most juveniles coming into contact with the police are ultimately not referred to any other agency. However, any change in the criteria used by police agencies for referral to a court will logically result in either a higher or lower percentage of the youths contacted being referred to a court. Using some of the previously-analyzed data as an example, it will be noted that in 1972 the Juvenile Bureau of the Des Moines Police Department contacted 3,160 youths, but only referred 1,130 youths (or 35.8%) to the Juvenile Court. In 1973, however, the Des Moines Police Department referred a total of 1,530 youths to the Court, an increase due both to a larger number of total cases (3,491) and a higher percentage of cases referred (44.3%). Table X examines this for Des Moines Police Department referrals during the past five years.

Thus, although no further explanatory data are available, a change in criteria may have resulted in a portion of the increase in youths referred by the Juvenile Bureau of the Des Moines Police Department to the Court. A similar change may also have been occurring in suburban areas. Contributing to this possibility is the Court Reform Act implemented in July of 1973. Again, there are no data supporting this theory. However, it is possible that certain juvenile cases which previously would have been referred by law enforcement agencies to local suburban court (Mayors' Courts and Justices of the Peace) are now no longer being

TABLE X

Des Moines Police Department Referrals  
to Polk County Juvenile Court, 1969-1973\*

	1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Total Cases D.M.P.D. Juvenile Bureau	2150	718	2439	926	2398	834	2146	1014	2516	975
Percent By Sex	75.0	25.0	72.5	27.5	74.2	25.9	67.9	32.1	72.1	27.9
Percent Change	-3.3	27.5	13.4	29.0	-1.7	-9.9	-10.5	21.6	17.2	-3.8
Total Cases	2868		3365		3232		3160		3491	
Percent Change	2.9		17.3		-4.0		-2.2		10.5	
Referred To Juvenile Court	1025	202	1050	307	1045	278	834	296	1209	321
Percent Referred By Sex	47.7	25.1	43.1	33.2	43.6	33.3	38.9	29.2	48.1	34.4
Percent Change	-2.8	35.6	2.4	52.0	-0.5	-9.4	-20.2	6.5	45.0	8.4
Percent Of Total Juvenile Court Referrals	78.0		73.9		72.9		64.1		59.1	
Total Percent Referred	42.8		40.3		40.9		35.8		44.3	

\*Data for years 1962-1968 (although in a different format) are found on P. 188 of a previous MCJC publication, "The Criminal Justice System in Polk County, Iowa", Volume IV, Juvenile Justice.

handled within the suburbs, and are being referred to the Polk County Juvenile Court.

G. On Records - Keeping and Evaluation

What this points up again is that data relating to the functions and operations of the juvenile justice system are inadequate for any conclusive analysis. In 1973, this agency recommended improved records-keeping within the juvenile justice system to permit more comprehensive analysis. However, such improvement has not occurred, and we must reiterate our plea for improved records keeping if for no other reason than to assist local agencies in more accurately identifying the scope of the problems with which they deal.

Part of the difficulty in this particular area is that the local juvenile justice agencies simply do not have the manpower or resources to analyze their problems and to determine methodologies to alleviate them. The agencies are so caught up in day-to-day operation that they are unable to look into the reasons for their quandary.

For example, this report identifies certain data and trends which have not previously received specific attention within the Polk County juvenile justice system. These are the sorts of data that the agencies should routinely have at their disposal. However, in all fairness to the agencies, they simply do not have time to perform these sorts of analyses. Without the existence of research and planning divisions, there are no personnel having the expertise or responsibility to do same. Thus, one recommendation resulting from this study is that juvenile justice agencies be given the manpower to operationalize planning and/or research units to perform analyses relating both to day-to-day operation and to analysis of the problems with which they deal.

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Some uninformed critics, of course, will maintain that the sorts of analyses presented here do no more than point out things that people already know. Such is hardly the case. Although we here may quantify some information or trends previously suspected within agencies, there is a substantial difference between knowing and suspecting, particularly as they relate to planning and program development. Suspicions don't result in concrete proposals; hard data do.

The agencies, however, must accept at least some blame for the inconsistency of data and evaluation. Accountability and empirical evaluation in the criminal justice system are just now gaining a foothold, and neither is necessarily popular with most criminal justice administrator or practitioners. Further, even when administrators are amenable to research, records-keeping systems may not lend themselves to evaluation or research. The Juvenile Court of Polk County may be used as an example here, for even though its officials are very co-operative with researchers (those of this agency in particular), its records are not especially amenable to research. The Court took a positive step to alleviate this situation in early 1973 when it requested our assistance in developing a more "researchable" face sheet, which was developed (with the Court's assistance) within a short period. However, even though this new face-sheet was deemed to be much more systematic and complete than the old sheet, lending itself to more cogent evaluation and leading easily to the development of a manual or computer-based records-keeping system, it has yet to be implemented by the Court. It is, then, in situations such as this that one must question the real desire of agencies for rigorous evaluation and assessment of accountability.

H. Age of Referrals

Table XI, referring to the ages of referrals to the Polk County Juvenile Court, presents the number and percent of youths referred to the Court who fall

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into specific age groupings. In that previous analyses (see volume on Juvenile Justice) have indicated that girls referred to the Court have been generally somewhat younger than their male counterparts, the Table was prepared to permit further analysis.

TABLE XI  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
Ages of Referrals  
1971-1973

		1971		1972		1973	
		B	G	B	G	B	G
Less than 10	N %	18 1.3	7 1.7	21 1.6	2 0.4	31 1.6	4 0.6
10-12	N %	108 8.0	26 5.6	113 8.7	24 5.1	171 8.7	46 7.3
13	N %	120 8.9	55 11.9	116 9.0	63 13.5	177 9.0	61 9.7
14	N %	187 13.8	112 24.3	184 14.2	89 19.0	273 13.9	122 19.3
15	N %	262 19.4	100 21.7	255 19.7	125 26.7	359 18.3	153 24.2
16	N %	315 23.3	97 21.0	326 25.2	100 21.4	465 23.7	136 21.6
17-18	N %	342 25.3	64 13.9	281 21.7	65 13.9	484 24.7	109 17.3
Average		15.04	14.70	14.95	14.84	15.00	14.91
Median		15.93	15.30	15.84	15.45	15.91	15.60

It is apparent from the Table that the average age of males referred to the Court has not changed considerably in the past three years, while the average age of females has increased slightly, to the point that there is no significant

difference in the average ages of boys and girls referred to the Court. It is still apparent, however, that the majority of boys referred to the Court fall into the 16-and-17-year age brackets, while the majority of girls occupy the 15-and-16-year categories.

The median age of boys and girls referred to the Court was computed also, to determine whether or not the average age was being skewed to some degree by the larger percentage of boys falling into the 12-and-under categories. It was found that this, in fact, was true, not only in the cases of boys, but for girls as well. The median age, in this case, is more accurate than the average in identifying the age of the "typical" Juvenile Court referral, and for each sex is more proximate to the age group in which most youths fall.

Use of the median also proved to be a better indicator in assessing age differences between male and female referrals to the Court, and the recent decrease in the difference between the two. In 1971, although there was a .63 year difference in the median age of boys and girls referred to the Court (or about 7.6 months), in 1973 this difference had halved to .31 years (or about 3.7 months). Thus there is very little difference in the ages of males and females referred to the Court.

#### I. Race of Referrals

Data relating to the race of referrals to the Court are found in Table XII. The information found there indicates very little change from what was found relating to race in previous years: that the overwhelming majority of youths referred to the Court are white, although black youths are over-represented according to their percentage in the general youth population. As has been the case in recent years, a higher percentage of male referrals are black than female referrals. Further, the percentage of black referrals to the Court has decreased steadily during the last three years, to the point that in 1973 the Court received

TABLE XII  
 Polk County Juvenile Court  
 Race of Referrals  
 1971-1973

		1971		1972		1973	
		B	G	B	G	B	G
White	N %	1140 84.3	400 86.8	1100 84.9	408 87.2	1698 86.6	562 89.1
Black	N %	208 15.4	61 13.2	192 14.8	57 12.2	251 12.8	68 10.8
Indian	N %			2 0.2	2 0.4		
Other	N %	3 0.2	2 0.4	2 0.2	1 0.2	10 0.5	
Unknown	N %					1 0.1	1 0.2
Total		1351*	463*	1296	468	1960	631
*Total is incorrect due to errors in Juvenile Court Data							

a smaller percentage of black referrals than it had during at least the last 12 years.

J. Type of Care

Table XIII, detailing the type of care received by youths immediately following the referral to the Court, indicates the continuation of a practice noted previously: the release of most juveniles to their parents pending other action by the Court. This is the case particularly for boys, in that approximately four out of five boys referred are released without having received any physical restraint from the juvenile justice system. What this amounts to, usually is simple release to parents or guardian. In the case of juvenile girls, however, a much smaller

TABLE XIII  
 Polk County Juvenile Court  
 Place of Care  
 1971-1973

		1971		1972		1973	
		B	G	B	G	B	G
No Care	N %	1071 79.3	305 65.9	1033 79.7	302 64.5	1622 82.7	428 67.8
Jail or Police Station	N %	79 5.9	10 2.2	77 5.9	6 1.3	124 6.3	40 6.3
Detention	N %	179 13.3	138 29.8	173 13.3	153 32.7	191 9.7	144 22.8
Foster Family	N %	0	1 0.2	0	0	2 0.1	0
Other	N %	21 1.6	9 1.9	13 1.0	7 1.5	23 1.2	19 3.0
Total		1350*	463*	1296	468	1962*	631
*Total is incorrect due to errors in Juvenile Court Data							

percentage is released in this manner. In all three years noted in the Table, the percentage of girls admitted to secure detention was more than double that of boys. Conversely, boys were more frequently incarcerated in the county jail or police stations following referral to the Court.

An exception to this is noted in 1973 when, according to Juvenile Court figures, 6.3% of all girls received by the Court were incarcerated in jails or police stations. Although this seems to indicate a rapid rise in the number of girls incarcerated -- which would seem unusual in a year in which detention of juveniles in jails in Iowa came under such heated attack -- according to verbal reports from officers of the Court, these figures may not be accurate. Discussion with the chief probation officer indicated his belief that no such increase in females held in

jails and police stations occurred. This casts additional doubt on the general accuracy of Juvenile Court records.

It is clear from the Table that alternatives other than those already mentioned are hardly ever used in Polk County. Temporary foster placements, especially, are infrequent, a fact which attests to the absence of any organized foster family network for delinquents in Polk County. In that such short term foster care is utilized to a greater degree in other parts of the State (notably Blackhawk County), it does not seem unreasonable to hope for more extensive development of this phenomenon in Polk County in the future. On the basis of other information collected on detention in Polk County (not included in this report), it appears that some of the youths currently held in secure detention do not require the security found in that setting. The development of a network of foster car homes and/or group homes would be one means of alleviating (this situation and permitting less extensive use of secure detention).

In order to present a more long-term analysis of the use of secure sites for the care of youths after referral to the Court, Table XIV was constructed. This Table indicates that, although there was a decrease in the utilization of detention (particularly for girls) in 1973, the total percentage of youths being handled in a secure manner has dropped only slightly in recent years. This minimal drop in the percentage of youths being locked up after referral raises some perplexing questions, particularly given the previously-noted drop in the percentage of youths handled formally by the Court. It appears that, in practice, the Court is saying that although more and more youths do not require formal action on its part, many of these youths do require secure detention. This particular practice seems quite inconsistent. It would appear, at least on face, that most youths not requiring the filing of a formal delinquency petition would similarly not require secure detention.

TABLE XIV  
Polk County Juvenile Court  
Use Of Secure Places Of Care  
1967-1973

Place of Care	1967		1968		1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	b	G
Jail or P.D.	49 4.0	1 0.5	56 4.5	2 0.9	89 6.8	1 0.4	76 5.3	6 1.5	79 5.9	10 7.2	77 5.9	6 1.3	124 6.3	40 6.3
Detention	95 7.7	71 36.6	124 10.0	71 30.2	99 7.6	87 31.8	137 9.5	108 26.6	179 13.3	138 29.8	173 13.3	153 32.7	191 9.7	144 22.8
Total Secured	144 11.6	72 37.1	180 14.5	73 31.1	188 14.5	88 32.1	213 14.8	114 28.1	258 19.1	148 32.0	250 19.3	159 34.0	315 16.1	184 29.2
Total	1239	194	1241	235	1300	274	1444	406	1350*	463*	1296	468	1962*	631

\*Total is incorrect due to errors in Juvenile Court Data.

There are, however, arguments supporting the Court's practice, in that it could be maintained that placing a child for a short period of time in secure detention permits a probation officer to develop alternatives permitting action other than the filing of a delinquency petition. However, even accepting this position, the question must be raised as to why the child's place of care situations such as this must be secure. One can accept the need for a stable environment for a youth; however, "stable" need not be equated with "secure".

This leads again to the conclusion that alternatives to secure detention have not been adequately developed in Polk County. Given that most criminal justice authorities accept the existence of detrimental side-effects on youths from secure institutionalization, and given the recent national emphasis on deinstitutionalization and the

utilization of secure alternatives only when such security is clearly necessary, there is no rational argument supporting such continued use of secure detention in a high percentage of cases, particularly for girls. Although girls referred to the Court, because of the nature of their problems, are unable to be referred back to their parents more frequently than males, alternatives other than secure detention could be used more consistently than is now the case, given the development of appropriate alternatives. The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals has recommended a complete prohibition against the detention of juveniles in jails, lockups, or other facilities used for housing adults accused or convicted of crimes, and that secure detention be used only for juveniles who have committed acts that would be criminal if committed by adults.<sup>2</sup> These recommendations are clearly not followed in Polk County, but they are goals capable of accomplishment should less severe alternatives be developed. Although there is clearly no wholesale abuse of secure detention in Polk County -- the Court probably detains fewer youths than most juvenile courts -- the development of additional alternatives can mean less frequent use of secure detention.

K. Reasons For Referral

Table XV lists the most frequent reasons for referral of youths to the Polk County Juvenile Court during the period from 1971 to 1973. Several patterns are evident on the table, some of which have been previously identified:

1. Boy's referrals span the whole spectrum of offenses, while girls' referrals are concentrated in five or fewer categories. In 1972, for example, there were 11 different reasons for referral which accounted for 5% or more of all male referrals, while there were only 4 similar categories for girls (two of which accounted for more than half of all girls' referrals in that year);

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<sup>2</sup>National Advisory Commission, Corrections, p. 573.

TABLE XV

Polk County Juvenile Court  
Most Frequent Reasons For Referral  
1971-1973

Person	OFFENSE	1971		1972		1973	
		B	G	B	G	B	G
Property Offenses	Assault	6.8 7	3.8	5.0 11	3.0	4.3	2.1
	Auto Theft & Unauth. Use	7.8 5	1.0	6.1 9	0.4	7.5 5	1.1
	B & E	12.3 2	2.4	8.6 3	0.2	9.9 3	1.1
	Shoplifting	4.2	11.6 3	6.0 10	16.9 3	6.3 7	15.5 3
Liquor and Drugs	Larceny	14.2 1	7.2 4	15.6 1	24	10.4 2	1.7
	Liquor	6.9 6	2.4	6.8 8	4.5	5.2 10	5.7 5
	Drunkenness	2.9	0.2	2.2	0.6	4.6	2.1
	Narcotics	4.1	6.6 5	7.2 6	3.4	12.6 1	4.3
Status Of	Other Drugs	3.0	0.8	1.2	0	0.7	1.7
	Runaway	6.0 8	27.5 1	7.2 6	27.8 2	5.7 9	30.9 1
Mischief	Ungovernable	8.0 4	25.1 2	9.3 2	29.9 1	8.4 4	20.4 2
	Disorderly Conduct	5.5 9	2.8	3.5	1.1	2.4	1.3
	Vandalism	3.8	1.2	7.5 5	0.6	5.8 8	1.9
	Other Mischief	8.3 3	3.0	7.9 4	5.8 4	6.5 6	6.2 4

\*Rank is noted only when the category amounts to five percent or more of the total.

2. Girls' offenses are concentrated in the "status offense" category, i.e., running away and ungovernable behavior. In each year, these two offenses were counted for more than half of all girls' referrals to the court, while the maximum percentage of boys referred for these offenses in any year was 16.5%;
3. There has been a substantial increase in the percentage of boys referred for use and/or possession of narcotics;
4. There has been a drop in female referrals for narcotics involvement, but an increase in alcohol-related female referrals;
5. In 1973 there was a notable drop in the percentage of girls referred for ungovernable behavior. This drop may be significant due to the past consistency in the percentage of females referred for this behavior (the 20.4% figure noted for 1973 is the lowest in at least 12 years).

Results pertaining to referrals for narcotics must be tempered by information received from the Juvenile Court indicating that most of these "narcotics" referrals were, in fact, for possession of marijuana. In that the category "narcotic" drugs should include only those drugs which are addicting -- with marijuana, according to most experts, hardly falling into that category -- the data suggest an additional change in Juvenile Court records, a change which would specifically itemize opium derivative narcotics, barbiturates, amphetamines, hallucinogens, and marijuana. Such a change would more specifically identify the nature of the drug problem with which the Juvenile Court is attempting to cope.

For additional information pertaining to reasons for referral, see Section M., Delinquency Rates.

#### L. Dispositions

Dispositions of the cases of youths referred to the Polk County Juvenile Court in the years 1971 - 1973 are found in Table XVI. As will be noted upon inspection of the Table, there have been a number of changes in the types of dispositions handed down by the Court since 1971:

TABLE XVI

Polk County Juvenile Court  
Dispositions  
1971-1973

No Juvenile Court Jurisdiction			1971		1972		1973	
			B	G	B	G	B	G
	Waived To Adult Court	N %	32 2.4	6 1.3	26 2.0	4 0.9	30 1.5	2 0.3
Dismissed	N %	39 2.9	22 4.6	41 3.2	20 4.3	58 3.0	28 4.4	
Total % Without Jurisdiction		5.3	5.9	5.2	5.1	4.5	4.8	
No Transfer Of Custody	Warned, Adjusted	N %	427 31.6	150 31.6	361 27.9	208 44.3	603 30.8	302 47.9
	Held Open	N %	336 24.9	53 11.2	388 29.9	75 16.0	503 25.7	75 11.9
	Probation Superv.	N %	356 26.3	177 37.3	360 27.8	101 21.5	589 30.1	138 21.9
	Referred to Other Agency	N %	57 4.2	11 2.3	53 4.1	16 3.4	49 2.5	37 5.9
	Runaway Returned	N %	12 0.9	8 1.7	11 0.8	14 3.0	29 1.5	27 4.3
	Other	N %	2 0.1	3 0.6	2 0.1	0	10 0.5	3 0.5
Total % Not Transferred		88.0	84.8	90.7	88.3	91.0	92.2	
Transfer Of Legal Custody To:	Pub. Institution For Delinquents	N %	50 3.7	29 6.1	44 3.4	23 4.9	58 3.0	11 1.7
	Other Institution	N %	7 0.5	6 1.3	5 0.4	3 0.6	13 0.7	2 0.3
	Pub. Agency	N %	5 0.4	1 0.2	1 0.1	3 0.6	8 0.4	4 0.6
	Other Court	N %	8 0.6	0	0	0	0	0
	Private Agency	N %	15 1.1	4 0.8	1 0.1	1 0.2	8 0.4	1 0.2
	Individual	N %	0	3 0.6	0	1 0.2	1 0.1	1 0.2
	Other	N %	6 0.4	1 0.2	3 0.3	0	1 0.1	0
Total % Transferred		6.7	9.3	4.2	6.6	4.5	3.0	
Total		N	1352	474*	1296	469*	1960	631

\*Total is incorrect due to errors in Juvenile Court Data

1. There has been no substantial change in the percentage of youths regarding whom the Court finds it has no jurisdiction due either to dismissal or to waiver to adult court. The raw numbers of youths falling into these categories, however, has risen along with the general rise in Juvenile Court referrals;
2. There has been a substantial rise in the number and percentage of females whose cases are disposed of with mere warning or adjustment. Correspondingly there has been a notable drop in the percentage of girls whose cases ultimately involved probation supervision. Whereas in 1971 supervision was the most frequent disposition of girls' cases, by 1973 warning and adjustment proved to be the most frequently-used disposition for girls;
3. Probation supervision for boys has risen slightly since 1971. This rise in the percentage of boys receiving probations supervision has resulted in a substantial rise in the actual number of boys receiving supervision (223 more in 1973 than in 1971);
4. Although there has been no substantial change in the numbers of runaway youths referred to the Court (see Table XV), there has been an increase in the numbers of youths ultimately returned home, particularly girls;
5. The Table indicates generally a greater willingness on the part of the Court to handle youths without any formal transfer of custody. This is true both for girls and for boys, in that for boys over the three-year-period there was a 3% increase in the percentage of cases in which custody was not transferred, and for girls, there was a 7.4% increase.
6. There has been a drop in the percentage of youths committed to public institutions for delinquents, i.e., the two state training schools. For boys there has been an increase in the raw number of youths committed, but a drop in the percentage of the youths so handled. For girls, there has been a substantial reduction both in the number of youths committed to the training schools and the percentage of girls so handled.
7. There has been a general drop in the percentage of cases in which a transfer of legal custody is involved. This, combined with the increase in the percentage of cases in which no transfer of custody occurs, tends to indicate that the Juvenile Court is much more willing than in the past to handle the problems of its referrals while maintaining jurisdiction, the result being that more options are left open for future action with the child than was the case in the past.

M. On Press Criticism of Our Earlier Recommendations

The above-mentioned drop in female commitments to the Training School for Girls is of particular note, as in 1973 this agency recommended increased use of community alternatives in preference to training schools, and a resulting drop in the relatively high percentage in female delinquents then committed to the Girls' Training School.<sup>3</sup> In response to this recommendation, officials of the Juvenile Court defended their actions as being entirely necessary, and were supported by the February 16, 1973 Des Moines Tribune, which contained an editorial entitled "Shallow Study of Juvenile Crime". The editorial, in effect, argued that because urban areas have always been "havens of anonymity to law-breakers" resulting in an overabundance of crime, that a high incidence of commitment to state institution must

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<sup>3</sup>In brief, our 1973 recommendations were the following:

1. Increased identification of community-based resources for diversion treatment;
2. Increased utilization of these community resources;
3. Greater utilization of volunteers;
4. A "systems" approach to operation and planning;
5. Greater willingness to innovate an experiment;
6. Development of stronger ties with adult corrections agencies and personnel;
7. Examination of alternatives to two-headed juvenile justice system currently operating within Iowa;
8. Increased efforts to identify potential pre-delinquent youth;
9. Identification of further opportunities to assist youths already identified as delinquent;
10. The development of better records-keeping functions in juvenile justice agencies;
11. Reduction of commitments to the Iowa Training Schools, particularly Mitchellville;
12. Reduction of youths permitted to Training Schools for the commission of victimless crimes;
13. Increase in minority personnel within the Polk County Juvenile Court;
14. Improved communication within the staff of the Juvenile Court;
15. Reduction in the population of youths detained at Meyer Hall, particularly girls;
16. The development of a stronger relationship between the two Iowa Training Schools; and
17. Greater use of community resources by the State Training School for Girls.

always result.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>The Tribune editorial, in toto, reads as follows:

"SHALLOW STUDY OF JUVENILE CRIME" The Polk County Juvenile Court is committing too many youths to the state training schools, according to the report of a study by the Metropolitan Criminal Justice Center at Drake University.

The report, one in a series on criminal justice in Polk County based on studies financed by a federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration grant, points out that while Polk County has only 10 per cent of the state's population, in 1971 it accounted for 19 per cent of all commitments to the Eldora training school for boys, and 41 per cent of commitments to the Mitchellville training school for girls. The court, the report's authors say, should make more use of local alternative to the training schools.

The statistics do not in themselves warrant the accusation. Delinquency, as well as adult crime, could be expected to be more prevalent in urban areas, which offer the haven of anonymity to lawbreakers.

Other urban Iowa counties also send disproportionately large number of delinquents to Eldora. The combined population of Linn, Scott, Woodbury and Black Hawk counties in 19 per cent of the state's total, they account for 26 per cent of commitments. However, only 19 per cent of commitments to Mitchellville come from these counties.

Carl Parks, director of court services for the Polk County Juvenile Court, said children are sent to the training schools as a last resort, "to protect the child from his own ... conduct. Very seldom is a youth committed as a result of his first brush with the juvenile court system," he said: "We exhaust all our own and all local resources in almost every case before we send him to the training school." Parks and Gary Ventling, chief probation officer, said they think the two training schools do a good job.

The Justice Center report recommended that the juvenile court seek more local volunteers and develop more community-based programs for delinquents. Ventling argues that there is no shortage of alternatives to institutionalization. More foster homes are available than are needed, and volunteer programs provide assistance to probation officers.

According to the report, "it may be that the other counties have been more adept at locating and utilizing alternatives to the training school." On the other hand, it might be argued that the others are making too little use of the schools.

There is no infallible method of determining how to handle each youthful offender. Generally it is considered preferable to try to deal with him in his own environment, but for some, removal from that environment is important to rehabilitation. How frequently the court makes commitments to the training schools does not shed any light on the quality of the court's judgment.

In that "shallow" report on Juvenile Justice, this agency also recommended increased utilization of volunteers in the juvenile justice system, something the Juvenile Court at the time dismissed as being already quite adequate. The Tribune appeared to agree with the stance of the Juvenile Court, saying "more foster homes are available than needed and volunteer programs provide assistance to probation officers".

The period of time elapsing since publication of our report has clearly upheld the validity of our recommendations. For the record, it must be noted that since the condemnation of our "shallow study of juvenile crime", there have occurred both the reduction of commitments to the Girls' Training School and the development of a Volunteers in Probation program at the Juvenile Court level. And, as will be confirmed by representatives of the Juvenile Court, it appears that the former has occurred without any additional harm to female delinquents (or to the community) and the latter has made the Juvenile Court program appreciably stronger than it once was. Finally, relating to the claimed abundance of foster homes, it should be clear from above analyses that such as the case due to the Court's simply not using foster homes for delinquents, rather than a numerical abundance of available foster homes.

That the Juvenile Court staff reconsidered their opinions of our recommendations, and subsequently acted on them, is to their credit. However, such affirmative action has not visibly taken place in the Tribune staff which, in taking its position and publicizing it to its readers, merely exhibited the degree to which its understanding of our report was, itself, shallow. Although this agency may be somewhat to blame by not supplying additional information to buttress our recommendations or by not spelling things out more clearly, subsequent reporting of our activities has so consistently paralleled the editorial stance that this agency must be absolved with at least some of the blame for our conflict.

The disagreement over commitments to the Girls' Training School is illustrative. We implied in our former Volume that institutionalization, due to its very nature, should be used only as a last resort for delinquents. We also implied -- but did not explicitly state -- that our recommendation relating to state training school commitments (as well as other recommendations) was based upon our two major recommendations, which related to the necessity to identify and utilize community resources in combatting juvenile delinquency. The Tribune's editorial writer apparently grasped neither of these implications.

The position we took at that time was consistent with that of the prestigious President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, released in 1967, which provided the first national impetus toward the development of community-based corrections and away from state institutionalization. It is also consistent with the position of the 1973 National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, which built upon the recommendations of the President's Commission, and ultimately stated the following:

The facts set forth earlier in this chapter lead logically to the conclusion that no new institutions for adults should be built and existing institutions for juveniles should be closed. The primary purpose to be served in dealing with juveniles is their rehabilitation and reintegration, a purpose which can not be served satisfactorily by state institutions. In fact, commitment to a major institution is more likely to confirm juveniles in delinquent and criminal patterns of behavior.<sup>5</sup>

It will be noted, after reading this statement, that the position we took regarding training schools, rather than being particularly radical or irresponsible, was mild -- albeit philosophically similar -- in comparison with that of the National Advisory Commission. The reasoning for this is quite simple. In making recommendations or in establishing a position, in the maligned juvenile justice

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<sup>5</sup>p. 358

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report or elsewhere, we have been particularly careful not to overstep the bounds established by limitations in the data with which we have worked. Although it might have been our philosophical inclination to recommend closing of the Girls' Training School, with total utilization of community-based alternatives in its stead, the data we have had at our disposal could not substantiate such a position. The data did, however, support a reduction in female commitments from Polk County to the Training School for Girls. The Polk County percentage of commitments to Mithcellville in 1971 (41%) was clearly out of line both with the Polk County percentage of state population (10%) and Polk County commitments to the Training School for Boys (19%).

Secure institutionalization of youths should be used only as a last resort and only when such confinement is clearly needed by the youth in question. If one can accept this position, it should not be especially difficult also to accept the conclusion that Polk County, with its 10% of state population, is unlikely in a given year to possess 41% of all delinquent juvenile females in the State of Iowa needing secure confinement. Although one might argue -- as did the editorial writer -- that some areas may indeed be under-committing females to the training school, such an argument is not persuasive. . .

In one other respect we did not take our position irresponsibly. One of the great debates today in the juvenile justice system regards the closing of training schools and the development of community-based alternatives in lieu thereof. An example of this debate took place in the 1973 Congress of Corrections of the American Correctional Association. The presence on the panel of community corrections personnel, institutional corrections personnel, and their advocates, appeared to ensure the development of heated discussion regarding the closing of training schools.

However, the "debate" turned out to much less a debate regarding whether to close juvenile institutions than a colloquy on the whens and hows of closing train-

ing schools. There was near-unanimity regarding the eventual closing of training schools and the movement toward community-based alternatives. The issue, in fact, was whether training schools should be closed before or after the development of local alternatives. Those who came closest to supporting the existence of training schools maintained that local alternatives must be developed prior to deinstitutionalization. Opponents of this position, maintaining that communities have had ample opportunity to develop alternatives to training schools and have failed, maintained that communities must be forced to develop programs, and that training schools should be closed regardless of their existence. It should be remembered that these positions, rather than emanating from a group of wild-eyed radicals, came from representatives of this country's largest and most established correctional organization.<sup>6</sup>

The Tribune's editorial writer maintained, in attempting to discredit our analysis, that under-utilization of a training school in some areas is possible -- the end result apparently being detrimental to a youth not committed to a training school who should have been so committed. In taking this position, that writer appeared to be agreeing with previous comment of the Juvenile Court's Director of Court Services: "The kids come out better than when they went in." (Des Moines Tribune, 2/12/73). As is typically the case in the juvenile justice system, there were absolutely no data to support or refute this claim. As a result, this agency designed and funded a grant application of the State Department of Social Services for a follow-up study of State Training School releases.

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<sup>6</sup>Panel participants included William Madaus, Deputy Commissioner, Boston Youth Services Bureau; Oliver J. Keller, Jr., Director, Florida Division of Youth Services; Michael Dana, Director to Technical Assistance for Diversion and Presentation, YDDPA, HEW; Milton Luger, Director, New York Division for Youth; Edna Goodrich, Superintendent, Purdy (Wash.) Women's Treatment Center; and Abraham Novick, Executive Director, Berkshire Farm for Boys (New York).

That study, although not yet released, contains preliminary data which raise disturbing questions regarding the past effectiveness of the two Iowa State Training Schools.<sup>7</sup> Given the data in that study, as well as the results of other research assessing state institutionalization elsewhere, we doubt the likelihood that communities frequently under-utilize state incarceration to the detriment of their delinquent youth. Overuse, rather than underuse, is the norm. Underuse assumes the existence of frequent beneficial effects on youth from institutionalization which are nearly impossible to substantiate.

Frankly, we were somewhat incredulous at the stance taken in the Tribune's editorial, in that the position taken there seems inconsistent with other editorials strongly supporting the establishment of community-based alternatives for adult offenders in Polk County. Recently, an editorial in the Des Moines Register supported the Riverview Apartments, a half-way house of the State corrections system, in a time at which community programs for convicted adult offenders were receiving considerable criticism. Although the editorial which was critical of our previous work did state that it is generally considered preferable to work with a youth in his own environment, the paper failed to take a position on the development of community-alternatives for youths -- the advocacy of which was meant to be the primary thrust of our report. Thus, the editorial does appear to be inconsistent with other editorial positions taken on adult community-based corrections programs. We fail to comprehend how one can support adult community programming and appear ambivalent about similar juvenile programs.

The editorial points out that the statistics on Juvenile Court commitments to the Training Schools do not, in themselves, warrant the accusation that the Polk County Juvenile Court is over-committing youths to the Training Schools. This is

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<sup>7</sup>Data were collected on a sample of admissions from 1965, 1968, and 1971.

most certainly true. However, the statistics alone did not lead to our recommendations. Rather, the statistics, taken in conjunction with the lack of community-based programming for youths and the numerous assertions of practitioners regarding the need for increased community programming, led to our recommendation. Had the Juvenile Court developed community alternatives such as those already available to adult courts -- intensive supervision in lieu of secure detention and non-secure residential facilities, for example -- and still maintained a high percentage of commitments to the training school, in all likelihood we would not have taken the position we did. However, these alternatives have not been developed (although a residential facility for male delinquents is under consideration). We suspect that increased community programming can result in reduced training school commitments.

The Tribune editorial concluded with the following statement: "How frequently the Court makes commitments to the Training Schools does not shed any light on the quality of the Court's judgment". However, frequency of Training School commitments in fact does shed some light on the degree to which the Court is willing to exhaust community-based alternatives prior to institutionalization. It may also comment on the degree to which local alternatives are developed. In recommending greater utilization of community alternatives, we were echoing the statement of the many juvenile justice practitioners to whom we had talked: that the plethora of resources in Des Moines has to be much better coordinated than in the past, and that where resources do not exist they must be developed. As these occur, state institutionalization of youths can diminish. Massachusetts, for example -- a much more urban environment than Iowa -- has totally abandoned its Training Schools in favor of community-based alternatives. Thus far, according to an evaluation in progress performed by Dr. Lloyd Ohlin, Harvard Sociologist, this transition is reaping beneficial results. Although the Training Schools Massachusetts abandoned

were certainly much more detrimental than either of the two Iowa Training Schools, the Massachusetts experience clearly indicates the absurdity of the claim that urban areas must always utilize state institutionalization more frequently than rural areas. Massachusetts, for the record, currently maintains fewer youths in secure institutionalization than does the State of Iowa, apparently without significant detrimental effects either to communities in the State or to delinquents who previously would have been incarcerated.

Although we might agree with the Tribune's allegation that commitments to Training Schools do not shed any light on the quality of a court's judgment, the extent of such commitments can also shed light on the degree to which a Court -- as representative of a community -- is willing to accept the responsibility of working with problems which are ultimately the community's own. The development of community-based programming is as much an indication of a community's accepting responsibility for "The Crime Problem" as it is an indication that past utilization of state institutionalization has been a tragic failure. The past record indicates that communities have all too often been willing to give up responsibility for a problem which is ultimately theirs. An analogy -- albeit a simplistic one -- can be drawn to parents bringing their child to a juvenile court and saying, "We can't do anything with him, you take him, it's your responsibility, not ours." Few would maintain this to be a beneficial stance, or a situation likely to conclude in resolution of the problem.

Finally, relating again to the "shallowness" of our previous report, trained staff members of this agency spent the greater portion of one year collecting data and interviewing juvenile justice personnel during its development. No other Polk County-based agency -- including the Des Moines Register and Tribune -- has conducted such a systematic and exhaustive investigation of juvenile justice prac-

tices in Des Moines and Polk County. Perhaps our writers did not clearly enough establish the links between the data and our recommendations. However, the validity of our recommendations has thus far been upheld, and we see absolutely no reason at this time to change our positions.

We claim no credit for any change in Juvenile Court practices. However, the existence of a "watchdog" to oversee the Court's activity is probably beneficial, and can potentially lead to greater experimentation and innovation in a Court which has been a state leader but not an innovator. The Court's reduction in female commitments to Mitchellville, more than anything else, is probably due to the arrival of a new administration at the Girls' Training School and the Court's lack of enchantment with some ensuing policy changes. However, the Court has acted positively in reducing commitments to Mitchellville, in the process attempting to use alternatives the Court perceived as less harmful to its clients.

Further use of community alternatives is possible, however, both for girls and boys. Court staff will indicate the need for more group homes in the Des Moines area and, although the currently-planned residential facility initially will be serving only boys, it is likely that a similar type of programming would be effective for females as well. The development of a co-educational program is not out of the question, given the success of a facility for males. Further use of temporary foster homes, through the assistance of the Volunteers in Probation, is also under consideration, and could result in population changes at Meyer Hall and perhaps the juvenile population detained in the County Jail. Editorial support for further changes of this sort would be consistent with editorial positions taken in support of adult community-based programming, is appropriate, and would be welcomed.

N. Delinquency Rates

The next group of Tables presents official and unofficial delinquency rates, by type of crime, for the period of 1963 to 1973. The decision to collect data for this 11-year period was arbitrary. Ideally, data would have been analyzed back to 1962, because MCJC data relating to the Juvenile Court have been collected back to that year. However, it appeared that school enrollment figures could be obtained accurately only back to 1963. Because the delinquency rates are based upon school figures (as well as Juvenile Court data), then, figures covering the 11-year period have been presented.

The methodology in developing these figures, although somewhat time-consuming, is quite simple:

1. School enrollment figures from the eight school districts of Polk County were collected for grades 7 - 12.<sup>8</sup> Data collection was limited to these grades because youths in the age group attending these grades are those historically most prone to delinquent activity;
2. Census data from the 1970 United States Census were collected for youths aged 12 - 17. Again, this group of youths has historically been the group most likely to be referred to juvenile justice authorities;
3. Using the school enrollment figures, and the actual county population of youths aged 12 - 17, estimated population figures for 1963 - 1973 were developed. Although there is bound to be some inaccuracy in the estimated population figures, -- due to possible fluctuation in the percent of youths in school during a particular year and the presence of some youths in these grades who are not between the ages of 12 and 17 -- the degree of error should be quite small;
4. Annual reports of the Polk County Juvenile Court were collected, and offenses grouped into five categories; crimes against property, crimes against persons, public order crimes, juvenile status offenses, and traffic offense. Within these categories, official referrals were tabulated, as were unofficial referrals and total referrals.

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<sup>8</sup>Due to oversight the North Polk School District was not included in the tabulation. However, because that district includes a small number of students, some of whom do not reside in Polk County, the exclusion is not deemed significant.

5. Using the Juvenile Court data and the estimated population data, delinquency rates per 1,000 youths were computed.

Due to changes in records keeping at the Juvenile Court, data relating to specific reasons for referral are sometimes incomplete. For example, prior to 1971, purse snatching and other robbery were grouped together under a single heading of robbery. Similarly, aggravated assault and other assaults were not differentiated prior to 1971.

TABLE XVII

Polk County Schools Enrollment Figures, Grades 7-12  
1963-1973

	Ankeny	Des Moines	Johnston	Parochial (Catholic)	Saydel	Southeast Polk	Urbandale	W. Des Moines	Total
1963-64	733	17,782	456	3,040*	927	989	706	1741	26,374
1964-65 % Change	800 9.1%	18,242 2.6%	466 2.2%	3,072* 1.1%	982 5.9%	1049 6.1%	747 5.8%	1854 6.5%	27,212 3.2%
1965-66 % Change	881 10.1%	18,305 0.3%	466 0.0%	3,078* 0.2%	1029 4.8%	1121 6.9%	836 11.9%	1951 5.2%	27,667 1.7%
1966-67 % Change	914 3.7%	18,591 1.6%	454 -2.6%	3,044 -1.1%	1071 4.1%	1186 4.9%	958 14.6%	2088 7.0%	28,306 2.3%
1967-68 % Change	1040 13.8%	19,105 2.8%	458 0.9%	2,502 -17.8%	1070 -0.1%	1212 2.2%	1084 13.2%	2270 8.7%	28,741 1.5%
1968-69 % Change	1122 7.9%	19,181 0.4%	467 7.0%	2,637 5.3%	1070 0.0%	1291 6.5%	1230 13.5%	2476 9.1%	29,474 2.6%
1969-70 % Change	1237 10.2%	18,938 -1.3%	493 5.6%	2,896 9.8%	1115 4.2%	1368 6.0%	1368 11.2%	2583 4.3%	29,998 1.8%
1970-71 % Change	1288 4.1%	18,763 -0.9%	506 2.6%	2,681 -7.4%	1133 1.5%	1379 0.8%	1481 8.3%	2663 3.1%	29,894 -0.3%
1971-72 % Change	1434 11.3%	18,784 0.1%	547 8.1%	2,564 -4.4%	1127 0.4%	1495 8.4%	1574 6.3%	2863 7.5%	30,388 1.7%
1972-73 % Change	1631 13.7%	18,979 1.0%	612 11.9%	2,568 0.2%	1148 1.9%	1550 3.7%	1607 2.1%	2976 3.9%	31,071 2.2%
1973-74 % Change	1773 8.7%	19,176 1.0%	585 -4.4%	2,502 -2.6%	1149 0.1%	1620 4.5%	1655 3.0%	3103 4.3%	31,563 1.6%

\* Estimated

TABLE XVIII

Estimated Population  
Youths 12-17 Years of Age  
Polk County

Year	School Population, Grades 7-12	Actual Population	Estimated Population*
1963	26,374		28,862
1964	27,212		29,779
1965	27,667		30,277
1966	28,306		30,976
1967	28,741		31,452
1968	29,474		32,254
1969	29,998		32,828
1970	29,894	32,714	32,714
1971	30,388		33,255
1972	31,071		34,002
1973	31,563		34,540

\*Estimated population based upon 1970 school figures, (grades 7-12) and 1970 census figures (ages 12-17). In that year the number of youths registered in grades 7-12 was 91.38% of the youths aged 12-17 who were residing in the County. Using this percentage, and the actual numbers of young people in school in a given year, the estimated population figure was computed.

TABLE XIX

Polk County Delinquency Rates Per 1000 Youths Aged 12-17  
1963 - 1973

		1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	Avg.	% Change
Crimes Against Property (see TABLE XX)	Official	3.0	4.1	3.5	3.2	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.1	3.8	4.8	6.6	4.1	120.0%
	Unofficial	13.2	12.7	12.2	8.4	8.1	7.8	8.4	11.0	11.8	11.8	9.2	11.3	-45.5%
Crimes Against Persons (See TABLE XXI)	Official	0.9	0.9	0.5	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.7	0.7	1.5	1.1	1.6	1.1	77.8%
	Unofficial	1.4	1.3	1.2	2.2	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.2	2.3	2.1	64.3%
Public Order Crimes (See TABLE XXII)	Official	2.2	1.7	2.1	2.9	2.2	2.4	2.2	3.9	4.0	3.4	4.0	2.8	81.8%
	Unofficial	11.5	11.1	7.9	14.4	15.2	15.4	15.0	16.4	11.0	10.2	18.3	13.3	59.1%
Juvenile Status Offenses (See TABLE XXIII)	Official	4.6	5.2	4.4	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.7	4.6	6.2	5.3	3.9	4.5	-15.2%
	Unofficial	3.8	4.1	3.4	2.6	3.6	3.8	4.8	8.3	11.2	13.1	18.9	7.1	397.4%
Traffic Offenses (See TABLE XXIV)	Official											0.1	0.1	
	Unofficial											0.2	0.2	
Total (See TABLE XXV)	Official	13.1	14.5	13.2	13.8	14.3	15.0	15.4	16.8	17.4	14.6	16.2	14.9	23.7%
	Unofficial	33.0	31.2	26.5	28.9	31.2	30.8	32.5	39.7	37.1	37.3	58.8	35.2	78.2%
	TOTAL	46.1	45.7	39.7	42.6	45.6	45.8	47.9	56.6	54.5	51.9	75.0	50.1	62.7%

TABLE XX  
Crimes Against Property

	1963		1964		1965		1966		1967		1968		1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un
Burg-B&E	47	92	46	81	39	61	41	50	67	53	68	67	82	73	69	72	74	105	54	59	66	136
Auto: Unauth																			44	26	41	42
Auto Theft																			6	6	32	38
Shoplift	39	288	77	297	68	309	58	210	56	202	56	186	46	203	65	288	19	96	12	145	24	198
Larceny																	35	193	48	165	65	249
Total	86	380	123	378	107	370	99	260	123	255	124	253	128	276	134	360	128	394	164	401	228	663
% Change Of.			43.0		-13.0		-7.4		24.2		0.8		3.2		4.7		-4.5		28.1		39.0	
% Change Un.			-0.5		-2.1		-29.7		-1.9		-0.7		9.1		30.4		9.4		1.8		65.3	
Rate Of.	3.0		4.1		3.5		3.2		3.9		3.8		3.9		4.1		3.8		4.8		6.6	
Rate Un.	13.2		12.7		12.2		8.4		8.1		7.8		8.4		11.0		11.8		11.8		19.2	
Total	466		501		477		359		378		377		404		494		522		565		891	
% Change			28.9		-4.7		-24.7		5.3		-0.3		7.1		22.3		5.7		8.2		57.7	
Rate	16.1		16.8		15.8		11.6		12.0		11.7		12.3		15.1		15.7		16.6		25.8	

TABLE XXI  
Crimes Against Persons

	1963		1964		1965		1966		1967		1968		1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un
Murder, M.S.																			2	0	0	0
M.S. By Neg.																			1	0	0	0
Rape															0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Robbery-Purse	5	2	6	4	6	2	14	8	18	10	7	5	17	11	12	11	0	11	1	3	1	6
Robbery-Other																	20	10	16	7	23	7
Assault-Agg	22	39	22	34	10	34	16	61	19	61	31	83	40	73	12	72	9	23	4	19	4	20
Assault-Other																	21	59	12	44	27	45
Total	27	41	28	38	16	36	30	69	37	71	38	88	57	84	24	83	49	93	36	74	55	78
% Change Of			3.7		-42.8		87.5		23.3		2.7		50.0		57.9		104.1		-26.5		52.8	
% Change Un			-7.3		-5.2		91.7		2.9		23.9		4.5		1.2		12.0		20.4		5.4	
Rate Of	0.9		0.9		0.5		1.0		1.2		1.2		1.7		0.7		1.5		1.1		1.6	
Rate Un	1.4		1.3		1.2		2.2		2.3		2.7		2.6		2.5		2.8		2.2		2.3	
Total	68		66		52		99		108		126		141		107		142		110		133	
% Change			-2.9		-21.2		90.3		7.1		16.7		11.9		-24.1		32.7		-22.5		20.9	
Rate	2.4		2.2		1.7		3.2		3.4		3.9		4.3		3.3		4.3		3.2		3.9	

TABLE XXII  
Public Order Crimes

	1963		1964		1965		1966		1967		1968		1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un
Vandalism	25	168	17	98	20	96	28	137	20	190	20	96	10	107	16	95	4	53	16	84	9	116
Weapons																	0	12	2	12	1	13
Sex Off.	9	28	17	34	13	22	15	18	4	17	9	13	2	16	2	5	7	8	4	9	2	9
Drugs-Narc.	29	136	18	197	30	120	46	292	46	272	48	389	59	368	111	436	35	54	52	57	84	189
Drugs-Not Nar																	25	20	6	9	7	17
Drunk																	6	35	2	29	8	96
Dis. Conduct																	26	63	5	45	2	53
Other																	30	122	28	102	26	140
Total	63	332	52	330	63	238	89	447	70	479	77	498	71	491	129	536	133	367	115	347	139	633
% Change Of			-17.5		21.6		41.3		-21.3		10.0		-7.8		81.7		3.1		-13.5		20.9	
% Change Un			-0.6		-27.9		87.8		7.2		3.9		-1.4		9.2		-31.5		-5.4		82.4	
Rate Of	2.2		1.7		2.1		2.9		2.2		2.4		2.2		3.9		4.0		3.4		4.0	
Rate Un	11.5		11.1		7.9		14.4		15.2		15.4		15.0		16.4		11.0		10.2		18.3	
Total	395		382		301		536		549		575		562		665		500		462		772	
% Change			-3.2		-21.2		78.1		2.4		4.7		-2.2		18.3		-24.8		-7.6		67.1	
Rate	13.7		12.8		9.9		17.3		17.5		17.8		17.1		20.3		15.0		13.6		22.4	

TABLE XXIII  
 Juvenile Status Offenses

	1963		1964		1965		1966		1967		1968		1969		1970		1971		1972		1973	
	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un	Of	Un
Runaway	34	38	38	45	38	34	30	19	39	33	46	44	44	75	56	106	76	143	41	182	32	275
Truancy	25	21	24	15	28	18	20	20	22	23	12	12	6	15	10	29	6	14	3	21	5	34
Ungov.	74	51	94	63	67	50	74	42	60	56	69	65	72	67	85	136	119	115	130	131	92	201
Poss. Liquor																	5	101	3	106	4	133
Other																			3	7	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>652</b>
% Change Of.			17.3		-14.7		-6.7		-2.4		5.0		-3.9	23.7		36.4		-12.6		-26.1		
% Change Un.			11.8		-17.1		-20.6		38.2		8.0		29.8	72.6		37.6		19.8		45.9		
Rate Of.	4.6		5.2		4.4		4.0		3.8		3.9		3.7	4.6		6.2		5.3		3.9		
Rate Un.	3.8		4.1		3.4		2.6		3.6		3.8		4.8	8.3		11.2		13.1		18.9		
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>		<b>279</b>		<b>235</b>		<b>205</b>		<b>233</b>		<b>248</b>		<b>279</b>	<b>422</b>		<b>579</b>		<b>627</b>		<b>785</b>		
% Change			14.8		15.7		12.7		13.6		6.4		12.5	51.3		37.2		8.3		25.1		
Rate	8.4		9.4		7.8		6.6		7.4		7.7		8.5	12.9		17.4		18.4		22.7		



TABLE XXV

## Total

	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
OFFICIAL TOTAL	379	432	399	427	451	484	506	550	579	495	559
% Change	30.7	14.0	-7.6	7.0	5.6	7.3	4.5	8.7	5.3	-14.5	12.9
Rate/1000 vths	13.1	14.5	13.2	13.8	14.3	15.0	15.4	16.8	17.4	14.6	16.2
UNOFFICIAL TOTAL	952	930	802	894	982	992	1068	1300	1235	1269	2032
% Change	19.3	-2.3	-13.8	11.5	9.8	1.0	7.7	21.7	-5.0	2.8	60.1
Rate/1000 yths	33.0	31.2	26.5	28.9	31.2	30.8	32.5	39.7	37.1	37.3	58.8
GRAND TOTAL	1331	1362	1201	1321	1433	1476	1574	1850	1814	1764	2591
% Change	22.3	2.3	-11.8	10.0	8.5	3.0	6.6	17.5	-1.9	-2.8	46.9
Rate/1000 yths	46.1	45.7	39.7	42.6	45.6	45.8	47.9	56.6	54.5	51.9	75.0

IV. An Update on Meyer Hall,  
The Juvenile Detention Facility of the Polk County Juvenile Home

Since we published our Volume on Juvenile Justice in 1973, several notable changes have occurred within the Polk County Juvenile Home. The most significant change, which has been the cause of most other changes, is a new director who appears to possess a different philosophy of operation of juvenile shelter care and detention facilities than his predecessor. Whereas the new Director's predecessor did not develop programming within Meyer Hall, rather tending to view the detention facility as a "neutral environment" permitting youths to think over their difficulties, the new Director is expanding diagnostic services and programming for youths.

To that end, Meyer Hall now possesses a full-time psychologist to administer diagnostic tests to almost all youths entering the detention facility and to youths entering Juvenile Hall for whom such diagnostic services are requested. Within Meyer Hall, the only youths not so tested are "courtesy holds" and those whom the psychologist has been specifically directed by the Juvenile Court not to test. The purpose of these diagnostic services is to expedite youths through Meyer Hall, thus shortening their length of stay. Although it could be claimed the existence of a psychologist at Meyer Hall duplicates services provided by other psychologists within local agencies, the Director of the Juvenile Home indicates that in the past some of these community-based services were not available for Meyer Hall youths without a lengthy waiting period. Thus, a youth in Meyer Hall today should not spend a lengthy time period waiting for diagnostic services to be completed prior to release. In other words, release of a youth to an appropriate alternative should not be delayed because of a delay in diagnosis.

In addition to the psychologist, the Juvenile Home has retained an Assistant Director whose role involves administration and counselling, although more of the latter than the former. The individual occupying this position is a specialist in guidance and counselling, and conducts orientation interviews with each admission to Meyer Hall. In essence, the Assistant ensures that youths know "how things work" within Meyer Hall, are aware of rules and regulations, and the like. Within the facility, the Director reports that his Assistant acts as an advocate for detained youths, with youths requesting the Assistant's services.

The new Meyer Hall Director reports that he is trying to make the facility more than purely custodial, as it has alleged to have been in the past. In addition to the above-noted changes, the medical program has been expanded within the facility, with doctors providing diagnostic services more often than emergency services. The Director reports that the doctors are trying to look into future medical needs of youths in the Juvenile Home, giving the Juvenile Court a report on the medical services youths should need within the foreseeable future.

In the past, primary criterion dictating whether a youth was detained in Meyer Hall or received shelter care in Juvenile Hall was a youth's age: those youths 12 and under generally went to Juvenile Hall, where as those older went to Meyer Hall, regardless of whether they had been referred to the Court (and thus to the Juvenile Home) for delinquency, dependency, or neglect. This criterion is apparently changing. The new Director reports that the decision regarding place of care now rests mainly on whether a youth is in need of custody and security. Those having such need are referred to Meyer Hall, regardless of reason for referral. Those not needing such custody are, at present, said to be referred to Juvenile Hall, which does not maintain the security possessed within Meyer Hall. This office supports that change.

Also within the past two years, the Juvenile Hall has begun more intensive use of community services providing assistance to youth. Two organizations of note which are providing such services are ADAPT (Alternatives in Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment) and Planned Parenthood. These two organizations conduct "educational group rap sessions" on drugs, sexual problems, etc., for volunteer participants within Meyer Hall. Generally, each organization presents one session weekly.

One final change which is strongly supported by this office is a move toward a more comprehensive records-keeping system within the Juvenile Home. In the past, Juvenile Home annual reports were respectable, but did not answer many questions regarding Juvenile Home activity which this office and others have asked. The new Director of the Juvenile Home reports movement toward a records-keeping system which is more adequate in answering questions regarding the day-to-day operation of Meyer Hall and Juvenile Hall. For example, it will be possible in the future to determine why a youth is detained in Meyer Hall or Juvenile Hall. It will also be possible to determine where youths go upon release from the Juvenile Home, and how often they are visited by probation officers. We support this upgrading in records-keeping, and urge other juvenile justice agencies to adopt similar systems permitting assessment of accountability.

More basic than the above changes is another change which is difficult to quantify or pinpoint with the precision we prefer to maintain. This relates to what appears to be a changed relationship between the Juvenile Home and the Juvenile Court. In the past it appeared to us that the Juvenile Home was operated to a large degree simply as an arm of the Juvenile Court, with the Juvenile Home staff accepting the Juvenile Court's decisions regarding what youths were maintained in which Juvenile Home facility and for what period of time. Organizationally, of

course, the Juvenile Home is under the administration of the Polk County Board of Supervisors, while the Juvenile Court Judge maintains responsibility for the Juvenile Court probation staff. Although a court order is necessary for admission to the Juvenile Home, the Court theoretically has no power in the operation of that facility.

It is our belief, verified by the opinions of Juvenile Home and Juvenile Court staff, that the current operation of the Juvenile Home is considerably more independent of Juvenile Court direction than was the case in the past. The Director of the Juvenile Home, for one, appears determined to reduce lengthy detention within Meyer Hall by urging the Juvenile Court to actively solicit alternatives to detention for a detained youth, and to ensure that detention is not abused. We support such efforts, and commend the Director of the Juvenile Home for his actions.

Table XXVI  
 MEYER HALL  
 Average Daily Attendance

	1971		1972		1973	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Jan.	12.3	9.0	10.7	13.1	11.9	4.9
Total	21.4		23.7		16.8	
Feb.	12.4	7.0	14.0	12.6	13.8	6.9
Total	19.4		26.6		20.8	
Mar.	11.8	10.8	12.7	13.0	11.6	9.1
Total	22.7		25.7		20.6	
April	12.4	10.7	12.1	10.1	12.3	11.0
Total	23.1		22.2		23.3	
May	13.4	10.8	12.5	12.4	13.6	10.5
Total	24.2		24.9		24.0	
June	7.8	11.5	11.6	8.3	9.0	6.2
Total	19.3		19.9		15.2	
July	6.4	11.3	17.4	9.6	9.9	7.7
Total	17.7		22.0		17.6	
Aug.	11.7	10.5	10.8	8.2	12.6	8.1
Total	22.2		19.1		20.7	
Sept.	13.2	12.0	12.1	10.1	13.1	10.6
Total	25.1		22.2		23.7	
Oct.	11.0	10.7	14.6	9.8	11.9	12.7
Total	21.7		24.5		24.6	
Nov.	11.0	12.5	11.7	5.1	13.3	10.2
Total	23.5		16.8		23.4	
Dec.	5.7	11.7	8.5	6.8	9.7	7.8
Total	17.4		15.3		17.5	
Yearly	10.8	10.7	12.0	10.0	11.9	8.8
Total	21.5		22.0		20.7	

**END**

*7-11-1944*