

Exemplary Project Screening and Validation Reports

Project Candidate:

LEIBERMAN FAMILY CENTER
Akron, Ohio

30725

ates

Cambridge, Massachusetts

LEIBERMAN FAMILY CENTER
Akron, Ohio

*Summary of a Validation Study Conducted for the Office of Technology
Transfer, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice*

August, 1975

July 30 1975

This report was prepared for the National Institute in support of the program's application for Exemplary Project status. LEAA's Exemplary Projects Program is a systematic method of identifying outstanding criminal justice programs throughout the country, verifying their achievements and publicizing them widely. The goal: to encourage widespread use of advanced criminal justice practices.

Though the project described here did not receive an exemplary designation, it was considered a worthwhile effort that should be brought to the attention of criminal justice planners and program administrators in other communities. Since the report describes the project at the time of the validation study, it may not reflect current program policies, procedures or results.

The distribution of selected validation reports is part of the National Institute's effort to share information on specific program developments and to highlight important issues in program operation and evaluation.

Project Title: Leiberman Family Center

Project Start Date: October, 1972

Approximate Annual Operating Costs: \$160,000

Date of On-Site Review: August, 1975

Type of Program: Juvenile Court Probation and Parole (Juvenile)

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Akron, Ohio

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Project Summary

The Lieberman Family Center (LFC) is a project of the Summit County (Ohio) Juvenile Court. The project is designed to serve youth whose anti-social or deviant behavior is determined to be a function of the breakdown in family communications and interpersonal relationships. LFC is one of three intake services developed by the Juvenile Court as a means of providing rehabilitative services to youthful offenders and minimizing their involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Youth who are referred to LFC participate with their family in a process of short-term, goal-specific, conjoint therapy. The strategy is based on the premise that the youth's behavior is inextricably dependent upon the interactions of the family members, and that in order to treat one, all members must be involved. Attempts are made to induce specific behavioral changes and through them, to establish within the family the capacity to resolve other problems that may arise in the future. All of this is to be accomplished within a ninety-day period.

Determinations of project eligibility and referral to the Center are made by members of the Intake Probation Office of the Juvenile Court. Eligibility to participate in the program is governed by a defendant's "score" when rated against a series of personal and familial criteria thought to be related to amenability to family therapy. The criteria are formally spelled out on a code sheet used by the Intake Probation

Officer who assesses potential participants in terms of seriousness of offense, duration of the problem leading to the court referral, prior contact with social and legal agencies, behavior, parental and family structure, effect demonstrated by family members, socio-economic level, school performance, and family willingness to engage in conjoint counseling.

The severity of a juvenile's problems corresponds to the magnitude of his score. Hence, juveniles who receive a very low score are thought not to be in need of services and those with very high scores are thought to have problems beyond the scope of the Lieberman capability. Where the score is in the middle ranges, however, the juvenile is thought to be amenable to the services of the Center, and the individual and his family may be referred for treatment. In any given case, the cumulative score is not the exclusive determinant of project eligibility. Subjective appraisals of individual and family fitness for conjoint counseling are permitted, and an individual may be referred to the Center in spite of an irregular score.

Furthermore, would-be participants meeting all eligibility requirements but referred to the Court on Fridays and Sundays are ineligible. This requirement was instituted in an attempt to create a statistically comparable control group for evaluation purposes. (Unfortunately, in reviewing the evaluation report it appeared that weekend referrals might represent a higher-risk clientele. As a result it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the experimental design.)

The professional staff of the center consist of the Project Supervisor, a Supervisor Counselor, and two Family Counselors. The Project Supervisor is responsible for overall coordination of the project, and works with consultants to develop training and research programs. The Supervisor Counselor carries half a regular counseling caseload, assists the Project Supervisor in coordinating program functions, assigns cases to the Family Counselors and monitors the course of therapy. The two Counselors are each responsible for a caseload that fluctuates between fifteen and thirty; their functions include scheduling and conduct of therapy sessions, liaison with shelter homes, and referral to appropriate outside service agencies. An extensive and continuing training program operates to develop and maintain the staff's counselling capabilities.

Major Project Strengths

- The project is integrated into the operation of the Juvenile Court.

As one of the three "front door" services, the Lieberman Family Center complements other court projects which focus on the problems of the individual apart from his family. By virtue of its placement the project is more responsive to the policies and administrative concerns of the Judiciary and the Court Administrator. At the same time, the project benefits from this arrangement in that it can expect cooperation and support from other sections of the Court.

- A spirit of professionalism and commitment to the concepts of treatment and diversion characterize the Court and the project.

At every level of the Court, the validators found administrators who manage in accordance with the principles of management by objective, maintain statistics on their operations, and keep up to date with developments in the field. Moreover, the administrative staff fully support treatment and diversionary alternatives and are quite willing to experiment with projects that promote these goals. A particularly appealing characteristic of the court personnel is their interest in objective analysis of their work as a means to determine weaknesses and to make improvements. The project supervisor shares these characteristics with his fellow administrators.

- The training program is well conceived and executed.

Since the inception of the project, the counselling staff has met weekly with a therapeutic consultant; at less frequent intervals, workshops featuring nationally prominent family therapists have been conducted; and twice a year staff have been able to participate in out-of-state conferences. The result of this continuous, intensive training has been that staff are well grounded in the theory and practical applications of counselling. Their techniques are constantly analyzed and upgraded. In addition to the training program, the project has developed an extensive library of psychological material.

- The project is housed in comfortable quarters located away from the court facility.

Much of the project's start up costs have gone toward refurbishing the Lieberman house and creating comfortable rooms and offices. The relaxed setting helps put families at ease, thereby contributing to more effective communications. At the same time, the location away from the Juvenile Court and the Detention Home is less likely to lead parents to believe that the result of the session will be the incarceration of their child. Project staff believe this leaves the parents free to concentrate on solutions to family problems. (See below for reference to intra-court communication problems caused in part by the residential location of the LFC.)

Project Weaknesses

- Differences in the control and project group make it difficult to accurately assess the effectiveness of the project.

Age differences, the possibility of different periods of exposure to the risk of arrest, and the ambiguities arising from the possibility that weekend referrals may represent a higher-risk clientele make it difficult to attribute any project outcome to the effect of the treatment program.

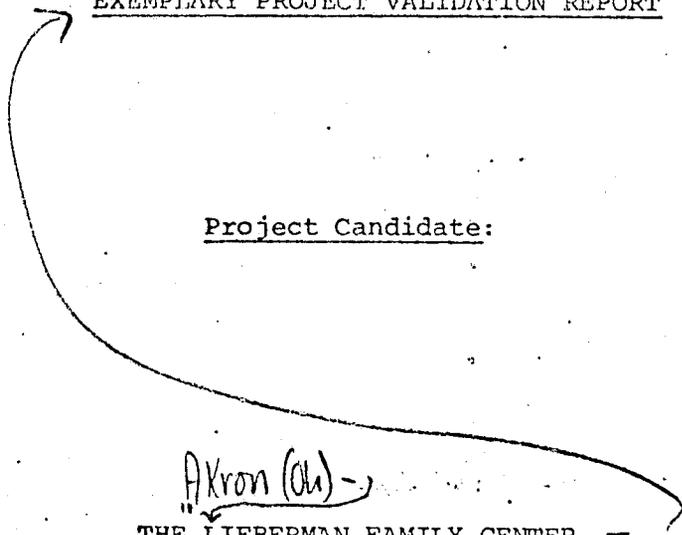
- The relationship between the LFC and the Intake Probation Office is sometimes strained.

Intake Probation Officers indicate that despite the score sheets, the eligibility requirements are not always clear, the LFC sometimes closes a case without devoting sufficient attention to it, and referrals should be accepted on Fridays and Sundays. At the base of these complaints seems to be a feeling that the LFC is too remote. Indeed, the LFC has not conducted training sessions for new Intake Officers, and the physical location of the Center inhibits communication. The result of the tension has been that some Officers have held back on referrals and have been generally uncooperative in completing the data sheets for control group members. The Project Supervisor has begun to meet monthly with the Intake staff, but at the time of the validation study not all problems has been resolved.

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EXEMPLARY PROJECT VALIDATION REPORT



Project Candidate:

Akron (Oh) -
THE LIEBERMAN FAMILY CENTER -
" "

Akron, Ohio

A Validation Study Conducted for
the Office of Technology Transfer,
National Institute of Law Enforcement
and Criminal Justice, August,
1975.

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1.0 Introduction

The Lieberman Family Center is a project of the Summit County (Ohio) Juvenile Court, developed in pursuit of the court's goal of providing rehabilitative services to youthful offenders and minimizing their involvement in the juvenile justice system. It is designed to serve all youth whose anti-social or deviant behavior is determined to be a function of the breakdown in family communications and interpersonal relationships. Referral to the Center is made through the Intake Probation Office of the Juvenile Court. Upon referral, the youth and his family are engaged in a process of short-term, goal-specific, conjoint family therapy. The strategy is based on the premise that the youth's behavior is inextricably dependent upon the interactions of the family members, and that in order to treat one, all members must be involved. Attempts are made to induce specific behavioral changes and through them, to establish within the family the capacity to resolve other problems that may arise in the future. All of this is to be accomplished within a ninety-day period.

This is a report on the validation study of the Lieberman Family Center, conducted by Abt Associates Inc., at the request of the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. The study is based on a review of the project's exemplary project submission, its grant applications submitted to the Summit County Justice Commission and the Administration of Justice Division of the Ohio Department of Economic and Community Development between 1972 and 1975, a sample of the project's quarterly reports, and data collected during an on-site visit to Akron, Ohio, on August 13-15, 1975. During the visit, interviews were conducted with the following project principals: James J. Telegdy, Project Supervisor; Chuck Simonson, Director of the Juvenile Court; Myron Tarbis, Assistant Director of the Juvenile Court and Director of Casework Services; James Phillips, Director of Psychological Services and Administrative Consultant to the Project; Frank Hernandez, Intake Supervisor; Doug Kulow, Counselor; Dorothy Masion, Counselor; David Alexander, Assistant to Intake Supervisor; Ronald D'Antonio, Fiscal Officer; Dr. Wray Pascoe, Case-Western Reserve University; and Thomas Garver, Project Evaluator. The on-site visit was conducted by a staff member from Abt Associates Inc., and Dr. Keith Griffiths, Director of Planning and Research of the California Youth Authority.

1.1 Background

In Ohio, legal responsibility for juvenile affairs is vested in the Court of Common Pleas. Although the Court is Constitu-

tionally created and the definitions of juvenile malfeasance are a matter of state law, the administration of the Juvenile Court is primarily a local concern. In Summit County, the Juvenile Court is a separate division of the Common Pleas Court, funded as a separate entity by County Commissioners and headed by an elected judge. The judge appoints two Referees to share his caseload and fulfills his administrative responsibilities through another appointee, the Director of Court Services.

The Juvenile Court is organized to provide treatment or rehabilitative services to defendants and to minimize their involvement in the traditional court structure. The manner in which this is accomplished, and the operation of the Lieberman Family Center as one of the mechanisms for accomplishing it, are best understood in the context of the court as a whole.

The Summit County Juvenile Court is responsible for hearing four types of cases: dependency and neglect, juvenile traffic, unruliness, and delinquency. Dependency and neglect cases necessarily require a judicial hearing, and juvenile traffic cases are filed in greater number than any other. Nevertheless, the court is oriented primarily toward cases involving charges of unruly behavior and delinquency. Unruly behavior cases are those involving truancy, incorrigibility, running away, or other status offenses; delinquency cases involve charged offenses that would be criminal if committed by an adult. During 1974, 7732 such cases were referred to the Juvenile Court. 27% of them involved charges of unruliness; 73% charged delinquency.

Referrals to the Juvenile Court may be self initiated, or may be the result of action taken by parents, school authorities, or the police. In most instances the referral entails the appearance at the Court by the complaining party; police referrals may be effected through the mail.

The complaint is brought to the Intake section of the Probation Department. It is here that the Courts express priority for

service delivery and minimal involvement is actively pursued. Intake Officers interview the defendant and at least one of his parents, and, on the basis of charge, previous record, and personal characteristics, make one of four dispositions. The intake worker may simply discuss the charge with the youth, warn and release him. This is an option that is widely followed in the Akron court as a result of studies showing that some 80% of first referrals never return to the court, no matter what service is given or denied them. A second option is for the Intake officer to refer the youth to one of a number of social services available in the Akron community. In such instances, the case is closed at the point of secondary referral and the youth is free to pursue the referral or not. A third option involves use of one of three intake services developed by the Juvenile Court itself to serve special needs of its defendants. One service involves assigning a student community worker to the defendant with the purpose of helping the defendant solve immediate problems and to so modify his behavior as to be more effective in his particular environment. A second intake service, used mainly for younger defendants, matches children with community volunteers who attempt to positively affect the child's behavior through the establishment of a warm and supportive relationship. The third intake service is family counseling at the Lieberman Family Center. According to the assessment of the defendant and his situation, the Intake Officer may refer to any one of these three intake services. Generally, defendant involvement does not exceed ninety days in any of these services. Cases are not closed when referred out from the Intake Department: supervisors or counselors in each service program are authorized to close a case if the defendant's progress in the service program warrants closure. This usually happens, although occasionally a defendant will be found unsuited to an intake service and be referred back to the Intake Department for further disposition. A fourth Intake option is to proceed formally with the case by filing an affidavit and sending the case before a Judge or Referee. Under this option, ultimate disposition lies with the Judge, who may exercise any of the three previous options, put over the defendant on probation, or place him in some form of secure custody.

The nature of the charged offense and the particulars of the defendant's background are important determinants of disposition, but the choice by the Intake Officer is strongly influenced by the Court's expressed policy of minimizing institutional involvement. This policy is enunciated monthly by the head of the Intake staff by means of quantified, disposition objectives

which are published and circulated to Intake staff to govern their performance. These objectives require that a certain percentage of cases be disposed of at the intake level by means of counseling, a smaller percentage be disposed of by referral to intake services, and that a much smaller percentage be handled through the formal mechanism of affidavit and judicial hearing. Differing percentages are established for cases involving defendants in juvenile court for the first time, for those in the court on a second referral, and for those referred for a third offense. As the number of prior referrals increases, the promulgated objectives become relatively less insistent on diversion, but the overall goal of minimizing penetration is never forsaken. Even where the defendant is in court on his third violation, the most recent monthly objectives require that 75% of the cases be screened out of the formal system through one of the first three options.

Intake Probation Officers are also responsible for making decisions regarding the placement of defendants who are unable to return home. It is Court policy that a youthful defendant referred to the Juvenile Court should be returned home, but this may be impossible in certain instances. Where the defendant is charged with a serious delinquent offense and his detention is necessary to the security of the community, the Intake Officer may commit him to the county Detention Home, a juvenile jail located in the same building as the Juvenile Court. In such a situation, Ohio law requires a preliminary hearing with 48 hours to determine the validity of the placement. In certain instances the juvenile represents no threat to the community but is unable to return home because of family tensions. When this is the case, the Intake Probation Officer may try to arrange for the youth to stay with relatives. Failing this, placement may be effected in one of several shelter homes maintained by the Juvenile Court; if these are fully occupied, short term placement is sought in a foster home. In those hours when the Intake Officer is not open, placement decisions are made by staff at the Detention Home.

1.2 Project Operation

As the first of the intake services in the Summit County Juvenile Court, the Lieberman Family Center was designed in 1972 to prevent children charged with "unruly" offenses from being entangled in the formal workings of the juvenile justice system. It was originally

envisioned that group therapy services would be the preferred mode of treatment, but this concept was subsequently altered in favor of an approach that emphasized intensive, short-term, goal-specific, conjoint family therapy. After two months of operation, the project was again altered, this time to permit acceptance of juveniles charged with "delinquent" offenses. Since that time, the project has focused its attention on juveniles charged with either "unruly" or "delinquent" offenses whose anti-social and deviant behavior is clearly a function of a breakdown in family communication and interpersonal relationships.

1.2.1 Structure and Staff

The Center itself is located several miles away from the Juvenile Court in a home donated to the Court in 1970. The building has been converted into a series of offices and counseling areas and furnished throughout with comfortable, residential style furniture. An effort is made to maintain a relaxed, non-institutional ambience in which to conduct the therapy sessions.

Professional staff consists of the Project Supervisor, a Supervisor Counselor, and two Family Counselors. The Project Supervisor is responsible for overall coordination of the project; he supervises the work of the Supervisor Counselor and the administrative employees, acts as a liaison with the Intake Probation Staff and other programs and administrators in the Juvenile Court, and works with consultants to develop the training and research programs. He is also responsible for the development and administration of the project budget. The Supervisor Counselor carries half a regular counseling caseload, assists the Project Supervisor in coordinating program functions, assigns cases to the Family Counselors and monitors the course of therapy. The two Counselors are each responsible for a caseload that fluctuates between fifteen and thirty; their functions include scheduling and conduct of therapy sessions, liaison with shelter homes, and referral to appropriate outside service agencies.

An extensive training program has been used to develop and maintain the staff's counseling capabilities. Since the inception of the project, weekly training sessions have been conducted by the therapeutic consultant, Dr. Wray Pascoe of Case Western Reserve University. Training methods have included lectures, role plays, video tapes of counseling sessions, and discussions. In addition to the weekly sessions, nationally prominent therapists have been flown to Akron to conduct workshops on the average of four times per year, and each staff member has been given several opportunities to travel to out-of-state conferences and workshops.

The professional staff is assisted by an administrative staff consisting of a full and part-time secretary, a maintenance man, and a part time bookkeeper. Additionally, the project engages a training consultant and a researcher to perform specialized functions.

I.2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility to participate in the program is governed by a defendant's "score" when rated against a series of personal and familial criteria thought to be related to amenability to family therapy. The criteria are formally spelled out on a code sheet used by an IPO who assesses potential participants in terms of seriousness of offense, duration of the problem leading to the court referral, prior contact with social and legal agencies, behavior, parental and family structure, effect demonstrated by family members, socio-economic level, school performance, and family willingness to engage in conjoint counseling. The severity of a juvenile's problems corresponds to the magnitude of his score; hence, juveniles who receive a very low score are thought not to be in need of services and are denied admission to the project on that basis. Very high scores are thought to represent problems beyond the scope of the Lieberman capability and therefore are used as grounds to deny admissions to the project. Where the score is in the middle ranges, however, the juvenile is thought to be amenable to the services of the Center, and the individual and his family may be referred for treatment. In any given case, the cumulative score is not the exclusive determinant of project eligibility. Subjective appraisals of individual and family fitness for conjoint counseling are permitted, and an individual may be deferred to the Center in spite of an irregular score.

There is one set of criteria which serve as an absolute bar to program participation, however. These have to do with ensuring the courts jurisdiction over program participants, convenience, and the maintenance of a control group for evaluative purposes. For the following reasons, a client will be deemed ineligible for project participation:

- Residence outside Summit County;
- Child under supervision of the Children's Service Program;
- Child under study by the Court;
- Child currently on probation;
- Child has been on probation within previous 12 months;

- Child previously incarcerated in state correctional institution (stay in Detention Center is not grounds for ineligibility here); or
- Child currently under institutional placement.

Furthermore, would-be participants who otherwise meet all eligibility requirements but who are referred to the Court on Fridays or Sundays are ineligible. This requirement is also the result of an attempt to create a statistically comparable control group for evaluative purposes.

1.2.3 Screening

Determinations of project eligibility are made by members of the Intake section of the Probation Department. The Intake Office is staffed by six full time employees, two volunteers from the federally sponsored University Year in ACTION program, and six students detailed on a work practicum from the Criminal Justice program at Kent State and Akron Universities. Until recently, assignment to the Intake staff was not considered particularly prestigious, and staff turnover among the full time probation officers was relatively high. Half of the Intake staff had six or more years of experience but the others were often holding their first job in the Probation Department. The latter group generally sought different assignments after a short period of service, and were replaced by more entry level personnel. Only two of the current Intake staff held their positions at the time the Lieberman Family Center was instituted. The turnover rate for the student staff is high, as the term of participation in the University Year for ACTION is one year and in the criminal justice practicum, six months.

When it is determined that a juvenile and his/her family are eligible to receive treatment from the Lieberman Family Center, the Intake officer has two tasks. The first is to complete the scoring sheet used to determine project amenability. In most cases this should have been accomplished during the screening process. It is a five minute task involving the preparation of paperwork used by the Center for diagnostic and evaluation purposes. The second task involves explaining the nature of the Lieberman project to the defendant's family and convincing them of the desirability of participation. This act or

procedure is sometimes complicated by parents' perception of the problem as being exclusively with the youth and by their defensive reaction to the implicit suggestion that they, the parents, are a significant part of the problem.

On "project" days, that is Monday through Thursday and Saturday, both of these tasks must be completed prior to referral. On "control" days there is obviously no need to convince parents of the desirability of family therapy at the Lieberman Center. Intake staff are asked to complete the scoring sheet so that the control group can be identified and its salient characteristics recorded.

Staff from both the Lieberman Family Center and the Intake Office admit that the paperwork is often dispensed with on control days. Intake staff evidently are frustrated by their inability to refer needy cases simply because the case was brought to court on a control day and are often unwilling to complete what they see as unnecessary paperwork. Personnel in the Juvenile Court agree they have no way of knowing what percentage of control cases are unrecorded, but estimate the figure to be 25%.

1.2.4 Referral and Rereferral

The score sheet and an accompanying "face sheet" which indicates the particulars of the current and any prior offenses are set aside for the Project Supervisor, who picks them up twice a day. At the Center, cases are assigned to individual family counselors by the Supervisor Counselor. Assignments are made on the basis of caseload and special expertise which individual counselors have developed.

If the information sent over by the Intake staff indicates that the juvenile and his family do not meet project guidelines, the case is returned to Intake for another form of disposition. This has rarely happened. More frequent has been the case in which a family fails to show up for a scheduled session. In this instance, a new arrangement calls for the Lieberman Counselor to notify the Intake Probation Officer, and for them to jointly

decide how to dispose of the case. Occasionally, a family does show up for the counseling session, but is adjudged by the Counselor to be inappropriate for conjoint family therapy. In this instance too, the case may be returned to the Intake staff for another disposition.

1.2.5 Process at Lieberman Family Center

From the time the Lieberman Family Center began accepting clients in October of 1972, a total of 915 referrals have been made to the project (as of July 31, 1975). The standard method for handling each case, after assignment to an individual counselor, begins with a review by the counselor of the papers sent over from the Intake Probation Staff. Provided that the papers are in order, the counselor calls the parents of the juvenile and arranges a counseling session. Contact between the counselor and the parents is usually effected within two days, and a session is scheduled at the convenience of the parents and the staff member. As initially conceived, the Lieberman Center was to provide emergency, crisis intervention style counseling. Immediate counseling sessions may be and still are arranged, but project staff have found that it is generally unnecessary to hold sessions on the same day that the referral is received from the Intake Probation Office. Hence, the first counseling session may not be held for three weeks, though where sessions are held at all, 54% of them are held within one week and 70% are held within twelve days.

The preferred mode of treatment is intensive, goal-specific, conjoint family therapy. Here the family is viewed as a system, and the counselor concerns himself with its processes of communication and interaction. Accordingly, all family members are expected to participate in counseling sessions, even grandparents, in-laws, cousins, or any other relatives living in the home. To promote maximum participation, the Lieberman Family Center is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Monday through Thursday. In emergency situations, or where scheduling is impossible at other times, counseling sessions may be held on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.

If the family is in a crisis state at the start of therapy, the counselor's first task is to restore a sense of normalcy and to help the family operate at a functional level. Then, using the charged

offense as a base, the family is engaged in a process of problem elucidation. Communication patterns and methods used by the family to resolve problems are examined. Specific problem areas are identified, and each family member "contracts" with the counselor to take particular, tangible action as a first step in resolving one of the problems. Elements of reality therapy and transactional analysis are occasionally employed in this process, which is ultimately geared toward helping the family solve certain problems while establishing the capability to resolve others. At subsequent sessions the success of family members in fulfilling their contracts is used as a base for once again engaging in the process of problem elucidation and the examination of the workings of the family system. Attempts are made to conclude the therapy within ninety days and a maximum of six sessions.

Optimally, the case is closed when both the counselor and the family agree that the problems are under control and that all therapy goals have been met. Sessions may also be terminated at the discretion of the counselor, alone, or the family, or they may be ended by transferring the case to an outside agency or therapy program. Other reasons for termination are that the juvenile has reached his/her eighteenth birthday or the family has moved beyond the geographical jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court. When the case is closed in any of these ways, the potential legal proceedings against the juvenile are dismissed. A record of court contact and project participation is maintained in probation records kept at the Juvenile Court, however.

2.0 Selection Criteria

This section discusses the available evidence on the extent to which the Lieberman Family Center meets the criteria for exemplary project selection. The discussion is based primarily on data accumulated and processed by the project's own research and evaluation component, although the interpretations of the data are those of the validation team.

2.1 Goal Achievement

The formal goal of the Center is to divert children from further contact with the Summit County Juvenile Justice System and to help them resolve family problems without formal court involvement. An implicit subgoal of the Center is to reverse the delinquent behavior of the youngsters referred to the Lieberman programs.

The strategy for change is that of family therapy, whereby both the designated delinquents and their families are involved in a treatment process. The strategy is based on the premise that the delinquent youngsters' behavior is inextricably dependent upon the interactions of the family membership and that treatment should involve all members of the family.

Admission to the program from court referrals is highly selective. It is presumed that not all types of cases are appropriate candidates for the Lieberman program. In 1974 there were 5,821 referral dispositions made by the Summit County Intake Department. Of these, 378, or 6.5%, were referred to the Lieberman Center. This selectivity imposes an intrinsic limit on the extent to which the program can exert influence over the juvenile justice system as a whole. It can expand the options available for processing a few cases, but by itself can only marginally affect the size of court caseloads.

Lieberman Center Program Objectives

The definition of specific and measurable objectives for the Lieberman Center Program has proved a difficult matter. Over the period of time that the program has been in operation (since October 17, 1972), the

program objectives have been redefined. The program staff still feel somewhat uncomfortable with them since many program objectives seem unmeasurable, or are so long-term that they cannot be explicitly stated. For example, the family therapy process is seen as producing important, beneficial changes in the family structure of the treated delinquent and in the interactions of its membership. However, such changes are acknowledged to be unmeasurable as the program and its evaluation are presently constituted.

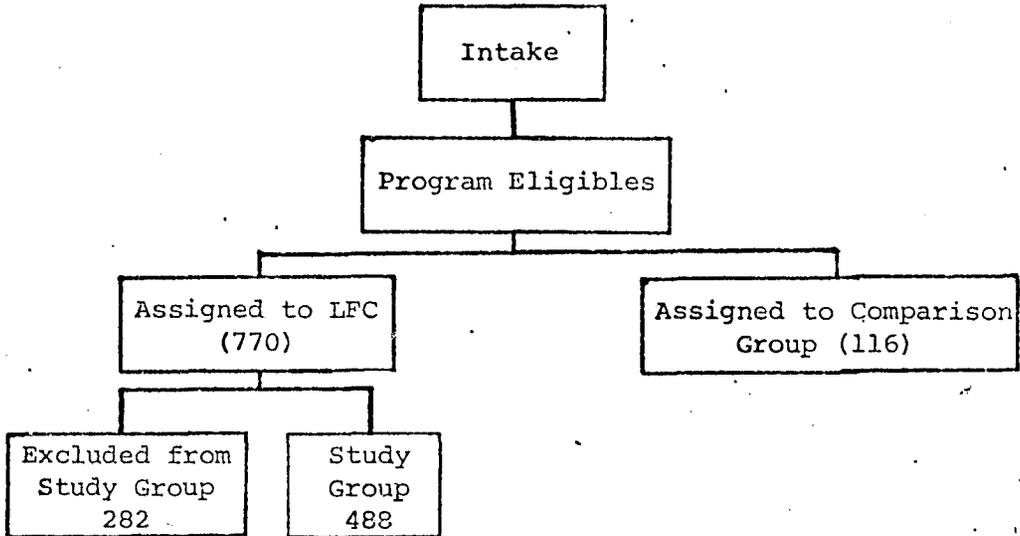
The Lieberman Family Center program objectives, as currently stated, are as follows:

1. To demonstrate that children who are diverted to LFC have fewer referrals back to the Summit County Juvenile Court than those not diverted.
2. To demonstrate that detention of children whose problems are primarily family-related can be avoided through short-term family counseling and alternative placements that are both temporary and voluntary.
3. To offer crisis-intervention and short-term family counseling with particular emphasis upon applying treatment to all members of the family and striving for termination in six or fewer sessions, or within a 90-day period.
4. To provide a community-based diversion program based upon family counseling with the capacity to counsel from 25-50 families a month.
5. To implement an evaluation component that will identify variables related to successful outcomes of family counseling provided at LFC.

The evaluation component mentioned in this last objective has collected data on an experimental group of 488 participants in the program and another 116 children designated as a comparison group, who were processed by traditional juvenile procedures. Data on subsequent referrals and detention time were collected to measure achievement of the first two goals. Management statistics on number of cases processed per month and number of counseling sessions per case were maintained by the project.

The Study Design

The flow of cases into the Lieberman Family Center program is shown below. The study period, during which cases were accepted, began October 17, 1972, and continued through December 31, 1974. As indicated previously, it is estimated that fewer than seven percent of the total referrals into the Intake Department were referred to the LFC.



Reasons for exclusion:

• not closed	5
• missing data (in process)	20
• did not meet criteria	40
• no sessions (did not show)	81
• turned 18	136
	<u>282</u>

Of the 770 children assigned to the LFC, 282 (58 percent) were excluded from the study group. A total of 81 did not show up for the Center and consequently had no sessions. The remainder were excluded because of missing data, were later found to have not met referral criteria to the Lieberman program,* or had become 18 years of age.

Assignment to the experimental and to the comparison group was accomplished by designating Friday and Sunday as "control" days. On those two days referrals to the Intake Department which met the LFC assignment criteria were placed in a comparison group. On the other hand, referrals to the Intake Department on the remaining five days were potential candidates for the LFC program.

This procedure was intended to "randomize" assignment to the experimental (LFC) and comparison groups. Unfortunately, it did not accomplish its intent. It is predictable that a number of types of referrals (e.g., those from schools and those arriving in the mail) would only come in on weekdays. This implies that proportionately more referrals from the police would be represented in the control groups, as potentially half of the members of the control group are from persons referred on Sundays. Furthermore, the opportunities for delinquency are probably significantly different on weekends, and there is therefore every reason to suppose that there would be significant differences between the experimental and comparison groups.

A preferable procedure would have been to stagger the days of assignment to the control group so that the Intake referrals on all days would have had an equal chance to be assigned to the control group. Even better and fairer would have been individual randomization without reference to day of referral.

Characteristics of the Experimental and Comparison Groups

Table 1 compares several demographic characteristics of the two groups. The most important difference is that the comparison group members are

* Following are criteria for exclusion: (1) residence outside of Summit County, (2) currently under supervision of Childrens' Service Bureau, (3) currently under study by Court, (4) currently on probation, (5) on probation within past 12 months, (6) formerly in state correctional institution, (7) currently in any type of institutional placement.

approximately one year older. The distribution of arrests by age published in the most recent FBI uniform crime report (1973 data) shows a sharp peak at 16 years, with an 11% decline in the next year. (See Table 2.) This age difference means that participants enter at a time of decreasing probability of arrest, while most of the control group have the 16-year peak still before them. Other demographic characteristics do not differ significantly between the two groups.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics

	LFC	Comparison Group
Female	52%	53%
White	87%	90%
No prior record	63%	68%
Average prior referrals	0.54%	0.48%
Not in school	8%	5%
Mean age	15.7%	14.9%
Median age	16.1%	15.1%

Table 2
City Arrests by Age (1973)

Age	Total Arrests	Percent of All Arrests
15	283,423	5.2
16	333,329	6.1
17	297,132	5.4
18	284,531	5.2

(Source: *Crime in the United States, 1973*. FBI, 1974. Table 36.)

The offenses for which the cases were referred were for behavior of both a delinquent and unruly nature.

Table 3
Offenses

Offense	LFC		Comparison	
	#	%	#	%
Delinquency				
Auto theft/burglary	28	6	10	9
Robbery	10	2	2	2
Larceny/shoplifting	62	13	20	18
Drugs/alcohol	20	4	11	10
Other delinquent offenses	17	3	9	8
	<u>137</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>46</u>
Unruly behavior				
Runaway	179	37	43	38
Incorrigibility	142	29	13	12
Truancy	15	3	-	-
Other unruly offenses	15	3	5	4
	<u>351</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>54</u>
Total	488	100	113	100

As shown below, both groups were more likely to have been made up of referrals for unruly rather than delinquent behavior. However, the control group was more likely to be assigned delinquent youngsters.

Table 3
Offenses (Summary)

	LFC		Comparison	
	#	%	#	%
Delinquent behavior	137	28	52	46
Unruly behavior	<u>351</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>54</u>
Total	488	100	113	100

The number of "incorrigible" cases is significantly higher in the experimental group than in the comparison group. These may be cases less likely to be re-referred to court. Shoplifting cases are more prevalent in the comparison group. This, too, may reflect systematic bias due to increased opportunity on weekends.

Further, the source of referral for the control group was much more likely to be the police than for the LFC group.

Table 4
Source of Referral

Source	LFC		Control	
	#	%	#	%
Police	262	54	96	91
Child walk-in	15	3	4	4
Parent walk-in	54	11	3	3
Parent & child walk-in	84	18	-	-
Mail-in	41	9	-	-
Another agency	8	2	2	2
School administrator	16	3	-	-
	<u>481</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>100</u>

In conclusion, it does not seem that the two groups were strictly comparable. The LFC group was older, more likely to have been referred for unruly than delinquent behavior, and less likely to have been referred by the police.

Attainment of Objectives

1. *The first objective of the Lieberman Family Center was to demonstrate that the children diverted to the LFC would have fewer referrals back to the Juvenile Court than their controls.*

LFC referrals back to Court were recorded both while they were in the LFC program and after the closing of the case. LFC cases were followed from the beginning of the program on October 17, 1972, through June 30, 1975. Consequently, cases assigned to the LFC program could be followed for a period as long as 33 months and as short as six months. Control cases were assigned during the same approximate time period. It should be kept in mind that the cases were followed only

up to their 18th birthday since referral to the Juvenile Court would no longer be possible after the youngster had become 18 years of age. Because the experimental group averaged 10 months older than the comparison group, this meant that the follow-up period (from entry to age 18) could have been as much as 35% longer for the comparison group.

Table 5
Subsequent Referrals to Juvenile Court

No. of referrals after assignment to group	LFC		Control	
	#	%	#	%
0	211	43	20	21
1	100	21	36	38
2	66	14	16	17
3	44	9	6	6
4	24	5	6	6
5	19	4	3	3
6	10	2	3	3
7	5	1	5	5
8	6	1	1	1
9-11	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	-	-
Total	488	100	96*	100
Mean referrals per client	1.49		1.94	

Table 5
(Summary)

No. of referrals after assignment to group	LFC		Control	
	#	%	#	%
0 referrals	211	43	20	21
1 or more	<u>277</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>79</u>
Total	488	100	96	100

Although the Lieberman Center cases clearly had fewer referrals back to court than did the comparison group, we cannot be confident that this difference reflects more than the initial difference between the groups.

* On 20 cases data were not available.

Records of the actual lengths of follow-up for clients would resolve the major uncertainty about different exposure to risk of arrest for the two groups, but there is no possibility of resolving the ambiguity arising from the possibility that weekend referrals may represent a higher-risk clientele.

2. *The second objective was to demonstrate that detention of children assigned to the LFC program would be less than their controls.*

As is shown in Table 6 below, the LFC cases did no better than their controls. In fact, this control group had fewer days in detention, on the average, than did the LFC group. However, detention was used very sparingly--in only about 20% of the cases in both groups.

Table 6
Detention

	LFC		Control	
	#	%	#	%
Not detained	397	82	52	80
Detained	80	18	61	20
Total	477	100	113	100
Mean days detention	4.5		3.8	

The difficulties in interpreting these results are the same as for the first objective of reduced referrals, except for the fact of no differences between the two groups. It is difficult to explain why the controls, who were referred back to court more often than LFC cases, were no more likely to be placed in detention. Additional data would be required to resolve this question.

3. *The third objective was to provide short-term family counseling which would terminate in six months or less, or within a 90-day period.*

As shown in Table 7 below, 90 percent of the cases were terminated within six sessions. The mean number of sessions was 3.2, and the median was 2.6.

Table 7
Number of Sessions

No. of sessions held to close a case	LFC	
	#	%
1	125	26
2	110	22
3	81	17
4	45	9
5	61	12
6	22	4
7	19	4
8	12	3
9	4	1
10	4	1
11-17	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	487	100
Mean = 3.2		
Median = 2.6		

The surface conclusion is that the objective of providing a short-term counseling program was achieved. However, termination of a case did not necessarily mean that family therapy had taken place or had been successfully completed. Table 8 below shows the reasons for termination for the 488 cases referred to the LFC program. A total of 264, or 54 percent, were judged to have completed the program. Some 149, or 32 percent, were judged not to have completed the program. The remaining 75, or 14 percent of the cases, could not be classified in either group.

Table 8
Reasons for Termination

Reason for Termination		LFC		
		No.	%	
Judged to have completed program	Mutual agreement and no further sessions needed - goals reached	187	39	264 54%
	Held open for family to call if help needed. Family did not call and case was closed without a session.	9	2	
	Counselor felt it wasn't necessary to continue holding sessions	20	4	
	Family wanted private counseling	4	1	
	Family felt LFC no longer necessary	44	9	
Judged not to have completed program	Family uncooperative - missed appointments or didn't come in	70	15	149 32%
	Case not appropriate for LFC -- terminated	3	1	
	Appeared in Court - not amenable	10	2	
	Referred back to Court - not amenable	60	13	
	Referred to another agency because not responding to LFC counseling	6	1	
Not determinable	Subject or family moved	23	5	75 14%
	Other	40	8	
	Data missing	12	2	
Total		488	100	

Accordingly, a more pertinent analysis of the number of sessions required to successfully terminate a LFC case would concentrate on the 54 percent (264 cases) who were judged to have completed the program.

4. *The fourth objective was to counsel between 25-50 cases a month.*

During the period from October 17, 1972, to December 31, 1974, a total of 770 cases were referred to LFC by juvenile intake, for an average referral rate of 28.5 cases per month. 81 of these cases never appeared for a session, 40 did not meet the criteria for admission, and 73 were terminated because their cases were not appropriate for LFC or were returned to court as "not amenable." This leaves 576 cases treated during the first 27 months of program operation, or an average of 21 per month. As noted, the 770 referrals to LFC were reduced to 488 cases, which constituted the study group. Of the 488 study cases, some 264 were judged to have completed the program-- only 34 percent of those referred.

5. *The fifth objective was to implement an evaluation component.*

Such an evaluation component has been implemented and has provided useful information. For the reasons noted above, however, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the experimental design implemented by the evaluation component.

2.2 Replicability

This project addresses the behavior of juveniles, stemming from a breakdown in family communications, which constitutes a violation of "delinquency" or "status" codes. Juvenile delinquency is a major problem in the United States, and most jurisdictions recognize some variety of "status" offense. It is not clear what significance the breakdown in family communications may have as a "cause" of juvenile deviance, especially in relation to other concurrent factors. Nevertheless, it is commonly accepted that the youth's relationships to his or her family is an important determinant of social adjustment.

The LFC has not yet produced any comprehensive description of its structure and operation. Nevertheless, important aspects of the project have been documented. Screening sheets used by the Intake Probation Officers are available to demonstrate the considerations used in assessing the amenability of a juvenile and his family to a program of therapy. A videotape library of training and actual counseling sessions has also been maintained. The collected tapes are invaluable in demonstrating the techniques of goal-specific, conjoint family therapy. At present, the project has obtained permission from selected clients to film sessions and use the results for local training purposes. It may be necessary to obtain subsequent releases before the tapes can be disseminated further or used for different purposes. Finally, a mass of data on project operation is available as a result of an ambitious data collection effort pursued since the inception of the project. Highly detailed information on client background, number and nature of therapy sessions, and subsequent contact with the Summit County Juvenile Court has been collected in computer-usable form. Portions of the data have been analyzed, but the greater part remains in unaggregated form. Both the results of the analyses and the raw data are available to anyone who would desire to study the project in greater detail.

Within the context of the project's major assumptions, four factors stand out as contributing most significantly to the LFC's effectiveness. The first of these is the mode of therapy itself. As previously noted, the LFC relies on intensive, goal-specific therapy, reasoning that a therapeutic mode which induces changes in the family's behavioral and communication patterns is just as effective in the long run and produces more tangible results than most other counseling styles. Dr. Wray Pascoe, the project's therapeutic consultant, insists that the particular mode of counseling used at the LFC is the only style that makes sense in the court context. He may or may not be correct in this regard, but due respect for the scientific method suggests that other jurisdictions may wish to experiment with different modes of counseling.

A second critical factor is training, for the success of a counseling program is ultimately dependant on the skill of the counselors, whatever the therapeutic style. The extensive training program developed by the Lieberman Center is almost exemplary in itself, but most jurisdictions considering replication probably need not match the investment of time and money, except during a start-up period when counselors must be introduced to the therapeutic style. Staff at the LFC agree that proficiency in the counseling style can be achieved after a period of concentrated training. A problem of replication may exist in a community without access to a university psychology department, a mental health service, or some other source of instructors. Additionally, Dr. Pascoe has suggested that the number of trainers qualified to teach the counseling style employed at the LFC may be extremely limited in the near future. The significance of the latter problem is reduced where other modes of family counseling are used.

A third factor contributing to project effectiveness is the method used to identify clients. To aid Intake Officers in this fundamental task, the LFC has developed scoring sheets which enable a systematic and hopefully more accurate approach to eligibility determinations. These sheets also provide a data source which can be analyzed to discover any correlations between client characteristics and program success. They can be modified according to the needs and experiences of any particular jurisdiction.

Relationships between the LFC and various segments of the Juvenile Court strongly influence the effectiveness of the project as well. The Lieberman Family Center benefits from the general tenor of its host court, for the Summit County Juvenile Court is managed in a professional style in accordance with an operating philosophy that supports treatment and diversion projects. Obviously, the support of the judiciary and the court administrator will be critical in any replication efforts. The nature of the relationship between the project and its source of referrals is also very important. In the case of the Lieberman Family Center, this relationship has sometimes been strained. Although the working relationship is aided by the fact that the Lieberman counselors have themselves been Probation Officers or been affiliated with the Detention Home, rapid turnover in the Intake Office has complicated the maintenance of good personal relationships and necessitated a constant retraining of new intake staff. The retraining has not always been accomplished. Additionally, project and intake personnel report that the separate physical facility of the counseling center is a source of bad relations as it creates a measure of jealousy among intake workers and constitutes an actual physical barrier to communication. These detriments must be weighed against the therapeutic benefits that accrue to a location outside the courthouse.

A highly visible characteristic of the LFC was its operation of two shelter homes during its first three years of operation. The homes were provided for juveniles who had entered the counseling process with their families, yet were unable to return home due to unresolved problems. The experience of the project has been that the homes have been useful and very important on occasion, but not to such an extent that they are a necessary part of an overall program. Jurisdictions unable to secure group home facilities need not consider this an irremediable problem. In those instances where a need for shelter does present itself, a foster home or some other part-time arrangement may be sufficient.

Akron is an older, industrial city with a population of some 550,000. In contrast, Summit County includes some distinctly rural areas. The population is black and white and represents a wide range along socio-economic and educational scales. The Lieberman Family Center has dealt with clients representing nearly all the major variations in the Akron and Summit County population. As yet, no analysis has been conducted to determine whether any single type of client is most susceptible to counseling, though experience with other "talking" therapies in non-court environments suggests that positive effect is usually correlated with education. Otherwise, the only other limitation on placement of a comparable project may be the availability of a therapeutic consultant or trainer.

2.3 Measurability

An outside consultant has been retained by the Lieberman Family Center to analyze the large amount of data maintained by project staff. Exceptionally detailed information concerning the personal background of the client, the nature of his participation in the program, and his previous and subsequent contact with the Summit County Juvenile Court has been collected for all persons referred to the project. In addition, an attempt has been made to document characteristics of the client and his family which are thought to be indicative of client receptivity to family counseling. Similar data have been compiled in the control group, but reluctance on the part of the Intake Officers to complete LFC paperwork on days when it is impossible to refer children to the project has resulted in some loss of information.

The project has been in operation since October, 1972. Information relating to the project's achievement of its stated goals since that time is generally available. This includes measures of the number of cases processed, the number of counseling sessions and the duration of the counseling period, the number of subsequent detentions in secure facilities, and the number of subsequent contacts with the Summit County Juvenile Court. No attempt was made to measure contact with any other juvenile or adult criminal court.

Members of the counseling staff expressed the view that some of the major effects of the project, notably a reduction in the delinquency of the siblings of the referred client and the effect of treatment on the structure and interactions of the family, were being overlooked as a result of the inadequacy of measurement methods.

2.4 Efficiency

Project costs through December 31, 1974 amounted to \$241,241, with a minimum of some \$20,000 accounting for start-up costs. On a per client basis, the project spent \$313.30 for every case referred to it by the Intake Probation Office. As noted previously, a considerable percentage of referred children did not make use of the Center's services, thus the cost per client for those who actually received some form of treatment averages \$494.35. It is to be noted that these figures do not account for the costs involved in processing a case through the Intake Office and that the costs would be higher but for Dr. Lieberman's donation of the building.

Figures are not available to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the program, nor can a comparison of processing costs for the control group be constructed. Information on the disposition of control cases is sparse (only 73 of 116 case results are recorded) and the costs associated with the documented dispositions are either unknown or difficult to isolate.

2.5 Accessibility

Project staff and affiliated personnel at the Summit County Juvenile Court were interested and open in explaining the operation of the

Lieberman Family Center, were amenable to publicity and visitation, and welcomed the possibilities of outside evaluation. The only foreseeable problem is that new releases may have to be negotiated before video taped films of counseling sessions can be made available for general review. As for continuation, all project costs will be absorbed by Summit County, commencing on January 1, 1976.

3.0 Project Strengths and Weaknesses

3.1 Project Strengths

1. *The project is integrated into the operation of the Juvenile Court.*

As one of the three "front door" services, the Lieberman Family Center complements other court projects which focus on the problems of the individual apart from his family. By virtue of its placement the project is more responsive to the policies and administrative concerns of the Judiciary and the Court Administrator. At the same time, the project benefits from this arrangement in that it can expect cooperation and support from other sections of the Court.

2. *A spirit of professionalism and commitment to the concepts of treatment and diversion characterize the Court and the project.*

At every level of the Court, the validators found administrators who manage in accordance with the principles of management by objective, maintain statistics on their operations, and keep up to date with developments in the field. Moreover, the administrative staff fully support treatment and diversionary alternatives and are quite willing to experiment with projects that promote these goals. A particularly appealing characteristic of the court personnel is their interest in objective analysis of their work as a means to determine weaknesses and to make improvements. The project supervisor, James Telegdy, shares these characteristics with his fellow administrators.

3. *The training program is well conceived and executed.*

Since the inception of the project, the counseling staff has met weekly with a therapeutic consultant; at less frequent intervals, workshops featuring nationally prominent family therapists have been conducted; and twice a year staff have been able to participate in out-of-state conferences. The result of this continuous, intensive training has been that staff are well grounded in the theory and practical applications of counseling. Their techniques are constantly analyzed and upgraded. In addition to the training program, the project has developed an extensive library of psychological material.

4. *The project is housed in comfortable quarters located away from the court facility.*

Much of the project's start up costs have gone toward refurbishing the Leiberman house and creating comfortable rooms and offices. The relaxed setting helps put families at ease, thereby contributing to more effective communications. At the same time, the location away from the Juvenile Court and the Detention Home is less likely to lead parents to believe that the result of the session will be the incarceration of their child. Project staff believe this leaves the parents free to concentrate on solutions to family problems. (See below for reference to intra-court communication problems caused in part by the residential location of the LFC.)

3.2 Project Weaknesses

1. *Differences in the control and project group make it difficult to accurately assess the effectiveness of the project.*

Age differences, the possibility of different periods of exposure to the risk of arrest, and the ambiguities arising from the possibility that weekend referrals may represent a higher-risk clientele make it difficult to attribute any project outcome to the effect of the treatment program.

2. *The relationship between the LFC and the Intake Probation Office is sometimes strained.*

Intake Probation Officers complain that despite the score sheets, the eligibility requirements are not always clear, the LFC sometimes closes a case without devoting sufficient attention to it, and referrals should be accepted on Fridays and Sundays. At the base of these complaints seems to be a feeling that the LFC is too remote. Indeed, the LFC has not conducted training sessions for new Intake Officers, and the physical location of the Center inhibits communication. The result of the tension has been that some Officers have held back on referrals and have been generally uncooperative in completing the data sheets for control group members. The Project Supervisor has begun to meet monthly with the Intake staff, but at the time of the validation study not all problems had been resolved.

4.0 Conclusions

The Lieberman Family Center fills the need of the Summit County Juvenile Court for a unit capable of delivering therapeutic services to "unruly" or "delinquent" children and their families. The project is generally well equipped, administered, and staffed, and has benefited from an elaborate and intensive training program. There are some problems between the project and its referral source, the Intake Probation Office. The preferred mode of treatment at the Lieberman Center is short-term, goal-specific, conjoint family therapy.

The project has been able to meet one process goal of handling a minimum of twenty referrals per month; it is not certain that another, to terminate treatment within 90 days and six sessions, was achieved. A significant reduction in the recidivism rate (as measured by referrals to the Juvenile Court after entrance into the treatment program) and a slight increase in the average period of subsequent detention has been reported for project clientele. Unfortunately these results cannot be attributed to the effect of the LFC, because an ambitiously conceived evaluation program is flawed by a lack of similarity between control and project groups.

Appendices

- Exemplary Project Submission
- Evaluation by Thomas Garver

EXEMPLARY PROJECT RECOMMENDATION

I. Project Description

1. Name of the Program

LIEBERMAN FAMILY CENTER

2. Type of Program (ROR, burglary prevention, etc.)

(Family Crisis Intervention)

3. Name of Area or Community Served

Summit County

(a) Approximate total population of area or community served

575,000

(b) Target subset of this population served by the project (if appropriate)

N/A

No. Served

Period

Population

4. Administering Agency (give full title and address)

Summit County Juvenile Court
650 Dan Street
Akron, Ohio 44308

(a) Project Director (name and phone number; address only if different from 4 above.)

James J. Telegdy, Project Supervisor
Lieberman Family Center
969 Copley Road
Akron, Ohio 44320 Phone: 1-867-7220

(b) Individual responsible for day to day program operations (name and phone number)

Same as (a) above

5. Funding Agency(s) and Grant Number (agency name and address, staff contact and phone number)

Summit County Criminal Justice Commission
234 Ohio Building "B"
191 South Main Street
Akron, Ohio 44308
Robert M. McCann, Corrections Planner 1-253-4547

6. Project Duration (give date project began rather than date LEAA funding, if any, began)

October 1972

7. Project Operating Costs (Do not include costs of formal evaluation if one has been performed. See Item 8)

Breakdown of total operating costs, specify time period:

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Federal:	69,986	71,560	66,940	44,623	14,874
State:			3,719	2,479	826
Local:	32,273	61,206	3,719	2,479	826
Private:				90,101	93,288
Total:	102,259	132,766	74,378	139,591	109,814

Of the above total, indicate how much is:

(a) Start-up, one time expenditures:

\$18,300

(b) Annual operating costs:

\$160,000

(A complete budget breakdown should be included with the attachments to this form)

8. Evaluation Costs (Indicate cost of formal evaluation if one has been performed)

N/A

Total Cost

Time Period

Principal Cost Categories

9. Continuation. Has the project been institutionalized or is it still regarded as experimental in nature? Does its continuation appear reasonably certain with local funding?

Institutionalized

Yes

(cut along this line)

ATTACHMENT A

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

In the past, delinquent youth who came before the court with family-related problems were funneled into the regular juvenile justice system, with little attention or emphasis placed on the family situation. Through court experience, however, it was found that most of these youth could be diverted from the system and given intensive family-related counseling.

Lieberman Family Center has succeeded in implementing a viable and effective diversion model, utilizing community based shelter-homes for overnight and short-term lodging of boys and girls, instead of detention. The Center also uses a community-based counseling facility, offering immediate crisis-intervention and short-term Family Counseling. Particular emphasis is placed on the counselors' utilizing system-oriented Family Counseling, i.e., applying treatment conjointly to all members of the family, as a family unit interacting at all times.

The primary source of referrals to the Center is the Summit County Juvenile Court Intake Department. In addition, a small number of "walk-ins", families seeking counseling on their own, occur and take part in sessions.

Lieberman Family Center, as a diversion model, is aimed at providing the type of treatment effectiveness that will reduce the rate of serious offenses committed in Summit County. The Center continues to effect a statistically significant reduction in the rate of unruly children involved with the program who later commit serious delinquent acts, compared with the rate of unruly children handled through regular court procedures who later commit serious delinquent acts.

The program has further endeavored to implement an evaluation component of the Program that will not only determine whether or not a community-based Diversion strategy offering immediate family crisis-intervention and short-term follow-up counseling is an effective alternative to formal Juvenile Court procedure, but will identify variables related to successful outcomes of Family Counseling and delineate those characteristics of families and children referred to Juvenile Court who benefit from family therapy and those who do not.

Family members, together, determine early in their involvement with the Center, the number and length of counseling sessions needed, and desired termination date. Emphasis is placed on immediately negotiating and contracting such a decision.

2. CRITERIA ACHIEVEMENT

Goal: To provide a community-based family counseling program for children and families referred to Juvenile Court specifically designed to divert them from the Juvenile Justice System and help them resolve family problems without formal court involvement.

Measures: a. 20% reduction in rate of children involved with Lieberman Family Center being placed in Detention Home, as compared to children handled through regular court procedures.

- b. Strive for successful termination of family counseling within six sessions or 90 days from the start of counseling.
- c. Divert a minimum of 20 and maximum of 50 youth and their families, each month, from the court system to the Center.
- d. A self-evaluation component of the Program that will identify variables related to successful outcomes of Family Counseling and delineate those characteristics of families and children referred to Juvenile Court who benefit from family therapy and those who do not.

Outcomes:

- a. A total of 600 cases have been referred to Lieberman Family Center since October 17, 1972 through May 10, 1974. A control group of 107 children is also used in this evaluation. The control group consists of all children eligible for Center counseling who were referred to Juvenile Court and processed through the Intake Department on Friday and Sunday. These children were not diverted to Lieberman Family Center but were handled by standard court procedures.

LFC RECIDIVISM RATE

<u>No. of referrals after closing case</u>	<u>No. of Cases</u>	<u>% of Cases</u>
	282	61
0 referrals	92	20
1 referrals	46	10
2 referrals	23	5
3 referrals	10	2
4 referrals	4	1
5 referrals	5	
6-8 referrals	462	

In the control samplly 71 cases have been closed. The recidivism rate for these cases is 86% as shown in the following tables:

CONTROL GROUP RECIDIVISM RATE

<u>No. of referrals after closing case</u>	<u>No. of Cases</u>	<u>% of Cases</u>
0 referrals	10	14
1 referrals	33	47
2 referrals	14	20
3 referrals	7	10
4 referrals	3	4
5 referrals	2	3
7 referrals	2	3
	71	

Comparison of these two tables clearly shows the effectiveness of LFC.

To determine the effectiveness of the LFC with children who had prior court contacts, an analysis of recidivism rates by the number of prior court contracts was completed. The results of this analysis are given in the following table.

Number of prior Offenses	Number of referrals after closing case						Recidivism Rate
	0	1	2	3	4	5-9	
First offenders (n=295)	177	61	33	13	8	2	40%
Second Offenders (n=102)	64	24	8	4	2	0	39%
Third Offenders (n=35)	23	4	3	2	0	3	34%
Fourth offenders (n=15)	9	3	1	2	0	0	40%
Fifth Offenders (n=3)	2	0	0	0	0	1	33%
Seventh Offenders	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%

Similar analysis of the control group will be forthcoming when enough data becomes available.

As indicated above all have about the same recidivism rate; therefore, the LFC is just as effective in reducing the number of referrals after closing a case for the first offenders as second, third and fourth offenders.

Judging, then, from data analyzed during the first nineteen months, Lieberman Family Center has had substantial success as a diversion model in providing an alternate to formalized Juvenile Court procedures. A 39% recidivism rate of the Project group indicates rather clearly that unruly and delinquent youngsters with family problems can be diverted from the Juvenile Court without the need for Detention and Court involvement.

- b. This objective continues to be strived for. Due to the nature of a family's participation in the program - i.e., family members determine number of sessions and duration of involvement with the Center-this objective is met in most cases.
- c. Evidenced by the Center's most recent quarterly reports (attached), this is being done. During Quarter IV, 1974, 59 cases were referred by Juvenile Court. Between January 1, and March 31, 1975, 78 referrals were received. In Quarter II, 1975, 60 cases were referred to the Center.

- d. Please refer to Attachment A, Action Project Grant, for detailed explanation of evaluation system.

B. REPLICABILITY

1. A widely recognized need existed in Summit County, prior to 1972, to develop a program to divert unruly, pre-delinquent children from the Juvenile Justice System. The diversionary strategy stressed the importance of providing a community-based alternative service for children, designed to involve the entire family in intensive short-term crisis intervention and family counseling without need for detention and formal court adjudication. The second year funding proposal was changed to include the need to divert both unruly and delinquent.

The Summit County Juvenile Court has traditionally established priorities for keeping children out of the Juvenile Justice System. The Center is a specialized family counseling service which is presently being implemented as a means of still further augmenting the capacity of the Juvenile Court to provide increasingly more skillful, early intervention. The problems these children present is generated within their families, and solutions to these problems must therefore be resolved where the problem occurs-in the family.

2. Please see Attachment A
3. See Attachments.
4. This program would be viable and useful in any type of community.

C. MEASURABILITY

1. The program is entering its fifth year of LEAA funding.
2. Evaluation efforts consist of quarterlies (attached) self-evaluation (attached) , and monthly summaries by the SCCJC Corrections Planner.

D. EFFICIENCY

1. The benefits derived from the project, including successful reduction in recidivism rate, justify expenditures of time, money, and manpower.
2. A more expensive alternative would be the continuation of handling of these cases by the Juvenile Court, without crisis intervention counseling involving the family, with the accompanying expected increase in recidivism rate.

E. ACCESSIBILITY

- 1&2. The project is planned for continuation, and would welcome any evaluation, publicity, and visitation.
3. Outstanding features:

The staff of SCCJC believes that the Lieberman Family Center has enjoyed such success for a number of reasons, including the following:

- Immediate crisis intervention counseling.
- Professionally trained staff.
- Totally community based.
- Program shelters and counsels both boys and girls.
- Focus is not on guilt or innocence; rather, families solve problems together, with aid of professional, objective counselors.
- Private sessions, at no cost to parties involved.
- Unique, ongoing self-evaluation, utilizing a control group.

4. WEAKNESSES

It is felt by Lieberman Family Center staff that more time is needed to determine whether or not the promising results of evaluation will have long-term success, and what components of the of the present Diversion model need changes to insure achievement of its goals and objectives.

5. DEGREE OF SUPPORT

The Summit County Juvenile Court administrators recognize the need for more satisfactory strategies for dealing with status offenders who have family related problems. The belief in the great potential of the diversion concept coupled with the success the Project has demonstrated thus far has inspired County Administrators to provide necessary funds the Project will need in the future.

ATTACHMENT B - Endorsements (To be sent under separate cover)

EVALUATION OF THE
LIEBERMAN FAMILY CENTER
DIVERSION PROGRAM

Juvenile Court of Summit County
Akron, Ohio

by

Thomas K. Garver

Consultant - Evaluator

November 1, 1974

Evaluation of the
Lieberman Family Center Diversion Program

The LFC Diversion Program was put into operation on October 17, 1972. As indicated on table below a total of 730 children was referred to the Program by the Summit County Juvenile Court Intake Staff from October 17, 1972 through October 31, 1974.

Number of Children Referred to LFC by Year, Month, and Sex:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1972	October 17, 1972	7	13	20
1972	November	8	22	30
1972	December	4	3	7
1973	January	10	22	32
1973	February	4	18	22
1973	March	18	22	40
1973	April	17	23	40
1973	May	16	16	32
1973	June	16	10	26
1973	July	12	14	26
1973	August	20	19	39
1973	September	22	22	44
1973	October	14	20	34
1973	November	13	14	27
1973	December	15	13	28
1974	January	23	18	41
1974	February	15	13	28
1974	March	16 17	13 12	29
1974	April	24 25	12 11	36
1974	May	16 15	13 14	29
1974	June	10 9	9 10	19
1974	July	16	17	33
1974	August	13	19	32
1974	September	10	7	17
1974	October 31, 1974	23 11	6 8	19
TOTAL		352	378	730

However, the present evaluation is based on data collected and analyzed on the first 600 children referred to the program which covers the period from October 17, 1972 through May 10, 1974.

A control group of 107 children is also used in this evaluation. The control group consists of all children eligible for LFC counseling who were referred to Juvenile Court and processed through the Intake Department on Friday and Sunday. These children were not diverted to LFC but were handled by standard court procedures. The number of children interviewed and identified as control day cases by Intake Staff from October 17, 1972 through October 31, 1974 is outlined below:

Number of Control Days Children by Years, Month and Sex:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1972	October 17, 1972	0	0	0
1972	November	1	2	3
1972	December	0	2	2
1973	January	0	2	2
1973	February	4	1	5
1973	March	4	3	7
1973	April	6	2	8
1973	May	4	3	7
1973	June	3	3	6
1973	July	0	1	1
1973	August	0	4	4
1973	September	1	1	2
1973	October	4	3	7
1973	November	2	4	6
1973	December	1	3	4
1974	January	1	1	2
1974	February	11	6	17
1974	March	7	8	15
1974	April	0	1	1
1974	May	2	0	2
1974	June	1	1	2
1974	July	0	1	1
1974	August	2	1	3
1974	September	0	0	0
1974	October 31, 1974	0	0	0
TOTAL		54	53	107

The major objective of this evaluation report is to compare the LFC group or experimental group with the control group to ascertain some measure of the Diversion Program's effectiveness.

In order to make valid statistical comparisons between the two

groups, 38 cases from the total 600 LFC group were excluded from this evaluation. The following table delineates the number and reason for the exclusion:

LFC CASES

	8	- still open
	8	- court information unavailable
	<u>22</u>	- referred by Probation (Did not meet basic criteria)
Total	38	

Thus, in this evaluation report, the total sample for the LFC group consists of 562 cases and 107 cases for the control group. In addition to excluding cases, the frequency distributions in each group are beset by missing data or information (unanswered questions on the questionnaires and the total in each group will reflect this discrepancy.

Biographical Data Comparisons Between LFC and Control Group

Biographical data on LFC cases were obtained from the family at the time of counseling and from court records. Control data was obtained strictly from court records. These data are summarized here to describe and compare the two samples.

<u>Sex</u>	<u>LFC</u>		<u>Control</u>	
	cases	%	cases	%
Males	260	46	54	51
Females	<u>302</u>	54	<u>53</u>	49
Total	562		Total	107

These tables illustrate that the average case will be about 15 years old, white and either sex. The child will be attending school,

AEC

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>CONTROL</u>	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
7	1	.2	0	
8	1	.2	0	
9	4	1	0	
10	4	1	0	
11	10	2	1	1
12	21	3	3	3
13	43	7	9	9
14	106	19	17	17
15	142	26	28	29
16	141	26	22	22
17	80	14	17	17
18	3	.5	1	1
Total	557		98	

Race

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>CONTROL</u>	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
White	459	85	94	90
Black	95	15	10	10
Total	554		104	

Attending School

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>CONTROL</u>	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
Yes	468	88	65	94
No	61	12	4	6
Total	529		69	

and have a 50 percent chance of having been suspended from school at least once and have the same chance of having run away from home before being referred to LFC. The average case at LFC is not that

No. of suspensions from school

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>Control</u>	
	cases	%	Cases	%
0	5	2		
1	95	42	No Data	
2	40	18		
3	24	11		
4	25	11		
5	9	4		
6	11	5		
7	4	2		
8	1	1		
9	9	4		
Total	223			

No. of times ran away from home

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>Control</u>	
	cases	%	Cases	%
0	11			
1	92		No Data	
2	59			
3	32			
4	12			
5	10			
6	5			
7 or more	12			
Total	223			

drug orientated, as illustrated in the following table. However, caution must be taken in interpreting this table since it is made by the parent and not the child. Nevertheless, 40% of the parents considered their children to be involved with some kind of drug

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD PRESENTLY LIVING IN SAME HOME

<u>MAN</u>	NO. OF CASES %		<u>WOMEN</u>	NO. OF CASES %	
Father	283	50	Mother	428	76
Stepfather	58	10	Stepmother	30	5
Grandfather	2	.4	Grandmother	2	.4
Adopted Father	14	3	Adopted Mother	12	3
Guardian	1	2	Guardian	2	.4
Other	6	2	Other	7	2
Missing data	<u>198</u>	35	Missing data	<u>81</u>	14
	562			562	

No family had both a Stepmother and a Stepfather.

Brothers and sisters not presently living in same Home.

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>Control</u>	
	cases	%	cases	%
0	186	45		
1	87	21		
2	76	18	No Data	
3	35	8		
4	16	4		
5	4	1		
6	6	1		
7 or more	<u>3</u>	1		
Total	411			

The child will be the first or second born in 57 percent of the cases, as the following table illustrates.

BIRTH ORDER OF THE CHILD

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>Control</u>	
	cases	%	cases	%
1st	160	32	36	42
2	127	25	17	20
3	93	18	16	19
4	68	13	10	12
5	31	6	4	5
6	14	3	0	0
7	12	2	00	0
9th	<u>2</u>	1	<u>2</u>	2
Total	507		Total	85

There is a 64 percent chance that the children will have no referrals prior to being referred to LFC. In other words, most LFC cases are first referrals to Juvenile Court. 45

Number of prior court referrals

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>CONTROL</u>	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
0 referrals	350	64	77	75
1 referral	130	23	16	15
2 referrals	50	9	10	10
3 referrals	18	3	0	0
4 referrals or more	6	1	0	0
Total	<u>554</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>1103</u>

The following tables delineate the types of offenses committed and the referral source. These tables suggest that the offense charged with at the time of referral and the most serious offenses are similar for both groups.

Offense at Time of Referral:

Delinquent Offenses:

	<u>LFC</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CONTROL</u>	<u>%</u>
Arson	1	.2	0	0
Auto theft	10	2	4	4
B&E	21	4	6	6
Robbery	12	2	1	1
Larceny	23	4	3	3
Shoplifting	43	8	15	14
M.D.O.P.	3	.5	2	2
Assault & Battery	5	1	0	0
Forcible Rape	0	0	0	0
Trespassing	2	.4	0	0
Intoxication	10	2	1	1
Possession of drugs	12	2	2	2
Use of drugs	1	.2	7	6
Sale of drugs	1	.2	0	0
Probation Violation	0	0	0	0
Uncritical Judgment	0	0	0	0
Other delinquent offenses	22	4	0	0
Total	<u>166</u>		<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>

Total 47

Unruly Offenses:

	<u>LFC</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CONTROL</u>	<u>%</u>
Curfew	8	1	5	5
Runaway	206	37	34	32
Incorrigibility	146	26	17	16
Sex offense	4	.7	0	0
Truancy (School)	22	4	0	0
Protective custody	2	.4	1	1
Other unruly offenses	4	.7	1	1
Total	<u>392</u>		<u>58</u>	

Total 58

Most Serious Offense every Committed Prior to Referral Offense:

	<u>LFC</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>CONTROL</u>	<u>%</u>
Arson	2	1	0	0
Auto theft	10	5	2	5
B&E	12	6	3	7
Robbery	5	2	0	0
Larceny	18	9	0	0
Shoplifting	43	21	6	14
M.D.O.P. (Destruction of Property)	10	5	3	7
Assault & Battery	12	6	1	2
Forcible Rape	0	0	0	0
Trespassing	1	.5	1	2
Intoxication	3	1	0	0
Possession of Drugs	6	3	4	10
Use of Drugs	1	.5	0	0
Sale of Drugs	0	0	0	0
Probation Violation	0	0	0	0
Uncritical Judgment	0	0	0	0
Other delinquent offenses	20	10	4	10
Curfew	2	1	2	5
Runaway	35	17	7	17
Incorrigibility	13	6	3	7
Sex offense	0	0	0	0
Truancy (School)	0	0	4	10
Other unruly offense	3	2	0	0
Total	<u>201</u>		Total <u>40</u>	

Source of referral to Juvenile Court:

	<u>LFC</u>		<u>CONTROL</u>	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
police	305	55	92	96
child walk-in	16	3	2	2
parent walk-in	62	11	1	1
parent & child walk in	90	16		
mail in	48	9		
another agency	10	2	1	1
school administrator	21	4		
Total	552		Total	96

The average age of the LFC case is 15.1 years. For the control group the average age is 15.2 years. The police are a larger source of referrals in the control group than the LFC group but their offenses are similar.

The annual income from the husband and wife and other sources for the LFC cases is:

<u>Income</u>	<u>No. of Cases</u>	<u>% of cases</u>
\$ 0 - 2,999	19	5
3,000 - 4,999	37	10
5,000 - 6,999	37	10
7,000 - 9,999	65	18
10,000 -14,999	110	30
15,000 -and over	96	26
Total	364	

The average income is between \$10,000 - \$14,999; however thirty-six percent or 127 families said they received outside financial help.

The variables of age, sex, race, school attendance, number of prior court referrals and offense charged with at time of referral etc. are statistically similar and for the purpose of data analysis the two samples will be considered as having been drawn from the same population.

Evaluation of LFC Program

The evaluation portion of this report is based upon cases in which the family had one or more sessions with an LFC counselor and are now closed. A review of the total 562 cases reveals 80 cases closed without a session and will not be included in this part of the evaluation. 56% of these cases were uncooperative with attempts to schedule them for sessions. 60% of the 80 families were closed by phone. Twenty cases were excluded due to lack of adequate LFC information.

Reasons for Terminating LFC Family Counseling:

	<u>No. of cases</u>	<u>%</u>
Mutual agreement and no further sessions needed - goals reached	187	41
Family uncooperative - missed appointments or didn't want to come in- Counselor closed	62	14
IP (Identified Patient) turned 18 years old	1	.1
IP or Family moved	21	5
Case not appropriate for LFC-counselor terminated	4	1
Appeared in court - not amenable	9	2
Referred back to court - not amenable	46	10
Held open for family to call if further help needed. Family did not call and case was closed without a session.	15	3
Counselor felt it wasn't necessary to continue holding sessions -counselor closed	16	3
Referred to another agency because not responding to LFC counseling	8	2
Family wanted private counseling	3	1
Family felt LFC no longer necessary	46	10
Other	<u>38</u>	8
Total	456	

The median is reported when appropriate to use as the best measure of central tendency since extreme scores tend to distort the representativeness of computed averages.

The median number of days from court referral (intake) to the assignment of an LFC counselor is 1.65 days. Eighty cases were closed without a session, 135 with only one session, 101 with two sessions, 67 with three sessions, and 157 with four or more sessions.

No. of sessions held
to close a case:

	<u>LFC</u> <u>No. of Cases</u>	<u>% of Cases</u>
1	135	29
2	102	22
3	67	15
4	43	9
5	52	11
6	21	5
7	19	4
8	8	2
9	6	1
10	5	1
11	4	1
Total	<u>462</u>	

This represents a median of 2.5 sessions to close a case. Sessions last an average of 1½ hours.

One of the goals of the LFC program is immediate crisis intervention. Of the 460 cases with one or more sessions, 20% met with an LFC counselor on the same day their case was assigned to LFC; 10% met with an LFC counselor one day after assignment. Forty-six percent of cases met with an LFC counselor between four and twenty days after assignment to LFC, and more than twenty days elapsed between assignment and first session in 16% of the cases.

No. of days from assignment
to first session:

	<u>LFC</u>	
	no. of cases	% of cases
0 days	107	22
1	43	9
2	24	5
3	16	3
4	16	3
5	22	5
6	25	5
7	24	5
8	17	4
9	14	3
10	11	2
11	7	2
12	12	2
13 or more	<u>143</u>	30
	Total	<u>481</u>

The median number of days from LFC referral to LFC assignment is 1.2 days. The median number of days between LFC assignment to the first session is 6.1 days.

Biographical Data Summary

Based on the biographical data collected thus far, the probability a referral will be female is .54 and male is .46. The data suggests that the typical referral to LFC will be 15.1 years old and oldest or next to the oldest child in the family. They will be white and have no prior court contact. They attend school and have a history of cutting (flicking) are in the 9th grade and attaining "c" level work. They will have been suspended from school at least once for either truancy or smoking. The child will have lived at his current address for an average of seven years.

Predictor Analysis

A predictor analysis has been completed to determine the relationships between the biographical data and the criteria of effectiveness measures. The criteria of effectiveness measures were:

1. the number of days spent in detention after the case had closed;
2. the number of referrals after case has been closed, and 3. the number of referrals during LFC counseling. It was intended that the results of this analysis would be useful in selecting future LFC diversion cases, i.e. referring from court those cases in which LFC would maximize its counseling effectiveness. Only those cases that were closed and had more than one session were used in this analysis (i.e. 462 cases).

Predictor analysis was completed by correlation analysis as outlined below.

Correlation analysis - Correlation is a widely used statistic which measures the extent to which two variables vary together in a systematic fashion. It is a measure of association between two variables or scores. The correlation may be positive or negative and range from - 1.00 to 1.00.

A positive correlation between two variables will be obtained when subjects who are above the average on one of the variables also tend to be above the average on other variables, whereas subjects who are below the average on one of the variables also tend to be below the average on the other variable. A negative correlation, on the other hand, will be obtained when subjects who are below the average on one variable tend to be above the average on the other variable, whereas subjects who are above the average on the first variable tend to be below the average on the second variable. Only significant correlations are considered in this evaluation.

Significance is the level of probability used as a criterion for deciding whether an observed event or relationship is based upon chance or an actual correlation.

In this analysis the probability of any correlation occurring less than 5 times in 100 is considered significant. A probability this small insures against drawing conclusions based upon chance correlations and that an improbable or rare correlation has occurred (one which was not due to chance).

A correlation analysis of the biographical variables with the criteria of effectiveness was done to determine those variables that are related to success in the LFC Diversion program.

Correlation of Detention Placement with Biographical Variables.

Significant positive correlations were found between the number of days spent in Detention after LFC closed the case and (1) the number of months the child was employed, (2) the family's annual income, (3) the number of days in Shelter Home prior to closing case, (4) the number of referrals during LFC counseling, (5) the number of referrals after closing case at LFC, (6) the number of days in the Detention Home as a courtesy hold, (7) the number of days in the Detention Home during LFC counseling.

Significant negative correlations were found between the number of days spent in Detention after LFC closed the case and (1) the child's grade in school, (2) how long the child has lived in Summit County, (3) the number of days from court referral to LFC referral, (4) the number of days from LFC assignment to the first session, (5) the identification number assigned in sequence as the cases were referred to LFC.

These correlations suggest that the child who would spend fewer days in Detention after closing the case at LFC would be above the ninth

grade in school working less than three months, with a family of less than \$12,000. annual income had to wait over 1.65 days between court referral and LFC referral and wait over 6 days between LFC assignment and the first session, spent less than 4 days in the Shelter Home prior to closing the case and less than one day during LFC counseling, spent 0 days in the Detention Home as a courtesy hold less than one day during LFC counseling.

These analyses suggest that LFC counseling may be less effective while the child is being held in the shelter house or detention home, even as a courtesy hold. Children in the upper grades spend fewer days in detention after their case is closed suggesting that with respect to reducing detentions, LFC is more effective with those in the ninth through 12th grades. Children of families whose annual income is below \$10,000. and who have lived in Summit County more than ten years have spent less time in detention after closing.

One unexpected finding was the number of detentions after LFC closing a case is not dependent upon a short time between court referral and LFC referral, and between LFC assignment and the first session. In fact those who were delayed longer had fewer detentions as the following table illustrates:

No. of days between court referral and LFC	No. detentions days after LFC		
	0	1-6	7 or more
	No. cases	No. cases	No. cases
0	156	12	27
1-6	59	3	13
7-20	60	6	6
21-101	100	5	5

LFC is just as effective when assignment takes place on the same day of court referral as when a delay of more than 7 days. In fact LFC effectiveness does not decrease as the time between court referral and LFC assignment increases. This is the court's process and not a Lieberman Family Center function.

A LFC function that delays the time to the first session is the process of assigning the case to a counselor. The following table illustrates how this effects the number of days spent in Detention after LFC closing.

No. of days from LFC assignment to first session	No. of detention days after LFC closing		
	0 cases	1-6 cases	7 or more cases
0	69	7	13
1-6	33	8	26
7-20	118	7	8
21 or more	150	5	4

LFC seems to be more effective at reducing the number of days in Detention if the delay between assigning the case and LFC referral is greater than 7 days.

Correlation of Referrals after LFC counseling with Biographical Variables

Significant positive correlations were found between the number of referrals after closing the case at LFC and (1) the number of times the child was suspended from school, (2) the number of times the family moved during the last two years, (3) the number of times the family did not show up for counseling sessions, (4) the number of days held in the detention home as a courtesy hold, (5) the number of days in Detention after LFC closing the case, (6) the identification number of the case.

Significant negative correlations were found between the number of referrals after closing the case at LFC and (1) the child's grade in school, (2) the time the child has lived at the current address, (3) the number of days from LFC assignment to the first session with an LFC counselor.

These correlations suggest, like the number of days in detention, after closing LFC may be more effective for those above the ninth grade in school that LFC counseling effectiveness may be decreased with spending over 1/2 days in the detention home as a courtesy hold. Those with less suspensions from school have fewer referrals after closing. LFC is more effective at reducing the number of referrals for those families who have lived for more than six years at their current address or have not moved in the last two years. As the number of detentions, the number of referrals after LFC closing is not dependent upon crisis counseling, but a reduction in the number of referrals after closing should be gained by increasing the number of days from LFC assignment to the first session. Also, the people who had more "no shows" for counseling were more likely to have referrals after LFC closing.

CORRELATION OF REFERRALS DURING LFC COUNSELING WITH BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

Significant positive correlations were found between the number referrals during LFC counseling and (1) number of times the child cut school in the last three months, (2) the child's grades on his last report card, (3) the highest grade in school completed by the father, (4) the number of days from first session to closing the case, (5) the number of sessions held to close the case, (6) the number of days in the shelter home prior to closing the case, (7) the number of court referrals prior to being sent to LFC, (8) the number of referrals after closing the case at LFC (9) the number of days in the detention

home during LFC counseling, (10) the number of days in the detention home after LFC closed the case, (11) the number of sessions held to close the reopened case.

Significant negative correlations were found between the number of referrals during LFC counseling and (1) the number months to when the child was last suspended from school, (2) the number of times the mother has ever been married before, (3) the total number of brothers and sisters that do not live in the household.

These correlations suggest that those children that have more than one referral during LFC counseling have a history of cutting school (more than twice), above average in school work and a suspension from school within the last four months. Their fathers have more education (i.e. completed the twelfth grade), their mothers have not married more than once and they have one or less brothers or sister living outside the house hold. Those that have referrals during counseling take over 60 days from their first session to close (thereby increasing the probability of referrals) and take three or more sessions. These children have about 1.5 prior court contacts and have spent some time in the shelter home, and Detention Home.

CORRELATION OF EFFECTIVENESS CRITERION WITH OTHER COUNSELING COMPONENTS

The correlational analysis of the criteria of effectiveness was extended to the other components of the LFC counseling to determine the effectiveness of each. Attention was focused on the following counseling components: the number of sessions needed to close each case, the average length of each session, the number of days from LFC assignment to the first LFC counseling session, and the average number of days between sessions.

No significant correlation was found between the three criteria of effectiveness and any of the 58 components of LFC counseling.

time related concerns with the number of referrals during LFC counseling. Significant positive relationships were found between the time between counseling sessions and (1) the number of months the child has lived outside his present family group, (2) the number of days from first session to closing case, (3) the number of home visits made by the counselor, (4) the number of counseling cancellations. A longer time was taken between sessions for those cases involved with children who have lived outside their present family and who cancelled more than one session. They took more time to close since they were uncooperative. The number of visits that a counselor makes to the house also lengthens the time between sessions.

Significant positive correlations were found between the number of sessions held to close a case and (1) father's highest grade in school completed, (2) average length of each session, (3) number of days from court intake to placement in the shelter home, (4) the number of referrals during LFC counseling, (5) the number of session cancellations, (6) number of days in the detention home during LFC counseling.

Significant negative correlations were found between the number of counseling sessions and (1) the child's age, (2) the child's grade in school, (3) the number of months the child was last suspended from school, (4) the number of days from court referral to LFC referral, (5) the number of days from LFC referral to LFC assignment, (6) the number of court referrals prior to LFC. Those cases which took more sessions to close, involved older children in the upper grade at school and whose father was more educated (12th grade or more). Those requiring more sessions took less time to be referred to LFC, to be assigned to a LFC counselor, to get to their first session, had fewer prior court referrals, and were more likely to have more

court referrals during LFC counseling. Children more likely to need more sessions were assigned quickly and entered their session quick, had few prior court contacts and were held in the Detention Home during LFC counseling.

Significant positive correlations were found between the average length of each session and (1) the highest grade in school the mother and father completed, (2) the annual income of the family, (3) number of counseling sessions held to closing, (4) the number of home visits made by the counselor, (5) the number of times the family has moved in the last two years.

Significant negative correlations were found between the average length of each counseling session and (1) the number of times the child cut school in the last three months, (2) the child's grades on his last report card, (3) the number of days from LFC assignment to the first session. Those cases which took longer involved children who cut school less and whose parents made more than \$10,000 and were more educated (completed the 12th grade or more). They had below "C" level grades in school. They had more sessions and more home visits, less time to their first session and very few changes in address over the last two years.

TIME ANALYSIS

To determine if there were changes in the LFC program over the two year period covered by this evaluation, and to determine if these changes were influencing the effectiveness of the program, a number was assigned to each case. This number represented the order each case was assigned to the LFC. The correlational analysis suggest that since the program began in October 1972 fewer sessions are now necessary to close a case, the average length of each session

has been reduced; however, increased periods of time were noted between court referral to LFC referral and from assignment to LFC counselor to first session.

The number of times the shelter home has been used after LFC was increased. The number of session cancellations has gone down since LFC became operational. This reflects the increased effectiveness of the LFC Diversion program and not the lack of time for the more recently closed cases to recidivate since the recidivism rate up to and including May 1974 is 43% compared to 39% including the last three months. Therefore, the number of cases in the last three months involves only 42 cases which is small compared to the total sample.

COMPARISON OF RECIDIVISM RATES BETWEEN LFC AND CONTROL GROUPS

As of May 10, 1974, 462 cases have been closed. The recidivism rate for these cases is 39% as shown in the following table:

<u>No. of referrals after closing case</u>	<u>LFC Group Recidivism Rate</u>	
	<u>No. of cases</u>	<u>% of cases</u>
0 referrals	282	61
1 "	92	20
2 "	46	10
3 "	23	5
4 "	10	2
5 "	4	1
6-8 "	5	
	<u>462</u>	

In control sample 71 cases have been closed. The recidivism rate for these cases is 86% as shown in the following table:

CONTROL GROUP RECIDIVISM RATE

No. of referrals after closing case	No. of cases	% of cases
0 referrals	10	14
1 "	33	47
2 "	14	20
3 "	7	10
4 "	3	4
5 "	2	3
7 "	2	3
	<u>71</u>	

Comparison of these two tables clearly shows the effectiveness of LFC.

To determine the effectiveness of the LFC with children who had prior court contacts, an analysis of recidivism rates by the number of prior court contacts was completed. The results of this analysis are given in the following table.

Number of prior offenses	Number of referrals after closing case						Recidivism Rate
	0	1	2	3	4	5-9	
First offenders (n=295)	177	61	33	13	8	2	40%
Second offenders (n=102)	64	24	8	4	2	0	39%
Third offenders (n=35)	23	4	3	2	0	3	34%
Fourth offenders (n=15)	9	3	1	2	0	0	40%
Fifth offenders (n=3)	2	0	0	0	0	1	33%
Seventh offenders	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%

Similar analysis of the control group will be forthcoming when enough data becomes available.

As indicated above all have about the same recidivism rate, therefore the LFC is just as effective in reducing the number of referrals after closing a case for the first offenders as second, third and fourth offenders.

UNRULY & DELINQUENT RECIDIVISM RATES OF LFC GROUP

No. Referrals after Closing case	Delinquent No. of Cases	%	Unruly No. of cases
0	111	67	231
1	31	19	79
2	14	8	39
3	5	3	20
4	2	1	12
5	0	0	4
6	1	.6	1
7	0	0	1
8	1	.6	1
9	0	0	1
	<u>165</u>		<u>390</u>

Recidivism rate for delinquent children is 33 per cent and for unruly children it is 41 percent. LFC appears to be more effective treating the delinquent child than the unruly, however the difference is not large enough to recommend LFC treatment to only delinquent. The recidivism rate for the eighty cases referred to L and closed without session was 38 percent. Many interpretations are possible of this; however the data analysis at this time does not favor any.

Recommendations - The evaluation suggests the following recommendations:

1. Selection of students above the ninth grade.
2. Restrict LFC counseling to only those children who have not spent time in the Detention Home or are being held there.
3. Develop methods to reduce the number of cancellations.
4. Selections of children from families who have moved very little in the past five to ten years.
5. Selection of those cases that have fewer than three suspensions from school.
6. Expand counseling to those families who make less than \$10,000 annually.
7. Do not neglect counseling in situations that are not an "immediate crisis".
8. Continuation of control days.
9. Completion of all biographical questionnaire items at the time of referral to LFC.
10. Continuation of data collection and program evaluation to validate the findings of this evaluation and develop a stable criteria.
11. Continuation of statistical analysis of the questionnaire data.

END

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