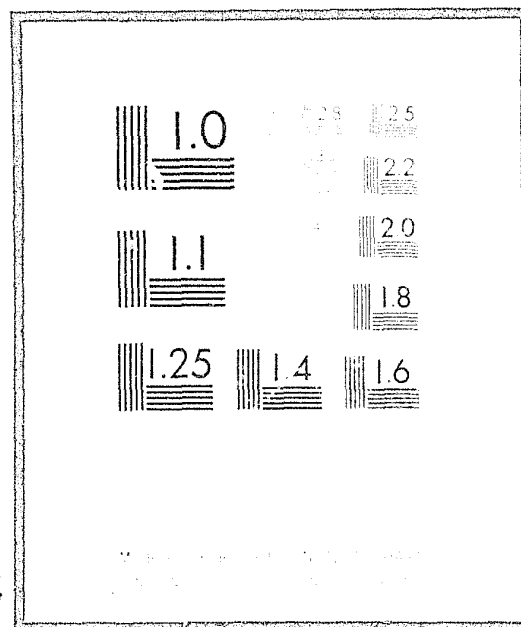


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STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Seattle - King County Center for Youth Services

1972 EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CLINICAL PROGRAM

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STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

SEATTLE - KING COUNTY CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES

1972 EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CLINICAL PROGRAM

by John Blackwood

NCJRS  
OCT 18 1976  
ACQUISITION

SEATTLE - KING COUNTY CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES  
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Seattle, Washington 98107

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Officer John Blackwood of the Seattle Police Department for the many off-duty hours which he volunteered to us in conducting this study.

David Evans  
Regional Director

Seattle, Washington  
July 1972

## INTRODUCTION

The Center for Youth Services (formerly known as the Seattle - King County Child Guidance Center) was established in Seattle in 1969.

The program attempts to provide a variety of clinical and community development services in an effort to prevent delinquency. The emphasis is on early intervention in the career of the potential delinquent. Every attempt is made to identify those children who are displaying behavioral warning signs at home, in the school, or in the community and to engage them and their parents in appropriate programs aimed at reducing the frequency and severity of subsequent delinquent acts.

Washington is almost unique among the fifty states in instituting such a program on the state level. The Center is funded and operated by the Department of Social and Health Services; no fees are charged to recipients of the services.

## THE 1960 STUDY

In 1960 a study of the State's Child Guidance Center programs was carried out. Questionnaires were sent to the families of 359 children who had been treated at the clinics and whose cases had been closed for six months.

At that time, the program consisted of Centers which had been established in smaller communities. There were no services provided in the large metropolitan areas. Also, the program was a more traditional child guidance service then, with an emphasis on direct clinical intervention.

By the late 1960's, the program had evolved considerably. The provision of high-quality clinical services to troubled children and youth (and their families) was still a basic goal, but emphasis had shifted toward an aggressive assault on the problem of juvenile delinquency. This required the establishment of Centers in the large cities. It also demanded the presence of strong community development components with the Centers, to complement the direct treatment programs. The primary goal became prevention--"reaching out" into the schools, the police precinct house, the neighborhood to find the child making the first steps toward a career of delinquency.

Despite these differences between the program in 1960 and in 1972, we felt that it would be instructive to include some comparative data from the former study at appropriate points.

## THE PRESENT STUDY

One-hundred-and-sixty-one cases were closed at the Seattle Center for Youth Services between October 15, 1969 and September 30, 1971. Efforts were made to locate each of the families in April 1972. We were able to find only ninety-four families, and were amazed to learn that at least forty of the remaining children had moved out of the area. After location, a personal contact was made (usually by phone) to explain the purposes of the study and to inform the parents that a questionnaire would be mailed to them.

THE PRESENT STUDY (continued)

The questionnaire was similar to that used in 1960, with some additional questions included. It was mailed right after the initial phone call, accompanied by an explanatory letter (see Appendix) and a stamped return envelope. When no reply was forthcoming within ten days, another phone call was made to request return of the form. In most cases, a second call was made a few days later, if there had been no response. Forty-five questionnaires were returned; a reply rate of forty-eight percent. The 1960 percentage was about sixty-five percent.

RESULTS

1. The first section of the form requested the parent(s) to check which of ten problems had been of concern at the time when the family first came to the Center with their child and to indicate on a four-point scale the present status of the problem. (see Table I)

TABLE I

CHILD'S PROBLEMS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROBLEMS INITIALLY	MUCH BETTER		SOME BETTER		NO CHANGE		WORSE		NOT INDICATED	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Disobedience to Parents	31	12	39	12	39	3	10	2	6	2	6
Excessive Fighting	19	11	58	5	26	2	11	1	5	0	0
School Behavior, Truancy	28	15	54	6	21	3	11	2	7	2	7
Poor School Grades	24	10	42	7	29	4	17	2	8	1	5
Stealing	20	15	75	3	15	1	5	1	5	0	0
Repeated Lying	18	11	61	4	22	2	11	1	6	0	0
Tantrums, Destructive Behavior	15	5	33	3	20	3	20	2	13.5	2	13.5
Running Away	14	12	86	0	0	2	14	0	0	0	0
Illegal Drugs	6	4	67	0	0	1	16.5	0	0	1	16.5
Unacceptable Sexual Behavior	4	3	75	0	0	1	25	0	0	0	0
Other	4	2	50	1	25	0	0	0	0	1	25
TOTAL	183	100		41		22		11		9	



TABLE I-A

CHILD'S PROBLEMS	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROBLEMS	IMPROVEMENT					NO CHANGE		WORSE		NOT INDICATED	
		TOTAL	NO LONGER EXISTS		IMPROVED							
		#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TOTAL	239	173	48	20.1	125	52.3	51	21.3	8	3.4	7	2.9
Disobedience to Parents or Other Adults in Authority	54	37	4	7.4	33	61.1	12	22.2	4	7.4	1	1.9
School Failure	49	32	8	16.3	24	49.0	15	30.6	1	2.0	1	2.0
Excessive Fighting with Other Children in Family, School or Neighborhood	24	16	1	4.2	15	62.5	8	33.3	-	-	-	-
Temper Tantrums	23	18	5	21.7	13	56.5	4	17.4	1	4.3	-	-
Repeated Lying	21	13	2	9.5	11	52.4	6	28.6	2	9.5	-	-
Stealing	20	16	13	65.0	3	15.0	3	15.0	-	-	1	5.0
Unacceptable Sexual Behavior	8	7	5	62.5	2	25.0	-	-	-	-	1	12.0
Runaway Behavior	3	2	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	-	-	-	-
Other (Specified)	37	32	9	24.3	23	62.2	2	5.4	-	-	3	8.1

This Table from the 1960 study is included for reference. The older table cannot be compared statistically to our Table I, because in the 1960 study parents were asked to specify the chief problem only, and its present status. We requested parents to check multiple problems without regard to which they considered of most concern.

RESULTS (continued)

Many parents added written comments to the questionnaire. A sample of statements appended to Section I:

"I feel that you cannot change a child's behavior without getting at the roots of the problem and this usually stems from the home."

"Before, she didn't care to help out at home and would cause a big argument about anything she didn't agree with. She wouldn't talk to us about so many things, good or bad."

"Bill is in an adjustment class at school. He is making progress, and there are no major problems at this time."

The following table is a comparison of parents' perceptions about the status of the child's adjustment at the time when the case was closed to the same parents' responses to the question of status of the problems at the time of the present study.

Since we had invited parents in Table I to list all of the presenting problems and to indicate their present status, we sometimes found that for a given child some problems were later seen as better, some worse. In forty-two of the cases, it was possible to make a judgement about the general trend of the child's perceived adjustment, as indicated by the parents.

TABLE II

PARENTS' EVALUATION  
AT CLOSING

PARENTS' EVALUATION AT  
TIME OF PRESENT STUDY

	MUCH BETTER	SOME BETTER	NO CHANGE	WORSE
MUCH BETTER	11	6	0	1
SOME BETTER	6	8	1	0
NO CHANGE	2	3	2	2
WORSE	0	0	0	0



RESULTS (continued)

2. Table III is a tabulation, by percentages, of the parents' perceptions of the child's present adjustment to the family. The comparable figures from the 1960 study are included in parentheses.

TABLE III

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PRESENT ADJUSTMENT (%)		
		BETTER	NO CHANGE	WORSE
Being a Cooperative Family Member	39 (174)	82 (72)	13 (25)	5 (3)
Being Happy	39 (171)	77 (69)	20 (29)	3 (2)
Getting Along with Brothers and Sisters	35 (157)	66 (54)	29 (43)	5 (3)
Getting Along with Mother	38 (169)	76 (65)	16 (30)	8 (5)
Getting Along with Father	24 (154)	67 (57)	16.5 (42)	16.5 (1)

## Sample comments:

"Bobby did not change until we all started going to counseling."

"Does not get along with Dad--none of our kids do. Father does not discuss problems, but simply says they must do things because he says so."

"I wish I knew what normal 13-year-old-going-on-14 behavior was! He thinks our house is a place to sleep and eat, and that's all."

"I think his father is attempting to get along better with his son, rather than vice-versa. The problem was with the father in the first place."

NOTE: Most of the forms were filled out by the mother. In many of the cases, there was no father in the house.

3. Table IV is a tabulation, by percentages, of the parents' perceptions of the child's present adjustment to school. The comparable figures from the 1960 study are included in parentheses.

TABLE IV

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PRESENT ADJUSTMENT (%)		
		BETTER	NO CHANGE	WORSE
Liking for School	36 (160)	58 (55)	33 (41)	9 (4)
Grades	36 (158)	61 (52.5)	30 (40)	9 (7.5)
Getting Along with Other Children	35 (155)	71 (59)	23 (40)	6 (1)
Getting Along with Teachers	37 (155)	65 (60)	33 (38)	2 (2)

## Sample comments:

"She seems to be able to accept being told to do something--in school, her teachers say she has really improved."

"Attends school on occasion. Has been suspended twice. Great, huh?"

"By taking three subjects for a semester, she did very well. She likes school when she likes the teacher."

"Now willing to study on his own and bring home school work. Also taking more interest in reading."

"She gets fine grades. Has a fine understanding with the teacher."

4. Table V is a tabulation, by percentages, of the parents' perceptions of the child's present adjustment within the neighborhood. The comparable figures from the 1960 study (in which the term community was used instead of neighborhood) are included in parentheses.

TABLE V

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PRESENT ADJUSTMENT (%)		
		BETTER	NO CHANGE	WORSE
Getting Along with Adults	35 (154)	69 (47)	31 (52)	0 (1)
Getting Along with Other Children	33 (157)	67 (51.5)	33 (48)	0 (0.5)
Respecting Property of Others	33 (154)	67 (46)	27 (51)	6 (3)

RESULTS (continued)

Sample comments:

"Finds it easier to talk with adults. Realizes that she has more in common with adults, and that they are not against her."

"I have noticed some things he took that didn't belong to him. He says that they are his friends, or that he found them."

"More willing to sit and listen to what an adult has to say. Also realizes that if we take care of property and respect it, it will look better."

5. Parents were asked to inform us whether, since the family's last contact with the Center, the child had, through misbehavior, been involved with any of several types of agencies. The response is presented in Table VI. Comparable 1960 study figures are included in parentheses.

TABLE VI

INVOLVED THROUGH MISBEHAVIOR WITH...	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	YES	NO
School Authorities	37 (163)	13 (33)	24 (130)
Law Enforcement	36 (160)	7 (19)	29 (141)
Juvenile Court	35 (162)	6 (12)	29 (150)
Other Counseling Service	35 (*)	7 (*)	28 (*)
Correctional Institution	34 (160)	2 (9)	32 (151)

\*not asked in 1960 study

Sample comments:

"Was caught drinking beer in Magnolia Park with other teenagers."

"Misbehavior in classroom. Was sent to principal's office."

"A year ago involved in an auto theft with another boy."

"Caught smoking."

6. We asked the parents whether their child had been living with them the entire time since their last visit to the Center.

The response: YES - 36 NO - 12

RESULTS (continued)

Of the twelve responding "no", the child was presently located as follows:

With Other Relatives	-	6
Children's Home	-	1
Foster Home	-	4
State Institution	-	1

7. The final question asked was, "Do you think the services of the Center for Youth Services were helpful?" Table VII tabulates the responses.

TABLE VII

VERY MUCH SO	SOMEWHAT	MADE NO DIFFERENCE	MADE THINGS WORSE
20	17	3	3

In 1960, the question was asked, "Were the services helpful?"

The response: YES - 172 NO - 19

Sample comments from parents involved in the present study:

"I never would have made it without you."

"You tried." (From a parent who felt that services had made things worse.)

"The social worker was very young, but helpful."

"He quit messing his pants because he didn't want to come in for any more sessions."

"It didn't help our boy, but us."

"We are proud of our daughter in every way, thanks to the Center."

"We learned to replace material values with love."

"Was impressed that I received help right away, and did not have to wait."

One comment, "I don't like social workers!", was offset by six other expressions of appreciation directed toward specific staff members.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. An examination of Table I reveals that parents felt there had been improvement in seventy-seven percent of problems which had initially brought them and their children to the Center.

The highest improvement percentages were registered for stealing (90%), runaway (86%), lying (83%), and fighting (84%). Least success was perceived in tantrums (53%).

2. Comparison of these figures to those of the 1960 study (Table I-A) is subject to the difference in type of data collected, which was noted above.

3. Table II is interesting in that it shows that, of the forty-two cases in which it was possible to compare the parents' perceptions of change at the time of closing to the same parents' perceptions from six to eighteen months later, in twenty-one (50%) cases, the parental judgements remained the same.

Of the other cases, eleven children were later seen as doing better, and ten as getting along less well.

4. Table III shows that perceived improvements in adjustment within the family were registered most highly in regard to general cooperativeness, "being happy", and getting along with mother. Less improvement was seen in relations with father and siblings. In all cases, the percentage seen as "better" was higher than in 1960, although the relative improvements in the five categories were similar to 1960. For instance, improvement in relations with fathers and siblings was seen as less in the older study also.

5. Table IV shows that the highest perceived improvements in the area of school occurred in getting along with teachers and other children. Improvement in grades was seen as occurring in sixty-one percent of cases, and improved liking for school in fifty-eight percent of cases. The ranking of improvement among the four categories was the same as in the 1960 study, and again the 1972 improvement percentages were higher.

6. Table V showed perceived improvements in getting along in the neighborhood in sixty-seven to sixty-nine percent of the cases; figures which are considerably higher than those of the 1960 study.

7. Table VI shows that, following the case being closed, thirty-five percent of our respondents' children had had difficulty with school authorities, compared to twenty percent in 1960. Nineteen percent had subsequent police contacts, compared to twelve percent in 1960. Seventeen percent were later referred to Juvenile Court, compared to seven percent in 1960. Twenty percent sought help at other counseling agencies. Six percent had been sent to a correctional institution, compared to five-and-a-half percent in 1960.

8. The question as to whether the child had been in the home since the case was closed showed that he had in seventy-five percent of the responding

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS (continued)

cases. In the other cases, six were with relatives, and six had had problems requiring placement in foster homes (4) or an institution (2).

9. The final question, "Do you think the services were helpful?", was answered affirmatively by eighty-eight percent of the parents, compared to ninety percent in 1960.

CONCLUSIONS

We would have liked to have been able to follow-up in each of the cases in which we had earlier worked with a child and his family, and we are disappointed that we were not able to find so many and were unable to have a higher return rate on the questionnaires we did send.

The total number of cases is very small, and while some useful indicators emerge, large generalizations would be risky.

We don't know how the "missing" children are doing. It is reasonable to assume that the parents who were most pleased with our efforts were the most likely to return the form.

Similarly, comparisons with the 1960 study can be done only very cautiously. The 1960 sample was much larger, and the rate of return higher. The families were contacted sooner after closing, when the treatment experience was fresher in the minds of the members.

Nevertheless, many of the 1972 findings are encouraging. For instance, despite the fact that the Center program is now much more directed toward the pre-delinquent and delinquent child, the subsequent rate of institutional commitment remained the same.

It was also gratifying to note that comparatively good rates of perceived improvement were registered up to eighteen months later, in the behavior of those children who had been referred for aggressive behavior (stealing, fighting, etc.). We also note that the parents in our study made accurate predictions about behavioral changes, in that their prognoses held true at a later time (Table II).

The present study, then, is generally encouraging to us in our mission of finding more effective ways to help troubled people. A basic part of this mission is the task of finding better ways to measure the effectiveness of what we have already done.

Our efforts to measure effectiveness, reported here, are not, by any means, the complete answer. A great deal of basic research needs to be done, and our present study is only a small contribution.

Whatever ways we will find in the future to improve upon our methods, we remain firmly committed to the proposal that problems, including juvenile

CONCLUSIONS (continued)

delinquency, are most easily solved when efforts are made to prevent them at as early a stage as possible.

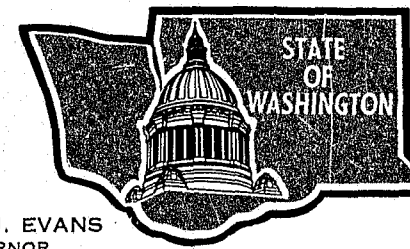
Our commitment to prevention could not be expressed any better than by using the words of one of the mothers of a child, whom we had contacted in the study:

"If I had had access to a clinic such as yours when Connie first showed signs of these problems at the age of six, I'm sure you would have been able to help her. Her problems were just too deep by the time I got to your office for help."



## APPENDIX

Appended are a sample of the letter of explanation which accompanied the questionnaire and a sample questionnaire.



DANIEL J. EVANS  
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

SIDNEY E. SMITH  
SECRETARY

SERVICE DELIVERY DIVISION

SEATTLE-KING COUNTY CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES  
SUITE 300 2208 NW MARKET ST., SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98107

GERALD E. THOMAS  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

For \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

We are attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of our service to the families and children we are trying to help. It is for this reason that we are asking you to fill out the enclosed questionnaire. Please be assured that your replies will be kept in the strictest confidence. Also your replies will place you under no obligation to resume contact with us. We plan to compile the replies for research material which will have no reference to individuals by name. We are entirely dependent for the success of our evaluation on your willingness to complete and return the questionnaire to us.

In filling out the comment sections of the questionnaire, we want you to feel free to express what you think without reference to our feelings.

We wish to thank you in advance for your cooperation with this project. We would appreciate your mailing the completed form to us by \_\_\_\_\_ and have enclosed an addressed and stamped envelope.

Sincerely,

*David Evans*

David Evans  
Regional Director

/mah

SEATTLE - KING COUNTY CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES

EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

We are attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of our services to the youth and families we are trying to help. For this reason, we are asking you to fill out this brief questionnaire. Please be assured that your reply will be kept in the strictest confidence. Space has been provided in the comment sections for you to express your thoughts on each of the questions.

I. WHAT WERE YOUR CHILD'S PROBLEMS WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO THE CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES AND WHAT IS THEIR PRESENT STATUS?

(Please indicate with an X)

	<u>Problems</u>	<u>Much Better</u>	<u>Some Better</u>	<u>No Change</u>	<u>Worse</u>
A.	Disobedience to parents or guardians.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
B.	Excessive fighting with other children in family, school or neighborhood.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
C.	School behavior problems, truancy.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
D.	Poor grades at school.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
E.	Stealing.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
F.	Repeated lying.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
G.	Temper tantrums, destructive behavior.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
H.	Running away.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
I.	Using drugs illegally.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
J.	Unacceptable sexual behavior.....	_____	_____	_____	_____
K.	Other (specify).....	_____	_____	_____	_____

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

V. SINCE YOUR LAST CONTACT WITH THE CENTER, HAS YOUR CHILD THROUGH MISBEHAVIOR BEEN INVOLVED WITH - - -

(Circle the appropriate answer)

- |                                  |     |    |
|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| A. School authorities.....       | Yes | No |
| B. Law enforcement agencies..... | Yes | No |
| C. Juvenile Court.....           | Yes | No |
| D. Other counseling service..... | Yes | No |
| E. Correctional institution..... | Yes | No |

If yes to any of the above, please specify the nature of the problem: \_\_\_\_\_

VI. SINCE YOUR LAST CONTACT WITH THE CENTER, HAS YOUR CHILD BEEN LIVING WITH YOU THE ENTIRE TIME?

(Circle the appropriate answer)

Yes

No

If no, where has child been living and where is he at the present time: \_\_\_\_\_

VII. DO YOU THINK THAT THE SERVICES OF THE CENTER FOR YOUTH SERVICES WERE HELPFUL?

(Circle appropriate statement)

Very Much So      Somewhat      Made No Difference      Made Things Worse

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. Please call us at SU3-9800 if you would like to receive a copy of the report when it is completed, or if you have other comments about this study and do not choose to communicate them in writing.

II. HOW IS YOUR CHILD ADJUSTING TO THE FAMILY AT THE PRESENT TIME IN COMPARISON WITH HIS ADJUSTMENT AT THE TIME YOU FIRST CAME TO THE CENTER?

(Please respond to each of the following statements by circling the appropriate word to the right)

- |   |             |             |           |       |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Being a cooperative member of the family.... | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| B. Being happy.....                             | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| C. Getting along with brothers and sisters..... | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| D. Getting along with mother.....               | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| E. Getting along with father.....               | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

III. HOW IS YOUR CHILD ADJUSTING TO SCHOOL AT THE PRESENT TIME IN COMPARISON WITH HIS ADJUSTMENT AT THE TIME YOU FIRST CAME TO THE CENTER?

(Circle the appropriate word to the right)

- |   |             |             |           |       |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Liking for school.....                 | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| B. Grades.....                            | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| C. Getting along with other children..... | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| D. Getting along with teachers.....       | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

IV. HOW IS YOUR CHILD ADJUSTING TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD AT THE PRESENT TIME IN COMPARISON WITH HIS ADJUSTMENT AT THE TIME YOU FIRST CAME TO THE CENTER?

(Circle the appropriate word to the right)

- |   |             |             |           |       |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Getting along with adults.....               | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| B. Getting along with other children.....       | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |
| C. Having respect for the property of others... | Much Better | Some Better | No Change | Worse |

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

**END**

7. 10. 1951/11. 11.