

NCJRS

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FEDERAL ACTIVITY UPDATE:

Programs Targeting Student Crime and Violence in Schools

ACQUISITIONS

Edited by
Robert J. Rubel, Ph.D.

The range of activity undertaken by the federal government can be viewed as nearly random or nearly logical, depending upon one's point of view. In this brief paper, I have made an attempt to piece the pattern of this activity into a sequence that will permit the reader to see the logic of the entire federal effort. It is my hope that at the same time that the logic of the effort becomes clear, the reasons for the division of labor between Offices will also become apparent.

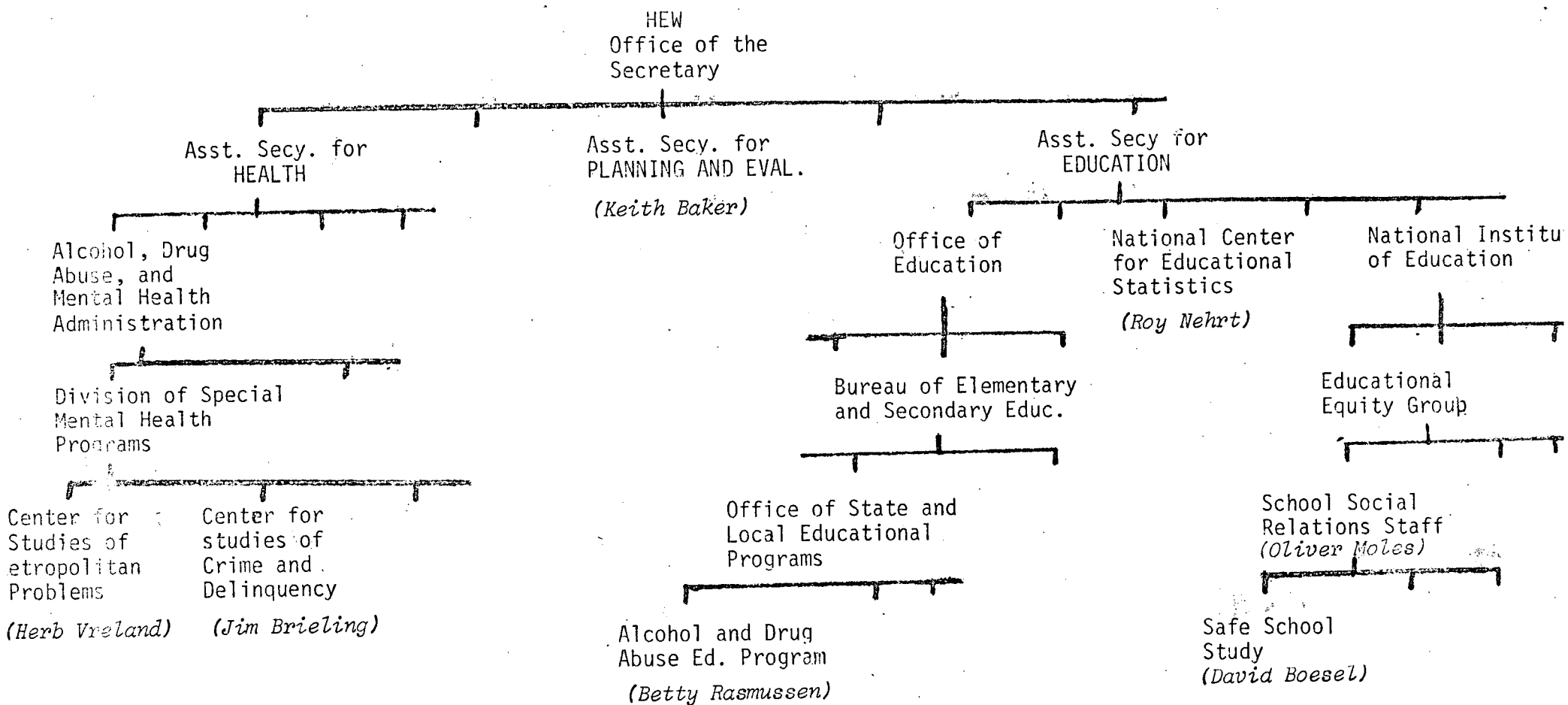
The organization of this Update is as follows: Beginning with a discussion of a study to determine the THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS of efforts to reduce student crime in schools, we move to see the kinds of SURVEYS OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT of the problem are currently in progress. SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE in the form of "prescriptive packages" are mentioned, and then the various PROGRAM RESEARCH AND EVALUATION undertakings are presented. TRAINING, funded by LEAA through HEW's Office of Education is explained just before two program areas within the National Institute of Mental Health get the center stage. The two NIMH programs deal with PROJECT-LEVEL RESEARCH (out of the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency) and RELATED RESEARCH (potentially--but not currently--found within the Center for Studies of Metropolitan Issues).

To aid in the understanding of the text, charts are included that show the relevant organizational aspects of the Offices and Departments whose efforts are discussed here.

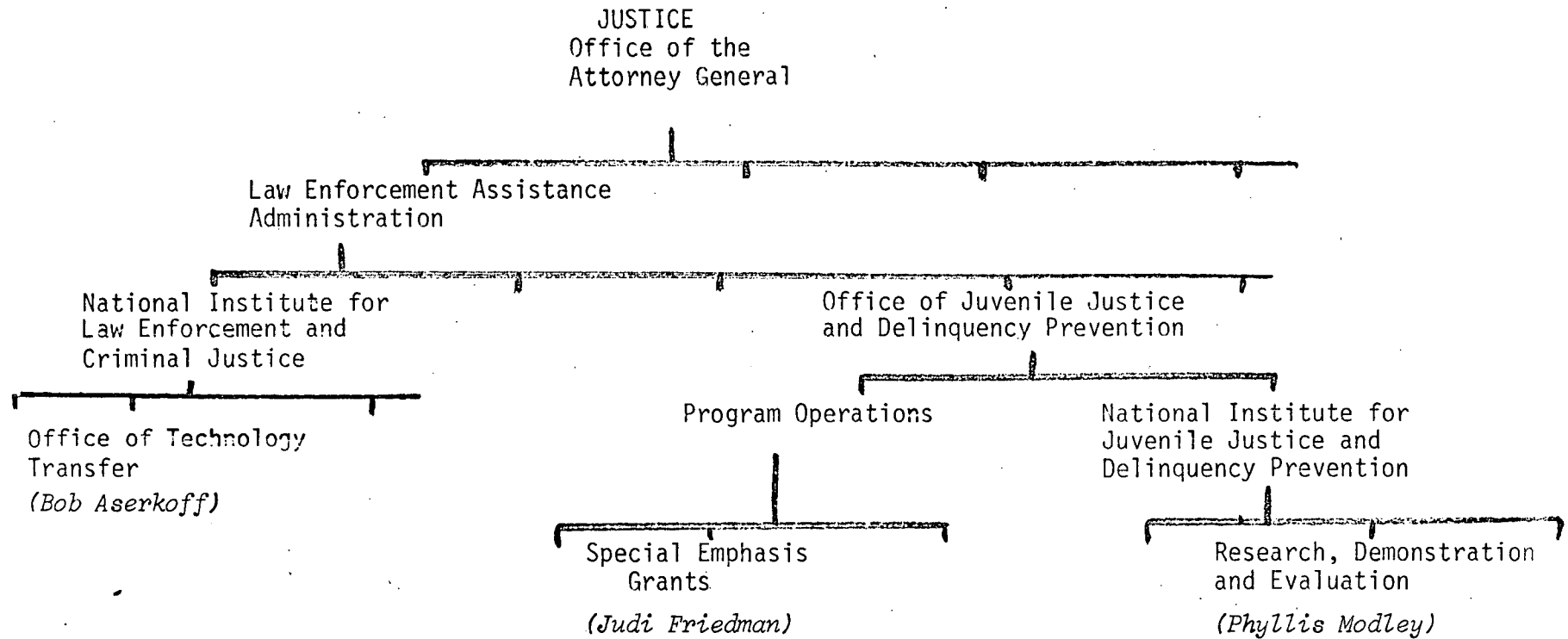
I have chosen to use this editing format rather than a summarization-and-condensation format because I suspect that it lends greater credibility to the final product if each Office is willing to state what it is they are doing -- rather than have that information filtered through an "outsider" who must interpret the activities of an office.

I particularly wish to thank each of the contributors for their timely and responsible treatment of this request for information.

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(NOTE: Names written in are contact points, and not necessarily Office Heads.)



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THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

U.S. Department of H.E.W.
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

Keith Baker, Ph.D.
Program Specialist

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), part of the Office of the Secretary of HEW, is HEW's central planning and evaluation coordinating office. While HEW's major research and evaluation work is carried out by the various operating agencies -- i.e., Office of Education (OE), the National Institute of Education (NIE), etc. -- ASPE also conducts a small number of policy research and evaluation projects.

In reviewing NIE's and the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) initial plans for the Safe Schools Study (discussed elsewhere), ASPE noted that NIE and NCES were proposing a data collection and analysis effort based more on common sense than on the existing state-of-knowledge in the field. In the case of the Safe Schools Study, ASPE decided to augment the study's lack of a theoretical base by simultaneously conducting a study to identify theories of school crime. Because ASPE is particularly interested in poverty problems, it was also decided to make the relationship between poverty and school crime a central, but in no way a limiting concern of the project.

ASPE awarded a contract to the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) to develop the theoretical perspectives by identifying people from various fields who might have something interesting to say about what causes school crime. Based on originality, scope, and quality, 20-40 people have been selected to write an article length theory on school crime. NCCD will assemble the articles into a book length report which should be ready around the end of 1977.

A collection of theoretical perspectives should be useful to both researchers and to those responsible for anti-crime projects for a good theory should summarize what is known about a problem, indicate what the important questions and relationships are, and point out ideas which may not otherwise occur to the reader. The most immediate use to practitioners would be to increase their understanding of the school crime problem and to raise some new ideas as to what can be done to solve the problem. We are purposefully avoiding trying to develop one grand theory of school crime. Such an effort is epistemologically premature, and, more importantly, not as likely

to be practically useful in that it is easier for the school to identify approaches it can do something about. For example, an explanation of school crime based on violence on TV is probably of less use to a school than is a theory of how some types of school organization are more crime prone than others. The first is beyond the power of the school, but the school can do something about the latter.

SURVEY OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

U.S. Department of H.E.W.
National Institute of Education
Educational Equity Group

Oliver C. Moles, Ph.D.
Head, School Social Relations Staff

The School Social Relations Staff sponsors research on the social environment of the school, which includes both cooperative and conflictual patterns of interaction, student rights and student responsibilities. Student alienation and conflict are of major concern including disruptive behavior and some forms of delinquency. The largest project of this unit is the Safe School Study (see below), but other projects in this area planned to begin in this fiscal year or already underway include a study of the effectiveness of alternative schools for disruptive students, the influence of early academic failure and factors in family life on school social relations, and the potential benefits of programs such as peer counseling and organization development activities for improving the school social environment. For more information, please feel free to contact me in care of:

Educational Equity Group
National Institute of Education
Washington, D.C. 20208

NIE's Safe School Study:

In recent years schools have reported large increases in vandalism, attacks on students and teachers, and other crimes. Yet estimates

of the incidence, seriousness, and cost of crime vary widely, and there is a lack of information about effective means of prevention.

Congress has responded to these concerns by mandating in Public Law 93-380 a Safe Schools Study to determine the extent of school crime and the measures being taken to prevent it.

The National Institute of Education (NIE) is working together with the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) to fulfill the mandate of Congress. NCES has conducted a survey of offenses in schools that were reported to the police, and property loss in dollars as a result of illegal activities on school sites. Findings on these points will be included in the NIE final report.

NIE is conducting an intensive investigation into the causes of school crime and the effective means of prevention. NIE's study will result in information that will be directly useful to principals in their continuing efforts to make their schools safe.

NIE will focus especially on prevention strategies and techniques. In order to determine which are most effective, it will also be necessary to know how much crime has been occurring in schools (regardless of whether it was reported to the police) and to have information describing students, schools, and communities. The data collected should indicate factors contributing to crime which may affect the success of various preventive measures.

The NIE research team will analyze the data and write the report for Congress for presentation August 31, 1977. The data gathering is being conducted under contract by the Research Triangle Institute of North Carolina. Based on the findings, conclusions of the study will emphasize measures schools can take, either on their own or with outside assistance, to reduce crime. For more information contact:

David Boesel, Ph.D.
Director, Safe School Study
Educational Equity Group
National Institute of Education
Washington, D.C. 20208

SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

U.S. Department of Justice
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

Robert Aserkoff
Research Program Monitor

LEAA's National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, through its Office of Technology Transfer, has awarded a \$58,000/ten-month grant to the Council of the Great City Schools to develop a Prescriptive Package on School Vandalism. The anticipated end-product will be a highly readable and practical manual for the planning, operation, and administration of both in-school and after-school anti-vandalism programs within the public schools. It will be aimed at an audience of educators, school administrators, school security directors, police and concerned community groups, and will provide concrete guidelines for reducing vandalism with a variety of implementable techniques uncovered through the research.

The project is headed up by Mr. Milton Bins, Senior Associate to the Council, with the primary research responsibilities being performed by Drs. Scott Bass and John Garrett of Centre Research Associates of Boston, Massachusetts.

This effort is the result of careful coordination among LEAA's two principal research components, the National Institute and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's National Institute of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The National Institute of Education is also making substantial contributions to the development of the manual. This inter-agency coordination is hoped to ensure that the manual will present model programs and guidelines which will meet the needs of a variety of communities, educational systems, criminal justice agencies, and supportive social service systems.

The scope of the manual will be sufficiently broad to provide recommended program models in the areas of building security, identification and exclusion of offenders, target hardening, behavioral change in students, human relations institutional change, architectural design, community relations, and combined approaches.

The Prescriptive Package is scheduled for completion in September 1977 and Government Printing Office publication is anticipated in the Spring, 1978. Multiple copies may be purchased from the GPO

and single copies will be available free-of-charge from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Widescale dissemination is also sought through the various educational organizations, including the National Association of School Security Directors.

PROGRAM RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

U.S. Department of Justice
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Judi Friedman and Phyllis Modley
Program Managers

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has initiated a major program effort to reduce school violence and disruption. This effort has three aspects which bear on student crime and violence. One initiative involves transferring 1.2 million dollars to HEW's Office of Education to establish a "School Team Approach for Preventing and Reducing Crime and Disruptive Behavior in Schools." (This initiative is discussed below by Helen Nowlis.) The second initiative involves a \$2 million transfer to the Teacher Corps to establish components within their ten youth advocacy projects wherein students will participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs to reduce school violence and disruption. The third initiative will involve the establishment of a National Resource and Training Center. It is this initiative which is the subject of this brief article.

School Resource and Training Center

At present, school districts have few sources of information and technical assistance to aid them in preventing and controlling crimes committed in and around their constituent schools. What information does exist is scattered and diluted and therefore difficult to access.

With the development of a School Resource Center, schools and school districts will be able to obtain materials describing promising programs to impact school violence, effective techniques to prevent crimes on school premises, findings of studies on the school crime problem, methods of evaluating school crime intervention programs, etc. The School Resource Center will also be able to assist school districts in locating appropriate persons to provide technical assistance to schools for the development and implementation of programs suited to a particular school's needs.

In addition to the information function of the School Resource Center, a major responsibility of the Center will be in the area of training. Instruction will be directed at school security and other school personnel who must deal with school violence and disruption on a day-to-day basis and whose participation in the development of programs to reduce school crime is deemed important to the success of such programs. Training will be designed to upgrade the skills and knowledge of these individuals, with the expected result being the realization of more effective intervention programs.

The School Resource Center will be established through a contract to the organization or institution which most adequately responds to the Request for Proposal developed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for this purpose. The RFP is expected to be published in March 1977, with proposals being accepted in May. It is anticipated that the award of the contract will be made during the summer.

Overall LEAA Evaluation of School-Crime Initiative

The major research activity in the school crime area is a comprehensive evaluation of all parts of the discretionary program initiative described above. The evaluation research is conducted under a grant to the Social Action Research Center of Berkeley, California. The project is called the Umbrella Evaluation of the Schools Initiative and J. Douglas Grant is the Director.

The evaluation recognizes that the initiative encompasses a number of innovative and developmental programs. It is concerned, therefore, not only with assessing the outcomes of the programs, i.e. is there in fact a reduction in crime and the fear of crime? It is equally concerned with documenting how the outcomes come about in order to find out why a project works or doesn't work in a particular setting. These "process" questions address those problems encountered in project implementation and seeks to identify those interventions that seem to hold greatest promise.

TRAINING

U.S. Department of H.E.W.
Office of Education
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Education Program

Betty Rasmussen
Educational Program Specialist

In a cooperative effort with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, the U.S. Office of Education will apply its "school team approach" to the problems of crime and violence in schools. The school team approach, developed by OE's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Education Program (ADAEP) will help schools develop appropriate local strategies aimed at preventing and reducing the incidence, severity and consequences of crime and disruptive behavior which manifests itself in personal and property offenses and other problems within the schools.

The principal objectives of this pilot program are to provide training and on-site technical assistance to local school teams that will result in:

1. A basic understanding of violent and disruptive behavior in the schools, its underlying causes, and its manifestations including crime and physical assault.
2. Skill in assessing local needs with respect to school crime and disruption, in identifying local resources available to implement a program directed at preventing and reducing such events, and in developing a plan and support for it through the active participation of diverse groups representing the school and the community.
3. The development of a comprehensive action plan appropriate for that school which deals with school crime and disruption through such components as counseling services, curricular and instructional modifications, improved security systems, or changes in school climate, structure or policy.
4. The implementation of this plan and the assessment of its results in terms of the likelihood of eventually reducing targeted crime, disruptive behavior and the fear of victimization within the local school.

The 80 teams selected in January represent a cross section of schools serving grades 5-12 that have a history of school crime or other disruptive behavior, or have experienced the consequences of these offenses in terms of fear, discord, or interference with the educational process. Each team consists of seven members including a school administrator, classroom teacher, guidance counselor, school security officer or disciplinarian, one representative of the juvenile justice system, one community representative, and one student or other young person (age 18-22). The mix of people and occupations is designed to insure that all segments of the community work together to design and implement a local program.

Each team will receive two weeks of residential training during February or March at one of the ADAEP Regional Training Centers participating in the pilot project, and followup technical assistance specifically geared to that team's needs as it begins to develop and put into place a prevention program.

The pilot program will be completed September 30, 1977 and will be assessed by LEAA for possible continuation and/or expansion.

PROJECT-LEVEL RESEARCH

U.S. Department of H.E.W.
National Institutes of Mental Health
Division of Special Mental Health Programs
Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency

James Breiling, Ph.D.
Staff Psychologist

The Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency is the focal point within NIMH for research, training, and related activities in the areas of crime and delinquency, individual violent behavior, and law and mental health interactions. The Center places primary emphasis on efforts to understand and cope with problems of mental health as these are or may be reflected in various types of deviant, maladaptive, aggressive, and violent behaviors that frequently involve violations of the criminal or juvenile law. The Center program is largely carried out by means of research and training grants that are awarded to persons who submit successful applications for an independent and

demanding review by professionals whose various fields relate to the broad area of crime and delinquency and mental health. The Center does not have funds for service projects or for projects which essentially are intended to merely improve the program of a particular agency or jurisdiction. A major program objective, however, is to relate all Center research and training activities as closely as possible to actual social needs. For this reason, school security directors and police personnel may find of interest several of the currently funded Center research and training projects for assisting in efforts to conceive, recommend, and support efforts to deal with the larger matrix of problems in which school violence may be a part. The projects are listed below:

1. "Maturational Reform and Rural Delinquency." This study is relating background factors and experiences to the activities and juvenile and criminal offenses of a group of rural and small town youths. The significant study findings to date are briefly summarized in a research report, "Teenage Delinquency in Small Town America," that is available free from the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency.
2. "Treatment of Childhood Behavior Problems." This project is attempting to develop, test, and refine methods of parent and teacher training that will affect significant behavior changes with high-risk "oppositional" children that will not only reduce the problem behaviors that are targeted, but that will affect other desired behavior changes in a way that will result in the maintenance of therapeutic change over time. For information on the assessment, evaluation, and treatment procedures, contact Robert G. Wahler, Ph.D., Child Behavior Institute, 1720 Lake Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee 37916.
3. "Achievement Place." This is a multi-project effort to develop, refine, and test an effective, economical, humane, and practical model for the treatment of pre-delinquent and delinquent youths in a group home setting. The model has to date been adopted by more than 50 group homes in states ranging from Florida to Maryland to Minnesota to Texas to Nevada. Many of the procedures developed for the group home model may well be transferrable to treatment efforts in other settings. The model also contains a unique and important consumer evaluation system. For a wide array of varied items -- from a readable, comprehensive, and practical manual on the implementation of the model to magazine descriptions of it to research papers, write: The Achievement Place Project, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

4. "Preparation Through Responsive Educational Programs." This is a school-based model for the remediation of academic and social skill deficits of low achieving and/or disruptive junior high school age students, and for developing family support systems. The model has been tested in suburban, rural, and urban schools. For information on the instruction materials and procedures, and results of the evaluations, write Mr. James Flipczak, PREP Project, Institute for Behavioral Research, 2429 Linden Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.
5. "Community-Based Treatment and Prevention." This project has developed, refined, and tested a family training model for the treatment of youths who are aggressive and/or who steal. A school intervention component has also been developed. For information on popularly written explanations of the treatment model, and for copies of research reports, write Gerald Patterson, Ph.D., Oregon Research Institute, P.O. Box 3196, Eugene, Oregon 97403.
6. "Home-based Treatment of Juvenile Probationers." This project has extended the Achievement Place model from the group home setting to the families and homes of juvenile probationers. For information on the treatment procedures and outcomes, contact Edward R. Christophersen, Ph.D., Family Training Program, 4121 West 83rd Street. Suite 125, Prairie Village, Kansas 66208.

For a fuller description of the Center program, please write me in care of the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency, National Institute of Mental Health, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

RELATED RESEARCH INTEREST

U.S. Department of H.E.W.
National Institutes of Mental Health
Division of Special Mental Health Programs
Center for Studies of Metropolitan Problems

Herbert H. Vreeland, Ph.D.
Social Science Analyst

The Center for Studies of Metropolitan Problems (Metro Center) is primarily concerned with the mental health consequences of contemporary urban life. The Center's mission is (1) to develop a better understanding of how complex urban processes affect the lives of urban people, and (2) to foster a wider and more effective use of this scientific knowledge among those most able to promote the well-being and mental health of urban populations through direct and indirect forms of social action. To carry out its mission the Center conducts programs of research, demonstration and training, using such means as research and training grants, fellowships, contracts and program development conferences.

A major research area in the Center's program concerns urban institutions. The school system constitutes one of these institutions. The Center has funded studies involving the relationship between education and social mobility and between school and housing segregation patterns. To date, we have not funded or encouraged studies specifically in the area of school crime and violence.

The Center's orientation to schools and school systems is ecological. We see the school not as a separate entity but as one component of a complex social system involving the school, the community, the family, voluntary organizations and various agencies of local government and community service. We see disruptive or destructive behavior in the schools as one type of response to social and psychological stresses that originates in many places in this system and that affects not only youths but also teachers, counselors, families, neighborhoods and the community at large. Thus crime and violence are viewed not in isolation but on a spectrum of dysfunctional behaviors along with self-abuse and self-destructiveness, absenteeism, running away, and a wide range of psychic and psychomatic disorders that reflect different kinds of responses to varying types and levels of stress.

In this context the Center's primary concern is to identify the source and nature of social and psychological factors that tend to generate chronic dysfunctional stress among youth, and that tend to produce disruptive or destructive behaviors on the part of certain individuals, or in particular institutional settings, or in particular kinds of urban communities or climates of social change. The following aspects of this situation appear to be especially relevant for study:

- (1) formal and informal structural relationships between schools and their surrounding communities, and public service systems.
- (2) school, community and family support systems for youth.
- (3) role and status problems of youth in transition to adult roles and statuses.
- (4) problem definition and communication styles among the various adult actors who relate to youth.