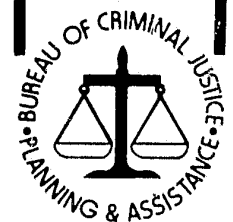


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FLORIDA NETWORK OF RUNAWAY
AND YOUTH SERVICES
GRANT NUMBER: 75-AS-29-E101
AUGUST, 1977

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The Florida Department of Administration Division of State Planning



EVALUATION REPORT

NCJRS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This is the first evaluation by the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance of the Florida Network project, which became operational in September, 1976. Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) funds are utilized for the portion of Network activities which addresses the needs of runaway youth and their families. The evaluation is based on the initial 9 month grant period: September, 1976 - May, 1977.

The Network activities funded through the JJDP Act include; establishment of a statewide data base on runaway youth; assurance of compliance of Florida runaway centers with state standards; mobilizing public and private sector cooperation and support for runaway youth and family services in Florida; increasing runaway centers' planning capabilities; facilitating coordination among national, regional, and state runaway centers/networks in providing and upgrading services to runaway youth; and establishment of an information clearinghouse.

The most recent grant from JJDP Act funds to the Network was in the amount of \$23,333 for the time period June, 1977 - May, 1978. The grant pays for eighty-five percent of the project director's time, and fifty percent of a clerical staff person's time.

FINDINGS

An analysis of Network files, survey questionnaire results from 9 of Florida's 11 runaway centers, and interviews with Network and runaway center staff indicated that the project has developed contacts with all state runaway centers and with some major resources for runaway youth nationally, in other states, and in-state.

Further, the Network has considerably increased the visibility of runaway youth and family problems and services through its newsletter, participation in local, state, regional, and state workshops and conferences, and provision of technical assistance.

Formal documentation of activities relating to specific objectives was found to be sparse in some areas. Definition of roles and responsibilities of Network staff and the Network, in general, were often unclear. A major portion of the problem regarding role and responsibility delineation appeared to be due to the fact that the Network receives funds from a variety of sources, to perform varied activities. Also, the concept of "networking" is highly complex and requires much delineation of processes and acceptance of responsibilities both in the part of the Network central office and the centers.

The Network has played a minor role in the state in setting common goals for runaway centers. For this reason, and a variety of other reasons, the establishment of a statewide data base on runaway youth has essentially not occurred.

Increased technical expertise in the areas of planning and management would appear to be beneficial to the project.

Despite the deficiencies in the project, which have been occasioned by a variety of factors - some of which have been beyond project control - the Network serves a very necessary central coordinating function for runaway services which is not being filled by any other agency or organization. In view of this fact, continued funding is recommended.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improved accountability via development of formats for technical assistance requests, and technical assistance evaluation; and aggregation of data collected.
2. Further training for Network staff in planning and management, with such expertise to be transferred to runaway center directors.
3. Development of data base and goals for runaway centers via meetings with SPA staff, Network staff, Office of Youth Development staff, and runaway project directors.
4. Increased priority emphasis on in-state coordination and improvement of services to runaway youth.
5. Priority emphasis on private sector and local governmental agencies and organizations with regard to runaway services improvement.

EVALUATION REPORT

Introduction

The Florida Network of Runaway and Youth Services (FNRYS) was selected for evaluation in 1977, for several reasons. First, the Network is a state-level project with potentially broad impact. Most other state-level projects in the juvenile justice and delinquency prevention functional area are either awarded to the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services Youth Services Program Office which performs its own fairly intensive evaluations, or are awarded to other agencies but are not yet operational.

In selecting this project for evaluation, the SPA hoped to: begin assessing some of the impact of JJDP Act funds in the state; attempt to measure the impacts of a project which did not provide direct services to youth, but was rather a coordinative and technical assistance mechanism.

The primary users of this evaluation would be relevant SPA staff, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the NCJRS, the project director, runaway center directors in the State, the State Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Task Force, the SPA Supervisory Board, MPUs and RPCs, and the Florida Legislature.

Methodology

Evaluation objectives were developed with two major goals in mind: to assess the internal effectiveness of the project ("monitoring"); and to assess the impact/effectiveness of the project on improving services to runaway youth in Florida ("outcome evaluation"). The following are the evaluation objectives developed, with the procedures used to measure each:

- (1) To determine the impact of this project on increasing the planning capabilities within Florida's runaway centers.

Methodology

- Review of data being collected by the centers, on which to base planning decisions, and any plans for services to runaways developed by centers 6 months prior to Network inception and 1 year after project - by questionnaire survey.
- (2) To determine the effectiveness of the project in ensuring compliance with the Florida draft Juvenile Delinquency standards regarding runaway services in the Florida runaway centers.

Methodology

- Review of operating manuals/program guidelines for the individual runaway centers, 6 months prior to Network inception and 1 year after project inception - by questionnaire survey/copies of material.
- (3) To determine the effectiveness of the project in mobilizing and/or increasing public and private sectors' cooperation and support for runaway services in Florida.

Methodology

- Review of runaway center logs or records of volunteer participation in providing center services - by questionnaire survey.
 - Review of composition of runaway centers' boards of directors or advisory boards - by questionnaire survey.
 - Review of runaway centers' fiscal data regarding donations to the programs - by questionnaire survey.
 - Information from runaway centers' staffs regarding other community support services for runaway youth by questionnaire survey (all of the above 6 months prior to Network inception - January-June, 1976 - and 1 year after project inception - January-June, 1977).
- (4) To determine the effectiveness of the project in facilitating coordination among the national and Florida runaway centers or networks in providing services to runaway youth.

Methodology

- Review of contacts (telephone/letters/meetings) between Florida and other states; between Florida and National Runaway Network; letters of cooperation or agreement between the centers/network and other public/private agencies or organizations. (6 months prior to Network inception - January-June, 1976 - and 1 year after project inception - January-June, 1977) - by correspondence and questionnaire survey.
- (5) To determine the internal effectiveness of the project in meeting programmatic objectives (regarding provision of technical assistance; development of a data base on runaways; and providing an information clearinghouse).

Methodology

- Review of data collected by Network and publications collected/disseminated by Network - by materials review, at point in time which evaluation is performed.

The evaluation data was to be compared in several ways: pre/post project inception; with draft Juvenile Delinquency standards on runaways; with any relevant national studies on networks and/or runaway centers; and with Network project objectives.

Questionnaire survey forms were pretested and then mailed to all 11 runaway centers in Florida (see Appendix) for completion and return to the SPA. Additionally, 3 personal, follow-up interviews were conducted with runaway project directors to check the validity of responses and note problematic areas of responses. Network staff collected appropriate data and gave this to SPA staff, in response to each of the evaluation objectives; SPA staff also conducted an on-site interview with Network staff and had several other non-site and telephone discussions with Network staff to collect further data.

Several limitations or qualifications were noted either at the start of the evaluation, or during the course of collecting and analyzing data. First, although it is acknowledged that "networking" is a concept somewhat difficult to grasp and even more difficult to quantify, the measurable objectives in the Network's grant proposal for LEAA funds are vague with a great deal of additional information or explanation given which serves to further cloud, rather than to clarify the objectives regarding what the Network will accomplish. Such lack of clarity made the development of evaluation design and objectives, with appropriate measures, exceedingly difficult. Second, the fact that 7 of the 11 existing runaway centers receive OYD (Office of Youth Development) funding - which carries some very stringent requirements regarding data collecting, planning, etc. - limited the possibility of measuring Network impact on these centers, as it was highly likely that OYD requirements "caused" certain upgrading of services to runaways, rather than Network assistance "causing" such upgrading. Third, the fact that 8 of the 11 existing runaway centers began prior to the Network's inception in 1976, may also have limited the Network's impact on those centers, as their mode and processes of operation were already fairly well established.

Background Data

The initial developmental phase of the FNRYS began in 1974; the formal development of the Network as a corporate structure was completed in 1976. Funding from LEAA for the Network began in September of 1976; with \$17,500 of JJDP Act funds for a 9 month grant period; funding was continued in 1977, via an award of \$23,333 JJDP Act funds for a twelve month period (June, 1977-May, 1978). Currently, the Network is scheduled to receive \$50,000 of 1978 JJDP Act funds.

During its first 9 months of operation, the Network concentrated on hiring and training staff; developing an organizational structure; establishing internal policies and procedures; developing and solidifying local, state, regional, and national contacts; and initiating input into local, state, regional, and national policies impacting on youth. Each of the 11 Florida runaway centers was the recipient of an on-site visit by Network staff, with primary emphasis on review of draft standards on runaway services developed initially by the Governor's Task Force on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, with the diligent support and assistance of the runaway centers, and on understanding the concept of networking of services.

Also in its first 9 months, the Network participated in several workshops and conferences, among them: regional multi-regional workshops for the Office of Youth Development (OYD) and the National Youth Alternatives Project (NYAP); a NYAP conference in Florida; National Network of Runaway and Youth Services; an alcoholism workshop for FNRYS alcohol worker pilot center projects; a Governor's Task Force meeting on runaway standards; and a FNRYS runaway center state conference.

Clearinghouse data was collected; this entailed accumulating approximately 110 resources, cataloguing those items, and developing forms for the dissemination of those resources.

Developing a statewide data base was also targeted, but with limited success, due partially to changes in report forms utilized by OYD.

A newsletter entitled "Renaissance" was also begun during these first 9 months, which provided information on Networking OYD funding, other federal funding sources, youth employment, and other major youth-related issues.

The general problems which the Network attempted to target on were: lack of coordination among resources for runaway youth and their families, and general upgrading of services for runaway youth and their families. Because of its commitment to youth advocacy and to the concept of networking services within and between geographical areas, the Network has - since its initial inception - attempted to broaden its scope to youth and private sector services for youth. Although many activities participated in by the Network were not funded by the JJDP Act grant monies, the Network also became actively involved in legislative input and an extensive youth alcohol project, through contract with NYAP/NIAAA.

Findings

A. Planning Capabilities - Two major questions on the survey administered to the 11 runaway centers were designed to solicit information on Network impact on center planning capabilities: one item dealt with data collected by centers on which to base planning decisions; the other dealt with the actual production of a written plan for center operation. Nine of the eleven centers responded to

the questionnaire - five of which receive at least some funding from LEAA monies. The requirements of OYD funding - as noted in the "Methodology" section - appeared to have the most influence on the development of a programmatic planning capability. Network input in the form of technical assistance was mainly directed at development of a statewide networking of centers. Two of the nine centers were not operational as of June, 1976, and so could not respond to the first portion of items one and two. By June, 1977, all centers collected almost all of the data indicated - plus 4 centers collected additional data not specified in the questionnaire. Of those centers operational in June, 1976, all but one had a written plan. In June, 1977, all 9 responding centers had developed a written plan or were in the process of so doing.

As indicated by questionnaire responses, all 9 of the responding centers were aware that the Network offered technical assistance in the areas of program and administrative planning. Five centers indicated that they had utilized the program planning technical assistance and two indicated use of some administrative planning assistance. In responding to an item regarding results of technical assistance, two centers indicated some actual impact in their program as a result of planning technical assistance (i.e., more attention focused on systematic program development; institution of "awake night supervision").

Some interviews conducted indicated that the Network's expertise in the area of planning and program development might have been at least primarily centered in one staff person who left the Network before its first year was completed.

B. Ensuring Compliance with Standards - With regard to the draft runaway standards for Florida, the Network solicited input from all of the 11 centers via a review/comment process in on-site visits, and assisted the SPA in preparing the standards. The Network also requested, by utilizing a formal outline form, input from the centers regarding what plans they had for ensuring their programs' compliance with standards. To some extent, the results of this assessment were incorporated by the Network into the existing system and implementation strategy portions of the runaway standards, which it assisted the SPA in preparing.

The item on the survey questionnaire which attempted to measure standards compliance and progress made in that area, solicited information on written center manuals. Not all of the responding centers sent copies of their manuals, but all 9 respondents at least indicated that such manuals had been developed and all were either in the process of revising manuals or had done so since September, 1976, (when the Network began operation).

The Network did not provide an aggregated summary of center responses in its LEAA progress reports, regarding areas in which centers were not in compliance with standards. Therefore, technical assistance of the Network to bring centers into compliance could not be completely assessed. However, Network staff indicated that they felt the evaluation of centers' capabilities to meet standards might be threatening to centers and might, therefore, impair the first year of Network development.

In view of the amount of time and effort the Network expended with the centers in the standards review process, however, it is believed that some positive impact could have resulted - if only because of the fact that specific efforts were made to solicit center input, and centers would be more likely to conform to standards in which they had an investment.

C. Public/Private Sector Cooperation/Support - Four major question areas on the survey administered to the runaway centers attempted to assess public and private sector cooperation and support for runaway services. Such support was seen as integral to the Network's task of helping to coordinate and upgrade services for runaway youth. The four items addressed: the utilization of volunteers, receipt of donations, composition of governing or advisory boards, and community support services available to serve runaway youth.

For the most part, volunteer use appeared to remain fairly constant, pre and post Network inception; however, the two centers which became operational after September, 1976, both showed fairly extensive volunteer use. It is difficult to assess whether such heavy utilization of volunteers is something common to runaway center program development during the initial phases, or whether the Network's encouragement and training in using volunteers may have had a positive impact.

Of the 8 centers responding to the question regarding governing/advisory board composition, 4 either were not operational in June, 1976, or had no such boards. Of the 4 remaining centers, one had a board composed of a wide range of representatives from the community, but with no youth; one utilized the board of another "parent" organization which was limited in composition and had no youth; the other 2 had a fair range of community representation, with one having several youth represented and the other having no such representation. From 1976 to 1977, there was no change in the basic composition of such boards in existing centers; however, one center not previously operational developed a board with a very broad representative base and a large youth advisory group. The Network also solicited information regarding youth participation in center operations via a questionnaire entitled "Youth Participation in Society Analysis"; however, this measure was only taken at one point in time and results were not provided in LEAA progress reports. It is highly possible-based on the Network's commitment to youth participation in planning, developing, and assessing services for youth, and based on several interviews with center and Network staff-that the Network has had an impact on at least garnering support for youth involvement in cooperating with and supporting services for runaway youth. (One major obstacle for more visible impact on the composition of governing/advisory boards of the

Network may have been the still rather innovative nature of broadening the composition of such boards to include consumers and minority members.)

Of the 8 centers responding to the question regarding donations to their programs, 2 were not operational in June of 1976, and 4 centers showed no donations from January-June of 1976. However, by the time period January-June of 1977, 6 of the 8 centers showed either material or cash donations, with only one center showing a decrease from the 1976 time period. It is possible that the centers increased the donations they received on their own; however, it is just as possible that the Network - by providing information on fund raising and survival strategy - assisted the centers in developing private sector financial support for their programs.

Of the 8 centers responding to the questions regarding community support services, only one center was not operational in January-June, 1976; the other 7 programs showed no change in community support services available between 1976-1977. According to the above-noted 8 responses, major community support service gaps appear to have been - and remain to be - diversionary mechanisms, medical and dental rehabilitative services, and psychological testing services. Only 3 centers showed all services listed as being available. The one center which became operational after June of 1976, showed all listed services plus three additional services not listed. Again, the possibility of positive Network impact cannot be ruled out in the case of the one newer responding center, even though a positive causation link cannot be drawn.

In looking at agencies or organizations with which centers had/have formal service agreements, 9 of the centers responding showed no change from the first to the second reporting time period, except for the two which became operational after the first report period. Those two centers showed from 3-6 such agreements, which is more than that reported by 3 of the previously operating centers. Another measure used to assess public and private sector cooperation and support was correspondence and letters of agreements to/from the Network. Such a measure indicated contact with at least 12 other states, 2 Florida universities, at least 12 Florida cities, 2 Florida counties, various segments of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, several private associations in Florida, the Office of Youth Development (DHEW), the National Youth Alternatives Project, the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, the National Association of Counties, the National Runaway Switchboard, the National Self-Help Resource Center, all 11 runaway programs in Florida, Florida YMCA's and the Girls Clubs of America (nationally and in-state).

The Network also initiated two national mailings for the strengthening of the National Network through the formation of a national data base.

D. Facilitating Coordination - Two items on the questionnaire survey attempted to assess changes in contacts between Florida's runaway centers, other regions, and other states, which might have been attributable to Network coordination efforts. The first item dealt with participation in multi regional conferences/meetings/workshops: 6 of 9 responses indicated an increase in such participation; however, 2 of those 6 were not operational during the first time report period. Two of the respondents noting decreased participation indicated that the Network's linkage or representation was the major reason for such a decrease.

With regard to a question concerning program staff contact with persons or agencies in other states on behalf of runaway youth, all but one of the 8 centers responding indicated an increase in such contacts. Two of the 7 centers reporting an increase gave credit to the Network for its coordinating efforts; one center reporting a decrease, attributed this change to Network coordination efforts.

Initially, staff at the SPA had anticipated that the reporting of increases in both these types of contact might be an index of Network efforts to broaden the range of contacts for Florida runaway programs. Due to the responses received, however, it appears that a decrease in such contacts may also indicate Network effectiveness in coordinating services and in acting as a representative for the individual centers.

In addition to the questionnaire survey responses, Network file reviews showed several organizations with which the Network had established contact in an attempt to provide better out-of-state cooperation for services to runaways. These agencies included: the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, the National Runaway Switchboard, the National Youth Alternatives Project, the National Coalition of Hotlines, the National Self-Help Resources Center, the San Diego Community Congress, Office of Youth Development/Region IV Runaway Centers, and the Rhode Island, Oregon, and Michigan Coalitions of Runaway Centers. Also, the state conference for runaway centers conducted by the Network in May of 1977, is an indication of the Network's efforts to facilitate coordination among the Florida Runaway Centers. There were, however, several other resources for which there were no indications of agreements or particular cooperation by the Network. These included: Inter-state Compact administrators for juveniles and dependent youth, national and/or state Travelers' Aid Societies, and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

E. Internal Effectiveness - Voluminous material was reviewed from the Network, along with questionnaire survey responses, in attempting to assess the internal effectiveness of the Network in

meeting its programmatic objectives in providing technical assistance; developing a data base on runaways; and providing an information clearinghouse.

With regard to the questionnaire survey, all of the 9 responding centers indicated an awareness that the Network provides technical assistance in a variety of areas, with the exception that 2 respondents were not aware of such assistance in the subject area of fund raising. All respondents had utilized Network assistance in the areas of staff development and training, and runaway systems statewide; 6 of the 9 had utilized clearinghouse information; 5 of 9 had used technical assistance in the areas of program planning and networking; 4 of 9 used assistance regarding volunteer utilization and community development; 3 of 9 used proposal writing, survival strategy, and counseling skill technical assistance; 2 of 9 used administrative planning, program initiation, and community leadership technical assistance. The most heavily used technical assistance services provided by the Network were runaway systems statewide and clearinghouse information. The most frequently reported modes of technical assistance delivery were "in-person" and "mail."

According to correspondence files of the Network, requests for technical assistance were received by the Network from at least 9 of the 11 runaway centers in Florida from September of 1976-June of 1977. Other Network correspondence indicates at least 8 requests for information and/or assistance from Network staff; the sources of such requests were as follows: Youth Services Specialist, DHRS District 2; Program Development Associates; Iowa Runaway Services; Youth Services, Inc. (New Orleans); South Carolina Department of Youth Services; Regional Institute of Social Work Research, Inc. (Georgia); Office of Youth Development; and the National Youth Alternatives Project. Review of materials indicated an apparent lack of a systematic recording mechanism for most types of technical assistance requests. There were, however, forms for receipt and request of clearinghouse information; however, no summary of the "outgoing clearinghouse information" form was provided in either the project progress reports or information gathered by the Network for each evaluation objective, so that no actual check of clearinghouse activities could be made except by reviewing correspondence.

The Network also developed a "technical assistance evaluation" form; however, no copies of responses to this form were included in progress reports or data gathered for the SPA evaluation by the Network. The actual questions in the evaluation form were rather vague and did not all seem to be actually an attempt to assess the quality of technical assistance provided; also, there was no particular space for comments from recipients.

According to Network reports, the subject areas frequently indicated by centers' staffs as priorities for further technical assistance (from on-site visits) were: volunteerism, outreach, and

peer management systems. Most of these areas appear to have been addressed by workshops in the May, 1977 conference for Florida's Runaway Network. Centers were also sent several checklists to complete regarding desired clearinghouse information and subject areas for the May conference. Four subject areas were most frequently prioritized by centers for the statewide conference: volunteers, outreach, family counseling, and youth participation in society - the latter two areas received the 2 highest overall priorities.

With regard to the establishment of a data base on runaways, the Network itself has indicated severe problems in accomplishing its initial objectives. Several barriers to developing the data base have been evident: OYD's data requirements have already been set and are somewhat different from what the Network needs; centers have set their data collection processes and are not anxious to change what serves their purposes adequately; runaway center staff generally appear to place first priority on providing direct, client services, and second priority on "paperwork" tasks, (i.e. filling out data forms). The Network solicited extensive statistics on runaway youth and services provided to them, in addition to programmatic information and publications, from the 11 centers. All centers appear to have responded quite well to this informational request, but with varying degrees of extensiveness. At this point in time, however, the data base has still not been developed to the Network's satisfaction. (Many of the materials received from the centers appeared to be of very high quality, and are good basic materials for some model policies, procedures, and programs which the Network could provide to all centers.)

Another task which the Network hoped to accomplish was the identification of resources for skill-sharing and support within the Network programs and external to the programs. To this end, two forms were developed - the "External Program Resources: Skills and Support Bank" and "Internal Program Resources: Skills and Support Bank" forms. However, no final listing or summary of responses received were documented in progress reports of the Network or materials prepared for this evaluation by the Network. Additionally, no formal plans have been outlined by the Network to utilize those resources identified.

The Network also made efforts to involve all Network members in a planning, self-evaluation, and budget process development effort by creating an extensive PSEBP (planning, self-evaluation, and budget process) form, which was to be completed by each program unit of a program. This format included: program need or goal - priority; specific objectives; implementation strategies; realistic capabilities; evaluation methods; and reporting techniques. Response to this format was not documented in progress reports or information provided to the SPA for evaluation, however.

F. Other Major Findings - The following findings resulted from review of the various evaluation materials collected and from interviews with center and Network staff, but were not initially envisioned in the evaluation design.

First, it appears that some of the problems encountered by the Network in accomplishing all of its objectives to the extent initially expected may have resulted from the fact that the Network was initially created by staff involved in the runaway centers to fill a particular need. Much of the Network's activities have been constrained, to some extent, by this reactive role. There seems to be a great deal of concern on the part of many of the centers that they not lose their local "flavor" and autonomy. Because of this concern and the lack of more specific direction from both OYD and LEAA - the 2 major funding sources for runaway centers - common goals for runaway centers are unclear and uncertain. The major explicit common goal for such programs, at present, is the provision of services to meet the immediate needs of runaway youth (i.e., food, clothing, shelter, crisis counseling, emergency medical services). However, implicit in the provision of services to runaway youth is the longer range common goal of reducing the recidivism of runaway youth. The Network has not taken a proactive role in defining common goals for runaway centers. Until such time as this is done, the logic behind accumulating statistics for a data base will remain unclear and, consequently, unacceptable to many program staff.

Second in operation there seem to be potential - if not actual - management problems for the Network due to several factors. In operation, there does not seem to have been a clear delineation of the various roles and responsibilities of Network central office and centers staff. The Network does receive funding from several sources and has taken on responsibilities additional to those initially outlined, in the areas of legislative monitoring, networking of services for youth and their families, and youth alcohol services. Involvement in such a variety of diverse activities and lack of delineation of roles and responsibilities require very tight management procedures which are not presently evident in Network operations. (However, this issue has been addressed to some degree in another evaluation of the Network performed by the Human Resources Development, Inc.)

The second finding had several additional implications. First, by moving into a more general advocacy role for youth and by becoming involved in legislative monitoring, the Network has begun to possibly duplicate services of the Center for Children and Youth. There is some specific delineation between the two projects, at least as far as target groups are concerned. Very simplistically, the Network (LEAA funded portion was originally conceptualized by the SPA as concentrating on runaway youth - with the Center being more of a generalized advocate for all youth. Second, it appears that some further delineation has occurred between the two projects with regard to their "power bases" in-state, although this is difficult to document. The Network appears to have had more productive contacts with private sector and lower level governmental resources in-state than with the upper-level power brokers

(e.g. state legislature, DHRS program office staff); whereas, the Center appears to be more effective with the opposite power groups.

Another finding which resulted from analysis of the data was that, although the Network seems to have had some positive impact on national policies and on strengthening national and out-of-state liaisons for runaway youth, state policies, procedures, and liaisons to improve services for runaway youth have received comparatively little attention from the Network. Services and linkages for runaway youth in Florida are still far from ideal and formalized, and should have been addressed as the first priority with LEAA funds allocated to Florida.

Summary

The Network was monitored by the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance in May of 1977. According to that monitoring report, the Network was in compliance with all applicable LEAA requirements. The only recommendation made as a result of the monitoring was that the Network devote an issue of its newsletter "Renaissance" to publicizing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the role of the SPA and Juvenile Delinquency Task Force in implementing the Act. According to financial information attached with the monitoring report, the operating revenue for the period September 1, 1976-May 18, 1977 was as follows: \$17,500 LEAA; \$1,944 Local Match; \$50,000 Private Foundation: and \$10,063 N.I.A.A.A.

Attempts were made to compare the evaluation data collected with draft Juvenile Delinquency standards for runaway centers, and studies of networks and centers. However, both comparisons were not feasible due to lack of data. Therefore, the major emphasis has been on project objectives, pre/post assessment of center operations, and center/Network staff input regarding the Network's success/usefulness.

Overall, it appears that the FNRYS in its first year of operation has made some good basic strides in establishing contact with the runaway centers in Florida and with some major resources for runaways both in-state and out-of-state.

The Network appears to have had the most successful impact on mustering cooperation and support for runaway services - largely through increasing the visibility of runaway problems and services - and on facilitating coordination among runaway centers and networks statewide, regionally and nationally. Provision of technical assistance and clearinghouse information are more difficult to assess in terms of Network impact, except that areas which indicated gaps in centers' services do not appear to have been filled during the Network's first year of operation. Therefore, it is estimated that success or usefulness of services in these two areas has been limited. Network impact on ensurance of compliance with stan-

dards was also difficult to measure, due to lack of summary information; however, it is estimated that the major Network impact was on soliciting input - and therefore, making strong attempts to insure ultimate compliance - of the centers in the development of the standards. Establishment of a data base and increasing planning capabilities of the centers are viewed as the areas of least impact/success by the Network in its first year, due to the limitations mentioned previously.

Recommendations

1. First priority should be on improving the provision and co-operation in Florida of services to runaway youth.

Runaway services are still far from ideal in terms of availability throughout the state and formal linkages with other services. The Network has concentrated considerable efforts on regional and national efforts, but needs to focus more on Florida efforts.

2. Out-of-state and national liaison efforts should not be escalated to any large degree, but formal contracts should be established with Traveler's Aid Society, the Salvation Army, and Interstate Compact Administrators on Juveniles and Dependent Youth for the purpose of facilitating data collection and follow-up referrals.

Data collection regarding recidivism of runaway youth and the meeting of longer-term needs of runaway youth has been exceedingly difficult to obtain in a consistent manner. Other sources for obtaining this data need to be tapped by the Network.

3. Network and center planning capabilities should be increased via either a staff member's attendance at the Criminal Justice Planning Institute and then transfer of capability in a workshop for all center directors, or via requesting technical assistance from the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance to conduct such a workshop.

Specialized expertise in the area of planning appears somewhat weak at the Network central level, and consequently capabilities of many Network runaway centers to do technical planning of services has received inadequate attention.

4. Network should prepare a report for the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance which includes an assessment of existing centers' compliance with draft runaway standards, specific problem areas in attaining compliance, and strategies (with timetable) for accomplishing compliance.

Although the Network and centers expended considerable effort in developing standards and attempted to identify degree of centers' compliance, full identification of compliance problems center-by-center, with problems and strategies for attaining standards has never been sufficiently accomplished.

5. Forms for request of all types of technical assistance should be developed, with summaries of such requests to be provided to the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance with each quarterly progress report.

No formalized format was available for requests of all types of Network technical assistance, which makes it exceedingly difficult to monitor provision of such assistance.

6. Technical assistance evaluation format should be revised (perhaps similar to that utilized by the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance), with summaries of all such evaluations provided to the BCJPA with each quarterly progress report.

Technical assistance evaluation formats utilized by the Network do not appear to fully address all facets of consumer assessment of services, and results were not always provided to the SPA.

7. Skill-sharing resources thus far identified should be compiled and disseminated to the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance and to all center staffs. Recommendations for utilization of such resources should also be prepared and provided to the BCJPA.

The Network did an excellent survey of skill-sharing resources among the runaway centers; however, a summary compilation of resources identified did not appear to have been prepared, and no formal plan proposed by utilizing resources identified.

8. Priority areas for technical assistance via on-site visits, statewide workshops, and model program/policy casebooks should be: development of formal diversionary mechanisms; provision of medical and dental rehabilitative services to runaway youth; development of more representative advisory/governing boards; and fund raising techniques and resources.

Certain gaps in community supports for runaway centers' services were identified in the survey which was administered as part of this evaluation. Such gaps existed, for the most part, prior to Network inception and continued to exist at the time of the survey.

9. Network should, in conjunction with the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance staff, OYD staff, and center directors, establish common goals which apply to all runaway center programs in Florida.

Goals for runaway center programs at national, state, and local levels are not explicit-aside from the goal of meeting immediate shelter needs of such youth-and create problems in terms of data collection (particularly recidivism data) as the logic and necessity of collecting such data is unclear.

10. Network staff should meet with the Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance staff, center directors, and OYD staff to determine what data should be collected for a state-wide data base on runaway youth, time periods for collection of data, and a commitment obtained to collect data.

At the time of the evaluation, there still appeared to be difficulties in establishing a state-wide data base on runaway youth - at least partially due to differences in data collection requirements from funding sources for the centers.

11. Network staff should obtain specific training in management techniques.

The Network has assumed responsibility for a variety of tasks, utilizing a variety of funding sources. As a result of the evaluation, SPA staff felt that more attention to management techniques at the Network was a necessity in order to assure that all tasks were successfully completed within timeframes and conditions placed by funding sources.

12. Priority emphasis should be placed by the Network on runaway youth.

Network appears to have begun placing more emphasis on services to all youth and their families, rather than just on runaway youth. SPA staff felt that since there are still considerable gaps in services to runaway youth, statewide, and since the Network includes all runaway centers in-state, specific attention to runaway youth should be a priority in Network operations.

13. Priority groups for the Network to impact upon in performing its objectives should be the private sector and local units of government.

Much of the power base and contacts of the Network in-state appear to have been within the private sector and at local levels of government. As other agencies do not appear to have as heavy support in these areas as the Network, and as the contacts are basically established, SPA staff felt that Network efforts should be specifically geared towards these groups as first priority.

14. Input with regard to state legislation and state agency policy changes affecting youth should be made to the Center for Children and Youth.

As the Center for Children and Youth, through the SPA's evaluation of that project, seems to have strong contacts established with state agency personnel and with persons close to the Legislature, it was felt that Network input to this power base might be most efficiently and effectively accomplished via coordination with the centers.

APPENDIX

Florida Network of Runaway and Youth Services

EVALUATION DESIGN

I. Purpose of Evaluation

This evaluation is being initiated to meet the LEAA requirements to provide an evaluation of a state level LEAA funded project. Currently, very few projects in the Juvenile Delinquency area on the state level are awarded to agencies or organizations other than Youth Services within the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (DHRS). Youth services intensively evaluates all of their projects, and therefore performance of an evaluation of one of those projects was felt to be duplicative. Funds for other projects at the state level have been awarded, but many of those projects are not yet operating. The Florida Network project was one of the few remaining state projects which could conceivably be evaluated..

The LEAA Regional Office will be the primary audience for this evaluation.

II. Evaluation Objectives

- A. To determine the impact of this project on increasing the planning capabilities within Florida's runaway centers.
- B. To determine the effectiveness of the project in ensuring compliance with the draft Juvenile Delinquency standards regarding runaway services in the Florida runaway centers.
- C. To determine the effectiveness of the project in mobilizing and/or increasing public and private sectors cooperation and support for runaway services in Florida.
- D. To determine the effectiveness of the project in facilitating coordination among the national and Florida runaway centers or networks in providing services to runaway youth.
- E. To determine the internal effectiveness of the project in meeting programmatic objectives (regarding provision of technical assistance; development of data base on runaways; and providing an information clearinghouse).

III. Evaluation Measurement

- A. The first evaluation objective regarding planning capabilities of the runaway centers will be measured by:
 - 1. review of data being collected by the centers, in which to base planning decisions;
 - 2. review of any plans for services to runaways developed by the runaway centers.
- B. The second evaluation objective regarding compliance of the runaway centers with draft Juvenile Delinquency standards regarding runaway services will be measured by:
 - 1. review of operating manuals/program guidelines for the individual runaway centers.
- C. The third evaluation objective regarding public and private sector support for runaway services will be measured by:
 - 1. review of runaway center logs or records of volunteer participation in providing center services;
 - 2. review of composition of runaway centers' boards of directors or advisory boards;
 - 3. review of runaway centers' fiscal data regarding donations to the programs;
 - 4. information from runaway centers' staffs regarding other community support services for runaway youth.
- D. The fourth evaluation objective regarding coordination of services for runaways amongst the runaway centers and networks will be measured by:
 - 1. review of contacts (telephone/letters/meetings) between Florida and other states;
 - 2. review of contacts (telephone/letters/meetings) between Florida and National Runaway Networks;
 - 3. review of letters of cooperation or agreement between the centers/network and other public/private agencies or organizations.

(An attempt will be made to gather the above-mentioned data (Items in A-D) for two time periods: approximately six months prior to the inception of the Network project, and again one year after the inception of the project's inception.)

E. The fifth evaluation objective regarding internal effectiveness of the project in meeting the program objectives will be measured by:

1. review of data collected by the Network;
2. review of publications collected/disseminated by Network.

(These two measures will be taken only at one point in time--when the evaluation is done.)

F. One final measure may be taken in an attempt to rather superficially measure the implicit ultimate impact of the project (the reduction of runaway/delinquent behavior).

1. a pre/post (Network inception) review of the number of juvenile arrests and referrals to (DHRS) Intake in the areas within which the runaway centers are operating.

All data is to be gathered together by the Network for SPA staff to analyze for the evaluation of the project--one possible exception might be the data for objective "F" above.

IV. Data Analysis

Evaluation data will be compared in several different ways: with the draft JD Standards on runaways; with any relevant national studies on networks and/or runaway centers; with Network project objectives; and in a pre/post manner (for the centers).

V. Distribution of Report/Implementation Strategy

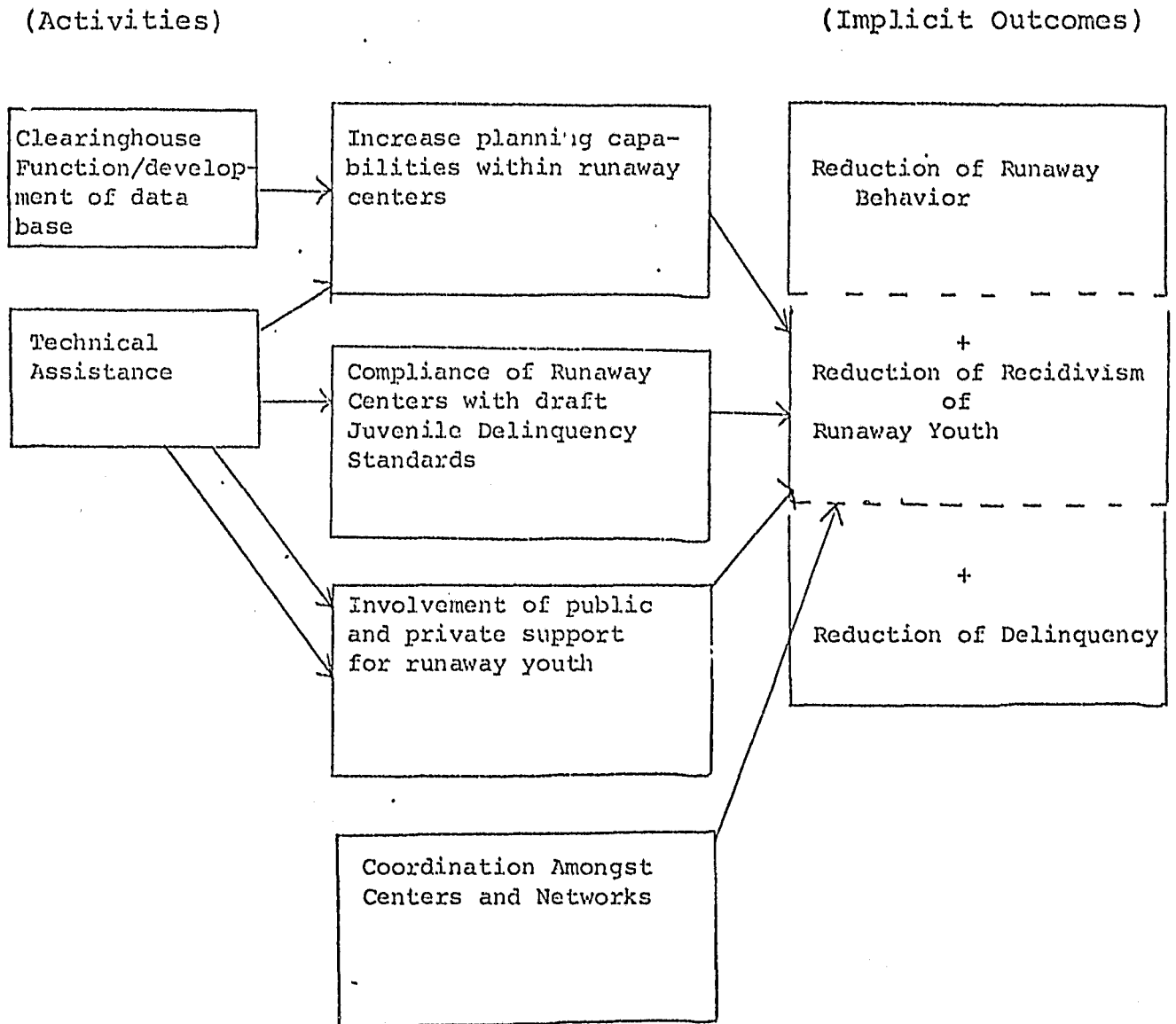
- A. Full reports of evaluation will be distributed to relevant SPA staff, the project director, the LEAA Regional Office, the Center for Children and Youth, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the NCJRS.
- B. Summaries of the evaluation will be distributed at least to runaway centers' directors, State JD Task Force, MPU's and RPC's, the SPA supervisory board, the Florida Legislature

(relevant legislators and/or committees) and the DHRS (relevant program offices).

- C. Basic strategies to implement the recommendations made in the evaluation might include:
1. special conditions to the project grant;
 2. recommendations to the project director;
 3. provision of technical assistance to project director;
 4. recommendations to funding authorities.
- D. Evaluators of the project would possibly make the actual recommendations regarding implementation strategies to the above persons or agencies and either provide necessary technical assistance or arrange for its provisions.

APPENDIX II

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



Some other possible outcomes might be:

1. increase in number of runaway centers;
2. increase in community support for youth in general;
3. increase in youth involvement in planning services for themselves.

APPENDIX III

DEFINITIONS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUBJECT AREAS

Staff Training and Development: efforts directed at the upgrading of program personnel through recruitment, screening, training of staff.

Fund Raising: efforts directed at identifying funding sources and methods of obtaining funds.

Program Planning: efforts directed at designing runaway programs and developing systematic means of assessing resources, gaps in services, and means of filling service gaps (e.g. establishing goals and objectives).

Runaway System Statewide: efforts directed at inter-program cooperation and coordination of services for runaway youth.

Proposal Writing: efforts directed at the development of expertise in the preparation of proposals for obtaining funds.

Administrative Planning: efforts directed at development and/or improvement of administrative/managerial skills (e.g. fiscal program management, delegation of responsibilities, etc.).

Program Initiation: efforts directed at starting a runaway program.

Volunteer Utilization: efforts directed at initiating a volunteer program and/or improving a volunteer program to provide additional manpower to serve runaway youth (by recruitment, screening, training, placement of volunteers).

Community Development: efforts directed at coordinating services for runaway youth, identifying service gaps, and developing services to fill those gaps; development of programmatic linkages.

Survival Strategy: efforts directed at providing leadership to the community in establishing or improving services for runaway youth (e.g. filling service gaps, gaining support for Florida Juvenile Delinquency Standards, etc.)

Counseling Skills: efforts directed at developing and improving program staffs' counseling skills.

Clearinghouse Information: efforts directed at improving runaway programs' knowledge regarding services to youth (e.g., via newsletters, research information, other program descriptions, etc.)

PROCESS MEASURES

I.

Subject of Technical Assistance from Network	Are You Aware of Availability?	Number of Times Used	Date(s) Used	Number of Hours Per Date	# Center Program Staff Involved	*Method	**Satisfaction
Staff Training & Development							
Fund Raising							
Program Planning							
Runaway System Statewide							
Proposal Writing							
Administrative Planning							
Program Initiation							
Volunteer Utilization							
Community Development							
Survival Strategy							
Community Leadership							
Counseling Skills							
Clearinghouse Information							
Other***							

*Method: M=by mail; T=by telephone; P=individualized, in-person; W=multiproject workshop; C=Statewide Conference

**Satisfaction: S=Satisfactory; U=Unsatisfactory

***Other: Please specify other subjects on back of page.

- II. What were the results of the technical assistance received from the Network by your program in regard to the provision of services for runaway youth? (Include any changes in center policy/procedures that resulted from technical assistance.)

Planning Capabilities

- I. What types of data did your program collect during the first 6 months of 1976 and the first 6 months of 1977? (Please indicate by an "X" the data collected.)

	<u>Jan.-June 1976</u>	<u>Jan.-June 1977</u>
1. Number of youth served	_____	_____
2. Demographic characteristic of youth served	_____	_____
3. Problems of youth served	_____	_____
4. Referrals of youth served	_____	_____
5. Type of service provided to youth by project	_____	_____
6. Length of time youth were served by project	_____	_____
7. Disposition of cases	_____	_____
8. Other (Please list on back of page)	_____	_____

- II. Did you have a formal written plan for your services to runaways in June of 1976? _____
Do you have such a plan at present? _____ (Please addend both past and present plans.)

Standards Compliance

- I. Do you have any written procedural or operating manuals/program guidelines? Yes _____ No _____ When were these developed? _____ Have they been revised? Yes _____ No _____ When? _____
(Please addend copies)

Public and Private Sector Support

- I. How many volunteers provided services to runaway youth served by your program during the period from January-June, 1976; _____; from January-June, 1977; _____; by type of service provided? (See next page).

<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>Jan.-June, 1976</u> <u># of Volunteers</u>	<u>Jan.-June, 1977</u> <u># of Volunteers</u>
Counseling	_____	_____
Soliciting Necessary donations of funds or materials for project	_____	_____
Public relations/Education efforts	_____	_____
Provision of additional bed spaces	_____	_____
Other (Please list)		
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____

II. Please list names/agencies represented by persons serving as your center's governing board or advisory board in 1976, and at present (designate by "Y" after person's name if he or she is under 21 years of age).

<u>Jan.-June, 1976</u>		<u>Jan.-June, 1977</u>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>

III. What was the amount of donations received by your program during Jan.-June, 1976? _____; from Jan.-June, 1977? _____

IV. What community support services were available in your city/county for runaway youth during Jan.-June, 1976, and from Jan.-June, 1977? (Please indicate services available by an "X".)

	<u>Jan.-June, 1976</u>	<u>Jan.-June, 1977</u>
Individual Counseling	_____	_____
Group Counseling	_____	_____
Family Counseling	_____	_____
Medical/Dental Problem Screening	_____	_____
Medical/Dental Rehabilitative Services	_____	_____
Psychological Testing	_____	_____
Follow-up Services	_____	_____
Formalized Mechanisms to Divert Status Offenders from Juvenile Justice Processing	_____	_____
Other (Please specify on back of page)	_____	_____

Coordination of Services for Runaways

I. Would you estimate that your program staffs' participation in multi-regional conferences/meetings/workshops has increased _____ decreased _____ from calendar year 1976 to calendar year 1977? Please indicate the reasons for any such changes in the number of those contacts. _____

II. Would you estimate that the number of contacts on behalf of youth served by your program (telephone, mail, in-person - at meetings) your program staff has had (in the course of runaway project activities) with persons/agencies in other states has increased _____ decreased _____ from calendar year 1976 to calendar year 1977? Please indicate the reasons for any such changes in the number of those contacts.

III. Please list the public/private agencies or organizations with whom your center had formal cooperation or agreement for services (i.e., formalized by letter or contract) in 1976 and 1977.

Agency

Jan.-June, 1976

Jan.-June, 1977

Additional Comments

- I. What is your estimation of the services provided to your program by the Network? _____

- II. What could the Network do to help to improve/further improve services to runaway youth? _____

- III. Please note, below, any additional comments you may have regarding the Network's efforts in the area of services to runaway youth and/or regarding this survey (e.g., its content, format, etc.) _____

APPENDIX IV

FLORIDA RUNAWAY CENTERS

Bayhouse
Miami, Florida

Beach Place
Tampa, Florida

Crosswinds
Merritt Island, Florida

DuRocher House
Orlando, Florida

FAME Haven
Sarasota, Florida

Interface
Gainesville, Florida

Jacksonville Transient Youth Center
Jacksonville, Florida

Miami Bridge
Miami, Florida

Someplace Else
Tallahassee, Florida

Tops Haven
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Youth Alternatives
Daytona Beach, Florida

END