

68643



YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

Project Narrative

A. Statement of the Problem

Insufficient efforts to divert juveniles results in many children being inappropriately committed to institutional care. This is particularly true in Bankhead Courts - a large public housing project located within the City of Atlanta with a very high concentration of low-income families, children, and juvenile delinquency problems.

Bankhead Courts is a 500 unit housing project located in Northwest Atlanta. Atlanta Housing Authority records indicate that there are 1,736 residents of the project under age 18. Out of a total of 480 families in the project, 428 (89%) are single parent families, and 440 (91%) are welfare recipients.

Since the project is located in parts of two census tracts and Fulton Juvenile Court does not keep statistics by housing projects, exact statistics on reported delinquency incidence in the project are difficult to determine. The court records do indicate the following statistics on cases of delinquency, neglect, and unruliness that came to its attention during 1973 and 1974.

<u>Census Tract</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
F82	101	168	212	84
F86	<u>126</u>	<u>212</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>204</u>
Total	227	380	416	288

Since Bankhead Courts occupies only part of the two census tracts, many of the reported cases were from other areas, but a high percentage were from Bankhead.

The Youth Service Bureau in Bankhead Courts has been in operation since September 1973. A Youth Service Bureau program in the East Lake Meadows public housing has terminated as of September 1976, with staff moving into a program of family counseling and information and referral work with youth and their families in the Community Development Block Grant Impact Area, which includes East Lake Meadows along with nineteen other Southeast Atlanta neighborhoods.

Prior to 1973, the sponsoring agency, Child Service and Family Counseling Center, had provided service to families in the area through other outreach services. The Bankhead Courts Youth Service Bureau is continuing to provide a variety of services to youth in the area under contract with the City of Atlanta and the State Crime Commission.

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B. Goals

1. To divert children from institutional care to community treatment;
2. To minimize contact with juvenile justice system by providing alternative resources for referrals to existing resources for juveniles;
3. To reduce recidivism for those who have had contact with the Juvenile Court system;
4. To effect attitudinal and/or behavioral changes within clients which will foster non-delinquent behavior.

C. Objectives

1. To prevent 68 selected youth ages 8-18 from becoming involved or further involved in the formal juvenile justice system through the provision of intensive services on a behavior change group model and other supportive services (75% of total in the year's program).
2. To improve the academic performance for 50% of the youth in the program.
3. To improve school attendance for 50% of the youth served by the project.
4. To improve the parenting behaviors of the parents of the youth served by the project through provision of counseling or family life education.
5. To interpret the child's needs to the school.
6. To provide experiences for cultural enrichment, through excursions and recreational activities.

D. Approach

1. Identification and Referral

Several community agencies have been and will continue to be brought into the identification system as component parts. Such agencies include (but are not limited to) the following:

- a. Area Schools
- b. Juvenile Court System
- c. Police Department
- d. Department of Family and Children Services
- e. Social Agencies
- f. Private Citizens

This system will identify and refer those youths from age 8-18 who exhibit behavior sufficient to be systemically defined as potential delinquents (e.g., truancy, extreme hostility, rebellious of authority, socially withdrawn behavior or drug usage) and those youth who have been adjudicated delinquent by the Juvenile Court.

## 2. Intake Process

After a youth has been referred, the following process will usually occur:

- a. The youth and his parents will be interviewed in-office or at their home. This interview will identify problem areas (family functioning and cohesiveness, environmental problems, intrapersonal dysfunctioning, etc.) as perceived by the individual youth and his family.
- b. When possible an informal staffing will occur between referring agencies and significant other (e.g., Juvenile Court worker, teachers, school social worker, etc.) A tentative treatment program will be developed with each agency assuming certain responsibilities thereof.
- c. The youth will be assigned to a worker and a behavior modification group. Further, the program will be thoroughly explained to the youth and the parents, and commitments from each received on the treatment plan developed.

## 3. Program Treatment System

The treatment system will consist of integrated components as follows:

### a. Sponsors

The program will identify youths between the ages of 14-17 who are beginning to exhibit predelinquent patterns of behavior to act as sponsors.

One way of working with these youths is to have them act as role-models with Peers (younger children). We call these Sponsors.

### Job Description of a Sponsor

A Sponsor is a youth between the ages of 14 to 17, who displays ability to be a positive influence on a Peer (a youth between ages 8 to 13).

A

A Sponsor is required to attend:

1. Weekly group meetings
2. Weekly individual sessions
3. One monthly training session
4. Spend 3 hours a week with each of his two Peers

The Sponsor is expected to display a positive behavior (no cussing, fighting, drinking, or smoking around his/her Peers). Also to display a respectful attitude toward office and staff. Sponsors should also get to know the parents of his/her Peers. And once (1) per week engage in tutoring.

There will be three phases to the Sponsor component:

Phase I - Identification and Recruitment

This process will rely heavily on referrals from area schools, police and Juvenile Court.

Phase II - Treatment and Training

Each group of Sponsors recruited will be involved in several weeks of intensive individual and group counseling services. Such intensive services will be designed to facilitate maximum self-awareness and behavioral change within each Sponsor. Similarly, group training sessions will be conducted during this initial sponsor orientation which will include training in such areas as listening skills, facilitation skills, behavior modification concepts, positive leadership, and other helping skills. After this initial orientation period, each Sponsor will be a member of an ongoing weekly counseling group.

Phase III - Assignment of Youth

After appropriate training, each Sponsor will be assigned two or three younger youth (Peers) to be supervised by the Sponsor. The function of the Sponsor is to develop positive role behaviors for himself, to form informal trust relationship with his assignee and use this relationship to help shape the youth's behavior in a positive, socially rewarding direction.

Each Sponsor is expected to spend at least two hours per week with each of the two assignees. Activities will consist of one-to-one games, one-to-one talks, taking youth to local ball games, movies, etc.

During the above activities, the Sponsor will be attempting to redirect the attitudes and concomitant behavior of the youth into attitudinal and behavioral role patterns which are more individually and socially rewarding.

Monitoring of Peer-Sponsor activities will be maintained on a continual basis by project staff.

Sponsors will receive two hours of continuous on the job training the last week in each month.

b. Group Behavior Therapy for Peers (Ages 8-13)

Definition and Responsibilities of a Peer

A Peer is a youth between the ages 8-13 who gets involved with the YSB Program for the purpose of avoiding delinquency and other personal problems.

Each Peer will have certain responsibilities, based on the goals of his contract with the worker, but the general duties are as follows:

1. To attend individual meetings with worker at least two times per month.
2. To attend and participate positively in group meetings each week.
3. To meet with assigned sponsors at least 2 hours per week.
4. To share with his worker all the problems which affect him as an individual, in the family, at school, in the neighborhood, in the community, etc.
5. To cooperate and work with his worker toward a positive solution in the above areas.
6. To try to improve in the goals of his contract.
7. To try to participate in social activities, special events, and tutoring classes.

The Group Behavior Therapy component operates on the premise that (1) the maladaptive and socially dysfunctional behavior patterns exhibited by the program youth are learned patterns of behavior, and can thus be extinguished and new, more functional, behavior patterns be relearned; and (2) that there presently exists in the youth's environment insufficient status and a relative absence of reinforcement sufficient to elicit and motivate adjustive behaviors.

A system of group therapy, utilizing behavior modification techniques, will serve as the major mechanism for therapeutic input. This program component will involve three sequential group levels through which the youth must graduate: Reality Level (self-analysis and group confrontation of behavior); Contract Level (contracting with self, group and staff for succinct changes in behavior); Level III (self-improvement and direction). There will be a graduated economy system with each subsequent level possessing a greater system of rewards. Such rewards will be culturally defined and will include (1) tickets to sporting events; (2) trips; (3) movies; (4) access to the "shore"; and (5) \$5.00 per week stipends for the adolescents.

One 3-bedroom apartment has been equipped with lounge chairs, pool tables, ping pong, stereo, television, etc. to serve as the group activity rooms for the behavioral groups.

The peer group will be utilized to (1) confront with dysfunctional behavior; (2) identify alternative functional behavior; (3) support and reward improved behaviors; and (4) provide continuing support and reinforcement outside of the formal program and into the community.

Upon program entry, each youth will enter at the Reality Level. Herein, the focus will be upon the youth facing reality "head-on," and gaining an awareness of himself and his environment. When a youth feels he is ready, he may ask for a vote from his reality group peers to move on to the Contract Level. At this level, the youth will discuss and write up a contract for behavior change. After successfully passing the "Contract Review Committee" (peers, sponsors, and staff), the youth moves or graduates to Level III. Level III will represent for the youth the epitome of the program.

The Level III group will be emotionally supportive in nature. Individuals herein will receive greater rewards in the form of increased "rewards," preferential treatment from staff, Peers, Sponsors, school authorities, and others.

c. Individual Counseling

Each youth will be assigned to an individual counselor who will provide 2-5 hours of individual counseling per month.

d. Family Counseling

Once a month, a counseling session will occur with each respective family. Such sessions shall focus upon the functioning of the family as a unit, the definition of roles and responsibilities within the family, and problems between husband and wife, parent-child, or child-child.

Once a month, additionally, a two-hour group counseling session for parents will be conducted. During this time, parents will (1) be made aware of behavior modification principles and techniques; (2) encouraged to reinforce program efforts by continuing to utilize and apply behavior modification in the home; (3) discuss their concerns, problem areas, successes, failures, etc.; and (4) utilize Family Life Education techniques to gain knowledge, and increase their respective problem-solving and coping abilities. Each parent group will consist of approximately 10-12 members.

e. Vocational Counseling

The vocational component will consist of the following:

1. Films and readings on various careers or vocations.
2. Expectations of the "world of work."
3. Information on areas of vocational interest.
4. Referrals for jobs and "on the job training" through Georgia State Employment Service and other appropriate employment agencies (e.g., Neighborhood Youth Corps, Economic Opportunity Atlanta, etc.).
5. Techniques and information for use when interviewing for a job (role playing, video-tape, etc.).

The vocational component will be integrated into the program at three various levels: (1) during the Contract Level; (2) during the Level III; and (3) at the Brief Service Level.

f. Academic Counseling

The academic component will consist of the following:

1. Tutorial assistance through use of Agency volunteers.
2. Reading clinics conducted by Agency volunteers.
3. Information and referral for GED assistance.
4. Information on area colleges (entry, expenses, financial aid, etc.).

An additional component hereof will be the provision of drug abuse information. Herein, films, literature and knowledgeable speakers will be utilized.

The academic component will become an integrated ongoing part of the overall treatment system.



g. Recreation

Recreational activities will be an ongoing component and will be utilized in the groups by both staff and peer-sponsors. Table tennis, billiards, T.V., and small games will be placed in the project recreation room for use by the youth in the behavior modification program. The facilities will be made available to other youth not involved in the program one evening per week. Maximum use will be made of nearby facilities to develop more adequate socialization skills, provide outlets for aggression and reinforce socially approved behavior. Field trips to cultural and recreational events will be made by groups of youth. Advocacy efforts will be made by Project staff to improve the availability of recreation services in the area.

h. Crisis Intervention and Brief Service

Trained staff will be available to Project youth and their families for crisis counseling services.

A youth may be referred for only limited services such as vocational information, job assistance, problem pregnancy services, advocacy, legal or short-term counseling services. This program component by-passes the usual intake services. The Brief Service component serves (1) youth who are not accepted into the program by providing short-term counseling and/or supportive services to them; and (2) through the existence of open-ended groups for youth who want to be in the program, but who do not meet the criteria (i.e. pre-delinquent and delinquent).

4. Staffing

The Project is being directed by trained social workers with knowledge of community resources and behavioral intervention techniques.

Direct services to youth will be provided by a social work team. All staff will have continuous staff training by the Project Director and the agency, Child Service and Family Counseling Center.

The team will recruit, select, service and monitor a minimum of 45 youths and their parents: 15 older "Sponsors" and 30 younger, elementary school age youths. Six months later another 15 Sponsors and Peers will be recruited, and the first group will be "graduated." The older youths to serve as Sponsors will first be recruited and undergo intensive therapy and training before assignment to younger, elementary school age Project youth. Intensive family counseling will be given to 30 families of children and youth in this project within the year.

In order to better meet the needs of youth in the target area, evening hours of operation for the Project will be maintained. Work on Saturdays will be as needed for special events.

5. Work Program

a. Continuing Program Activities to be Prepared by Project Director and Social Work Staff

1. Interpretation of program to agencies and community.
2. Monthly behavioral reports completed on each youth for evaluation.
3. Weekly group sessions with sponsor groups.
4. Weekly individual counseling sessions with the sponsor.
5. Weekly group sessions with peer groups.
6. Individual counseling with peers every week.
7. Once a month sessions with parents.
8. Consultation with school personnel.
9. Quarterly meetings with professional and resident advisory staff.
10. Career and job counseling.
11. Supervised indoor and outdoor recreational activities.
12. Tutoring with volunteers and staff.
13. Monthly staff training, and consultation sessions.
14. Scheduled Family Life Education for parents of youth in the program and those not in the program.

E. Evaluation

A baseline of behavior has been and will be established for each youth-participant and parent-participant involved in the Project groups. Past patterns of behavior as reflected in school records and personal history of past problematic behavior will be documented. Incidence of school absenteeism, juvenile delinquency, petty crime, adolescent pregnancy, school drop-outs, problematic contacts with school and police

will be established from public records. These records are updated by staff monthly by reports from schools, Juvenile Courts, parents and youths themselves (See attached "YSB Client and Service Record").

F. Continuation

Child Service and Family Counseling Center has requested funding from United Way of Atlanta, however no determination on this will be known until late 1978.

G. Cooperation and Coordination

1. Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee has been established in Bankhead Courts. The Committee is composed of the following representatives:

Bankhead

Fulton County Juvenile Court  
Fulton County Department of Family  
and Children Services  
Blalock Elementary School  
Harper High School  
Atlanta Housing Authority  
Area Office and School Board  
Parents of Bankhead  
Youth of Bankhead

The Committee will meet every quarter and their functions will be as follows:

- a. To recommend operational policies for program.
- b. To assist project staff in interpreting the program of services to the communities.
- c. To assist in identifying youth in need of services.
- d. To help identify jobs and services and advocate for needed services in the target area.
- e. To provide input for program evaluation.

2. Other

Close cooperative relationships have been formed over the past year with Harper and Blalock Elementary Schools, Atlanta Police Crime Prevention officers, Atlanta Housing Authority staff, Fulton County Juvenile Court, and numerous other youth-serving agencies. These relationships will be maintained and strengthened.

## APPENDICES

Evaluations (both Bankhead Courts and East Lake Meadows):

1) Results of First Year of Operation

During the period November 1973 through May 1974, the Youth Service Bureau provided intensive services to 131 youth from the two areas. The services provided included: (1) individual counseling, (2) group behavior therapy, (3) individual behavior therapy, (4) family counseling, (5) vocational counseling, (6) tutorial assistance, (7) crisis intervention, (8) recreation therapy, and (9) youth advocacy.

Recorded information on the progress of 131 youth served during the period November 1973 through May 1974 revealed the following progress in reference to stated goals:

Goal 1: Preventing 60% of pre-delinquent youth served by the project from being referred to Juvenile Court during the project year.

Results: 94.3% of 118 pre-delinquent youth served were not referred to Juvenile Court during the project year.

Goal 2: Preventing 50% of the delinquent youth served from further involvement with Juvenile Court during the project year.

Results: Only 2 out of 13 delinquent youth served were returned to Juvenile Court during the period. Thus, 84% of the delinquent youth were prevented from further court involvement.

Goal 3: Reduce the number of youth from Drew Elementary School referred to Dekalb Juvenile Court by 30%.

Results: The project served 30 youth from Drew School. None of the youth were referred to Juvenile Court during the period. Statistics were not available from the school or the Juvenile Court on referrals from Drew School during the period.

Goal 4: Reduce the number of youth from Bankhead Courts reported for behavior problems at Harper High School by 10%.

Results: Harper High School reported a decrease of reported behavior problems by Bankhead students from 300 in 1973 to 248 in 1974. This is a 17% decrease.

Goal 5: Reduce the number of East Lake Meadows youth suspended from East Atlanta High School for behavior problems by 10%.

Results: Statistics on suspensions of East Lake students were not available from East Atlanta High School. However, only 4 of the 18 youth from East Lake Meadows served by the YSB program and attended East Atlanta High were suspended during the period. Thus, 88% were not suspended.

Goal 6: Improve the school performance of 40% of the youth served by project.

Results: Client service records and school reports revealed that 98% of the youth served improved their academic performance in school.

## 2) Results of Second Year of Operation:

An evaluation was completed covering the period of September 1974 to April 1975.

Goal 1: To reduce the incidence of reported juvenile delinquency in the two target areas measured by:

- a. Preventing 75% of predelinquent youths served by project from being referred to Juvenile Court during the Project year.
- b. Preventing 60% of delinquent youths served from further involvement with Juvenile Court during the project year.

Results: The average monthly non-involvement with Juvenile Court was 97%; or 28% higher than the stated goal of 75%. Of 12 youths served referred to the program by Juvenile Court only two (16%) had further involvement with the court. Eighty-four percent of youth referred by Juvenile Court had no further contact with the Courts. This is 23% better than the stated goal of 60%.

Goal 2: To improve the school performance of 60% of the youth served by the program.

Results: Of the 121 youths served by the program the school performance of 77% improved. This is 13% higher than the goal set.

Goal 3: To improve the school attendance of project youth by 20%.

Results: In October of 1974 the total number of days absent by the program youth at both YSB offices was 932 days. By April 1975 the total number of days absent by the program youth was 187 days. The school attendance of the project youth improved by 80%.

Goal 4: To improve the self-esteem and self-confidence of each youth participants toward an improved degree of self-directed, personally rewarding behavior.

Results: If "improved self-esteem and self-confidence" can be partly defined as the achievement of an individual goal, then the majority of youth in the program achieved this goal.

Goal 5: To improve the parenting behaviors of the parents of youth served by the project.

Results: For the project year there have been 855 family counseling sessions for both YSB offices. This is an average of about one family counseling session per month.

Goal 6: To improve availability of recreational services to youth in the areas through advocacy efforts.

Results: The project was able to solicit and obtain funds to furnish a three-bedroom apartment at each of the YSB's with lounge chairs, pool table, ping-pong table, stereo, television, etc. In addition the program has provided the youths with free tickets and field trips to various recreational events.

## YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU REPORT

### UNIT OF RESPONSIBILITY

Youth Service Bureau  
Group Behavior Modification Program

### PERSON REPORTING

Charlotte Theodocion, Unit Director

### PERIOD

July 1, 1977 - December 31, 1977

YSB project year ended September 30, 1977. Data reported under Objectives Achieved will cover project year September, 1976 to September, 1977. We have 45 additional youth currently enrolled in the project, however, results of work with current youth cannot be documented until end of 6 months program in March, 1978.

## I OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED

### A. Prevention of further increase in delinquency in target area

Results: Of 116 youth completing project, 97% did not become involved with the Juvenile Court during project.

### B. To prevent 75% of youth becoming involved in formal juvenile justice system.

Results: Of the 116 youth, 7 youth had prior contact with court. None of these have had further contact. Four youth became known to the court for the first time. The project was 96% effective in preventing involvement or further involvement with the court.

### C. Maintain coping abilities and prevent delinquency for 100 other youth to be served through brief service.

Results: We met this objective. Kinds of brief service included re-entry of teen-age girls to school following pregnancy; school re-entry of suspended youth; counseling around contraception; determination of pregnancy; assistance in obtaining college entrance requirements; information about legal custody and help with food and clothing.

### D. To promote sound personality development and social maturation; strengthen democratic group participation; to develop self-confidence and pride, leadership and harmonious relationships; to provide opportunities for creative self-expression.

We achieved this objective with 199 group sessions for Sponsor and Peers and Sponsor Training. Group sessions focus on communication and problem solving skills and represent core of behavior modification program. Social growth and maturation ratings by staff showed improvement in growth areas by about half the youth. Creative pride and self-confidence development were enhanced by special money for special projects. These included 3 sewing classes, a grooming class, building soap-box derby cars, ceramics classes and a modern dance class.

### E. To redirect aspirations and behavior toward goals that are more acceptable to the community.

Results: School behavior of first group of youth was documented from school records and conferences and recorded in records. 54% of youth referred for



truancy had no absences in last two months of project. 79% of youth who had problems with fighting in school ceased fighting by last two months of project. 63% of youth cutting classes ceased this behavior by last two months. 79% of youth showed improvement in disruptive behavior during last three months.

F. To improve academic performance for 50% of youth in the program. Only youth in first half of project are used in sample as grades are unavailable from school during summer program.

Results: 60% of youth showed grade improvement by end of project.

G. To promote emotional, social, physical and education development and to develop self-reliance and resourcefulness of youth away from home through camping experiences.

Results: 1) 24 youths received camperships this year. A camp orientation was held for parents and youth.

2) Each sponsor participated in tutoring and each peer was tutored 1 hour per week.

## II OBJECTIVES NOT ACHIEVED:

A. To improve school attendance for 50% of youth served.

Results: We did not demonstrate a decrease in absenteeism except for youth with high absenteeism rate. Of special note are 2 chronic truants who had perfect attendance records the entire year. In an effort to more accurately assess whether or not a behavior modification program can decrease absenteeism, it will be necessary to contract with the youth for improved attendance. There was improvement in attendance for those youth who contracted with staff for improved school attendance. Characteristics of the youth with high absenteeism represent more withdrawn, shy, internal problems with self and family rather than acting out, behaviorally disruptive youth.

B. To improve the parenting behaviors of the parents of the youth served by the project.

Results: We continue to be ineffective in involving many of our parents. Two parents groups, involving 8 to 10 parents, participate. We have had family life sessions around the Black Child, Sex Education and camp orientation. Some parents have participated in a sewing class and on recreational trips with the youth. Project design is not conducive to engaging and being effective with hard to reach families. We need a counseling service not limited to six months and an M.S.W. on site.

## III NEW PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS, STUDIES

We are completing a follow-up study three to six months post project to determine whether or not sponsors have become known to the court and are still in school. Follow-up interviews are not complete as of this date. Initial impressions are improved behavioral changes at home which have not been noted in records. There is initial evidence that the modeling experience with peers has carried over to younger siblings at home.

The Crime Analysis Team of the City of Atlanta completed an analysis of Youth Service Bureau this fall. We received a very satisfactory review with recommendations for additional funding and that a Youth Service Bureau be available in every quadrant of the city.

#### PERSONNEL

Personnel available until September, 1977 was 4 staff with attempts to employ a stable C.E.T.A. worker. As of September, 1 position had to be cut due to funding loss. We have had two regular staff with serious illness the last quarter.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES - last six months.

1. Urban League National Conference - "Black Families" - 1 staff
2. Health Conference on Women - 1 staff
3. Fulton County Mental Health Services Speaker - 1 staff
4. Aging Services
5. Training Workshop for N.Y.C. students

#### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1. Inter-agency Council at Bankhead Courts with DF&CS, YSB and Housing Authority - facilitate use of resources - 1 staff
2. Representation on Bankhead Courts Tenants Association - 1 staff
3. Representation on Advocacy Committee - 1 staff
4. Panelist at Atlanta Housing Fair - 1 staff

Youth Service Bureau continues to need an M.S.W. position and to offer on-site counseling services to families when they need it.

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**END**