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/⚊\ Arthur D. Little, Inc.

June 15, 1984

Ref: III OJJDP ADL-443

Dear Colleague:

Enclosed herewith is the report of Technical Assistance on Classification
of Juveniles in Corrections prepared under our technical assistance
contract with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention,
Technical Assistance and Formula Grants Division. This report is the
result of a request made to the Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention to provide correctional administrators with
information on classification and management systems.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Pamela Fenrich
Project Director

Enclosure

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CLASSIFICATION OF JUVENILES IN CORRECTIONS:
A MODEL SYSTEMS APPROACH

June 15, 1984

Prepared by:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This manuscript presents a comprehensive system for managing juvenile populations in institutions and community supervision, i.e. probation, aftercare (parole). Components of the system are:

- Classification based on risk of continued criminal activity and the youth's need for services.

- A management information system designed to enhance planning, monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

- A workload deployment system which allows agencies to effectively and efficiently allocate their limited resources.

These components combine to form an integrated management package to assist personnel at every level of the organization; administrators, supervisors, and line staff. The strengths and benefits of this system include the following:

- The procedures recommended are simple and practical which encourages routine use by all personnel including line staff;

- Information generated by classification of the offender according to risk (custody/control requirements) and service needs is of immediate benefit to staff responsible for developing comprehensive case plans;

- Aggregated classification data can serve as the basis for planning, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluating programs, policies and procedures;

- Standardization of procedures encourages consistency, fairness, and legal credibility; and

- The system is equally appropriate (with some modifications) for classification and management purposes in both community supervision and institutional services.

In sum, the basic strengths of the proposed system lie in its simplicity, its utility to management, and the degree of accountability inherent in the system.

The value of this type of systematic approach to Corrections' management has been demonstrated during a decade of development and use in adult corrections principally through the National Institute of Corrections' (NIC) Model Classification Project. The NIC system has become the dominant model of offender classification in adult probation and parole, and is currently used by hundreds of agencies throughout the United States and Canada. Correctional administrators have long advocated the development of a parallel process for managing juvenile institutional services, probation, and aftercare. The

system described in this manuscript draws on the success of the NIC project. Most importantly, the instruments and methods described here have been developed and refined through work in juvenile probation agencies, correctional institutions, and aftercare programs.

Figure 1 displays the key elements of the system. The key component, classification, consists of three procedures:

- Assessment of the risk the juvenile poses to the community and/or others in an institutional setting (risk assessment);

- Assessment of the types and relative importance of needs for services (needs assessment); and

- Reclassification at regular intervals based on an assessment of risks and needs.

The initial risk and needs assessments are conducted shortly after placement in the care of an institution or a probation organization. Reclassification is conducted at regular intervals established by each agency.

Each of these three procedures entails use of standardized "scales" or assessment instruments. "Model" assessment scales for risk, needs and custody decisions are presented in later sections.

As indicated in Figure 1, classification data on individual juveniles are used to determine the most appropriate: (1) custody level (e.g.: maximum, medium, and minimum) if institutionalized or supervision level if in community services, and (2) services in either setting. Such data is essential to developing individual casework plans. Risk and need data, considered in a balanced fashion, constitute a framework for supervision and service delivery plans.

Another key to overall success of this approach is the management information component of the system. Classification and information systems are integrally linked concepts. Classification collects data on individual clients that when aggregated provides input for planning, monitoring, budgeting, and evaluating. Recent advances in technology, coupled with streamlined data collection procedures based on classification needs present unprecedented opportunities for effective use of information by correctional managers. Section V of this manuscript describes the elements and uses of the management information system.

FIGURE 1

ELEMENTS OF THE MODEL SYSTEM

| Admission To A Correctional System |

| INSTITUTION | PROBATION or AFTERCARE |

Initial Classification:

- Custody Assessment
- Needs Assessment
- Individualized Treatment Plan

↓

Placement at Appropriate
Custody Level and Assignment
to Needs Programs/Services

↓

Reclassification:

- Custody Reassessment
- Needs Reassessment
- Revised Treatment Plan

Initial Classification:

- Risk Assessment
- Needs Assessment
- Case Plan

↓

Placement at Appropriate
Supervision Level and in Programs
Appropriate to Needs

↓

Reclassification:

- Risk Reassessment
- Needs Reassessment
- Revised Case Plan

Management Information System

Data Sources:

- Risk and Custody
  Assessments
- Need Assessments
- Outcome Data
- Other Selected Data Elements

Data Uses:

- Case Planning
- Progress Monitoring
- Program Planning
- Evaluation of Programs, Policies
  and Procedures
- Increased Accountability
- Workload Allocation
- Budgeting

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One important component of the NIC system has yet to be entirely modified for use in juvenile corrections and therefore is not included as part of the proposed model system. This component is a Case Management Classification System (CMC) which assists probation, institutional staff, and aftercare workers in the development of caseplans and casework strategies. A validated CMC system could be ready for use with juveniles fairly soon if increased funding is allocated for CMC development.

The success of the NIC Model Classification Project and the degree of interest expressed by juvenile correctional agencies are obvious reasons for development of a parallel system for juvenile corrections. Less obvious, yet just as important are several evolving trends in juvenile corrections which are creating a need for more effective classification and management systems. Two major trends, increasing pressure for control vs. treatment and pressure for increased effectiveness and lower costs, create particularly strong impetus for improved methods of classification and management.

Included in this manuscript are sections of reports originally printed by the National Institute of Corrections including Probation and Parole Management - A Model Systems Approach (Baird; 1980) and Workload Measures for Probation and Parole (Bemus, Arling, Quigley; 1983).

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, concern with the serious juvenile offender has resulted in intense debate among corrections professionals and the general public over how best to deal with these cases. The demand for crime control and emphasis on increased punishment of serious offenders has caused many jurisdictions to review existing laws, policies and programs. Despite these recent trends, advocates of treatment rather than punishment of juvenile offenders continue to exert a strong influence on juvenile corrections. These divergent schools of thought are generally characterized by two correctional models -- the rehabilitation/treatment model and the justice/control model.

The latter model has dominated correctional philosophy in the adult field and has manifested itself in harsher sentences and diminished use of parole through determinant sentencing laws and parole board conservatism. For better or worse, the same philosophy is now being applied with increasing frequency to juvenile justice.

It seems, however, that both control and treatment represent legitimate correctional pursuits. Reliance on a single approach serves neither the community nor the offender adequately, particularly in the juvenile area.

Correctional programs that stressed treatment of juveniles were initially envisioned by correctional reformers as better, more humane methods of helping youth overcome their problems. Today, treatment has lost credence with scholars and citizens alike.[1]

Community supervision, in particular, is clearly at a cross-roads. While it has lost attractiveness as an idea, it has retained attractiveness as a function.[2] At the same time it is being criticized as an ineffective slap on the wrist, lawmakers are looking to probation to provide innovative methods of dealing with offenders in the community to alleviate the enormous financial and human costs of overcrowding. Thus, without dealing with fundamental problems of probation -- lack of staff, ill-defined goals, lack of accountability -- states are funding intensive supervision programs, early release supervision, house arrest projects and even looking to technology to provide better means of control and surveillance of offenders.[3]

This emphasis on control will not be effective if uniformly applied to all clients. Exhibitionists, armed robbers, murderers, marijuana users, drug pushers, thieves, child molestors, and burglars, are all labeled criminal. They differ considerably in terms of type of offense, living stability, acceptance of criminal behavior, likelihood of recommitting crimes, emotional needs, levels of education, vocational skills, honesty, and other factors. To deal effectively with this variety of people and problems requires both an understanding of the individual as well as knowledge and flexibility in applying different supervision techniques.

A balanced approach of control and casework based on individual characteristics is essential to success in juvenile corrections. Not all offenders require the same level of supervision or exhibit the same problems; therefore, most experienced probation and aftercare officers utilize an intuitive system of classifying offenders into differential treatment and surveillance modes, usually based on their judgments of client needs and their perception of the client's potential for continued unlawful behavior. While it seems reasonable to assume that without this type of caseload management, successes would diminish and failures increase, this untested, highly individualized approach does not provide the information necessary to rationally deploy staff and other resources. The criteria used in determining the appropriate level of supervision are probably as varied as officers' experiences, educations, and philosophical approaches to the job.[4]

Classification systems are designed to bring structure and consistency to decision making in Corrections. The major classification effort of the last decade, the National Institute of Corrections' (NIC) Model Classification Project, combines elements of control and casework with three classification purposes to form an integrated approach to probation and parole management. These purposes identified are:

1. Establishment of an appropriate supervision level

2. Better allocation of resources

3. More effective supervision

The program is a comprehensive approach to probation and parole which incorporates the following elements:

- Classification based on risk of continued criminal activity and the offender's need for services.

- A case management classification system designed to help probation and parole officers develop effective case plans and select appropriate casework strategies.

- A management information system designed to enhance planning, monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

- A workload deployment system which allows agencies to effectively and efficiently allocate their limited resources.

This system has become the dominant model of offender classification in adult probation and parole, and is currently used by hundreds of agencies throughout the United States and Canada. Advocates of the system have lobbied hard for the development of a parallel process for managing juvenile probation and aftercare. A discussion of issues regarding the development of such a model is presented below.

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Juvenile Classification

The history of juvenile classification is one of high expectations and disappointing results. Most past attempts at classification were based on treatment models. The I-Level System, developed initially for use in the California Youth Authority is perhaps the best known of the "clinically based" typology" systems. Youths are classified into groups such as "manipulators" and "cultural conformists" for which specific counseling strategies have been developed. Initially, I-Level classifications were based on data obtained during an interview, but the same basic classifications can be derived via use of a multiple choice questionnaire (the Jesness Inventory).[5]

The Quay System is similar to I-Level in many ways, but derives its classifications from checklists which presuppose considerable information about or experience with each offender.[6] Both systems have major weaknesses. The I-Level requires six weeks of training -- a luxury few agencies can afford -- and both the I-Level and the Quay System suffer from weak inter-rater reliability.[7]

As Corrections has turned away from the traditional medical model of rehabilitation, expectations of classification have changed dramatically. Classification is now viewed as a major management tool for corrections and as a means for enhancing consistency and equity in decision making. Recent Federal Court involvement in corrections has caused many agencies to "rethink" the relationship between classification and management issues. The Courts' recognition of the importance of classification to corrections' management was best expressed in Palmigiano vs. Garrahy, 443 F. Supp. 956, 965 (DRI 1977):

> Classification is essential to the operation of an orderly and safe prison. It is a prerequisite for the rational allocation of whatever program opportunities exist within the institution. It enables the institution to gauge the proper custody level of an inmate, to identify the inmate's educational, vocational, and psychological needs, and to separate non-violent inmates from the more predatory.... Classification is also indispensable for any coherent future planning.

The NIC Model Probation/Parole Classification System also emphasizes management issues. According to NIC, a classification system should at a minimum:

- provide a rationale for deploying agency resources;

- enable administrators to make efficient use of available staff;

- avoid providing services to offenders who do not need them;

- assist officers in identifying the needs and risk represented by each client; and

- provide a basis for more effective case planning.[8]

The NIC system was designed specifically for adult offenders. In developing a similar system for use with juveniles, several issues need to be carefully considered. First, any system developed must meet specific operational standards such as those advanced by Clements (1981) who states that an adequate classification system should:[9]

- be sufficiently complete so that most of the offenders or clients in the agency or setting can be classified;

- have clear operational definitions of the various types so that each person can be classified with a minimum of ambiguity;

- be reliable so that two different raters will arrive at the same classification of a given individual;

- be valid in the sense that the individuals falling within a given classification actually have the attributes they are hypothesized to possess;

- be dynamic so that changes in an individual will be reflected by a change in his or her classification; and

- carry implications for treatment.

Experienced juvenile correctional workers almost uniformly agree that juvenile offender populations have changed over the last decade with significantly more serious "adult-like" crimes represented. However, major differences between adult and juvenile populations still exist. Juveniles are more volatile, their circumstances and needs change rapidly, and they generally are on supervision for shorter periods of time than are most adults. Long standing patterns of behavior that assist researchers in identifying risk predictors for adult populations have not yet been established by juveniles. Therefore, while the concepts of risk and need assessments, differential supervision and work-load deployment transfer easily to juvenile corrections, the instruments utilized must be refined and validated for juvenile populations. Subsequent sections of this report present a parallel to the NIC adult system and the methodology employed to develop the new system.

The Proposed Model

The system proposed in this document integrates classification, case management, workload deployment and an information system into a comprehensive management package. This is the approach used so successfully by the NIC Model Probation and Parole Management Project in adult corrections. Scales and procedures have been modified, revalidated and reformated for use in juvenile probation and aftercare.

The basic strengths of this approach lie in its completeness, its simplicity, its utility to management, and the degree of accountability inherent in the system.

In sum, experience indicates that an effective probation and parole classification system:[10]

- considers both risk to community and the service needs of the client;

- uses classification data to formulate comprehensive case plans;

- should be incorporated into a management information system (MIS) for monitoring evaluation, planning and accountability; and

- utilizes the data generated to allocate resources in an effective, efficient and equitable manner.

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RISK ASSESSMENT IN PROBATION AND AFTERCARE

This section of the report discusses the use of risk assessment in establishing appropriate levels of supervision for juveniles on aftercare or probation status. An initial and a reclassification scale are presented on pages 12 and 14 to serve as guides for agencies interested in using risk assessment instruments. The methods used to identify elements that are predictive of risk are described in the text.

To assist with development of risk and custody assessment scales, data on 743 youths from five states were collected and analyzed. These results were combined with the findings of prior research efforts to form the basis for scale development.

Risk assessment in its traditional sense, is the process of determining the probability that an individual will repeat an unlawful or destructive behavior. Risk prediction can take several forms -- risk of violent behavior, risk of any new offense (recidivism) or risk of a technical violation of probation or parole. Each type of behavior represents a different degree of concern for the correctional system and for the community in general. For example, while past research indicates that property offenders are the group most likely to recidivate, the violent offender may represent a greater physical danger, and inspire greater fear in the community. To be of maximum value to decision makers, risk assessment must consider all of these concerns and the moral and legal issues surrounding each one.

Youth representing very different levels of risk enter correctional systems. Some will never commit another offense; others will commit many crimes and move continually in and out of various components of the criminal justice system. Identification of the latter group has been a great concern of social science researchers for many years. Prediction of success or failure on parole gained much attention in the 1920s with the work of Harno, Luane Burgess, and the Gluecks. Their work was devoted to the construction of experience based tables which were used to estimate the likelihood that an offender would repeat his offense after release from prison. The first risk assessment scales were based on simple tabulations of actual experiences of offenders with similar characteristics. More sophisticated multivariate techniques, such as multiple regression and discriminant function analysis were introduced to the field of risk prediction in the 1950s and 1960s. Although these methods used more powerful measures to determine the cause and effect relationships among the variables, the general theory remained the same. Future individual behavior is predicted from actual behavior of a group of individuals with similar characteristics. For example, the base expectancy tables utilized in California were developed to predict the probability of a parole violation based on the past performance of a group of parolees with similar demographic, personal and offense profiles.

In practice, rating the relative risk of each offender is approached in different ways by probation and parole agencies. Some rely on the judgment of the supervising officer; others utilize actuarial or base expectancy tables; a

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few use psychological screening devices and; others use some combination of the above methods. The task of risk assessment is difficult since it is an attempt to project future behavior. Obviously specific predictions (i.e., type of crime) are more difficult to make than are more general predictions (recidivism). Certainly, past attempts to predict assaultive behavior have met with very limited success and even instruments developed to predict general recidivism fail to explain much of the variance in criminal activity among individuals. Because of this low predictive power, some researchers have cautioned against the use of such instruments.

It seems unrealistic to expect any instrument to predict accurately on an individual basis given that there are dozens (if not hundreds) of factors related to recidivism that are specific to each case. However, several risk assessment instruments have demonstrated that they provide reasonably accurate estimates for aggregate populations. For example, one subset of an offender population may be 20 times as likely to recidivate as another subset. While predictions as to which individuals within each group will commit new offenses cannot be accurately made, the information is still very valuable and should be used to help allocate agency resources. These types of actuarial tables are used in many disciplines, not to make predictions about individuals but to provide a rational basis for allocating staff, funds, services and other resources.

Due to the NIC Project, the use of risk assessment instruments in adult probation and parole has expanded dramatically in recent years. Often, agencies adopt scales developed elsewhere and this has raised concerns regarding transferability. Close examination of the more successful scales, however, indicates that there is considerable similarity among instruments no matter where they were developed. While items, definitions and weights do vary somewhat, all the better scales generally contain some combination of factors related to prior criminal history, stability, substance abuse, and employment or school records. Based on these similarities and supported by a recent study which demonstrated that several different risk assessment instruments were about equally predictive when tested on a single offender population, the National Institute of Corrections has advocated that jurisdictions adopt an existing validated instrument rather than undertake an extensive developmental effort.

Several assumptions which served as the basis for the NIC classification project, were adopted as the foundation for this model. These assumptions are:[11]

1. Well constructed risk assessment instruments provide reasonably accurate estimates of risk for aggregate populations. Such information is vital to effective and efficient management of probation and aftercare agencies.

2. Probation and aftercare agencies should adopt a proven risk assessment instrument rather than undertaking expensive and time consuming developmental efforts. The scale should be incorporated in the agency information system to provide data so that it can be routinely evaluated and modified if appropriate.

3. While the prediction of violence is an important concept, it is extremely difficult to do with any degree of accuracy. Therefore, the types of instruments advocated in the model deal more generally with the risk of recidivism.

4. Risk assessment instruments and the manner in which they are utilized can and should reflect agency policy. Policy statements can, in fact, be incorporated into risk scales. Higher supervision levels can thus be assigned to violent offenders within the parameters of the system even though the relationship between severity of the commitment offense and recidivism is generally inverse.

Elements of Risk Assessment

To determine elements commonly used in juvenile risk prediction and the degree of validity each element represents, three separate steps were undertaken. First, risk instruments from several jurisdictions were obtained. Items from these scales were then compared with those identified through past research efforts. Finally, new data was obtained from four correctional agencies currently involved in the development and implementation of juvenile classification systems.

The review of various risk instruments currently in use indicated that there is considerable commonality among the scales. Each risk scale reviewed utilized ratings of substance abuse, prior criminal involvement, and emotional stability. Some of the scales were obviously adapted from adult risk assessment instruments, and thus contained variables of questionable validity. Others were based on an analysis of juvenile characteristics related to probation/aftercare success or failure. The latter group tended to use additional risk indices such as school problems, the presence of learning disabilities, and family problems. Most of the scales reviewed contained a measure of client attitude which was clearly adopted from risk instruments used in adult probation.

Use of the scales is generally too new to have generated much data regarding their accuracy. In other instances, follow-up data were not collected in any systematic fashion after scales were implemented. Thus, additional validity measures are not available.

While most prior research efforts in juvenile risk prediction dealt exclusively with parole (aftercare), the results do present some guidelines for probation risk scale development as well. Studies conducted in Illinois (Baird 1973), California (Wenk 1975), Wenk and Emerick (1976) and Wisconsin (Baird and Heinz 1978) indicated that prior criminal involvement indices such as age at first adjudication, numbers of prior adjudications, and number of prior commitments were the best available predictors of future behavior. (The intercorrelations – multicolinearity – among these variables generally prohibited all of them to be reference in the same study.) In one instance (the Illinois study), approximately 60% of the variance in the dependent variable (a scaled index of future correctional experience) was explained and the scale "correctly" classified about 86% into "success" or "failure" groups.

In addition to criminal history variables, these studies noted that institutional adjustment (Illinois), drug usage (California), and emotional stability (Wisconsin) increased the overall predictive ability of each statistical equation.

To further augment the development of a "model" risk instrument, data were obtained from five agencies: Orange County, California Probation; Hennepin County, Minnesota Court Services; the Louisiana Department of Corrections; the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility; and the New Mexico Boys School at Springa. The data varied in quality and quantity among sites as did the point of correctional intervention that data was obtained (probation or correctional facility placement). These differences prevented merging of the information into a single data file. Despite this drawback, separate analysis of each data set proved valuable to the construction of a "model" risk instrument.

The most complete data base (Orange County, California) found the following variables to be most predictive (through a series of analyses) of future criminal behavior:

Predictive Factors	Correlation Coefficient
	(N = 237)
Drug abuse	.326
Prior commitments	.292
Parental control	.197
School problems	.297
Prior criminal behavior	.265
Alcohol abuse	N.S.*
Runaway	.236
Peer relationships	N.S.*

The Hennepin County data base, although substantially smaller and not entirely comparable in terms of data elements collected, reaffirmed many of these relationships. Correlations between social and criminal history measures and two outcome measures are presented below:

Predictive Factors	Overall Adjustment to Supervision	Number of New Offenses
	(N = 70)	
Alcohol abuse	.59	.30
Drug abuse	.45	.27
Family relationships	.52	N.S.*
Age at first adjudication	N.S.*	-.22
School problems	.39	N.S.*
Prior commitments	.25	.18
Most serious prior offense	.38	.43
Emotional stability	.57	.26

The difference between the lists of predictive variables from each site is largely attributable to differences in data definitions. The criminal behavior index used in Orange County for example, rates dispositions rather than numbers of priors and therefore may actually reflect the seriousness of past offenses as much as the number of priors. The Illinois study described earlier also found that a combined measure of the number and severity of past offenses was a better predictor of future criminal activity than was the number of priors alone. This coupled with the Hennepin County finding that the most serious prior is highly correlated with subsequent violating behavior provides valuable information for risk scale construction.

In sum, although past research seems to indicate that the seriousness of the commitment offense is inversely related to recidivism, a serious offense followed by another law violation may represent a pattern of behavior that is a good "predictor" of future violations.

Data from three other states were collected on youths already incarcerated in state correctional facilities. The "problem" profiles of these youth indicated a higher instance of needs in every area. Overall, these groups were more homogeneous than the probation samples (i.e., there was not as much variance in characteristics). Despite this fact, the additional data did reinforce several points:

1. Drug and alcohol abuse again showed significant relationships with the total amount of criminal behavior reported for each youth.*

2. Age at first adjudication also exhibited a strong relationship with criminal behavior indicating that the earlier a youth enters the criminal justice system, the higher the risk of continued activity.

3. In both samples, emotional stability was related to the severity of the commitment offense, but unrelated to number of priors.

Based on all of the information reviewed, the following elements seem universally predictive of continued criminal involvement for juveniles:

1. Age at first adjudication

2. Prior criminal behavior (a combined measure of the number and severity of priors)

---

*Not Significant - Although the simple correlations were not significant, these variables entered a step-wise linear regression analysis ahead of some other factors that demonstrated higher correlations with the respective outcome variables. In addition, significant correlations were obtained between these variables and other outcome measures.

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3. Number of prior commitments to juvenile facilities

4. Drug/chemical abuse

5. Alcohol abuse

6. Family relationships (parental control)

7. School problems

8. Peer relationships

Figure 2 utilizes these variables and is presented as an example of a risk instrument that could provide juvenile agencies with a basic foundation on which to build a scale specific to their needs. Other risk factors may be more relevant based on the specific circumstances of jurisdictions. Therefore, agencies should incorporate risk instruments into a management information system so that they can be routinely evaluated and revised to improve reliability and validity.

Reclassification

In the view of most staff interviewed for this project, reclassification should occur relatively frequently because the situations of juvenile clients change rapidly. Further, risk assessment at reclassification should emphasize adjustment rather than predictive factors. Data collected in one study site indicated that while subjective judgments of probation officers made at intake demonstrated little correlation with success or failure, the same judgment made after 90 or more days experience with a youth had considerable validity. The role of a reclassification is to structure these ratings by requiring that all staff consider the same criteria in establishing supervision levels.

In changing emphasis from prior criminal history and other factors used at intake, to factors which describe adjustment to supervision at reassessment, youth are able to move to lower or higher supervision levels based on actual behavior. The system thus assumes a "just desserts" approach to setting supervision levels.

A proposed reclassification instrument is presented on Figure 3. Again, modifications to the instrument may be required to reflect the circumstances of each jurisdiction.

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*Background factors were tested against a criminal history measure that incorporated both the number and severity of prior offenses.

FIGURE 2
JUVENILE PROBATION AND AFTERCARE
ASSESSMENT OF RISK

Select the highest point total applicable for each category

AGE AT FIRST ADJUDICATION   _____
   0 = 16 or older
   3 = 14 or 15
   5 = 13 or younger

PRIOR CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR
   0 = No prior arrests   _____
   2 = Prior arrest record, no formal sanctions
   3 = Prior delinquency petitions sustained;
      no offenses classified as assaultive
   5 = Prior delinquency petitions sustained;
      at least one assaultive offense recorded

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS OR PLACEMENTS OF 30 DAYS
OR MORE   _____
   0 = None
   2 = One
   4 = Two or more

DRUG/CHEMICAL ABUSE
   0 = No known use or no interference with   _____
      functioning
   2 = Some disruption of functioning
   5 = Chronic abuse or dependency

ALCOHOL ABUSE
   0 = No known use or no interference with   _____
      functioning
   1 = Occasional abuse, some disruption of
      functioning
   3 = Chronic abuse, serious disruption of
      functioning

PARENTAL CONTROL
   0 = Generally effective   _____
   2 = Inconsistent and/or ineffective
   4 = Little or none

SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS
   0 = Attending, graduated, GED equivalence   _____
   1 = Problems handled at school level
   3 = Severe truancy or behavioral problems
   5 = Not attending/expelled

PEER RELATIONSHIPS
   0 = Good support and influence   _____
   2 = Negative influence, companions involved
      in delinquent behavior
   4 = Gang member

     TOTAL   _____

FIGURE 3
REASSESSMENT OF RISK

AGE AT FIRST ADJUDICATION   _____
     0 = 16 or older
     2 = 14 or 15
     3 = 13 or younger

PRIOR CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR   _____
     0 = No prior arrests
     1 = Prior arrest record, no formal sanctions
     2 = Prior delinquency petitions sustained;
          no offenses classified as assaultive
     4 = Prior delinquency petitions sustained;
          at least one assaultive offense recorded

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS OR PLACEMENTS OF 30 DAYS
OR MORE   _____
     0 = None
     1 = One
     3 = Two or more

Rate the following based on experience since last assessment:

DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE   _____
     0 = No known use or no interference with
          functioning
     2 = Some disruption of functioning
     5 = Chronic abuse or dependency, serious
          disruption of functioning

PARENTAL CONTROL (Include foster or group home
                experience)   _____
     0 = Generally effective
     2 = Inconsistent and/or ineffective
     5 = Little or none

SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS   _____
     0 = Attending, graduated, GED equivalence
     1 = Problems handled at school level
     3 = Severe truancy or behavioral problems
     5 = Not attending/expelled

RESPONSE TO SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS   _____
     0 = No problems of consequence
     2 = Moderate compliance problems (e.g. missed
          appointments, some resistance to authority)
     5 = Major compliance problems, totally uncooperative

USE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES/TREATMENT PROGRAMS   _____
     0 = Not needed
     0 = Productively utilized
     2 = Needed but not available
     3 = Utilized but not beneficial
     5 = Available but rejected

     TOTAL   _____

CUSTODY ASSESSMENT FOR JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS

This section outlines the development of custody assessment scales for institutions. As institutions become responsible for more assaultive youths, housing and supervision decisions gain significance. Two scales are presented -- the first as an aid to initial custody decisions and the second for use in reclassification.

While considerable research has been conducted on predicting recidivism, far less has been done on assigning appropriate custody levels in juvenile institutions. In the past, classification of juveniles has been principally limited to placement based on age, sex and legal requirements (such as desegregation orders). Thus, the instruments presented are based on:

1. An approach to classification that primarily bases custody assignments on the recency, frequency and severity of past behavior.

2. On-site work with staff from several jurisdictions to obtain their input into

     a. the need for objective classification instruments; and

     b. factors that should be considered in making custody decisions.

3. Data collected on 436 youths representing three separate jurisdictions.

In the past, most formal classification systems used in juvenile facilities have focused on treatment needs. However, it has become increasingly evident that housing and supervision decisions are critical to order and safety in juvenile institutions. Removal of status offenders and an increase in effective diversion programs has resulted in populations that, in the judgement of experienced correctional administrators, contain many assaultive and potentially assaultive youths. For the safety of other wards and staff as well, increased supervision requirements are obviously necessary for some youths while others function well with little direct supervision.

Most institutions have utilized "level systems" for many years. Based on behavior, wards are given more or less freedom of movement and concomitant privileges. However, examination of these systems often indicate that they are not consistently applied to all youths. Criteria for level assignments are sometimes vague and often interpreted differently among cottages and staff members. In addition, because they are often totally based on behavior within the institution, important community based factors regarding assaultive potential may be ignored.

The purpose of custody classification instruments is to lend consistency and validity to placement decisions. When coupled with a comprehensive needs assessment and treatment plan, classification forms the basis establishing supervision requirements, program participation, goals for each ward and for monitoring progress.

The following assumptions served as a guide to the development of the National Institute of Corrections Adult Prison Classification Model. Eight of the nine assumptions used by NIC apply equally well to juvenile classification. These are:

1. Classification can only be done appropriately when quality information is available. Therefore, it is essential that a standard, high quality pre-sentence or admission investigation be completed by field staff on all incoming inmates. In addition, the intake process should include a standardized interview administered by a thoroughly trained intake worker. The purpose of these two processes is to provide complete and reliable data on which custody and program placements can be based.

2. Custody decisions should be based, to the extent possible, on actual past relevant behavior. The frequency, recency, and severity of past behavior are the best indicators of future similar behavior. At intake, however, it may be necessary to consider other variables demonstrated to be correlated with institutional adjustment (such as age, employment history, school problems for juveniles, etc.), but these should be replaced at reclassification by measures of actual institutional behavior (e.g., disciplinary reports).

3. Inmates should be classified to the least restrictive custody required to protect society, staff, and other inmates. Therefore, maximum custody placements should be reserved for inmates who have demonstrated through past violent behavior that they are a serious threat to other inmates or staff.

4. Inmate needs should be systematically assessed at intake and again at reclassification. Program recommendations should be made based on this needs assessment. Subsequent actions should be closely monitored to determine whether recommendations are carried out.

5. Tests for psychological disturbance (e.g., MMPI, CPI) need not be administered to all inmates. To do so probably constitutes a misallocation of resources. Testing should be requested based on the type of offense committed (unusual offense, degree of violence, sexual offense, etc.), history of emotional instability, or problems uncovered during the intake interview. Testing should always be done in conjunction with a complete psychological/psychiatric evaluation. However, achievement and intelligence tests are appropriate for all inmates at intake in order to facilitate effective programming decisions based, in part, on these test results.

6. No classification device will correctly classify all individuals -- there will always be cases exhibiting exceptional circumstances not addressed by "normal" classification criteria. Thus, an override capability must be built into the system and continuously monitored to prevent abuses.

7. Classification forms should be designed to allow them to also serve as data input documents to an agency's information system. Computerized files allow for routine monitoring to enhance accountability and systematic program planning, research, and evaluation.

8. A standard reclassification process addressing both custody and program needs is an essential part of any classification system. Reclassification schedules can be developed to meet the various needs of the inmates and the institution, but under no circumstances should more than six months elapse between evaluations.

The quantity and quality of data collected varied somewhat from site to site. In each study, criminal and social history factors were tested against institutional adjustment measures. Five adjustment measures were collected for all youths in the sample:

1. Major disciplinary reports.

2. Minor disciplinary reports.

3. Escape/escape attempts.

4. Abscondings from community based settings.

5. Over adjustment ratings by staff.

The principal measure utilized was the number of major disciplinary reports filed. The main purposes of custody classification is to separate assaultive youth from others and to increase supervision of these wards. Thus, it was thought that major disciplinary reports reflected more serious behaviors and should be used for the study. It was also assumed that this measure was more objective than staff ratings of overall adjustment. (Further investigation indicated that this assumption was probably accurate. Staff often seemed to react to factors other than problems caused by a particular youth. Wards with few disciplinaries reported were often rated lower than wards with substantial numbers of reports. This was especially true for youths with emotional or intellectual deficits.)

The following list of factors showed the strongest relationships with adjustment:

	Highest correlation coefficient attained
Prior Criminal Behavior*	0.25
Severity of Current Offense	0.39
Age at First Adjudication	0.32
Emotional Stability	0.38
Family Problems	0.38
School Problems	0.25
Intellectual Ability	0.25
Substance Abuse	0.30

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In some instances, there was considerable variability in relationships between adjustment and the above factors among the populations analyzed. For example, substance abuse was significantly correlated with adjustment in two jurisdictions, but showed no correlation in the third. Other relationships (Emotional Stability, Intellectual Ability) were quite stable across agencies. Use of disciplinary reports also varied substantially. The most received by any one youth was 17 in one jurisdiction and over 70 in another. In sum, different policies and practices in each jurisdiction made any comparison of data tenuous at best.

In choosing elements for the custody assessment scales presented on Figures 4 and 5, the following criteria were used:

1. Objectivity - To the extent possible, scale items should be objective measures. If an item may be subjectively interpreted, precise definitions should be incorporated to increase consistency.

2. A Behavioral Basis - The scale should be based on the recency, frequency and severity of past behavior.

3. Face Validity - Items must make intuitive sense to staff members if a classification system is to be properly utilized.

In addition, the scale used at reclassification should reflect the actual behavior of each individual. Thus, emphasis at reclassification shifts from prior history items to actual measures of institutional adjustment (conduct reports, etc.).

Figures 4 and 5 are intended only as examples of well designed and formatted scales. Each jurisdiction will need to modify these scales to fit their special circumstances, policies, procedures and population.

---

*Prior Criminal Behavior includes both the number and seriousness of prior offenses.

FIGURE 4
INITIAL CUSTODY CLASSIFICATION

NAME _____ _____
    LAST   FIRST   MI   NUMBER

DATE OF ADMISSION_____ STAFF PERSON_____

SEVERITY OF COMMITMENT OFFENSE*   _____
    Highest............. 6
    High................ 5
    Moderate............ 3
    Low................. 1

MOST SERIOUS PRIOR OFFENSE*   _____
    Highest............. 7
    High................ 5
    Moderate............ 3
    Low................. 1

NUMBER OF PRIOR OFFENSES   _____
    8 or more........... 6
    5-7................. 4
    3-4................. 2
    2 or fewer.......... 0

AGE AT FIRST ADJUDICATION   _____
    12 or under......... 5
    13-14............... 3
    15.................. 2
    16 or older......... 0

PRIOR ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR   _____
    Assault leading to adjudication......... 6
    Assault on authority figure, no
    conviction............................. 5
    Fighting resulting in injury to others
    or suspension from school.............. 4

PRIOR ESCAPES/RUNAWAYS (WITHIN LAST 12 MONTHS)   _____
    None................................... 0
    Runaway (attempts) from parents' home... 2
    Runaways from group or foster home
    placement.............................. 4
    Escape from secure facility (jail or
    correctional facility)................. 6

EMOTIONAL STABILITY   _____
    No serious problems.................... 0
    Moderate problems (aggressive acting
    out or withdrawal)..................... 3
    Major problems (excessive responses,
    limits functioning)................... 5

                      TOTAL   _____

*Each jurisdiction should assign offenses to the appropriate category

FIGURE 5
CUSTODY RECLASSIFICATION SCALE

NAME _____ NUMBER _____
     LAST   FIRST   MI

DATE OF ADMISSION _____ STAFF PERSON _____

SEVERITY OF CURRENT OFFENSE*   ————
    Highest 3
    High 2
    Moderate 1
    Low 0

MOST SERIOUS PRIOR OFFENSE*   ————
    Highest 5
    High 2
    Moderate 1
    Low 0

NUMBER OF PRIOR OFFENSES   ————
    8 or more 3
    5-7 2
    4 or fewer 0

ESCAPES/ATTEMPTS (LAST THREE MONTHS)   ————
    1 or more 5
    None 0

NUMBER OF MAJOR MISCONDUCT REPORTS (LAST THREE MONTHS) ————
    3 or more 5
    1 or 2 3
    None 0

MOST SERIOUS MISCONDUCT REPORT RECEIVED (IN LAST
THREE MONTHS)*   ————
    Highest 7
    High 5
    Moderate 3
    Low 1

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION/ADJUSTMENT (LAST THREE MONTHS) ————
    Major problems reported 5
    Moderate problems 3
    Full participation/no significant
    problems 0

FURLOUGH/DAYS OFF EXPERIENCE   ————
    Completed three or more successfully ... -5
    Completed one or two successfully ...... -3

             TOTAL   ————

*Each jurisdiction should assign offenses and infractions to the appropriate
category.

NEED ASSESSMENT

In this section, the development and use of needs assessment instruments in both field and institutional settings is described. In some institutions, a need assessment is used as an initial screening device that is often supplemented by additional testing. In others, they are used to summarize test results and clinical evaluations, thus serving as the basis for an individualized treatment plan. In probation and aftercare, need assessments add an element of consistency to case assessment and provide the foundation for a case plan and progress monitoring. Regardless of how an agency uses needs assessment in the case planning process, aggregated need data will prove valuable in resource planning and allocation.

A recommended needs assessment instrument is presented on Figure 6.

Purpose

Need assessments in juvenile corrections should be an integral part of any classification system since there is considerable evidence that the criminal behavior of youth is often linked to learning and environmental problems. By including need assessments in the classification process, an agency not only addresses custody requirements and community protection issues, but also the rehabilitative needs of juveniles.

Despite recent trends toward incapacitation and punishment, the goal of rehabilitation, particularly in juvenile justice, has not been abandoned. The following excerpt from a speech made by the Chief Justice of the United States articulately summarizes the need for correctional programming:

> (O)ur criminal justice system is in need of fundamental change; specifically, we must focus more attention on the conditions of incarcerated persons...and I intend to press this subject in 1981. (W)e have a system of justice that provides each criminal defendant the most elaborate due process, free counsel, and the most expensive trials known anywhere, yet when the trial is over we simply cast the guilty into nineteenth century penal institutions...The 1970's saw some encouraging efforts to redress this imbalance, in part because of the realization that if those responsible for ensuring decent and responsible correctional administration fail to do so, the courts reach the point where there is no choice but to act.
>
> (T)o put people behind walls and bars and do nothing to change them is to win a battle but lose a war. It is wrong. It is expensive. It is stupid.
>
> Chief Justice Warren Burger
> Year-End Report on the Judiciary
> December 1980

FIGURE 6
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Client Name	Last	First	M.I.	Client No.

For each item below, select the single appropriate answer and enter the associated number in the adjacent blank.

DRUG/CHEMICAL ABUSE

0 No interference with functioning 　　4 Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning, unwilling to participate in treatment program 　　6 Frequent abuse, serious disruption, needs immediate treatment 　　____

ALCOHOL ABUSE

0 No known use 　　4 Occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning, unwilling to participate in treatment program 　　6 Frequent abuse, serious disruption, needs immediate treatment 　　____

PRIMARY FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

0 Relatively stable relationships or not applicable 　　3 Some disorganization or stress but potential for improvement 　　5 Major disorganization or stress 　　____

ALTERNATIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

0 Relatively stable relationships or not applicable 　　3 Some disorganization or stress but potential for improvement 　　5 Major disorganization or stress, unwilling to comply with family rules 　　____

EMOTIONAL STABILITY

0 Appropriate adolescent responses 　　3 Exaggerated periodic or sporadic responses e.g., aggressive acting out or depressive withdrawal 　　6 Excessive responses; prohibits or limits adequate functioning 　　____

INTELLECTUAL ABILITY

0 Able to function independently 　　3 Some need for assistance, potential for adequate adjustment; mild retardation 　　5 Deficiencies severely limit independent functioning, moderate retardation 　　____

LEARNING DISABILITY

0 None 　　3 Mild disability, able to function in classroom 　　5 Serious disability, interferes with social functioning 　　____

EMPLOYMENT

0 Not needed or currently employed 　　3 Currently employed but poor work habits 　　4 Needs employment 　　____

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS

0 Currently developing marketable skill 　　3 Needs to develop marketable skill 　　____

Enter the value 1 for each characteristic which applies to this case.

EDUCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT
Not working to potential.................... ____
Poor attendance record..................... ____
Refusal to participate in any educational program.......................... ____
Program not appropriate for needs, age and/or ability......................... ____
Disruptive school behavior................. ____ TOTAL ____

PEER RELATIONSHIPS
Socially inept............................. ____
Loner behavior............................. ____
Receives basically negative influence from peers............................ ____
Dependent upon others...................... ____
Exploits and/or manipulates others......... ____ TOTAL ____

HEALTH AND HYGIENE
Medical or Dental referral needed.......... ____
Needs health or hygiene education.......... ____
Handicap or illness limits functioning..... ____ TOTAL ____

SEXUAL ADJUSTMENT
Lacks knowledge (sex education)............ ____
Avoidance of the opposite sex.............. ____
Promiscuity (not prostitution)............. ____
Sexual deviant (not prostitution).......... ____
Unwed parent............................... ____
Prostitution............................... ____ TOTAL ____

TOTAL NEEDS SCORE ____

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While most Correctional agencies make some attempt to address program needs of youth, a structured, formalized needs assessment component:[12]

- ensures that certain types of problems are considered and aids in formulating a case plan;

- provides an additional measure for setting priorities (i.e. judging the amount of effort that should be expended on an individual case relative to the entire caseload);

- provides a base for monitoring a juvenile's progress;

- forces qualitative review of every case through periodic reassessments and provides a basis for judging the relative effectiveness of the case plan and casework approach. This process should lead to changes where appropriate; and,

- provides a data base for coherent planning and evaluation of programs, policies and procedures.

Development

Unlike risk instruments, needs assessments are not predictive scales. Therefore, they are rarely results of statistical analyses. Need assessments usually emanate from staff efforts to articulate and formalize case assessment procedures through a structured process of identification, definition and prioritization of problems frequently encountered in clients. To illustrate this process, the developmental effort undertaken by the Wisconsin Division of Corrections is chronicled below:

1. A task force was established consisting of juvenile probation officers, supervisors, representatives from clinical services and the research and evaluation unit.

2. The probation officers on the task force surveyed their current caseloads and constructed a "laundry" list of need categories.

3. The task force then prioritized this list based on the need for officer intervention. Specific categories of need were then selected for inclusion on the need assessment scale. (Short term crisis needs were not included because they were deemed to be symptomatic of longer term problems which should serve as a basis for case plan development).

4. Each need area was further subdivided into three categories: No Problem, Moderate Problem, and Major Problem. (For some items, a fourth category "Strength" was also included.)

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5. Short definitions for each category were developed to enhance inter-rater reliability (i.e. the consistency of ratings).

6. Task force members then rank ordered the need scale items based on their estimate of the amount of officer time required to deal with each type of problem.

7. A weighting system was devised based on the rank ordering process. Values were assigned to each category of need.

8. A format for the needs assessment instrument was developed by the research and evaluation unit, and the resultant form was integrated with other components of the agency's information system.

9. Juvenile probation officers and supervisors were then asked to help construct a Needs Assessment Manual which described in detail the following guidelines for each need scale item:

   1. Identification of the Problem
   2. Treatment Approach
   3. When to Make a Referral
   4. Community Resources Available

While other agency efforts at need scale development may have been less structured than the process used in Wisconsin, the use of a task force to reach consensus on need scale elements is generally the type of methodology employed.

Need Scale Elements

A review of juvenile need assessment instruments constructed in California, Illinois, Montana and Wisconsin found the need items represented on Table 1 on the following page.

The four instruments described and other need scales used in juvenile corrections are quite similar in content and format. The Montana form, however, does present some interesting variations. Its definitions are the most clear and comprehensive of all the scales, but it is also the most difficult to complete. All agencies involved in developing a classification system should be guided by the maxim "simple is better". Complex systems are difficult to complete and reliability is often less than desirable.

TABLE 1
NEED ELEMENTS FROM FOUR SELECTED SCALES

	Orange County CA	MacLean County IL	Montana	Wisconsin
Vocational Skills				X
Alcohol Abuse	X	X	X	X
Drug/Chemical Abuse	X	X	X	X
Emotional Stability	X	X	X	X
Learning Disabilities	X	X		
School Attendance	X	X	X	X
Academic Achievement	X	X	X	X
Employment/Work Performance	X	X		X
Family Problems	X	X		X
Parental Control	X			
Parent Problems	X			
Peer Relationships	X	X	X	X
Recreation/Leisure Time	X	X	X	
Health	X	X		X
Residential Stability	X			
Life Skills			X	
Communication Skills			X	
Residential Living Skills			X	
Relationships with Opposite Sex		X		X
Sexual Adjustment				X
Financial Management		X		X
Mental Ability				X
Family Finances		X		

Weighting of Need Scale Items

The weights given need scale items are generally assigned through the rank ordering process previously described. The basis for assigning weights, however, does vary among agencies. Basing weights on workload factors (i.e.

the amount of time required to deal with a particular need) is the most common approach. Another approach is to base weights on each problem's relationship to success or failure on supervision. To do this in any scientific fashion (through statistical analysis) is, in essence, to create another risk index. The result is unnecessary redundancy in data collection and the loss of an additional input (workload) in assigning a supervision level.

The following table presents a cumulative rank ordering of the heaviest weighted items of need scales used in California, Montana, Illinois and Wisconsin.

TABLE 2
RELATIVE WEIGHTING OF NEED ELEMENTS

Rank Order	Needs Category
1	Substance Abuse
2	Emotional Stability
3	Family Problems (Parental Problems)
4	School Problems
5	Intellectual Impairment

The remaining items listed in Table 1 received approximately equal weights.

Format

Needs assessments need not be complicated, as most are rather straight forward systems for rating the severity of common potential problem areas. Most agencies have found that development of short definitions describing the degree of need enhances inter-rater consistency. Because they consider generic problem areas, need assessment instruments are generally considered transferable among agencies although a few minor modifications may be necessary to reflect differences in populations.

The planning and evaluation potential provided by a formal needs assessment system should not be overlooked. In an era of limited resources, agencies must strive to obtain the best results from each dollar spent. Assessments of needs, periodically completed on each ward, can serve as a basis for measuring progress, evaluating the relative effectiveness of programs and planning future projects. Examples of uses of aggregate need scale information is presented in the Management Information Systems section of this report.

The needs instrument presented on page 25 is based on the best features of various scales already in use and on data recently collected from juvenile agencies in four states. It includes problem areas most frequently encountered in youth committed to corrections agencies and some needs less frequently encountered but nevertheless important to comprehensive case planning.

STANDARDS FOR CUSTODY AND SUPERVISION

This section of the manuscript discusses the need for established standards of operation for all correctional agencies. Without measurable standards, even the best classification systems will not result in consistently applied services or supervision. A definition of correctional standards is presented, followed by guidelines for standards development, examples of standards for both field and institutional settings and illustrations of the relationship between standards and classification systems.

Standards Development

Agencies implementing classification systems must first address the need to develop standards for all agency functions. Standards represent both the quantity and quality control measures of an organization. They are generally developed as precise written statements that outline the minimum performance requirements for each custody or supervision level, investigations, case planning, auditing, and other agency responsibilities. Neither classification nor workload have much meaning unless related to specified standards. Considerable emphasis should therefore be given to their development, including, at a minimum, the following points:[13]

1. Standards should represent a level of quality of service mandated by the community, the courts, and/or the oversight agency.

2. Standards should reflect reasonable requirements; minimum expectations must be attainable or the standards become meaningless. In jurisdictions that are significantly understaffed, points 1 and 2 are often in conflict. In such instances, point 2 should take precedence and the difference documented in reports to the appropriate funding or oversight agencies.*

3. Standards must be measurable. Minimum expectations should be quantified and/or clearly defined.

4. Standards must be monitored and enforced if the agency wishes to be recognized as a responsible and accountable entity.

---

*For example, the agency administration may determine that a minimum of four contacts per month are appropriate for all high need probationers, but with current caseloads of 60 prohibit staff from meeting these requirements. The standards should be temporarily lowered to reasonable levels or staff cannot be held accountable for any particular level of service,

In institutions, custody standards specify the amount of supervision required at each level, including the type of housing and the freedom of movement allowed both in and out of the facility. Listed below are standards for four custody levels developed in 1983 by a juvenile division of corrections:

Maximum Custody

Housing: Single room only
Movement: Always under supervision/escort
Meals: Independent dining schedule
Recreation: Separate recoreation area/schedule
Education: With general population, but escorted separately
                to and from classrooms
Other: No furloughs or days off;
                No outside privileges;
                Separate visitation area/schedule;
                Limited access to programs

Medium-In Custody

Housing: Single room
Movement: Confined to within perimeter always observed,
                but direct escort not necessary
Meals: Independent dining
Recreation: Full program participation
Education: Full program participation
Other: General visitation;
                No furloughs or days off

Medium-Out Custody

General parameters of medium-in with the following exceptions:

- Eligible for furloughs/days off
- Off grounds activities under supervision
- Supervised work on institution grounds, but may be outside perimeter

Minimum Custody

Housing: Outside perimeter, single room or dormitory
                (24 hour residential supervision)
Meals: Separate dining area
Education: Regular area high school
Recreation: Community programs
Work: Eligible to work in community
Other: Eligible for furloughs/days off

In probation and aftercare, supervision standards delineate the minimum number and type of required contacts at each supervision level thereby incorporating a level of accountability into a system where performance is inherently difficult to quantify. The one drawback of establishing minimum contact standards is that, over time, minimum requirements may become the operational norm. Thus, it is extremely important to incorporate a casework

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audit procedure into the system to ensure that contacts respond to the needs and risk of each case, exceeding minimum standards where appropriate.

Examples of standards used in probation and aftercare are presented below:

Regular Supervision
4 face to face contacts per month with your
2 face to face contacts per month with parents
1 face to face contact per month with placement staff
1 contact with school officials

Intensive Supervision

6 face to face contacts per month with youth
3 face to face contacts per month with parents
1 face to face contact per month with placement staff
2 contacts with school officials

Alternative Care Cases

1 face to face contact per month with youth
4 contacts with agency staff (1 must be face to face)
1 contact every two months with parents

Assignment to Custody or Supervision Levels

Once scales have been devised and custody or supervision standards developed, agencies must determine how the instruments will be used in assigning youths to the appropriate classification level. The assignment of custody levels is generally straightforward, with specified scoring intervals resulting in placement as in the following example:

Custody Score	Placement
20 or higher	Maximum Custody
15-19	Medium-In
10-14	Medium-Out
9 or under	Minimum

The selection of "cut-off points" for custody assignments can be accomplished several different ways. The recommended method is to relate custody scores for youths who have been in the institutions for three months or longer to their actual behavior records; i.e., major and minor disciplinary reports, escapes, assaults, and overall adjustment ratings. Using simple mathematical tabulations, cut-off points can be established to correspond with significant changes in behavior as scores increase.

In probation and aftercare, establishment of cut-off points can be somewhat more complicated. Assignments to supervision levels are usually based on both risk and need assessments. Many agencies simply assign the highest level of supervision indicated by either scale. Others, by policy, will emphasize one scale over the other.

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This is usually accomplished through the use of a matrix or grid. The following example illustrates how an agency can base assignments more on risk assessments than need scores:

FIGURE 7
NEED-RISK GRID

RISK \ NEEDS	High	Moderate	Low
High	Maximum Sup.	Maximum Sup.	Maximum Sup.
Moderate	Medium Sup.	Medium Sup.	Medium Sup.
Low	Medium Sup.	Minimum Sup.	Minimum Sup.

In this instance, high need individuals with moderate or low risk scores are placed in medium supervision and moderate need, low risk clients receive only minimum supervision.

Selecting cut-off points for risk and need scales can be based both on recidivism data and resource availability. A general recommendation is not applicable here, as the specific circumstances of each jurisdiction will determine the methodology chosen.

THE ROLE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS
IN CORRECTIONS MANAGEMENT

This section outlines the need for and uses of management information systems (MIS) in Corrections. The current availability for cost efficient data management systems provide excellent opportunities for correctional administrators to enhance their management capabilities both in institutional and field operations.

Classification is, itself, an information system. Using classification as the basis for an agency's MIS has proved to be an efficient and effective systems design. The proposed model is based on the highly successful adult system adopted by many agencies with support provided by the National Institute of Corrections.

System Design

A good information system is essential to corrections management. Data regarding cases, staff actions, and probation outcomes must be collected and properly analyzed if an agency is to evaluate its policies, programs and procedures. In designing an information system, two fundamental issues must be addressed: what data is needed, and how and when should data be collected and processed.

After a decade of costly mistakes in designing information systems, corrections has over the last three years, made substantial progress in defining data needs. Probation and parole, in particular, has learned that automated client tracking systems are costly and of limited value to staff and management and that the real need is for aggregate data for planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. The selection of data elements required for these functions is not an easy task. Some agencies collect too much information and consequently the accuracy and timeliness of data are less than ideal. Other agencies collect too little information and are unable to adequately plan or evaluate programs or policies without collecting additional data through staff surveys or other means.

While every corrections department must analyze its need for data and design its automated system accordingly, considerable commonality exists among the better information systems. These systems require, at a minimum, that case specific data be collected at admission and termination and are often "driven" by classification systems. Classification itself, is an information system and the data it generates has implications for evaluation, planning and monitoring. Correctional agencies throughout the country need to become increasingly sophisticated in using this type of data to monitor and evaluate programs, policies and staff performance. Examples of effective data utilization by probation are presented later in this section of the report.

When determining its data requirements, an agency also must consider various processing options. Some phases of a well designed system may operate on a manual basis while other phases should be automated. Choosing

which data need to be computerized and which do not is the key to developing an efficient information system. Too often, agencies have attempted to computerize all data systems without giving due consideration to less expensive alternatives' The results are often worse than having nothing computerized. Unrealistic expectations coupled with the system's failure to produce timely, accurate and useful data leads to cynicism and staff resistance to data collection procedures.

Recent advances in technology (i.e., the microprocessor) have created new opportunities for data management in corrections. Microcomputers now have the capacity to meet the needs of nearly all juvenile correctional agencies. This "frees" corrections from centralized data processing operations and allows agencies to have control over the collection, processing and reporting of data. Distributive processing operations are quickly replacing centralized operations in other fields and should be seriously considered by all correctional agencies.

Although generalities seldom apply in total to an agency, experience in systems development in many organizations has led to the discussed below guidelines for selecting appropriate processing options for each module of an information system.

Manual systems in some instances, are the most efficient means of processing information that need not be aggregated. Examples of "reports" that can be efficiently produced manually include lists of case actions due in a specified time period, case plans and the frequency and type of contacts. The "reminder" lists are important to probation officers, institutional staff, and first line supervisors, but have no value to higher level administrators. Although automated systems are very efficient at producing these "reminder" listings, agencies have often demonstrated that well designed manual systems also work very well. Caseplans are important to line staff and supervisors, but aggregating these data is expensive, complex, and time consuming, and offers little meaningful information to administrators. A good case audit procedure should suffice: It helps establish expectations for staff; it represents a vehicle for supervisor input; and it provides an excellent means for evaluating the performance of staff.

In short, if data will not be aggregated or if the management implications of the data are basically between officers and first line supervisors, a well designed manual system could suffice.

A manual system with batch processing of summary data is the most efficient option in some instances. Some tracking procedures can be effectively done manually and still provide valuable aggregate data for management. At this juncture, the agency must carefully weigh the cost of automating the entire process versus the cost of simply keying in manually tabulated summaries on a weekly, monthly or less frequent basis. Though the latter option is seemingly unsophisticated, its simplicity and minimal cost make it the best approach for many agencies. The primary drawback is the lag time that occurs between staff actions, summarizations, and data entry.

Therefore this option only should be used for routine reports where a short delay in obtaining the data is of little consequence to management.

Workload accounting systems represent a primary example of this approach. In dozens of probation agencies, case changes are tracked manually within each office and monthly summaries of each caseload are entered into the computer. The resultant workload reports are used for monitoring, budgeting and deployment purposes. The advent of the microcomputer has, however, removed much of the cost involved in automating workload data.

Automation should be reserved for data that will be aggregated for management use, and for information that must be transferred between offices quickly and accurately. The most successful systems are based on rather simple designs. The National Institute of Corrections has advocated use of the information system found on Figure 8, NIC Management Information System.

Comparing the NIC approach with most information systems will underscore its simplicity. Examples of types of reports that this system can generate are presented later in this report.

In summary, a good data system is essential to good management. Recent progress in information system design indicates that a comprehensive data system possesses the following attributes:
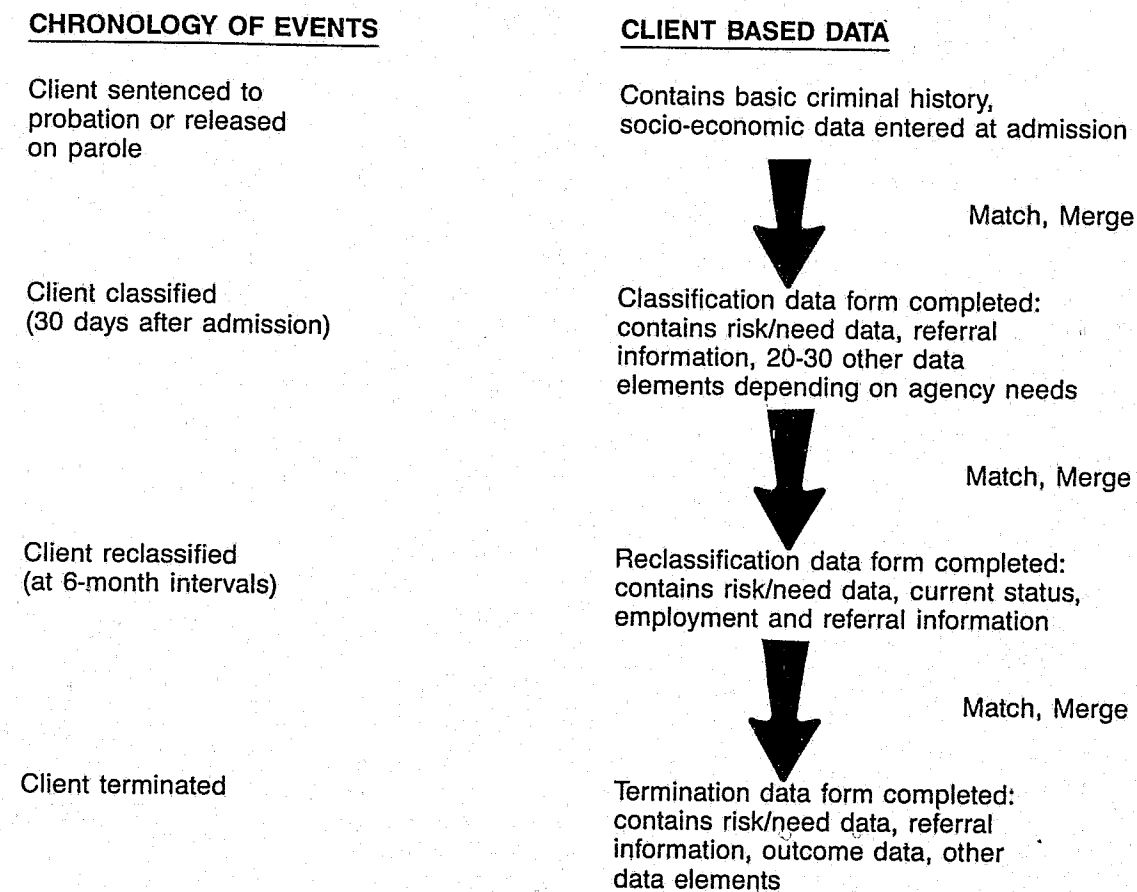
- Often utilizes a combination of manual, batch processing and on-line applications to meet agency needs (although microcomputers and distributive processing may well result in increased automation);

- Captures data from forms used for other agency purposes rather than adding a new layer of paperwork;

- Is dynamic and flexible; Items and report formats can be added, changed or deleted without a major programming effort;

- Routinely provides aggregate information to management. (Management use of this information should, in turn, be conveyed to line staff.);

- Provides timely and useful information to all levels of the organization and is integrally tied to other management functions;

- Includes routine editing procedures (manual and/or automated) to protect the integrity of the data; and

- Finally, the automated portion of an agency's information should remain uncomplicated.

Utilization of a Management Information System

The purpose of this section is to present examples of data that can be routinely produced if a comprehensive management information system is in place. Routine production of similar reports would enhance knowledge of operations, trends, and agency needs in any juvenile correctional agency.

FIGURE 8

NIC MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS	CLIENT BASED DATA
Client sentenced to probation or released on parole	Contains basic criminal history, socio-economic data entered at admission
	Match, Merge
Client classified (30 days after admission)	Classification data form completed: contains risk/need data, referral information, 20-30 other data elements depending on agency needs
	Match, Merge
Client reclassified (at 6-month intervals)	Reclassification data form completed: contains risk/need data, current status, employment and referral information
	Match, Merge
Client terminated	Termination data form completed: contains risk/need data, referral information, outcome data, other data elements

Source: National Institute of Corrections. *The Model Probation/Parole Management Program.* Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 1981, p. 74.

Sources of performance measures are generally identified as the agency mission, the agency's need to maintain operations and its relationship to other agencies or systems. An effective method of promoting the use of performance measures and enhancing accountability at all organizational levels is to define the above issues in terms specific to staff, supervisory and administrative functions.

Staff functions - The work of probation officers is generally evaluated on how they handle cases and/or investigations. Questions presented earlier can be translated into performance indicators that relate specifically to the issues below.

Specific performance indicators	General issue addressed
1. Proportion of cases that committed a new offense while on probation or aftercare.	Community Protection (mission)
2. Proportion of cases returning to the institution	Community Protection/ Rehabilitation
3. Proportion of cases with progress reported in dealing with drug, alcohol abuse	Rehabilitation/Problem Amelioration (mission)
4. Proportion of cases where standards were met or exceeded.	Operations/Policy
5. Proportion of cases completing institutional educational vocational programs.	Rehabilitation/Problem Amelioration
6. Proportion of cases where community resource agencies were properly utilized.	Relationships with other agencies/systems
7. Proportion of cases that successfully completed probation/ aftercare term.	Operations/Policy
8. Proportion of cases not receiving any major misconduct reports over a specified period of time.	Rehabilitation/Problem Amelioration
9. Proportion of investigations completed on schedule.	Operations/Policy
10. Proportion of investigations meeting or exceeding standards.	Operations/Policy
11. Proportion of PSI recommendations followed by courts.	Relationship with other agencies/systems

These represent some of the issues that can be addressed in assessing the performance of staff and the agency. Many other measures are possible and it is often important to look at relationships between measures. For example, probation outcomes should not be analyzed without taking offenders profiles into account. A high violation rate may simply indicate an officer has a difficult caseload rather than being a reflection of performance.

The tables on the following page; Standards Compliance/Casework Indicators, Alcohol/Drug Abuse Problems, and Probation Outcome Information, represent examples of data routinely collected and available for use as performance measures in many jurisdictions. The analysis begins with measures of standards compliance and the quality of casework and referrals, progressing through a presentation of outcome information.

There is much more data that could be used to evaluate the performance of individual staff. However, the examples presented allow supervisors to begin to assess casework strategies, staff priorities, and the relative efficiency and effectiveness of each individual. This information not only helps administrators to evaluate performance but also identifies training needs and should lead to a more effective assignment of work based on staff preferences and capabilities.

TABLE 3
STANDARDS COMPLIANCE/CASEWORK INDICATORS
(% of Total Cases Audited)

Probation Officer	Investigation Completed as Scheduled	Contract Standards Met or Exceeded	Referral Agencies Appropriately Utilized	Case Plan Reflects Needs
A	90%	90%	94%	90%
B	84%	92%	100%	96%
C	92%	87%	74%	81%
D	100%	56%	60%	60%

TABLE 4
ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE PROBLEMS
COMPARISON OF ADMISSION AND TERMINATION ASSESSMENTS
(Based on Cases Terminated, 1982)

Probation Officer	Major Abuse At Admission		Number Referred to Treatment Programs		Major Problem At Term (Improv. in Parentheses)	
	Drug	Alcohol	Drug	Alcohol	Drug	Alcohol
A	34	40	32	39	21(13)	20(20)
B	26	27	25	27	11(15)	16(11)
C	29	24	21	19	16(13)	14(8)
D	19	31	12	17	13(6)	24(7)

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TABLE 5
PROBATION OUTCOME INFORMATION
(Terminations, 1982)

Probation Officer	Number of Cases Terminated	Early Discharges	Probations Revoked	New Offenses Reported
A	36	4(11%)	6(17%)	9(25%)
B	30	3(10%)	9(30%)	6(20%)
C	40	8(20%)	4(10%)	8(20%)
D	28	4(14%)	4(14%)	7(25%)

These same data can be used to evaluate performance at the supervisory level. Administrators can determine if an office or unit is adhering to agency standards and if staff actions are being properly monitored to ensure compliance with agency policies and priorities. Simply changing the above tables to reflect districts A through D rather than individual officers indicates how administrators can monitor and evaluate activities in entire units or districts.

A classification based information system also provides valuable information for facility and program planning as well as program evaluation. Jurisdictions faced with the need for new construction, need to know the types of beds, recreation, program and support space required. Classification trends should serve as the core element of facility planning.

Program evaluation can be routinely done if classification data (risk and needs) is processed on a regular basis. Such evaluations are further enhanced if institution and aftercare information systems are linked. This allows outcome data to be related to specific institutional programs and evaluated using various community supervision outcome measures.

Tables 6 and 7 present the type of data that would be useful to program planning and evaluation, facility planning and staffing analyses.

TABLE 6
VOCATIONAL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
(One Year Follow-Up)

Vocational Program	Number of Participants	Course Completions	Employed in Community	Number New Offense Reported
Welding	24	20 (83%)	6 (25%)	12 (50%
Auto Mechanics	30	27 (90%)	16 (52%)	6 (20%
Printing	27	18 (67%)	4 (15%)	9 (33%
Upholstering	18	14 (77%)	2 (11%)	10 (56%
Computer Tech.	14	13 (92%)	6 (43%)	3 (21%

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TABLE 7
COMPARISON OF HOUSING UNIT POPULATIONS

Housing Unit	Average Daily Population	Capacity	Number of Major Conduct Reports
Cottage A (Reception)	34	25	51
Cottage B (Minimum)	32	30	12
Cottage C (Minimum)	33	28	10
Cottage D (Medium)	38	28	31
Cottage E (Medium)	38	30	36
Cottage F (Maximum)	24	25	82
Disciplinary	4	8	NA

Workload Systems for Budgeting and Deployment

The basic purposes of workload systems in probation and parole are as follows:

- To provide data for budget justification and support;

- To enable an agency to appropriately allocate its resources; and

- To enhance agency accountability.

Once time requirements for various agency functions have been ascertained, the data can be used to determine staffing requirements for the organization. Funding bodies unwilling to accept caseload ratios as the basis for an agency's budget have been more predisposed to accept a budget based on the time required to complete mandated functions.

Workload systems should not be used for budget purposes only. The data such systems generate can be of substantial assistance to the agency in allocating its limited resources. A thorough workload analysis will indicate, for example, the number of pre-sentence investigations that can be completed by each staff person in a given month. It will also indicate how many cases of which type an officer can appropriately supervise at a given time, as well as the amount of time required by other agency functions. Thus, administrators can assign staff to each unit, office, or area based on the total workload each represents.

If used appropriately, workload systems can greatly increase accountability at all levels of the organization. The processes and reports required for workload accounting and management purposes also serve as a means for monitoring performance. This can be accomplished at the individual officer, unit, district or agency level. In an era characterized by management objectives, sunset provisions, zero-based budgeting, and diminishing resources, agencies will be increasingly required to justify their existence. While workload systems often provide budget analysts with an inside view of agency operations, this potential threat is more than offset by the opportunities they offer administrators to monitor, evaluate, and take corrective action where appropriate.[14]

Workload reports, for example, provide excellent insights to actual practice as they quickly point out to officers and units that they may not be properly classifying clients or seeking early discharges when appropriate. Consider the following example:

TABLE 8
WORKLOAD REPORT
AVERAGE OF LAST 6 MONTHS WORKLOAD STATISTICS

Officer/Unit	Max. Sup.	Med. Sup.	Min. Sup.	PSI's	Social Histories
Unit 1					
Officer A	33%	40%	27%	4	2
Officer B	36%	39%	25%	5	1
Officer C	31%	42%	27%	4	2
Totals	33%	41%	26%	13	5
Unit 2					
Officer D	56%	31%	13%	1	2
Officer E	41%	39%	20%	5	4
Officer F	47%	42%	11%	2	2
Totals	46%	37%	17%	8	8
Unit 3					
Officer G	25%	62%	13%	3	3
Officer H	34%	21%	45%	1	4
Officer I	61%	32%	7%	0	2
Totals	33%	40%	27%	4	9

Unit 1 appears to be well managed, with a great deal of consistency evident among officers. It also appears that this unit is providing much more service to the courts than Units 2 or 3. The supervisor in Unit 3 may be selectively assigning cases; if not, there are major problems in adhering to agency classification policies.

Other measures of supervisor performance are not based on unit activities, but instead directly reflect on the job responsibilities of supervisors.

- Are case audits being completed according to agency policy?

- Are assignments to officers done in accordance with policy?

- Are staff adhering to policies governing monitoring behavior, reporting, and program review?

- Are presentence investigations and other court services being delivered as required by policy?

While a good data system will "flag" many potential problem areas for management, operational improvements still depend on the ability of administrators to take corrective action. For example, merely establishing a good case audit system will not ensure that audits are being done. Managers need to consider a tracking system to monitor compliance and to hold supervisors accountable for their job responsibilities.

Aggregate information also can be effectively used by administrators for many different purposes. Reynolds, in Management-Oriented Corrections Evaluation Guidelines identifies four primary purposes as management improvement, accountability, public relations, and reputation. More specifically, data can be used to:

- Evaluate policies, programs and procedures;

- Enhance community understanding of probation functions;

- Plan future activities, programs;

- Assess the cost effectiveness of programs; and

- Budget and deploy resources.

Agency performance measures can range from a simple tabulation of the numbers of offenders processed through a system or program to in-depth assessment of the impact of a program or policy change. The more common measures include:

- Percentage of offender population receiving probation;

- Average annual cost of probation compared to institutional costs;

- Percentage of offenders successfully completing probation or aftercare terms;

- Average length of stay in institutions;

- Number of youths completing institutional based programs;

- Amount of restitution collected by probation annually; and

- Number of presentence investigations completed annually.

Better data systems now allow more sophisticated measures of performance to be routinely produced. For instance, success of probation/aftercare can he related to program participation (in or out of institutions), level of supervision, offender needs, age groups, or other factors. Policy changes can be assessed according to their impact on revocation rates, assigned levels of supervision, PSI recommendations and so forth. Outcomes can be presented in terms of problem amelioration as well as recidivism rates.

Agencies are also beginning to take a proactive stance in defending community supervision options as legitimate sanctions for the majority of offenders. The Texas Adult Probation Commission, for instance, has recently attempted to use data to influence public opinion and policy regarding probation. This agency has developed and distributed a pamphlet comparing the costs of probation and prison, reporting the amount of restitution collected by the probation officers and distributed to victims of crime, as well as tax payments made by individuals on probation. This strategy is helping to change the public's perception of probation and the legislature recently passed major funding of an Intensive Supervision Project as an alternative to incarceration.

As the above illustrate, the creative use of data and a commitment to measuring performance can greatly enhance the reputation and ultimately the resources granted to corrections.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Experience implementing a comprehensive classification system in probation and parole agencies provides the following guidelines for success:[15]

1. <u>Scoring procedures should be simple</u>. Complex tabulations will reduce reliability. Even the most sophisticated and valid classification system is of no value if those charged with doing the classifying do not complete the scale(s) properly.

2. <u>The classification rationale must be readily apparent and accepted by probation and parole staff (face validity)</u>. If line staff members believe the classification criteria are inappropriate, then the instruments simply become excess forms to complete. Proper attention may not be given to the classification procedure, thus diminishing its validity. Including staff in the development of a classification device not only can strengthen the instruments but helps to instill confidence and ensure acceptance of the system. Alluding to such problems, former National Institute of Corrections' Director Allen Breed stated that:

> "For research to play an effective role in the development of an increased body of knowledge in the field of corrections, it must become participating partners with operational staff in program planning, program development, and program evaluation. This does not mean that theoretical research has no place in the future. It does mean that action or practice-oriented research will become more important and meaningful in the years ahead. <u>A classification system which is understandable and able to be communicated</u> allows for far greater participation in the research process by line staff...research staff should be able to tabulate, scale, and present material in a form that can be used by operational staff."

3. <u>Consideration of line staff's subjective judgments ought to be maintained</u>. In an age of management by objectives, emphasis on accountability, and increasing utilization of standards, staff members engaged in the provision of direct services often feel professional discretion is being systematically eroded. Allowing staff impressions to effect the level of supervision or custody assigned can provide valuable input and gain staff support, which is essential to successful implementation.

4. <u>Periodic reassessments should be an integral part of any classification process</u>. Reassessments compel staff to regularly appraise client progress. This type of systematic assessment may not otherwise be done as staff tend to focus on the more immediate demands of a full workload. Reclassifications should reflect changes in the circumstances, clients'

needs, and risks of continued unlawful or disruptive behavior, all of which can alter substantially over time. Recurrent classifications will help move some clients through institutions, probation or aftercare with greater precision. A staff member's attention is often focused on a small number of problematic clients and/or investigations, and, as a result, relatively problem-free cases may be "carried" in the system because the agency has not taken the time to properly assess progress.

5. <u>Classification should be incorporated into the agency's recordkeeping system</u>. Paperwork is a sensitive subject in any organization and classification forms which add to the paperwork burden of line staff, rather than replacing old data collection documents wherever possible, are likely to be resisted. Combining classification and data collection documents assures that classification is done for every case and prevents duplication of data collection tasks. Classification should also be used by unit or office supervisors as the primary measure of accountability. A comprehensive classification system identifies client custody requirements, needs, problems, and risk of continued offending. It follows logically that the original case plan and subsequent reevaluation reports should deal with those needs, problems, and risks. This presents an ideal opportunity for supervisory input, including an assessment of staff effort, suggestions of alternative methods of treatment, and recommendations for additional staff training when it is needed.[16] Building classification into an agency's information system, allows management to use this critical data for:

- Program planning;

- Budgeting and deployment of resources;

- Evaluating services, programs, procedures, and performances;

- Measuring the potential impact of legislative and policy changes;

- Enhancing accountability through standardization;

- Equitably distributing the workload; and

- Improving service delivery to clients.

6. <u>Finally, representatives of each level of the organization should be involved in the entire effort from design/selection of the classification instruments through training of staff to use the system</u>. Such involvement fosters "ownership" and understanding of the system's importance and avoids the conclusion by line staff that the system is merely a management attempt to increase accountability.

Union representation should also be included on the classification task force (if staff are unionized). The system will impact on staffing and the allocation of workload and unions usually support the new methods <u>if</u> they thoroughly understand the basis for and intent of workload deployment.

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