



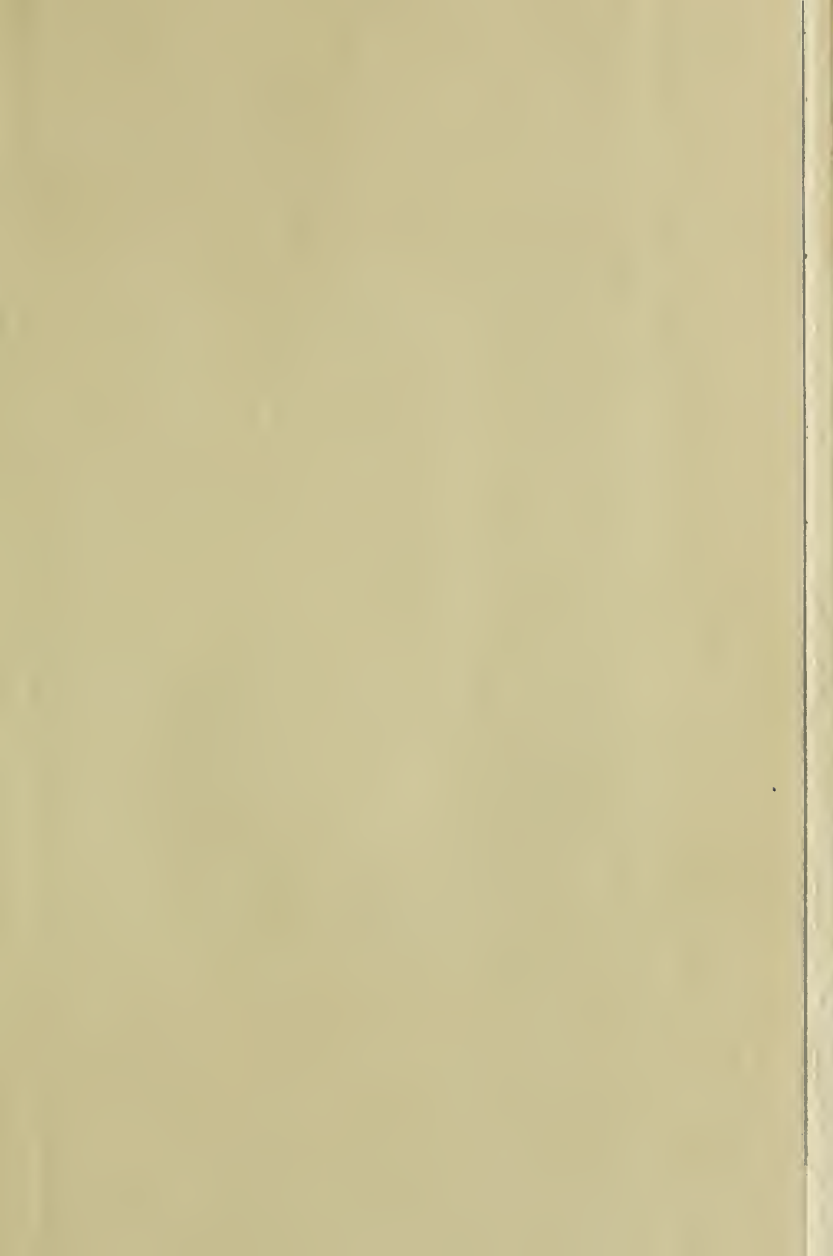
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a look at  
**JUVENILE  
DELINQUENCY**

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Foreword, 1960  
APR 1

## DEPOSITORY

With juvenile delinquency being talked and written about so much it is understandable why some persons may suspect that today's boys and girls are different and might even be regarded as a "delinquent generation."

Actually, today's youngsters are not much different. They have the same basic needs and drives as yesterday's children. Of the small percentage who lapse into delinquency, most are confused, frightened, unhappy children in need of help.

What *is* vastly different today is the world in which these children are growing up. As we realize this, we are able to understand better some of the aspects of modern juvenile delinquency. Never in past history has the pace of change been so rapid in our values and how we live. Of all of us, the young feel this the most. Atom bombs and atomic power, the thrust towards automation, shifting cultural patterns, rapidly increasing population, family mobility, the incalculable influence of television and other mass media in shaping reality for youngsters, and shrinking needs for unskilled workers, more working mothers and unprecedented prosperity—these are just some of the ingredients in our way of life which strike children with tremendous impact.

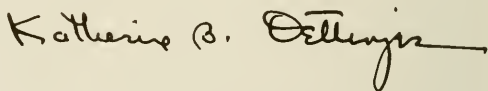
The world faced by youngsters today has implications for the adult generation as we strive to reduce juvenile delinquency. We have to realize that we must make special efforts to understand and keep in communication with our boys and girls.

As we plan programs and services aimed at reducing delinquency, we must learn all we can about the interests, attitudes, and problems of the young generation. What better way than to ask youth them-

selves and listen to what they say? We must reject the false idea that the two generations cannot understand each other and give youth opportunity to speak about today's world and about juvenile delinquency. Many of them are ready and eager to assume more responsibility in improving themselves and life around them. We adults often err in not recognizing this and being more willing to work with them.

This short non-technical pamphlet "A Look At Juvenile Delinquency" was written by Lincoln Daniels, Chief, Community Services Branch of the Bureau's Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service. It is addressed to the general public—particularly community leaders. The emphasis is on prevention, and it is recognized that better handling and treatment of already delinquent boys and girls is an important part of this.

Obviously, it's more sensible to prevent delinquency than to try to unmake delinquents. Progress will come as each of us become concerned enough to take more responsibility for prevention as a part of our daily lives. As we do this, a groundswell of activity can be set in motion to improve the quality of family and community life and services for children. This will go a long way toward slowing down and halting the upward trend of juvenile delinquency.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine B. Oettinger". The signature is written in dark ink and has a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

KATHERINE B. OETTINGER  
*Chief, Children's Bureau*



a look at

# JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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## WHAT DOES JUVENILE DELINQUENCY MEAN?

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY means different things to different people. To some, a juvenile delinquent is a boy or girl arrested for a law violation. To others a single appearance in juvenile court identifies the delinquent. To many the term covers a variety of anti-social behavior which offends them, whether or not a law is violated.

In a strictly legal sense, the term should be applied only to those adjudged delinquent by a juvenile court. Yet, young offenders who become involved with the police and courts are only a part of juvenile law violators. There is no way of telling how many youngsters commit delinquencies and are not caught.

State laws differ as to the upper age which determines whether a young offender will be handled as a juvenile delinquent or as an adult criminal. Most States have age 18 as the upper limit, others 16 or 17. Some State laws require persons of juvenile age to be tried in an adult criminal court for certain crimes such as murder. In many States, the juvenile court can waive jurisdiction so that a juvenile is tried in an adult criminal court for offenses like a felony.

These variations in juvenile court laws are confusing. For example, a child from one place who commits a specific offense may be handled as a juvenile delinquent while one from another place who

commits the same offense may be handled as an adult criminal. This makes an accurate count of juvenile delinquents difficult. More uniformity in laws and practices will help to clarify the meaning and extent of juvenile delinquency.

## EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

Juvenile delinquency in the United States, as measured by the number of delinquency cases handled by juvenile courts and police ar-



rests reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has increased each year for the past decade. The Children's Bureau estimates that roughly a half-million delinquency cases (excluding traffic violations) are being handled yearly by the courts. In addition, juvenile courts handle a substantial volume of traffic violations involving juveniles.

Almost half of all delinquency cases referred to court are dismissed, adjusted or held open without further hearings. In about a quarter of them, the child is placed on probation, and in about one-tenth the young offender is committed to an institution for delinquents.

Increases in both police arrests of juveniles and juvenile court delinquency cases have far outstripped increases in the population of children age 10 through 17 over the past 5-10 years. Recently, however, the increase in delinquency has not been as great as in previous years, and only slightly higher than the increase in the child population. A sizeable increase is predicted in the 10-17 age group in the years ahead.

Boys outnumber girls by a ratio of 4 to 1 in court delinquency cases, excluding traffic cases. The most frequent offenses of boys are stealing and malicious mischief, like window breaking and other damage to property. Girls get into court most frequently for being ungovernable, running away, and sexual promiscuity.

Rates of delinquency court cases in urban areas are about 3½ times higher than in rural areas. More and more of the population is centering in metropolitan areas, where 60 percent of all people now live. Recent rate of growth in these areas has been four times as great as in non-metropolitan areas.

## WHAT CAUSES DELINQUENCY?

There are many kinds of juvenile delinquents and no one cause can explain all delinquency. Numerous causes which vary from child to child in significance and number contribute to delinquency.

To begin to understand the persistent delinquent behavior of one youngster requires that as much knowledge as possible be learned about

him. His physical and mental makeup are important. In one child, a physical defect may be a significant factor and in another a mental deficiency. These can interfere with a child's adjustment to the world around him no matter how wholesome his environment may be. Emotional and social forces that have played upon him from birth have to be uncovered. Above all, it is important to know how he feels about himself, his family, other people and things in general. The reasons why he is the kind of person he is and behaves as he does will emerge as this kind of information is put together and interpreted.

Every child has certain basic needs. Failure to meet these reasonably well increases the danger of a serious maladjustment developing, including juvenile delinquency. Every child needs food, clothing, and shelter. He needs love, affection, and the feeling of being wanted. Every child needs to succeed in ways that will give him recognition and self respect. Every child has social needs to be with others and enjoy their company. How and to what degree these basic needs are met depends in good part on a child's environment, especially his home.

Home and community are difficult to separate in explaining how delinquency evolves.

Adverse factors in a child's early home life, such as parental conflict, neglect or mistreatment, can predispose a youngster to delinquency. Feelings of being unloved and unwanted can impel him into delinquent behavior which he hopes will yield substitute satisfactions.

Many children learn unlawful behavior outside the home either from delinquents or youngsters with delinquent traits. Stealing and vandalism most often involve more than one youngster. Hostile youth gangs involve a group of youngsters with varying degrees of experience and inexperience in breaking the law. Environmental conditions outside the home are important in explaining much delinquency. However, the danger of a child who has a physical, mental, or emotional handicap becoming delinquent is increased when he encounters adverse influences in the community. Social services can be of great help to such a child.

All delinquents are not mentally or emotionally sick, nor can all delinquency be attributed solely to environmental influences outside the home or association with other delinquents. Each delinquent dif-

fers. The makeup, background, and life experience of each youngster have to be studied to uncover the basic factors contributing to his delinquency.

The boy beckoned into a car by his chums who lands in juvenile court because the car was stolen may well be a chance delinquent. Court appearance, warning, and release may suffice to assure that this boy's first brush with the law is his last.

The youngster who stealthily starts fires in building basements may be a different type of delinquent. He may be emotionally disturbed. If this is the diagnosis, psychiatric treatment should be arranged.

Boys in a gang which viciously assaults someone in a deserted street at night may all seem to be alike in their sullen defiant attitude when taken into custody. The study and diagnosis of each individual will reveal differences which should be considered in the disposition of each case. For the hardened delinquent with a record of repeated serious offenses, intensive psychiatric treatment or commitment to training school may be indicated.

Investigation may uncover that a youth recently pressured into joining the gang has no record of previous law violations. The encouragement and supervision of an able probation officer may be all he needs to turn him away from unlawful activity once and for all.

A boy who grows up in an area where crime and disrespect for the law are widespread may drift into juvenile delinquency because it's the accepted way. Opportunities to get into trouble lure from all sides. He may begin to mend his ways as soon as he is placed in a more wholesome environment.

## CAN IT BE PREVENTED?

The idea of wiping out juvenile delinquency through prevention has tremendous appeal. The dream of a discovery which might make oncoming generations of children virtually immune to delinquency as they may be to polio may never come true. For years, social scien-

tists and others have sought to isolate specific causes of juvenile delinquency. Since it is a form of behavior and not a physical disease, the discovery of a single cause or distinct combination of factors that always causes delinquency in children is unlikely. However, research and experience will continue to reveal more about causes and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

## Importance of Research

More and better research is needed into the causes and prevention of juvenile delinquency. This does not mean that some preventive and rehabilitative measures now in use are not effective in varying degrees. Efforts to reduce delinquency should not wait for research to come up with final answers as to what works best with whom. Research should be an integral part of prevention and treatment programs. Various techniques to reduce delinquency should be tested by research to measure their effectiveness as they are practiced.

Although research is expensive, in the long run it represents economy. If well designed, it contributes to more efficient use of time and money for prevention and treatment. Many Federal, State and municipal governments and private foundations, aware of the importance of research, are making more funds available for this purpose.

## Need for Trained Workers

Persons who work with youngsters to prevent or treat juvenile delinquency require special training. Many workers do not have this. For example, thousands of probation officers have no specialized preparation for this work. They cannot be expected to be as effective in rehabilitating youngsters as they would be if properly prepared. Those who work with youngsters, whether full or part time, need a background of study in human growth and behavior. Full-time workers, with or without social work education, need inservice training to im-

prove their skills and keep abreast of new knowledge. A worker needs to counsel with a youngster with delinquent tendencies, or one already delinquent, over a period of time to help him overcome his problems. There is no way to shortcut this. Yet, qualified social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists to work with problem youngsters are scarce. To begin to overcome this personnel shortage is one clear way to help prevent delinquency and to rehabilitate more delinquents.

Citizens can serve as volunteers under supervision of trained people in neighborhood and day-care centers, settlement houses, clinics, and many other child-caring agencies. But diagnosis of a problem or treatment of a delinquent youngster on a one-to-one basis requires a person with more than good intentions. Treatment of individual youngsters requires persons trained to do this.

## How About Single Solutions?

If a single change, program, or method could solve juvenile delinquency, its steady increase would have long since been checked. Many single solutions or panaceas are proposed and tried. They fail because they are usually based on false assumptions. For example, it is often said that juvenile delinquency has a single dominant cause and that if this can be eliminated the problem will be eliminated. This brings forth proposals for a single law, a single practice, or expansion of a single program or service aimed at a single cause.

Progress toward sound measures for the prevention, control, and treatment of juvenile delinquency comes easier when people are skeptical of single solutions and discount popular panaceas. This clears the way for sound thinking and long-range planning. What can be expected from some of these popularly held cures for juvenile delinquency?

### *Punish the delinquent*

Punishment alone or the "eye for an eye" method of crime control has been tried for centuries and found wanting. Just holding a

youth in a reformatory does nothing constructive to make him want to be a law abiding citizen when he gets out.

Today, the trend is away from punishment toward corrective treatment. Especially is this true in the handling of juvenile offenders. Walls and bars which keep wayward youth out of sight solve neither their problems nor the problem facing society of what to do with these boys and girls so that they aren't an ever-increasing financial burden. Some success in rehabilitation is bringing about the gradual abandonment of harsh punishment as uneconomic as well as inhumane.

A criticism frequently leveled at juvenile courts is that they are too soft; that they coddle young ruffians and law breakers who should be dealt with as criminals in adult criminal courts. People who criticize juvenile courts for apparent leniency often advocate lowering the upper legal age of a juvenile delinquent so that more young offenders go directly to criminal courts. Those who hold this belief assume that delinquents will be more severely punished in adult courts. Actually, some evidence points to the opposite conclusion—that the adult court may be more lenient with youth waived to it by the juvenile court.

When youth are regarded and treated as criminals, they are likely to begin to think of themselves in this way. This hardly brings out the good in them. Proposals to handle juveniles like adult criminals thrusts aside much that has been learned about preventing the recurrence of juvenile delinquency and treating delinquents. The belief that more severe punishment of delinquents will deter them from delinquency has not been proved by experience.

A simple change in the law will not reduce delinquency. The psychological and social factors which cause youth to seriously misbehave have to be dealt with constructively. Changing a law in hopes of punishing more delinquents does nothing about these factors.

People who treat juvenile delinquents feel challenged to help these youths gain self respect and an acceptable place in society. Many delinquents don't like themselves, other people, or their communities, and this can block the possibility of their achieving reasonably happy and productive living. The person treating the delinquent who has hostile feelings tries to draw these out by helping the boy or girl understand their causes and how to overcome them. This process which



helps develop feelings of more trust and friendliness toward other people is a key to a youngster acquiring some self respect and purpose which can modify his behavior for the better.

### *Punish parents*

The laws of most States now give courts the authority to hold parents, as well as other adults who contribute to the delinquency of a minor, criminally liable. More and more men and women who believe punishing parents will reduce juvenile delinquency are demanding more vigorous enforcement of these laws, and new legal measures to hold parents firmly accountable. Some States have enacted parental responsibility laws. For example, one such law enables the owner of property which has been damaged by a minor under 18 to recover damages up to \$300 from the child's parents.

Negligence by parents doesn't have to be proved. Imposing this responsibility on a mother and father is questionable legally and socially. It presumes that parents are always responsible for the delinquency of their children because of willful neglect or abuse or failure to control them. Not enough delinquency cases can be explained in this way to justify the automatic punishment of a parent, regardless of his or his child's situation when the delinquency is committed. Frequently, the authority of the court can be used wisely and effectively to regulate the conduct of flagrantly irresponsible parents.

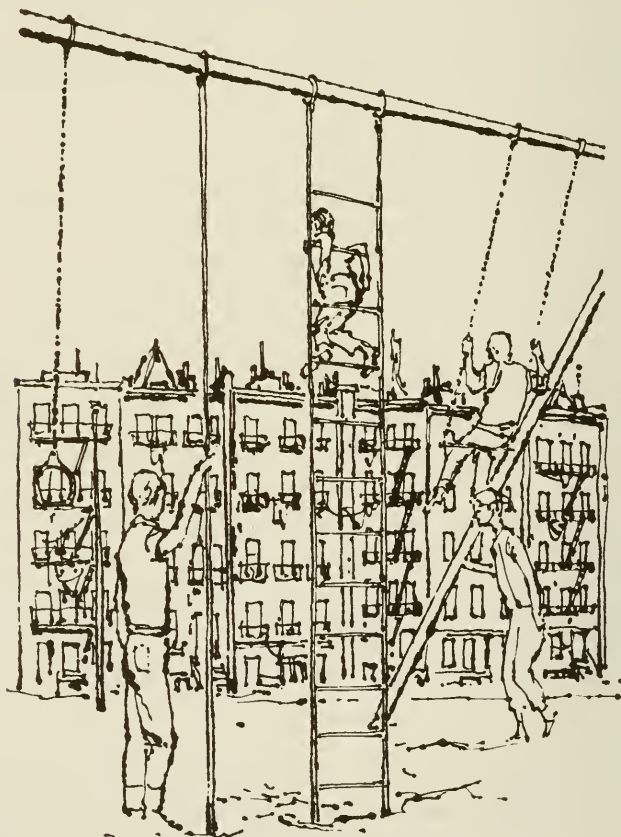
Punishing parents indiscriminately for the delinquency of their child seldom yields hoped-for results. It ignores all that is known about the disrupted family life of many delinquents. Punishing parents does nothing to improve the relationship between them and their child, which may have much to do with the delinquent behavior. A great many parents of delinquent children seem to lack the character and emotional stability to succeed as parents, even though they want to. They need help themselves, rather than punishment.

### *Recreation*

Many people believe that more organized recreation will prevent a great deal of delinquency because it will keep children occupied and supervised. Many youngsters waste much of their free time. Some do

this from lack of guidance and opportunity to do otherwise. Others waste time for more complicated reasons. Wise use of leisure time can be expected only from fairly happy, well adjusted young people. Most potential and actual delinquents don't have these characteristics.

Many children become involved in delinquency when away from home and not in school. But it doesn't follow that lack of playgrounds or supervised recreation during a child's free time is a cause of juvenile delinquency. The fact that delinquency occurs during free, un-



supervised time tells us little about its underlying causes or how to prevent and treat it.

Recreation's strength lies in what it does to enrich the lives of everyone—children, adolescents, and adults. Learning to play constructively, alone and with others, helps develop a healthy personality. Recreation skills can be used throughout life to achieve proper balance between work and play. A sound recreation program improves a community for all children just as do good schools. Recreation doesn't have to be justified as a direct means of delinquency prevention. Research indicates that providing additional recreation facilities in an area usually does not bring about significant change in the volume of juvenile delinquency.

It is impossible to fill all children's leisure time with organized recreation—nor would we want to do this. Children should not be kept busy every waking moment. They need some unoccupied time as they grow up to imagine, to wonder, and to daydream.

Youngsters tending toward delinquency are seldom attracted to recreation programs which interest well adjusted children. They like activities which promise risks and excitement not found in the usual recreation program. Recreation won't solve the deep-seated problems which beset delinquent or pre-delinquent youngsters who need individualized guidance and treatment, nor is it supposed to.

Some recreation departments now assign workers to contact seemingly delinquent youngsters and develop special activities to fit their interests and abilities. This contributes directly to delinquency prevention, as does the recreation leader who spots a youngster in his program who is a serious behavior problem and arranges specialized help for him.

### *Youth curfews*

Curfews are local ordinances which require youth under a specified age to be off the streets at night after a certain hour unless accompanied by an adult.

When public concern about juvenile delinquency runs high, a curfew is often proposed as a measure to control the problem. Court decisions in some municipalities where the strict enforcement of curfews has been attempted cast doubt on their constitutionality. Never-

theless, such laws continue to be passed when public pressure for quick action is mounting. Although curfew laws have existed for many years, there is scant evidence that they are effective in reducing delinquency.

A danger of the curfew law is that it may induce unjustified complacency. No law can correct delinquency. Since a curfew does nothing constructive about the behavior and needs of youth picked up as violators, its value as a preventive measure is questionable.

The most effective curfew regulation is applied by parents. Children are more likely to obey this. It can be flexible to meet different circumstances. Certainly, parents have the legal right to insist that they and not the police have the authority to allow their children to be out at night for legitimate reasons.

A community considering a curfew should first find out what it hopes to gain. The legal authority for police to pick up children on the street late at night may already exist in other ordinances or in general State laws. If so, better law enforcement rather than a curfew may be needed.

Enforcement problems of curfews should be weighed before such a law is passed. Are the police able to check on all possible violators and still meet their other responsibilities? Is there a reliable method to determine the age of suspected violators? Are children to be exempt under certain circumstances, such as evening school and church activities, which conflict with the curfew hour? Should curfew hours differ for weekday and weekend nights? Because of such problems, curfews often aren't rigorously enforced.

### *Youth employment*

Success in a paid job develops self respect, maturity and self confidence in young people. Many boys and girls are eager for part-time jobs while going to school, to gain work experience. Most whose education ends before or with high school want full-time work. For both groups, employment is desirable and should be regarded as part of their education for successful living. Unfortunately, suitable full-time jobs for them are not easy to come by.

It cannot be stated with certainty that some youths become delinquent because they want a job but don't find one. Well adjusted

boys and girls are more likely to find and hold jobs than youngsters with serious behavior problems. Research into whether lack of employment is a valid cause of juvenile delinquency raises doubts that it is.

The case for more youth employment is strongest for educational and mental health reasons. The adolescent years of 14-18 are difficult for most boys and girls. Many are unsettled by feelings of inadequacy as they struggle to make the transition to adulthood. A work career and the responsibility of a job can be stabilizing influences during the crucial years after age 16 for out-of-school youth.

A job seldom helps the emotionally disturbed delinquent. He needs individual treatment which employment cannot provide. A job may actually aggravate his problems.

Boys and girls who fail in school because of lack of interest or ability present a different problem. With limited education and no training, they have little to offer in the open competitive job market which has few positions they can fill. However, school programs of supervised work may enable some of these boys and girls to enjoy feelings of success which they are unable to attain through academic work.

A community needs a professional placement service as well as school vocational guidance to promote sound employment of youth. Approximately 1,800 public employment service offices throughout the country are financed in part by Federal funds. They study the job market, for young people as well as for adults. Trained people in these offices provide employment counseling and occupational aptitude tests. They work closely with employers and the schools which issue the employment certificates boys and girls must have before starting paid work.

One logical way for a community to approach youth employment is for a citizen group to survey local youth work possibilities and promote cooperation among employers, unions, schools and placement services in opening up more jobs for boys and girls. Concurrently, citizens should build community support for a sound program of job preparation which will increase youth employment in the long run. Vocational guidance and placement of young people in jobs should be done by persons trained for this.

Apprenticeship programs developed jointly by employers and labor unions are possible means of meeting the needs of many youths



who must go to work after high school. More aggressive programs are needed to inform young people while still in school about trades and other employment which may offer them a future.

### *Child labor laws*

Child labor laws are not meant to prevent children from working, but rather to protect them against working in certain kinds of jobs at too early an age. Although most exploitation of children has been eliminated, it still persists in some areas, particularly in agriculture.

Child labor laws should re-enforce school attendance laws to keep children in school at least until age 16. It is important not to compromise this principle. In practically all States, children can leave school legally on reaching 16. However, many employers make 18

the minimum age for employment because they prefer their employees to be high-school graduates. The close supervision required for younger workers is costly and their accident rate in manufacturing industries is higher than for persons above 18.

Most youngsters who enter the labor market without a high school education are unlikely to find and hold jobs with a future. Lowering the age when children can leave school legally would further crowd the unskilled labor market. For youth to gain a foothold in the world of work, they have to learn what is expected of them in finding and holding a job.

Schools usually have the authority to issue work permits to youngsters. Persons eager to expand youth employment sometimes propose that this authority not rest with schools alone. In this regard, it is well to remember that many schools have trained employment counselors who are able to keep youngsters in safe jobs, and out of hazardous or unsuitable ones. Extending the authority to other agencies to issue work permits might open the door to persons without special competence to make decisions as to when and where youngsters will work.

## WHAT HELPS PREVENT DELINQUENCY

### Parental Guidance

During a child's early years, the day-to-day example of his parents is the strongest influence in shaping his personality and behavior. Children tend to pick up their parents' prejudices and intolerances as well as their moral values and standards of conduct. Mothers and fathers have no more important job than to teach their children the rules for living together in harmony. At the same time, children should be taught that they have responsibilities as well as rights and privileges.

Parents should learn all they can about the growth and behavior of children in general to better understand the growth and behavior

of their own children. Children grow at different rates mentally and emotionally as well as physically. This means that two children in the same family will not necessarily behave the same way at the same age. They are individuals with many differences. When parents recognize or suspect a child of serious emotional upset or the beginning of delinquent traits, they should seek professional help at once.

To know a child's needs, feelings, and problems, parents have to spend time with him talking, listening, and watching. Children whose parents give generously of their time in this way are less likely to develop serious behavior problems that may lead to delinquency. No real substitute exists for the feeling of well being a child gets from parents who remain close and understanding.

The child who is taught to do tasks well and to get along with others has a good measure of protection against delinquency. Most delinquents lack those characteristics. The delinquent is frequently an unhappy child because he has been steadily neglected by parents who are either too busy, too distant, or too inadequate.

Parental discipline is important to children. Boys and girls really want to know that limits are set for their behavior and what these are. To be effective, discipline should be consistent. A child is confused when disciplined one day for certain misbehavior and not the next. Wise and consistent handling of incidents when they occur is sound prevention as well as sound discipline.

All parents need to be prepared for the trials of their children's adolescence. During this period, children often act as though they don't want control of any kind. Parents must exercise patience and restraint as the teenager struggles to find himself and become an adult.

## Community Climate

The child from the emotionally healthful home emerges better equipped to withstand the harmful influences that he is exposed to in the community. It is true, however, that many children grow up without lapsing into delinquency in spite of homes which are emotionally deprived because of parents who fail to meet their responsibilities. This





suggests that a poor home environment which might predispose a youngster to delinquency can be offset by outside influences and personal relationships which encourage right conduct.

The community that plans and works to protect the welfare of children will have less delinquency than a community similar in other respects which is too preoccupied with other things to do this. The

temptations and pressures for youngsters to seriously misbehave are stronger if the area or town where they live is disorganized and apathetic. Children are often confused about acceptable behavior standards because the community does not clearly express what its standards are. Youngsters at loose ends in such a community are likely to get into trouble. How individual boys and girls feel about their home town is important for delinquency prevention. A healthy community marked by cohesiveness and a sustained interest in children will give them a feeling of belonging. When a youngster feels that nobody cares about him, the danger of delinquency increases.

## Finding Those in Danger

No magic formula exists that makes it possible to screen out those children who will become delinquent. Predicting delinquency in individual children has yet to be demonstrated.

Early discovery of children with serious behavior problems, however, is fundamental to delinquency prevention. So it shouldn't be left to chance. It requires planning and trained personnel who can recognize the emotionally disturbed children whether or not they are in danger of becoming delinquent.

In their visits to homes pediatricians, general practitioners, child welfare workers, and public health nurses often encounter children needing help. Pre-school clinics, schools, and social agencies also have an important role in identifying children who may be headed for delinquency. Yet, finding problem boys and girls is unproductive unless there are facilities and professional people to diagnose their difficulties and provide needed preventive treatment or guidance.

Social agencies have no legal authority to hold possibly pre-delinquent children referred to them for treatment. However, voluntary arrangements should assure continuous treatment of children with serious behavior problems until professional judgment rules it can be discontinued. When agencies maintain an efficient referral and follow-up system, one agency is accountable for a child until responsibility is shifted to another. This protects the child and contributes to delin-

quency prevention. Each agency which serves children should know other resources to turn to when a child needs help it cannot give.

## Services Which Can Help

A wide range of services is necessary to help all kinds of youngsters who may be in danger of becoming delinquent. Unfortunately, some of these services are sparse or totally lacking in many communities. Generally, urban and semi-urban areas have more social agencies, youth serving organizations, and special services available to help children than most rural and semi-rural areas.

Every community should inventory its resources to protect the welfare of children so that the citizenry can be informed on those available and those most needed.

The inventory will include many agencies providing services to parents as well as to children directly, such as public welfare departments, family service agencies, mental health clinics, and social service programs in schools and hospitals. In counseling and assistance to parents in the solution of personal and family difficulties, such agencies contribute in a vital way to the prevention of delinquency. Parents who are in marital conflict, overly worried about debts or demanding perfection from their children may, against their own wishes, foster delinquent behavior.

Examples of some programs directly related to children which can help prevent delinquency are as follows:

### *Child welfare services*

Although parents are primarily responsible for the care and guidance of their children, some need help. Social work help to children, which usually involves their parents, is the child welfare program. Its aim is to preserve and strengthen family life. To do this often means providing services to parents and to the child when necessary in order to keep children in their own homes. Homemaker service, for example, places a woman skilled in child care and household manage-

ment in the home during the temporary absence or incapacity of the mother.

Child welfare services can help children exposed to such conditions as neglect or mistreatment which may seriously impair their well being. When a child welfare worker helps a family to function better or removes a child from a home that fails hopelessly to meet his basic needs, the danger of delinquency is reduced.

State and local welfare departments are primary sources of child welfare services. All State departments to some degree provide local public services for children. In large cities, various private agencies also furnish services to children and their families. The Federal government plays an important role, too. In 1935, it began making financial grants to States to help them establish, improve, and extend public child welfare services. This program sparked a wide expansion of these services, but they are still lacking or inadequate in many communities. To extend and improve basic child welfare services is one way to help prevent juvenile delinquency.

The major method used by social workers to help people with personal problems is known as casework, and it is applied more or less in all social services to children and their families. Trained social caseworkers help people to help themselves. They are able to help children to talk about themselves and their problems and thereby gain awareness and understanding of them. Only then can they begin to deal constructively with their problems.

Recently, some agencies have begun to seek out and offer help to families so overwhelmed with problems that the will to overcome them may be gone. This kind of family is least likely to ask for help. Youngsters in danger of delinquency often cannot be reached in any other way. This kind of initiative opens doors for potentially effective preventive work with the small percentage of families which research indicates produce far more than their proportionate share of delinquent youngsters.

**Services to children living at home.**—There are a variety of services to children living in their own homes. Some of these are basic to delinquency prevention, when help is provided as first signs of diffi-

culty appear. These services are particularly effective when children are neglected or abused by their parents or others responsible for their care.

When a young child is discovered locked alone in a car late at night while his parents are out on the town, someone must act to stop this parental neglect. Where neglect or abuse is reported by someone other than one of the child's parents, the services used to meet the situation are known as protective. The aim of these services is to prevent further mistreatment of the child.

It is necessary in all instances to determine if the complaint is justified. Complaints are sometimes investigated first by the police. A study of the child and his family may be made by a social agency or the court if a petition has been filed, and a plan developed for his fu-



ture. The plan may call for sustained casework service to the child and parents in the home through a public or private social agency or for court action. When the family situation is beyond repair, court action may be necessary in order that a better plan of care may be made.

Services which remedy parental neglect or abuse and home conditions of danger to children represent sound delinquency prevention. When the need for protection of a child is met and a better future assured, it seems safe to assume that he is less likely to become delinquent.

Responsibility to protect children from neglect is often shared by several agencies such as law enforcement, private or public social agencies, and the court. Agencies should clearly understand the division of responsibility.

Every community needs adequate services to safeguard children suffering from gross neglect or abuse, whatever the circumstances.

**Foster care.**—While child welfare services enable many children needing special help to remain in their own homes, some have to be removed. Different kinds of foster care are used for the child who must be separated from his natural family. He may be cared for by relatives, or in a family not related by blood, or in an institution. The availability and quality of this care is important to the well being of the children who need it.

**Shelter care.**—Each year the temporary care of thousands of children becomes a community responsibility because of unforeseen circumstances. Children may be abandoned, made dependent for other reasons, or need protection from abuse or neglect in their homes. Emergency care which the community has to provide on short notice is known as shelter care. A child may be placed in a boarding home or an institution until he is returned to his home or arrangements are made for more permanent care. A detention facility, jail, or juvenile training school should not be used for this purpose as secure custody is not needed for shelter care.

**Foster family care.**—The care of children in substitute homes with substitute parents is known as foster family care. Parents and

child have to be prepared for this. It should be used selectively and only when necessary to protect and promote the well being of the child.

Foster parents have to be selected with great care and casework service used to help the child and foster parents develop an intimate, satisfying relationship. At the same time, the child's relationship to his own family must be strengthened.

**Institutional care.**—The need for institutions to care for dependent children has declined in recent years. Some reasons for this are fewer deaths among parents of young children, improved economic conditions, assistance programs for parents, and increased use of foster family care. Although the child population has been increasing, the number of full orphans has dropped to one-tenth of one percent. Further, many children who formerly would have been placed in institutions for dependent children are remaining in their own homes or are in foster family care.

Many private institutions, originally built for dependent children, are reshaping their programs to care for boys and girls whose needs cannot be met initially through foster home care or other community facilities. More institutions are now serving children who must be temporarily removed from the community; for example, the child whose behavior or condition cannot be tolerated or treated in his own home, a foster home, or in the community. Many emotionally disturbed children and adolescents with serious behavior problems who require residential care and treatment are now placed in institutions. More institutions are developing individualized treatment for these children with casework and clinical staff.

**Day care.**—Day care is a method of caring for children away from their own homes for part of the day. This service supplements parental care, but doesn't assume parental responsibilities or substitute for a child's home. The number of employed mothers has increased steadily since World War II, and this trend will probably continue. Their small children represent the largest group requiring day care, which fact intensifies the need for this service.

Family day care is given in a day care home which usually cares



for children only by the day. Such a place is usually best for youngsters of pre-school age who are not ready for group activity. Some older children who need more individualized attention will use family day care too.

Group day-care facilities, often called day-care centers, are primarily for pre-school children age 3 to 6, and for older children after school hours. These centers should have a trained staff, and there should be close cooperation between welfare, health and education personnel on program planning.

### *Aid to dependent children*

In 1935, as part of the social security program, the Federal government began a program of financial aid to needy dependent children



under age 18. Aid to Dependent Children seeks to help maintain and strengthen the family life of children deprived of adequate parental support or care. It encourages care of these children in their own homes or with relatives. When possible and appropriate, it helps the home achieve self-support without impairing proper care of the child.

About two and a quarter million children now benefit from this program, which contributes indirectly to the prevention of juvenile delinquency by preserving family life for most of these children. In addition to money, ADC seeks to provide medical care, casework, and other social services.

- While the father is missing because of death in a number of ADC families, this proportion is declining. The largest percentage of ADC families need help because the father is continuously absent from home for such reasons as divorce, separation, desertion, or unmarried parenthood.

Wide variation exists between States in the adequacy and coverage of Aid to Dependent Children. This can be partly explained by variations in the financial ability of States to meet the costs of the program. However, there is a basic conflict in this country between concern for the welfare of children and anxiety about the mounting social problems of divorce, desertion, and illegitimacy which increase the costs of child care. Without the ADC program, however, juvenile delinquency, which is also a symptom of family and social disorganization, might be even more prevalent. The ADC program was established to back up the determination that in the United States "no child should be deprived of care in his own home because of poverty alone."

### *Family life education*

Instruction, by all practical means, of parents and prospective parents in the mental health aspects of family living is a vital community service. To serve a delinquency prevention purpose, this teaching should emphasize the importance of a happy family to a child's life.

Parents who are having serious difficulty with their children sometimes gain the understanding and the courage to resolve these problems through parent discussion groups under trained leaders.

Through practical in-school programs of family life education, young people can become more aware of the positive values of parenthood and family living. In the past, this phase of their education has often been neglected. Today, many American schools include child and family development in the curriculum. Many communities encourage the expansion of this teaching as a part of a community program of education for family living.

### *Group work*

Children and adults with behavior difficulties also can be helped in groups. Under leadership of a social group worker, each group member not only enjoys program activities but grows in understanding of himself and others.

Group work services are provided by a wide range of social agencies and organizations such as settlement houses, community centers, youth serving organizations, recreation departments, child guidance clinics, rehabilitative institutions and hospitals.

When these services are designed to reach and serve pre-delinquent or delinquent youth, they contribute to delinquency prevention. A striking example of this method in action can be seen in the streets of some of our big cities as group workers strive to redirect the attitudes and behavior of youth gangs.

**Youth gangs in conflict.**—Belonging to a teen-age group is a natural part of growing up for most adolescents. Teenagers like to be together and what they do in most groups usually harms neither themselves nor the community.

But some groups can be harmful to those in them and to the areas where they flourish. The worst, often called street gangs, breed juvenile delinquency and are a constant threat to the community. These are the hostile, angry youth groups which seem to be in open rebellion against the community.

Periodically these gangs engage in vicious fighting with other gangs, go on sprees of property theft and destruction, and may even carry out the most serious crimes such as assault, larceny, and homicide. For the most part, these highly organized gangs flourish only in

certain sections of our largest cities.

How to reach and work with these gangs poses a difficult problem. The members remain aloof and don't want to be a part of organized youth programs. An experimental method being used by some public and voluntary agencies is to have trained young men seek out the gang in its own haunts. The worker tries to overcome its hostile feelings and gradually channel the energies and interests of the gang away from destructive pursuits into constructive activity.

To be effective, this approach to the gang problem should not be used in isolation. Parents, police, churches, social agencies, schools,



and neighborhood organizations should also try to give these youths a more positive outlook on life. The entire community has to understand the problem to support those working directly with these gangs. In the big city with a gang problem, central planning for this work is essential for determining where and how available workers in different projects can be used to best advantage.

It is hard for workers to make lasting changes for the good in youth they work with. This is particularly true in crowded rundown neighborhoods where gangs flourish. However, the violent fights between rival gangs—which often lead to serious casualties—have been somewhat reduced by workers acting as mediators.

The vicious youth gang corrupts younger children who hang around and acquire its disrespect for law and order. In time, they may be recruited into the gang or form one of their own. Hopefully, service which reaches out to youth gangs can be extended to susceptible younger children and their parents. To prevent hostile youth gangs from forming is the best way to prevent their delinquency-breeding way of life.

### *Health services*

Many workers in the health field can contribute to delinquency prevention. These include physicians, especially pediatricians, general practitioners, obstetricians and psychiatrists, school health staff, public health nurses, medical social workers, and other personnel in public health departments.

These people probably see more children during their early years when personality is shaped than any other professional group serving families. When they are concerned with the "whole child" and his family, they can help parents to understand better themselves and their children. They can anticipate common behavior problems in children, and counsel parents on how to deal with them before they become serious.

Adolescents often discuss emotional problems with their doctor while he is treating them for medical problems ranging from serious illness to facial blemishes or for being overweight.

Traditionally, psychiatrists were called in when a serious prob-



lem already existed. Today, their increasing consultation to health personnel is being given earlier.

Health workers have the close contacts needed to help "high risk" children such as those born out of wedlock. They can cooperate with social agencies to assure proper care for unmarried mothers and help them plan a future for their babies. Similarly, they are often in a position to help "high risk" families in which the children may be delinquency prone because of many adverse home factors. Public health nurses, in particular, frequently come face to face with seemingly hopeless family situations dangerous to children. Their initiative can open the possibility of improving these situations.

Children with physical, mental and emotional problems need the specialized services of health personnel. Progress in overcoming physical handicaps strengthens a child's emotional health. Federal funds are available through State health departments for preventive

health programs of maternal and child health and also through State agencies for crippled children to provide services to many physically handicapped children.

### *Child guidance clinics*

Child guidance clinics study, diagnose, and treat children showing behavior or personality disorders. If left untreated, some of these conditions can result in delinquency.

The staff of a typical clinic has a psychiatrist, either full or part time, a psychologist, and several psychiatric social workers. Juvenile courts often turn to clinics for psychiatric diagnosis and consultation.

A clinic may be attached to a school, a court, or a hospital. It may be part of the State or local public health or welfare service or it may be an independent agency. Some are supported by public funds and others by private. It's important for the clinic to make itself part of a coordinated community program, since it must often seek the help of other community agencies in carrying out treatment plans for individual youngsters. Thus, the effectiveness of a clinic depends in good part on the availability of other resources in the community, and the



cooperation of other agencies. For example, after studying a child, the clinic may conclude he should have foster home care as a part of his treatment plan. If there is no agency to arrange this placement, its efforts to help the child are hampered.

Child guidance clinics treat children having a wide range of behavior problems and personality disorders. A child suffering from deep emotional conflict may require long intensive treatment by a psychiatrist. One whose misbehavior is largely a product of the environment in which he lives may be helped by an entirely different type of approach. In most instances, the total situation to which the child reacts must be treated rather than just the child himself. Perhaps his school program should be changed or a physical condition remedied. Perhaps he needs several services plus a friendly relationship with a worker who understands his problems.

The attitudes of parents toward the child often need to be modified. Research indicates that child guidance clinics are most effective with children whose personality disorders are not of the extreme type, and those who are not up against hopelessly adverse home factors. Many clinics prefer to work only with children whose parents are willing to participate actively in treatment along with their youngsters. Improving the relationship between parents and the child is often the first step in overcoming a child's behavior disorders.

The child guidance clinic interprets the needs of children to parents, teachers, nurses, social workers, probation and juvenile police officers, recreation leaders, and others dealing with children. Through lectures, discussion groups, and other means, the staff spreads knowledge of the principles of mental health and child behavior. Most communities have no child guidance clinic to help emotionally disturbed youngsters because of high cost and the shortage of psychiatric personnel.

## Schools and Prevention

School is one of the best places to discover problem children whose behavior may signal danger ahead. All children go to school



where they can be observed at work and play in groups over a period of time.

Truancy is a common forerunner of delinquency. While all truant youngsters won't become delinquents, the records of many adult criminals show truancy. This is the kind of evidence on which specific preventive measures can be based.

The angry, hostile child, the overly aggressive child, and the withdrawn child can be spotted early in the classroom by the teacher. When a trained person works with the child and his parents at this point, the chances of clearing up causes of this behavior are favorable.

Undue slowness in school work is common among juvenile delinquents. This backwardness often leads to delinquent behavior. Schools can help minimize these causes of misbehavior by providing special educational helps.

When a school is unable to meet the needs of a problem child, referral to a community resource is the alternative. A shortage of



treatment resources in the community reduces the delinquency prevention potential of the schools. Little is gained by discovering problem children in schools if adequate resources to help them are not available in the community. Parent-teacher associations can work for more specialized school services to help children with personality and emotional problems.

Most schools have come far from the days when they were isolated from the rest of the community, with their doors open only during school hours. A child's education starts long before he enters the school building and doesn't stop when he leaves it. More and more schools are concerning themselves with the total life of the child—his home, neighborhood, companions, and play. The more leadership for youth welfare the schools can provide the better. The trend for schools to serve as community centers and offer educational and recreational activities to adults as well as children is good. They should be an integral part of any comprehensive community plan to reduce juvenile delinquency. Close working cooperation with persons or agencies providing treatment outside of the school assures coordination of a child's treatment program with his school activities.

## Churches and Prevention

Whether a child has moral standards or lacks them is determined largely by his parents. Their example of living and teaching shapes his basic outlook on life and his moral and ethical standards of right and wrong. The church can reinforce the family in helping a child achieve personal and social integrity.

When children begin religious education outside of the home, churches have a unique opportunity to help them to a sense of self-identity and to foster their moral and spiritual growth. By effective teaching of the meaning, dignity and positive values of life, churches can be a force for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. Whatever churches do to help boys and girls achieve a basic inner harmony and more purposeful living helps insure their well being.

To contribute in other ways to delinquency prevention, church

leaders can begin by taking an active interest in community life and encouraging their members to do likewise. They can inform themselves on the local juvenile delinquency problem and cooperate with other agencies to make the community a better place for children. The church which learns firsthand about community conditions and experiences harmful to the welfare of children is most likely to help improve the situation.

In small towns and rural communities without social agencies, the church can carry a major responsibility for youth welfare. In larger communities, churches can be a strong force in building public opinion and support for specific measures to reduce delinquency.

Moralistic preaching has little or no effect on the delinquent child. The challenge facing all churches is to find concrete functions for themselves by tying in with the total community effort to deal with the problem of juvenile delinquency.

## HELPING DELINQUENT CHILDREN

The community that wants to reduce juvenile delinquency can't overlook youngsters who are already delinquent. A vital part of total prevention is to prevent these boys and girls from getting into further trouble with the law.

The child or youth who repeats his delinquent pattern is difficult to rehabilitate and is a costly liability to the community. The hardened repeating delinquent is a source of infection for more delinquency because of his influence on other youths.

To help delinquent children, someone must learn what factors in the personality, home, or environment of the young offender may explain the offense. It means weighing these factors to determine whether treatment is needed, and if so, what kind? Three basic approaches to treatment which are not mutually exclusive are: remove the child from his environment, improve the environment, or modify the negative ideas the child may have about himself, other people and his environment.

Four official agencies have crucial contacts with children in trouble—the police, detention, juvenile court, and the training school. What they do may well determine whether a delinquent youngster straightens out or goes on to more serious trouble.

## The Police and Control

All police departments have two basic responsibilities: to protect life and property, and to preserve the public peace. One way they do this is to apprehend persons who violate the law, and arrange for prosecution, treatment, or other action. Another function of the police is to enforce regulations, such as traffic controls, imposed by law on people's daily activities. In carrying out these functions which apply



to juveniles as well as to adults, the police encounter all kinds of delinquency and have to take action.

The police should play a major role in the control of delinquency and the protection of children because they observe firsthand where, when, and why juvenile delinquency develops in a community. They deal with between one and a half and two million children each year—more than any other official agency. Most juvenile delinquents come to police attention for violations of law, but some are reported as neglected or abused. Generally throughout the country, one of every four children dealt with by the police is referred to the juvenile court. The police through their screening process dispose of the other three by warning or referral to another agency.

Today, most police departments in urban centers of 100,000 or more persons have juvenile units as a part of their organization. About one-half of our middle-sized cities, between 25,000 and 100,000, and a quarter of those with less than 25,000 population, have them.

While this specialization is desirable, officers who regularly patrol neighborhoods continue to have initial contacts with most children apprehended as law violators. They are in the best position to investigate and dispose of cases at the time and place where offenses occur.

A police juvenile specialist should always be available on request to advise other officers on disposition of children's cases which they have investigated. The juvenile bureau investigates and disposes of cases referred by other divisions of the police organization. Usually all referrals of children's cases to community agencies for guidance or treatment are made by the juvenile unit.

An important function of a juvenile unit is keeping the police department in close touch with the court, schools, and other community agencies which serve children. Juvenile officers should participate in community planning to improve services for children and youth.

Generally, expanded training opportunities in child growth and human behavior for all officers are needed to improve police handling of children's cases. This should be emphasized because of the potential effectiveness of patrol officers to control delinquency. The juvenile specialist requires additional training.

Early case finding and referral are essential for the prevention

and control of juvenile delinquency and the police are in a strategic position to do this in the community at large.

## Detention Services

Some children who appear in court for delinquency must be detained in a secure place until the court decides what to do with them. Only when there is reason to believe that a youngster may run away or get into further trouble if allowed to return home should he be held.

A detention facility should be used sparingly, and the detention period kept as brief as possible. Careful screening of children by police as well as the court supports this policy.

Detention should provide good physical care, and maximum opportunity for observation and study of the child while he is held for disposition by the court. In general, it should promote his physical and emotional well being.



Every year over 100,000 children are held in jails for lack of adequate facilities. Most counties don't have separate detention for children. Generally, detention care is a local responsibility. Most localities which use jails would like to have a separate detention facility. Rather than detain them in jail, some communities without separate quarters will release children who should be held or send them to a State institution which should not be used for this purpose.

When few children require detention in any one community, it is understandable why costly special quarters are not built. It is doubtful whether many communities will ever provide these facilities as long as they must bear the full cost.

More and more States are assuming some responsibility for detention care. A possible way of achieving more adequate service is for a State agency to assume partial responsibility for providing detention on a regional basis. A Statewide detention plan would assure service to children in all parts of the State. At present, the less populous sections of States are usually without decent detention service.

## Juvenile Court and Probation Services

Many people think of a juvenile court either as doing little or nothing with children who break the law or as a place where punishment is meted out. Neither of these views reflect what a juvenile court is supposed to do or how most courts function. Their philosophy is one of individualized justice fitting court action to the child. The juvenile court was founded on the principle that its prime responsibility is to understand, protect, and help the child or youth—not to punish him. This means that the court is more concerned with the delinquent child himself than with his specific offense.

Every State has laws which provide for juvenile or family courts or specialized procedures in children's cases. The effectiveness of these courts depends upon such things as an adequate juvenile court law, the qualifications of the judge, a well trained court staff, and good community resources.

Facing a juvenile court judge can be a turning point for better

or worse in a child's life. The judge should be legally trained, understand child growth and behavior, and be informed on social problems. He should have time to consider each case carefully, and not be under pressure when he makes decisions affecting a youngster's future. Many judges have to decide cases hurriedly because they are overburdened with other legal work.

Every judge needs able probation officers to perform the following functions: screen cases to see if children and families referred to the court require court services or should be referred to other agencies; make a social study of the child and his family to help the judge reach a decision; supervise children placed on probation by the court.

A probation officer needs a working knowledge of human behavior as well as skills to help children and parents. Trained probation officers are effective in preventing children found delinquent from getting into further trouble. There is an acute shortage of probation personnel. Those without specialized training far outnumber those who have it. Strengthening probation services is a clear way of reducing



juvenile delinquency. More State governments are assuming some responsibility for improving the quality and coverage of probation services. Recent model legislation proposed by national standard setting agencies provides for State operated probation services, juvenile and family courts. State governments should provide consultation and training to help local court and detention programs.

- Every juvenile court should have the services of a doctor, psychiatrist and psychologist for assistance in diagnosis and treatment planning when needed. Trained probation staff are necessary to use these services properly.

A well staffed and well run juvenile court needs community resources to do a good job of rehabilitating delinquent children. Various kinds of foster family and institutional care should be available to the court as well as family counseling, special educational services, and vocational training. The court should take an active role in developing and strengthening these community services.

Interest is increasing in establishing a family court which provides one court jurisdiction over family problems, many of which vitally affect a youngster's future. It is usual for juvenile, domestic relations, and other types of courts to have partial jurisdiction over family problems. A family court would replace the piecemeal handling of family problems with an integrated system. It should have jurisdiction over children alleged to be delinquent, neglected, or dependent. It should have jurisdiction over proceedings for adoption, determination of custody of a child, establishing paternity, divorce and separation, and related matters.

## Training School and Aftercare

State governments provide some of the major resources for the care and treatment of delinquent children. Among these are public training schools which are usually too costly for local communities to build and operate. It is important that all State and local services for delinquent children work together. State planning for the care and treatment of delinquent children should be vested in a single agency—



preferably the same one responsible for other public child welfare services.

The training school is but one of a number of rehabilitative services for the treatment of delinquent children. The child committed to a training school, for example, may need casework in his own or a foster home when he is released.

Generally, training schools receive an assortment of children with a wide range of problems. It is a mistake to treat all of them the same way. To prevent this, States need diversified institutions for different treatment programs. A State diagnostic center which studies delinquent children to determine the course of treatment most likely to benefit each one may be indicated. Small residential treatment centers for seriously disturbed children, and separate institutions for mentally retarded and psychotic children, should also be available.

The purpose of training schools is to retrain, educate, and treat delinquent children committed to them by juvenile courts, so that they can live successfully in their communities. A modern physical plant and equipment are important. However, an environment which helps the normal development of youngsters while maintaining control of them is essential to achieve this purpose. The creation of this kind of environment is primarily the responsibility of training school administrators and staff. When the staff is genuinely interested in the welfare of the children, a training school can have a fair measure of warmth and friendliness.

Although the right training school environment is crucial to treatment, this has to be supplemented by adequate specialized services and program activities. Social work, psychological, medical and psychiatric services are needed as well as education, vocational, and religious programs. Most State schools are overcrowded and because of insufficient trained staff don't have a fair chance of rehabilitating many of the youngsters committed to them.

Far too many children again become involved with the law after release from training schools. These institutions have the most difficult task in the entire correctional program for juvenile delinquents. Youngsters are usually committed as a last resort after other plans and services to modify their anti-social behavior have failed. While a

youngster is in training school his family may need services. After he is released he should have adequate professional supervision. When these two important aspects of rehabilitation are slighted, the released boy is more likely to repeat, and the training school is usually held responsible for the failure.

More local residential treatment centers might ease the overcrowding in some big State institutions. A few States are experimenting with smaller treatment facilities where fewer youngsters with similar problems can be treated without the rigid regimentation which is difficult to overcome in large institutions. The use of forestry camps for the treatment of more stable delinquent youngsters is increasing. These camps may provide a better environment for rehabilitating certain kinds of youngsters. This experimentation with alternatives to the large and often isolated training school for treating youngsters committed by juvenile courts is a promising development.

When a youngster is released from a training school, he needs help to fit into normal community life. How he is received at home by those who know him may determine whether or not he lapses back into delinquency. What happens to him day-by-day during the first months back home should not be left to chance. An aftercare program which provides trained workers to assist and supervise these boys and girls is essential. The aftercare workers may be supervised by the training school or by a State or local welfare agency.

The aftercare worker should help a youth plan his future before his release. In the community, the worker prepares the family for his return. A youth returning home from training school needs affection and support as never before from his family. The worker should pave the way for his enrollment in school or guide him into a suitable job. He should give guidance and encouragement until the youth shows that he is ready to stand on his own feet.

## LAWS AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Good laws will not of themselves guarantee an effective program to reduce juvenile delinquency. However, they are essential for

public programs and without them program improvement can be held back.

State anti-delinquency legislation should provide:

Sound laws covering court jurisdiction over children's cases.

Sound laws which define the legal responsibilities of the State agency or agencies which administer State services for the control and treatment of juvenile delinquency.

Sound laws which are regulatory and protect the welfare of children and youth. Examples of these are laws covering compulsory school attendance, child labor, and the sale of intoxicating liquor or dangerous weapons to minors.

## CITIZEN ACTION

More citizens must become active in preventive efforts. The juvenile delinquency problem is too big and all pervasive for police, courts, and other agencies to handle without the help of organized citizens. These citizens can work at overcoming root causes in homes and communities which may predispose some youngsters to delinquency. Concurrently, they can work to strengthen services which must be available to help children in danger and to rehabilitate more delinquents.

The citizen interested in helping reduce delinquency should join forces with others who share his concern. To find them, he should express his interest as widely as possible, especially to community leaders. Almost every community has an organization which can serve to involve citizens in a planned, coordinated approach to the problem.

When a citizen or public official is asked about delinquency, he is apt to say "we don't have much delinquency in our town." Complacency about juvenile delinquency is never justified. It takes digging below the surface to uncover the full range and nature of the problem so that it can be studied and discussed. The facts about juvenile delin-

quency must be brought out into the open before a community can mount an attack against it.

What is being done to help boys and girls in trouble? What is being done to help those in danger of becoming delinquent? How many children were picked up by the police in the past two years and for what? How many children with serious behavior problems are known to schools?

In getting answers to these questions, some things which should be done will come to light. Various possibilities for constructive action probably will be apparent. It is wise to decide on one and get to work. Starting without undue delay toward a concrete goal is important. Once a citizen group goes into action to do something worthwhile for children, interest and support seem to snowball.

Citizens can help improve the community for children in many ways. For example, they can make sure that land in sprawling developments of tract homes is left clear as play space for children or they



can encourage youths to execute a project of their own to improve the community.

In mixed communities everybody has a chance to strengthen tolerance so that all youngsters can feel accepted, regardless of race or religion.

Any citizen can call praiseworthy achievements of youth to the attention of the newspaper he reads. He can write them up or ask the editor to do this.

Concerned citizens can organize groups to discuss the problems and needs of adolescents under a trained leader. Parents, teachers, and all who work with youth need this learning and sharing of experience. A parent-teacher association can see that the school has remedial reading instruction, a school social worker, guidance counselors, and other services for youngsters with special needs.

Citizens have many opportunities to help combat juvenile delinquency by serving on agency boards or on committees which survey the kinds of help available for children with serious behavior problems—~~or~~ the quality of services for delinquent youngsters. Developing the means to select a qualified juvenile court judge may be needed or expansion of foster homes for different kinds of children may be needed.

Local citizen action is frequently stimulated and supported by official State agencies. Over one-third of the States have special youth agencies or youth commissions which offer guidance and consultation to local citizen groups and officials seeking ways to curb delinquency. State governments have to provide certain services for delinquents such as training schools. However, the strategic and least costly place to prevent and deal with delinquency is in local communities where it occurs.

Consequently, a growing number of States have employed consultants to give communities technical help on the delinquency problem. Some States have a separate agency which operates State facilities and programs for the diagnosis, care and treatment of juvenile delinquents. In others, the youth commissions do not operate services for youngsters. However, all commissions are concerned with planning, coordination and consultation to reduce juvenile delinquency. In States with a youth commission or similar agency, services for the pre-

vention, control, and treatment of juvenile delinquency are likely to be comparatively well developed and coordinated. Similarly, citizen action is likely to be more widespread and productive when there is sustained leadership from the State level.

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

Many agencies of the Federal government have a part in strengthening this Nation's effort to reduce juvenile delinquency. Their contributions—which sometimes are preventive and sometimes treatment—come from the fields of education, health, housing, research, labor, law enforcement, and welfare.

Representatives from each of these agencies comprise the Interdepartmental Committee on Children and Youth to exchange information, pool thinking as to needs, and keep an up-to-date picture of programs for boys and girls and young men and women.

Of these agencies, the Children's Bureau has a major responsibility in combatting juvenile delinquency. In carrying out the mandate contained in the basic Act of 1912 under which the Bureau was founded—to investigate and report "upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people"—delinquency among children and young people has always been a concern of the Bureau.

When the incidence of juvenile delinquency began its upsurge, the Bureau expanded its staff of specialists to help States and communities develop more effective programs to reduce delinquency and treat juvenile delinquents.

The Bureau prepares guide materials for distribution, and develops standards for some of the key services combatting juvenile delinquency. It advises on pertinent legislation and analyzes program information which may be helpful to the States and communities. It helps plan and coordinate aspects of State and local programs to prevent and control juvenile delinquency; improve specialized services provided by the police, juvenile courts, probation, reception and diagnostic centers,

training schools, forestry camps, and group work projects; and develop concepts, standards and materials for inservice and professional training of personnel working with or planning to work with juvenile delinquents. The Bureau also collects and analyzes juvenile court statistics furnished by States and gathers information on certain State services to delinquent children. It helps design research and interprets research findings.

## CHILDREN'S BUREAU

*publications on*

## JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

(The following publications can be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. except as noted)

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

*\*A Selected Bibliography on Juvenile Delinquency.* An annotated bibliography prepared primarily for professional workers. 44 pp. Revised 1958.

### COMMUNITY PLANNING

*Helping Delinquent Children.* Describes the functions of various agencies officially concerned with delinquent children and points up how they can be improved. Children's Bureau Publication No. 341. 47 pp. 1953. (20¢)

*What's Happening to Delinquent Children in Your Town?* A simple guide to help citizen groups obtain facts about certain agencies serving delinquent children. Children's Bureau Publication No. 342. 26 pp. 1953. (15¢)

## COURTS

*Standards for Specialized Courts Dealing with Children.* Standards for organization and procedures in juvenile courts and other courts that hear cases concerning children. Children's Bureau Publication No. 346. 99 pp. 1954. (35¢)

## DETENTION

*Detention Planning.* This technical pamphlet covers general suggestions and a guide for determining capacity. Children's Bureau Publication No. 381. 1960.

## FILMS

*Selected Films on Child Life.* Listing with brief descriptions selected films on child life, reviewed by the Children's Bureau. Includes eighteen on juvenile delinquency. Children's Bureau Publication No. 376. 79 pp. 1959. (30¢)

## HEALTH SERVICES

*Health Services and Juvenile Delinquency.* A report of a conference on the role of health services in preventing anti-social behavior. Children's Bureau Publication No. 353. 54 pp. 1955. (25¢)

## JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS

*Institutions Serving Delinquent Children—Guides and Goals.* Primarily for directors of State agencies administering such institutions and for superintendents and their staffs. Children's Bureau Publication No. 360. 119 pp. 1957. (40¢)

## LEGISLATION

*\*Proposals for Drafting Principles and Suggested Language for Legislation on Public Child Welfare and Youth Services.* Working draft of a guide to help develop legislation for programs of public child welfare and youth services operated by State and local administrative agencies. (Single copies available from Children's Bureau to those helping to develop legislation.) 130 pp. 1957.



## NATIONAL CONFERENCE REPORTS

*Report on the National Conference on Juvenile Delinquency.* This is the report of the conference held June 28-30, 1954, under the sponsorship of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. It includes reports of the various work groups as well as a summary of work group findings. 77 pp. 1954. (30¢)

*Youth Groups in Conflict.* This reports a national conference sponsored by the Children's Bureau on problems and practices in extending services to groups of hostile anti-social youth. Children's Bureau Publication No. 365. 52 pp. 1958. (25¢)

## PARENTS

*Parents and Delinquency.* A discussion of the relationship between delinquent children and their parents. Such questions as whether parents should be held legally responsible for delinquent acts of their children, and how parents can be helped, are covered. Children's Bureau Publication No. 349. 43 pp. 1954. (20¢)

## POLICE SERVICES

*Police Services for Juveniles.* A general guide for police practices with delinquent and neglected children who come to their attention. Children's Bureau Publication No. 344. 91 pp. 1954. (35¢)

## RESEARCH

*New Perspectives for Research on Juvenile Delinquency.* A report of a conference, held May 1955, on the relevance and interrelations of certain concepts from sociology and psychiatry for delinquency. Children's Bureau Publication No. 356. 92 pp. 1956. (30¢)

\**Studies in Juvenile Delinquency.* A selected bibliography 1939-1954, prepared for both practitioners and research workers. 37 pp.

*The Effectiveness of Delinquency Prevention Programs.* An appraisal of evaluative studies which have been made of delinquency pre-

vention programs. Children's Bureau Publication No. 350. 50 pp. 1954. (25¢)

## STATISTICS

\**Statistical Reporting of Probation Services in Juvenile Courts.* A Report of a workshop held in 1956 to help stimulate and improve State and local reporting of probation services. 10 pp. 1957.

\**Juvenile Court Statistics.* An annual summary of juvenile court reports on children's cases handled. Children's Bureau Statistical Series No. 47. 16 pp. 1958.

\**Statistics on Public Institutions for Delinquent Children.* An annual summary on child population, personnel, and expenditures. Each year supplemental detailed data on varying aspects of the institutional program are included. Children's Bureau Statistical Series No. 48. 40 pp. 1956.

## TRAINING

*Administration and Staff Training in Institutions for Juvenile Delinquents.* A report of a workshop sponsored by the Children's Bureau to consider a new approach to administrative uses in inservice training and staff development. Children's Bureau Publication No. 377. 47 pp. 1959. (20¢).

*Staff Training for Personnel in Institutions for Juvenile Delinquents.* Report of a workshop held April 6-13, 1957, to identify new means of accomplishing staff development in institutions for juvenile delinquents. Children's Bureau Publication No. 364. 56 pp. 1958. (25¢)

*Training Personnel for Work With Juvenile Delinquents.* A report of a conference on ways and means of training personnel, mainly in courts and institutions working directly with delinquents. Children's Bureau Publication No. 348. 90 pp. 1954. (35¢)

\*Single copies available on request from Children's Bureau.





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