DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 307 368 UD 026 795

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TITLE School Placement and Maintenance of At-Risk Youth under Agency Care.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn. Office of Educational Assessment.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attendance; Delinquency Prevention; *Dropout Prevention; Elementary Secondary Education; Foster Children; *High Risk Students; *Out of School Youth; Program Evaluation; Public Schools; Reentry Students; *Student Placement; *Transitional Programs; Truancy; *Youth Agencies
IDENTIFIERS New York (New York); *New York City Board of Education

ABSTRACT

In 1987, the New York City Board of Education established the following three placement units responsible for improving school attendance and preventing dropping out among at-risk youth: (1) the Central Placement Unit (CPU); (2) the Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) Diversion Unit; and (3) the Bronx District Attorney's Educational Outreach program. The overall program goal was to return out-of-school youth under agency care to public school settings and to ensure the delivery of appropriate services. During the first year of CPU-PINS's existence, the Board of Education's Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment (OREA) examined the roles of the three program components. This paper reports on the OREA evaluation. Evaluation procedures included the following: (1) two literature reviews (included as appendices); (2) staff surveys of Board of Education and agency programs appropriate for the target population; (3) a staff questionnaire; and (4) structured interviews with all placement unit staff. The OREA evaluation found communication lacking among units, resulting in disorganization and confusion, despite documented records of re-connecting students with educational placements. Eight recommendations were forwarded for the correction of CPU-PINS problems. Appendix A reviews characteristics of at-risk youth and includes 17 references. Appendix B reviews effective placement practices and includes 12 references. (AF)

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School Placement and Maintenance of At-Risk Youth Under Agency Care

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Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting
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San Francisco
March, 1989

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In August 1987, The Office of Student Progress (O.S.P.) of the New York City Board of Education established three placement units to facilitate the school placement and tracking of youth under the care of state, city, and private agencies. The target population included students from all five boroughs who are juvenile offenders or delinquents, in foster care, or students with pre-petition status as Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS).

As part of attendance improvement and drop-out prevention for at-risk youth, the overall goal of all three placement units was to return out-of-school youth to public school settings and to insure that these youth remained in school to receive appropriate services to which they were entitled.

Specific program objectives (established by the O.S.P. and the Chancellor's Memorandum No. 3, 1987-88) were:

- to facilitate the timely placement of youth in programs appropriate to their needs;
- to track the progress and retention of the students over a period of six months, using a stand-alone computerized Student Record System;
- to identify barriers to placement and gaps in services, and
- to initiate processes to address the identified needs.

The evaluation by the Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment (O.R.E.A.) was designed and conducted as both a formative and summative tool to augment educational and policy solutions to public school attendance problems associated with

truancy, delinquency, and foster care and agency placements. This presentation focuses on the formative evaluation measures which included cooperative linkage between the placement units and the evaluation office.

Theoretical and research literature supports educational and transition strategies for disengaged, alienated students and juvenile offenders and delinquents (Druian, 1986; Keilitz & Dunivant, 1986; Webb & Maddox, 1986; Gottfredson, 1983; and Hirschi, 1969). Historically, schools had been regarded as inconsequential in the process of delinquency prevention because of their emphasis upon psychogenic and social class factors (Pink, 1984). More recently, however, researchers have emphasized the association of delinquency with school-related conditions including low academic achievement, various learning difficulties, and disruptive school behavior or attendance problems (Pink, 1984; Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Rist, 1970; and Hargreaves, 1967). At the same time, the movement toward "normalization," "deinstitutionalization," and community-based diversion have returned low-risk offenders to public school settings rather than correctional institutions. These recent trends highlight the importance of the school as a critical setting for intervention into the problems of delinquency, truancy, and behavioral difficulties.

For many students disengaged from public schools, educational programs have been seriously disrupted. While there has been a recognized need for specialized programs in a wide

variety of contexts, too often the mechanisms for placement, maintenance, and interagency communication have not been addressed.

Webb and Maddox (1986), in their overview of the literature on transitional programs, identified the following common problems related to student transition among placements: poor communication between agencies and local schools, lack of transfer of education records, failure to identify students needing special education services, insufficient information on school placement options, and lack of feedback about student progress to agencies' staff.

The New York City placement units have attempted to address many of the issues identified by a review of literature. In response to New York State legislation and regulations, the Board of Education established three placement units which supplemented existing admissions and placement mechanisms.

Background Rationale

In 1985, The New York State legislature passed the PINS Adjustment Services Act which mandated a new process for those children brought to Family Court on PINS allegations (as Persons In Need of Supervision). In the past, parents had come to Family Court for assistance with children under 16 years of age who were alleged not to be under parental control but had not committed any offense which would be criminal if committed by an adult. Typical allegations included truancy, drug abuse, running away, sexual promiscuity, disobedience, or incorrigibility. Probation

officers traditionally handled PINS cases entirely within Family Court.

Under the new state law, governmental and non-governmental agencies within a county were required to plan together to fill gaps in the service net for families so as to reduce the need for PINS petitions. The new law redefined and, to a large extent, limited the role of Family Court in PINS proceedings. It was also intended that fewer children would consequently be remanded to foster care for temporary shelter.

In 1986, every county in New York State established a planning process under direction of the New York State Council on Children and Families. In New York City, the planning process was coordinated by the Office of the Coordinator of Criminal Justice and involved more than 40 pertinent state, city, and private agencies including the Board of Education. The role of each agency was defined in a plan submitted and approved by the state in September of 1986. The plan included new program ideas, enhancement of existing services, and inter-agency linkage agreements outlining on-going cooperation and efforts to improve access to services.

The new PINS diversion process was launched in February, 1987. The process is as follows:

Families and children are interviewed by probation officers as in the past but are then referred to a Designated Assessment Service (DAS), which is a private agency in each jurisdiction. Within thirty days, the DAS assesses the service needs and

devises a service plan for each family referred to them and submits the plan to Probation Intake for approval. Probation Intake has the responsibility to approve the assessment and service plans and to monitor the delivery of services to the potential respondent and family. Assessments include identification of mental health, social service, and educational needs of individual cases. The DAS makes referrals to other non-judicial, community-based agencies as dictated by the needs and interests of both the PINS youth and their families.

The Board of Education is one of the agencies where families can be referred. The responsibility of the Board as defined by the state plan is to return those PINS children who are truant to an appropriate school setting and to monitor their retention. A plan was implemented to unify three placement units under the leadership of one director. The three placement units are: 1) a PINS Diversion Unit in the Bronx Family Court; 2) a Central Placement Unit (C.P.U.) in the Office of Student Progress; and 3) an Educational Outreach Unit in the Bronx District Attorney's Office.

Description of Programs

PINS Diversion Unit

In the Bronx, a PINS Diversion Unit serves all PINS cases coming to the Bronx Family Court with school-related problems. The offices are physically located in the Bronx Family Court while they are organizationally part of the Board of Education's Bureau of Attendance.

In accordance with the 1985 New York State PINS Diversion Act, children brought to Family Court on a PINS petition are diverted to the borough DAS for programs of social services rather than to placement in residential or foster facilities. This unit works only with cases referred by the North Bronx Family Service Center (also called Pius XII Youth and Family Services), which is the Designated Assessment Service (DAS) for the borough of the Bronx.

The legislative mandate includes regular reports to the Bronx DAS and to the Department of Probation regarding the placement, attendance, academic and behavioral progress of each referred student.

Central Placement Unit

In the four other New York City boroughs, the DAS units are to handle the school placements and related needs of PINS cases during the first three years of the PINS diversion initiative. However, the N.Y.C. Board of Education was asked by the State to provide a "back-up service" for the most difficult PINS placement cases. Thus the initial purpose of the Central Placement Unit (C.P.U.) was to assist the borough DAS with those PINS cases which could not achieve educational placement within thirty days of referral. A second purpose evolved from needs identified by correctional and social service agencies (including the Division for Youth, Special Services for Children, the N.Y.C. Division of Juvenile Justice, and the Youth Bureau) for youth returning to public school from agency care. The target population includes

juvenile offenders, juvenile delinquents, and foster care children. For these youth, agencies have at times experienced difficulty in public school admissions when students need to change placements. If sending agencies (including group homes, psychiatric centers, developmental centers, and residential treatment centers) are unable to effect appropriate public school placement in a timely manner by working through standard placement channels and procedures (Chancellor's Regulations A-160 and A-162), then these cases may also be referred to the C.P.U. for intervention. In such cases, the role of the C.P.U. is to assign a placement specialist to confer with appropriate Board of Education offices to resolve the problems. In those situations, agencies should maintain contact with the case and with school personnel.

The C.P.U. has established a computerized tracking system to monitor progress (achievement and attendance) in such cases for six months. On a monthly basis, attendance and achievement data are to be obtained through contact with school and district guidance staff, and also through review of Student Information System (SIS) central data base files. Reports to referring agencies are to be made on a regular basis to inform them of actions taken by the school personnel.

Whenever necessary, the C.P.U. is to identify gaps in available school services and to formulate recommendations for different programs or services. Also, the schools are to notify the referring agencies if additional support services outside the

Board of Education are needed by the student.

Educational Outreach unit

At the request of the District Attorney's office in the Bronx, one C.P.U. placement specialist has been stationed in the D.A.'s office since the spring of 1987. This specialist works to facilitate the school placement of youth who are part of a special borough program. The Bronx D.A. identifies those youth (ages 16 - 21) arrested for the first time on misdemeanor or minor felony charges, who are not attending school and have not received a diploma. With the permission of judges, the D.A. offers these youth the opportunity to return to an educational program and find part-time employment. If they remain in school and have no further court-related difficulties for six months, their cases are removed from the criminal justice process.

The C.P.U. outreach specialist works only with those cases referred by the Assistant District Attorneys in the Bronx for the purpose of educational placement. Many of the youth are long-term truants or drop-outs as well as academically unsuccessful and held-over in grade.

Evaluation Goals and Procedures

Formative goals of evaluation were to provide information on student characteristics and needs, to monitor the overall level of implementation for each placement unit, to help identify effective programs and practices identify any barriers to successful school placement and any gaps in services. O.R.E.A. sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics and needs of the eligible students?
- What beliefs and attitudes are held by agency and school staff towards the target populations of students and towards the school system which may hinder or enhance placements and services?
- What are the characteristics of effective services for these populations identified in research and evaluation literature?
- Which existing New York City programs and services are most appropriate for these student populations? What are the characteristics of exemplary programs and successful strategies?

Further questions addressing program implementation included:

- How are students referred to the placement units?
- What factors influence agency decisions to refer a case to the placement units?
- How many referred students are placed and remain in their placement for at least six months?
- How complete are individual case records on the computerized Student Record System?
- What staff members are in the program and what are their responsibilities?
- What is the quality of the contact between agencies, placement units, and district and school staff?
- What are impediments to placement or gaps in services identified by program staff?
- How are identified needs being addressed by the school system?

Evaluation procedures included 1) two literature reviews; 2) staff surveys of Board of Education and agency programs appropriate for the target student population; 3) a staff questionnaire a) probing attitudes toward the target population

and beliefs about the school system's capacity to meet needs of these students and b) collecting information about respondents' interactions with the placement units; and 4) structured interviews with all placement unit staff to gather implementation data and staff perceptions of the program.

Other sources of information included the Board of Education C.P.U. computerized Student Record System and end-of-year reports provided by each placement unit.

Through periodic memoranda to Board of Education program staff and to an Interagency Task Force, O.R.E.A. reviewed and disseminated information on the following:

- characteristics and needs of relevant student populations;
- theoretical frameworks for policies and program design;
- effective models identified in related literature for similar populations of students;
- exemplary programs and effective practices currently in place in the New York City system for addressing the needs of the target population; and
- beliefs and attitudes of school and agency staffs which potentially interfere with or enhance the timely placement of students and provision of appropriate services.

Implementation Findings

This chapter discusses the implementation findings gleaned from structured interviews with the 13 staff members of the three program units. These interviews were conducted on-site by Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment (O.R.E.A.) staff during May, 1988. For the purpose of program monitoring, evaluation questions covered the following aspects of implementation:

- student characteristics;
- student referral;
- program staffing, responsibilities, and training;
- organization and operating procedures;
- placement and follow-up services provided;
- recordkeeping; and
- barriers to placement.

This chapter concludes with staff responses to questions about their perceptions of program strengths, impediments, and recommendations.

Student Characteristics

A total of 718 students were referred to the three placement units during the 1987-88 academic year. In the PINS Diversion Unit, all of the 376 referrals were pre-petitioned PINS youth; three percent were also juvenile delinquents. The age range for these students was 11-16, in grades 5 to 9. Sixty percent were male. School-related problems included poor attendance, truancy for over a year or more, school suspension, overage for grade, and Special Education needs.

In the Central Placement Unit, 60 percent of their 35 cases were foster care children, and 25 percent were juvenile delinquents. Fifty-six percent were students requiring special education. The age range was 14-18, predominantly junior high and high school students. Twenty-five of the thirty-five cases were male.

All 261 cases handled by the Educational Outreach unit were

first or second time offenders, ages 16-25. Two hundred and forty-nine of the total cases were males.

Although the Chancellor's Memorandum creating C.P.U. referred to students who were difficult to place appropriately and who, as a result of their involvement in the foster-care or the court system, were not currently enrolled in New York City schools, most of the students served by two of these three program components were in fact enrolled in school. Only the unit in the D.A.'s office served many youth who were not enrolled. The bulk of the youth served in all components were enrolled, although they may have been truant for extensive periods, and/or in need of transfer to a different school. Very small percentages of those referred for service could not be placed. The age group typically served by the units varied, with the PINS Diversion Unit serving youth somewhat younger than in the other programs. Its referral mechanism limits its clients to those under 16, whereas the Educational Outreach in the D.A.'s office limits its clientele to those over 16.

Because the three program components differed in most aspects of implementation, these will be discussed separately by unit.

Bronx PINS Diversion Unit

Referrals

The first referrals were received by the PINS Diversion Unit in February, 1987. By May, 1988, staff estimated about 400 active cases. The per-team active caseload ranged from 100 to

180 cases.

Referrals are received from the Bronx Designated Assessment Service (DAS) and include all PINS-petitioned cases diverted from Family Court which have educational service needs. All referrals from the DAS are accepted as cases. Staff reported that the most common reason for educational intervention is truancy. Additional factors included illegal suspension, promotional policy issues, the need for diagnostic testing, and student/parent desire for transfer to a different school.

Referral information provided to the PINS Diversion staff from the DAS consisted only of identifying information, family composition information, and client-described school status problems.

Staffing, Responsibilities, and Trainir:

The PINS Diversion unit began in February 1987 and was fully staffed by July of that year. Staffing consisted of a supervisor, three placement teams, and two clerical support staff. Each placement team was composed of an education officer and a family assistant. The education officers conducted social history interviews and made referrals to education services. The family assistants provided outreach through home and school visits.

The three education officers held bachelor's degrees or five years of related experience in special education or case work. Family workers were high school graduates with experience in attendance work.

Supervisory staff indicated that they received monthly training for supervisors through the Bureau of Attendance as well as attending the Mayor's Office meetings every two months. Although such contact was reported helpful, several respondents said there was a need for organized training for the entire program staff.

Operating procedures

Once the referral was received, recorded, and assigned to a team -- on the basis of the community school district (CSD) of the youth's current school -- a letter was sent to the school to verify the youth's status and obtain information about attendance. The team then invited the youth and family to a conference during which educational needs were more fully explored. If an educational crisis existed (i.e. client not enrolled in any school or client suspended illegally), the team immediately intervened through conferences with school personnel. After priority issues were adjusted, the team was responsible for developing an educational service plan to meet individual client needs. Referrals could be made to services such as Attendance Improvement/Drop-out Prevention (A.I./D.P.), after-school programs, or community-based agencies offering educational support services.

Almost all of the students referred to this unit were on register but needed to be reconnected with a New York City school. In most cases, the educational plan included reconnection to school, with follow-up encouragement and monitoring for

attendance. The educational officer and family assistant implemented the educational plan through communication with school staff and through visits to school and home. In cases where the child was unable or unwilling to be returned to his previous school, the plan called for the identification of another appropriate school program and arranging for the child's transfer and support there.

The following were the primary services provided:

- educational conferences;
- report back to DAS on the status of the case;
- provide a liaison to the C.S.D. or High School Admissions Office if school change is needed;
- confer with A.I./D.P. to support child in school;
- establish a contract with the youth, focusing on attendance;
- monitor the fulfillment of the contract; and
- visit school, interview school personnel, get records, advocate for student.

The program reported back to the DAS within 60 days for the purpose of obtaining updated information about services from other agencies to which the family may have been referred. Staff stressed that the Bronx DAS was required to close a case within 60 days, a requirement that significantly limited the amount of possible contact with the referral source. In addition, program regulations called for cases to be closed within six months of referral, but staff reported that in cases where workers felt further service is needed, the case remained open.

Staff reported maintaining the following records: the DAS referral form, a Bureau of Attendance fact sheet, a copy of the teacher's record of attendance for the term, interview write-ups, follow-up sheets, a case history sheet, report cards, Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.'s), and forms reporting recommendations at 30 days and at case closing.

The family assistant was responsible for contacting school personnel, including the following: principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors and supervisors, social workers, district personnel, Committee on Special Education (C.S.E.) staff, school secretaries, pupil personnel secretaries, A.I.D.P. facilitators, and attendance teachers or coordinators.

Central Placement Unit

Referrals

The Central Placement officer received referrals from parents as well as from a variety of agencies, most of them under contract to the Human Resources Administration's Special Services to Children. Factors leading to referral by agencies included barriers to placement, lack of appropriate facilities, and student behavior problems.

The educational officer clarified for those making a referral what the Chancellor's regulations and procedures are for placing a child in school. Only when standard procedures fail will C.P.U. staff take the case and provide assistance.

The first referral to this unit occurred in September, 1987, and the first placement was in October of that year. By August

1988, 151 inquiries had been handled and 35 of these were counted as cases. Of these 35 cases, only six were children who had not been in New York City schools within the previous school year; the remainder needed transfers to more appropriate placements. Inquiries that did not result in cases were usually requests for information about placement and transfer regulations.

Staffing, Responsibilities, and Training

The C.P.U. was established in September, 1987. It is located at the Board of Education's Office of Student Progress in Brooklyn. The unit consists of a coordinator, a placement officer and two clerical aides, one assigned to computer data collection. This unit also oversees the Bronx Educational Outreach component and is responsible for data processing for all three programs. The coordinator has made numerous presentations to familiarize relevant agencies with the service. The coordinator and the placement officer have graduate degrees and related experiences in education and social services.

C.P.U. staff reported receiving initial and annual training covering the kinds of students to be served and the Board of Education contacts relevant to the job. Other forms of in-service training mentioned were staff meetings every two weeks to discuss issues, as well as the availability of computer courses.

Operating Procedures

CPU staff listed the following operating procedures:

- get identifying information from the referral source;

- get client information;
- enter information into computer system;
- telephone the principal from the school for which the child is zoned to see why not accepted;
- may have to contact the district superintendent or supervisor of guidance;
- contact the Committee on Special Education's (C.S.E.) placement officer for special education students;
- retrace the agency's steps in attempting to place the child; find the best placement for child, identify any barriers, and start to address problem; and
- after placement, track the student's attendance.

Staff reported contact with the following school personnel: principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors and supervisors, social workers, district personnel, and C.S.E. staff. Staff reported maintaining student achievement, guidance, referral, placement and attendance records, computerized records, correspondence, and phone logs.

Educational Outreach Unit

Referrals

The Bronx D.A.'s office referred to the Placement Officer all youth (ages 16-25) who were charged with a misdemeanor for the first or second time and could avoid adjudication by participating in the program. All such referrals were accepted. The Placement Office reported that no referral material is provided to him by the D.A.'s office. Approximately half of the referred youth were drop-outs or otherwise out of school; the remainder were still on register in a school.

Staffing, Responsibilities, and Training

Staffing for this program consisted of one educational placement officer who was located in the Bronx courthouse and also had a desk at the Office of Student Progress (O.S.P.) in Brooklyn. The only training he reported was attendance at a computer training program providing general background for computer use.

This unit began operation in March 1987 and placed the first student in April, 1987.

Operating Procedures

The placement officer reported that he saw each referred youth several times and endeavored to assist their return to the school at which they were registered, or their transfer to another school or to a non-school training program. He identified the following services typically provided:

- for students already placed, focus on their attendance;
- refer students to off-site high school training programs;
- help students to find employment; and
- refer dropouts to non-school, vocational programs.

In doing this work, the educational officer indicated that he was in contact with assistant principals and guidance counselors, attendance teachers or coordinators, and C.S.E. staff. He reported maintaining computerized forms and a case register.

The component programs reported somewhat different practices with regard to maintaining contact with and obtaining information

on students in their case load.

The PINS Diversion Unit reported two to three contacts with the student on average, only one contact with the referring DAS, and monthly contact with the school guidance personnel. The CPU reported that the frequency of contact with the student and with the referring source depended on individual cases, with school contact every two months. The Placement Officer in the Educational Outreach program reported that he had contact with the student every two weeks and on-going contact with the referral source. He also reported weekly contact with the student's school or vocational placement and contact with guidance personnel every two months. The frequency of contacts of all kinds reported for the Bronx Outreach program was noteworthy in view of the caseload size.

Staff responded to questions asking the frequency of obtaining information from schools on attendance and grades. The PINS Diversion Unit and the Educational Outreach Program reported collecting attendance information monthly, while the C.P.U. collected attendance data only every two months. Information on grades and academic progress was rarely collected by any unit.

One of the measures of success in making a placement was the students ability to remain in the placement arranged. Staff estimates of percentages of youth they placed (or encouraged to return) and who remained in placement were 70 percent for the PINS Diversion Unit and only 50 percent for the other two units. The PINS Diversion Unit reported being unable to place five

percent of its cases; the Educational Outreach Unit could not place one percent; while the C.P.U. reported placing all 35 students.

Student Record System

The computerized Student Record System (S.R.S.) was designed to expedite the post-placement tracking of student participants in the Central Placement Unit, the PINS Diversion Unit, and the Bronx District Attorney's Educational Outreach Unit. Included in the S.R.S. were fields for the following data:

- identifying information about the student (e.g. name, identification number, and date of birth);
- the date and source of referral;
- the location and date of placement;
- the dates of any guidance meetings attended by the client and parents, principals, or guidance personnel;
- the number of subjects passed and failed and the grade-point average of the student during the time the case was active; and the number of half- and full- day absences during that time;
- courses passed/failed and grade average for students who were attending school in 1986-87; and
- closing codes indicating case status after six months.

The difficulty encountered in the use of the S.R.S. was the inconsistency with which the different units utilized this record-keeping system, and the resulting lack of uniformity in the data available for analysis in this program. For example, the Bronx D.A.'s program and the C.P.U. entered data into these records for all their cases, but the Bronx PINS Diversion Unit only entered data for two-thirds of the total cases (n=376) that

they reported.

O.R.E.A. staff visited the Bronx PINS unit to review a sample of the records to determine what information had been collected and recorded. Out of 179 randomly selected records, it was determined that three kinds of information were recorded: school identification codes indicating where the student was placed, services the student was referred to or received, and the number of absences during the months that the student's case was active. However, the absence of this information in the computerized record system mame the analysis of pertinent data for the evaluation of the program difficult.

The general opinion of the usefulness of the S.R.S. differed from component to component. The Bronx PINS staff unit stated that they did not believe that the entire system was in operation. They had developed their own method of record keeping based on the Bureau of Attendance's forms. The Bronx D.A. Office's Placement Specialist said that he did not understand the purpose of the S.R.S. Only the personnel at the Central Placement Unit were aware of the usefulness of the computerized record system.

In summation, the evaluators felt that a very comprehensive computerized student record system was designed by C.P.U., but training in the utilization of this system was insufficient. If properly implemented, the evaluation of data from this record system would be much more efficient than the sampling methods required in the absence of a centralized system.

Staff Perceptions of Program

The Bronx PINS Diversion staff rated their unit as "somewhat successful" and described the strengths of the program as staff commitment and sensitivity relevant to client needs, diversion from court for students and families, connections with clients that is longer than that of other agencies, and teamwork for children.

C.P.U. staff rated their unit as "successful" in meeting stated goals and similarly identified the following strengths of the program: staff commitment and belief in clients; a caring, dedicated, innovative, and multi-ethnic staff; outreach and advocacy for children; and liaison with schools and agencies.

The main strength identified by the placement specialist in the D.A.'s office was his ability to provide the D.A. with information about the kinds of educational and vocational problems referred youth have.

Identified Impediments and Gaps in Services

Staff from all three units identified the following institutional difficulties that impede appropriate placement of students:

- delay involved in diagnostic evaluation for special education;
- High school admissions office delays in placement or transfer;
- Eighth grade promotional policies that prohibit alternative programs for overage students;
- lack of appropriate middle school programs to meet the educational and social needs of heldover students with gaps in skills;

- few facilities for emotionally disabled children;
- school lack of attention to these targeted youth and lack of communication with C.P.U.;
- lack of cooperation and attitudinal problems on the part of school personnel;
- lack of student records or lost records:
- vague accountability, lack of authority relative to other Board of Education staff; and
- lack of knowledge about Board of Education procedures for admission and transfers.

In addition, lack of family cooperation and students' unwillingness to return to their previous schcol were cited by staff as case-specific difficulties.

Reasons given for students not remaining in the school placement were the student moved, was expelled, became homeless, requested transfer, or just stopped going to school. Staff explained that the returning student might feel out of place, get into fights, feel picked on, and be subjected to negative peer pressure.

The educational officer in the Bronx D.A.'s Office program said that family and student lack of cooperation were the factors that made it difficult for him to place a youth. He felt that barriers to placement lay in the student himself. Paperwork presented an additional barrier. Student re-arrest was the only reason given for the one percent of cases that were impossible to place as well as for youth not remaining in an educational placement any length of time.

Staff identified three measures by which impediments to placement were being addressed:

- the mayor's educational committee was reviewing promotional policies;
- The placement units had developed liaisons with Community School Districts; and
- problem-solving occurred at informal staff meetings.

Staff Recommendations

Staff were asked to identify additional services they would like to see agencies (including Board of Education schools) provide to the children on their caseloads. Staff recommended:

- more counseling, relevant to the children;
- required parental participation in counseling;
- bridge programs between school and home;
- transitional classes for returning PINS-petitioned students;
- skills-training programs; after-school and job programs; minority programs;
- alternative school programs with mental health components and with motivators for student success;
- Big Brothers/Sisters type of program for parents as well as children, i.e. non-punitive adult contacts; and
- more follow-up contact during and after the school placement process.

The PINS Diversion Unit staff made the following suggestions for improvement in the placement units:

- more staff and smaller caseloads, and more space;
- more training and stronger supervision, team meetings;
- more authority vis-a-vis the Bronx Probation Unit;
- better communication with provider agencies, and receiving more information from D.A.S.; and

- offering more services (other than educational) to kids, employment and recreational facilities in neighborhoods, more counseling, more evening activities, and a system of reward for attendance.

C.P.U. staff asked for more authority with schools and agencies, better communication with agencies, more and better public information, the ability to offer more services to students rather than just gathering data on them, better attendance tracking, improved computer system, improved mail system, and more resources to enable them to answer all questions.

The definition of placement differed from component to component. In the C.P.U. component the placement procedure consisted of locating the appropriate school, most commonly within the district where the student resided. In the Bronx D.A.'s Educational Placement Unit, placement was based upon the specific vocational needs of the client. In the PINS Diversion Unit, placement really meant a re-connection of the student with the school originally attended. This school liaison work appeared to be the major function of the PINS Diversion Unit, only 59 percent of the cases reviewed contained any reference to special services (e.g. mental health, counseling, social services, and special education services).

In summary, C.P.U./PINS consisted of three program components serving differing populations with somewhat different procedures. Most students served were not out of school in the sense of having been in an institution nor in the sense of having

clearly dropped out. Rather, the bulk of the clients in all components were youths who were enrolled in New York City public schools but who had been truant from their schools. In most cases, the short-term outcome of service is to re-connect the student with the same school with some effort to encourage and monitor attendance. Some students were assisted in transferring between school programs, some who were out of school were assisted into alternative training programs and a small number of out of school youth were re-enrolled in New York City public schools.

Conclusions and Recommendations

During the first year of C.P.U./PINS' existence, an attempt was made to define the roles of the three program components: Central Placement Unit (C.P.U.), PINS Diversion Unit, and the Bronx District Attorney's Educational Outreach program. In the process of exploring and establishing its identity, the program fell short of its potential in several aspects. Evaluation consultants from O.R.E.A. examined each component and concluded that, despite documented records of re-connecting students with educational placements, a great deal of disorganization and confusion existed among units, largely due to a lack of communication.

The Bronx D.A.'s Office had a most difficult task, which involved the placement of older students back into appropriate educational settings, as an alternative to incarceration. These placements were either academic or vocational, and were of great

importance to the immediate future of the participants. The PINS Diversion Unit should be noted for re-connecting a large number of students with the public schools after the students' involvement with the Family Court. In most cases, new placements were not instituted; instead, contact was renewed with the student's district school. However, a mechanism to monitor progress and re-connect these PINS students with necessary agency services after a six-month period was absent.

In light of the findings made by this study, the following recommendations were made:

- There should be increased promotion of the services that C.P.U./PINS Placement Units offers, which would enable a wider variety of agencies to become aware of the services available to them. The redefinition of the organizational relationship of the three component units would assist in the process of promoting the program and in providing staff training, and would also create the possibility of shifting staff between the units on an as-needed basis. There was an overall absence of understanding as to the exact authority of C.P.U./PINS Units in the area of placement and liaison activities, and frequently a total absence of knowledge of the existence of C.P.U. on the part of outside social service agencies.
- C.P.U./PINS staff expressed a need for more power to effect placement. More clout is needed on the district level to assist in the placement of the most difficult cases after

all the standard channels have been exhausted. Developing a closer relationship with district superintendents and other administrative personnel could assist in accomplishing this. When the usual channels have failed to create a placement for the at-risk youth, often C.P.U. found itself re-tracing the steps to placement that the agency bid taken, and stating the student's legal placement rights to the family and the agency. If C.P.U. had the power to intervene in the actual school placement by telling the school administrators that they cannot legally refuse admission to a student in his/her own district, then C.P.U. would hold sufficient power.

- With regard to the PINS Unit, a problem exists regarding absences that may re-surface after the 90-day period in which the DAS holds a case opens. A mechanism for effecting change in absenteeism should be created to prevent recidivism (e.g. spot-checking absentee records to identify problem cases, and offering immediate intervention, as needed). Also, cases may need to remain active beyond six months, and that option should be available. Proper placement of a youth in a school is meaningless if the youth is not tracked, and the support is not continued beyond the initial crisis.
- All of the placement units need to intensify their efforts to gather attendance and other progress and impact data for all of the students that they place in a school or

alternative program. This information should be entered into the computerized Student Record System (S.R.S.), which requires greater knowledge on the part of the component personnel about the function of the system. Too often, the S.R.S. was not utilized at all, or only parts of the records were filled in. More training is required to assist in future use of this comprehensive computer program.

- In addition, there is a need to expedite the transfer of records from one school to another when a student is placed, thereby permitting a prompt and accurate placement of the student at the new site. Frequent delays in record transfers may make placements in school-based programs inappropriate, or totally delay placement in any program.
- All agency and school staff should become familiarized with the Chancellor's regulations for placement and transfer. If there was uniformity in the knowledge of placement regulations, many problems could be averted. In addition, the school system's policies regarding transfer and promotion should be reviewed with the intention of facilitating appropriate placements for at-risk youth.
- More appropriate programs need to be developed or identified to deal with the needs of adolescents who are overage for grade and who do not yet meet the criteria for entrance into a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program. (The GED criteria include the need for sixth-grade reading and mathematics s[illegible]es on standardized tests.)

The concept of the Mayor's Interagency Task Force should not be abandoned; rather, it should be expanded and more widely promoted to improve effectiveness.

The creation of the Mayor's Interagency Task Force to assist in the unified effort of placing at-risk youth back into the public schools or appropriate vocational programs was commendable, however the Task Force did not continue to meet regularly as planned. The communication channels between agencies within the New York City Board of Education and outside agencies were to be improved through the Interagency Task Force, but significant improvement was not seen.

With the correction of the problems that C.P.U./PINS units experienced in the first year, the program has the potential to bring an at-risk population back into association with public schools and appropriate educational programs.

APPENDIX A

Preliminary Literature Review on Characteristics of Juvenile Offenders, Juvenile Delinquents, and Foster Care Children

This preliminary literature review will focus on those youth classified as juvenile offenders and delinquents, as well as on children in foster care. The section on juvenile offenders and delinquents will examine characteristics and needs of that population. The section on foster care children will focus on reasons for placement, characteristics and needs of the population, and educational considerations.

Juvenile Delinquents and Offenders

Characteristics and needs

A range of academic, social, and/or personality characteristics of youth involved in the legal system has been identified in the literature. A disproportionate number of delinquent youth has been reported to come from lower socio-economic levels and to perform poorly on intelligence tests. When these factors are controlled, however, a relationship still exists between academic characteristics and delinquency (Pink, 1984; Schafer & Olexa, 1971; Rist, 1970; Hargreaves, 1967). Delinquent youth have numerous educational difficulties, including low academic achievement, poor verbal skills, and cognitive and perceptual disabilities. In addition, they frequently present a history of disruptive classroom behavior, truancy, absenteeism, and high rates of dropping out (Keilitz &

Dunivant, 1986; Gottfredson, 1981, 1983; Bachman, O'Malley, & Johnston, 1978). Rarely does the literature focus on the academic and cognitive strengths of this population. However, at least two studies report that delinquents have good visual-motor skills and higher quantitative than verbal skills (Borgman, 1986; Keilitz & Dunivant, 1986).

Socially, delinquent youth have been described as disengaged from the social institutions of family and school, alienated, and mistrustful of self and others (Wunderlich, 1985; Pink, 1984; Hirschi, 1969). It has been hypothesized that this disengagement or lack of attachment results in less commitment to conform and leads to delinquent behavior. In addition, association with delinquent peers; poor social judgment, particularly in terms of predicting the consequences of their actions; and less internalization of conventional rules have been reported (Gottfredson, 1981; Hirschi, 1969).

The identified personality traits of delinquent youth stem from a poor self concept and poor impulse control. Hypersensitivity, low self-esteem, aggressiveness, immaturity, irritability, impulsivity, suggestibility, and acting-out behavior have all been described as characteristic of this population (Keititz & Dunivant, 1986; Wunderlich, 1985; Kellam et al., 1980).

A review of 17 demonstration projects (Gottfredson et al., 1983) commissioned by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) identified similar characteristics

as representative of youth engaging in more frequent delinquent behavior. These characteristics are:

- truancy
- little effort expended on schoolwork
- weak attachment to or dislike of school
- weak attachment to parents
- alienation or a feeling of not being connected to the social order
- less belief in the validity of rules
- premature and rebellious expressions of autonomy and
- association with delinquent peers.

Clearly, the educational and social/emotional needs of this population are extensive (Carpenter & Sugrue, 1984). Improved academic skills, job skills, social skills, communication with authority figures, self control, and self-esteem are needed (Keilitz & Dunivant, 1986; Amster & Lazarus, 1984; Carpenter & Sugrue, 1984).

Foster Care Children

The foster care population has been defined as those children in "full-time substitute care outside their own homes by persons other than their parents" (Fanshel, 1982). In 1987, there were 18,500 children in New York City foster care (The New York Times, September 28, 1987). Of these foster children, approximately one-third, or 6,300, are considered troubled and hard-to-place. These children are usually adolescents and account for most of the children in group settings. A projected

16 percent increase of children in the New York City foster care system is anticipated by 1988. In addition, a new state law may add another 2,000 children to the system who currently live with relatives in homes not meeting state standards (The New York Times, September 28, 1987).

In general, New York City foster care children come from biological families with lower socio-economic backgrounds, limited educational achievement, and minimal financial resources (Festinger, 1983; Fanshel, 1982).

Reasons for placement

Most often, children are placed due to parental inability or unwillingness to fulfill child-rearing responsibilities. Neglect, abandonment, mental illness, and substance abuse account for most placements (Fanshel, 1982). At present, drug abuse accounts for one of every four placements in the New York City foster care system and may relate to the rising foster care rolls (The New York Times, 1987). Other common reasons for placement include parental illness or death, incarceration, inadequate resources, or family crisis. Misbehavior on the part of the child accounts for only a modest percentage of cases.

A follow-up of 277 adults who had been in the New York City foster care system for at least five continuous years (Festinger, 1983) found that the initial reason for placement influenced their later sense of well-being. Those who felt they had been placed as a result of forces outside of their parents' control, such as death or physical illness, reported more general life

satisfaction than those who were placed because their caretakers could not or would no longer cope, or because of neglect or abandonment.

Population Characteristics and Needs

A random sample of 1,238 children from 33 agencies (Fanshel, 1982) found that the children's mean age at placement was 3.4 years and that they had been in care an average of 5.7 years at the time the study was conducted. Festinger's population (1983) reported similar data. Her population had a median age of 3.1 years at time of placement. Older children were more likely to go into a group as compared to a foster home. Those who went into a foster home had a mean admission age of 3.9 years and stayed in placement a mean of 15 years; those who entered a group home had a mean admission age of 8.6 years and remained an average of 10 years (Fanshel 1982).

Most foster care children are not emotionally, physically, or intellectually handicapped at the time of their placement. Festinger (1983) found that half of the subjects had entered and left foster care without any identifiable problems. In her sample, fewer than 10 percent exhibited moderate to severe health problems at placement or discharge. More males who left a group setting had health problems than those from foster homes.

Approximately one-fourth of the sample had moderate to severe social or emotional problems at the time of placement, including withdrawal from relationships, eating or sleeping disorders, depression, hyperactivity, or difficult interaction

with adults or peers. Nearly 17 percent had such problems at the time of discharge, including about five percent (mostly males) who had difficulties at both points in time. Several factors were associated with increased social and emotional problems. Children were more likely to experience difficulty the older they were at time of placement and the lower the level of educational attainment they achieved while in care. Children who were moved through a large number of placements also had greater difficulty. In addition, minimal or no contact with biological parents or extended families was related to psychological problems for those children discharged from group settings (Festinger, 1983).

Educational Considerations

While the adults in Festinger's study (1983) compared favorably to others their age in the general population on a number of variables, they were found to lag behind in scholastic achievement. Many had received limited schooling; thirty-five percent had not completed high school. Those from foster homes tended to complete more years of school than those from group settings, and females received more education than males. Once out of foster care, over half the respondents acquired some additional education, 37 percent in career or vocational training and 25 percent in formal credits. Thirty-seven percent of the sample felt that they had been inadequately prepared to receive further training after high school; most felt that such preparation is vital. Those young adults with more education were more often happier, involved in their community

organizations, and satisfied with the usefulness of their education. Festinger recommended that:

- foster children receive periodic educational assessments for early identification of problems;
- expectations about school performance should not be lowered simply because they are foster care children;
- academic expectations be clearly communicated to the foster children, their foster parents, and other care providers in group settings;
- discharge counseling address educational and career options and opportunities, with information on community resources for employment; and
- education provide training in independent living skills, including sex education and family planning.

Issues of Transition

A basic concern in foster care is achieving permanency in the children's living arrangement as quickly as possible. For some, the initial placement was their final placement. But for many, frequent shifts occurred early in their foster care experience, usually in response to emergency or crisis situations. However, after initial changes a long-term stable placement was achieved. Thus, a temporary arrangement turned into long-term care, as the foster care children reached young adulthood without returning home or being adopted. Changes, whether due to placement shifts or a turnover in assigned social worker, were not necessarily damaging to the children in care if the reasons for change were understood and accepted (Festinger, 1983). In cases where placement shifts result in school changes, personnel need to ensure that students understand the reason for

transfer and need to develop strategies to ease the transition, such as setting up a visit to the new school. In addition, issues relating to the older foster care child may need to be addressed at the late elementary or junior high level. Finally, procedures which aid transitions in placement would be applicable to this population.

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APPENDIX B

Memorandum on Effective Practices.

The Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment (O.R.E.A.) is currently evaluating the Central Placement Unit and the PINS unit in the Bronx. In order to collect information about the variety of educational programs available to the student population served by CPU/PINS (i.e. juvenile offenders, juvenile delinquents, foster care children and PINS children), O.E.A. sent survey questionnaires to members of the Interagency Task Force and to Supervisors of Guidance in all 32 community school districts. One survey question asked respondents to identify exemplary programs and those features which make the programs exemplary. Information on effective practices and programs within New York City was compiled from the survey and integrated with reviews of related literature. It should be noted that the selection of programs considered exemplary by respondents to the O.E.A. questionnaires does not necessarily encompass all successful programs available for CPU/PINS-involved students.

Effective Programs

A preliminary literature review prepared and disseminated by O.R.E.A. highlighted three prevention models. Primary prevention programs emphasize reducing the incidence or severity of delinquency in the population at large through effective school practices. Secondary prevention programs, often in alternative school settings, focus on reducing the incidence or severity of delinquency in a selected subset of the population considered at

high risk. A combination of primary and secondary prevention programs is described in the section on alternative education programs. Tertiary prevention programs focus on remediation or rehabilitation once youth have been involved in delinquent behavior (Gottfredson et al., 1983). These models operate on a continuum, from those which focus mainly on altering the educational environment to those which focus mainly on enhancing the adaptation skills of individuals. The following section describes effective programs in each category. Concluding remarks focus upon the crucial issue of transition between agency and school programs.

Effective Schools as Prevention. The effective schools literature (Druian, 1986; Edmonds, 1979; Brookover et al., 1978, 1979) advocates strong administrative leadership, high expectations of student achievement, an orderly climate conducive to learning, frequent monitoring of pupil progress, a clear and fair discipline code, and community and parent involvement. Successful implementation depends on commitment at the local level, careful planning and clear articulation, a stable faculty and administration, on-going staff development, and purposeful monitoring and evaluation. It is hypothesized that all students attending effective schools have an opportunity for success in school and in the occupational sphere, thereby resulting in significantly fewer youth entering the juvenile justice system (Pink, 1984). Druian (1986) concluded that many characteristics of effective schools are highly consistent with features found in successful programs for at-risk students. Gottfredson (1983)

advocated the following changes in school policies and environments to more appropriately serve youth at risk for delinquent behavior:

- make school discipline fair and consistent while providing for due process;
- increase youth, parent, and community participation in school decision-making to reduce student alienation and feelings of powerlessness;
- decrease the grouping of students according to inappropriate criteria (e.g. social class, race); and
- provide a structure for learning that is tailored to realistic levels of performance for individual students.

(See memorandum on New York City Middle Schools identified as Effective by Advocates for Children.)

Alternative Schools have been found to be successful in reducing delinquency when they provide a fundamental change in educational options rather than merely a "dumping ground" for troubled youth (Pink, 1984; Gottfredson et al., 1983; Hawkins & Wall, 1979). Gold and Mann (1978) reported that successful alternative schools were able to improve student achievement and reduce delinquency by changing the learning environment, independent of such factors as family background, I.Q., or social class. The restructured educational program usually includes individual instruction and evaluation and social support from warm and accepting teachers. School success and social support are believed to raise self-esteem and strengthen a sense of student engagement. One caution regarding alternative programs, despite

their success in reducing delinquency, is that they may fail to address two crucial goals -- reintegration of students into the larger student population and facilitation of student movement from the school into occupations (Pink, 1984).

Within New York City, **Northeast Academy** in District 4 is an alternative mini-school cited as exemplary for its "clearly conceptualized program goals, the involvement of the staff, the educational field trips, and the open communication between students and staff." Northeast Academy offers full-time diagnostic and remedial services, individualized and small-group instruction, career and individual counseling to students between the ages of 12 and 14 in grades seven through nine. Characteristics of students served include "anti-social, disruptive behavior; inability to accept responsibility for actions and consequences; truancy, and academic underachievement."

Operation Return in District 30 serves 12 to 16 year olds in an alternative school setting. It targets low achievers with poor reading skills who are at risk of dropping out and who have serious disciplinary problems. Using a self-contained classroom approach, remedial and diagnostic services are provided, along with individual, group, and career counseling. Other features noted were the small group size, excellent staff, parent workshops, and the community and family outreach.

Agency alternative schools include the **Junior Engineering Club** for 12- to 18-year-old students preparing for the G.E.D. Based in a converted apartment building, it provides training in computer

and mathematics skills. In addition to academic assistance, recreational activities such as karate and yoga are offered.

Queens General Hospital has a program utilizing classrooms and recreational facilities to help 12- to 16-year-old youths in grades eight through twelve. This program serves as an alternative to high school for youths in special education. Weekly counseling sessions are scheduled with a psychiatrist or a social worker, and medication is provided when prescribed. The typical client in the program is a youth who is capable of punctuality and does not have serious temper tantrums.

The Jamaica Learning Center offers a G.E.D. program to youths over the age of 17. This alternative high school has flexible day and evening courses. A bilingual high-school equivalency program is also available. The typical program participant is a drop-out who is employed and needs to complete his/her high school ducation during evening hours. The Jamaica Learning Center's low student-teacher ratio enables participants to work closely with staff members. Guidance counselors are available to assist with school and home problems and help the youths achieve their goal of acquiring a high school diploma.

Alternative Education Programs include a range of interventions on both the individual and school level. Among these interventions are psycho-educational diagnosis, individualized instruction, vocational/career education, counseling, affective education, staff development, changes in classroom management and organization, improvements in school climate, and increased

student/parent involvement. Gottfredson et al. (1983) reported on 17 alternative education programs aimed at the reduction of delinquency and funded by OJJDP. Despite varied results across programs, statistically significant improvements were noted in school safety, student self-concept, and teacher morale, with decreased rebellious autonomy. Increases in youth and parent involvement and individualized instruction remained elusive goals for the majority of programs evaluated.

Romano (1983) reported on "The Connection, " a 15-month demonstration program at South High School in Minneapolis, MN. for adolescents considered at risk for becoming involved with the juvenile justice system, not completing high school or not finding suitable employment after high school. Regarded as generally successful, the program incorporated the following features: tutoring, counseling, job preparation training and job placement, life skills training, chemical management counseling and recreational and cultural services. Service delivery was largely through college students acting as part-time paraprofessionals.

In New York City's District 6, five Project Success sites were identified as exemplary: P.S. 189, I.S. 143, P.S. 128, P.S. 28, and I.S. 164. The program serves students who score below the 35th percentile in reading and math tests, are between the ages of five and 14, and are in grades kindergarten through nine. These students are at risk of dropping out and are in need of outreach services. The program, held in the regular school setting, includes diagnostic and remedial services in reading and math,

along with outreach services offered to students and their parents by a Community Associate. Incentives are offered, parent workshops are held, and home visits are made as needed. The exemplary characteristics of the program include a maximum class size of 25 students and paraprofessional assistance with small group instruction.

"Cities in Schools" in District 16, is located in one junior high school (J.H.S. 35), and offers services to general education students aged 12 to 18 in grades seven to nine. Low achievers who have f mily problems and are at risk for dropping out receive academic and counseling assistance in an after-school setting. Job training, work-study, parent workshops, community outreach, and recreation are all aspects of the program. One of the reasons it was cited as exemplary was the on-site presence of a social worker and recreational workers who are able to supplement the instructional aspect of the program to make it a well-rounded after-school center.

ESCALA, located at J.H.S. 303 in District 21, is a bilingual program which assists Spanish language-dominant students identified as low-achieving and at-risk. Serving general education students between the ages of 12 and 18 in grades seven through 12, this self-contained class program offers peer tutoring, diagnostic and remedial services, and career counseling. Community and family outreach were also identified as positive aspects of the program.

In District 26 two programs were identified as exemplary. **The Drug Program** serves students from five to 16 years of age in

grades one through nine at P.S. 173. The program participants are at risk for drug or alcohol abuse; they are offered individual, group, and career counseling in addition to remedial assistance in reading and math. Community and family outreach are provided and parent workshops are given. The student participants, who are low achievers who would likely become drug and/or alcohol abusers if not for the program's intervention, receive in-class support and are pulled out of class for assistance. Summer school is offered in grades six through nine. In addition to serving the targeted population, the program staff offers liaison services, such as rap sessions, to all schools in the district as needed.

The **Resource Room** program, existing in all schools in District 26, serves five- to 14-year-old students in grades kindergarten through nine. These students are characterized as being low achievers with disabilities in reading and/or mathematics . This pull-out program offers both diagnostic and remedial educational services, supplemented by individual, group, and career counseling, work study, and family and community outreach programs. Three sites were selected as exemplary: P.S. 26, P.S. 98, and I.S. 74.

The on-site mental health services located at three sites in District 30 (P.S. 150, P.S. 76, and P.S. 127) assist students between the ages of five and 11 in grades kindergarten to six who have emotional problems which interfere with learning. Individual, group, and career counseling are offered by a psychologist and a social worker on the premises. Educational diagnostic services are also available. Additional positive components of these on-site

programs are the parent workshops, community outreach, and parent outreach.

Project Share is located in thirteen schools -- elementary, intermediate and junior highs -- in District 30. These schools are P.S. 166, P.S. 11, P.S. 17, P.S. 171, P.S. 151, P.S. 70, P.S. 69, P.S. 150, J.H.S. 204, J.H.S. 10, J.H.S. 141, I.S. 126, and I.S. 145. While all the sites were identified as exemplary, two were spotlighted as exceptionally outstanding (J.H.S. 10 and I.S. 145). Project Share targets elementary and middle school students between the ages of five and 18 in grades kindergarten through nine. These students are low achievers at risk of dropping out who demonstrate maladaptive behavior, are children either of alcoholics (COA) or of substance abusers (COSA), or are substance abusers themselves. In a regular school setting using pull-out and in-class support methods, small-group discussions are held and individual assistance is offered in coping techniques for the problems these students face. Academic tutoring is provided only as an adjunct to counseling services. Career counseling and a mentor program are additional aspects of the program along with peer leadership training, parent workshops, family outreach, and community outreach. The factors making the program exemplary include positive leadership by a committed and motivated staff, unique expertise in substance-abuse prevention, on-going staff training and evaluation, and a staff-developed curriculum enhanced by the use of the police-affiliated School Program to Educate and Control Drug Abuse (S.P.E.C.D.A.).

Prevention Alternative to Special Education was recognized as an exemplary program in District 30. Three exemplary sites were identified: P.S. 171, P.S. 111, and P.S. 127, and these sites were served in eight-week cycles. The program targets low achievers with poor adjustment to general education in grades kindergarten through six and between the ages of five and 11. Diagnosis and remediation in reading and math are offered along with individual and group counseling. An action plan was supplied for each participating student to assure the continuity of the program. Parent workshops and family outreach are also an integral part of the program.

Agency alternative programs include **The Vocational Foundation** which offers psycho-educational diagnostic services as well as intensive remediation of basic academic skills, on an individual basis and in a group setting. Additional aspects of the program includes a work-study program, vocational education, and G.E.D. preparation. The youth who are eligible to participate in this program are between the ages of 16 and 21 and are highly motivated to complete their education in a work-study program. The program also supplies a stipend as additional incentive. The quality of the staff was highlighted as one reason this program is exemplary.

Staff in the Department of Juvenile Justice identified three exemplary programs serving both special and general education students. **City Works** offers two weeks of school alternating with two weeks of work to students, usually 16 years if age, who are motivated and reliable. In addition, academic counseling is

available for the program participants. Big Sisters provides tutoring for youths aged 11 to 16 who are in special or general education. El Puente offers a G.E.D. program, tutorial services, and academic counseling for students aged 13 to 1^. This program was cited as exemplary because it serves both special education and general education students and is well structured.

The **Rheedlen Foundation's Parents Help Center** offers tutoring and counseling in an after-school setting for children ages six to 12. Referrals to the Help Center are made by District 3. Parents most frequently utilize the program due to truancy of a child, substance abuse problems, or housing difficulties. Identified exemplary features are its focus on school problems, and its effort to prevent the removal of children from their homes for placement in foster care.

Rehabilitation models focus on the remediation of learning problems and the provision of academic and emotional support (Keilitz & Dunivant, 1986; Pink, 1984). Amster and Lazarus (1984) have noted that remediation and rehabilitation programs can signi^^antly reduce the repetition of delinquency when specific learning disabilities are correctly diagnosed and treated. They advocate that such programs include the following:

·clinical evaluation ser ices (coordinated among community agencies, the juvenile court system, and nearby university graduate programs) to provide low-cost screening of learning problems when a juvenile first comes to the attention of the justice system.

·in-service training for court and agency staff to aid in

recognition of learning problems and referral for remedial placements.

·efficient methods for timely collection and dissemination of assessment data for each youth housed in short-term detention.

·appropriate intervention, even for short-term detentions, including diagnostic teaching and counseling

·recommendations which accompany the youth from one placement to the next.

·follow-up services coordinated among agencies, the court system and the public schools to assure that youth with learning problems are receiving appropriate services.

·development of channels for accessing remedial and vocational programs.

Keilitz and Dunivant (1986) implemented a performance-based educational program in which adjudicated youth received remedial instruction after school four times a week for fifty minutes a session. Decreases in delinquency were attributed to the bonding that occurred between the learning disabilities specialist and the student.

Another strategy identified in the literature emphasizes employment intervention. The Alternative Youth Employment Strategies Project (AYES) targeted high-risk, disadvantaged youth with prior involvement with the justice system. The focus was on vocational training and work-experience in community service jobs. Findings indicate that the program was at least partially successful in increasing participants' employability and reducing

criminal involvement (Sadd, 1983).

Locally, Carter G. Woodson Academy targets 10- to 16-year-olds who are in secure detention at Spofford Juvenile Center. Instruction is offered on an individualized and small-group basis, based on a comprehensive assessment and education planning. In addition, counseling is offered individually, in groups, and for crisis intervention purposes. Carter G. Woodson Academy and the Board of Education collaborate on special- education evaluations and individualized programs. Speech and language evaluations and therapy, tutorials, and enrichment in areas of special interest are provided by the Academy. The average stay for a student is three and one-half weeks. This program was deemed "a model education program in a detention facility" due to the personal attention offered to the students resulting in progress in a very short time.

Respondents from the New York City Department of Probation deemed several programs exemplary. Alternatives to Detention has centers in every borough of New York City except Staten Island and provides on-site schooling with Board of Education teachers, using a modified curriculum designed for this population. The major academic emphasis is on increasing reading levels. Counseling is available on an as-needed basis and, wherever possible, parents or guardians must make an appearance and participate in the counseling effort. Students are provided with breakfast and lunch, taken on supervised trips, and participate in discussions with guest speakers on relevant topics. Other features include alcohol

and drug abuse counseling, community outreach, career development, and evening recreation programs.

The target population ranges from 7 to 16, with the majority of participants on the junior high school level. These students are chronic truants who were considered for placement at Spofford. The average stay in the program is two to three months. The program is considered exemplary because it gives the youths a place to go while waiting for their court cases, and it gives the Probation Department a chance to get to know the children better and re-direct them.

Hooper Academy offers academic assistance and job-training to school drop-outs and youthful offenders ages 16 to 21. High school equivalency courses and computer training in word processing and data entry are available. In addition, individual and group counseling are offered. Exemplary features are "individual attention to the youths and excellent follow-up to the referring agency."

The **Brooklyn Community Care Project** of the **Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Mental Health Center** serves a target population of 12- to 18-year-old students in grades seven to twelve, with an emphasis on students with special education needs. The adjudicated juvenile delinquents in this program have been returned to the community from the Division for Youth facility in upstate New York, and both they and their parents receive services at this center. Exemplary features include individualization for students and outreach to families.

Finally, the issue of transition from agency care to public school needs to be reviewed. The timely transition and placement of youth from agency to public school have been identified as critical in the provision of services for this population. Webb and Maddox (1986), in their overview of the literature, identified the following common problems related to transition: lack of communication between agencies and local schools, lack of transfer of education records, lack of identification of students needing special education services, lack of information on school placement options, and lack of feedback to institutions' educational staff on student progress. Based on these identified problems, Webb & Maddox (1986) listed four areas that need to be addressed by a transition model: awareness of other agencies' activities and missions; transfer of records when a student enters the institution and when leaving for a local school; preplacement planning for the transition before the youth leaves the institution; placement maintenance in the public school; and on-going communication between agencies and school about youth progress. Successful implementation in each of the four areas required the identification of who would participate, when the strategy would be initiated, and what materials were needed.

This model was implemented throughout the State of Washington during the 1984-85 school year. Evaluation of the implementation showed that it took approximately nine months to effect the smooth transfer of information between agencies and schools. Specific strategies were identified which facilitated

inter-agency cooperation. These included involving both administrators and staff who provide direct services in the process, avoiding jargon and acronyms whenever possible, developing a list of designated contact persons, preparing a school placement options list by district, informing agencies of the information available from school records, presenting jointly attended workshops to familiarize agency and school personnel with specific organizations' goals and procedures, and developing guidelines for school registration. School registration procedures required that all adults working with a youth, as well as his/her parent or guardian, meet and discuss educational goals, expectations, and attendance as well as establish times and methods for future communication. This process enabled parents and professionals to meet in circumstances other than a crisis situation. Preliminary data seem to indicate that this model has had a positive impact on interagency cooperation, the transfer of student educational records between agencies and schools, and student retention.

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