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The Evolving System of Juvenile Corrections in Illinois

Illinois created the first juvenile court in the nation in 1899. It evolved as a type of formal recognition that young offenders have special problems and needs that are best met through a juvenile justice system separate from that used for adults. However, a shortcoming of the Juvenile Court Act was the almost total lack of facilities for carrying out the work intended by the law. In 1902, a board of trustees was appointed and construction was begun on Illinois' first home for delinquent boys.

Two boys were delivered to the St. Charles School for Boys in 1904—a modest beginning to what is now a nationally accredited division of the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The Illinois Youth Commission came into being in 1954 and all youth centers were placed in the Division of Correctional Services. The Juvenile Court Act brought together under one jurisdiction cases of dependency, neglect and delinquency. Many of the youth committed were deemed to be delinquent. At that time, the term delinquent was used rather loosely and a child could be incarcerated as a delinquent for truancy, if they didn't obey their parents or were a run-away. They didn't have to commit a crime. As a result, juvenile populations boomed.

A revision of the act in the '60s changed the definition of the term "delinquent" so that a child could not be incarcerated for an act that would not be a crime if committed by an adult. Also, several supreme

court decisions were enacted dealing with incarcerated children that made it unlawful to confine a child any longer than an adult for committing the same crime. The juvenile population declined significantly with these new regulations.

Following several executive and legislative initiatives, the Department of Corrections was established as a code agency by the governor in 1970. Adult, juvenile and parole programs were then administered by the department instead of under separate agencies, commissions and boards as in the past. At that time, the Juvenile Division assumed a greater role in providing programs and services in accordance with its mandate to "provide care, custody, treatment and rehabilitation for the persons committed to it."

IDOC Accreditation Manager Sam Sublett, somewhat of a "corrections sage," and 40-year DOC veteran recalls the changing corrections philosophy toward juveniles over the years. "When the St.

by Rita Crifasi

Quarterly News Notes

CORRECTIONS FY92 BUDGET SET AT \$573.6 MILLION

The FY92 budget for the department totals \$573.6 million including reductions by the General Assembly of \$3.9 million and Governor's veto reductions of \$2.7 million. Some areas in which reductions were taken are General Office telecommunications, contractual services and electronic data processing funds. Personal services reductions are \$2.1 million by not filling vacancies and increased staff turnover including the 1,234 workers eligible for early retirement. The statewide equipment budget, gate money for inmates, inmate pay and funding for School District 428 contractual services also took cuts. In addition, a total of 1,700 beds at the Big Muddy River Correctional Center in southern Illinois and four work camps will be completed and ready for staffing and inmates during FY92 but, due to extraordinary pressures on the budget in this fiscal year, money needed to staff and operate those facilities will not be allocated until FY93. □

FACILITIES AT PERE MARQUETTE, KANKAKEE RE-OPEN

On the positive side of the budget story, \$3.7 million was added back into the budget to re-open the department facilities at Kankakee and Pere Marquette. The Illinois Youth Center at Pere Marquette will return as a juvenile center, however, the former youth center at Kankakee will re-open as a 100-bed minimum security correctional facility for women. Students began returning to IYC-Pere Marquette in September and women are expected to arrive at the Kankakee facility in October. □

STAFF APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED

Governor Jim Edgar announced the appointment of the second Hispanic warden of an Illinois prison Sept. 9. Salvador A. Godinez, was named warden of the maximum security Stateville Correctional Center on Sept. 3 by Director Howard A. Peters III. Godinez returned to Stateville after almost two years as warden of a Nevada prison. Godinez started his DOC career as a counselor at the Illinois Youth Center at St. Charles in 1973.

Peters also appointed Joanne G. Perkins as the first woman in the history of the department to lead the DOC Juvenile Division effective June 17. Perkins, a 16-year Corrections veteran, had been superintendent of IYC-Warrenville since 1981. At the same time, Glenda M. Blakemore was appointed superintendent of the IYC-Warrenville, Victor E. Brooks was named superintendent of the IYC-St. Charles, Dennis J. Levandowski was named superintendent of the IYC-Valley View, and Kenneth P. Dobucki was appointed warden of the John A. Graham CC. Stephen L. McEvers was named warden of the Jacksonville CC and Augustus Scott, Jr., was made warden of the Lincoln CC. Verma D. Harris was appointed unit superintendent of the new minimum security correctional center for women at Kankakee effective Aug. 16 and Gary L. McHugh was named superintendent at the IYC-Pere Marquette Aug. 5. □

DIRECTOR SEEKS HELP IN EFFORT TO FIND WEAPONS

Following a recent shakedown at Pontiac CC in which numerous inmate-made weapons and dangerous contraband was found, Director Howard A. Peters III has called on all levels of staff statewide to seek out and find shanks and other items that can be made into weapons. He has challenged staff to focus on eliminating the availability of odd pieces of metal and plastic that inmates use to manufacture weapons. In an open message to all employees, Peters said "...it is not only the duty of security staff to come up with new ideas to ferret out the metal and plastic used to make weaponry. Program staff, maintenance personnel, leisure activities specialists, dietary workers, clerical staff and administrators—everyone who regularly or occasionally works in a correctional facility—must address this issue." □

INSIGHT

Info corrections



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Jim Edgar, Governor

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This photo of a classroom was taken about 1910 at the St. Charles School for Boys west of Chicago. The facility is still operating as the Illinois Youth Center-St. Charles—a unit of the Illinois Department of Corrections Juvenile Division. Dramatic changes in programs and operations have occurred here during the last 80 years. Youth who break disciplinary rules at the center no longer dig ditches as punishment. Medical facilities, almost non-existent at the turn of the century, are now provided by a new infirmary at the youth center.



Charles School for Boys opened in 1904, people believed that the way to correct wayward youths was with a military style of discipline while they were made to milk cows and take care of hogs. For punishment, they were made to dig six foot holes in the ground," says Sublett, who spent the first 28 years of his career in the Juvenile Division.

"Then Charles Leonard came along and set up a child guidance clinic at St. Charles and juvenile corrections took a social work approach. In the late '50s and '60s, we sent about half of the kids home for Christmas furloughs. We never had more than 1% of them cause problems on these furloughs, but the program tapered off in the '70s," according to Sublett.

"The fashion in the early '60s was forestry camps for youthful offenders. These inexpensive extensions of institutions were developed as a response to overcrowding. A lot of the camps were donated and there was even one mobile camp that moved around the state in trailers. The drawback with the forestry camps was that they were not big enough to offer all the services afforded youths at regular institutions and there were problems with providing basic services in bad weather.

"Residential centers were the style in

the '70s. These centers were originally conceived as way-stations for youth designated minimum security. They operated under the philosophy of reintegrating each youth into his home community and encouraged associations with many agencies and organizations in achieving this goal. The regionalization and residential center concepts were abandoned toward the end of the decade," says Sublett.

Goals today

The goal of the juvenile justice system is not to punish young people for wrongdoing but, instead, to provide individual treatment and guidance. Under this system, children are viewed as developmentally incapable of forming the criminal intent making them responsible for their actions. In addition, they are seen as being impressionable enough to be diverted from further criminal behavior. Accordingly, the offender is generally more important than the offense.

Joanne Perkins, Deputy Director of the IDOC Juvenile Division and 16-year corrections veteran, has clear insight into dealing with youths. Firm, but fair, Perkins "calls 'em like she sees 'em," never losing sight of her mission nor the com-

passion and dedication to changing children's lives that led her to become the first woman in the history of the department to head the Juvenile Division.

"I think, in large, the public is confused about what they want us to do," says Perkins. "But, what they do expect is that children who violate the law will face the consequences, just as adults do. However, the mission of the Juvenile Division is entirely different than that for the Adult Division. Our purpose is to impact change. The juvenile years are the best time to affect change and help chart a new course. Adults tend to get hardened in their ways; kids are highly impressionable and their lives are more easily molded. Our greatest hope is that the changes made while in DOC custody will be carried over into the community."

Following the intent of the Juvenile Court Act, the Juvenile Division provides secure custody and rehabilitative programs to 1,300 youths aged 13-21 committed under the act. The division operates six youth centers statewide, four in the northern area of the state and two in southern Illinois. Each provides a wide range of academic, vocational, recreational, clinical and medical services in a secure setting.

Stressing resocialization, successful

return to the community without criminal activity, and treatment rather than punishment, Juvenile Division programs strive to help each youth realize his/her potential for a rewarding life as a contributing member of society.

To encourage positive behavior, consistent controls are offered which are gradually reduced as each youth demonstrates more responsible behavior. As part of the resocialization process, some institutions have a token economy which resembles a community economic system so the youths learn how to handle everyday consumer affairs.

The division offers a complete range of educational opportunities from grade school through high school or GED, as well as vocational training including auto mechanics, carpentry, construction/building trades, data processing, drafting and welding. A broad range of religious and recreational activities also are offered.

Sending kids home

The field services component of the Juvenile Division provides support services to approximately 1,350 youths and their families upon return to the community through a statewide network of parole counselors. These services include counseling, job finding, supervision of juveniles on extended or authorized absence from youth centers, and placement in a suitable foster home when necessary.

Because field services fell on hard times after budget cuts during the last legislative session, a major revision has been implemented for the delivery of services. Nine field representatives have been hired and are working in the facilities to provide transition from and coordination with facilities and field services. The department has recently shifted funds in order to bring back an additional 13 staff to further enhance parole services. Even with the return of these staff members, the average juvenile parole agent caseload is still four times higher than caseloads recommended by American Correctional Association standards.

The Juvenile Division is specifically designed to meet the special needs of the youth sent there. Because research suggests different motivations for juvenile and adult offenders, these differences are taken into account in the treatment of juveniles. Adults tend to commit crimes for what they yield, while juvenile crime is

Move away from family and friends can cause problems at IYC-Harrisburg

"IYC-Harrisburg is the most southern juvenile center in the state. The isolation has both helped and hindered us," says Youth Center Superintendent Monty Field.

"Because we are so far away and 52-60% of our population are Cook County commitments, we have had to overcome the general negativity of those youths about coming to the facility. Some of the northern commitments would go into confinement and refuse to come out while others assaulted staff to get transferred to IYC-Joliet so they could be closer to their families. We realized we had a problem and began to look for ways to deal with it," says Field.

"We began by trying hard not to transfer a young person away from here for disciplinary problems and just dealt with them here. When the northern kids saw that their assaultive behavior didn't get them transferred, word got around, and the problem subsided quite a bit from the level we had experienced before.

"In addition, we began showing slide presentations to kids in the reception unit at IYC-St. Charles highlighting the strengths of the program, giving greater access to telephones so the kids can talk to their families more often, encouraging written communications

and implementing a more liberal program for moving between living units," Field says. "The kids have begun to see that IYC-Harrisburg isn't such a scary place after all."

According to Field, the outstanding staff at IYC-Harrisburg are a result of hiring many employees from the Bowen Developmental Center and IYC-Dixon Springs when those facilities closed.

"We have an experienced workforce. The mental health background many of the workers brought with them has been a big asset to the facility. They tend to look at things a little differently and are able to tell a youth to do something in a way that gets them to cooperate instead of setting them off. And those who came from Dixon Springs brought with them a wealth of ideas, skills and knowledge," says Field.

"Another advantage is the low rate of staff turnover. With no major industries or factories in the area, individuals who apply for jobs at the center are serious about staying. Many employees were born and raised in the area and have no intention of leaving. For the most part, the staff at IYC-Harrisburg are well educated, highly motivated and possess good work ethics," said Superintendent Fields. □

often motivated by excitement, attention and peer recognition. Accordingly, a strong emphasis is put on building up a juvenile's self-esteem under the belief that, if they think more of themselves, they will not feel that they have to act out to gain attention from others.

"People tend to put so much responsibility on kids to adjust, both emotionally and socially," says Perkins. "Overall, these are difficult times for society. We're switching to such a technological society that

you're either able to fit in or not. With layoffs happening all over the country, people begin feeling unimportant and that has an impact on criminality, both for adults and juveniles.

"Kids are running away from impoverishment. They want things and they steal and deal and use drugs to escape reality. They prostitute to get things they need and want. These mixed-up kids are having kids of their own because it's the only thing they feel they can do and be

successful at. We're dealing with a society in such a state of flux, it's difficult to convince kids that there is hope for them. It's a complex problem to solve."

To keep up with the needs of the changing population, services such as alcohol/substance abuse counseling and sex offender treatment programs have been initiated. All juvenile facilities have trained substance abuse counselors on staff. The Illinois Youth Center at Valley View has its own residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program, under contract with Interventions, in which 26 youth are treated in one housing unit specifically set aside for the program.

The Sex Offender Treatment Program established at IYC-Pere Marquette in 1990 was switched to IYC-Valley View after the center closed in June due to budget cuts. The program at Valley View currently provides treatment for nine youths. The department hopes to re-open the program at Pere Marquette and expand the program to other facilities when funds are available.

On the flip side of sex offenders are the victims. And the Juvenile Division has a large number of them. Self-reports from youths coming into the system indicate that 51-52% of the females and 2% of the males were sexually abused prior to incarceration.

"The girls are more likely to report incidences of sexual abuse. Boys try to hide it, and it may take awhile before they admit that they have been abused," according to Perkins. "We try to identify the victims as soon as possible so that we can give them the help they need to overcome the trauma. Research indicates that the abused often become the abusers later on in life. That's a vicious circle that we try to break."

Who are these kids?

Although the many causes for criminal behavior in juveniles are difficult to quantify, statistics indicate a large portion of juvenile offenders are economically poor, poorly educated, and have little hope or goals. Most of them have dropped out of school or been terminated from school due to behavior problems and, generally, are failures emotionally and socially compared to their peers in general population.

The department's School District 428 offers Special Education and Chapter I programs to help these handicapped and

disadvantaged learners through individualized education plans. In addition, each facility offers a full range of academic and vocational offerings. Education is mandatory in all juvenile facilities and the programs are offered year round. On average, an IDOC student shows an increase of 2.05 grade levels in 80 days of classroom work. The academic gains made within a juvenile facility may increase the chances of similar gains in more traditional education programs on the outside and has the additional benefit of boosting the students' self esteem.

"The school district is now dealing with more and more special education students. Teachers are becoming more trained at dealing with these multi-problem kids. Many of their parents experimented with drugs in the '60s and '70s and some still abuse drugs and alcohol. These children suffer from instability as a result of their having been socially, emotionally and economically deprived," says Perkins.

"A lot of the children have been diagnosed as having attention deficit disorders. They can't sit still, can't concentrate and exhibit severe behavior problems. This type of behavior, gone undiagnosed, caused their public school teachers to get frustrated and resulted in many getting kicked out of school. The parents usually have their own problems they are trying to deal with. They are just trying to survive themselves, and the kids' needs often go unidentified and unserved. The department takes these kids, utilizes the school resources and attempts to deal with the problem immediately.

"We are seeing kids who had fetal alcohol syndrome and were cocaine babies—and they are now having babies of their own. All of the facilities will be challenged in the next few years to ensure the safety of students and staff as they deal with a more difficult population with fewer staff," advises Perkins.

A look at IDOC juvenile statistics over the past 10 years proves interesting. During this time, there has been a 12% increase in incarcerated African-American juveniles, a 15% decrease in Caucasian juveniles and only a slight increase in Hispanic admissions. The total number of males has decreased by .9% and the number of females has increased by the same amount. Cook County admissions have decreased by 6.2% while downstate admissions have gone up by 7.8%.

Currently, the Juvenile Division houses

62% African-Americans, 27% Caucasians and 10% Hispanics, with the remainder of the population consisting of Asians, Native Americans and others. Fifty-two percent of the population are committed from Cook County with an additional 8% admitted from the collar counties. Downstate commitments constitute 40% of the population. Ninety-four percent of the population is male and 6% is female. The average age is 16.

Thirty-five percent of the population has been diagnosed as being in need of minimum to urgent mental health care and 25% of the population have from 6-12 months left to serve. Two youths are serving life sentences.

"It used to be that certain types of kids were sent to certain institutions. But now our facilities are much more heterogeneous than in the past and I suspect the trend will continue," says Perkins.

The youth centers

Taking in different types of youth and altering programming to meet the changing needs of the population are challenges Juvenile Division staff are meeting with success. Following are profiles of the individual juvenile centers. Although they are all a part of the same system, they each have a uniqueness that sets them apart from the rest.

IYC-Harrisburg is located in the southeastern part of the state approximately 45 miles east of Carbondale. The center was built as a childrens' mental health facility in 1964. It is a high-medium security male juvenile facility housing older, more criminally sophisticated youth. Since it opened as an IDOC facility in 1983, IYC-Harrisburg has grown to become the largest general population facility in the division with a capacity of 276 youth. The average annual cost to house a juvenile at the center is \$29,130.

IYC-Joliet is located on the southwestern corner of Joliet on land formerly occupied by the Will County Poor Farm. The maximum security male juvenile facility opened in 1959 and now has a capacity of 212 youth. A special Intensive Reintegration Unit provides 32 beds for high-risk youths with mental health needs. The facility is designated to accommodate those juveniles in need of secure, long-term programming and treatment. Increasing commitments of long-term juvenile felons has prompted tighter secu-

rity measures at this facility where it costs \$38,603 per year to house one juvenile.

IYC-Pere Marquette is located 17 miles north of Alton near Grafton. It is adjacent to the Pere Marquette State Park at the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. The facility, which opened in 1963, was a farm estate built from stone and quarried from limestone in the nearby hills. The minimum security male juvenile facility, which was closed because of budget cutbacks, was re-opened in September, 1991. This center is designed for youth who demonstrate minimal behavior problems and are classified as low security risks. The center has a capacity of 80 youth. A special relationship has been developed with nearby Principia College in Elsah that includes college student-sponsored cultural and recreational activities for the center. The annual cost to house a juvenile at the center is \$39,498.

IYC-St. Charles is located approximately 40 miles west of Chicago. It is the division's oldest and largest facility encompassing 1,200 acres with a 125-acre, fenced central campus. The medium security male facility opened in 1904. St. Charles houses three programs: a Reception and Classification Unit for all juvenile males committed to the department, two Special Treatment Units for youth who show disruptive behavior and are in need of intensive counseling, and the general program population. The capacities are 108 in the Reception and Classification Unit, 52 in the Special Treatment Units and 210 in the general program population. It costs \$36,460 per year to house a youth at the center.

IYC-Valley View is located in a suburban residential area west of Chicago and outside the community of St. Charles. The former St. Joseph's Servite Seminary opened as a youth center in 1966. Valley View has a capacity of 228 minimum security male juveniles with an average annual cost per juvenile of \$24,511. An award-winning token economy was enacted at the center in 1969 in which reinforcement and rewards for positive behavior are emphasized. The center has a Substance Abuse Treatment Program which provides a therapeutic environment for a special housing unit of 26 youth. The center also has a Sex Offender Treatment Program, the only such program currently operating in the Juvenile Division.

IYC-Warrenville is located approximately 35 miles west of Chicago. It is the division's Reception and Assessment facil-

Grissett: Educate youth on decisions

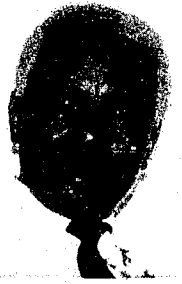
Tom Grissett is chief of security at IYC Warrenville. He has been with the department's Juvenile Division since 1970 when he was hired as a youth supervisor at the former Geneva Girls School which closed in 1977.

"Back in the early '70's most people dealt with the kids from a physical domination standpoint. I could have done that also. I was a Golden Gloves boxer. But, I chose very early on in my career to deal with the kids from the standpoint of how I would want them treated if they were my own children," said Grissett.

"I've been here at Warrenville since 1977. I don't try to brainwash these kids. I have three basic rules I operate by. First, be consistent in how you treat all the kids. Second, be a good example. You know, if you don't want kids cursing at you

don't use that kind of language yourself. And third, be known by what you do, not so much as by what you say. I guess that means not as much talk and more action. Kids respect that.

"One of the biggest changes I've seen in kids over the years is the increase in self-destructive messages they get now. Drugs, violence, and confrontation are more evident in our society now. Education helps us to stop the transmittal of these destructive messages. Being compassionate and caring is important. But, educating kids and showing them the choices, the alternatives they have is an important part of our job here." □



25 years of change at IYC-St. Charles

Eddie Harris is the afternoon shift commander at IYC-St. Charles. He has worked there since the spring of 1967. He started as a helper for the cottage parents at one of the houses in the facility. There were at least 600 youth held at St. Charles then. As Harris remembers from talking to staff working at the facility then, that number was down some from the 800 to 850 youth who lived at St. Charles in the '20's and '30's.

"Back then there were about two types of people who worked here. The desperate and the dedicated. I didn't plan on staying here for my whole career when I started. I wasn't desperate. But, I grew up just like these kids did. I grew up tough. And, I enjoyed dealing with the kids—dealing with their problems, and protecting them," said Harris.

"These kids know they can count on me to protect them. They know I'm fair and true to my word. That's why I get kids catching me in a closed place to give me a note about

some gang thing that's supposed to be happening, or a fight that is about to start."

"I'm also here because I hate gangs. They do nothing but destroy the lives of young black men in the city. That hasn't changed in 25 years. Back then the kids in gangs were here for stealing cars, not going to school or breaking the law in more minor offenses. Today, many of them are here for dealing drugs and for very violent things....murder, armed robbery, kidnapping....much more sophisticated and dangerous."

"I try to get involved and do these kids some good. Some of them never had anybody bother to try to teach them right from wrong. I also try to teach them respect. But some of these kids talk about killing you and they mean it. It's never easy." □



A group of young women at IYC - Warrenville are pictured here in a courtyard furnished with benches and a screened patio all built by residents of the center. IYC-Warrenville is the only youth center for female juveniles in Illinois. It is also the only coed facility in the juvenile division. According to Superintendent Glenda Blakemore, the young women at the facility often prefer life at the center to their lives in the free community. She attributes much of that feeling to the moral support, safety, medical attention and sense of self-worth provided by the center staff.



ity for female juveniles and the only facility for females. It also is the only coed juvenile facility. The youth center, which opened in 1964, formerly existed as a World War II defense installation before being acquired by a major oil company for a research center. The current facility was constructed by the oil company and donated to the state in 1973. Warrenville combines a justice and treatment model and serves a severely emotionally disturbed population. The multi-range security coed facility has a capacity of 67 females and 41 males. It costs \$30,748 per year to house a juvenile at the center.

Recent improvements

"Nearly all of the facilities are being used for things they were never designed to do," says Perkins. "The aging infrastructures all hold greater numbers of staff and kids than they were ever intended to accommodate. Ongoing repair and maintenance projects take up much of the money allocated for physical plant improvements. However, several improvements recently made, and a few in the works, are designed to enhance security and management of the diverse and growing juvenile population."

IYC-Harrisburg has completed renova-

tion of B Building adding 76 rooms, installed a new fire alarm system for E Building, opened an extra classroom in the vocational area and completed sidewalk repairs and concrete improvements. A new hydroponic greenhouse will soon be completed which the youths built themselves, and expansion of the dining room should be completed next summer.

IYC-Joliet installed new security screens and a new gym floor, constructed a new control center and installed Juvenile Tracking System terminals and cables throughout the facility. IYC-Pere Marquette converted a dorm to 12 two-person rooms, replaced roofs on three buildings and installed a new key/lock system in B dorm.

IYC-St. Charles replaced roofs on three buildings, reroofed the main gate house and underwent a major landscaping upgrade. IYC-Valley View installed a new gym floor, replaced the roof and gutters on the Canteen Building, and installed a new electronic gate locking system on the Main Gate. In addition, security screens and mesh were installed on all windows in A Hall.

IYC-Warrenville installed water tempering valves in all living units and added a new building for program space. Future improvements include completing an

energy control system in the school area, replacing the locking system in the Administration Building and installing new roofs on several living units.

Even with these physical plant improvements, the department will be challenged to come up with new concepts on how to handle the growing population. "With no letup in sight, it becomes more important to put a priority on the kids with the worst problems—those with mental problems, substance abuse histories and sexual offender/victim issues. To be effective, the department will need to expand the specialized programs already in place to deal with these youth," advises Perkins.

"A concerted effort to change a kid's life around, at a point where change is still possible, can pay big dividends. It may be the difference in whether or not we see them coming back to the system as adults with an even more entrenched criminal pattern. There is a responsibility to do the best we can for these youth in our care. I believe that change can occur, and I expect our staff to create the type of environment in which positive change can occur. We are doing this, and I am committed to our getting even better at what we do and how we do it." □