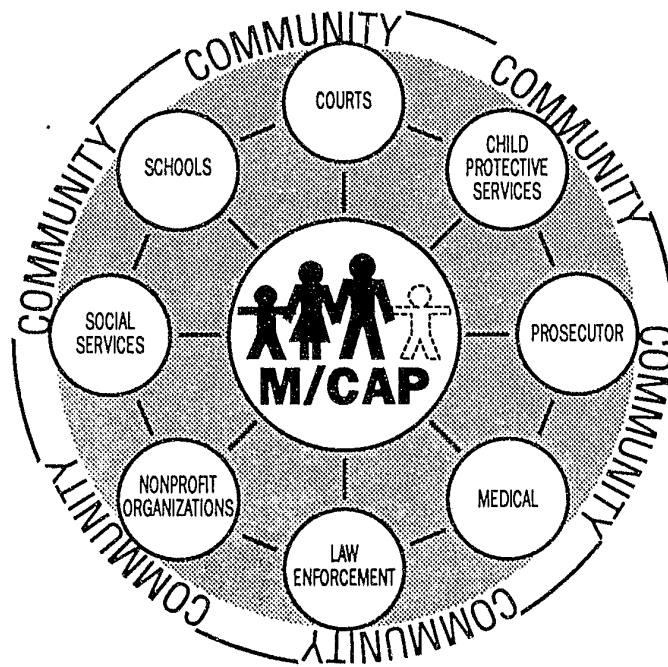




MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PROGRAM (M/CAP)



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**MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN
COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PROGRAM**

(M/CAP)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Revised - January 1991

Prepared by

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PREFACE

This needs assessment report is designed to provide the basis for developing training and technical assistance materials for the Missing and Exploited Children Comprehensive Action Program (M/CAP).

The report is the result of a collaborative effort between the staff of Public Administration Service (PAS) and an Advisory Committee comprised of people who have first-hand experience in dealing with missing and exploited children and their families. It is only through this collaborative effort that this report could be prepared in a way that accurately portrays the problems that inhibit interagency cooperation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Missing and Exploited Children Comprehensive Action Program (M/CAP) was conceived by the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), as a coordinated, multi-agency, community action program to serve the needs of missing and exploited children. Public Administration Service (PAS), a private, not-for-profit, management consulting firm, was awarded a grant by OJJDP, to develop training and technical assistance materials and assist selected jurisdictions organize multi-agency teams to effectively deal with the needs of missing and exploited children and their families.

Statement of the Problem

In many jurisdictions, the current system and process for handling cases of missing and exploited children is fragmented. This fragmentation can be traced to the evolution of the juvenile justice system, which is comprised of a wide-range of agencies that provide services to children and families. Each agency has its own unique role, and offers its own perspectives to the problems facing children and their families -- from law enforcement, social services, probation, prosecution, schools, non-profit agencies, child protective services, mental health agencies, welfare, and even medical institutions.

Fragmentation occurs because these agencies often operate in vacuums, focusing solely on their own federal, state and local mandates, without consideration of the available services or mandates of other agencies. When agency goals and service priorities are not shared or communicated with other agencies, a lack of continuity or consistency in service delivery results. The greatest impact is felt by families and children with multiple service needs who are bounced from one agency to another, without any agency having a clear or total picture of the needs or the most effective solutions to the family's problems. What the public perceives as ineffectiveness on the part of an agency, therefore, may actually be the result of an uncoordinated, fragmented service delivery system.

For example, a nonprofit agency for locating missing youth may receive a report of a parental abduction from the custodial parent. The agency will gather all of the available information from the parent to use in making decisions about how to best proceed with the case. While the agency may receive extensive information from the reporting parent, valuable pieces of information which will effect the agency's decisions may still be absent. The complexity of family problems may render complete understanding of the problem impossible. The true reason why the child was abducted can easily elude a caseworker, but information from other agencies could assist in making the right decision for the child. In this instance, child protective services may have information regarding prior emergency placements to protect the child; the local hospital may have information about unusual injuries to

the child; and the schools also may have related reports of injuries, adding another piece to the puzzle. Information from these and other agencies could dramatically impact the way the agency responds to the situation.

Multi-agency teamwork and sharing of information about families and children can lead to more informed and better decisions and services for the child and their family. This is the premise on which M/CAP is based. To help communities achieve the goal of providing more effective services to missing and exploited children through increased information sharing and case management, four major activities will be undertaken through this project:

- A needs assessment will be conducted of current programs that use a community-based, multi-disciplinary response to missing and exploited children to determine effective approaches for addressing the needs of these population groups.
- A program manual will be developed to identify specific operational approaches for multi-agency cooperation.
- Training and technical assistance materials will be developed to assist jurisdictions in organizing a multi-agency team for missing and exploited children.
- A training and technical assistance program will be designed and administered in selected jurisdictions that demonstrate interest and commitment in the multi-agency approach.

This needs assessment report represents the product of the first major M/CAP activity. This report documents the problems and needs related to community response to missing and exploited children and the roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved in a community-based, multi-agency approach. The results of this assessment will help determine the knowledge and skills required by public and private agency staff to implement M/CAP.

The remaining chapters of this report contain the following:

- Legislative background and history surrounding the development of the multi-agency cooperation and collaboration regarding missing and exploited children.
- Review and summary of literature focusing on multi-agency activities for missing and exploited children.

- Discussion of problems and needs affecting the various components of the system as they address issues associated with missing and exploited children.
- Necessary skills and knowledge needed by agencies to develop and implement a successful multi-agency approach to missing and exploited children issues.
- Description of training and technical assistance methods to be used to assist selected jurisdictions implement a multi-agency approach.

Finally, conclusions drawn from the needs assessment report will provide insights into the types of approaches that could be used to market M/CAP on a national level.

II. M/CAP PROGRAM HISTORY

The basic concept of M/CAP took shape more than a decade and a half ago with the passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act in 1974. The JJDP Act, as amended, was established to improve the juvenile justice system, provide national direction and leadership, and serve as the focal point for coordinating programs relating to juvenile delinquency and missing and exploited children. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice, promotes these goals by providing direction and oversight, and through the award of numerous juvenile justice grants and cooperative agreements.

The JJDP Act also established the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to "coordinate all federal juvenile delinquency programs and, in consultation with the Advisory Board on Missing Children, all federal programs related to missing and exploited children." As such, the Council provides an opportunity for the exchange of information about programs and plans, and for agencies to learn about issues affecting children and youth involved in or at-risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system.

OJJDP and the Coordinating Council emphasize inter-agency cooperation and collaboration to address the myriad problems affecting children and youth today. Federal, state, and local collaboration are important aspects of programs sponsored or supported by OJJDP. One example of this collaboration is the Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP), which is the predecessor to M/CAP. SHOCAP helps the juvenile and criminal justice system focus attention on juveniles who repeatedly commit serious crimes by emphasizing the collection and exchange of relevant and complete case information for informed decisionmaking. SHOCAP strives to end system-wide frustration and inability to effectively handle these youth through a well coordinated, interagency approach. The SHOCAP development approach consists of:

- A needs assessment to identify problems, training, and technical assistance needs.
- A dissemination and marketing plan to provide access to the program development activities.
- A training program targeted to the needs of each community.
- A technical assistance program to address individual needs on an ongoing basis.

Although the problems addressed through SHOCAP differ from those that are the focus of M/CAP, the use of the multi-agency approach is equally important to both

programs. The complexity and gravity of the issues associated with missing and exploited children, as well as the issues associated with serious habitual offenders, demonstrate the need for and importance of the multi-agency approach.

The importance of coordination regarding missing and exploited children issues became more apparent through the passage of the Juvenile Justice, Runaway Youth, and Missing Children's Act Amendments in 1984. In response to public concern regarding missing and exploited children, the Act called for the formation of the U.S. Attorney General's Advisory Board on Missing Children to develop recommendations regarding coordination of federal programs and activities; establish national program priorities; and approve a comprehensive plan to ensure effective cooperation and communication among all federal, state, and local agencies involved with missing and exploited children.

The Advisory Board, working closely with OJJDP, submitted a series of recommendations to the Office to increase protection of and improve the delivery of services to children and their families. These recommendations, discussed later in this report, coupled with OJJDP's emphasis on multi-agency collaboration and cooperation, helped to set forth eight major objectives for M/CAP. These objectives include the development and adoption of:

- Multi-agency guidelines for reporting and investigating missing and exploited children cases.
- Training procedures for juvenile service and law enforcement agencies to improve awareness and investigations of child abductions, missing and runaway children, and child exploitation.
- Policies and procedures for all juvenile service agencies to enable thorough background checks and investigations on persons working with children.
- Family or juvenile court policies to promote exchange of case-appropriate information between multi-agency groups dealing with missing and exploited children issues.
- Constitutionally valid ways and programs to alleviate the trauma and intimidation many children experience in court proceedings.
- Case management practices involving abusers, abductors, and exploiters of children that produce more informed case disposition decisions by the courts.

- School policies and procedures for flagging, recording, and documenting school transfer records to prevent the concealment of abducted children.
- Public awareness and prevention programs on missing children, child abuse, child exploitation, and child abduction.

To determine how to best meet these objectives, PAS performed a review of literature focused on multi-agency cooperation and collaboration for missing and exploited children and conducted an assessment of the multi-agency approach from the practitioner's point of view. The literature review and assessment revealed that while there were varying opinions regarding the number of children who were missing or exploited, these problems were clearly taxing the system and posed great concern and danger to the child, the family, and the system. These sources also confirmed that fragmentation exists with regard to missing and exploited children. Yet, in communities where agencies work together, children and their families were better served. The most appropriate model for improving services to missing and exploited children is the multi-agency, community-based program approach.

The M/CAP Approach

The M/CAP multi-agency approach allows individual communities to tailor the program to their own local needs and resources. This approach encourages grass roots commitment and interest, which is necessary to enhance continuance, growth, and expansion of their M/CAP project.

Defining Needs

The needs and problems of the victims and families involved in missing and exploited children cases are many and varied. Thus, there are many organizations and agencies involved in handling these cases. While these cases eventually impact on virtually every juvenile service agency, several core agencies are critical for serving the needs of these populations. These agencies, often referred to as primary service delivery agencies for missing and exploited children, include law enforcement, courts, prosecution, social services, selected nonprofit organizations, child protective service organizations, medical services, and schools. Their involvement in M/CAP is essential.

Children who are missing or exploited, however, are at risk of future involvement in assaultive, delinquent, violent, and self-destructive activities. For this reason, several additional agencies are potential M/CAP participants, including: juvenile intake, probation, corrections, and public or private mental health agencies. Agencies such as adult probation and corrections, and community groups that deal with the perpetrators of crime against children, are potential participants as well

because they focus on bringing about a more proactive community response to the problems of missing and exploited children.

Agency Participation

The number and type of agencies involved in M/CAP in any given community is determined by the community itself. Several factors will affect the exact composition of the M/CAP team: the scope or type of missing and exploited children cases the community wishes to address through the multi-agency approach; the available resources and services; legislative restrictions; agency mandates; and the desire, commitment, and limitations of each agency to participate in M/CAP. During the self-assessment phase of M/CAP, communities will have the opportunity to clearly examine their needs, assign agency responsibility, and establish a M/CAP team to address the problems in their particular community.

The operation and function of the M/CAP team also depends on the unique needs and features of a community. Some teams may serve as a treatment team, sharing specific information on a case-by-case basis. While this type of team is very effective, it is difficult to manage because of issues regarding confidentiality and the time it takes to deal with each case. Other communities may elect to develop a diagnostic team, which makes general suggestions without the benefit of information from all agencies involved in the case. While the issue of confidentiality is alleviated through this approach, the effectiveness of the team is limited. Other teams may choose to function as an advisory team, reviewing the system's handling of specific cases and identifying system gaps. These teams make recommendations to the appropriate agencies to avoid similar situations from occurring in the future.

Regardless of the approach, the formation of the M/CAP team and the decisions regarding its function and operation rest with each community. A thorough self-assessment process will enable each community to examine critical problems and needs with regard to missing and exploited children, and to design and develop a response that is unique and targeted to their own community.

Program Leadership

The leadership of the M/CAP team may vary from community to community. The lead agency will be determined by such factors as: resource availability, desire, and commitment to the M/CAP process. Depending on these and other factors, the lead agency in the M/CAP team may be the prosecutor, court, law enforcement, social service, child protective service, medical, school, nonprofit organization, or one of the other core agencies. Through experience gained in working with similar programs, PAS has found that a lead agency will naturally emerge through the self-assessment process. Allowing the lead agency to be identified in this manner rather than arbitrary selection will help to ensure the community's ownership of the program.

Conclusion

Communities that attempt to address all missing and exploited children issues at once may become discouraged because of the myriad of agencies involved. Without a careful, deliberate set of priorities, accompanied by an implementation plan, the resulting frustration due to the complexity of the tasks and the number of agencies and issues involved, could lead to the eventual collapse of the team. The assessment process designed by PAS, which is mirrored closely after the successful SHOCAP assessment process, will help communities identify and prioritize their problems related to missing and exploited children; assess the available resources; determine the team function; and design an implementation plan. To be most effective, the M/CAP development is an evolutionary process, allowing the team and community to expand its focus over time to address the full range of problems relating to missing and exploited children.

III. STUDY APPROACH

This chapter describes the methods used to collect information needed to identify the knowledge and skills that should be imparted through M/CAP training and technical assistance materials. The information was gathered from practitioners in the field and from available literature.

A Systems Approach to Training

A standard approach known as Instructional Systems Design (ISD) is being followed to create a valid, credible training program for M/CAP. ISD is comprised of four phases: analysis, design, development, and implementation. Each phase is briefly described below to clarify how this report establishes a framework for M/CAP training products and programs.

This report is the result of the first ISD phase - the analysis. In the analysis phase, specific problems are identified and defined, and training needs are subsequently specified. These needs are examined in the context of three categories: (1) organizational needs such as administrative priorities, mission and goal, personnel training, and resources; (2) employee needs such as academic background, previous experience, ability, or any performance that may cause service gaps; and (3) job needs which constitute the exact training requirements. The skills and knowledge necessary for course content evolve directly from this analysis phase. This report is based on a study of agency organizational needs. Once individual sites are selected, an analysis will be conducted, and training will be designed and developed which is tailored to the specific organizational, employee, and job needs of each site.

Phase II of ISD, the design phase, will consist of converting skills and knowledge into specific training outcomes or instructional objectives. Once these objectives are developed, instructional strategies, materials, and testing specifications will be designed. Strategies, materials, and test specifications will be evaluated to ensure they lead to attainment of the objectives.

Phases III and IV, the development and implementation phases, are characterized by the translation from design to actual training materials. These two phases include a strong evaluation segment to test the results of the training design. In the development phase, specific materials will be evaluated. In the implementation phase, the entire course content, the training facilities, the instructor's ability, and change in behavior will be evaluated. This final phase is an ongoing process of development and improvement to ensure that training is appropriate, credible, and achieves results.

Collection of Data from Practitioners

The analysis phase consisted of several activities, including an assessment of current practices of handling children who have been victimized; determination of the ability of the juvenile and/or criminal justice system to address such issues and problems; and identification of effective ways to address these problems through the use of a multi-agency approach. This was accomplished through two activities - - interviews and data collection from practitioners, and through a literature review.

This first activity, the collection of information from practitioners and experts, was designed to solicit and collect information about problems, issues, and practices relating to missing or exploited children. Data collection activities focused on agencies, organizations, and jurisdictions that worked in teams or with other agencies/organizations (i.e., using a multi-agency approach) to address these concerns. Data collection took the form of meetings, site visits, and telephone interviews.

In April 1989, PAS conducted the first of these data collection activities. PAS staff met in Washington, D.C., with selected OJJDP grant recipients to discuss the mission and goals of national and federal programs related to missing and exploited children. Grantees provided insight about community efforts to address the problems facing families and youth who are victimized, abused, missing, or runaways; identified issue-specific problems; discussed existing and needed resources and services pertaining to each issue area; and described the needs and gaps in services to children. Sixteen grantees whose primary focus is on various facets of these issues, attended this meeting. A list of the participants and their OJJDP-sponsored projects can be found in Appendix A.

PAS also worked with several other constituency groups and organizations to identify agencies, programs, and jurisdictions using innovative, multi-agency approaches to address child victimization, missing, and runaway youth issues. For example, PAS held a meeting with 38 State Clearinghouses for Missing Children; participated in a training conference for nonprofit organizations specializing in missing/runaway children; held its first Advisory Board meeting; met with staff from OJJDP as well as representatives from national programs involved with missing and exploited children; and made site visits to 12 jurisdictions currently using multi-agency approaches to address issues and problems regarding serious juvenile offenders. In each of these jurisdictions, visits were made to law enforcement, schools, prosecutors, social services, probation, and courts to determine problems each jurisdiction faced when handling missing and exploited children issues. Site visits also were made to criminal justice and social service agencies in the Washington metropolitan area to learn about their specific problems and programs for dealing with these issues.

PAS identified several programs, agencies, organizations, and jurisdictions using multi-agency approaches to address problems associated with missing, exploited, and runaway youth. Site visits were made to these programs to learn more about their operations and approach, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the multi-agency approach. A list of these agencies and jurisdictions can be found in Appendix B.

Finally, PAS contacted several additional agencies and organizations by telephone to ensure that as much information as possible was collected about multi-agency programs and practices. Documentation on program operations, policies, and procedures for multi-agency cooperation and communication were collected and reviewed. A list of these agencies can be found in Appendix C.

Literature Review

A second major needs assessment activity was a review of literature and documentation about multi-agency activities that address the needs of missing and/or exploited children. As a first step in this process, PAS contacted or visited several agencies and organizations as well as clearinghouses for guidance in identifying pertinent documents. These agencies or groups included:

- The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).
- The Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect.
- The National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse.
- The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services.
- The National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse, American Prosecutors Research Institute.

In addition, PAS contacted selected OJJDP grantees (see Appendix A) to obtain additional documentation on these topics, and asked members of the M/CAP Advisory Board for information and documentation regarding the use of the multi-agency approach to missing and exploited children's issues.

From NCJRS and other organizations listed above, PAS requested information about the use of multi-agency cooperation and coordination in several key areas: child sexual abuse, physical abuse, child abuse in general, child exploitation, child victims, runaway youth, parental abductions, kidnappings, stranger abductions, child snatching, child stealing, missing children, juvenile justice system coordination, juvenile justice system cooperation, multi-agency/disciplinary teams, and comprehensive services delivery. PAS collected bibliographies from current research, grant activities, and literature from OJJDP as well as other agencies and organizations.

Finally, PAS sought additional materials and program information from the sites selected for on-site visits. While program documentation and descriptions were not used for the literature review per se, they none-the-less served as resource materials and are referenced in later sections of this report.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the past several years, considerable discussion has focused on developing effective ways to address the many issues confronting youth and their families. Recently, incidents such as the Steinberg case in New York, the McMartin case in Los Angeles, the Ramon Salsido case in California, and the Morgan case in Washington, D.C., have increased public awareness of the problems surrounding children who are exploited, victimized, or missing. However, this increased awareness has not necessarily increased public understanding -- in fact, these highly visible cases have led to confusion by showing the public the complexity of issues surrounding missing, exploited, or victimized youth. Still, this increased scrutiny has helped focus attention on the need to find more effective ways for agencies serving children to address these problems. Increased reporting of incidents of child sexual and physical abuse has further heightened public concern about the risks associated with children who are missing from home as a result of runaway, throwaway, or even parental abduction cases.

Child-serving agencies in many communities have come to realize that trying to "do it all"--that is, working alone to address the multiple problems associated with missing, abused, or victimized children--is difficult if not impossible. It has become an established fact that multi-agency cooperation and coordination is necessary if victims and their families are to be helped, offenders are to be prosecuted, and treatment and services are to be provided. As a result, communities have been taking a closer look at their handling of cases and incidents involving missing and exploited children and have made important changes in their response. These changes, however, have not always been easy to achieve because of the complexity of the issues, the variety of operational definitions of missing and exploited children, and the multitude of agencies and individuals who are involved, both directly and indirectly, in these issues.

This literature review was conducted as a means to summarize documented efforts to implement the multi-agency approach as a primary vehicle for addressing the many problems associated with missing, exploited, or victimized children and their families. The literature review discovered new and innovative multi-agency approaches, as well as long-standing multi-agency projects. Also identified were areas where multi-agency cooperation is most effective, and areas requiring additional attention. These and other topics that surfaced through the literature review are discussed below.

Defining Missing and Exploited Children

In the juvenile justice community, considerable debate surrounds the definition of missing, exploited, runaway, and homeless youth. Each jurisdiction establishes its own definition based on the problems and needs of its juvenile population and community. Because the problems associated with missing and exploited children are extremely diverse and complicated, so too are the solutions, responses, and remedies.

This literature review was not intended, nor does it attempt, to establish definitions of missing or exploited children. The recently released, OJJDP-sponsored Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children in America Study provides new data on the number and description of children who are considered "missing" due to various circumstances. For the purpose of this literature review, the use of the terms "missing" and "exploited" reflects the definitions established by Congress in the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. As stated in Section 403 (1) of the Act, the term "missing child" means any child who is 18 years of age or younger and who's whereabouts are not known to the child's legal custodian if:

- ...the circumstances surrounding such individual's disappearance indicate that such individual may possibly have been removed by another from the control of such individual's legal custodian without such custodian's consent, or;
- ...the circumstances of the case strongly indicate that such individual is likely to be abused or sexually exploited.¹

This definition implies that there are at least four types or subgroups of missing and exploited children: runaways, throwaways, victims of parental abductions, and victims of nonfamily abductions.² Exploitation then refers to the "use of a child under the age of eighteen for sexual purposes by an older person for profit or advantage. Such sexual purposes include the use of children in the production of pornography and the performance of sexual acts in exchange for money or other resources".³

In the literature review, the use of a multi-agency, cooperative approach for missing and exploited children focused on several of these subgroups -- child sexual exploitation and abuse, abductions, runaway, and child victims activities. These multi-agency approaches are described on the following pages.

Defining Multi-Agency Cooperation

As evidenced through the literature, multi-agency cooperation is defined differently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, depending on the nature of the problem or issue being addressed, or the goals or primary purpose of the multi-agency

approach. In broad terms, a multi-agency approach involves two or more agencies working together to respond to and address the problems of missing and exploited children that affect more than one agency. The multi-agency approach ranges from the informal to formal -- from "people simply talking to each other to a more formal multi-disciplinary diagnostic/treatment and prevention program."⁴

The literature also identifies an increasing interest in the concept of formal multi-agency cooperation and coordination in recent years as human service and criminal justice agencies strive to make the most out of reduced budgets and increased demands for services. For the juvenile justice system especially, the concept of coordination has become increasingly important in light of the diversity and number of agencies involved in the system: law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, parole, mental health, education, social services, and the like. Agencies have begun to realize that many of their daily clients are the same, and that coordination and cooperation can help them take a more proactive, client oriented approach, as opposed to a service-oriented approach.

Many communities also have realized that a fragmented system leads to polarization, lack of trust, and frustration, not only by clients but by agency personnel as well. This isolated view and approach inhibit their ability to do what they were intended to do in the first place--serve their client population and achieve their stated goals. Furthermore, a fragmented system often leads to overworked agencies and staff, confusion over resources, duplication of services, and a lack of services to the intended client population.⁵

Coordination, an important concept in today's juvenile justice field, has also been defined as "a systematic process; strongly linked agencies working to provide comprehensive and integrated responses to the identified needs of youth".⁶ It involves teamwork and working in tandem to achieve like goals. It involves trust, adherence to operating standards, and communication to ensure that the juveniles and their families in need of services receive them. Finally, it involves commitment by the members of the multi-agency group.

Legislative Mandates

Federal legislation has increasingly embraced the concept of multi-agency cooperation for missing and exploited children's issues. The passage of the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (P.L. 93-247, as amended), in 1973, brought about a recognition that "the complexity of child maltreatment makes it difficult for workers trained in a single discipline to provide adequate treatment or prevention services."⁷ The Act also fostered the use of a multi-agency approach to respond to problems associated with abused, exploited, and victimized children.

The goal of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (P.L. 93-415, as amended) in 1974, was to improve the juvenile justice community, provide national direction and leadership, and serve as the focal point for coordinating programs relating to juvenile delinquency and missing and exploited children. The Act emphasizes coordination of juvenile justice agencies, programs, activities, and organizations at the local, state, and federal levels to respond to the diverse needs of the juvenile population.

Similarly, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (codified as Title III of the JJDP Act), the Missing Children's Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-292), and the 1984 Missing Children's Assistance Act (Title IV of the JJDP Act), further promoted and supported greater attention to and resources for missing and exploited children. These acts also encouraged greater involvement of the many sectors of the juvenile justice system to prevent, provide for, and protect missing and exploited children.

States and communities have embraced these laws through local legislation, policies, and practices. These laws have been applied through various mechanisms used for multi-agency cooperation and coordination relating to missing and exploited children. More importantly, however, communities have realized the many benefits of multi-agency cooperation, which has prompted greater interest in the approach.

Benefits of Multi-Agency Cooperation

One of the principal reasons for increased attention to the multi-agency approach is the proven and perceived benefits that can be derived from such an effort. Reduction in service duplication, the provision of a range and variety of services to meet multiple client and family needs, and the elimination of frustration among agencies are among the advantages to this approach. It also has several other advantages:

- It promotes consistency within and among agencies when addressing issues of common concern; it ends polarization; and it fosters new commitment to addressing common problems among agencies and organizations.
- It improves the efficiency and effectiveness of individual agencies and the entire system by targeting resources, monitoring the system's response, and ensuring quality control.
- It reduces gaps and overlaps in services.
- It ensures that multiple family and client needs are met through case management, and ensures that agencies work together to meet their common goals (e.g., prosecutor's prosecute the offender, mental health

agencies provide services to clients, law enforcement protects the community, etc.).

- It can be a catalyst for mobilizing community support and resources and for increasing community awareness, ultimately adding to system wide support, resources, or volunteer services.
- It enhances professionalism, commitment, and morale and improves the quality of services.
- It prompts effective planning and delivery of services, within and among agencies.
- It broadens understanding of family needs.
- It gives credence to the system through more accurate reporting and assurance that individuals with legitimate interest in missing and exploited children cases have access to all available information.
- It ensures prompt investigation and vigorous prosecution of cases.
- It improves knowledge and skills of individual staff members and agencies as a whole.
- It reduces trauma to child victims and witnesses by streamlining the interview process and sharing information and knowledge.
- It leads to earlier detection of families at risk.

While these benefits appear to be all encompassing, several obstacles to the approach have deterred communities from establishing truly system-wide approaches. Implementation problems arising from agency bias, egos, or lack of leadership have hindered many multi-agency projects. Successful multi-agency processes require significant effort and commitment by many agencies and people from varying backgrounds and professions. Staff who work for the wide-range of agencies that serve children have different training, philosophies, and jargon that can cause communication problems. In addition:

- A multi-agency approach requires agencies to break down obstacles, such as political barriers, organizational barriers, and misconceptions among agencies.
- It takes the time, patience, leadership, education, training, and commitment of all agencies involved in the process.

- It requires agencies to reach agreement on the issues of confidentiality of information. This is perhaps one of the most important issues, yet can be the most troublesome and difficult to overcome.
- Continuing the momentum of a multi-agency approach is a long-term process that requires continuing leadership and commitment.
- Coordination in and of itself is not a panacea--agencies may sense a loss of control, that may diminish their commitment to and involvement in the process.
- By nature, coordination requires the system components to discuss problem cases and instances where the system has failed. Dealing with these issues in a multi-agency setting may be embarrassing and difficult to discuss.
- Coordination and communication may cause youth to lose some of their privacy and control over their welfare due to the ongoing communication regarding the child and the family. This sense of loss may hamper the youth's ability to give input into his or her goals and long-term plans.
- There is disagreement about the cost-effectiveness of this approach -- "one could argue that too much time is spent talking about too many youth. . . talk does not affect youth development, action does; the meetings take too much time from direct services provision and other activities. . . the team gives too many staff resources to youth".⁸
- Increased paperwork and reporting requirements may result from the multi-agency process.

Other factors present barriers to multi-agency cooperation. They include staff turnover and lack of institutional knowledge and commitment to the process; lack of support from agency administrators or staff; intra-agency conflicts; unrealistic expectations; scheduling problems; too large or unwieldy multi-agency committees; and problems associated with assembling a multi-agency working group in a short period of time as a result of a crisis or critical incident.

The benefits described above show the value in working cooperatively to address issues of common concern in the juvenile justice field. To understand how the multi-agency approach can benefit missing and exploited children, we will now examine how state and local communities have embraced this concept and applied it to these issues. Children can be missing from their homes for several reasons: they leave voluntarily; they are asked to leave or are sent away from home (throwaways); or they are taken from their homes against their will (abductions) or by order of the

court. In the following sections, multi-agency approaches are applied to four main categories of missing and exploited children: child sexual abuse and exploitation; child abductions; runaways; and child victims who serve as witnesses against those who have endangered them.

Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

For child sexual abuse and exploitation, the use of the multi-agency approach to handle cases has increased since the passage of the Child Abuse and Protection Act in 1974. The use of multi-agency or multi-disciplinary teams has grown over the years to address multiple crimes associated with child sexual abuse. Sexual exploitation crimes include child pornography and sex rings, child prostitution, intrafamilial and nonfamilial child sexual assault. Multi-agency teams review cases during intake and/or treatment. These teams, comprised of individuals from different disciplines, are used for diagnosis, case planning, or case reassessment.⁹ Team representatives from agencies or organizations with vested interests in the child focus on the examination and intervention in cases of possible child abuse and neglect.

The composition of these teams varies widely. Because of this, it is difficult to describe a "typical" team since membership is based on the problem being addressed, the case referral sources, and the goal and purpose of the team. The roles and responsibilities of the team vary as well, depending on the needs of the community, structure, and organization of the local criminal and juvenile justice system, local politics, the problem being addressed, and the function of the team in terms of diagnosis/treatment or monitoring.

In a study done for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect in the late 1970's, teams were classified into four main types:

- Hospital-based teams, which received most of their referrals from hospitals and focused on cases where abuse was in doubt.
- Coordinating council teams, which focused on issues related to child abuse and neglect as well as client services, prevention, and treatment.
- Specialized social service agency teams, which typically had fewer medical professionals than the first two teams and concentrated on case review and problem-solving.
- Multi-agency staffing teams that were generally multi-agency teams providing multi-disciplinary case review.¹⁰

Since the late 1970's, multi-agency teams have evolved into more formal, targeted teams. Specific protocols have been developed for reporting, prosecuting, and treating child sexual abuse victims. Specific agencies and organizations are emerging as key motivators and coordinators in the areas of child sexual abuse. Various multi-disciplinary teams are evolving throughout the country to address the issues associated with child sexual abuse.

- In Seattle, a multi-disciplinary approach addresses the issue of child prostitution. Team members include the police, public safety agencies, prosecutor's office, public defender, medical center, youth and community services, and the State Department of Social and Health Services. Meetings were held monthly for a year to address the issue of juvenile prostitution through examination of existing resources and practices; identification of weaknesses in intervention; and development of solutions.¹¹
- In Louisville, Kentucky, the Exploited and Missing Children's Unit was established in 1980 to address the sexual exploitation of children in the city. The Unit, comprised of four social workers and six police officers, established formal agreements to work together on the child prostitution problem.¹²
- In Madison County (Huntsville), Alabama, the Children's Advocacy Center uses an "advance team approach to handling cases of child sexual abuse."¹³ Through multi-agency agreement, all community agencies coordinate their activities through the Center, and all reports of child abuse are referred to it. Cases are reviewed weekly by a team from law enforcement, protective services, victim advocates, prosecution, and staff therapist. A Victim/Witness Coordinator maintains close contact with the child and his/her family.
- At the University of Colorado University Hospital, the child protection team is comprised of three professional tiers: a core team is made up of a team social worker, physician, and coordinator who see all hospital cases of child abuse and neglect; the consultive team is comprised of an attorney, psychiatrist, developmental specialist, psychologist, and public health nurse coordinator, who attend weekly team meetings to review the cases; and, finally, case-specific professionals, including police, teacher, family physician, family public health nurse, medical specialist, intake social worker, mental health therapist, guardian ad litem, foster parent, and county attorney, who provide specialized assistance, expertise, and consultation on a case-by-case basis.¹⁴

Despite variations from community to community, the work and membership of multi-disciplinary teams are designed to meet three goals:

- Primary prevention -- providing comprehensive services to families.
- Secondary prevention -- helping at-risk families by providing services before a crisis or incident.
- Tertiary prevention -- focusing on issues after the fact, serving in a crisis intervention capacity, and focusing on prevention of recurrence and minimizing the effects of the incident.¹⁵

The increased recognition associated with child sexual abuse issues requires a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, and has led to an increased use of multi-disciplinary teams in recent years. In addition, the criminal and juvenile justice communities have become aware that child sexual abuse can lead to additional problems such as running away, future victimization, and offender behavior. This has prompted many jurisdictions to take another look at how best to prevent child abuse. The links between child sexual abuse and these other problems become clear when taking a "holistic," multi-agency approach.

Various agencies have emerged as the leaders to orchestrate or manage these multi-disciplinary teams. On teams that focus on diagnosis and treatment, hospitals or social service professionals serve as the focal point of the team. They concentrate on assessing the problem, treating the physical, medical, and psychological needs of the victim, and delivering services to the victim and the family. Additional team members are likely to include the district attorney, mental health official, police officer, school official, and other volunteer and ancillary services as support/consultative representatives of the team.

Other multi-disciplinary teams focus on the prosecution of child abuse. Here, the focal point is the district attorney or prosecutor's office, which takes the lead in managing and orchestrating the team. Team members also include law enforcement, mental health, education, child protective services, medical professionals, child advocates, the court, and other special interest groups.

The size of the agency, its influence and position in the community, leadership qualities and capabilities, as well as investment and commitment to the problem or issue, are factors that prompt one agency to surface as the investigator/coordinator of the overall effort. State and local guidelines, local politics, and community needs also dictate membership as well as the focus of the teams.

In spite of these variations, each agency has its own role and set of responsibilities within the multi-agency team. The following describes typical features, as well as roles and responsibilities of the members of a multi-agency team.

Prosecution

Successful prosecution can be enhanced by prosecutors' active involvement in the multi-disciplinary team. In many jurisdictions, the prosecutor is the focal point of the multi-disciplinary approach because of the prosecutor's role in making decisions concerning case processing and handling. The prosecutor is responsible for protecting the child and for prosecuting the offender/perpetrator. This includes helping to prepare the child for trial, making the victim feel comfortable with the court surrounding and proceedings, and helping to reduce further trauma to the victim by staying in touch with the needs of the child and the family as well.

In the multi-disciplinary team, the prosecutor oversees all activities of the court; communicates with the family throughout the trial to inform them of any changes in the court proceedings; communicates regularly with the police and social worker to keep them abreast of the status of the case and any changes in it; and consults with the police regarding details of the case. The prosecutor:

- Treats every complaint of child sexual abuse seriously and discusses the case with the police.
- Employs vertical prosecution and is accessible to the victim, the police, and the other agencies throughout the process to provide counsel and guidance regarding case handling, evidence, and suggestions for police response to build evidence for the case.
- Uses innovative case development techniques such as videotaping, anatomically correct dolls, and the like in presenting the case and preparing statements.¹⁶

Law Enforcement

The role of the police or law enforcement officer is to protect the child and to investigate and refer cases of abuse for prosecution. In conjunction with social workers or child protective workers, police conduct investigations and serve as primary investigators from the time of the initial complaint through the case processing. Due to their exposure to vice related activities, police are frequently involved in the investigation of child prostitution and sex rings.

On the multi-agency team, law enforcement provides support to the victim and his/her family throughout the case by keeping them informed through victim-witness programs and services. In addition, the police offer assistance to the prosecutor in case preparation and investigation to ensure the best possible prosecution of the case. Finally, law enforcement officers assist the victim, the prosecutor, the court, and probation and correction agencies by helping to enforce terms of probation or court orders.

Social Services/Child Protective Services

In some jurisdictions, child protection workers assume leadership in the multi-disciplinary team review process. As indicated above, this depends on the nature of the community, the legal framework, and the political environment of the locale. Child protection workers work closely with the police during the preliminary investigation and assessment of the case and throughout the case processing. They provide necessary support services to the victim and the families; arrange for and provide treatment; in some instances serve as case manager for the child; and provide crisis intervention.

Courts

One of the basic objectives of a multi-disciplinary team dealing in the area of missing and exploited children is to provide the court with case specific information which can assist a judge in rendering the most comprehensive decision.

The responsibilities of the Court in cases involving child abuse include:

- Coordinating between juvenile and criminal court proceedings and ensuring information exchange between the two to reduce trauma to the child and to eliminate unnecessary delays.
- Assisting and supporting the child victims in preparation for the trial. This includes procedural reforms, education, training, and a sensitivity to the needs of the child.

Medical Community

In some jurisdictions, the medical community assumes the leadership role in the multi-disciplinary team approach. In addition to serving in this capacity, the medical community is responsible for meeting the physical, emotional, and

psychological needs of the child and the family. This includes conducting an assessment and reporting evidence of child abuse to the proper authorities; evaluating the needs of the child; and providing treatment. Representatives from the medical community include hospitals, mental health professionals, therapists, and other medical professionals as necessary and appropriate.

Victim Advocates/Guardians ad Litem

Child advocates also play an important role in the multi-disciplinary team. They serve as an advocate for the child and, as such, provide support, encouragement and guidance to the child before, during, and after the trial; ensure that the needs of the child are met; and protect the rights of the child by representing the child's best interest.

Schools

Teachers and school administrators are mandated to report child abuse in all 50 states. Strong penalties exist for the failure to report, including fines, loss of licensing certification, termination, and civil prosecution. Many schools have child safety curriculum programs emphasizing exploitation, substance abuse, neglect, gangs, bullying, and intimidation. Schools report that when a child sexual abuse curriculum is taught, many children disclose sexual abuse to their teachers and friends.

In many cases, more children disclose than can be handled by school counselors. Experienced program practitioners emphasize the importance of relationships between school and other community agencies to develop a cohesive, comprehensive referral plan for children who disclose to teachers.¹⁷ This type of action and collaboration and cooperation with other agencies ensures that children who disclose receive timely, effective services from the multi-agency team.

Additional Interest Groups

Other components of multi-agency teams include special interest groups and outside experts. Their role on the team is to provide expertise in their specialty and to help provide services to the child and the family throughout the court process.

As evidenced from the above information, there has been considerable activity and progress to date with regards to the use of the multi-agency approach to address issues associated with child sexual abuse. This interest and activity has helped communities address such issues as child pornography, child prostitution, and child sexual abuse. However, while significant advances have been made, the use of the multi-agency approach is not commonplace throughout the country. The next section

includes a review of the literature on the topic of the use of the multi-agency approach for child abduction cases.

Abductions

Abductions of children are one of the most visible "public" issues regarding children who are missing, yet they are the most misunderstood issues. This confusion is perhaps one of the main reasons why there is a lack of information about and use of coordination and multi-agency approaches to address the issue of abductions, by both family members and strangers.

Nonfamily Abductions

Little has been written about the practice of using multi-agency approaches to address issues concerning child abductions. However, there is a significant amount of material written about the numbers of youth who are missing each year. In the early 1980's due to the tragic murders of missing children such as Adam Walsh, public attention to and interest in the issue of child abductions increased. The public perception of the magnitude of the problem was, in many respects, exacerbated by the emotional impact of murders of children abducted by strangers. As a result, the general public most often associated the term "missing child" with the child who was abducted by a stranger, and not those who were missing because of running away or parental kidnappings. As the public perception of the problem became focused on abduction by strangers, the numbers of children reported to be missing each year tended to be misconstrued and connected only with that small portion of the population.

Jurisdictions reporting numbers of missing children used different terminologies and reporting requirements, thus further confusing or complicating the situation. A short term abduction which resulted in a sexual assault was frequently reported as a sexual assault with no acknowledgement of the abduction itself. Children often did not report if they had been abducted for a short period of time. Within each jurisdiction, agencies dealing with these different categories of missing youth used different terminologies and reporting requirements as well.

In 1987, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention sponsored the Incidence Studies of Missing Children to answer questions about the numbers of children who are abducted each year. These studies focused on clarifying the numbers and types of children who are missing each year to set the record straight for the public and practitioners alike. Findings indicate that the number of children abducted by strangers each year is smaller than the estimates made in the early to

mid 1980's. In fact, findings indicate a low number of stranger abductions, which may contribute to the reasons why multi-agency teams have not focused on this aspect of missing children.

Discussions about multi-agency approaches to address stranger abductions is lacking in the literature. We can surmise that this lack of information is due to the small number of youth who are missing each year due to stranger abductions, and in part to the range of programs and services that have emerged in recent years to address issues related to the abduction of children. However, this lack of information does not suggest that multi-agency cooperation to address stranger abductions is not necessary. On the contrary, the gravity of these cases and the fact that timing is of the essence in recovering missing children who are abducted by strangers suggests that better cooperation and communication are necessary if children who are abducted by strangers are to be safely recovered and returned to their legal custodians.

Family Abductions

Abductions by family members, especially non-custodial parents, are also creating increasing concern in the juvenile justice community and by the public. Parental abductions are complicated by a number of factors, one of which is the extremely emotional nature of the action. Another is the fact that parental kidnappings are not necessarily viewed as a crime.

The desire to protect the child is seldom the motivating factor in these intrafamily disputes. The offending parent typically uses the child as a pawn in order to harass his or her estranged spouse, to bargain for reduced child support, or to bring about a reconciliation, usually without full appreciation for the pain suffered by the child victim in this process...parental kidnapping is frequently characterized as a form of child abuse.¹⁸

Other factors that contribute to the complexity of the problem include: differences in the way states recognize custody orders and decisions from other states; the ability of the state to intervene in child custody disputes--parens patriae--and to act on behalf of the child, oftentimes without child representation or advocacy; and the lack of criminal sanctions for parental abductions.

Changes have taken place in recent years, not only in terms of awareness of the problem, but in legislation and handling of parental kidnapping cases at the state and local level.

- A majority of states have created criminal penalties for parental kidnapping.

- The Unified Child Custody Jurisdiction Act was created to ensure that only one state exercises jurisdiction over a child custody dispute.
- The Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act, passed in 1980, requires all states to enforce the child custody and visitation decrees of other states and allows the Federal Parent Locator Service to help locate parents who abduct their children.

In addition to these legislative changes which have affected the legal aspects of child custody disputes and parental abductions, multi-agency coordination mechanisms have been applied to cases of abductions by both parents or strangers. These multi-agency approaches include:

- Guardians ad litem, used in cooperation with prosecutors and the court, provide advocacy and support for the child who has been abducted by a parent.
- Interstate I-Search provides a multistate information network to locate children who are missing and to coordinate prevention/intervention efforts.
- Police/social worker teams are used to provide ongoing support and assistance to the child and the family from the time of abduction through release and follow-up. Police are responsible for filing the missing child report and performing their specific duties in connection with the investigation, prosecution, and follow-up of the case. The social worker ensures that the needed services are afforded to the child and the family, during and after recovery.

In summary, the scarcity of written materials regarding multi-agency cooperation in dealing with abductions may be due to the confusion about definitions, numbers and consequently about roles and responsibilities.

Increasing awareness of parental abductions has improved coordination within and among jurisdictions for addressing issues associated with parental abductions. This greater awareness has also led to a recognition of the need for more coordination in and among jurisdictions. The literature indicates that coordination is an important mechanism to reduce trauma, provide services, and locate and return children who are abducted by their parents.

Runaway Youth

As with child abduction, there has also been little written about multi-agency work focusing on another category of missing youth--runaways. While the reasons for this are not articulated in the literature, it can be speculated that they include the following:

- The problem of runaway youth is not new--rather, it is an age-old problem that has plagued and frustrated the juvenile justice system for many years. Runaways do not capture the public eye as do the victims of sexual abuse or abduction. They are seldom considered victims by the system -- forced out of their homes and victimized by others. In the streets, they are likely to be forced into child pornography and sex rings, prostitution, and drug abuse.
- In many jurisdictions, the juvenile justice system is unable to take a firm hold on runaway youth. In some jurisdictions, a youth's classification as a runaway removes the youngster from traditional forms of control or intervention in the juvenile justice system. Thus, it is difficult to involve some of the key agencies, such as law enforcement, prosecutors, and the court, in matters pertaining to runaway youth.
- While professionals in the system recognize linkages between runaway behavior, child abuse, and future activity in unlawful matters, research has not adequately studied these correlations. In fact, the public too often attributes the behavior of the runaway as a symptom of youth instead of a result or symptom of some other cause or action. As such, the multi-agency approach is often linked to a specific issue as opposed to something that is either too large or too ambiguous to grasp.

While discussions of the multi-agency approach to address problems associated with runaway youth are not as prevalent in the literature as with child sexual abuse, coordination and communication, nonetheless, are key components to programming and services for this population today. Informal networks, communication, and coordination mechanisms, many of which fall outside the traditional juvenile justice system, exist to ensure that comprehensive services are afforded to youth. Coordination typically occurs between social service and mental health agencies, ancillary service providers, and medical and psychological services as opposed to law enforcement, courts, and prosecutors. National networks and organizations addressing runaway and homeless youth issues also form part of the network.

State, local, and national coalitions and networks of runaway and youth programs serve as mechanisms for coordinating runaway services through communication and information exchange on the state and national level. "Coalitions

increasingly are viewed as one means to help agencies offer comprehensive services in a more coordinated and cost effective way. . . and to enhance the capacity of the community as a whole to plan and program for young people. . . . Networking draws on existing service providers, links and strengthens those services, and becomes a conduit for the flow of: information. . . referrals. . . feedback. . . data. . . planning."¹⁹

State and national hotlines and information referral systems also coordinate programs and services for runaway youth through information exchange, referral, and networking. The National Communications System (Runaway Switchboard) and Coordinated Regional Networks, funded through the Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, are two examples of programs providing communication, information, feedback, and referrals to clients and their families.

Local or state-operated runaway programs also coordinate, both formally and informally, with other service providers to serve the multiple needs of runaway youth. Some of the most recent innovations include:

- In Los Angeles, runaway youth receive comprehensive medical, psychological, shelter, and other support services through the use of a formal Coordinating Council of runaway service providers in the Los Angeles area.²⁰
- In New York, runaway youth involved with illegal drugs receive drug counseling and treatment, education, shelter, social service, and other support services through interfaces with local service providers.²¹
- In Boston, both formal and informal arrangements with service providers in the local areas ensure that the multiple needs of runaway youth are met. This includes employment counseling, alcohol and drug abuse services, psychiatric care, and rape counseling.²²

In summary, multi-agency approaches to addressing runaway youth issues are complicated because in many jurisdictions, runaway youth fall outside the juvenile justice system. Nonetheless, coordination and cooperation are important in providing comprehensive services for runaway youth. The fact that many youth who are runaways are sexually or physically abused or exploited makes it all the more important for coordination to go beyond service providers and stretch into the juvenile justice system.

As stated by the principal investigators and authors of the Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children in America:

. . . police and social agencies have long dealt with a variety of other kinds of missing children, especially children who have run away from home. Runaways do not elicit quite the same sympathy as kidnap victims, but in part because they are much more numerous and in part because they are much more integrally connected with a variety of other social problems like child abuse, prostitution, drug abuse and family breakdown, they are of great concern to child welfare professionals as well as law enforcement officials who end up burdened with the task of finding them. Although the two problems of kidnapping and runaways could not have more different causes, they are united by the fact that police frequently find it hard to tell which of the two kinds of cases they have on their hands.²³

Child Victim as a Witness

Problems associated with the child victim, while similar to the issues facing children who are victims of sexual abuse, have been singled out in this literature review because of the nature of the problem, the recent advances, and multi-agency practices.

When a child is a victim of an assault, a series of activities are set in motion to meet the needs of the many agencies that will eventually become involved in the case. The law enforcement community, social service agencies, mental health officials, prosecutors, and court, each with different agendas and objectives, become involved in the case. This can mean that the child, who is already traumatized and victimized by the assault, faces repeated trauma due to numerous interviews, testimony, examinations, and the like. "Among the most frustrating aspects of our criminal justice system are (1) the need for witnesses to repeat their stories over and over again, and (2) the length of the adjudication process."²⁴

Investigation of the child victim is critical to successful case prosecution. A deficient investigation of the case can lead to the unsuccessful apprehension or prosecution of the offender and the revictimization of the child. Multiple interviews, untrained or unskilled interviewers, or lengthy delays in case or court processing can result in cases that cannot be prosecuted effectively.

Multi-agency coordination and cooperation when dealing with child victims are essential. The effort involves several key agencies in the justice system: the prosecutor, police, and counselor/interviewer. Each agency has its own unique, yet interrelated function when dealing with the child victim.

The prosecutor is an integral part of the multi-agency group for the child victim. The prosecutor is in a unique position because of his/her awareness and

knowledge of: procedures that must be followed in preparing for and prosecuting the case; how judges will respond (what they are likely to do); timing of activities and events; tactics of the court and the trial process; rules of evidence and corroboration; and what assurances the victim can be given once the trial is completed. This knowledge about proceedings and the judicial process can help to avoid unexpected delays or defective cases.²⁵ The prosecutor's responsibilities, therefore, include:

- Ensuring that the victim is not traumatized further by the system. This includes the use of special mechanisms or procedures such as videotaping and the use of anatomically correct dolls; limiting continuances; limiting the offender's access to the victim; and safeguarding the victim's rights.
- Communicating and cooperating with other agencies in the system when determining whether to proceed with the case. This includes considering the concerns of other professionals, educators, and mental health professionals.
- Eliminating rules regarding the acceptance of a case based solely on the age of the victim.
- Communicating with the parent to inform him/her of the decision to proceed or not proceed with the case, unless the parent is the offender.
- Examining the potential for using information from other sources, such as licensing or professional groups, in other forums.²⁶

Police involvement in matters relating to child victims also is paramount to the success of the case and the prosecution and to meeting the needs of the child. Police are necessary to gather evidence and to reassure the victims that the police are there to protect them. Police are responsible for taking statements from the child--and working with the social worker or counselor in collecting these statements.²⁷ When dealing with the child victim, the initial interview is the first instance where coordination and cooperation between two agencies is needed to reduce the trauma for the child and to help streamline the process.

Counselors (referred to as social workers, child protective service workers, etc.) are the third important entity involved in the case. From the initial interview conducted in conjunction with the law enforcement officer, through completion of the case, the counselor, along with the prosecutor, follows the case and child through the judicial process, providing guidance and reassurance every step of the way. For this reason, adequate training is necessary for the counselors who deal with child victims.

Additional multi-agency activities can reduce the trauma to the child.

- Trained specialists can be assigned in each agency to ensure that there is only one interviewer per agency.
- Vertical prosecution can be employed to provide stability to the case and help reduce trauma to the child by changes in staffing arrangements.
- The child's initial statement can be videotaped to reduce the need for repeated interviews.
- The need for the child to appear at more than one formal proceeding can be eliminated.
- Juvenile and criminal court proceedings can be coordinated through use of guardian ad litem or other advocates appointed through the court.
- Agencies and staff designated to deal with victims of child sexual abuse should receive adequate training and instruction to ensure that they are fully aware of the principles of child development, the dynamics of child sexual abuse, and interviewing techniques to obtain accurate descriptions without embellishments.
- States can abolish competency requirements and, instead, assume that all witnesses are competent to stand trial.
- Legislatures can adopt hearsay exceptions to admit certain out-of-court statements that do not fall within current hearsay evidence rules.²⁸

The multi-agency approach used in dealing with child victims focuses first on the needs of the child and second on the needs of the components of the system. In doing so, the rights, privacy, and protection of the child are maintained, and the data and information needs of the agencies are met. The result is that the child suffers less trauma and is provided with support throughout the process, and the components of the system that are actively involved in these cases are able to gather accurate information and process the case swiftly and expeditiously.

Conclusions

While the literature review yielded a significant amount of information about multi-agency efforts in the juvenile justice field, it failed to yield extensive information about the use of multi-agency approaches for missing and exploited children. The literature indicates that there is significant merit in the multi-agency approach. It can improve service delivery, target services and resources to those most

in need, prevent duplication of services, and assure that the many needs of youth who are missing or exploited are addressed.

The body of information reviewed also supports one of the principal premises surrounding M/CAP -- that there is a need to synthesize rather than reinvent multi-agency approaches by tailoring projects to meet local needs and resources.

In spite of the advances that have been made in recent years, more can be done to promote the use of multi-agency approaches to address issues associated with missing and exploited children. From the literature, it is clear that the multi-agency approach presents both advantages and obstacles. As a result, M/CAP training and technical assistance materials will need to openly address the obstacles to multi-agency cooperation that were defined during the literature review.

These materials should leave no doubt that the process of developing and implementing a multi-agency approach is time-consuming and often difficult. Many challenges must be faced, and the process must be tended regularly. However, the obstacles described in the literature clearly are issues to consider and overcome as opposed to negative results or consequences. Issues such as information sharing, communication, establishing formal agreements and the like are critical to the success of the multi-agency approach and need to be addressed effectively and efficiently. Additional issues surrounding leadership, as well as agency involvement and commitment, also must be addressed in each jurisdiction desiring to implement M/CAP. The long-term benefits of multi-agency cooperation need to be demonstrated and compared with the short-term problems associated with implementation.

In the area of sexual abuse, much information has been published describing a number of alternative multi-agency approaches. However, documentation regarding multi-agency cooperation and approaches to handling child abductions is limited. From this, it can be deduced that in certain areas there is an acute awareness of the need for coordination and cooperation to better serve the client and the community. In other areas, the issues, problems, and agencies involved are so complex or diverse that it becomes difficult to look at the "total picture" and see the benefits that can be derived from working together. In these instances, agencies tend to see only the needs of the child as he/she comes before the agency--they tend not to see the magnitude of the problem or the need for involvement or intervention from other sources.

No longer is the issue whether or not a multi-disciplinary approach should be taken; the question is how to maximize the use of the multi-disciplinary team to meet the needs of the child, the family, and the community. The implication of these trends for M/CAP is that multi-agency approaches should be expanded to all categories of missing and exploited children including abduction cases and runaways.

PAS will identify a strategy for expanding the focus of multi-disciplinary teams to include abduction cases and runaways. Evidence suggests that preventing the victimization of children who are runaways, for example, requires better multi-agency cooperation and service delivery. Too many agencies tend not to see the total needs of the child. Some agencies look only at factors that brought the child to their attention and tend to miss factors that may have affected the child long ago -- for example, the influence of early childhood sexual abuse on a runaway or the victimization as a child that might have resulted in the youngster becoming an offender himself.

Multi-agency approaches in abduction cases are critical to the implementation of a clear, consistent response to parental abductions. Multi-agency cooperation will be equally critical in sharing information that can be used to locate children who may have been abducted. Multi-agency methods need to be developed to "cement over the cracks" in the system that abductors of all types use to victimize children.

A multi-agency approach may not be successful in every community. The complexity of the approaches described herein may also not suit the needs, environment, and political and legal framework of all communities. Each jurisdiction, therefore, must determine what it needs to address and how it is going to do that. No one approach will be effective in all communities. No one agency or organization has emerged as the leader or the critical driving force in the multi-agency approaches found in the literature. The success of the approach lies in the:

- Commitment of the agencies involved.
- Clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the group.
- Leadership qualities that are evident in the agency that takes the lead role in coordinating the efforts.

The literature speaks strongly to both the benefits and the drawbacks of the multi-agency model. However, additional issues must be considered when making changes that affect the structure and organization of services, regardless of whether the change is through coordination or restructuring of service delivery. For example, how does a jurisdiction know what agency should take the lead in the multi-agency approach? Who should be responsible for coordinating the efforts? How should the multi-agency team be organized, and who should its members be? In developing a multi-agency approach and in selecting M/CAP sites, several important issues must be addressed. They are:

- The **critical driving forces** or factors that prompted multi-agency coordination. Questions that must be answered include: What is the

purpose of the group? What led to its development? What is the goal of the group? What will this group achieve that is different from the norm--the way we are already doing business?

- **Leadership and management.** This is key to the success of any multi-agency effort or activity. An effective leader will ensure that the process works -- an ineffective one will certainly doom the approach to failure. Questions that must be asked include: Who will make decisions, and how will they be made? Who will take the leadership role, and who will ensure that the mission, goals, and objectives of the group are met? How will this individual provide ongoing management and continuation of the effort?
- The **structure** of the group. Who should be involved? What level of staff should be involved--line staff, middle managers, administrators? How many from each agency should be involved? Should there be rotating membership, or should members serve specific terms?
- Mechanisms for **coordination and conflict management.** Will this be a formal or informal group? How will information be shared? How will the group plan and manage its activities? How will disagreements in philosophy and practice be resolved?
- Protocols and procedures for **information exchange** to preserve confidentiality yet allow for information passage to those who need to know.
- Mechanisms for ongoing **monitoring and assessment** of the group and its activities to ensure that the stated goals are achieved and the needs of the clients are met.

The literature suggests a number of issues that will need to be addressed through M/CAP. When combined with the results of the needs assessment phase of this project, the literature review will provide an excellent overview of the activities, trends, and approaches in use today by communities that are actively involved in multi-agency work to address problems relating to missing and exploited children. Together, the literature review and results of the needs assessment will identify positive aspects of these approaches, as well as gaps in the system's use of the multi-agency approach. Communities and decisionmakers struggling to improve the handling and treatment of youth who are missing or exploited should find this assessment valuable.

V. PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF PRACTITIONERS

The problems of missing and exploited children facing criminal justice and social services agencies in this country today are far more complex than the current systems can address. Many practitioners believe that improving the current system would require nothing short of a complete fundamental and philosophical shift in our attitudes toward the worth of children and families. This shift in attitude would logically result in a dramatic change in federal and state laws; greater uniformity in state laws; a radical change in training standards, resource allocations, and research; a change in how child service providers and child development professionals are valued and compensated; and a substantial change in service priorities.

In their 1987-1988 report, the U.S. Attorney General's Advisory Board on Missing and Exploited Children, made the following series of recommendations to increase the protection of children and improve the systems that serve the children and their families:

- Parental kidnapping cases should be treated as felonious acts warranting vigorous investigation and prosecution. There is a need for uniformity in state law classification of parental kidnapping and a thorough examination of state and federal legislation regarding enforceability.
- All states should mandate that their legal definition of child sexual abuse include sexual exploitation.
- Priority should be given to the development of national child safety curriculum standards for use in the schools.
- The federal government should examine its child-related entitlement programs to the states to ensure that they encourage families receiving benefits to stay intact.
- The training programs for nonprofit organizations (NPOs) supporting families of missing and exploited children should focus on coordination and cooperation among NPOs.
- To ensure effective response in missing and exploited children cases, all states should enact laws in the areas of:
 - Prompt law enforcement investigation of missing child reports.

- Flagging of records to identify potential victims of abduction.
 - Extension of statutes of limitations for reporting and prosecuting child abuse and exploitation.
 - Training for law enforcement and child-serving professionals.
 - Background checks for those working with children.
 - Stricter penalties for offenses against children.
 - Mandated education and prevention programs.
- All states should create multiservice clearinghouses through state legislation, and secure appropriate funding for services.
 - The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act should be amended to ensure that federal statutes do not bar aid to state systems that have legal authority to take custody and control of runaway and homeless children.
 - The criminal justice system should search for constitutionally valid ways to alleviate the trauma children experience in court.

These recommendations reflect the problems that plague this nation's child-serving systems. The Advisory Board states that these needs "constitute a plan for coordinated action to attack the nationwide problem of abducted children, runaways, throwaways, and child sexual exploitation."

From close study of the specific problems and needs of each public agency involved with missing and exploited children, it is evident that fundamental issues exist for these service providers. As independent entities, public agencies in general often have difficulty overcoming similar obstacles. Few social service and criminal justice agencies are currently equipped to assist the child victim. Overwhelming caseloads, frequent staff turnover, lack of sufficient funding, and absence of adequate staff training are some of the problems that plague service agencies. However, the data collected suggests that each individual agency has specific problems to be assessed before multi-agency cooperation can be implemented.

In the following segment, the problems and concerns of each public and private agency involved with abducted children, runaways, throwaways, and child sexual abuse will be addressed. This will be followed by the needs that must be met to establish an effective multi-agency community team. The agencies discussed will be:

- Prosecutor or District Attorney.
- Juvenile and Family Court Services.
- Law Enforcement.
- Children's Protective Services.
- Nonprofit Organizations.
- Mental Health.
- Schools.
- Medical Institutions.

Prosecutors

As the chief law enforcement officer in a community, the prosecutor is responsible for the prosecution of referred criminal cases. The prosecutor assigned to juvenile cases is seldom trained to handle the uniqueness of child victim cases. Law schools do not include courses on how to prosecute child abuse in their family law curriculum. Policies seldom exist for the prosecution of these cases. The child is a different type of victim, and the skills required to handle these cases are difficult to acquire.

Experience does not appear to alleviate this problem. The juvenile prosecutor, often viewed as an entry-level attorney, is typically promoted out of the juvenile unit after two to three years.

Continuity in juvenile cases is lacking as staff deficiencies and heavy caseloads frequently preclude vertical prosecution and agency coordination. Caseloads do not allow the time necessary for meetings with law enforcement officers or social workers to discuss cases. As a result, the juvenile prosecutor often remains autonomous, preparing cases using only information found in the case file.

System fragmentation precludes an efficient flow of information to prosecutors and results in incomplete records. The lack of cohesive data frequently renders a

case weak. Furthermore, public perception and political issues often generate pressure so prosecutors will not prosecute cases they cannot win.

State and local laws regarding confidentiality, parental kidnapping, and child abuse limit the power of the prosecutor to effectively try these cases. The absence of uniform state and local laws throughout the country hinders stringent punishment of offenders.

Law Enforcement

Many child service problems evident in law enforcement agencies are similar to those in other public agencies, including the lack of adequate training, resources, and child related services. Unique to law enforcement is its perceived role in juvenile issues. Juvenile matters are a low priority for many law enforcement agencies. This low priority comes from an absence of policy, which is reflected from the limited knowledge or awareness from agency administration about children's issues. Often, the emphasis on child related issues stems from political pressure resulting from a negative, highly publicized incident in a community, as opposed to an awareness of the needs and problems of children and their families.

The lack of administrative awareness or support is felt throughout the agency, resulting in reduced sensitivity toward child victims, insufficient knowledge concerning how to refer children to appropriate service providers, and reluctance to work with agencies outside of law enforcement.

State and local laws and policies, perceptions relating to confidentiality, or tradition frequently preclude law enforcement agencies from taking appropriate action. In many cases, law enforcement officers will not take action on a report of a runaway. In some cases, law enforcement reaction is delayed because runaway behavior is a status offense as opposed to a criminal offense -- and it is viewed as a sign of growing up. These limitations can be based on either actual laws, or on inaccurate perceptions which often exceed what laws mandate.

Child Protective Services

The problems inherent in child protective service agencies are similar to those problems experienced by other agencies. The agency administration fails to view child services as a priority, which results in insufficient staffing, limited resources, and overwhelming caseloads. Background checks are seldom done in selection of CPS employees which compounds operational problems and increases the risk of victimization within CPS. Administrators and supervisors often lack the time and management skills to adequately supervise, monitor, and train staff. State law can preclude child protective services for teenagers.

Caseworkers are not provided with adequate training and many do not have appropriate educational backgrounds. A lack of knowledge of other child services agencies for referral and support leaves many workers isolated. Legal limitations or perceptions thereof can preclude the sharing of valuable case information with other service agencies.

The foster care system throughout the country is not adequate to house children. The quality of foster care has diminished, while the demand for foster care as a result of increased reporting of child abuse cases has increased. The system has not adequately kept pace with the changing demands of society.

Juvenile and Family Courts

The juvenile court system is faced with unfavorable attitudes that often stem from the perception that the juvenile court is the step child to the adult court. This is further compounded by the fact that juvenile courts in some states do not have the statutory authority to take the lead in handling cases involving missing, exploited, runaway, or homeless children.

Due perhaps to a lingering belief that child victims tend to fantasize or embellish in stressful situations, practitioners often sense court bias favoring "expert" testimony over the statements of children and support professionals. A lack of sensitivity to child victims and prejudice against the complaining parent are signs that the court system does not adequately serve the needs of all children and their families.

The court system is isolated from protective services, prosecutors, and law enforcement, resulting in a lack of important information about cases. Courts generally seek to preserve the family, but this lack of information often results in inappropriate decisionmaking, as well as a perception that the court lacks sensitivity to the needs of the child. Like the juvenile prosecutor, in many states the juvenile judge rotates frequently. As such, judges are unable to follow children and their families through the court system over time.

Mental Health Agencies

In many jurisdictions there is a lack of clarity regarding agency responsibility for case investigation -- CPS, mental health, or social services. Mental health agencies are frequently isolated because other public agencies do not understand their role. Dwindling resources, increasing demands for services, staff shortages, and heavy caseloads impact on the ability of mental health agencies to provide services to its client population. Funding is often earmarked for adult programs with little emphasis on services for children.

Mental health agencies are often criticized for failing to see signs of risk, and for failing to collect, save, and use information to address these risk factors. Because they can play an important role by providing testimony in cases (e.g., pedophile cases), it is crucial that mental health personnel are fully aware of all circumstances and risks involved in each case.

Schools

Schools often have their own policies, procedures, and administrators which causes them to be isolated from other child service agencies. This isolation reduces the knowledge about the system which is important for referring children to other service providers. Teachers, counselors, and administrators often lack up-to-date training in children's issues and problems. Teacher education programs seldom address juvenile problems facing schools today, leaving teachers unequipped to deal with juvenile violence, child abuse, crime in school, and personal problems. Most teachers are not trained to recognize signs of distress and abuse in children.

Most school systems are unequipped to screen potential teachers effectively before hiring. Criminal history records that would reveal offenses against children are seldom accessed. The level of maintenance and continuity of child case files in schools is questionable, and policies regarding reporting and documentation of child victimization are lacking.

The statutory authority regulating school procedures is frequently restrictive. This authority is generally designed to avoid risk, but can result in continuing victimization of children.

Nonprofit Organizations

The private position of the nonprofit agencies for missing or victimized children automatically isolates them from the public sector. The system lacks awareness of their capabilities, mission, and role in the community and, in some cases, their existence. Frequently, nonprofit organizations were established in response to an emotional, highly publicized, negative local experience, which created certain attitudes and biases against them.

Often private nonprofits exist because of an actual or perceived gap in the public system causing confusion about the agency's role and oftentimes duplication of services. Nonprofits lack resources and funding, with management problems within these organizations prevalent.

Multi-Agency Needs

In assessing the individual problems of community agencies in serving child victims, PAS found certain issues common to each agency. Many of these common problems, when resolved, will be critical to facilitating multi-agency cooperation. Addressing these multi-agency needs will improve communication and coordination of services to children. These needs are summarized below.

- Identify roles and responsibilities of each child service agency in the community.

The most pervasive need identified by this study is thorough knowledge of the community system. Attrition is relatively high in public agencies, and new employees often come into the system without orientation, a community service directory, or an organizational chart. New employees know little about their agency's role in delivering services, and even less about other community agencies. Without this information, they cannot make accurate referrals, locate assistance, or establish an accurate picture of a child's needs. As a result, agencies remain independent of each other, operating with discrepant priorities and practices. If multi-agency cooperation is to develop, employees must be educated about available services in their community, and a community directory must be developed to ensure continuity.

- Gain accurate understanding of federal, state, and local laws.

The laws pertaining to abducted, abused, runaway, and throwaway children vary widely across localities and states. Frequently, perceptions of the law rather than the laws themselves, govern departmental policies. All agency administrators and employees must be educated on the actual limitations of federal, state, and local laws.

- Gain accurate understanding of information-sharing limitations, if any.

Many children can be involved with several public and private agencies simultaneously. Because of this, it is vital to the interests of children that agencies share information. Concerns about liability and misunderstandings about confidentiality often perpetuate a reluctance to share case information among child service agencies. Ironically, in an effort to protect children by not releasing case information, children are revictimized. Service agencies must work together to reduce the duplication of services and more importantly, to ensure a comprehensive, integrated response to the needs of children. Multi-agency teams must be developed with justifiable policies for sharing among themselves.

- Establish a framework for mutual respect between agencies, eliminating rivalry and encouraging an understanding of common goals.

Difficulties in multi-agency cooperation have evolved from the inability of agencies to communicate with each other. Criminal justice and social service agencies perceive themselves as independent factions, failing to visualize the "big picture." Agencies must receive training on the goals, limitations, and capabilities of other agencies so common goals can be established and service gaps filled. Team-building exercises develop a foundation of trust and understanding among agencies.

- Identify role and specific responsibilities of state and national agencies handling missing and exploited children.

Local community agencies must be aware of state and national missing children agencies, recognizing their role in order to use their services. True networking in the interest of locating missing children, educating children, and serving families cannot be accomplished without acknowledgement of and cooperation with these agencies.

- Educate practitioners and the public of the prevalence of child victimization in this country.

Child service practitioners and the public remain ignorant or resist acceptance of the incidence of child victimization. Parental kidnapping, for example, is treated as a civil or "family" problem, and it is assumed that as long as the child is in the care of a parent, the child is safe.

Teachers, jurors, and parents are examples of a public that is unaware of the threat of sexual exploitation in the environments children frequent. The public is too often afraid to give credence to the testimony of a child against an adult. To change attitudes, the public must be educated on the extent of this nationwide problem.

VI. ROLE OF M/CAP AGENCIES

Many multi-agency team projects begin the process by identifying a goal or goals based on a particular problem in their community. Once the goal is determined, there is a foundation for identifying the team members. The team then agrees on specific objectives or outcomes they want to achieve. Many projects have developed protocols for the response that is necessary from each agency. Policy manuals and community directories identify team members, the specific roles, responsibilities, and a plan of action for each agency. Multi-agency agreements are signed by team members which express justification for cooperation and a pledge of confidentiality among members. Figure 1 displays the interaction that needs to take place among agencies participating in M/CAP.

This chapter describes, in detail, the roles and responsibilities each agency should play in M/CAP. These roles and responsibilities closely parallel the features of successful multi-agency projects uncovered during the literature review and through interviews with practitioners. M/CAP is fundamentally a project that seeks to synthesize existing knowledge into a viable multi-agency process.

Because of the national scope of the problem of missing and exploited children, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and state-level information clearinghouses are included in this description of M/CAP.

M/CAP TEAM PROCESS

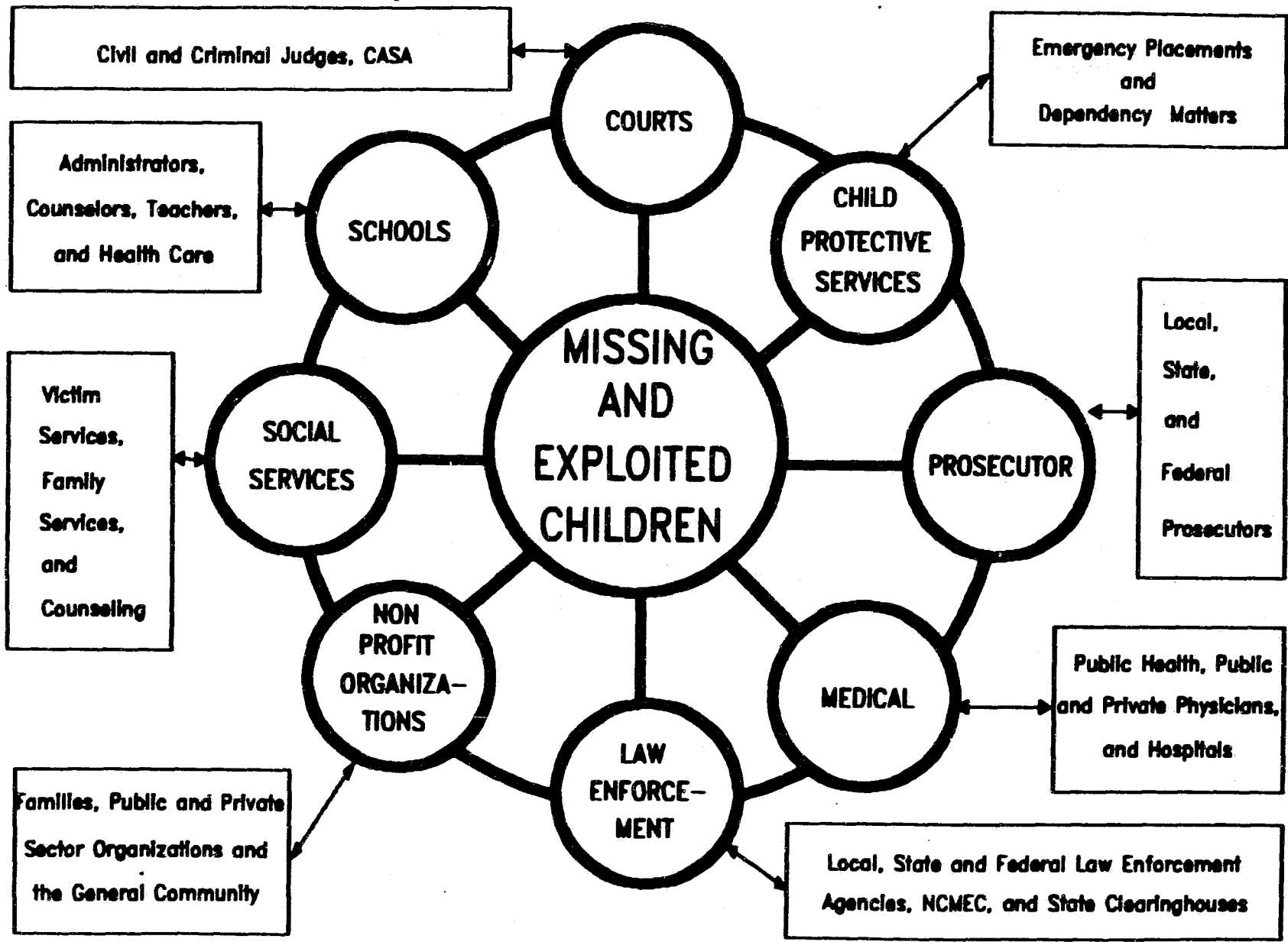


Figure 1

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement should be an active member of the M/CAP team. The individual selected for the team must be an experienced officer with a background in the area of missing and exploited children. This combination would ensure his or her ability to become a functioning M/CAP team member. Law enforcement would be able to contribute in both the proactive and reactive areas of the M/CAP process.

Proactively, law enforcement will be of tremendous value by presenting prevention programs directed at both the adult and juvenile populations of the community. These programs not only teach adults and children how to be safer, but also assist in increasing the community's awareness of missing and exploited children issues.

Through the M/CAP team, law enforcement can develop prevention programs involving other M/CAP agencies such as CPS, social services, and the medical community. Law enforcement, through information gathered from these presentations, will be able to make referrals to other M/CAP agencies. Because most law enforcement agencies have an existing crime prevention unit, this task would require minimal additional resources.

Traditionally, law enforcement agencies have had noticeable legislative clout. This ability to affect legislation, coupled with cooperative development of legislation with the other M/CAP agencies, can result in: (1) cooperative development of legislation to ensure that more uniform legislative proposals are presented; and (2) cooperative preparation can greatly enhance the lobbying ability of the M/CAP teams. This can be of great assistance to M/CAP should legislative change be needed to aid the M/CAP process.

Crime analysis information, provided to the M/CAP team by the law enforcement agencies, can help to identify potentially dangerous situations for children. This information will heighten awareness by such M/CAP agencies as social services, CPS, schools, and others. This heightened awareness will help ensure that agencies identify the less noticeable missing and exploited children. Agencies can also use this information to increase program services for these children and their families.

Reactively, law enforcement agencies have the ability to provide services, many of which are unique to that profession. While a number of M/CAP agencies may have the ability to provide 24-hour telephone service, law enforcement is the only agency that is able to provide immediate response to the scene 24 hours a day. This immediate response capability greatly enhances the development of cooperative investigations and assistance to other M/CAP agencies such as social services, CPS, and NPOs.

In emergency situations, the first responder component of M/CAP is extremely important. Many emergency situations occur at times other than normal business hours. Law enforcement is the primary first responder to these situations. If needed, law enforcement can mobilize other M/CAP team members on a 24-hour basis. Such mobilization would greatly impact the ability of service providers to reduce the emotional trauma faced by missing and exploited children and their families. Another service unique to law enforcement is its direct on-line access to the National Crime Information Computer (NCIC) and direct electronic communication with virtually every law enforcement agency in the nation through the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS). In the recovery, location, identification, and dissemination of information, these two systems are unparalleled.

In summary, law enforcement's role in M/CAP is extremely important. Like each M/CAP team member, law enforcement can provide certain unique services. However, the full effectiveness of these services for missing and exploited children can be realized only if they are used to complement the unique services of each agency involved in M/CAP.

Prosecution

The role of the prosecutor or district attorney in a multi-agency team for missing and exploited children focuses on building a strong criminal case against individuals who victimize children. The type of criminal case will vary, depending on the issue, from a child exploitation or abuse case to one against a non-custodial parent in an abduction.

In most jurisdictions, the prosecutor is responsible for determining whether legal action will be taken in a case. Through a careful review of all relevant case information from M/CAP team members, accuracy and thoroughness of case preparedness will be assured.

The prosecutor will work closely with social services and police officers who are investigating and preparing the case for court. In many instances, the prosecutor may have the authority to direct the investigation and arrest of the alleged offender.

Proper training for prosecutors in handling child abuse cases is crucial -- they must be adept at interviewing children and assessing their competence to testify. Prosecutors will frequently be responsible for preparing the child for court testimony. They will also work closely with the court to prepare and file petitions in the event that the alleged offender is a juvenile.

Vertical prosecution assures that the same prosecutor who handled the case presents the case at trial and during appeal. This ensures that the prosecutor has

complete knowledge of the case, the victim, and the family, and can substantiate all events that occurred in case development. This continuity not only increases the probability of the prosecution winning the case, but provides stability, consistency and support to the child and the family.

Social Services/Child Protective Services

While social services in some communities stand apart from CPS, in many jurisdictions they are one and the same or are housed in the same agency. For this reason, and because their roles and responsibilities relating to M/CAP are similar, they are addressed here together.

Child protection workers are part of the foundation of the M/CAP team. CPS workers are responsible for investigating alleged abuse and for providing protection and services to the victim and the family. As such, these workers are intimately involved in the processing of cases of abuse and the handling of victims and perpetrators of criminal activities against children. CPS should work closely with law enforcement and prosecutors during child abuse investigations. This team approach fully protects the victim and the family, as well as supplying them with the necessary services and resources.

Cooperation between the medical community and social service agencies helps to fill a gap in services to children. Because of the need for immediate counseling for child victims of sexual assault, many social workers now have offices in hospitals and emergency units.

Social services also is an important component of M/CAP for cases not involving child abuse. For runaway youth, social services provides for housing, clothing, food, or short-term shelter, as well as crisis intervention. Social services can provide support and referral to other agencies for medical care, employment, and other support services that might be necessary for survival.

Because of the breadth of responsibility of social service agencies, they often work with children from their early ages through their teens. At each stage, varying forms of assistance and support are given to the youth and the family. For example, a young child who is abused or neglected and left untreated faces a good chance of running away from home in later years. As a runaway, the youth is at risk of future victimization through physical or sexual abuse. This juvenile may abuse others or commit delinquent acts to gain food or shelter or support illegal drug habits. Because of this, social service staff are in a prime position to serve as case managers for the child. Whether working with the child as the victim of abuse, a runaway youth, or a youth who becomes involved in delinquent acts, social service workers are case managers helping to ensure that the youth receives the services necessary to prevent future victimization or criminal activities.

Mental Health Agencies

Mental health agencies are distinguished from social service agencies in that their primary responsibility lies in treating the emotional and mental health issues of the client. Social service agencies, on the other hand, ensure that services are provided to meet the total needs of the client, including shelter, clothing, and other physical needs. In some communities, social services clients receive mental health services through referral, placement, and payment from the social service agencies. In other communities, mental health services are provided through the court, through independent placement and referral, or through a separate mental health system.

Regardless of how these services are provided, mental health agencies play an important role in the M/CAP team. They provide counseling and support services to the victim of child abuse and his/her family; to the families of children who are abducted as well as to the child; and to youth who have run away from home. These agencies serve the M/CAP team in a consultive capacity regarding decisions on service and placement needs, perform assessments of children who are sex offenders; provide crisis intervention counseling and support; and conduct periodic assessments of a child's progress after abuse or victimization.

Issues of confidentiality are certain to be raised by the mental health community because of the need to protect the client/doctor relationship. Confidentiality issues are specific to each jurisdiction and should be addressed in each community. To overcome these concerns, the exchange of information needs to be viewed as important for the benefit and protection of the patient. It should occur on an as-needed basis, under controlled circumstances, and between specified individuals.

Schools

Schools are responsible for educating children and helping prepare them to lead productive lives. The role of schools in M/CAP focuses on the protection of children.

Timely reporting of absenteeism and evidence of child abuse is critical. Schools need to have a good working relationship with law enforcement, child protective services, and hospitals to ensure responsiveness to child victims. Schools have the potential to assist in locating runaway and homeless youth, as well. The friends of runaway children can frequently provide law enforcement or nonprofit groups with information to aid an investigation. In many communities, law enforcement delegates investigation of runaway children to community resource officers who work in the school.

School administrators should enlist assistance of law enforcement to conduct comprehensive background checks on all school employees working with children. Background checks on employees of daycare centers operated in the schools and as separate entities, as well, should be included in licensing requirements.

A system for flagging school records of missing children should be developed. Schools can request custody documents, report suspected missing children, and provide immediate information about student absenteeism. When a child changes schools, the new school can network with state and national missing agencies to ensure that the new student is not reported missing from another state or community.

Courts

In general, the term "court" is all-encompassing and applies to any individual or agency performing a service related to the judicial process. This includes virtually all agencies participating in M/CAP, such as law enforcement, social services, child protective services, prosecutors, and probation. However, since many of these agencies play extensive roles in cases involving missing and exploited children, they are discussed separately in this report.

The term "court" as referenced in this report refers to the judiciary and those persons who function as Guardians ad Litem in cases involving missing and exploited children. However, because of their unique status with the court and children, Guardians ad Litem are discussed separately below.

Traditionally, the court is involved in cases of missing and exploited children from both civil and criminal aspects. The civil proceeding of cases involving missing and exploited children deal with disposition of the child for placement in or out of the family unit and ordering services such as counseling to the family. Related cases heard in civil court occur in instances where the victim seeks damages from the perpetrators of crime. Criminal proceedings of missing and exploited children cases deal with the perpetrator of abuse and/or neglect from a punitive standpoint. Much of the literature places court responsibility, when dealing with missing and exploited children, in the following categories:

- Providing coordination between civil and criminal court proceedings to ensure the information exchange to reduce trauma to the child and eliminate unnecessary delays in the process.
- Providing assistance and support to the child in preparation for the trial. This includes making sure that the child receives both legal representation and other necessary services to handle their unique

needs. This is accomplished through procedural reform, education, training, and sensitivity to the child.

- Presiding over abduction cases.
- Determining custody in divorce cases.
- Issuing warrants for custody order violations.

The ability of a judge to be a direct participant on the M/CAP team would depend upon the statutory restraints regarding pretrial information on a specific case. However, through an appointed staff representative, the court can be a direct participant on the team.

One of the main purposes of M/CAP is to ensure that all relevant information on a missing and exploited child case is brought together through a community-based, multi-agency team approach, and is used in the best interest of the child. Because the court is often responsible for the final decision in missing and exploited children cases, it is in an excellent position to gauge the effectiveness of M/CAP within its community. The court can become a very involved and important part of M/CAP, providing input to the M/CAP team as to where the "gaps" may exist within the community.

Being involved in the M/CAP process, judges will receive enormous amounts of information on missing and exploited children cases enabling them to make informed decisions in both the criminal and civil proceedings. Where necessary, judges can assist M/CAP teams by issuing court orders that will help resolve any confidentiality problems involved in information sharing. Judges are extremely powerful in legislative matters and can assist with legislative reform where needed.

Guardians ad Litem

Practitioners within the criminal justice system, working in the area of missing and exploited children, have long realized that the overwhelming complexity of the criminal justice system, coupled with the problems associated with missing and exploited children cases, have increased the potential for revictimization of children. Practitioners have sought effective ways to address this concern, looking for ways to diminish or reduce the trauma experienced by child victims and their families. One successful approach has been the development and use of Guardians ad Litem, who represent the best interest of the child in court proceedings. The term Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), volunteers who are specially trained civilians serving as guardians in lieu of attorneys, has become almost synonymous with Guardians ad Litem.

Guardian ad Litem programs in each community can be a valuable asset to the M/CAP team. These volunteers have extensive information about the child and the case, and therefore can add pertinent information to the M/CAP team. This information would allow the team to make mid-course changes in services provided to the child, and reduce the possibility of revictimization of the child because of service delivery gaps or decisionmaking based on incomplete or inaccurate information. Having constant contact with the child and building a rapport with the child, the CASA would become aware of facts that would assist law enforcement in its investigation, prosecutors in their prosecution of the case, and social services in providing services for the child and family.

In summary, the court is an essential participant in M/CAP. The court's ability to coordinate services, identify system weaknesses, effect legislative change, dissolve confidentiality barriers, and enforce agency accountability makes it paramount to the success of the M/CAP process.

Medical Community

The term medical community in this report refers to hospitals, private physicians, and public health agencies. For missing and exploited children, the medical community provides many initial and follow-up services to the victims. Most hospitals today have designated an individual on their staff as the hospital social worker, who performs a myriad of duties. One of these duties is to function as the communication link between hospital medical staff and other community agencies in matters regarding missing and exploited children. Representatives from the medical community serving on multi-agency teams have assisted in writing protocols that facilitate the retrieval of information from the medical community.

In many cases of missing and exploited children, the medical community is involved in two phases of medical service delivery to the victims.

- Initial examination of the victim in the case of an exploited (physically or sexually abused) child.
- Follow-up medical community's input into the M/CAP process.

The medical community's input is helpful in both the investigative and after-care phases of dealing with missing and exploited children.

As a direct participant in M/CAP, the hospital social worker would function as a communications link between the attending physicians (hospital and private) and the law enforcement agency. The social worker could help transmit medical information to help direct the investigation to law enforcement from the physicians. In the reverse role, the social worker would be able to relay investigative information

that the physicians might corroborate with medical findings. The hospital social worker would be in a position to identify medical information that could not be released and would also be aware of the processes necessary to obtain this information. Not only would this person be of assistance in the investigative phase, but he or she would be able to provide the same service in the after-care phase by coordinating the efforts of the medical community and the social service agencies.

The hospital social worker would be able to identify specific situations where the M/CAP team might be of assistance to the medical staff. This individual would be very helpful in coordinating training efforts between the M/CAP team and the medical community. The medical community could be of great assistance to the M/CAP teams by cooperating in the development of medical/legal protocol where needed. This collaboration of medical services and legal services is imperative to increasing the efficiency of services and reducing the unnecessary trauma experienced by missing and exploited children and their families.

Nonprofit Organizations

The nonprofit organizations (NPOs) working in the area of missing and exploited children have traditionally filled gaps in the system. Many have done an exceptional job in assisting missing and exploited children and their families when other agencies have failed. NPOs have filled the gaps within the system from an investigative standpoint, as well as providing support services to the victims and families. They have also been instrumental in procedural and legislative changes, and can test new ideas for case handling. Most NPOs, by virtue of their membership, would be an excellent vehicle for supplying the M/CAP team with input from the private sector and the families of missing and exploited children. For these reasons, the NPOs should be an active member of the M/CAP team.

By being an active member of the M/CAP team, NPOs can help law enforcement locate and recover missing and exploited children. They would have a direct line into law enforcement through the law enforcement M/CAP team member and vice versa. Having this direct contact could reduce the current time lag between some possible sightings of missing and exploited children and the investigation of those sightings.

Most NPOs receive funding from public and private donations, as well as grants from state and federal governments. To survive in this type of environment, NPOs have become experienced at identifying funding sources. This knowledge and skill can greatly assist individual M/CAP agencies and M/CAP teams in locating funds for special programs. Conversely, NPOs would be the logical organizations for the public agencies to fund to administer programs outside their realms, such as runaway shelters, programs for street kids, and the like. Most NPOs rely heavily on volunteer staff. In many instances, they have dealt with the issue of

confidentiality and volunteer workers. Their experience enables NPOs to offer valuable assistance to M/CAP agencies such as law enforcement and social services in developing programs to use volunteers in the area of missing and exploited children.

In summary, NPOs can bring the voice of the private sector into the M/CAP team. This input would be valuable in assuring that the M/CAP site addresses all issues related to missing and exploited children.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) is the primary national agency for dealing with missing and exploited children issues. As a result, NCMEC personnel have dealt with virtually every type of public and private agency involved with missing and exploited children. This diversity justifies a role for NCMEC in the development and implementation phases of M/CAP, including:

- Core curriculum development.
- Design and development of training materials.
- Program marketing.
- Site assessment.
- Instructor corps selection.
- On-site technical assistance.

The following briefly explains how NCMEC might be involved in each of these activities.

Since its creation, NCMEC has produced booklets, brochures, and other related training materials on missing and exploited children. NCMEC has also assembled a large collection of materials on missing and exploited children produced by other sources. It has conducted and participated in many different training courses on missing and exploited children. For these reasons, NCMEC could greatly assist in the selection and production of materials that will be necessary for the training of M/CAP agency personnel.

With its national contacts, NCMEC will be extremely helpful in the marketing of M/CAP. It can assist in disseminating printed material and directing inquiries about M/CAP to PAS. The National Center also can be helpful in assembling a mailing list of interested parties.

The National Center is very aware of places throughout the country where there is tremendous activity and innovation with regards to missing and exploited children. NCMEC is knowledgeable about potential multi-agency problems in various communities. Through its legal division, the National Center also will be aware of legislative issues that may affect the development of M/CAP in a particular community. This type of information will be of great assistance to PAS during the site assessment process.

As mentioned earlier, the National Center has been extensively involved in the area of training personnel who deal with missing and exploited children. This exposure to national practitioners will help identify subject matter experts for training, and would be very helpful to PAS in assembling the instructor corps.

Some M/CAP agencies will need highly specialized on-site training in specific areas related to missing and exploited children (e.g., investigative techniques and interviewing). Through its case management staff, the National Center has in-house expertise in many missing and exploited children issues. If available, these individuals could assist with training.

Program management and expansion is the other phase in which the National Center can provide assistance with M/CAP development and implementation. This phase includes the following activities:

- Ongoing and up-to-date training.
- National networking of M/CAP sites.

The National Center has the unique ability to monitor and identify trends concerning missing and exploited children on the national level and, as demonstrated in the past, has the resources to produce training materials to assist agencies in dealing with these changes. This makes NCMEC a valuable resource in assisting with up-to-date training for the M/CAP sites.

As previously noted, the National Center has developed a very extensive national network with agencies from both the public and private sectors. Considering this existing network, it may be logical for the National Center to function as the informational network base for M/CAP at some point in the future.

In summary, NCMEC's knowledge, skills, and resources make it a valuable resource, and demonstrate its important role in the M/CAP process.

State Clearinghouses

Over 35 states have established clearinghouses for locating missing children. In many instances, clearinghouses were established in state police missing persons units where investigative and computer capabilities for locating persons were already established and in operation, but this is not the case in every state.

Regardless of their location, clearinghouses have similar objectives and engage in numerous activities in response to missing children, such as:

- Conducting education, training, and prevention programs for citizens and professional personnel.
- Compiling and disseminating data on missing children.
- Distributing flyers for locating missing children.
- Maintaining resources and referral information for assisting families in locating missing children.
- Establishing and maintaining communication with other state, local, and national agencies which assist in locating missing children.

Although they employ similar activities for locating missing children, state clearinghouses operate in their own unique fashion. Variations in state laws, organizational objectives, size, and emphasis contribute to these differences. Because of these differences, PAS, in cooperation with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, hosted a conference of state clearinghouses to discuss their potential role in M/CAP. While the exact role of each clearinghouse depends on the community it serves, as well as issues such as budget limitations, staff availability, and agency location, clearinghouses can be an important resource for M/CAP. The following discussion describes the optimum role for state clearinghouses in M/CAP as generated through the work session.

State clearinghouses can provide assistance in identifying potential M/CAP sites in their own state. Many are aware of the communities in their state that have implemented different multi-agency projects and their degree of success. In addition, many are aware of whether specific jurisdictions could provide the necessary infrastructure for implementing M/CAP.

Some state clearinghouses can provide up-to-date statistical data on missing and exploited children within their state. This can be of great assistance to PAS during the site assessment phase of M/CAP. It would also help a community identify

the specific issue areas regarding missing and exploited children on which to concentrate their efforts.

Clearinghouses have the personnel and experience background to provide initial and ongoing technical assistance to M/CAP sites. Depending on the individual clearinghouse, this technical assistance would vary in scope from providing investigative training, policy development, case information dissemination to media, to statewide case coordination.

Some clearinghouses could assist the M/CAP site identify possible program funding sources outside of the site's immediate jurisdiction. This includes federal and state grant funds available through governors' offices, as well as private sector organizations at the state level.

Many clearinghouses have developed strong relationships with local and state agencies involved with missing and exploited children. These relationships can enhance marketing of M/CAP to city and county level jurisdictions.

Clearinghouses also can be valuable to M/CAP as a participant of the M/CAP team. While M/CAP is a community-based program, the mobility associated with missing children cases makes them an asset for networking the M/CAP site with the state and national level programs.

In jurisdictions where changes in state legislation are necessary, clearinghouses can contribute support at the state level. Many clearinghouses required legislative changes early in their development, and therefore are familiar with key lobbying organizations within their states.

Finally, clearinghouses can be used to perpetuate the expansion of M/CAP sites. They could accomplish this by reporting the progress of M/CAP to non-participatory jurisdictions in their states.

Special Community Groups

In addition to the agencies just described, special interest groups are another important component of M/CAP. These groups include individuals, agencies, commissions, councils, and teams with vested interest in issues related to children who are victimized or missing or are runaways. These groups can be called upon on an as-needed basis to provide additional support, information, and assistance, or they can be a full member of the team, depending on their role, their expertise, and the type of assistance they can offer.

For example, special community groups might include child advocate organizations, which can offer assistance and guidance to the child as well as to the

team in how to better handle cases and offer services to the victim and the family. Another example is commissions appointed by the governor to address such special topics as runaway or homeless youth; such commissions can give insight into broader issues regarding these specific populations. A third type of special interest group consists of individuals who have experience with issues affecting youth who are victimized, perhaps even a victim of a parental abduction who can offer insight into the needs of the victim, changes necessary to better meet the needs of the victim, and more effective ways for the agencies to collaborate in addressing the issue of parental abductions in the community.

As in the case of the other agencies and organizations involved in the multi-agency team approach, specific roles and responsibilities of the special interest groups need to be articulated in advance of their participation in the team approach. This will help to avoid problems regarding confidentiality of information, prevent agencies and organizations from acting on their own behalf instead of the child's or the M/CAP team's, and ensure that the team benefits from the multitude of talent and energies available in any one community.

VII. TRAINING NEEDS

Primary responsibility for addressing issues associated with missing, exploited, or runaway youth is at the community level. State or local legislation, policies, or agency structure, influence the scope and quality of that effort. The needs of the youth population in each community vary and depend on the services and resources available. Consequently, M/CAP implementation will take place at the local level and will be designed to meet the needs of each community. M/CAP will not dictate a rigid program design or structure to meet the needs of all communities. No single off-the-shelf program is able to address all of the problems associated with runaway youth, victims of child abuse, or children abducted from home.

By design, M/CAP will establish a locally based, grass roots planning and implementation process to operate within the existing structure of a community and make the best use of available resources and services in that particular community. Potential M/CAP sites will be drawn from around the country, using the agencies, organizations, and associations contacted in previous stages of this effort to guide the selection process.

The results of this needs assessment point to categories of information and skills that are now lacking in many communities, but are needed to successfully implement M/CAP.

Knowledge of the System

Both the literature review and site visits identified the need for better understanding of roles and responsibilities of agencies that serve children. Knowing how and under what conditions agencies can work together can help improve the delivery of services. Resources can be more effectively used and services more easily delivered through coordination of efforts.

M/CAP training and technical assistance will assist agency staff to:

- Design and deliver a presentation on the operations of their agency including a fact sheet that can be included in a community directory.
- Complete a flow chart describing the decisions made by each agency in processing various types of cases involving missing children.
- Clearly define the legal constraints within which an agency must operate in delivering services.

Group Decisionmaking and Planning

Once agency staff know one another better, barriers of jargon and misunderstanding can be removed and replaced with a coordinated delivery of services. Yet, merely knowing how other agencies operate and the problems they face is not enough to assure that multi-agency cooperation and planning will take place. Agency representatives at each M/CAP site will need the skills necessary to solve problems and plan for the delivery of services on a multi-agency basis. These skills provide the ability to:

- Effectively participate in a group planning process promoting consensus and good multi-agency communication.
- Hold multi-agency meetings that are productive and draw out the views, problems and needs of all participating agencies.
- Use a process based on, data collection, analysis, planning, service delivery, and ongoing evaluation.
- Identify the data elements that should be included in a community wide management information system (MIS) for monitoring service delivery.
- Devise and implement agency level organizational development strategies to help employees become committed to their role in the community-wide M/CAP process.

VIII. TRAINING MEDIA AND METHODS

Training provides the opportunity for individuals to become proficient in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the training needs assessment. Training outcomes can only be observed and measured through active, appropriate practice that demonstrates change in behavior.

Instructional strategies developed for M/CAP site training will include:

- Lecture and discussion sessions to impart cognitive information such as local and state legal limitations.
- Group process and team building activities to develop rapport and encourage changes in attitude among agency members.
- Skill-building practical exercises to help participants perform specific skills and apply specific methods.

M/CAP lecture and discussion sessions will be supplemented with audiovisual training aids to improve retention and stimulate interest. Training manuals will be developed and distributed to each participant for future reference, training new employees, and developing supplemental training for community agencies.

Following the initial training, technical assistance will be provided, focused on the development and management of a multi-agency team to reinforce skills acquired during the training session. Frequently, jurisdictions have attempted the team approach but failed due to leadership problems. Time constraints, heavy workloads, and lack of organizational skills preclude individuals from maintaining the momentum necessary to keep the team operational. Site progress will be monitored by the multi-agency team to ensure that barriers to implementation are weakened or eliminated.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ATTENDEES AT THE APRIL 1989 GRANTEES MEETING

Jim Collins, Research Triangle Institute -- National Study Law Enforcement Agencies' Policies and Practices Regarding Missing Children and Homeless Youth.

Gerry Hotaling, University of New Hampshire, Family Research Lab -- National Study of the Incidence of Missing Children.

Chris Hatcher, University of California, Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute -- Families of Missing Children; Psychological Consequences and Promising Interventions.

Debra Whitcomb, Educational Development Center -- Child Victim as a Witness Research and Development Program.

Beth Waid, National Court Appointed Special Advocates Association -- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA): A National Training and Technical Assistance Project.

American Institutes for Research -- Victims and Witnesses in the Juvenile Justice System.

Greg Loken, National Crime Prevention Council -- Teen Victimization/Youth as Resources Project.

John Rabun, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children -- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Jim Shine, American Prosecutors Research Institute -- National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse.

Steven Block, Institute for Nonprofit Organization Management -- Management Training and Technical Assistance for Private, Non-Profit Organizations.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention -- Assistance to Missing Children's Private Volunteer Organizations.

Ron Stephens, National School Safety Center -- Missing and Exploited Children School Curriculum Standards.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention -- Child Sexual Exploitation Training.

Jim Toner, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges -- Training for Juvenile Justice System Decision-Makers: Missing Children and Child Sexual Exploitation.

Roland Summit, M.D., Community Consultation Services, Harbor - UCLA Medical Center.

APPENDIX B

SITE VISITS

Child Sexual Abuse Unit, Arlington County Police Department, Virginia
Juvenile Unit, Prince William County Police Department, Virginia
Juvenile Division, Montgomery County Police Department, Maryland
State's Attorney, Montgomery County, Maryland
Child Protection Services, Montgomery County, Maryland
Department of Addiction, Victim, and Witnesses, Montgomery County, Maryland
The Open Door Shelter Home, Silver Spring, Maryland
U.S. Magistrate, Alexandria, Virginia
Sequoia YMCA, Redwood City, California
High Risk Youth Program, Los Angeles, California
Seattle Youth and Community Services/Orion Center, Seattle, Washington
Covenant House, Los Angeles, California
Operation Lookout, Seattle, Washington
Multi-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect, El Monte, California
Child Victim as Witness Multi-disciplinary Program, Newton, Massachusetts
Lost Child Network, Kansas City, Missouri
National Court Appointed Special Advocates Assn., Seattle, Washington
Washington State Clearinghouse for Missing Children, Washington
Victim Support Network, San Jose, California
Center for Child Abuse Prevention, Tacoma, Washington

Child Abuse Service Providers Association, Tacoma, Washington

Child Abuse Treatment Center, Tacoma, Washington

SHOCAP Sites

Kokomo, Indiana

Knoxville, Tennessee

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Rapid City, South Dakota

Bellingham, Washington

Omaha, Nebraska

West Palm Beach, Florida

Riverside, California

Pomona, California

Rocky Mount, North Carolina

APPENDIX C

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

The Bridge, Boston, Massachusetts

Child Advocacy Center, Baltimore, Maryland

Children and Youth Network, Ames, Iowa

National Center for Child Advocacy, Huntsville, Alabama

Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Law Enforcement Planning Division, Montgomery, Alabama

Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Youth Services, Juneau, Alaska

Governor's Office for Children, Phoenix, Arizona

Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services, Little Rock, Arkansas

Office of Criminal Justice Planning, Sacramento, California

Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Denver, Colorado

Justice Planning Division, OPM, Hartford, Connecticut

Office of Management, Budget, and Planning, Criminal Justice Council, Wilmington, Delaware

Office of Criminal Justice Plans and Analysis, Washington, D.C.

Health and Rehabilitative Services: Children, Youth, and Family Services Program Office, Tallahassee, Florida

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, Atlanta, Georgia

State Law Enforcement Planning Agency, Honolulu, Hawaii

Office of the Governor, Commission for Children and Youth, Boise, Idaho

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, Indianapolis, Indiana

Iowa Division of Children, Youth and Families, Department of Human Rights, Des Moines, Iowa

SRS - Youth Services, Topeka, Kansas

Kentucky Justice Cabinet, Division of Grants Management, Frankfort, Kentucky

Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Department of Corrections, Augusta, Maine

Governor's Office of Operations and Public Safety, Baltimore, Maryland

Committee on Criminal Justice, Lansing, Michigan

Department of Jobs and Training, St. Paul, Minnesota

Department of Criminal Justice Planning, Jackson, Mississippi

Department of Public Safety, Jefferson City, Missouri

Montana Board of Crime Control, Helena, Montana

Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, Lincoln, Nebraska

Nevada Department of Human Resources, Youth Services Division, Carson City, Nevada

Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Children and Youth Services, Concord, New Hampshire

State Law Enforcement Planning Agency, Trenton, New Jersey

Corrections Department, Juvenile Division, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Division of Criminal Justice, Albany, New York

Governor's Crime Commission, Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Raleigh, North Carolina

North Dakota Association of Counties, Juvenile Services, Bismark, North Dakota

Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Services, Columbus, Ohio
Commission of Children and Youth, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Juvenile Services Commission, Salem, Oregon
Commission of Crime and Delinquency, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Governor's Justice Commission, West Warwick, Rhode Island
Division of Public Safety Programs, Columbia, South Carolina
South Dakota Association of County Commissioners, Pierre, South Dakota
Children's Services Commission, Nashville, Tennessee
Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, Austin, Texas
Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, Salt Lake City, Utah
Agency of Human Services, Planning and Evaluation, Waterbury, Vermont
Department of Criminal Justice Services, Richmond, Virginia
Department of Social and Health Services, Olympia, Washington
Governor's Office of Community and Industrial Development, Community
Development Division, Charleston, West Virginia
Office of Justice Assistance, Madison, Wisconsin
Department of Health and Social Services, Cheyenne, Wyoming

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