

# RESPONDING TO TROUBLED YOUTH

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CHERYL L. MAXSON  
and MALCOLM W. KLEIN

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*Responding to Troubled Youth* considers the current theories and practices in handling status offenders—those children who habitually resist the control of their parents and schools, who run away from home, who drink and stay out after curfew. How does society deal with status offenders today? How should it deal with them tomorrow? What are the social and legal implications of dealing with them in one way or another?

Designed to respond to troubled and troublesome youths, state legislative policies for juvenile offenders are effective at different times for different reasons—and are not always effective in the first place. This book evaluates such policies in terms of three basic and competing philosophies: the so-called treatment, deterrence, and normalization rationales. In examining each approach, Cheryl L. Maxson and Malcolm W. Klein consider the quality (and quantity) of response to (and for) status offenders at local community service outlets in seven different cities. By this method, the authors can determine whether such response practices conform with the ideological thrusts embedded in state legislation.

The results of their national study will surprise many legislative and youth service policy professionals. Agency characteristics, service delivery patterns, and youth clients can indeed reflect the treatment, deterrence, and normalization rationales, but in ways that have little bearing on the dominant viewpoints embodied by state legislation. Also, special chapters are devoted to those minors most likely to slip through the safety net of youth service—chronic runaways and street kids. At the conclusion and throughout the text, the authors soundly discuss the implications of their findings for lawmakers and policy developers.

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# Responding to Troubled Youth

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Cheryl L. Maxson and Malcolm W. Klein

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&  
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*To Solomon Kobrin (1910–1996)*

*With warmth and respect  
for a friend and colleague who showed the way*



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*Los Angeles, California*  
*January 1996*

C. L. M.  
M. W. K.

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# Responding to Troubled Youth



# 1

## Research Context

### Introduction

How should we, as a society, respond to youngsters who steadfastly refuse to obey their parents? They stay out late and fail to complete their homework or household chores. They hang out with youngsters of dubious character (or with youngsters whose character is unknown to the parents) and in other ways consistently signal disrespect for the authority of their parents. Are they the responsibility of these parents, who will use whatever resources they can muster? Or are they the proper fodder of a public system—the police, the juvenile court, the county children’s service?

And what of the habitual truant, whose parents seem able to compel daily school attendance no better than the school principal? Or the girl who seems headed toward early alcoholism, judging from her almost daily consumption of cheap wines or beer with her friends? Or the youngster who has taken to staying out overnight with friends or even on the street or in an abandoned house?

What is a parent to do? What can public officials do? What is the role of private agencies? In effect, these disturbing yet noncriminal youngsters are testing us, inadvertently or purposely, forcing us to evaluate just how intrusively we wish to control their lives. For decades, American society has generally taken the position that these youngsters require our intervention or at least can benefit from it. If ignored, they will move down the path toward self-harm and serious criminal involvement. Many will be in danger of be-

coming “street kids,” whose shelterless lives of pandering, thievery, prostitution, and drug abuse are symptoms of a failed society that cannot be ignored.

Many questions concerning intervention can be raised:

- What is the moral justification for intervention?
- What are the best strategies for intervention?
- What can be achieved by intervention?
- How do we feel about intervention?

Surprisingly, some answers seem to have emerged tentatively in the three decades since the 1950s, a period of philosophical turmoil over the handling of noncriminal but troublesome youth. We have decided that they constitute a “real” category of persons different from neglected children or delinquent children. They are called status offenders because the “offenses” they commit while holding the status of minors would not justify criminal justice intervention if they were adults. Adults can’t be arrested or adjudicated for running away from home, disobeying their parents, drinking, habitual truancy, or having sex—only kids can. Status *offenses* are the troublesome acts; status *offenders* are those juveniles who commit them, and they are seen as a denotable and different category of youngsters for whom special legislation has been developed. The moral justification for such legislation is based on the existence of this category of persons and what their behavior portends.

This book deals tangentially with this moral justification and more directly, with attempts and failures to intervene effectively in the lives of youth who commit status offenses simply because they commit such offenses. The attempts and failures occur at the federal level, at the level of state legislation, and at the level of local community agencies. The attempts represent our assumptions about status offenders; the failures represent the frailties of those assumptions. With some consistency, we seem to do the wrong things to the wrong youngsters for the wrong reasons.

Most of the book explores the results of a complex assessment of status offender interventions that has come to be known as the DSO II Project, the second major project in Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders assessment to be funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), a branch of the U.S. Department of Justice. To set the stage for examining the results of DSO II, we will provide in this chapter:

- a brief review of status offense history;
- a review of DSO I, a massive national evaluation of attempts to demonstrate successful approaches to status offender handling; and

- a look at status offender intervention in California as a case study of some of the principal issues and complexities revealed in DSO I.

Chapter 2 will discuss the literature review that led to DSO II and its implications for our approach. Chapter 3 moves away from *program* evaluation to a view of *policy* assessment as we suggest how legislation *about* status offenders relates to programs *for* them. In some sense, the federal government and OJJDP put the cart before the horse: they funded program evaluation (DSO I) prior to accessing the reforms involved in dealing with deinstitutionalized status offenders (DSO II). Action preceded philosophy in these projects, and the interest in philosophy emerged in part because of the failure of actions. From chapter 4 on, we will describe the processes and results of DSO II.

## The Background

A few pivotal historical events framed this country's current attitudes toward status offenders:

- Starting in 1889 in Chicago, various states first adapted to troublesome juvenile behavior by creating special juvenile courts, setting up special procedures that kept kids out of the adult criminal justice system.
- In 1909, the first White House Conference on Children and Youth was held; subsequent conferences were held every ten years. It signaled that children's welfare was not merely a local concern but a matter for national attention.
- In 1912, the U.S. Children's Bureau was established. It was charged with compiling national statistics on children and with developing national standards for the profusion of juvenile court systems emerging across the states. While federal institutional intrusion was thus established, it was quite minimal and would remain that way for decades to come.
- In 1961, as an early step of the new Kennedy administration, the first of an escalating series of federal involvements took place. In this year, the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime required cabinet level attention to youth problems.
- The result, in 1961, was the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offense Act and a small congressional appropriation of \$10 million a year to implement the act.
- In 1965, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice undertook a massive overview of the crime situation in the United States. The commission's 1967 *Task Force Report on Juvenile Delinquency* not only marked the significance of delinquency in federal

thinking but also provided the framework for liberal thought in the matter. Included was an explicit bifurcation of delinquent and status offenses.

- The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act of 1968 specifically lodged delinquency prevention in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, while delinquency control went to the Department of Justice under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. Again, these developments signaled the federal government's desire to separate juvenile from adult matters, juvenile misconduct from adult crime.

- A major (and continuing) trend came in 1974 with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJJPA). Now the Justice Department was given almost full jurisdiction over all delinquency matters, including status offenses. However, the bifurcation between delinquent and status offenses was further advanced by the promulgation of deinstitutionalization of the latter. Here, medical and labeling theory models were combined. The medical model dictated that status offending was a treatable behavior in community settings, while the labeling model used the prevention of secure detention and institutionalization for status offenders as a means of avoiding their being stigmatized as criminal. For status offenders, but not necessarily delinquents (and certainly not for chronic or serious delinquents), more and more it was their community and not the justice agencies that was to assume responsibility. DSO was born, and the DSO I project was soon to follow as a way to document the finest hours of community treatment for our troublesome, noncriminal youth.

The JJJPA was the fulcrum on which the status offender seesaw would tip. There were other influences—court decisions, runaway legislation, research that questioned the efficacy of various approaches to status offenders, increasing costs of justice system programs, and so on—but the JJJPA remains the definer of modern federal approaches, just as the 1967 task force report was the defining intellectual source.

### *DSO I*

With the 1974 act, OJJDP was put in an awkward position: it was charged with providing support for community treatment of status offenders without clear guidelines as to how to accomplish this. Its task was simplified by the federal carrot: state and local jurisdictions could support DSO projects of their own design while using federal funds for a demonstration period of two or three years. They had to apply to OJJDP for these demonstration funds and, among other things, agree to submit to an independent evaluation of their success. The final selected programs and their evaluations composed the DSO I project, which is fully documented in Kobrin and Klein (1983).

Hundreds of proposals for programs to deinstitutionalize status offenders were submitted, most of them failing to meet adequately the various criteria developed by OJJDP. In fact, there were only twelve that could satisfy OJJDP officials, and of these, only eight were accepted into the DSO I evaluation. Of the eight, only four were judged by the evaluators to meet the necessary conditions, but evaluation and politics make poor bedfellows.

How could hundreds of program proposals from public officials yield so little? Further, if deinstitutionalization means getting those kids out of secure confinement, why was it necessary to establish programs that had to submit to independent evaluation? Why not just turn the kids loose?

The answers are several. First, many officials and practitioners, to say nothing of the general public, were reluctant to turn loose troublesome kids for the very reason that they were troublesome. They were thought to need treatment, or control, or both. In addition, it was a matter not of turning loose the few thousand then in secure confinement, the ones then behind bars or fences, but of finding ways not to confine any in the future. Programs to treat and/or control had to be put in place as alternatives to confinement. Suitable community mechanisms had to be identified or developed that were capable of dealing with habitual truants, kids defiant of their parents, alcohol users, precocious sex offenders, and—most challenging of all—repeat runaways.

So turning them loose was not acceptable at the local level or to OJJDP. What was required were demonstrations of programs that could turn loose those already in secure placement, keep them out of trouble, and prevent others from replacing them. Deinstitutionalization, in practice, meant some combination of diversion to community treatment and prevention in community settings.

The eight programs approved by OJJDP as such demonstrations, and subjected to the national evaluation described in detail in the Kobrin and Klein report, proved to be quite varied in format and structure but less so in content. We describe them here so the reader may appreciate the nature of the DSO I attempts and begin to assess the reasons for their overall failure. Table 1.1, modified from the presentation in Kobrin and Klein, shows how the eight programs differed in selected characteristics. The table illustrates the variations and the kinds of concerns deemed potentially relevant to status offender programming: this is a far cry from simply turning kids loose.

#### DSO I PROGRAM MODELS

*Pima County, Arizona* This program, located primarily in Tucson, had already been developed for a year under the auspices of a liberal juvenile court judge. OJJDP funds were used principally to expand the operation. The core

TABLE 1.1. DSO I Program Characteristics

Program Site	Selected Contextual Factors											
	Statutory Restriction on Detention and Incarceration			Community Tolerance			Justice Control of Program			Availability of Residential Facilities		
	Absent	Partly Restricted	Fully Restricted	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
Alameda County, CA		X			X		X			X		
Pima County, AZ		X		X				X			X	
Connecticut	X					X	X			X		
Delaware	X					X	X				X	
Illinois		X				X		X			X	
South Carolina	X					X		X				X
Spokane County, WA		X			X				X		X	
Clark County, WA		X			X		X					X



Selected Operational Factors

Program Site	Organizational Design <sup>a</sup>			Eligibility for Program Services		Primary Program Strategy			System Penetration during Referral				Program Control of Client <sup>c</sup>			
	Formalistic	Mixed	Personalistic	Excluded	Instant Status Offense as Sole Qualification	Family Crisis Counseling	Youth Advocacy	Eclectic	Justice Agency Referral Required		System Penetration		High	Medium	Low	
									Yes	No	High	Low				
Alameda County, CA	X				X	X			X			X				X
Pima County, AZ	X				X		X			X		X				X
Connecticut	X			X				X	X		X					X
Delaware	X			X				X	X		X			X		
Illinois <sup>b</sup>	X			X			X		X		X					
South Carolina	X			X				X		X		X				X
Spokane County, WA			X		X	X			X			X			X	
Clark County, WA			X	X		X			X		X			X		

Source: From Solomon Kobrin and Malcolm Klein, eds., *Community Treatment of Juvenile Offenders: The DSO Experiments* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983), 112-13. Reprinted with permission.

<sup>a</sup> In the formalistic design, referrals of clients for service are typically routed through a central coordinating agency. Direct and unmediated referrals from one to another agency in the service network are represented in the personalistic organizational design.

<sup>b</sup> No attempt was made to obtain information on program control of client. Those placed in group home facilities were present for too brief a period to permit implementation of sanctions for rule violation.

<sup>c</sup> Data are based on program facility responses to a list of possible rule violations and the severity of sanctions imposed. Overall, the DSO programs exercised relatively low control over clients because of the short-term nature of services provided. Data were not collected from foster home facilities.

of the program was a "Mobile Diversion Unit" of cruising probation officers who contacted status offenders in the field and offered referrals to any of nineteen community agencies. Thus, an active outreach process was combined with a wide variety of *youth*-determined referral choices. The emphasis was on crisis intervention, diversity of resources, and a court-operated process of diversion from the very same court.

*Alameda County, California* Oakland was the principal city. As in Pima County, a court-related program was expanded by the use of OJJDP funds. In this case, it was the probation department's Family Crisis Intervention Unit that provided the model expanded into community-based services. The family counseling emphasis was stronger than in any of the other sites and represents a highly professionalized approach that proved difficult to inculcate into community-based agencies.

*Spokane County, Washington* Spokane's was yet another court-initiated diversion program. It developed a Youth Alternatives organization in the community to provide family crisis intervention and counseling referrals for police-diverted status offenders. A singular aspect of the program in Spokane was that community agencies and opinion leaders received it well and were involved in it.

The Pima, Alameda, and Spokane County programs composed a three-some of sites that were relatively receptive to the values and goals of the federal DSO initiative. They were sites in which significant movement toward status offender diversion and deinstitutionalization had already taken place. In addition, the California and Washington legislatures were on their way toward massive juvenile justice reforms that would remove status offender confinements during or just after the period in which DSO programs were funded. Thus, implementing community-oriented programs of the sort described was only an administrative challenge, not a philosophical one.

The remaining five sites presented more fundamental problems. In Illinois and Connecticut, there were serious control issues—the juvenile courts were highly resistant to giving up control over status offenders. In Delaware and South Carolina, there was resistance to the notion that status offending could be considered nonthreatening to the community fabric; the need for systemic reform was not clear in those primarily rural jurisdictions. Finally, in Clark County, Washington, the need for community alternatives, as opposed to court or state agency service, was not well accepted.

In a broad sense, it was to OJJDP's credit that it supported DSO efforts in these more resistant settings. One does not gain much credit for achieving easy success, but one also accepts higher odds for failure when tackling locations where philosophic resonance with program goals is weak. This will be

a crucial point when we describe the results of DSO II, for DSO II specifically tested the importance of philosophic resonance between state-level goals and community values. We turn now to the five cases of more resistant DSO I sites.

*Illinois* Although the Illinois program was located in several counties, its heart was in Cook County, meaning Chicago. Police and court resistance to any major intrusion led to a simple, limited program known as Alternatives to Detention. When a status offender was referred to court for a hearing, the child was not placed in prehearing detention. Instead, the child was assigned a volunteer, who agreed to monitor the child for the days prior to the scheduled hearing and assure his or her appearance at the appointed time. The volunteer or agency worker could return the status offender home, or to a foster home, and could plan whatever activities seemed appropriate to stay in touch and assure appearance. There were no other requirements—just to see to it that the accused showed up for court. Prevention, treatment, and control were side issues, secondary, even if considered, to making the court appearance.

*Connecticut* More than any other site, Connecticut saw to it that status offenders must first be actual court referrals prior to DSO program service. This stronger guarantee against the creaming off of “easy” cases was accomplished because of the power wielded by the presiding judge of the state’s juvenile court system and because of the collaboration of the local evaluation team. These two also designed the program for three levels of community-based interventions in the state’s three judicial districts, thereby offering a quasi-experimental design. However, at the same time, program eligibility was restricted to youth not on probation, charged with a delinquent offense, or currently in detention; only those providing both youth and parent consent could participate. In other words, the court guaranteed a program caseload of volunteer, “pure” status offenders and seemed to avoid genuine deinstitutionalization. The actual services offered (in other than the minimum service jurisdiction) were standard agency referrals for the most part—counseling in various forms and a smattering of legal advocacy. The client restrictions resulted in the smallest clientele of all eight sites.

*Delaware* This state offered another example of a court-run program, with power and control remaining in the court system. Included services were crisis intervention by court personnel, referrals to community agencies selected by the court, a legal advocacy program, close collaboration on placements with the state’s division of social services, and some shelter and foster home placements. All services, mostly of a standard variety, were initi-

ated by the court intake unit, which, however, tended not to divert chronic incorrigible and runaway cases. These were deemed deserving of adjudication.

*South Carolina* For political reasons, South Carolina was included among OJJDP's preferred sites. It used OJJDP's funds to augment services already provided to a variety of "at-risk" youth in what turned out to be a blatant exercise in net-widening. Clients were accepted as "in danger of becoming status offenders"; compare this with Connecticut's insistence upon detainable offenders. Services (for many youth not remotely in need) included residential placement, counseling with crisis intervention, and community-based recreation and mental health services. So intermingled did the OJJDP funds become with others aimed at youth minimally at danger of justice system involvement that South Carolina's DSO program was not even the diversion sort seen in other sites but broad prevention at best, scattered like buckshot across the counties.

*Clark County, Washington* If Illinois represented the least creative approach and South Carolina the least appropriate one, Clark County's program was perhaps the least ambitious. Serving the second smallest number of clients, Clark County merely added two people to its probation staff to handle status offender referrals and arranged for a voluntary parent counseling service in a local church. No genuine community alternatives to detention were undertaken.

#### DSO I CLIENTS

Over a period of approximately two years, these eight DSO I sites referred almost 20,000 youth to their programs. This number represents a lot of kids, a lot of service, and a lot of opportunities to demonstrate the successful deinstitutionalization and community absorption of troublesome youth. There were more females than males, typically 15 or 16 years old, but with almost as many in the 12-14 age group.

Unlike most court-relevant youth populations, two-thirds of the clients were white, and blacks constituted the next largest component at 27.5 percent. The most common status offense charge at the point of program referral was runaway, at 40.5 percent. Incorrigibility was next at 35.3 percent and truancy third at 28 percent. Almost half were referred by the police, and only 12.5 percent by the courts. Nuclear and single-parent households were equally represented at 35 and 33 percent, respectively, while reconstituted families accounted for 19 percent.

For readers accustomed to data on status offenders, there is nothing particularly striking in these data. Girls are a bit overrepresented, as are younger clients. Whites are in greater evidence than is usually the case in offender populations, and family problems—running away and incorrigibility—are preponderant. There is some evidence here of “creaming” off of easier cases, or alternatively of net widening, but the case is not yet strong.

We say “not yet” because of the following pivotal evidence. On average across all eight sites, these DSO clients being deinstitutionalized or provided services alternative to receiving detention had very minor police records—an average 1.33 charges on their arrest records. Since more than one charge can be listed per arrest, their prior arrests would yield an even lower figure. Here is proof positive of “creaming” by the programs: status offenders with zero, one, or two charges or arrests are seldom securely detained, and such was the case even in the mid-1970s, when deinstitutionalization and diversion were still growing reforms. These DSO programs were far too often accepting many clients who would not normally have been subjected to arrest or secure detention. As a South Carolina official put it, “We DSOed them.”

The range of prior charges is instructive. The most “severe” caseload was in Illinois—an average 2.81 prior charges. This was the site that offered detention alternatives only because of court and police resistance to the DSO goals. The lowest prior record figure was found, predictably, in South Carolina, where the DSO funds were folded into the state’s general welfare services. South Carolina clients averaged just 0.18 prior charges; in other words, the vast majority had never experienced a prior arrest.

This indication of programming attached to the wrong, or undeserving, youth clients is clearly a major failure in implementation. It will appear again in our DSO II data, which revealed many agencies to be serving status offending and nonoffending clients almost indistinguishably. It is a bit like treating patients for viral pneumonia who merely complain of the sniffles. Thus, for DSO II we will describe legislative attempts to view status offending clients as requiring justice system attention versus therapeutic attention versus no attention other than food, shelter, and social support.

#### DSO I RESULTS

None of the DSO I sites was willing to participate in a genuine experimental design as part of the evaluation: there could be no adequate control group that received no services. In each instance, however, the sites could yield, for comparative purposes, a similar set of status offenders who had been detained in the year before the program began. Thus, eight comparison groups

were assessed and compared to the eight sets of program clients with respect to the most critical issue—future delinquency, including more status offenses.

The results, one site at a time, were negligible—statistically non-significant differences. But aggregated across sites, the difference was significant; DSO clients on average recidivated at a higher rate than the comparison youth who had been subject to detention. This is not what had been hoped for in the sites, nor at OJJDP. Worse yet, the DSO clients were “softer”—they were more often girls than were the comparison youth; they were more likely to come from intact homes; most important, they had less serious offense histories, delinquent and status. Thus, if anything, they would have been predicted to reoffend at a lower rate than the comparison group, not at the higher rate actually recorded.

Again, as can be imagined, such results did not sit well with the professionals, the reformers, or OJJDP. Indeed, a national program that had been receiving wide publicity and was expected to be featured in the follow-up congressional hearings suddenly dropped out of sight. OJJDP declined to publish the completed work. The eight program modules were not widely disseminated. And when the Reagan administration took office, status offender deinstitutionalization was touted by the new OJJDP administration as failed liberalism and opened the door to DSO II.

#### DSO I SERVICES

Another discouraging aspect of DSO I was a set of conclusions about client services. We analyzed the data to determine which aspect of the program was most related to the outcomes for the clients: the site of the program, characteristics of the agencies that delivered the services, characteristics of the client youth, or the character of the services offered. This multilevel analysis is far too complex for description here—again, the interested reader can consult the Kobrin and Klein volume—but the results are crucial to report.

Client characteristics were the most clearly related to outcomes. Age, type of status offense, father’s occupational status, gender, and prior offenses were significantly related to recidivism. Least important was the character of the services offered. How discouraging a message for the service-delivery professions—your clients’ characteristics most clearly predict their future behavior, but what you do for them, to them, or with them does not. Nor does the kind of service-delivery agency make much difference.

Again, this is a devastating set of findings. Had creaming and net-widening not taken place, perhaps the story could have been different. But

these were, far too often, the wrong youth, given services for which little case could be made.

And what were these services? First and foremost was counseling: crisis counseling, family counseling, individual counseling—what one of our colleagues refers to as “talk therapy.” Counseling as the *only* service was predominant in four of the eight sites; diversion and diagnostic evaluation were also present but, when their surface was scratched, generally equated with counseling.

Other modalities appeared only in one location or another with even moderate frequency: shelter care, foster care, multiservice centers, outreach. What this suggests is that counseling in one form or another was seen by practitioners as the most appropriate service modality, almost irrespective of client type, and certainly irrespective of the large proportion of clients whose documented behavior histories could call into question the need for any therapeutic intrusions. We are reminded of our oft-quoted diversion counselor, who exclaimed: “I can’t believe that 15 minutes with me wouldn’t help any kid!”

As for other categories of “service,” such as youth advocacy, provision of new opportunities (job training, tutoring, etc.), or reform of service agency systems (schools, courts, welfare services, apprentice programs, etc.), little was noted in these eight sites. The problem was always assumed to reside within the child, or at most within the family system, but seldom outside in the contexts of day-to-day life. Status offense reform, though couched as getting kids out of secure confinement, was translated into reform of the kids. No evidence was adduced in DSO I to support this emphasis.

#### RUNAWAYS IN DSO I

Data from the eight DSO sites confirmed once again what had been demonstrated quite often: most youngsters involved in multiple illegal acts are generalists rather than specialists. That is, the multiple offender does not show a pattern of theft only, or violence only, or vandalism only but rather reveals a versatile pattern of offending—a little theft, some vandalism, a fight, several status offenses, or some such “cafeteria-style” pattern (Klein, 1974).

Despite concentrating on youth specifically studied because of status offending, DSO I found that the bulk of its youth that showed a multiple offending pattern did so in cafeteria style. Their prior offenses and recidivist offenses were as likely as not to be petty thefts or vandalisms as they were to be running away, incorrigibility, or habitual truancy.

This statement is far more than merely an empirical finding: *it constitutes a direct challenge to policymakers and practitioners.* Most legislators in this

arena pass laws about status offenders, not status offenses; most practitioners, from judges and cops to psychologists and social workers, make recommendations about status offenders, not about kids referred for a status offending episode. The idea is that there is a distinct category of kids who are status offenders, who differ from delinquents. The implication is that, for such a category of persons, there must be appropriate categories of response. Locate the status offender, apply the appropriate remedy, and reduce or eliminate the offense behavior.

The trouble is, the data simply do not reflect this notion. Most youngsters who commit more than one illegal act are versatile offenders. The particular acts for which we apprehend or refer them are in some sense random or accidental—it could just as well have been theft, property destruction, or drug use as truancy, running away, or drinking.

Yet our services are based on a status offender—a type of youth—and this may help explain the failures in DSO I. Eight sites applied therapeutic modalities to youngsters for which they were inappropriate. The “pure” status offender, the client who committed two or more offenses, all of which were status offenses, was clearly in the minority.

However, there did emerge two rather stable patterns, both related to clients referred for running away. The first, mirroring other research in the field, was that most runners had just one episode; they ran from home once but not again. That is, the most common pattern of recidivism was nonrecidivism, or desistance. There is an obvious service implication here. If most runners are episodic at worst, there may be little call for professional interventions. Youth and family manage to resolve the issue, at least in the sense that chronic running does not occur.

The second runaway pattern, far less common and terribly hard to predict, is of the “pure” runaway, the youth who runs more than once but does not get involved in other illegal acts at any troublesome rate. These repeat runaways, some of them truly chronic, do come to constitute a small but distinct category for which specific treatment modalities might be adopted. These runners were nondelinquent and not involved in other status offenses for the most part.

What do we know about them? First, in terms of program response, runaways generally were among the most difficult clients, as were pure status offenders, males, and clients with prior offenses. Runaways generally were the most common referrals and the most common re-referrals, the most likely DSO client. They were most likely to come from distressed families and least likely to benefit from brief interventions.

In short, runaways present the most difficult challenge to DSO I programming. But again, within the runaway group there was that small proportion of “pure” runners—more likely female than male, more likely to have prior



offenses (status offenses in particular). This is important for service considerations because hidden in the many demonstrated service failures in DSO I was one consistent though not strong positive finding that foster care or group homes may have been effective in reducing recidivism.

Who is most likely to be assigned to group homes or foster homes? In many cases, it was the pure, chronic runaway. It makes intuitive sense, of course. Here is a kid having a terrible time at home. Counseling and multi-service modalities, the data tell us, made matters worse if anything. But getting that kid out of the distressed home and into a (hopefully) more stable residential situation may allow for a period of reflection and adjustment. Although not a happy thought, it may also be that living in the street is for some of these youngsters a healthier opportunity than attempting to stay in that dysfunctional home. This is an issue raised again in our DSO II materials.

For now, it is important to keep the following points in mind because they will appear again in later chapters:

- Most status offenders are also delinquents; they do not compose a special category.
- The toughest status offending client is the one who runs from home.
- A minority of runners are “pure,” special, chronic, and the real challenge to law and practice within a far larger category who are indeed troublesome but not truly serious.
- For runaways, the most consistently applied service (psychological counseling) is more likely to be harmful than helpful, while the most expensive service (long-term residential care) may be most promising.

These are not messages to soothe the souls of legislators or practitioners. They must therefore be attended to with extra care, not set aside in favor of practice as usual. DSO II will drive this lesson home once again.

### *California's 1977 Reform Law*

While the DSO I programs were getting under way in the mid-1970s, various state legislators were also giving serious consideration to juvenile justice reform. In large part, this was attributable to the funding carrots dangled before them by the 1974 federal reform act. More than any other states, Washington and California developed reform packages that truly epitomized the national trends in bifurcating minor or status offenders and serious or delinquent offenders.

Assembly Bill 3121 emerged from the California legislature at the very end of 1976 and became law on January 1, 1977. The process tells us much about rationality in policymaking because for almost two years various bills

were formulated and submitted with the intent of reforming one aspect or another of the state's approach to juvenile offenders. But these bills were for the most part disparate in focus and unrelated to each other. Several of them emerged slowly with strong sponsorship, but even after many months of haggling and committee hearings, no single approach could be hammered out.

Three legislators represented the modal positions: Julian Dixon for serious offenders, Alan Sieroty for status offenders, and Art Torres for a mid-position. The 1976 legislature was approaching adjournment, so Sieroty, the committee chairman, sat down with five other committee members for lunch on the day of the final hearings. He presented the twelve principal provisions of the three competing bills, with the rule that four out of six votes would place a provision in the final, single bill, AB 3121. Eleven provisions made the cut.

This political compromise, containing compatible but not complementary liberal and conservative provisions, went on to the state senate and was deliberated to some extent in time for passage on the very last day of the legislative session. It was signed by the governor and was presented to the public as comprehensive juvenile justice reform.

In fact, it was a compromise of the sort that reads, "If I get what I want, you can have what you want." In essence, liberals in California and throughout the nation were saying, "If you let us deinstitutionalize status offenders and expand community treatment for minor offenders, we'll give you the serious and chronic cases to do with as you see fit." Conservatives were saying, "Let us crack down on the serious and chronic offenders and bring the authority of the justice system to bear on them, and you can have your status offenders for your diversion and treatment programs."

Such mutual accommodation (political as well as philosophical) rests, however, on the assumption that there are two different kinds of offenders. As it was built into the 1974 act, so it was built into AB 3121. There are status offenders and there are delinquents, sufficiently different that they are answerable to different approaches—"soft" for status offenders, "hard" for delinquents. But as we indicated earlier and has been documented often (Erickson, 1979; Thomas, 1976; Klein, 1974), it just ain't so. Leaving aside youngsters who commit one or two offenses, most offenders are criminally versatile; cafeteria-style offending is the norm.

The political compromise in effect represented Solomon's two biblical mothers tearing at the same child. Often, status offenders are neglected by their parents, as are some delinquent offenders. Runaways—at least the chronic ones—may be involved in criminal offenses in order to survive on the streets. And many a delinquent has status offenses in his or her repertoire of past events. Political compromises may be useful, but they may also

mask important conceptual realities, in this case realities that have strong implications for prevention, treatment, and control of offenders.

#### THE PROVISIONS

Most of the important provisions of California's reform legislation strengthened the hands of the conservatives, giving more power to law enforcement to deal with delinquents. The district attorney, not the probation officer as before, became the filer of delinquency petitions with the juvenile court. The D.A. was now to appear in all hearings to represent society against the juvenile. If law enforcement objected that a case had not been filed, it could now appeal directly to the D.A. Pretrial detention of delinquents became easier. Before the legislation was passed, only an "immediate and urgent necessity" could justify pretrial detention; now a "reasonable [undefined] necessity" could justify it. Finally, it became dramatically easier to seek a trial for a 16- or 17-year-old juvenile in adult court and to subject such a juvenile to incarceration in adult facilities (jail and prison) for a variety of serious offenses.

The trade-off for the liberals came in only three major provisions. First, status offenders could not be detained in secure (locked) facilities, although an exception was soon passed by the legislature to detain runaways for one to three days to check for outstanding warrants and find the parents, to whom the runner could be returned. Second, nonsecure community facilities were strongly encouraged for status offenders, but the legislation allocated no funds to bring this about. Third, minor offenders (not just status offenders) were to have expanded home supervision programs and lower caseloads in probation than had heretofore been true. Since deinstitutionalization was already federally mandated, and since no money was provided for community treatment, it seems clear that the California compromise was heavily weighted in favor of the conservative approach to handling juvenile offenders.

#### SELECTED CONSEQUENCES FOR STATUS OFFENDERS

An assessment of the effects of AB 3121 was undertaken by a research team including several of the DSO I and DSO II researchers. Similar issues were obviously involved. Pertinent as background to our DSO II descriptions are the following conclusions.

- The status offender deinstitutionalization provisions produced confusion, consternation, and different responses among the police throughout the state. Many interpreted it as meaning youth could no longer be arrested for status offenses and therefore ignored them. Although the interpretation

was patently incorrect—arrest is not secure detention—the result was an increased deceleration in status offense arrests beyond that already taking place. That is, such arrests were already declining, the legislation reflected this trend, and some misinterpretation accentuated the effect.

- A portion of the above resulted from some officers' belief that the new law tied their hands. When parents complained of their children's incorrigibility or reported they were missing or runaways, some officers responded that they could no longer do anything about it. Parents would have to handle their own problems. Again, this was not a correct interpretation of the new law.

- These patterns also resulted in fewer referrals to probation and courts. Often, the increased bed space in detention centers was subsequently filled by detaining other youth for longer periods of time.

- To retain secure detention power over status offenders, many police and court intake workers "relabelled" them as delinquents or as dependent or neglected youth who could be detained legally. Truants were labeled trespassers; runaways became delinquency "suspects" of one sort or another; incorrigibles became neglected youth from inadequate families. Other examples could be adduced. State welfare departments noted an increase in dependent or neglected youth, who actually resembled status offenders. Mental hospitals had an upsurge of adolescent clients with psychiatric diagnoses of ambiguous character such as "runaway reaction to adolescence." In other words, where there's a will, there's a way to detain legally undetainable youth. This response, however, was nowhere near the magnitude of the non-arrest response.

- Juvenile officers in many police departments, given the lower arrest numbers, were shifted to other assignments. Other juvenile officers, after first complaining of losing their "hammer" on status offenders, soon breathed a sigh of relief at not having to deal with these "Mickey Mouse" cases and turned their attention to cases with better crime-fighting character—juvenile gangs, younger missing children who were likely to be involved in foul play, juvenile drug pushers, and so on. Juvenile officers, sometimes called the "Kiddie Korps" or "Diaper Dicks," could reassert their crime-fighting image with the diminished attention to "cream puff" cases.

- In another effort to reestablish some detention, some judges lobbied strongly for special exceptions in cases of repeat runaways who were on probation. If a runner was placed on probation with special provisions—orders not to associate with bad companions, to stay home after curfew, to obey all his or her parents' requirements, not to skip class, and so forth—and that runner violated any such provisions, he or she could then be securely detained for violation of the terms of probation (so-called court order violation.) Such provisions of probation made it quite easy to arrange for

court order violations when desired; this was not in the spirit, nor was it the intent, of AB 3121, but later corrective legislation made it legal in California and many other states.

- Although the intent of the legislation was to encourage greater use of community alternatives, no funds for this were provided. Savings from the effects of deinstitutionalization were theoretically to be used for this purpose, but no mechanisms to bring that about were enacted. Thus, there was little increase in shelter care, family counseling, restitution, work programs, crisis resolution homes, or other nonsecure approaches. This was true despite the strong lobbying by the very agencies and treatment organizations that should have provided such services. In two of the most populous counties, requests for proposals to create community alternatives were developed and widely disseminated; only one response was received. The reasons for poor agency response were several: funds were not provided, various regulations for agency establishment or expansion were impediments, and clients with status offenses proved to be rebellious, resistant, and certainly harder to serve than the usual family or volunteer referral.

What do we learn from such results? First and foremost, deinstitutionalization can be implemented legislatively. This will result not only in reduced secure detention but also in reduced control of many sorts—fewer arrests, fewer referrals to probation and court, and fewer referrals for community-based services.

It also became clear that there were ways around DSO laws if and when practitioners seek increased control over particular youngsters. Clients can be relabeled “up” to delinquents or “down” to dependent/neglected and mental illness categories. They can be subjected to court order violations (especially in the case of runaways).

Finally, laws that mandate change succeed in establishing it better than laws that merely encourage it. Laws that do not provide funds and mechanisms for change are unlikely to effect much change.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR RUNAWAYS

As did the DSO I experience, AB 3121 revealed that runaways—especially chronic runners—constitute the most severe challenge to legislators, the justice system, and the treatment systems. Practitioners are likely to want to retain control of runaways more than any other category of status offenders. Two extreme examples set the tone.

- At one large detention center, with security provided by locked doors and barbed wire fencing, status offenders were placed in a section from which the locks were removed but the barbed wire remained.
- At another detention center, an unused section was turned into an open

“crash pad” for runaways. Probation officers provided food, shelter, and counseling, and youngsters were required only to call their parents to assure them they were alive and well. But one runner committed suicide in the facility, while others rejected counseling attempts, much to the consternation of the counselors. The solution was to require all clients to change into “county clothing” while in the facility to permit laundering of street clothes for hygienic purposes. But clients were then informed that to leave the facility in county clothing constituted theft, for which they could be securely detained.

As noted earlier, police responded with a mixture of confusion, regret, and relief at being released from some responsibility for runaways. Courts tended to resist deinstitutionalization for runaways more than for any other form of status offending. Both police and courts had to redefine runaways as a different kind of client requiring a different way of dealing with them.

Practitioners generally found themselves caught between two poles—liberalism and paternalism. For practitioners, children are moving targets; status offenders are ambiguous moving targets; and runaways are especially challenging, ambiguous moving targets. They resist efforts to help them, yet they are most likely to be victims, and are seen as requiring help. Worse yet, some of them conjure up the image of Huckleberry Finn, an image we find secretly appealing. As youth helpers, are we best to leave them alone for fear of overreacting, to treat them as disturbed, troubled youth requiring therapy, or to treat them as potential delinquents who need sanctioning? But we must also ask if there is a single category of youth that are runaways. If so, the above questions can stand alone. If not, then we must seek different approaches for different kinds of runners.

Out of the AB 3121 research came an illustrative categorization from the creative work of our colleague Margaret Little (1981). Little suggested that a major aspect of the running incident derived from whether runners viewed their parents, as well as themselves, as competent to handle their mutual affairs. A simple, fourfold categorization accounts for a range of behaviors, from that of runners who seek freedom from home constraints to that of those who run yet seek structure.

- Runaways who profess their own competence to live independently and deny their parents' competence to raise them. Programs of “family preservation” or police responses to return these youngsters home are likely to engender repeat running. Shelter care seems appropriate.
- Runaways who profess both their own and their parents' competence. These are most likely one-time runners for whom family counseling may be sufficient to adjust parent-child relationships.
- Runaways who do not feel competent to make it on their own and do

accept the competence of their parents. This, too, would seem to be a group of children that can be returned to their homes, but such youth may be particularly susceptible to the belief that alternative peer support is "equivalent" to the home situation.

- Runaways who do not feel competent to make it on their own but also feel that their parents lack the competence to deal with their needs. Alternative living arrangements seem appropriate for this category—suitable foster homes, short-term group homes, long-term residential centers.

This categorization is unique among various others because it starts with the child's perceptions. Services are first offered to the child, in the sense that detection, arrest, or referral is generally of the child and only later—if at all—of the parent. But regardless of the reader's response to this categorization, the more important point is that runaways come in many shapes; no one approach—turning them loose, detaining them, treating them—is likely to suffice. The runaways and runaway services we encounter in DSO II should be considered in the light of this human diversity.

#### THE WASHINGTON EXPERIENCE

We mentioned that California and Washington legislative reform in the late 1970s best epitomized the distinction made between status and delinquent offenders. Although using research procedures of a very different sort, political scientist Anne Schneider (1984) found in Washington a rather similar set of results for status offending youth to those found in California. First, and most important, there was a major decline in status offender referrals to court, including referrals for runaways. Second, while Washington did not intend a decline in police contacts with status offenders, it got it, just as California did. Schneider also found evidence of relabeling for the sake of reasserting secure detention. Finally, she noted that even delinquency dispositions became more severe under the new law if the youngster involved showed accompanying evidence of runaway. In many ways, the issue breaks down to the question of whether in California, or Washington, or the eight sites of DSO I, one searches for factors that might explain the significant failure of deinstitutionalization programs to achieve their stated ends. Because we can anticipate similar failure in the context of DSO II, we offer five such factors that seemed to emerge from these earlier studies in the 1970s during the height of fervor around DSO as a reform.

First is what we call *philosophic resonance*, the degree to which the legislation is in agreement with the underlying philosophies of those meant to carry out the legislation. Clearly, in both DSO I and AB 3121, we have

examples of resistant practitioners—evidence of insufficient philosophic resonance.

Second is the *clarity* of the legislative message or intent. Lack of clarity leads to alternative interpretations and conflicting practices. The DSO II project started, as we shall demonstrate, with an intensive effort to establish legislative intent and level of clarity.

Third is the degree to which there is a legislative *mandate* for action versus strong authorization, or encouragement, or permission for the activities suggested. For example, in AB 3121 DSO was mandated, but community treatment was merely encouraged.

Fourth is the matter of *discretion*, the degree to which organizations gain or lose their power to act under new legislation. Under AB 3121, probation lost and the D.A. gained. In DSO I, we saw several sites in which programs were designed to *retain* the power and discretion of the courts even though courts lost their ability to control status offenders via detention.

Fifth is *funding*. It will come as no surprise that dollars buy programs. All eight site programs in DSO I were “bought” with the infusion of federal funds. Services were initiated or expanded with those funds, and competition for them was intense. This contrasts strikingly with the California legislation, which suggested that funds released by the reduction in detention space would become available for community space. All the counties had to do was monitor the exchange, a visionary expectation that borders on the politically ridiculous. But reform bills formulated at a last-minute luncheon will easily pass over concerns for legislative implementation.

These five factors—philosophic resonance, clarity of message, level of mandate, discretion, and funding—combine to affect the likelihood that new legislation will be enacted as the framers hoped (if we take their new laws at face value). This is critical to our approach in DSO II, in which we ask explicitly to what extent legislative intent becomes articulated in forms and levels of community service. Further, if there are differences in intent across states, we ask whether or not those differences emerge in the provision of services. If they do, we have a case of legislative policy well implemented. If not, we have a case of legislative gaming and community agencies maintaining the status quo.



## 2

# Background Literature and Conceptual Approach

A book of this sort normally starts with a review of relevant research literature and then moves on to any prior studies that feed directly into the new material to be reported. We have reversed their order, starting in chapter 1 with a brief history and then moving into the studies most particularly relevant to DSO II. Thus, we presented the results of DSO I and the AB 3121 studies, rather than the research background, to entice the reader into the issues to be addressed.

But the research is important. Its relevance is more readily assessed, however, in the light of the historical background. Because DSO II was formulated in the mid-1980s, we review the literature published up until that time. This chapter reports the literature that influenced the design of DSO II. What came later is a different story for telling at a different time.

Status offenders are youth brought under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system for behaviors that would not be illegal if engaged in by adults. We have noted that the most frequent examples of status offenses are running away, habitual truancy, alcohol use, incorrigibility, and curfew violations. Behavior that may be included within the status offense category is quite diverse, and there are important differences among jurisdictions as to how these behaviors are defined, as well as variations in subsequent legal responses (White, 1976; Isenstadt, 1977). In a few states, for instance, cigarette smoking is included.

The treatment of status offenders has been controversial from the very inception of the juvenile court (Kobrin and Klein, 1983). Some have argued that legal control of status offenders is a gross violation of children's rights

(Hickey, 1977; Ketcham, 1977). Others have claimed that early legal intervention with status offenders is society's best hope to forestall future delinquent behavior and to reduce the victimization of both children and adults (Martin and Snyder, 1976; Arthur, 1977).

By the time Public Law 93-415, known as the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, was enacted, a sizable body of research literature about specific DSO programs and policies existed. However, these studies reported on specific programs more than on the reform movement *per se*. They did not provide an adequate assessment of the impact of DSO over time. Moreover, prior research did not examine jurisdictions that rejected the DSO policy thrust and embraced alternative policies. These other jurisdictions require examination in order to provide comparison with the reform-oriented jurisdictions. One purpose of DSO II, therefore, was to produce a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the impact of DSO across various state and local jurisdictions representing alternative approaches.

### The Evolving Federal Policy on Status Offenders

The 1967 Presidential Crime Commission called for removal of status offenders from secure custody and for widespread implementation of diversion programs for status offenders and minor law violators. During the 1970s, a number of states had been redrafting their juvenile codes to alter traditional patterns of handling status offenders (Rubin, 1979:37-40). California took the lead in 1961 by creating a special status offender category (Section 601) within the California Welfare and Institutions code. New York followed in 1962 by enacting a family court act that separated delinquents from "persons in need of supervision" (PINS). In the next few years, Illinois, Florida, Ohio, Georgia, and Colorado adopted statutory provisions in keeping with the new doctrine of legal separation of delinquents and status offenders. Other states—Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Indiana, for example—transferred jurisdiction for selected status offenses, such as truancy or ungovernability, to the dependency sections of their legal codes.

Foundations for a federal deinstitutionalization movement were grounded in humanitarian, due process, and economic concerns (Zatz, 1982). In July 1974, the U.S. Congress passed the JJDPA, following several years of research and hearings conducted by the United States Senate Judiciary Committee. The new law called upon the federal government to provide leadership to the states to encourage diversion, local treatment options, increased use of private agency programs, reduced juvenile incarceration, and expanded prevention services. The JJDPA also required that all states wishing to receive

grant funds must “provide within two years after submission of the plan that juveniles who are charged with or who have committed offenses that would not be criminal if committed by an adult, shall not be placed in juvenile detention or correctional facilities, but must be placed in shelter facilities” (Public Law 93-415, Section 223[a][12]).

Concurrently, Congress passed legislation providing grant funds via the Department of Health and Human Services (known then as Health, Education, and Welfare) for community-based programs for runaways and for reform of the nation’s foster care system. Other provisions of the JJDPDA required states to prohibit incarcerated delinquents from having regular contact with incarcerated adults.

The last trend in federal policy in the 1980s was toward reduced concern over the deinstitutionalization of status offenders and more focus upon serious and violent juvenile offenders. This shift was justified by many critics of the original DSO movement on several grounds:

- that substantial compliance with the DSO goals of the JJDPDA had occurred;
- that public concern over violent and serious youth crime had grown;
- that the scientific evidence supporting the wisdom of DSO was flimsy, at best, and subsequent research had not supported the value of DSO policies and programs;
- that DSO programs had not reduced recidivism;
- that DSO programs and policies may have inadvertently led to increased victimization of children because the expected alternative community resources never materialized; and
- that deinstitutionalized status offenders had, in reality, been shifted over to other incarcerative settings in public welfare and mental health systems.

There was reason to consider whether the original goals of DSO should be fundamentally altered or even abandoned. Moreover, there were growing community pressures to expand juvenile justice system efforts to respond to the problems of truancy and runaways. This evolution of federal and state policy, therefore, made it extremely significant and timely to conduct an objective assessment of current approaches to status offending behavior.

## National Statistical Trends on Status Offenders

The issue was not only whether deinstitutionalization had taken place but also what had resulted from it. In part, we can deal with the level of deinsti-

tutionalization rather easily by reference to available aggregated data sets such as the following.

Data from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) showed a large and consistent decline in the number of persons under 18 arrested for status offenses within six years after the JJDP, from 563,709 to 204,803. Arrests for running away dropped by more than half (53 percent), and arrests for curfew and loitering violations declined by 35 percent. While some of this decline was due to the declining U.S. youth population, it was also clear that police were arresting fewer juveniles for status offenses (Teilmann and Klein, 1979; Krisberg and Schwartz, 1983). While the exact magnitude of the national decline in status offender arrests is difficult to determine because law enforcement reporting of status offenses to the UCR is uneven across jurisdictions, in individual states with good criminal justice data systems, the decline in status arrests was clear.

Court data make the point as well. The National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) provides national data on the juvenile court. In 1975, NCJJ estimated that there were 356,000 status offender referrals to the juvenile court. By 1982, the estimated number of status offense referrals declined by 37 percent to approximately 223,000. These court data also revealed that status offenders were less likely to have formal petitions filed (41 percent in 1975 compared to 29 percent in 1982). Further, between 1975 and 1982 the proportion of status offender referrals detained by the court dropped from 40 percent to 12 percent. Comparable data on adjudication decisions and case dispositions do not exist for the period 1975–1982. However, data from 1982 show that only 16 percent of status offender referrals resulted in a sustained petition.

A final source of national data on the processing of status offenders comes from the semiannual survey of children in public and private correctional facilities. Regularly known as "Children in Custody" (CIC), this statistical series provides a profile of the nation's juvenile correctional system.

Table 2.1 presents data extracted from the 1974–85 CIC surveys and shows a 49 percent decline in status offenders found in public juvenile correctional facilities. During that same period, status offenders held in private facilities increased by 22 percent. Combining statistics from both public and private facilities reveals that between 1974 and 1982 the number of incarcerated status offenders declined from 9,613 to 8,442, a drop of 12 percent. These data must be interpreted with great care. For example, the data from 1974 contain a high percentage of incarcerated youth whose legal status was unknown. Moreover, status offenders held in adult facilities were excluded from the data. There was far greater consistency in the data collection definitions and methods employed in the 1977, 1979, 1982, and 1985 surveys. Between 1977 and 1982, the total number of status offenders in public and

TABLE 2.1. Juveniles Held in Public and Private Correctional Facilities, 1974–1985

	1974	1977	1979	1982	1985
<b>Public Facilities</b>					
Status offenders	4,644	4,916	2,789	2,390	2,293
Delinquents	31,270	37,846	39,519	45,357	46,086
Others/unknown <sup>a</sup>	11,354	1,334	926	961	953
Total	47,268	44,096	43,234	48,708	49,322
<b>Private Facilities</b>					
Status offenders	4,469	7,438	6,296	6,052	NA
Delinquents	9,874	9,484	9,607	10,712	NA
Others/unknown <sup>a</sup>	16,906	12,148	12,785	14,626	NA
Total	31,749	29,070	28,688	31,390	34,000 (est.)
Combined totals	79,017	73,166	71,922	80,098	83,322 (est.)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Children in Custody.

<sup>a</sup> Others/unknown includes youth who are dependency and neglect cases, voluntary commitments, other nonoffenders, and cases where legal status was unknown. Data for 1985 public facilities place the number of status offenders at 2,293. Data for private facilities were not available.

private facilities declined by 32 percent. At the same time, these data reveal a sharp increase of 20 percent in the number of delinquents in public juvenile correctional facilities. This increase leads to the speculation that some status offenders had been relabeled as delinquents and simply reincarcerated under a different legal auspice. The 1977–82 public juvenile facility data also showed a drop in incarceration of 56 percent for male status offenders compared to 47 percent for females. These data showed a decline of about 50 percent in the number of status offenders in secure facilities and a general movement of status offenders toward less secure institutional settings.

In summary, then, aggregated police, court, and correctional data all pointed in the same direction. Official processing of status offenders had changed appreciably, generally in the direction of less control.

### Research on State Laws, Policies, and Approaches

Following the passage of the JJDP, a number of state and local jurisdictions initiated efforts to effect compliance and compromise with the act. The result was a diverse and shifting array of programs and policies that defy simple categorization. Hutzler and Vereb (1980) conducted a review of state laws in relation to the federal DSO mandates, but there was no updated published statutory review available as DSO II got under way.

As Zatz (1982) has noted, the proponents of DSO have often disagreed on the precise meaning of the deinstitutionalization of status offenders: "One view stipulates only the removal of inappropriately institutionalized children; the other not only wants removal but also demands the provision of alternative services. The contrast is essentially between the objective of reducing occasions for intervention in the lives of these youths and the objective of modifying the form that such intervention should take" (Zatz, 1982:30).

This fundamental difference in perspective influenced the methods used to translate particular DSO policies into action. Perhaps appropriately, OJJDP's DSO program guidelines promulgated in 1975 left the matter of deinstitutionalization open to state and local interpretations of the theoretical, administrative, and policy issues involved (Zatz, 1982).

Accordingly, studies of DSO have reported marked differences in various approaches to deinstitutionalization among states and among local jurisdictions within individual states (Handler and Zatz, 1982). This multiplicity of approaches produced a variety of effects on clients, social service agencies, and the justice system. Three broad approaches had been used: decarceration, decarceration with diversion, and divestiture of juvenile court jurisdiction. Assessing the impact of DSO, therefore, requires an understanding of the approaches used in particular jurisdictions.

### *Decarceration*

California provides one of the best-researched examples of the decarceration strategy. While California state law severely limits the detention of status offenders in secure correctional institutions and detention facilities, state law does not reduce the jurisdictional control exercised by the juvenile court (Handler and Zatz, 1982). The juvenile court may order placement of status offenders in nonsecure settings, probation, or a wide range of treatment services (Kobrin and Klein, 1983; Schneider, 1984). However, as noted earlier, funding for these services has not been forthcoming. Also as noted earlier, in some states with a basic "decarceration" policy, detention is authorized if a status offender violates the placement or other order of the court.

### *Diversion*

A second major strategy of DSO hinges on the diversion of status offenders out of the justice system. In this approach, deinstitutionalization includes preventing the placement of status offenders into secure custody via a system

of alternative referrals. Diversion strategies often coexist with decarceration statutes (e.g., see case studies in Handler and Zatz, 1982; Kobrin and Klein, 1983). Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, among other states, also approached DSO through an extensive effort at diversion.

Critical to an understanding of diversion strategies is evaluation of the points of exit from the juvenile justice system and entry into alternative programs. Diversion may originate with the police, thus bypassing the intake and adjudication functions of the court. However, even as police stop referring status offenders to the court, other referral sources such as parents and schools may increase the number of status offenders coming into the juvenile court.

Proponents of diversion have asserted that community-based agencies provide superior services to troubled youth. Yet this argument was not confirmed by the DSO I research. Community agencies are often underfunded and understaffed, possessing few specialized treatment resources for status offenders. Moreover, diversion strategies have been repeatedly challenged as “widening the net”—that is, accepting referrals of youth who would not have come to court previously, as in the South Carolina case. Through net-widening activities, diversion programs may actually increase the number of youth under formal state control (Krisberg and Austin, 1981).

### *Divestiture*

The third DSO strategy legislated in Washington, Alaska, Maine, and to some extent Illinois has been called divestiture. This approach removes status offenders from juvenile court jurisdiction. By definition, then, divestiture represents a deliberate policy of judicial nonintervention in the lives and circumstances of status offenders. We will see an example of this in DSO II in the state of Maine.

Proponents of this approach include various prestigious task forces and commissions (e.g., President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, 1967). While the federal JJDPA mandated community-based services and treatment alternatives for status offenders, divestiture is principally concerned with ending juvenile court jurisdiction over status offenders. Nevertheless, as Schneider (1984) observes, divestiture has also included efforts to provide nonsecure residential facilities, crisis intervention, and other forms of treatment services for status offenders who are excluded from the juvenile justice system. Logan and Rausch (1985) argue on the basis of the Connecticut experience that DSO without concomitant divestiture is pointless in practice.

## Research on the Impact of DSO

Deinstitutionalization policy and programmatic reforms need to be assessed from a variety of perspectives. At a minimum, DSO should be examined in terms of: (1) consequences for the juvenile justice system; (2) effects on alternative youth-serving agencies; and (3) the impact of DSO on the future behavior of status offenders. The extent to which DSO strategies have had positive or negative consequences for the lives of young people and our social institutions is by no means conclusive. Several studies of DSO have been conducted, and the works of Handler and Zatz (1982), Kobrin and Klein (1983), and Schneider (1984) stand out as particularly informative reviews of DSO policy implementation. These research efforts portray deinstitutionalization as producing mixed effects across different jurisdictions. These differences may well be due to the strategic policy actions taken as well as the state juvenile codes defining status offenses as a separate legal category, as delinquent, or as within dependent and neglect categories (Handler and Zatz, 1982).

### *Consequences for the Juvenile Justice System*

#### IMPACT ON SECURE CONFINEMENT

Handler and Zatz (1982) reported that prohibition of the placement of status offenders in secure institutions after adjudication was substantially accomplished in the states they selected for study. This finding is essentially similar to those reported in connection with DSO I for the twelve local sites of the OJJDP-funded DSO program, although those sites were less successful (see Hellum, 1983).<sup>1</sup> Only one site was common to these two major research efforts.

While the data from the CIC survey showed a drop of 46 percent between 1977 and 1982 in the total number of status offenders in secure custody, other studies have implied that status offenders are simply being shifted over to other public (Gilman, 1976) and private systems of confinement (Vinter, Downs, and Hall, 1975; Guttridge, 1979; Lerman, 1980; Schwartz et al., 1984). It has also been shown that some status offenders are being confined in public facilities by escalating their charges to the delinquent offense categories (Teilmann and Klein, 1980; Schneider, 1984).

Preadjudication detention of status offenders has been prohibited or severely limited in many jurisdictions, including California, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. Handler and Zatz (1982) report that despite some reduction in detention following the implementation of DSO, there was a groundswell of opposition to the prohibition in the seven states they studied.



Kobrin and Klein (1983) report similar findings with respect to detention; five of twelve DSO I sites increased their number of status offender detentions.

Schneider (1984) reviewed thirty-eight studies of DSO policies and programs in nineteen states. She concluded that a substantial number of youth continued to be detained despite gains selected jurisdictions made in compliance with federal and state prohibition standards. The extent to which jurisdictions removed status offenders from detention seems more dependent upon state legislative action and local initiatives, including judicial administrative practices, than upon federal guidelines or the financial incentives of the JJDP (Kobrin and Klein, 1983; Krisberg and Schwartz, 1983).

#### WIDENING THE NET

The evidence is conflicting on whether DSO programs produced net-widening. For instance, the DSO I research compared the mean numbers of recorded offenses of the pre- and post-DSO program populations. At virtually all DSO sites, the programs brought into contact with the justice system numbers of youth who would not have been contacted before the DSO program. Good examples are offered by Spergel, Reamer, and Lynch (1980) and by Rojek (1978). But net-widening is a difficult phenomenon to pinpoint with official data, and the DSO reform is not unique in this regard. Past reform efforts such as diversion and delinquency prevention programs have been criticized for their lack of precision in identifying appropriate target populations (Blomberg, 1977; Klein, 1979). This imprecision in client selection criteria is particularly troublesome for status offenders whose prior behaviors and histories contain a mix of dependency, parental neglect, and delinquent activities (Scull, 1977; Krisberg and Austin, 1981; National Council on Crime and Delinquency [NCCD], 1981; Schneider, McKelvey, and Schram, 1983). The lack of a clear definition of the appropriate client for a program often leads to creaming, as has been noted before.

Both the causes and implications of net-widening are difficult to sort out. Nevertheless, they require investigation so we can comprehend the consequences of various DSO strategies. In DSO I, we attributed net-widening in Spokane, Washington, to increased law enforcement contacts with status offenders who were diverted directly or through the juvenile court to public service delivery agencies. The analysis for South Carolina, however, focused on the increased activity of service delivery agencies to bolster client referrals from sources other than the justice system. The National Delinquency Prevention Evaluation reported a similar finding about youth agencies recruiting new clients who were not necessarily "high risks" for further delinquent activity (NCCD, 1981).

## RELABELING

Relabeling is a further significant issue noted by deinstitutionalization research (Zatz and Stookey, 1982). Usually it has been defined as adjudicating youth as delinquents or dependency and neglect cases who, prior to the reform, had been treated by the juvenile court as status offenders (Schneider, 1984). The deinstitutionalization movement, however, may have fostered another relabeling process. For example, in Louisiana, approved nonsecure home placements that were willing to accept status offenders only influenced the adjudicatory process. Relabeling delinquents as children in need of supervision permitted greater access to such programs on an indeterminate basis (Sheley and Nock, 1982).

Prior to the deinstitutionalization movement, wide discretion within the juvenile justice system permitted delinquents to be labeled as status offenders, especially if they were young or had engaged in minor delinquent acts. With the onset of the reform, relabeling became a means for maintaining legal control over youth in order to overcome the detention prohibition (Handler and Zatz, 1982). To obtain detention, police may now use delinquent charges rather than status offense charges in cases where youth might be charged with both behaviors (Schneider, Cleary, and Reiter, 1978; Teilmann and Klein, 1981).

Andrews and Cohn (1974) describe a situation with alternate forms of relabeling. The New York Ungovernability Statute could be applied to both neglect/abuse cases and to delinquent cases. For instance, these authors state that 37 percent of ungovernables were legitimate neglect cases, while another 15 to 20 percent were legitimate delinquency cases.

While evidence indicates that some DSO jurisdictions have experienced a significant drop in detention rates, two possible explanations relevant to net-widening and relabeling have been advanced. Teilmann and Klein (1980) argued that when California passed AB 3121 it meant a decline in the ultimate legal control over status offenders. They contended that a decline in law enforcement activity and referral rates became inevitable because the authority to control the treatment of status offenders had been removed. If this is an accurate assessment, the deinstitutionalization movement could be viewed as providing maximum impetus for juvenile justice neglect of the status offender. What must be answered is whether this neglect is endangering the safety of troubled children or removing them from harmful intrusions.

An alternative proposition to explain apparent declines in detention rates can be drawn from the work of Schwartz et al. (1984). While correctional facility status offender populations appeared to be reduced in some areas, there is evidence that mental health commitments to public and private

facilities were increasing. Work by Guttridge (1979) and by Guttridge and Warren (1981) provides empirical verification. The key issue is whether the new labels may be even more damaging to youth than the older status offender designation.

### *Effects on Alternative, Youth-Serving Agencies*

In the wake of deinstitutionalization laws and policies, many jurisdictions set up a range of services and treatment programs available for status offenders. These alternatives, including diversion programs and crisis intervention treatment, enabled treatment to occur outside traditional juvenile institutional settings.

With divestiture, the removal of status offenders from the juvenile justice system required the juvenile court to relinquish all authority for jurisdiction. Concern about this "no action" approach to the status offender problem was voiced by many who opposed the transfer of authority to agencies outside the justice system on the grounds that services and treatment could not be assured. Given the pervasiveness of the treatment philosophy throughout the juvenile justice system and the doctrine of *parens patriae*, it is not surprising that, in practice, jurisdictions did not relinquish all control over status offenders. What types of services should be provided for status offenders and who should offer such services remain central issues of the deinstitutionalization debate.

Fiscal conservatives joined the alliance favoring deinstitutionalization on the basis that such reform would reduce public expenditure for treatment provision and costs would be shifted to the private sector. However, Handler and Zatz (1982) and Arthur D. Little (1977), among others, draw our attention to the lack of economy in the deinstitutionalization movement. It is not simply a matter of reducing the incarcerated status offender population. DSO also entails the creation and maintenance of alternative services and programs. Lack of such community resources can exert great influence on whether juvenile courts will divert status offenders to alternatives (Handler and Zatz, 1982). Consequently, the organizational practices of the juvenile justice system and fiscal forces may well determine what types of services, publicly or privately controlled, can be provided to status offenders in any given jurisdiction.

Several states, including Louisiana, Massachusetts, Washington, and Pennsylvania, transferred authority for service delivery to status offenders from correctional authorities to welfare-oriented state departments. Alternative deinstitutionalization services included crisis intervention treatment, shelter care, group homes, foster care, individual counseling, family counseling, and so on. Handler and Zatz (1982) point out that group homes or foster care

placements are the major out-of-home care alternatives. Kobrin and Klein (1983), in comparing various DSO I strategies, noted that treatment services ranged from minimum to intensive intervention. Providing more services to status offenders, however, does not necessarily reduce recidivism rates and may exacerbate the problem (Datesman and Scarpitti, 1981; van Dusen and Peterson, 1983).

Another issue is whether voluntary service provision reaches those most in need. Schneider (1984) argues that those who are not receiving services are likely to be those that would have been incarcerated prior to deinstitutionalization.

### *Impact on the Behavior of Youth*

Of particular concern is the impact of deinstitutionalization on youth behavior. Has deinstitutionalization led to changes in the future delinquent careers of status offenders? Recidivism has been the usual measure of such impact assessment, but past research has been plagued with methodological flaws. Deinstitutionalization studies have often compared pre- and post-reform law enforcement contacts of clients as indicative of recidivism trends.

Noticeably absent are studies using experimental designs randomly assigning status offenders to experimental or control conditions following the implementation of deinstitutionalization. Since DSO has for some time been operational in most jurisdictions, including some that did not participate in JJDP, the problem of finding comparison groups is exacerbated.

Besides resolving the methodological problems that can produce conflicting results, DSO research needs to confront a definitional task. Do status offenders constitute a clearly identifiable and separate category of youth who come before the juvenile court? According to Erickson (1979), Thomas (1976), and Weis et al. (1980), delinquent histories of status offenders and delinquents show few differences, particularly among minor offenders. The policy implication of this view amounts to equivalent juvenile justice treatment of status offenders and some delinquents, particularly young, first-time offenders. We concluded from DSO I that there were three discernible groups of status offenders. "The first consists of status offenders with little tendency to commit the more serious delinquent offenses; the second includes juveniles whose records show a predominance of delinquent offenses. Finally, as a finding of some importance, the data revealed the third and largest group to consist of juveniles without records of either a status or a delinquent offense both prior and subsequent to the single incident that defined their membership in a status offender population" (Kobrin and Klein, 1983:106)." If it is correct that a large portion of the status offender

population is unlikely to engage in serious subsequent behavior while a smaller but visible group is well entrenched in delinquent careers, both types of youth may require distinctive services or nonintervention (Handler and Zatz, 1982).

No clear pattern of findings exists regarding the impact of deinstitutionalization on recidivism. Across the national DSO I sites, the majority separately revealed little difference between the recidivism rates of pre-DSO and DSO groups, but in the aggregate they did reveal higher rates for the DSO-serviced groups (Kobrin and Klein, 1983). Schneider's (1984) review of deinstitutionalization literature concludes that the principle finding is that DSO and non-DSO recidivism rates were about the same. The previous research on DSO also fails to answer whether removal of status offenders subjects them to higher probabilities of being victimized. This is, if anything, an even more difficult question to answer in the absence of an experimentally designed study.

## Implications for DSO II

There are several general approaches that might be taken to assess the effects of the DSO movement. The first would stress causal relationships between specific DSO programs and youth behaviors. The second would describe on a broad basis the incidence and prevalence of status offending behavior and its relationship to other consequences such as offense escalation and victimization via abuse or exploitation. The third would attempt to relate DSO policies to programs and youth behaviors. We found this third approach to be most appropriate to the goals and objectives of the request for proposals from OJJDP, which led to DSO II.

One historical note helps explain our approach to OJJDP's request for proposals. DSO I was undertaken during an essentially liberal era in federal policy. But by the mid-1980s, the Reagan era had been inaugurated and OJJDP was directed by a very conservative presidential appointee. His view was that the deinstitutionalization involvement had been a dismal failure and that hordes of unserved status offenders had been loosed on the streets as both predators and victims. A new approach was thus required.

The request for proposals to take a new look at DSO had two features of great interest to us as potential applicants. First, it asked for an evaluation of the effectiveness of DSO since the JJDPA. Our view was that this was not technically feasible ten years after the fact because of the absence of any chance for experimental designs or decent comparative data. Second, inserted in the request for proposals was a statement to the effect that appli-

cants should bear in mind OJJDP's attitude toward DSO. In other words, applicants were expected to respond with a proposal that would feed OJJDP's current political philosophy on the issue.

Obviously, we could not accept such a biasing orientation. No university research group should, and none did. Only one organization responded with a proposal, and that one was not accepted. Nonetheless, because of our earlier involvement in DSO I, we received numerous calls from other potential bidders asking if we would be interested in joining with them in a proposal for DSO II. Our answer was negative, and none of these bids materialized.

Following the failure to obtain an acceptable proposal, OJJDP reissued the request for proposals, this time with less emphasis on definitive tests of effectiveness and without the caveat about its stance on the issue. This time we were more prepared to respond. Again, the contacts came in from other potential bidders, and we did agree to join forces with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, forming a contract with them to undertake a portion of the research tasks. We were pleased with this joint relationship but devastated a year later when a congressionally mandated funding cut of 25 percent forced a cancellation of that contract. Had our contract continued, this book would have even more data to report and additional authors as well.

Given OJJDP's originally unreasonable stance of effectiveness and political attitude, we felt it imperative to design the DSO II project so as not to be accountable on either issue. We wanted a free hand. This, then, brings us back to the three approaches one might have taken.

The first approach, stressing the search for causal relations, had already been undertaken in the earlier national evaluation (Kobrin and Klein, 1983) and other smaller studies (Schneider, 1984). The results did not support DSO in the forms it had taken. Further, more than a decade beyond the infusion of federal funds and the initiation of varied state laws, it would have been hard to initiate an experimentally controlled evaluation across jurisdictions or to employ a pre-post design when the point of DSO implementation was both vague and varied.

The second approach, to describe youth behavior on a broad or even national scale, could have been informative about the state of the art but would not have been useful for policy recommendations. Descriptions not tied to denotable policy options merely provide a Rorschach for recommendations. Further, aggregated data would not necessarily have represented operational-level concerns or have tied data at the local agency or youth level to broad policy options.

Our choice of the third approach, a policy-oriented design for data collection and interpretation, was based on our belief that it was not DSO programming that was at issue but the DSO movement per se. As part of the

ebb and flow of national concerns, the movement as it had evolved needed to be judged in the context of other directions it might have taken. This is an even more complex problem than that of extensive program evaluation.

To orient the reader to our approach, we offer here just a brief summary of the conceptual scheme that underlies the entire DSO II project. The scheme is more fully explained in chapter 3, but it involves specifying, locating, and assessing three basic and competing social philosophies in handling status offenders or seemingly troubled youth in general. In their pure forms, the three philosophies are mutually incompatible; in practice, they are often incoherently combined. Because they are part philosophy, part policy, part practice, and part after-the-fact justifications for practices already in place, we refer to these as rationales.

One of these, the treatment rationale, suggests that status offending is symptomatic of a more serious, underlying personal or familial disturbance. Such a disturbance does not cure itself but festers and worsens unless we respond with appropriate professional tools of diagnosis and treatment. This is the medical model at work, where psychological and family therapy are the treatments of choice.

The second philosophy is the deterrence rationale, in which status offending is seen as pseudo-criminal, predictive of more serious lawbreaking and therefore best handled by components of the juvenile justice system. It is the juvenile court system that can best judge the need for intervention, and punishment or other forms of holding the child accountable for his or her own behaviors will best provide the needed palliative.

In the treatment rationale, this punitive deterrent philosophy misses the mark of the child's (and family's) developmental needs. To the deterrent rationale, the treatment philosophy simply excuses and explains away the child's rational choices to misbehave and encourages further illegality through the failure to apply sanctions. For years, these two contrasting and often incompatible views have been played out in our public and private agencies, the courts, and our legislative bodies. Now a third philosophy has emerged to muddy the waters, the normalization rationale. Normalization is based on labeling theory, which holds that negative labels and official responses may create even more of the problem they are designed to reduce. This suggests that both treatment and deterrence are inappropriate when applied to status offending. Indeed, it suggests that we have been wrong to posit the special category of status offenders. Many, perhaps even most, youngsters get themselves in some trouble; most of them mature out of serious involvement if given the chance. To treat or punish "normal" behavior is to reify and concretize a transient status, to create the very phenomenon we wish to correct. The normalization approach recommends nonintervention or, at best benign intervention—that is, responding to normal

developmental needs such as food, shelter, and educational and occupational preparations.

This book speaks directly to the implications of selecting among the treatment, deterrence, and normalization approaches to the handling of status offenders. About the effectiveness of various forms of interventions there is now less question than there used to be, but no less controversy. Those committed to one philosophy or another are little affected by empirical knowledge.

It is probably a fair summary of what has been learned—scientifically—about interventions with status offenders that neither treatment nor deterrence has yielded much beneficial effect. DSO I, the largest study ever undertaken, and many components of that work suggest that (1) intervention programs often miss their mark in selecting appropriate youngsters; (2) most forms of intervention have minimal impact on various kinds of status offenders; and (3) most status offenders are in any case not much different from other youth not given that label.

This book does not attempt to add weight to the studies yielding these conclusions. Here we ask questions of response, not of effect.

Finally, how we feel as a society about status offender intervention is very much a part of this book. We catalog the ambivalence of American approaches to the problem, as seen in legislation and community responses. This country, unlike most, has not settled its mind about status offending. In Europe, it is not a legal problem but a welfare problem. In Asia, it is generally seen as a family and community problem, to be dealt with by informal means of social control. On both those continents, status offenders are not a recognized legal category as they have been in the United States. Slowly—very slowly, and inconsistently—the United States is moving toward the European model, the welfare approach. With a few exceptions, most states are not capable of moving to the Asian, informal social control approach.

In the following chapter, we will provide two sets of material. First, we will spell out more fully the character and implications of the treatment, deterrence, and normalization rationales for responding to status offenders. Second, because the data reported in later chapters throw doubts on the whole enterprise of linking legislation to community practice, we will document the fact that *the three rationales do clearly exist in practice*, that they are not mere figments of the academic imagination.

While this is a book about how we respond to status offending, the issue here is far broader. The same questions of policy and practice, the similarities and disparities between them, apply to many social problems. Consider such disparate controversies as legal abortion, deinstitutionalization of mental patients, welfare and “workfare,” drug and alcohol treatment, and com-



munity policing. Legislators dictate or encourage what should be; local authorities are left to respond to that mandate. Seldom is the response total; indeed, seldom is full compliance even possible.

A study of such compliance in the particular arena of status offending offers a unique window on the broader, generic problem of local compliance with central legislative intent. Status offenses make up an ambiguous category with much room for interpretation and discretion. Status offenses are a problem of children for adults, thereby assuming great common concern and commitment. Many adults who now determine policy and practice indulged in status offenses when they were young; many of us could lay claim to relevant experience.

Status offenders are seen as a threat, or as a source of concern, precisely because they violate our idealized conceptions of the way children should behave. We expect them to obey their parents, attend school, stay home at night, and delay their involvement in "adult" behaviors such as drinking and sexual activity. At the extreme, status offenders defy the institutionalized controls that reflect social values for adolescent behavior. Our responses to status offending reveal our ambivalence about what constitutes inappropriate conduct, its causes, and the optimal ways of bringing misbehaving youths back into the fold.

Status offending, then, offers a fertile field in which to test the merits and procedures of alternative methods of social control. This book is about status offenders; the issues are about many forms of social problems and social response.

#### NOTE

1. The twelve sites were those whose proposals were found acceptable by OJJDP, including the eight that fell into the evaluation program.

### 3

## Three Philosophies That Can Make a Difference

A wide range of behavior is included in the category of status offenses, from possession or use of alcohol on occasion—who among us was not guilty of such youthful experimentation?—to consistent truancy from school, extended serious defiance of parents, violation of evening curfews, and running away from home or placement. At the extreme, status offenders also include “street kids,” the homeless, often delinquent and victimized flotsam of our urban streets. Our research covers all of these but places special emphasis on runaways and street kids.

The intent of DSO II was to connect legislative intent, service delivery systems, and youth responses in order to provide guidelines for new or modified status offender legislation and practice. It differed markedly from the two major national assessments undertaken in the late 1970s. The National Research Council report by Handler and Zatz (1982) was focused more on the effects of federal legislation (the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974) than on local strategies. Emphasis was upon levels of decarceration and lower detention rates for status offenders.

The DSO I project reported by Kobrin and Klein (1983) and reviewed in chapter 1 focused more on local implementations of decarceration and detention restrictions via the provisions of alternative services for status offenders. Whereas the National Research Council report documented considerable progress in deinstitutionalization based upon analysis of state-level actions, Kobrin and Klein documented less progress, more undesired side effects such as net-widening, and some unwanted increase in recidivism associated with community services.

Neither of these projects is directly comparable to DSO II. Both had different goals and procedures and occurred in mostly different locations. The list of states involved is as follows:

<i>National Research Council</i>	<i>DSO I</i>	<i>DSO II</i>
Arizona	Arizona	Alaska
Louisiana	Delaware	Delaware
Massachusetts	California	Idaho
Pennsylvania	Connecticut	Maine
Utah	Illinois	Maryland
Virginia	South Carolina	Michigan
Wisconsin	Washington (two sites)	New Hampshire

The DSO II project was not designed to assess the effectiveness of different intervention approaches but rather to describe the concomitants of such approaches. The emphasis is on broad policy implications: if one adopts approach A, what sorts of legislation typically embody that approach, what sorts of intervention will be found, and what kinds of youngsters will be the subject of those interventions? But if one adopts approach B, how will legislation, service delivery, and youth clientele differ?

Because the project started at the level of state legislation and then moved to local community exemplification of legislative intent, one can look at the project as assessing the two competing hypotheses:

- The articulation hypothesis: Local community service delivery and clientele will substantially reflect state legislative intent. Practice articulates law.
- The habituation hypothesis: Local community service delivery and clientele will not reflect state legislative intent. Agencies will do what agencies do.

Stating the purpose of DSO II as testing the relative merits of these two conflicting hypotheses is a bit extreme, but we do so to place proper stress on the goal of seeking guidelines for choosing between philosophies of intervention, not on that of determining the effectiveness of those philosophies in action.

### Three DSO Rationales

There are three major philosophies—we have called them DSO rationales—that may ideally guide interventions into the situations of status offending youths. These are labeled the deterrence, treatment, and normalization rationales and may be characterized briefly as follows:

- Deterrence: Status offenses are *offenses*, will accelerate to serious delinquencies if not negatively sanctioned, and belong in the *juvenile justice system*. Runaways, in particular, require control.
- Treatment: Status offenses are *behaviors* signaling underlying emotional problems, will develop into serious maladjustment problems if not treated, and belong in the *community mental health system*. Runaways, in particular, require treatment.
- Normalization: Status offenses are *normal* youth behaviors, generally are not precursors to serious delinquency or maladjustment patterns, and require *little or no professional response*. Runaways, in particular, require shelter and tolerance.

We can spell these differences out in more detail by reference to six issues on which each of the rationales implies alternative positions. Figure 3.1 displays the differences.

## Site Selection

To locate the data collection where its utility could be optimized, the first operation was to analyze the relevant status offender legislation in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. We were seeking state legislation that represented the very best exemplar of each of the DSO rationales—that is, the purest possible deterrence states, treatment states, and normalization states as revealed in their legislation. State legislation was scored in three areas of concern: (1) classification of status offenses as delinquency, as a special category, or as nonoffenses; (2) requirements and restrictions in pre- and postadjudication secure detention; and (3) provision of resources and services for status offenders.

This analysis, described in chapter 4, yielded seven states that best fit our needs. There were two deterrence states (Michigan and Idaho), two treatment states (Maryland and New Hampshire), and three normalization states (Delaware, Alaska, and Maine).<sup>1</sup>

The legislative analysis revealed these seven states to have profiles high on one rationale and low on the other two. They looked, on paper, like splendid locations for data collection. We then entered into a series of telephone conversations and site visits to the largest city in each state—substituting Flint for Detroit due to resource limitations—and confirmed, for the most part, that the legislative analysis was indeed giving us data collection communities that “felt” like deterrence, treatment, and normalization sites. In other words, following the process of state and site selection, there was every

*Normalization*

1. Deviance is defined and “created” by societal response.
2. The societal response (e.g., arrest or referral) initiates the labeling.
3. Institutional control can itself constitute a stigmatizing process.
4. Labels such as incorrigible, delinquent, and disturbed are disproportionately applied to minorities, the poor, and the disadvantaged.
5. Negative labels should be avoided, along with their spread to significant others.
6. Normalization of minor offending behavior is the goal.

*Treatment*

1. Deviance is a learned response to social and familial problems.
2. Referral for treatment permits alteration of deviant responses and perceptions of problem-causing factors.
3. Institutional controls increase agencies’ access to the client to assure service delivery.
4. Antisocial behaviors are more common responses in problem-laden contexts—lower-class areas, broken families, etc.
5. Negative labels can be used to initiate treatment, to confront the reactions of significant others.
6. Normalization of minor offending behavior ignores its symptomatic significance for problems that would benefit from therapeutic response. Lack of response could result in abuse and exploitation.

*Deterrence*

1. Deviance is the result of free-will choices, the responsibility of the offender.
2. Insertion into the juvenile justice system permits application of appropriate sanctions to deter further deviant acts.
3. Institutional controls have sanctioning value and increase the chances for teaching personal accountability.
4. Antisocial behaviors are the consequence of failures in discipline, loss of traditional values, disrespect for the rights of others.
5. Negative labels have deterrent value of both specific and general forms: broadcasting the consequences of antisocial acts increases general deterrence.
6. Normalization of minor offending behavior effectively rewards that behavior, gives implicit permission to continue. Escalation to serious or repeat delinquency and exposure to exploitation may follow.

FIGURE 3.1. Main Characteristics of Three Contrasting Rationales

reason to believe that our competing hypotheses could be adequately tested and the utility of the rationales adequately assessed.

### Selected Site Practices

For purposes of illustration, we present here some practices found in a number of sites selected as clear examples of states with predominant normalization, treatment, or deterrence rationales. We spent two to three days in the seven major cities talking with officials in public and private agencies as well as a few offenders and informal service deliverers. It is worth emphasizing, given the ambiguities in the governing legislation, that actual practices in a given city often illuminate a rationale far more explicitly than do segments of the pertinent legislation.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Normalization Practices*

These are states in which many or even all forms of status offense behavior have been decriminalized. Thus, in Portland, Maine, we found it totally unnecessary to speak to court officials—they did not process status offenders at all. In these cities, the police arrested very few, if any, curfew violators, incorrigibles, or truants. Further, they received few referrals of such youngsters. Runaways emerged as the most persistent problem but received little official action. Most were seen as temporary runners who, if left to their own devices, would return home within a short time span.

In Portland, there were two groups of runners, many of them homeless. One was a persistent group who gathered on a main downtown street every evening, wandering up and down, jamming a video arcade, and finding lodging in empty buildings or one of several runaway shelters. The YWCA had an active street-worker program that developed in response to these youths. The other group consisted of a number of young male prostitutes who gathered in a local, dimly lit park. Their presence was obvious, as was that of the “Johns” who slowly cruised the winding streets of the park to make their evening’s connections. Less than a block away was an available shelter that asked few questions, met few zoning code restrictions, and received support from a large group of local churches.

Significantly, the police in Portland did little about these situations and there were more available shelter beds per capita than we had seen elsewhere. Equally significant was the community response. Where the justice system is no longer involved, shelters and a fully organized “soup kitchen” system had evolved to deal with subsistence issues—food, clothing, and beds. We were amazed, throughout our interviews in this city, at how little

conversation we heard about traditional status offender services—individual counseling, family therapy, mental health services, and the like. No deterrence, little traditional treatment, and an unusually heavy complement of formal and informal responses to a notable “street kid” problem were in evidence.

In another normalization city, Anchorage, Alaska, we found an agency providing training for juvenile emancipation; a police department that provided pickup and transportation for runaways but no counseling or referrals; and a considerable runaway problem, largely unattended to by public agencies and occasioning the creation of a new forty-bed shelter operated by Covenant House.

The schools in both these cities reported low truancy problems and had evolved special programs to respond to student problems. The sheer number of treatment programs was low, as were referrals to them.

One other point is worth noting. All three normalization states were considering legislation that was designed to pull back toward a more controlling treatment orientation. We saw the same thing in a major deterrence state as well. It may be that states representing the clearest examples of nontreatment orientation, those departing most from the generally accepted medical model, will be subject to the greatest pressures toward “regression to the mean,” a moving back toward the more commonly accepted treatment rationale. Pressures from treaters and parents seemed highly visible in these states.

### *Treatment Practices*

One city in this group, Baltimore, provided an interesting contrast to some of the above. It had a well-respected shelter, close to the best known hangout of runaway youth. However, this shelter provided highly professionalized counseling work for referred youngsters but no outreach to the local runners because it received public funds for referred clients but none for homeless youth.

Baltimore’s commitment to referrals for treatment was manifest, but the follow-through was less so. Status offenders were seen as a bother, and major public agencies wished they could turn them over to someone else. Alternative agencies seemed inadequate in number. The police defined status offending as a noncrime problem. Precinct-level juvenile officers were prevention oriented and overwhelmed by their unwanted status offender clientele; they kept no records on clientele in order to have time to be humanely responsive. Our impression here was of a treatment state failing to provide the resources called for by its rationale and therefore yielding, in effect, a de facto normalization site.

A second treatment site, Manchester, New Hampshire, presents a far more organized picture. It had, over the years, transformed a justice diversion system into a centralized treatment operation. Few status offenders made it to court; they were either counseled and otherwise helped by this central agency or referred by it to other treatment facilities. Police referrals went only to the central agency. Indeed, if a court petition was to be filed, the petition was written up there and merely signed off by the police.

There were few homeless "street kids" in this city. Runaways were all handled as treatment clients, both by the central agency and by another agency with a runaway specialist. An unusually good youth employment rate and low truancy rate probably served to keep the status offender numbers to a manageable size.

### *Deterrence Practices*

Here we have a contrast between two cities, one of which reflected the legislative rationale very clearly while the other has led a reform movement in the direction of normalization. Several features in the first city, Boise, Idaho, seemed to articulate well with the deterrence rationale.

- Truancy cases went directly to the prosecutor's office for filing with the magistrate's court, not juvenile court.
- The police used a form of informal probation, making the juvenile accountable to them (called "short-term behavior agreement").
- All but two of the juvenile officers were placed in the junior and senior high schools. The schools, not the police station, served as their base of operations, and all their investigations were done in that setting. This integration of the justice system and the educational system was fully approved by agency personnel in this city.
- The court (probation) diversion project, rather than emphasizing referrals to treatment services, had developed "detention control assessment" and "conditional release." This involved contracts with offenders and their families, signed off by the prosecution. Forty-five nonprofit groups (e.g., state forestry service, Salvation Army) were assigned these youngsters for programs of restitution and community service. In the year prior to our visit, out of 530 youths so handled, 142 were status offenders.

The practitioners in this city were concentrated in the public sector. Little private treatment seemed available. And while each of our public agency respondents denied the existence of a homeless "street kid" problem, we spoke with a group home resident who gave us names and descriptions of her street kid cohort as well as of the church groups that provided them



with food and clothing. The contrast between this depiction and the response to the street scene in the normalization sites is quite striking.

The second deterrence city, Flint, Michigan, looked similar to Boise some years earlier but had been altered significantly by attitudes of court personnel. Strong support for diversion had emerged within the court, primarily through the efforts of a local judge; other agencies were forced to go along, some of them begrudgingly. Police and school officials still preferred court petitioning to provide a “hammer” for handling status offenders. A leftover of the earlier deterrence approach, the system of school-based police officers, was still firmly in place and was in fact the model for the Boise system. In this case, the tie between the schools and the police was so firm that they shared the budget for those officers.

Significantly, Michigan had approved a series of new legislative provisions that would move it away from deterrence. The regression toward the mean, in the guise of noncoercive referrals to treatment services, was under way. The new state code would resemble those in California, Washington, and Maine, states that clearly bifurcated their approaches to status and delinquent offenders. The status offenders became decriminalized, diverted, and normalized, while delinquents were treated as responsible for their actions, subject to adult penalties and procedures.

These few examples add some flavor to the abstract rationales described earlier. They validate for us the distinctiveness of normalization, treatment, and deterrence rationales. It is well to remember, however, that we have presented some of the extremes in order to illustrate the rationales. Most states are legislative collages of normalization, treatment, and deterrence provisions. By clarifying the three rationales as well as their implications, perhaps we can begin to provide more lucid and less confusing messages to the on-site practitioners who ultimately respond to status offenses.

There are several implications for the utility of the procedures described here. In the context of our larger study of the DSO movement, we can describe different legislative approaches to handling status offenders; these approaches fall within a conceptually based framework that incorporates the major ideological stances regarding these youth. States can be selected among the various patterns for further examination of local justice and social agency policy and practices, whether consistent with legislative stances or not. These can then be compared across patterns to examine differential outcomes of various legislative approaches. Furthermore, this method can be applied to statutory changes over time to address the impact of federal reform initiatives.

In a more general context, this method can be applied to legislation in a wide variety of areas. Major underlying ideological dimensions need to be specified, along with statutory arenas that are expected to manifest ideologi-

cal stances. This process requires close familiarity with the subject matter and issues relevant to the development of legislation in each area. Given this familiarity, we believe this method shows promise for investigations in such arenas as mental health law, sentencing guidelines, environmental or revenue regulatory systems, and so on.

Clearly, the validity of our observations about the three kinds of sites, that they really do reflect the treatment, deterrence, and normalization rationales, is critical to our test of the competing articulation and habituation hypotheses. That is, the site visits seemed to confirm that the rationales exist in practice. But because we were looking for differences, we might have exaggerated them. We need some independent evidence that the three rationales are captured in three sets of practices.

In particular, we need this because we found that youth-serving practices and characteristics of agency clients in the three categories of cities did not yield the differences predicted from the articulation hypothesis. Overall, the lack of intercity differences in the status offender–serving agency youth interview data was quite remarkable. The premise that legislative strategies for dealing with the problem of status offenses filter down to the community level and translate into practices and organizational contexts was clearly not supported by these data. To the extent that there is a link between legislative philosophy and practice at the community level, it is evidently not a direct one.

Such a statement assumes that the rationales as we have described them are indeed “real”—that is, that they are abstractions that truly reflect consistent social service options. Having picked the states most “pure” in these rationales, the consistently negative findings force reconsideration of this question. Fortunately, we can do more than merely posit an *a priori* assertion concerning the rationales. That they are alive and well in practice is demonstrated in the agency data that can be aggregated by each rationale across the seven cities. That is, when all normalizing agencies in the seven cities, or all treatment agencies in the seven cities, or all deterrence agencies in the seven cities are viewed regardless of site location, the level of difference between the three categories is astoundingly clear. We will provide the details in the following pages, but in sum they reveal significant differences among the three types of agencies with respect to:

- status and delinquency offenses of clientele;
- stated organization goals;
- length of client service period;
- frequency of client participation;
- length of residential stay;
- client ethnicity;

- specific services for runaways;
- referral sources;
- techniques for rule enforcement;
- funding sources; and
- types of services provided.

### Three Philosophies, Three Kinds of Agencies

This analysis is in several regards the most interesting since, as noted above, we will be reporting later that our data provide little support for the project's primary hypothesis, the articulation hypothesis. We will report minimal and somewhat idiosyncratic evidence for the notion that the philosophical approaches toward handling status offending youth reflected in state legislation would express themselves in local service delivery characteristics. We will describe how the youth service delivery system, organization characteristics, descriptions of youth clients, and agency responses to status offending youth yield few differences supportive of the a priori predictions. Alternative explanations of differential effects by public auspices and residential status were investigated and rejected.

There remains a competing hypothesis, referred to earlier as the habituation hypothesis. The data we have gathered cannot address the more localized perceptions of status offender service needs and approaches. While agencies aggregated by site rationale appear to provide their services largely without regard to the philosophies articulated in legislation, agency characteristics measured by our survey items may reveal patterns in rationale or orientation at the agency rather than the site level. The following agency rationale analysis examines this proposition.

Coding of agency rationales used the information on community agencies available from the census development materials described in chapter 5. This included service target populations, types of services offered, organizational auspices, and agency objectives. Coders were provided with brief descriptions of the three philosophical orientations toward handling status offense youth and then proceeded to place each of 235 agencies in all seven sites under one of the three rationales.<sup>3</sup>

The analysis strategy was to use selected variables to compare agencies representing the three rationales, regardless of site location. That is, we now compare all 88 normalization agencies, all 124 treatment agencies, and all 23 deterrence agencies in the seven cities. Prior to reporting the results, the distribution of agency rationale by state legislative rationale may be of interest. Table 3.1 displays these data. There is only a weak relationship between agency type and legislative rationale ( $p = .20$ ). Normalization agencies are

TABLE 3.1. Percentage Distribution of Agencies by Agency Type and Legislative Rationale

Agency Type	Legislative Rationale Sites			N
	Normalization (N = 96)	Treatment (N = 76)	Deterrence (N = 63)	
Normalization	46%	33%	30%	88
Treatment	45	54	63	124
Deterrence	9	12	8	23
Σ =	100	99	101	

*Note:* Cell entries are percentage of agencies within each legislative rationale characterized by agency rationale. Ten cases are omitted that could not reliably be coded into the three agency types.

only slightly more common in normalization sites, while the proportion of treatment agencies is highest in both treatment and deterrence sites. In other words, legislative intent does not get reflected in prevalence of agency types. Cell sizes remain a concern throughout this analysis because relatively few agencies (23) were coded for the deterrence rationale.

Sources of client referrals are strongly associated with agency rationale. As shown in table 3.2, the patterns of referral sources are quite consistent with rationale-based predictions. For instance, treatment agencies report higher levels of referral from both social service and mental health organizations, deterrence agencies receive referrals from the justice system, and normalization agencies mention normalizing sources of referral more often than other types of agencies.

Rationale-based patterns are evident as well in the funding sources reported by these agencies. Deterrence agencies were most likely to rely upon public funding sources and least likely to derive funding from local or private sources (see table 3.3). The funding patterns in normalization and treatment agencies appear similar to each other.

Type of organizational goal clearly differentiates agencies with the three rationales. We found that 67 percent of treatment agencies reported that helping youths resolve emotional and social problems was their primary goal. Most (64 percent) normalization agencies described themselves as providing youths with skills and opportunities, while 61 percent of deterrence agencies stated that their primary goal was to emphasize personal responsibility ( $p < .001$ ).

Agency rationale is also related to the characteristics of status offenders. Selected youth characteristics are displayed in table 3.4. Treatment agencies reported higher proportions of nonminority youth clients. The relationship between agency rationale and a high proportion of status offender clients

TABLE 3.2 Referral Sources for Youths Engaged in Status Conduct (by Agency Rationale)

Referral Source Category	Agency Rationale			<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
	Normalization (N = 80)	Treatment (N = 117)	Deterrence (N = 23)	
Social service: Public social service/public welfare department or facilities; private service organizations	46	62	13	<.001
Mental health: Public mental health department or facilities; private in-patient psychiatric facilities or hospitals (including hospital psychiatric units); private out-patient mental health agencies or practitioners	10	38	0	<.001
Justice system: Police/sheriff's department; court/probation; juvenile correctional facilities	46	57	100	<.001
Normalizing: Family, friend, other client, or self-referral (including word-of-mouth or advertising); schools/educational facilities; churches and religious organizations	48	67	35	<.001
Other: Medical service organizations or practitioners; other	12	9	0	.177

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each agency rationale ranking any one of the organizations included in a category as one of the top three sources of referral for youths engaged in status conduct.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

with delinquent histories is quite consistent with predictions. Deterrence agencies are more likely to include these youths among their clientele than are other agencies, while a predominance of youth with delinquent histories is rare among normalization agencies. A similar pattern is evident in the predominance of clients with official records of status offenses, but, here, a higher proportion of treatment than of deterrence agencies report a predominance of such youth.

Finally, responses to status offending youth vary among agencies manifesting the three rationales. Each category of services provided reveals dis-

TABLE 3.3. Funding Sources (by Agency Rationale)

Source	Agency Rationale			<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
	Normalization (N = 88)	Treatment (N = 124)	Deterrence (N = 24)	
Public: Federal government; state government; local police or sheriff's department; local juvenile court or probation department; other county and/or city government agencies	76	78	100	.031
Private: Local private foundations or businesses; third party payments; client fees; individual donations	88	81	38	<.001
Local: Local police or sheriff's department; local juvenile court or probation department; other county and/or city government agencies; local private foundations or businesses; client fees	69	78	25	<.001

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each agency rationale reporting funding from any one of the sources within the category.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

TABLE 3.4. Youth Demographic Characteristics and Problem Histories (by Agency Rationale)

Characteristic	Agency Rationale			<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	
White <sup>b</sup>	53%	68%	50%	.003
With delinquent history: <sup>c</sup> > 50%	14	27	58	<.001 <sup>d</sup>
With status offense history: <sup>c</sup> > 50%	10	38	30	.001

<sup>a</sup> For race comparison, this is the probability associated with ANOVA F-test; for all other items, this is the probability associated with Chi-square (4 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries are the average percentages of clients in that race category across respondents within each rationale.

<sup>c</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents reporting that more than 50 percent of youths engaged in status conduct are characterized by this attribute. Percentages are not shown for those reporting 0 percent or 1-50 percent.

<sup>d</sup> Significance tests are suspect due to sparse cell frequencies.

tinctions among the three agency rationales, as seen in table 3.5. As expected, treatment agencies more often provide counseling, decision-making, and prevention services, while a higher proportion of normalization agencies report offering general services such as character-building and recreational activities. The findings for the training and support service categories, however, are not in the predicted directions; both types of services are consistent with the normalization philosophy, and yet normalization agencies are least likely to offer these services to status offender clients. Moreover, the high levels of this type of service provision among deterrence agencies was not anticipated.

The relatively high percentages in all the cells of table 3.5 suggest that there is a great deal of diversity in service provision among these agencies. Although differences between the three types of agencies are generally consistent with the rationales, it should be noted that the bulk of these agencies are providing multiple services, many of which are in contrast with their coded agency rationale. In this sense, the agency rationales are not pure depictions of the character of the agency. Just as we noted that state legislation was eclectic, most social agencies serve a diverse clientele, referred from a variety of agencies, and derive their funding from both public and private sources.

The duration and intensity of client participation in the most frequently offered service types also varies among the three rationales. Seventy-eight percent of treatment agencies report serving status offenders for several months or more, followed closely by normalization agencies (75 percent). The lower proportion (42 percent) of deterrence agencies reporting extended service is surprising ( $p = .001$ ). Statutory restrictions on the length of residential placement might explain the lower duration of services in deterrence agencies, but the data from residential facilities do not support this interpretation.

Perhaps the duration of community service programs is limited by judicial discretion. More than 90 percent of treatment and deterrence agencies report that clients participate in service activities once a week or more often; the figure for normalization agencies is a slightly lower 82 percent ( $p = .080$ ).

Normalization agencies were expected to place less emphasis on control of status offender clients, and this pattern is revealed in the survey items on strategies adopted for rule enforcement. Six of the ten methods for which agencies reported at least occasional use yielded differences among the three rationales. These were suspension of privileges, isolation, group discussion, assigning chores, threat of suspension or termination of service participation, and threat of referral to the justice system. With the exception of sus-

TABLE 3.5. Categories of Activities, Services, and Operations Provided (by Agency Rationale)

Category	Agency Rationale			<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
	Normalization (N = 88)	Treatment (N = 124)	Deterrence (N = 24)	
Counseling: Crisis intervention; counseling/therapy/psychotherapy; hotline; psychological diagnostic assessment and screening	47	99	83	<.001
General: Trips to special events; recreation/sports activities; character-building activities	88	69	71	.007
Decision making: Arranging out-of-home placement; case management; referral for services	67	93	71	<.001
Training: Education/tutoring, training for independent living; employment counseling, referral or training	65	71	88	.095
Support: Day care; birth control services; medical services (other than birth control); legal aid; advocacy; general relief or assistance; preparation for legal emancipation	52	81	83	<.001
Prevention: Substance abuse education/prevention; sexual/physical abuse education/prevention	55	85	67	<.001
Other: Residential/shelter/in-patient care; court-ordered restitution/community service work; parenting training (for the parents of youth clients); arbitration programs/dispute resolution	45	87	100	<.001

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each agency rationale providing (regardless of frequency) any one of the activities, services, or operations included in the category.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).



TABLE 3.6. Methods to Encourage Acceptable Behavior (by Agency Rationale)

Method	Normalization (N = 87)	Treatment (N = 119)	Deterrence (N = 24)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Awarding/suspension of privilege or rewards	60	78	83	.006
Isolation/time-out	23	55	42	<.001
Corporal punishment	1	1	0	.865 <sup>b</sup>
Parental/guardian notification	54	61	71	.282
Group discussions	48	74	67	.001
Assigning duties, tasks, or chores	36	61	83	<.001
Threat of suspension/termination of participation	52	47	21	.026
Threat of referral to the justice system	11	40	54	<.001
Individual conference/discussion	87	85	79	.599
Other	2	7	8	.284 <sup>b</sup>
None of the above	2	3	8	.230 <sup>b</sup>

Note: Cell entries are percentage of respondents within each agency rationale reporting at least occasional use of the method to encourage youths engaged in status conduct to follow rules about acceptable behavior.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> Significance tests are suspect due to sparse cell frequencies.

pension of service participation, normalization agencies consistently reported less utilization of these techniques for rule enforcement. These data are reported in table 3.6.

The final aspect of service response that we investigated was the provision of specialized services for chronic runaways. Consistent with rationale-related predictions, a service focus on youth who had run away more than three times is more common among treatment (35 percent) and deterrence (33 percent) agencies than among normalization agencies (17 percent,  $p = .016$ ).

## Summary

This analysis of agency rationale has revealed differences in service delivery networks, organizational characteristics, descriptors of clients who engage in status behavior, and agency responses to status offenders. Normalization agencies are clearly distinct from treatment agencies, and the service profile

of each of these two groups differs from that of deterrence agencies. Furthermore, the patterns of agency characteristics generally follow directions postulated from the philosophical orientations toward intervention with status offenders.

We cannot attribute these differences among agencies to the messages or signals flowing from state legislation. We can only speculate as to why some cities appear to have more agencies of one type than another. Local features such as special characteristics of the youth population, agency funding patterns, or charismatic leaders in the youth service delivery sector may provide explanations for these patterns. Since we investigated just one site in each state, we cannot know how representative these project cities may be of other locations within their states.

The data suggest that different service constellations are evident in agencies with varying philosophical orientations. Whether or not these orientations are reflected in the service experiences reported by their status offender clients will be discussed later. Three sites will be discussed, and since the cities are located in states with differing legislative philosophies, we can investigate further the roles of both legislative and agency rationales in explaining the nature of local intervention with status offenders.

But for now, it is important to repeat the conclusion from the data above; agencies of the three types are different and behave differently. The three philosophies exist in practice. If the philosophies as practices do not flow from legislative intent, the fault does not lie in their ambiguity but in issues of policy implementation.

#### NOTES

1. There were also some interesting combinations. Some states, labeled "control," combined deterrence and treatment rationales. Others, labeled "diversion," combined treatment and normalization rationales. All others were such mixes of the three rationales that they could only be considered eclectic. Our analysis is, by design, limited to the three "pure" rationales.

2. It is important to note that these practices were independently ascertained only after the states were scored as being examples of normalization, treatment, or deterrence rationales, as described in chapter 4.

3. About half of the agencies were coded for agency rationale twice to assess the reliability of the procedure. There were very few discrepancies between the two coders. The remainder of the agency coding was reviewed by a senior staff member and determined to be consistent with the earlier coding approach. Only ten agencies could not be categorized reliably.

## 4

# Legislative Analysis

*With Linda Szymanski*

A fundamental premise of our research is that there are several basic rationales that underlie the ebb and flow of policy positions on the handling of troublesome youth. State legislation governs the handling of status offenders, and state budgets provide the funds for many law enforcement and youth service programs. If state legislation is important in this area, then local practice or strategies for responding to these youth should be in tune with the state policy. Our study was designed to test this proposition—whether local practices exemplify the philosophical approaches embedded in legislation.

Thus, our first concern was to analyze state juvenile codes to assess the degree to which legislation reflects the major rationales or underlying philosophies of status offender intervention. In other words, could we articulate the rationales in such a way that statutory codes could be categorized as treatment, deterrence, or normalization? If that could be accomplished, then we could identify the states that were the strongest examples of one approach or the other and therefore most likely to send the clearest signals to local service providers.

### Legislative Coding Scheme

By expressing the intentions of the legislature, statutory codes reflect dominant ideologies and have clear policy implications. By defining certain types of behaviors that will (or will not) be considered status offenses, and by

prescribing the activities as well as the limitations for handling status offenders, juvenile law obviously can function as a major determinant of local justice system and agency practice.

This is not to suggest that the translation of law into policy and practice is a straightforward process. On the contrary, there is considerable justification for the position that local policies and practices are as much a product of the characteristics of implementers, and the environmental context in which implementation takes place, as they are a product of the characteristics of law. But, to examine the relationship between law and practice, our first task was to specify how the three rationales might be represented in state juvenile codes.

Juvenile statutory codes current through early 1987 were reviewed in the three major domains most relevant to the legal context of the DSO movement: (1) jurisdictional classification; (2) pre- and postadjudication detention and placement; and (3) the provision of services or dispositional options. A coding scheme was used to attribute normalization, treatment, and deterrence points to legislative provisions in these three areas.

Jurisdictional classification reflects value orientations toward different status offenses and should have major implications for institutional response and control of youths exhibiting these behaviors. There are three available classifications for each type of status offender: they can be handled as a delinquent offender, as a welfare issue (i.e., the youth is abused, dependent, or neglected and therefore not any kind of offender at all), or they can be treated in a separate category such as status offender or child in need of supervision (CHINS). In our coding scheme, high normalization points were scored in states that did not include status offense behaviors within the jurisdiction of the justice system. Slightly lower normalization points were accorded to states that classified status offenders within the dependent and neglected category, thereby placing the onus for youth misbehavior on parental shoulders. Still fewer normalization points were scored for a separate status classification (e.g., CHINS), but such states scored high in treatment points since a status classification allows agencies to approach these youth as children who need help with personal problems rather than punishment for criminal behavior or protection from abusive or neglectful parents. While no normalization points were given in states that included status offenses within the delinquent category, these states were scored for high deterrence points.

The statutory classifications of five status offenses and court order violation for status conduct are reported in table 4.1. Forty-nine states plus the District of Columbia are included in this table (Iowa's legislation did not contain the specificity required by the coding scheme and was omitted). There are minor variations in the placement of particular offenses, but the most striking feature of this table is the frequency with which these behav-

TABLE 4.1. Statutory Classifications of Status Offenses

Classification	Not Mentioned	Dependent/ Neglected	Status	Delinquent
Runaway	2	5	39	4
Incorrigible	6	5	35	4
Truancy	6	4	37	3
Curfew	19	1	25	5
Alcohol	19	1	25	5
Court order violation for status conduct	21	2	18	9

Note: All states plus the District of Columbia included, with the exception of Iowa.

iors are classified by legislation within a separate status category. Running away, truancy, and incorrigibility are each placed in the status category in the juvenile legislation of more than two-thirds of the states. Curfew and alcohol violations are classified as a status offense in about half the states, although many others do not address these behaviors within their juvenile statutes at all. Nine states have developed legislation that permits youth that have violated court orders for status conduct to be handled as delinquents; however, eighteen states have retained the status classification for these offenders. By the mid- to late 1980s, it was relatively rare for status offenses to fall within either the dependent/neglected or delinquency categories.

The second area of legal activity relevant to the DSO movement was the regulation of secure physical custody. Statutorily based elimination or restriction of confinement of juveniles in locked facilities has been a primary mechanism for preventing or decreasing institutionalization. Statutory codes regarding detention prior to adjudication, as well as incarceration or placement, were scored according to their implications for institutional exposure and control. High normalization points were given to states that prohibited secure custody for status offenders. Conversely, states that allowed secure custody, and in particular long-term placement in secure facilities, were scored with high deterrence points. High treatment scores in this area reflected an emphasis on treatment services within a custodial context, secure detention as a conduit to treatment, placement in mental health facilities, or a combination of these.

Dispositional options involved the scoring of legislative content according to the choices given to judges for responding to these problem behaviors and the specification of services appropriate to status offending youth. The three value orientations are manifest in different options and services. Normalization points were scored for emancipation as a dispositional option and also for services that focused on youth opportunities or enhancement of the family environment. Examples of these services are vocational, educational, or recreational programs, as well as parent training and housing as-

sistance. States that specified counseling and other noncustodial mental health services received treatment points. Deterrence points were allocated for fines, community service, restitution, or probation as appropriate dispositional options for status offenders.

The coding scheme (see appendix A) was developed after a review of the theoretical and empirical literature on approaches to status offending and after extended discussions with academic and practitioner colleagues. The process of extracting relevant provisions and coding statutory content necessarily required considerable judgment and interpretation. A researcher with special training in juvenile law extracted all legal provisions concerning status offenders from the juvenile codes for each state.<sup>1</sup>

All references to state identification were removed to make sure that prior knowledge or impressions about the orientation of the state did not influence the scoring process. The statutes were coded independently by two coders. The scheme was constructed to permit up to ten points for each rationale within the three content areas. The rationale scores were summed across the three domains. Intercoder agreement on the total rationale scores ranged from 85 percent to 96 percent. There were no substantive patterns to the coding discrepancies.

Due to differential scoring probabilities among the three rationales, as well as varying levels of specificity between different states' legislation, the three total rationale scores for each state were standardized to an arbitrary scale with a mean of 15 and standard deviation of 5.<sup>2</sup> Table 4.2 displays the results of the state legislation scoring process. The standardized profiles were used to identify legislation patterns pertinent to the three rationales. The calculation of ratios comparing rationale scores and combinations of scores aided the process of identifying legislative patterns.

Let's take one state as an example. At the time of the legislative coding, Oklahoma's legislation designated runaways, truants, and incorrigible youth as CHINS. Curfew and alcohol violations were not included, and there was no provision for a violation of a court order for status conduct. According to the jurisdictional classification section of the scoring sheet, this statutory arrangement yielded 10 normalization points, 24 treatment points, and 8 deterrence points (see scoring structure for cells c, g, k, m, q, and u in appendix A). Each of these was divided by 3.5 to bring the points available for jurisdictional classification in line with the scoring schemes for confinement and provision of services (a maximum of 10 points). With rounding, this calculation resulted in 6 normalization points, 7 treatment points, and 2 deterrence points for the jurisdictional classification section.

The confinement section of Oklahoma's juvenile code permitted placement of a child taken into custody as CHINS as a result of being a runaway in a secure detention facility for up to thirty days, but the custody order was

TABLE 4.2. State Coding Results

State	Raw Scores			Standardized Scores X = 15; s = 5			Rationale Pattern
	N	T	D	N	T	D	
Alabama	9	18	9	14	15	12	
<b>Alaska</b>	16	1	4	21	0	8	Normalization
Arizona	8	24	16	13	21	18	
Arkansas	15	21	5	20	18	9	Diversion
California	19	27	13	24	24	15	
Colorado	8	16	13	13	13	15	Eclectic
Connecticut	12	7	14	17	4	16	
<b>Delaware</b>	17	4	3	22	1	7	Normalization
District of Columbia	3	26	15	8	23	17	
Florida <sup>a</sup>	21	13	5	26	10	9	
Georgia	5	18	23	10	15	24	Control
Hawaii	18	19	10	23	16	13	
<b>Idaho</b>	7	14	23	12	11	24	Deterrence
Illinois	14	20	10	19	17	13	
Indiana	16	15	15	21	12	17	
Iowa	Not coded			Not coded			
Kansas	13	21	2	18	18	6	Diversion
Kentucky	8	15	12	13	12	15	
Louisiana	8	20	8	13	17	11	
<b>Maine</b>	18	11	4	23	8	8	Normalization
<b>Maryland</b>	10	25	8	15	22	11	Treatment
Massachusetts	11	19	11	16	16	14	Eclectic
<b>Michigan</b>	1	13	21	6	10	22	Deterrence
Minnesota	13	26	13	18	23	15	
Mississippi	9	13	20	14	10	21	
Missouri	9	17	9	14	14	12	Eclectic
Montana	9	23	16	14	20	18	
Nebraska	8	17	13	13	14	15	Eclectic
Nevada	5	16	20	10	13	21	
<b>New Hampshire</b>	13	30	9	18	27	12	Treatment
New Jersey	23	25	3	28	22	7	Diversion
New Mexico	6	20	13	11	17	15	
New York	9	15	15	14	12	17	
North Carolina	17	18	7	22	15	10	
North Dakota	3	16	15	8	13	17	Control
Ohio	5	11	15	13	8	17	
Oklahoma	8	23	14	13	20	16	
Oregon	10	18	12	15	15	15	Eclectic
Pennsylvania	11	12	7	16	9	10	
Rhode Island	7	17	15	12	14	17	
South Carolina	7	18	9	12	15	12	
South Dakota	8	19	16	13	16	18	
Tennessee	6	20	13	11	17	15	
Texas	8	23	14	13	20	16	
Utah	7	22	17	12	19	19	
Vermont	6	15	12	11	12	15	
Virginia	10	18	20	15	15	21	

TABLE 4.2. (continued)

State	Raw Scores			Standardized Scores X = 15; s = 5			Rationale Pattern
	N	T	D	N	T	D	
	Washington	18	22	8	23	19	
West Virginia	6	21	26	11	18	27	Control
Wisconsin	15	27	8	20	24	11	Diversion
Wyoming	7	21	23	12	18	24	

Note: Based on juvenile codes current as of January 1987. N stands for normalization, T for treatment, and D for deterrence. States in boldface were selected for the remainder of the study.

\*New legislation effective October 1987 produces standardized scores of 22-22-18.

extendable to sixty days. Placement in shelter or foster care were other options for preadjudication custody. Following adjudication, these youth could be ordered to rehabilitation facilities with an emphasis on treatment, but CHINS found to be "so unmanageable, ungovernable and antisocial that no other reasonable alternative exists for treatment or restraint" could be placed in a secure facility, albeit one used exclusively for CHINS. The confinement guidelines generated no normalization points, 8 treatment points, and 10 deterrence points.

The final section of the coding sheet accorded points for the specification of different types of services. Educational and vocational opportunities generated 2 normalization points. Frequent mention of counseling and mental health facilities and drug and alcohol treatment and an overall emphasis on treatment services yielded 8 treatment points for services. Probation was the only deterrence service that was scored for 2 points.

The raw scores for each section were summed to yield 8 normalization points, 23 treatment points, and 14 deterrence points. The standardized profile was 13, 20, and 16, depicting a state with both treatment and deterrence inclinations toward certain categories of status offending behavior. Figure 4.1 displays Oklahoma's legislative profile, utilizing the standard scores. The moderate levels of normalization stemmed primarily from the exclusion of curfew, alcohol, and court order violations from Oklahoma's statutory code. The selection of this state as an exemplar of the coding process was arbitrary, but the absence of a clear pattern of legislative rationale was not unusual.

### Patterns of Status Offender Legislation

About half of the states fell into one of six patterns. States with very high scores on one of the three rationales, combined with low scores on the



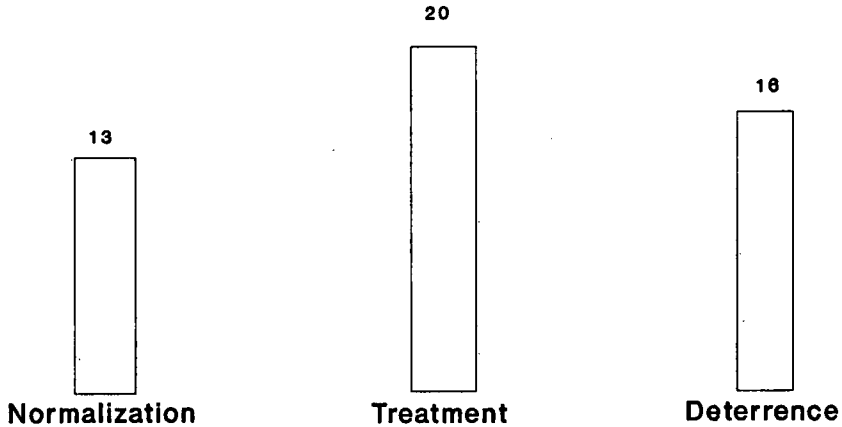


FIGURE 4.1. Oklahoma's Legislative Profile

remaining two rationales, made up three of these patterns. These were the states we designated to be normalization, treatment, or deterrence states.

Delaware, Maine, and Alaska exemplified the clear normalization pattern. Typically, the justice system in these states had divested—that is, given up jurisdiction over all or most status offenses. In some instances, status offending was included within the definition of the dependent/neglected classification. Even temporary secure custody was rarely an option in these states. Typical service options included a front-end referral to community agencies for remedial training, recreation, or crisis intervention, with participation on a voluntary basis.

New Hampshire and Maryland were identified as treatment states, although the normalization and deterrence scores were higher than would be optimal for a “pure” treatment status. States that fell within the treatment pattern had a separate jurisdictional classification for status conduct. The treatment orientation was evident in references to psychological and mental health services within secure or nonsecure custodial contexts or on an outpatient basis.

Michigan and Idaho, states within the clear deterrence pattern, included status offending within the delinquent classification or within a separate category. Typically, status offenders could be detained and placed in secure facilities; nonresidential dispositions often included probation or restitution programs closely associated with a justice model.

Figure 4.2 provides a graphic representation of the legislative profiles of the three types of states. In each case, one of the rationale scores was considerably higher than the other two. These are the actual profiles from three of the seven states that were included in the study. Each of these profiles can be located in table 4.2.

These states are clearly not representative of the rest of the country. They are the best exemplars of the three orientations and as such are ideal-type cases. They provide the best cases, therefore, for testing the main competing hypotheses of this study. In addition to the three "pure" rationale patterns, two patterns reflected high scoring on two rationales and low on the third. Diversion states had high normalization and treatment points but low deterrence scores. New Jersey, Kansas, Arkansas, and Wisconsin fit this pattern. These states classified status offenses within either the dependent and neglected category or a separate category, prohibited secure detention or placement and specified dispositional options involving treatment and normalization services. Basically, they apply a kind of medical model with a distaste for punishment.

Treatment options were specified also in states that fit the control pattern (West Virginia, North Dakota, Georgia, and Montana); they have high treatment and deterrence profiles and low normalization scores. Typically, treatment services were linked with secure custodial arrangements in the statutory provisions of control sites. The control model requires attention to status offenders but is inconsistent about the type of intervention.

The sixth pattern, which we termed eclectic, encompassed sites with bal-

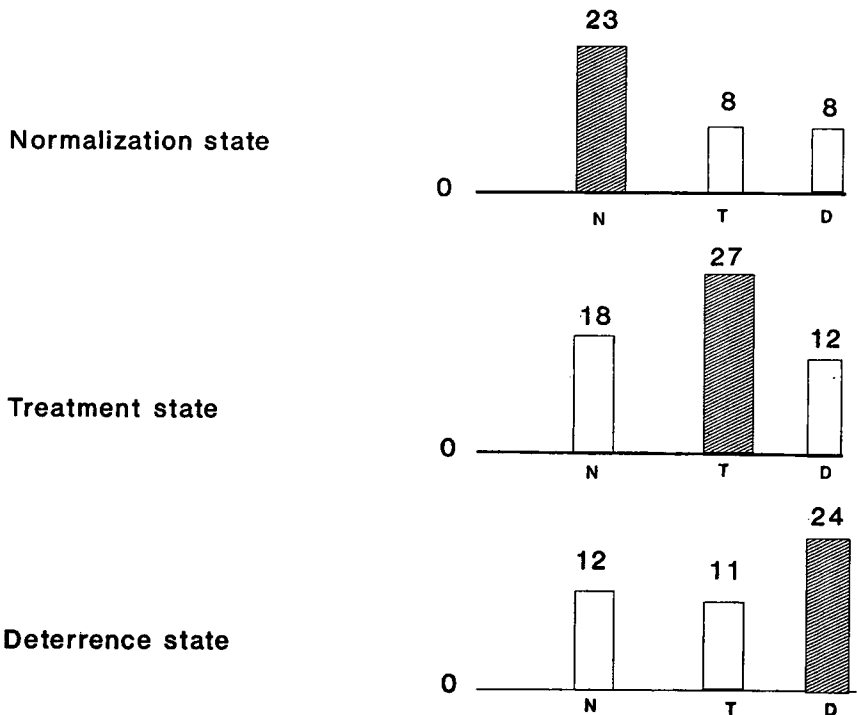


FIGURE 4.2. Legislative Profile Examples

anced scores across the three rationales. Oregon, Colorado, Massachusetts, Missouri, and Nebraska were the best examples. This pattern suggested balanced compromises between competing interests and ideologies in developing legislation; such compromises would have been achieved either by incorporating agency discretion to handle status offending youth according to individual needs or by taking various approaches to different categories of status offending—for example, running away versus incorrigibility.

The remaining sites, about half of the fifty, showed no clear pattern or had scores that were too low to permit accurate pattern identification. Sometimes, low scores were the result of the lack of specificity within the legislation. Ambiguous language provides an opportunity for the increased exercise of discretion by justice and social system practitioners. This represents a limitation to this method: it relies on legislative content to present a clear and coherent statement of value orientations toward youthful misbehavior. The finding that up to half of the states' legislative policy is "a little of this" and a "bit more of that" or a little of each is not particularly helpful in developing a national typology for legislative approaches. While the method might be improved by technical refinement, the ambiguous nature of legislative language presents grave challenges to the systematic application of conceptually based coding categories. It also provides little clarity of legislative intent to justice and welfare agencies.

## Summary

When we visited cities in the seven states with the purest legislative signals regarding the handling of status offenders, our interviews with key site informants lent some credibility to the notion that local practices reflected the philosophical underpinnings of the juvenile codes in these states (see "Selected Site Practices," chapter 3). Despite our best attempts to approach these site visits objectively, it may be that we found validation for the state rationales in local practices because we were looking for it. The systematic information we gathered later by surveying the broad range of youth service providers in each city, and described in the next chapter, failed to yield the differences predicted from the hypothesis of a close articulation between state philosophy and local practice. The interviews with youth in three of the sites similarly failed to provide support for the articulation hypothesis.

Nonetheless, throughout this work, we will argue for the proposition that the philosophical undercurrents of responses to status offenders can be articulated and investigated for their effects on the constellation of services that these youth eventually receive. The data presented in chapter 3 foreshadow our conclusion that the rationales permeate service provision but do not flow from state legislation. We find a lack of correspondence between

statutory code and local services, and yet this cannot be attributed to the lack of relatively clear signals from the legislatures in the seven purest states.

The state coding scheme and our selection process ensured that only the pure rationale sites were included in the study. Resources did not permit the investigation of states that fell within the diversion, control, or eclectic patterns. Given the diversity of service constellations that emerged in the pure rationale sites, it is quite likely that a similar variety of service practices exists in states with mixed legislative philosophies.

The legislative coding scheme categorized states by analyzing the juvenile codes that were current in early 1987. The modification of these codes is a constant process, although our historical analysis of status offender statutes suggested that radical changes since the mid-1970s were uncommon. For example, Florida emerged as a pure normalization state from our coding procedures, yet legislative changes during 1987 moved it squarely within the eclectic category.

Over the years since initiating this study, we have been contacted by legislative staff in states that are searching for new and more effective approaches to responding to status offenders. One of our primary objectives in conducting this research was to position ourselves to be responsive to such requests from legislative policymakers. Our intent was to be able to say to them, "Articulate the consensus of philosophies about approaches to status offenders in your legislation. If that is 'X,' then these are the services and practices that you can expect to see on the local level. If it is 'Y,' then this is the local situation likely to develop. . . ." The study results preclude our taking such a position. Instead, we caution these policymakers that despite the legislative wrangling and the tortuous process of building and then articulating a legislative consensus, local service providers adapt to legislative messages and dictates with their own philosophically driven perspectives at the forefront. Or, as stated earlier, agencies do what agencies do. The next chapter provides evidence that what they do does not correspond closely with the rationales reflected in state legislation.

#### NOTES

1. Legislative provisions within the three areas were extracted from automated files maintained by the National Center for Juvenile Justice.

2. The means and standard deviations for the raw scores were 10.4 and 4.98 for normalization, 18.1 and 4.90 for treatment, and 12.5 and 5.80 for deterrence.

## 5

# Youth Service Delivery in Seven Cities

## Introduction

How do communities respond to status offenders? How are these youths, in fact, “handled”? What types of services do they receive and what kind of organizations deliver these services? Who are the youth that receive these services, and how do they get connected to service providers? And most important for policymakers, do these service constellations and client characteristics mirror the intent expressed by state legislators in regard to these youths? In the previous chapter, we have shown that a handful of states communicated relatively strong and distinct ideological messages on how status offenders should be handled. Our early preview of the study’s overall findings—that local service provision does not flow inexorably from legislative mandates—should not preempt the reader’s interest in the considerable range of service characteristics represented by the several hundred agencies included in this study. The philosophical positions reflected in agency structure and service activity are likely to have a greater impact on youth exhibiting troublesome behavior than do the policies dictated by state legislators.

This is the first of several chapters that report the data gathered on local services to status offenders. We began gathering information at the most general level—by identifying those entities that might conceivably provide services to youth who engaged in behavior that, in some states, could be classified as status offenses. The conceptual framework dictated this broad approach because the normalization rationale implies minimal professional response, particularly that which could result in the attachment of negative

labels—such as “status offender”—to troublesome youth. This presented a major challenge to the research objective of describing service delivery to these youths.

The solution started with the collection of relatively superficial information from organizations likely to serve youth, continued with lengthy telephone interviews with personnel from agencies that provide service to status offenders, and concluded with personal interviews with status offenders in three of the seven cities. Chapters 6 and 7 describe status offender agencies and their clientele, but the context of status offender handling can be derived from the more general assessment of all youth-serving agencies included in this chapter.

Status offenses are not common to all youth, nor do agency staff necessarily know which of their youth clients have engaged in status offenses. A number of clients are referred to agencies specifically for status offense behavior and are treated accordingly. But many are not. A survey of agencies serving only status offenders specifically for those behaviors would miss many offenders and many agency responses. Thus, the survey on which we report deals with agencies serving a broad range of youth, regardless of the deliberateness with which they respond to status offending.

The surveys were carried out in seven cities, which were, with the exception of Flint, Michigan, the largest within the seven states whose legislation emphasized either deterrence or treatment or normalization of status offense behaviors. In this chapter, these philosophical positions loom less important than they will in chapters to follow. For current purposes, we stress the nature and variety of youth services found. We report selected intercity comparisons by way of illustrating this variety rather than addressing differences in state rationales.

In addition to descriptions of the services available to all youth in the seven cities, two sets of comparisons help to set the context for the more detailed agency and client information presented in later chapters. Characteristics of agencies that provide services to status offender clients will be compared to those that do not have these youth. This will provide a sense of the type of youth agency not included in the study. Then, agencies that provide specific services to status offenders for those behaviors will be compared with those that do not have these specific services. The differences between these two types of agencies may portend major distinctions in philosophical orientations toward the handling of status offenders.

### *A Note about Service Delivery Units*

The process of identifying youth service providers necessitated the application of some arbitrary distinctions. Our primary interest in organizational

delivery led to a focus, later in the study, on social agencies, but initial procedures included youth programs in churches and schools as well. An additional complexity is that organizations deliver services at multiple locations. A YMCA/YWCA in one city provided recreational, vocational, and counseling programs at one location, maintained a runaway shelter at another, and established a street youth drop-in facility at a third address. In general, the survey and analytic unit was a service-providing location. When several agencies or organizations provided services in the same location, each organization was surveyed separately regarding the services provided at that location.

Throughout this book, we tend to use the term “agency” to refer to organizational service delivery at a given location. To the extent possible, we attempted to include organizations providing services to site youth, whether or not the agency was physically located in the city.

The results from social agencies, churches, and schools will be covered in separate sections. For each type of agency, we will first briefly describe the process of identifying organizations for the survey. Then we will describe the aggregated seven-city data in six categories of interest, as well as selected intercity comparisons. This format will next be followed with respect to agencies that do and do not have status offender clients, and finally we will report on those that do and do not have specific services for status offenders.

## The Social Agencies

American cities do not come equipped with comprehensive lists of all their youth-serving capacities. There are directories, of course, and some local officials may assume that they are relatively complete, but our experience does not support such an assumption. Thus, our first task was to complete such a list for each of our cities; we referred to this as the agency census. The goal was to enumerate all agencies that serve youth from each of the seven cities; such agencies, as we noted, need not be located within the city limits to serve those youths, nor need they serve only local youth.

The process of census development was far more complex than we had anticipated. Combing local phone books for categories that conceivably could include youth service, trying to get churches to answer phones, even on Sundays, and plotting endless addresses on city maps are tasks best managed by patient and detail-oriented individuals. Our process varied across the seven cities, in part because information sources in the cities differed so much. The typical process of census development took the following course.

Phone interviews were undertaken with a small list of informants likely

to be found in any city: the police official in charge of juvenile affairs, a juvenile court judge, the director of the United Way, an official in the state children's service agency, a recreation official, a school official, and so on. These interviews informed us about the respondent's organization but also yielded names of others who could be informative.

Site visits to the seven cities were made by two research staff members, typically visiting about ten locations (always including the court, the police, a school official, and several public and private agencies). One purpose of these personal interviews was to gain general familiarity with each city's approach to the handling of status offenders. This has been summarized in chapter 3. Also, these interviews were deliberately used to elicit agency names, as well as lists of referral sources. Very often, these site visits produced both published and unpublished agency rosters and lists of various sorts. These had to be painstakingly reviewed to establish which agencies were likely to be appropriate for our purposes.

The specific youth-serving locations obtained from these steps were then combined with an exhaustive (and exhausting) search of the local phone books, both white and yellow pages. New rosters and lists were sometimes located, and all of this information was then thoroughly reviewed to form, for each city, three census lists: churches, schools, and agencies of all sorts. We will discuss the churches and schools later in the chapter.

Cross-list checking and more phone calls, along with staff discussions about criteria, nomenclature, and locations on city maps, continued the process until accord was reached on the appropriate census for each city. We deliberately erred, rather broadly, on the expansive side in order to include all possible youth-serving units. It would be one function of the survey itself to cull out units servicing adults only, or those not serving city residents, and so on.

Across the seven cities, the total census listing yielded 1,526 agencies. Individual city totals ranged from a low of 98 in Boise to 523 in Baltimore. Because city populations ranged from about 60,000 to 800,000, the number of potential youth-serving units is large. The availability of services is considerable, although what kinds of services for what kinds of youth obviously can vary a great deal across cities.

The data to be reported in this section come from the Youth Services Survey (YSS) returns from service agencies only; school and church data will be reported later. Further, we include data only from agencies providing direct services to youth. Those providing only indirect services such as training for youth service professionals, or referral lists, or direct service to parents alone were excluded from data collection. Also excluded were psychotherapists, clinical psychologists, and other counselors providing service in the context of individual or group private practice; this exclusion was based



on our limited resources as well as our interest in organizational service delivery.

Many of the 1,526 agencies on the seven census lists were of unknown character. The South City Service Center, for example, is a name that suggests only that it might serve youth. As information became available, agencies were excluded on the basis of several criteria: no youth clients, no service to youth residing in the city in question in the case of off-site agencies, service limited to youth under 12 years of age, indirect services only, individual therapists, and no service operations during 1987. The survey instrument was tested with about 350 agencies in the Los Angeles area, revised, and mailed to all entries on the seven agency lists. Using repeated mailings and phone promptings, we obtained a survey return or information on applicability for 80 percent of these 1,526 agencies. Applying the exclusion criteria on all returned surveys reduced the final number to 571 appropriate agencies, ranging from a low of 42 in Boise to a high of 214 in Baltimore.<sup>1</sup> This still represents a large number of available service units. The reader may wish to review the agency questionnaire before reading the data reports below (see appendix B).

### *Descriptive Data on Social Agencies*

Because the seven cities were selected to represent qualitatively different approaches to status offender responses, we are principally interested in two kinds of issues here. The first is simply to describe youth service, and the second is to describe differences from city to city. The data include characteristics of the agencies and of their clients, but these latter should also be viewed as agency descriptors. In this section, we include all youth-serving agencies, whether or not status offenders are among the clientele.

#### NUMBER OF YOUTH SERVED

While variation in city size is reflected in the average numbers of youth served, the reflection is less than clear. For instance, Baltimore, the largest city, yields the fourth largest average clientele, and despite city size differences, the intercity differences in clientele sizes do not reach statistical significance overall. There were no significant differences among cities with respect to youth clients under 12 years of age, nor for those from 12 to 17 (although the proportion of those 12 to 17 does yield a significant difference unrelated to city size). In other words, we find essentially no relationship between city size and average agency youth clientele. Larger cities tend to handle their larger needs by expanding the numbers of agencies rather than

the sizes of their agencies. This may at the same time be somewhat inefficient but beneficial for service delivery.

Clientele size ranges from an average annual number of 695 clients per agency in Manchester to 6,392 in Wilmington, with the average proportion of 12- to 17-year-olds ranging from .63 to .82. In judging these numbers, it is useful to keep in mind that these "agencies" include small counseling units and large recreational facilities; one may serve a few dozen clients, and another may serve thousands. It is this wide variation in numbers that helps account for the absence of statistically significant differences.

#### SERVICES PROVIDED

Respondents were given an extensive list of twenty types of services that might be offered their youth clientele. For convenience, we have grouped these into six categories.

Counseling	Hotline, crisis intervention, counseling/therapy, diagnostic screening
Shelter	Emergency shelter care, residential care
General	Recreation, child care, general supervision, character-building activities
Decision making	Out-of-home placement, case management, referral
Training	Education/tutoring, employment counseling/referral/training
Other	Advocacy, medical services, parent training, other

Overall, the category most frequently reported by the respondents was counseling, cited on the average by 55 percent of the respondents. Within that category, the predominant service was counseling/therapy. General was the next largest category at 46 percent, followed by training at 38 percent. Then shelter followed at 27 percent, decision making at 24 percent, and other at 22 percent. Most agencies listed more than one service, as the question on the survey asked for the three most frequently used services.

Of the six service categories, only shelter yielded significant differences across the seven cities ( $p < .01$ ), although counseling and decision making also approached significance. We are struck more by the similarities than by the differences between these cities. Table 5.1 presents the data on particular patterns of service within each city.

The previous discussion is based on the three services offered most frequently by the agencies, but we also looked at the primary service—the service ranked number one by each respondent. Primary service in some

TABLE 5.1. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Service Provision in Six Collapsed Categories in Seven Cities: Based on First Three Services Mentioned

City	Counseling	Shelter	General	Decision Making	Training	Other	N
Manchester	60.4	37.5	43.8	25.0	25.0	25.0	48
Portland	52.6	28.1	45.6	24.6	31.6	22.8	57
Wilmington	50.7	20.6	42.5	34.3	37.0	23.3	73
Boise	59.5	19.0	45.2	38.1	35.7	19.0	42
Baltimore	51.9	25.7	50.0	21.0	40.2	20.6	214
Flint	71.6	44.6	35.1	21.6	43.2	27.0	74
Anchorage	47.6	15.9	52.4	19.0	44.4	20.6	63
Total	55.2	27.2	46.1	24.5	39.2	22.2	571
Statistical sig. ( $\chi^2$ )	<.10	<.01	.38	<.10	.33	.93	

ways may be used to epitomize more sensitively the character of agency offerings and emphases in different cities.

Table 5.2 presents these primary service data, and a rather different picture emerges. Counseling loses its dominant position in favor of more general services. Counseling, shelter, and general services categories account for almost three-fourths of the primary services offered. Also, shelter, general services, and training categories all attain statistical significance between cities. Primary service, as a measure, reduces the predominance of particular categories but increases somewhat the intercity differences in service emphasis.

The five most frequent services included within the six categories, ranked somewhat differently, are the same in both sets of data: counseling/therapy, residential care, recreation, character-building, and education/tutoring. As primary services, however, only three of these reach double-digit percent-

TABLE 5.2. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Service Provision in Six Categories in Seven Cities: Based on Service Ranked First in Frequency

City	Counseling	Shelter	General	Decision Making	Training	Other	N
Manchester	29.2	27.1	27.1	2.1	2.1	8.3	48
Portland	21.0	19.3	26.3	3.5	8.8	8.8	57
Wilmington	16.4	16.4	26.0	8.2	15.1	11.0	73
Boise	33.3	14.3	14.3	4.8	14.3	11.9	42
Baltimore	22.0	22.9	35.0	2.8	10.3	2.8	214
Flint	25.7	37.8	12.2	1.4	4.0	10.8	74
Anchorage	19.0	14.3	34.9	3.2	19.0	6.4	63
Total	22.8	22.4	27.8	3.5	10.5	7.0	571
Statistical sig. ( $\chi^2$ )	.38	<.05	<.01	.36	<.05	.10	

ages—counseling/therapy, residential care, and recreation. Most specific services do not yield significant differences across cities. Taken together, these service descriptions give the general impression, again, of more similarities than differences across cities and less concentration on specific modalities than one might anticipate. Generalizing across many hundreds of agencies, the picture is one of a wide range of service capacities in rather plentiful numbers.

We make this comment about full availability of services because the data stand in some contrast to the impressions we received from personal visits to these seven cities, during which we deliberately elicited the services used by the police, courts, and correctional agencies for youth coming to their attention. In several of these cities, we had to press quite hard to extract the names of more than just a few agencies available for client referral. This is a common finding in research on service delivery for youth clientele; of the many services available, a relative few come to be accepted and used regularly by the juvenile justice system. Even status offender populations, those presumably most suited to community-level service, are seldom referred to a multiplicity of agencies. What our data suggest for these seven cities, in any case, is that this need not be the case.

#### SOURCES OF CLIENTS

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the sources of the clients referred to them and to rank the three major sources. The categories available were as follows:

- private service agencies, including religious
- public social service/public welfare departments
- police/sheriff departments
- schools and/or educational institutions
- private mental health agencies
- public mental health agencies
- self or family referrals, other non-agency sources
- court/probation
- other

The three most frequently named referral sources were self or family (61 percent), public social service/welfare (54 percent), and school (53 percent). As table 5.3 suggests, in fact, the referral sources most likely to deal with serious youth behavior problems (i.e., the justice and mental health systems) are those less likely to refer large numbers of clients to these agencies. This is our first indication that the youth services being provided by the community agencies are geared toward a relatively nondeviant population. There is no

TABLE 5.3. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Referral Sources in Seven Cities: Based on First Three Sources Mentioned

City	Private Service	Public Service	Law Enforcement	Schools	Private Mental Health	Public Mental Health	Self/Family	Court/Probation	Other
Manchester	27.1	52.1	6.2	60.4	10.4	16.7	60.4	35.4	0.0
Portland	24.6	68.4	10.5	56.1	3.5	14.0	66.7	21.0	0.0
Wilmington	24.7	54.8	5.5	53.4	4.1	9.6	67.1	23.3	2.7
Boise	28.6	52.4	9.5	52.4	11.9	9.5	73.8	33.3	0.0
Baltimore	23.8	52.3	7.9	53.7	5.1	7.9	58.4	31.8	1.4
Flint	28.4	63.5	5.4	37.8	6.8	24.3	44.6	51.4	0.0
Anchorage	34.9	39.7	7.9	61.9	9.5	11.1	68.2	15.9	0.0
Total	26.4	54.3	7.5	53.2	6.5	12.1	61.0	30.8	0.9
Statistical sig. ( $\chi^2$ )	.72	.12	.82	.17	.47	<.10	<.05	<.01	.47

reason, really, to expect otherwise. We can report, as well, that distinguishing public and private referral sources yields no overall differences: 72 percent indicate using public agencies and 72 percent report using private sources. Twenty-five percent list only public or only private sources. Distinguishing public and private sources increases the city differences beyond the .05 level of significance. Two cities contribute most clearly to this pattern: Anchorage has the highest private and lowest public referral sources, while Flint reverses this pattern.

Reference to each agency's first-ranked or most frequent referral resource reveals a very similar ranking of the categories; the first five, in fact, are identical. Nor is there any improvement in the intercity probabilities. The patterns (not shown in table form) are much the same as those in table 5.3, and we can add the same for the pattern of the simple dichotomy between public and private referral sources.

Because these data have been collected in the context of a juvenile justice project, it is important to note two points about referral sources. The police, courts, and probation are providing a relatively small portion of the client referrals to our responding agencies. Such data cannot be used to suggest the size of the juvenile justice problem in these cities or how many arrestees and court cases are referred out for service. But they do suggest that the justice agencies could refer far more extensively than they do. The service providers are there, and they offer a wide variety of services.

An example is provided by Flint. We knew from our site visit that the justice system in this city, heavily influenced by the views of its presiding juvenile court judge, had an active diversion program. And, as might be expected, this city's agencies were highest in reporting referrals from justice agencies (and lowest from schools, family, and self). Here, it seems, practice does reflect local policy.

## CLIENTELE PROBLEMS

Respondents were asked to estimate the percentage of their youth clientele in 1987 who experienced any (or none) of the following problems:

- sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect
- status offenses, including running away, being beyond parental control, habitual truancy, curfew violation, possession of liquor, and sexual promiscuity
- substance abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- other delinquent behavior
- other problems
- none of these problems

As might be expected from social agencies dealing with youth, the lowest cross-city average percentage was for no problems—28.3 percent. Even this seems rather high, given what is known about the generally wide distribution of problem behaviors, but of course many problem behaviors are not exhibited to or reported to agency personnel.

Among the five problem areas, the city averages are highest for status offenses (44 percent) and lowest for delinquency (34 percent), but these are obviously not large differences at all. Across the board, these agencies on the average are reporting considerable experience with youth exhibiting behavior problems of several types, and no category of problem predominates.

We also looked for combinations of problems. Most common were agencies—32 percent of the total—reporting at least a 50 percent mixture of status offending and delinquent youth. Another 25 percent reported a mixture of status offending youth with abuse, dependency, or neglect cases. These combinations varied considerably between cities, but not to the point of statistical significance.

Across the six problem areas (including no problems), there are no statistically significant city differences except for the abuse or neglect category. In this category, the range across seven cities is from a low of 30 percent to a high of 49 percent, still not a range of great size.

It is tempting to suggest that the comparatively minor cross-city differences in clientele size and services might reflect the absence of problem youth differences, but this could well be fallacious. The problems reported here are only those reported by the agencies and may not reflect general levels of prevalence. Further, the severity and chronicity of the problems reported cannot be gauged from our data.

Since the status offense category is our principal concern, the survey asked for some detail on how agencies respond to status offending. Specifically, it requested whether status offenders were eligible for agency service, whether

they were separately identifiable from non-status offender clients, and whether they were provided specific services.

Only 14 of the 571 agencies reported having no status offenders and intentionally excluding them. Eighty-five percent reported having some status offenders (technically one or more, even though the average status offense level among clients was just under half). Of these, about 71 percent could identify their status offenders separately, and 32 percent provided specific services for them.

We find these figures rather significant. Despite the facts that referrals tend not to be from problem-oriented sources (justice and mental health), that many clients are referred by themselves or family members, and that many agencies in the census are of the nonclinical variety (recreational, scouting, etc.), these agencies seem relatively alert to their status offender clients, who are, after all, in the minority.

The ability of the agencies to identify their status offender clientele is statistically significant across cities, with Flint yielding the highest identifiability.

#### RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

Agencies in which youth clients spend a good deal of time away from home hold particular importance for youth service policy. Respondents were asked to identify whether their agency or some component of it could be classified as a residential facility of the following types:

- residential treatment center
- halfway house or group home
- shelter
- mental health facility or unit
- reception or diagnostic center
- detention center
- hospital in-patient unit
- training school, ranch, forestry camp, or farm
- other

Surprisingly 33 percent of the 571 agencies had components that fell into these various residential categories. Nineteen percent of these were described as secure facilities—locked locations in which youth were physically prevented from leaving. The differences in residential capacities across cities are very substantial, from a high of 50 percent in Manchester to a low of 18 percent in Anchorage. If we take residential care to be a response to the perceived severity of the problem, then we have a major indication of the different capacities to handle youth in the seven cities. Only four of the

residential types appear at all frequently, accounting for about 85 percent of the residential agencies. These include 65 residential treatment centers, 49 halfway houses or group homes, 23 shelters, and 24 mental health facilities.

Further indications of cross-city differences include the following:

- In two cities, about 65 percent of the responding residential facilities are residential treatment centers, while in another the figure is 14 percent.
- Group homes account for one-third of the residential facilities reported in two cities but less than 10 percent in two others.
- Shelters, part of the nationwide service delivery system for runaways, are reported to be quite high in one city—25 percent—and yet not reported at all in two others.
- One city reported no in-patient hospital unit; we presume this is not true but a function of response attrition.

It is clear, then, that it is in the residential care area that major differences have emerged among the seven cities. However, a further caution should be noted; because residential centers often serve large regional areas, some of those in the sample are not located within the designated sites and may not reflect those cities as well as the nonresidential agencies. This does not affect the descriptions given above, but they should be understood as having a relevance different from that of other data reported here.

#### PRIVATE VERSUS PUBLIC AGENCIES

Survey respondents were asked to characterize their agencies as either public, private-nonprofit, or private-for-profit. The last category comprised only 8 percent of the total, in part because we excluded individual and group therapists from the agency census. Thirty-five percent of the agencies are public and 56 percent private-nonprofit.

As with residential care, the distinction between public and private is one that differs significantly across cities. Public agency percentages range from a high of 47 percent to a low of 12 percent. Private-nonprofit agency percentages range from a high of 73 percent to a low of 44 percent. The for-profit category ranges from 19 percent to 3 percent.

What we have learned so far may offer some surprises, depending upon one's expectations. Our impressions of the data include the following.

- These seven cities offer a broad potential for youth services.
- Even limiting ourselves to agencies specifically oriented toward youth services, each city has a substantial number of appropriate service units. The number reflects population size, but size of average agency clientele is relatively independent of city size.
- Counseling or therapy is the most common service provided, but the



picture is complicated by the multiservice orientation of most agencies. Thus, a broad spectrum of services is available, albeit not equally employed. Other prominent examples are recreation, character-building activities, educational tutoring, and employment preparation. We are struck more by the similarities than by the differences across the seven cities.

- Sources that refer clients to these agencies are also quite similar across the cities. Most common are self or family, public social service, and schools. The relatively low ranking of juvenile justice and mental health referral sources suggests that youth service is less driven by these serious youth behavior problems than by “normal” youth needs. This in turn argues that service for more seriously troubled youth shows considerable potential for expansion.

- While various forms of youth problems are reported as relatively common in the agency clientele, these do not vary much from city to city. Further, serious problems are in the minority. Status offenders, our target population, are widely accepted and often identifiable, and in about a quarter of the agencies, they are provided specific services.

- There are two descriptive items that show major city-to-city variation; these are the provision of residential care and the proportion of public to private auspices of the agencies. The vast majority of residential care (82 percent) is private.

### *Services Available to Status Offending Youth*

So far, we have been using the term “status offender” rather loosely, implying that there are large numbers of youth who can be differentiated from abuse and neglect victims on the one hand and delinquents on the other. This is generally not the case. There is ample criminological literature, summarized in chapter 2, that demonstrates two points. First, status offending is common to many youth. Second, the “specialized” status offender is in the minority; youth who engage in status offenses also tend to engage in delinquent offenses. In fact, young people seem quite versatile in their deviant behaviors.

This has important implications. For instance, many youth clients in our agencies have engaged in status offenses, whether or not the agency is aware of it. Thus, many status offending youth may be receiving services that could affect their status offending patterns, even though this is not the explicit intent. In addition, those agencies explicitly geared toward working with status offenders as part or all of their clientele may be dealing with a client population less unique than they think.

With these thoughts in mind, we will report two forms of agency comparison. First, we ask what differences there may be between agencies that re-

port status offenders among their clientele (about 85 percent of the 571 agencies) and those that do not. The small number of the latter precludes cross-city comparisons. Second, we ask what differences there may be between those agencies that report offering specific status offender services (about 27 percent) and those that do not.

### *Agencies with and without Status Offender Clients*

Only 65 agencies, or 11 percent of the respondents, reported having no status offending youth among their clientele. This compares with 85 percent (484 agencies) that reported status offending clientele and 4 percent (22 agencies) failing to specify. On occasion, we will refer to these, respectively, as “status offender agencies” and “non–status offender agencies.” Since most clienteles include status offending youth and a nonresponse to the question probably reflects an inability to identify them separately, the analyses will combine these latter two agency categories. Keep in mind that “status offending youth” remains a broad category; by no means does it imply clients referred specifically as status offenders or youths adjudicated for status offenses. Many were referred for other reasons but had been identified as having committed a status offense in the past. Given this caution and the fact that only 11 percent of the agencies reported not having status offending youth, one might reasonably expect few differences of any statistical significance to emerge between those with and those without such youth.

But this is clearly not what the data reveal. Substantial differences do emerge with respect to types of services offered, sources of referrals, and categories of youth problems identified. We list below the same categories of comparison as in the preceding sections of this chapter, although the numbers of agencies without status offenders precludes comparisons between the seven individual sites.

#### NUMBERS OF YOUTH SERVED

While agencies without status offending youth tend to have a larger clientele on the average, both child and adolescent, these differences do not attain statistical significance because of the large variation in client numbers. Not surprisingly, however, the proportion of adolescents is significantly higher in the agencies with status offenders.

#### CATEGORIES OF SERVICES PROVIDED

Looking first at the results from the report of all the services most frequently offered by each agency, we find major differences. Agencies with status of-

fending youth are significantly higher in three service categories: counseling (60 percent vs. 20 percent), shelter (30 percent vs. 6 percent), and decision making such as case management and referral (26 percent vs. 14 percent). Those agencies were far lower on general services such as recreation and character-building activities (42 percent vs. 82 percent). A similar pattern emerges when considering the primary service only, although decision making no longer attains statistical significance, and training is added to general services in favoring the non-status offender agencies.

These differences seem far too substantial to attribute only to the higher proportion of adolescents among clients of the status offender agencies, although this is certainly a likely contributor. Age and status offending are related, so the presence of status offenders in the larger set of agencies cannot at this point be disentangled from the age factor. Whatever the relative contribution of the two differences, this distinction based on the presence of status offending youth, to judge from service provision patterns, fits well with our goal of assessing status offender-related patterns.

#### SOURCES OF CLIENTS

Based on the three most frequent client sources, agencies with status offending youth differ significantly in drawing their clients from the social service and welfare category (71 percent vs. 59 percent), from the justice system (39 percent vs. 6 percent), and from the mental health system (19 percent vs. 2 percent). Those without these youth report a higher proportion of self- and family referrals (79 percent vs. 59 percent). The differences are substantial and in line with what might be expected.

The contrast is less sharp when primary client source alone is used, as only two differences attain statistical significance. Agencies with status offenders still report a higher number of justice system referrals (13 percent vs. 2 percent), while those without status offending youth report a higher proportion of self- or family referrals (48 percent vs. 34 percent). The pattern is now consistent across client ages, services provided, and client referral sources.

When sources are divided into public and private sectors, the expected pattern again emerges. Whether judged by the three most frequent sources or by the primary source only, agencies with status offenders use significantly more public sources of referral, while those without status offenders rely more on private sources.

#### CLIENTELE PROBLEMS

The difference between the two sets of agencies on presence of status offense problems is of course definitional: they differ completely. But does this carry

TABLE 5.4. Mean Percentage of Clients Reported to Have Other Problems

Problem	Agencies with Status Offenders	Agencies without Status Offenders
Physical/sexual abuse	41%	11%
Substance abuse	38	5
Delinquency	37	7
Other problems	41	20
No problems	23	74

over to other types of problems? Indeed it does, and the differences are striking, as can be seen in table 5.4.

All of these differences are statistically significant. The pattern suggests strongly that the differences reported above on age distribution, services rendered, and sources of referral are a function not only of status offending clients but also of more behaviorally troubled clients generally. That is, we may well be dealing generally with patterns of youth deviance (Elliott, Huizinga, and Ageton, 1985) rather than with any given category of trouble. The criminological and deviance literatures would certainly support such a suggestion, as data over the years have reinforced the connection between status offenses and delinquency and among both and patterns of substance abuse and mental health problems (see chapter 2). More recent data have also supported a significant though not strong relationship between early victimization or abuse and later deviant behavior (Widom, 1992; Smith and Thornberry, 1995).

#### RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

Differences between the two sets of agencies in use of residential settings are difficult to interpret because only five of those without status offending youth include a residential component. This constitutes 8 percent of these agencies, whereas 36 percent of the agencies with status offenders were partially or wholly residential. Those five were two group homes, two shelters, and one "miscellaneous," none of which was a secure facility. Beyond this, the low number makes comparisons useless.

#### PRIVATE VERSUS PUBLIC AGENCIES

There were no differences between the two sets of agencies regarding private versus public auspices, surprising perhaps in view of the difference in public-versus-private sources of client referrals.

In a context of relatively few intersite differences in the characteristics of youth-serving agencies, we find that separating these into agencies that do

or do not include or recognize status offending clients yields major differences. This clientele specification is clearly related to such matters as services offered, referral sources, youth problems reported, and inclusion of residential components. These differences may not be surprising, but they are nonetheless important to the DSO II project, which seeks to relate specific status offender legislation to community response. To judge from these data, agencies do recognize a special category of youth characterized by status offenses. Thus, one could legitimately expect to find special services for status offenders and perhaps even sensitivity to different philosophies of status offender intervention.

### *Agencies with and without Specific Services for Status Offenders*

Knowing that agencies differ rather dramatically depending on whether or not they are aware of status offending clients raises a further interesting question. Do these differences become even sharper when distinguishing between agencies that do or do not report providing specific services for status offenders? The pertinent item in the survey asked whether most status offending clients were "separately identifiable and provided specific services." Of agencies reporting status offending clients, 32 percent said they do provide specific services. On occasion, we will refer to these as specific service agencies. There are no significant differences on this item between the seven cities. However, in contrast to the preceding section on agencies with and without status offenders, this 32 percent figure means that we have large enough numbers to make some comparisons between cities. Nonetheless, these data are not quite as illuminating as we had anticipated.

There are essentially no differences in the total numbers of clients served, or in the age distributions, between agencies that do or do not provide specific status offender services. The proportion aged 12–17 did differ, however, in three sites and in the aggregate.

When all services are specified, regardless of which is primary, agencies providing specific status offender services were significantly more likely to offer counseling, shelter, and decision-making, while those not providing specific services were more likely to offer general and training. Looking only at the primary service does not substantially alter the picture; the agencies specifically serving status offenders have a more clinical cast to their offerings, reflecting the medical model that characterizes many social agencies and that is quite explicit in the federal status offender legislation.

However, it must be noted that in only a few cases do these differences appear within the seven cities, and even these patterns are not uniform. What this tells us, then, is that where there are differences, they favor clinical or social services among agencies responding specifically to status offenders.

However, the pattern is relatively weak and is more evident in the aggregate than in specific locations.

As with services above, the sources of client referrals exhibited some differences between agencies with and agencies without specific status offender services. However, the patterns were not stable but more city-specific. Social service and justice agencies appear more often in the specific service agencies when judging by primary source, and mental health and justice agencies appear more often as sources when all referral sources are included. These are not large differences, however. More substantial is the reliance on public over private sources by agencies that serve status offenders, suggesting the tendency to consider status offenders more as public problems than as amenable to less formal handling by the community.

Still, we are reluctant to make a great deal of these data because the differences among cities are so substantial. For instance, in three cities—Manchester, Boise, and Anchorage—the specific service agencies rely heavily on justice system client sources—71 percent, 85 percent, and 41 percent, respectively, reporting such sources as opposed to 30 percent, 19 percent, and 15 percent in agencies not providing specific status offender services. Yet the other four cities show no such pattern, with Wilmington and Baltimore (but not the other five) exhibiting far larger reliance on mental health sources among the specific service agencies, and Wilmington and Flint showing major differences in use of school sources among agencies not providing specific services.

Given the above trends, it would come as no surprise to find the two sets of agencies describing quite different sets of client problems. And indeed, specific service agencies do report significantly higher percentages of clients in all the problem categories and a lower percentage in the no-problem category.

With respect to percentages of clients with physical or sexual abuse, no differences appear in any city between agencies with and agencies without specific services for status offenders. In two of the seven cities, agencies with specific services report higher percentages of youth with status offenses, a surprisingly low number of cities. Specific service agencies report a higher percentage of clients with substance abuse problems in only one of the seven cities, while the number is four out of seven with respect to delinquency problems. The proportion of clients reported to have no problems is higher in four of the seven cities among agencies with no special services for status offenders. Broken down by city, then, the differences in problems experienced by clients are quite insubstantial. The generally higher percentages of client problems among agencies with special services are discernible in some cities but not large enough to attain statistical significance—that is, they are

not large, although they are large enough, it would seem, to drive some differences in service patterns.

The picture changes a bit when one considers agencies with multiple problem clients. Multiple-problem clientele may reasonably be assumed to present a greater need for service, and they thus represent a more sensitive test of the differences between the two sets of agencies.

Overall, more agencies with specific services for status offenders report the mix of status offenses with physical or sexual abuse, or neglect, although only Baltimore, by itself, yields a statistically significant difference. Similarly, the specific service agencies more often report a mix of status offending and delinquency among their clients, again with only Wilmington attaining a significant difference. Again, the data amount to a demonstration of an expectable but low level pattern of differences between the two sets of agencies.

Agencies providing specific services to status offenders were more likely to be residential, or have residential components, than were the other agencies, the respective percentages being 47 and 32. However, beyond that fact, there was little else to differentiate the two. Numbers and ages of clients did not differ between the two residential sets, nor did the type of facility. The only significant difference was that specific service agencies were more likely to have residential components (i.e., they were not wholly residential). City-by-city comparisons yielded virtually no differences.

Specific service agencies were significantly more likely to be private than public, but private was the more common status for both sets of agencies (77 percent and 59 percent). This picture did not vary substantially across cities.

Specific service agencies were more likely to be new (15 percent established prior to 1960, 32 percent from 1982 on) than were the other agencies (24 percent prior to 1960, 21 percent from 1982 on). This presumably reflects federal and state initiatives to separate status offenders from the larger delinquent population. Individual city differences were negligible.

Finally, we can add that the specific service agencies are more likely to be located off-site (that is, beyond the municipal boundaries of the seven cities), perhaps as an artifact of their residential services. Among those located on-site, a slightly lower proportion of city residents is served. It may be that specific services for status offenders act as magnets within each catchment area.

Given the substantial differences reported earlier between agencies with and agencies without status offenders among their clientele, it is interesting to report additional distinctions between specific service agencies and others, but we are a bit surprised that the differences associated with providing specific services for status offenders are not even greater. Of course, to re-

port that agencies differentiate among themselves to some extent on the presence or absence of status offending clients, or on the service implications of a status offender clientele, was not the ultimate goal of our project. Chapter 6 will throw more light on the topic, having been based on an intensive interview/questionnaire carried out with most of these same agencies in all seven cities. In addition, the information reported in chapter 7 on client interviews in the three most prototypical treatment, normalization, and deterrence cities will provide some triangulation on the agency-derived data.

## The Churches

In much the same way, and for the same purposes, we undertook a census of the churches in each of the seven sites. As alternatives to public and private social agencies, churches and their affiliated units potentially offer a wide variety of resources to youth and to those youth involved in status offenses. However, church organizations differ in several important ways. For many, social service interventions are secondary to their primary functions as propagators of the faith. For example, many church-sponsored youth groups are intended principally for religious purposes, not social, recreational, or treatment purposes. Another difference is that church participation in youth development is strictly voluntary, whereas the private and public agencies discussed earlier are in some way—by law, charter, or contract—required to attend to youth concerns.

The process of developing the church census depended heavily on phone listings. But as churches are different from social agencies, so was our experience. Defining a social agency brought one set of problems to us; defining a church brought another.

Religious organizations differ widely in the clarity of their religious function, the degree to which they are organized, their subunits' structures and types, and so on. We had difficulty with mailing addresses, answering machines, mobility of pastors, and locations. During site visits, phone calls to churches often went unanswered, regardless of day of the week and time of day or night. Mailed letters and questionnaires were returned by the post office in unexpected numbers. Some of these problems were increased by our deliberate attempt to include as wide an array as possible of nontraditional religious organizations—store-front churches, new or unaffiliated units, and so on.

Two other definitional approaches are pertinent. First, in seeking youth-serving units, we excluded narrowly defined church youth groups that served religious education purposes only; Bible study groups are a good example.



Second, we excluded church units that served essentially as social agencies. These were incorporated in the social agency census and are included in the analyses reported earlier. Examples include a few soup kitchens, summer camps, outreach centers, and autonomous youth agencies such as the Catholic Social Services.

This left us, nonetheless, with very large numbers of churches and religious units that might be appropriate youth-serving organizations. The survey was sent to all churches located within each city, or to a random sample of 100 if more were available from the census. Returns were not included in the analysis if any of the following was true:

- There were no youth programs or activities.
- All youth clients were less than twelve years of age.
- There were no youth from the research site.
- The return suggested that the unit should have been excluded from the census for one of the reasons cited earlier.

The church version of the questionnaire was tested on a sample of church organizations in Los Angeles County ( $N = 112$ ), revised, and mailed to all churches or a sample of 100 in each city. The church version did not include questions on sources of referrals, residential facilities, or public-versus-private auspices—these were inappropriate to church organizations but entirely appropriate to the social agencies. Of approximately 600 churches, 435 eventually were determined to be applicable listings. After repeated contact attempts, we eventually received 189 (43 percent of the 435) usable returns representing units that reported youth-serving functions as we defined them and meeting the criteria noted above.

### *Descriptive Data on Church Youth Programs*

Of the 189 churches that offered youth programs or activities, 156 reported serving status offending youth, and 61 were able to identify such youth for special programming. The number of usable returns from the individual cities ranged from 20 (Wilmington, Baltimore and Flint) to 45 (Boise) cases. Churches were asked to respond in terms of nonreligious activities.

#### NUMBER OF YOUTH SERVED

Across the seven cities, the average youth clientele served per church ranged from a high of 116 in Wilmington to a low of 69 in Baltimore. These numbers are far smaller than those reported for social agencies, reflecting (at least in part) differences in organization size and turnover in clientele—

churches are smaller units than many agencies (e.g., recreation centers, employment agencies) and retain a steadier youth clientele.

Reflecting what we found for social agencies, the seven cities do not differ significantly in their clientele numbers in total or with respect to the under 12 age group or 12–17 age group. There is no discernible relationship between city size and average size of clientele.

#### SERVICES PROVIDED

The list of services available from churches is basically the same as that for social agencies, with the exception of residential care. Based on the first three services ranked by the respondents, we find the broad category of general services reported by 99.5 percent of the churches. This category includes such widely used components as character-building activities and recreation, as well as child care, general assistance, and general supervision. Less than half as many respondents (44 percent) reported training services, with counseling at 28 percent, decision making at 5 percent, and other at 15 percent. None of these categories varied significantly across the seven cities.

When we look at the service categories in terms of the primary or most frequent service offered, general services again emerges as the most common (54 percent). The range across cities is from 39 to 73 percent, and this is statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). Training again emerges second, at 24 percent. The other categories are never listed as primary by more than two respondents in any city. Counseling, it seems, is almost never a primary youth service category in the churches of these seven cities. Further, when one looks at the seventeen individual service types subsumed under our five general headings of general services, training, counseling, decision making, and other, the only service types to emerge with any consistency at all are character-building (31 percent), education/training (24 percent), and recreation (17 percent). This is a very narrow band of services, indeed, and shows virtually no variation across cities.

#### CLIENTELE PROBLEMS

Perhaps no data better characterize the differences between the social agencies and the churches than the reported percentages of youth clientele exhibiting no problem behavior (delinquent, status, abuse, substance abuse, other). Earlier, in social agencies, we noted that the mean percentages for youth clients without such problems was 28 percent. For the churches, this figure ranged from a low of 58 percent in Portland to 74 percent in Anchorage. Clearly, by their own report, the churches are serving a relatively non-serious problem population of youngsters. The most common services noted

above—character building, education or training, and recreation—reflect such a clientele.

On the average, in no city do the churches report physical abuse problems above 17 percent, status offending above 20 percent, substance abuse above 16 percent, delinquency above 18 percent, or other problems above 25 percent. There are no cross-city differences that attain statistical significance with respect to these problem areas. We can report as anecdotal information, however, that Portland stands out from the others in that its churches report the highest youth problem percentages for physical abuse, substance abuse, delinquency, and other problems and ranks almost first for status offending as well. This city is neither the largest nor most urbanized of the seven. Rather, it is the best exemplar of the normalization approach to status offending and has the most visible problem with runaway and homeless youth. Both these problem clientele data and our site visit observations in this city suggest more of an organized, deliberate church response to this youth problem situation.

### *Church-Based Services Available to Status Offending Youth*

As noted earlier, of 189 responding churches, 156 report at least some of their clientele as having committed status offenses (although, as we noted above, the proportion of such youth is not high). Across the cities, the percentage with some status offending clients (or for whom the information is not available) ranges from 60 (Baltimore) to 95 (Flint), a statistically significant set of differences. A comparison of the 33 churches not reporting status offenders and the 156 with status offenders yields numbers too small to do valuable intercity comparisons, but we can compare the two sets of churches overall.

With respect to numbers, the two sets do not differ on mean number of clients, but those with status offenders report significantly more youth in the 12–17 age range. Not surprisingly, churches with status offenders also report significantly more clients with physical abuse, substance abuse, and delinquency problems, by ratios of six to one or more.

These differences, surprisingly, do not seem to be reflected in services offered. When considering primary (first-ranked) services only, there are no noteworthy differences between the two sets of churches in the kinds of service categories reported. Expanding the analysis to the top three ranked services, only one difference emerges: churches with status offender clients are more likely to offer counseling (31 percent as opposed to 12 percent). The difference is large, while the pattern is similar. However, we can also report that churches with status offending youth are far more likely to refer youth to other agencies or programs—46 percent so reporting, compared to

15 percent of the other churches. It seems the churches prefer not to serve, or feel unprepared to serve, status offending youth.

Another view of this distinction derives from a comparison of the 26 churches that reported providing specific services for status offending clients and the 130 churches reporting no specific services (or failing to respond to the query). The two sets do not differ in numbers of clients or in the age categories of their youth clients. And, surprisingly, there are no differences in numbers or percentages of youth experiencing abuse, delinquency, substance abuse, or other problems.

Given this, it is not surprising to find no overall difference among the six service categories as primary offerings, although general services was significantly more prominent among the churches with specific status offender services (73 vs. 48 percent). This difference disappears when the top three service offerings are used in the analysis, but counseling emerges as more favored among those with special services (54 vs. 26 percent), and training emerges higher among those without special status offense services (27 vs. 49 percent). Referrals to other programs are more common when special services are offered, but the difference falls just short of statistical significance ( $p = .075$ ).

What do the churches add to service delivery systems in these settings? "Not as much as they could," might be one answer; "About what one might reasonably expect," might be another. Some caution is required because of the low number of surveys returned from the churches. This rate could reflect the problems noted in developing the church census, but it could also result from a high rate of non-service among those failing to respond.

For those churches that responded, we can say at least the following.

- Their client numbers are far lower on the average than those of the social service agencies.
- The level of problem seriousness among the youth clientele is far lower than is the case for agency clienteles.
- The churches offer a narrower range of services, and those offered are principally of the nonclinical sort—character building, recreation, and training.
- When comparing churches that do and churches that do not report status offending youth, and when comparing churches that do and churches that do not offer special services geared toward status offenders, we do not find a distinct pattern of service differentiation.
- Overall, the level of church service delivery to problem youth seems to present more potential than realization.

One can debate the extent to which religious organizations should or should not involve themselves in youth-oriented social service. One can

equally well debate what types of services are most appropriately offered by churches. What the data clearly suggest, in any case, is that there is much room for service amplification if these communities wish to move in that direction.

## The Schools

In some ways, the school data are the most problematic. For example, since virtually all youngsters attend schools and participate in standard programming, all status offending students are served by the schools. Further, since a majority of youth at some time do commit status offenses—especially liquor possession—all schools serve a status offending population. Finally, truancy is peculiarly related to the schools—it is defined by their requirements. Thus, a full study of the relationship between schools and status offending would involve a study of the total school program in every school and of all students. This was not a principal concern of this project, nor was it possible within our resource limits. To focus our efforts, we made some census decisions as follows.

Both public and private schools were included in the census. We limited ourselves to intermediate and secondary schools (junior, middle, high). Excluded were primary schools, adult continuation schools, and special schools for the severely impaired. District-level programs were handled in the agency census and included in those analyses. In some cities, district-level permission to survey the public schools was required, and in Baltimore—the largest of the seven—this permission was denied despite several attempts to achieve access. Because of this, and the bias that would result from including only private schools from Baltimore, the school data reported hereafter will be based on six rather than seven cities.

With this one exception, all secondary schools within city boundaries, public and private, received the questionnaire. A total of 171 schools were included in the census, ranging from 17 in Portland to 61 in Wilmington. Returns, after various follow-up procedures, totaled 101 (59 percent), with a low of 7 in Portland and a high of 33 in Wilmington. The majority of these 101 schools (68) reported status offending youth in their student bodies, and 40 of them reported special programming for their status offenders. The level of school returns was affected by several factors, including district permission, timing (unfortunately, some mailings had to take place in the summer), adequacy of district school listings, and busing programs (which occasionally required surveys of off-site schools serving some site-resident youth).

As a result of such factors, our school sample should not be accepted as highly representative. We can report the following.

- Sixty-eight percent are public schools, 24 percent are parochial, and 8 percent are other private schools.
- The range of public school proportions in our samples is from 40 percent in Manchester to 91 percent in Wilmington, while the parochial schools range from 3 percent to 50 percent of the total, these being statistically significant differences.
- The proportion of high schools (exclusively) was 32 percent, while the remainder were junior high schools, middle schools, and mixed. In no city did the high schools predominate.

### *Descriptive Data on School Programs*

The questionnaire sent to the schools was similar to the social agency questionnaire. It contained a much shorter list of services because many of these were inappropriate to the schools. For the same reason, it omitted source of referrals and residential programs. The school survey included an item on programs carried out at schools by nonschool personnel since many groups and agencies make arrangements to use school facilities. However, the general instructions asked that responses be limited to services provided by school personnel.

The instructions specified our interest in "special programs and activities operated by school personnel that are *in addition to* the standard curriculum . . . and to the standard extracurricular activities available to all students." Examples of exclusions such as study hall, honors programs, language clubs, and athletic teams were given. Programs to be included were described as "those programs and activities that address the special needs within your student population; such programs might include character-building, remedial, rehabilitative or counseling services. Activities that represent special options for responding to students, for example, suspension or detention procedures, are also relevant to this survey. These special programs might target selected subpopulations of students, or they might be available to all students."

### NUMBER OF YOUTH SERVED

Across the six cities there are no statistically significant differences in the average school program clientele or in the age breakdown (11 and under, 12-17, proportion of 12-17-year-olds). Average total numbers range from a low of 500 youth in nonstandard programming (Flint) to a high of 723 (Wilmington). Thus, the schools join the churches and the social agencies

in exhibiting clientele sizes unrelated to city variables. If differences are to be found in the style of handling of youth clients, it must be in the style of handling, not in the amount.

#### SERVICES PROVIDED

The list of available service types is considerably more limited in the school setting (remembering once again that we are concerned only with "nonstandard" school services). They are grouped for analysis as follows:

Counseling	Includes hotline, crisis intervention, diagnostic screening/assessment, and counseling.
Training	Includes employment training/career planning and tutoring.
Punishment	Includes expulsion/suspension and detention/time out.
Other	Includes character-building activities, referral, and miscellaneous other.

Looking first at the top three services reported from each school, we find that counseling is the most commonly reported (91 percent of all schools), followed by other (55 percent), punishment (41 percent), and training (40 percent). Only the general category of punishment exhibits cross-city differences. The punishment intercity difference is a function of detention/time out.

When we look at primary service offered, counseling again emerges first (51 percent), followed by other (18 percent), training (12 percent), and punishment (5 percent), similar to the order noted above. This time, however, there are no noteworthy service type differences, and the numbers in all but the counseling category are too small to merit any serious comparative attention.

In sum, our samples of schools from each city are not distinguishable from each other in the types of service categories offered beyond the standard curricular programs. Counseling activities of several types make up the dominant service modality, but beyond these, the schools are not terribly active in their special programming.

#### CLIENTELE PROBLEMS

For the most part, the schools do not see their students as presenting many youth problems (as might be expected, given the findings about special activity offerings). On the average for the six cities, the schools reported between 65 percent and 81 percent of their students as experiencing none of

the problems we listed; that is, the respondents (the principal of the school or a designee) saw their student bodies as relatively trouble free. Specifically, the average of the six city means of reported problem areas is as follows:

- abuse/neglect: 12 percent of the students (range 8 to 17)
- status offending: 17 percent (range 10 to 22)
- substance abuse: 14 percent (range 8 to 23)
- delinquency: 12 percent (range 8 to 16)
- other problems: 22 percent (range 6 to 44)

None of these problems showed significant variation among cities. Similarly, percentages of multiple-problem students are quite low as reported by these schools, and these also fail to exhibit cross-city differences. This is of course not surprising, given the low percentages above. Thus, we are dealing with schools generally serving the 12–17 age group that do not report major levels of youth problems and do not provide a wide range of special services.

Since a number of the cities are facing serious urban problems, including high unemployment rates, diminishing populations, and runaway and homeless youth, one can only speculate why the schools seem so unaffected. The drop out rate of troubled and troublesome youth may provide one answer. The existence of absorbing social agencies may be another. Also, the respondents may not be aware of (or willing to report) higher levels of student problems. Since chronic truancy is by definition a school-related status offense, and since the use of alcohol is certainly common among adolescents, we are inclined toward the third explanation as being at least as valid as the other two. Finally, the lower than expected numbers of high schools and the relatively large numbers of parochial and other private schools—which, after all, can be quite selective—may help to account for the low reported levels of problem youth. In fact, 64 percent of all schools report transferring or referring status offenders to other schools or agencies.

### *School-Based Services Available to Status Offending Youth*

With 77 percent of the schools reporting having status offending students and 23 percent not (or unable to state), there are sufficient numbers to provide some comparisons. Although these percentages do not attain statistical significance across the six cities, the range of schools with status offender populations stretches from 54 percent (Flint) to 88 percent (Wilmington). Among those with status offenders, about one-half report providing special services, so we also have enough cases to compare schools with and schools without special services.

The first set of comparisons is between schools that do and schools that



do not report having status offenders. This will be followed by the comparison, within the former, of those with and those without special services.

#### NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED

Schools with status offenders report significantly higher numbers of students in the 12–17 age range, and a higher proportion of these, while the 11 and under range is significantly more common in the schools without status offenders. This is to be expected.

#### SERVICES PROVIDED

Looking at the three top-ranked services, we find no differences with respect to service categories. Considering the primary service offered, only service provision at the school by nonschool personnel (often an after-hours program) is significantly more common in the status offender schools (74 percent vs. 52 percent). These latter percentages are quite high in both cases, revealing the extent to which our six communities are engaged in using school facilities for youth programming.

It is also the case that schools with status offenders are far more likely to refer or transfer them. However, one cannot be sure whether the response to this question means that more services are provided to enrolled students or that fewer services are provided by diverting troublesome youth elsewhere. The difference, in either case, is very large (74 percent vs. 30 percent), and one must wonder why any schools without status offenders even responded to this question.

The status offender schools are far more likely to be public (82 percent vs. 21 percent) and those without status offenders to be parochial schools (57 percent) or private schools (22 percent). They are also more likely to be exclusively high schools and off-site.

#### CLIENTELE PROBLEMS

In both absolute numbers and percentages, schools with status offenders report significantly more students involved in physical abuse, substance abuse, and delinquency. Conversely, they report a significantly lower percentage of students with no problems. This is what one would expect—the presence of status offending youth should be related to the presence of other problems. It does lead one to wonder, on the other hand, why the two sets of schools are not clearly differentiated by the categories of service provision.

### *Schools with and without Specific Programs for Status Offenders*

Extending the analysis to the schools that do and those that do not offer special services for status offenders might offer an answer to this. Thus, we turn for our final analysis to this comparison. Forty of the 101 schools with status offenders provided specific services for them.

#### NUMBER OF YOUTH SERVED

Schools that do and schools that do not report specific status offender services do not differ significantly in the average size of their student bodies or in the numbers of students in the 12–17 age range. They do differ, however, in the numbers of younger students and the proportion of 12–17-year-olds, with the older students being more common in schools with specific services. Presumably, the service offerings are responsive to the age group more likely to include offenders.

#### SERVICES PROVIDED

Looking first at the top three services ranked by the respondents, we find the two sets of schools indistinguishable in the broad categories of service provided. Limiting the questions to the primary service category yields the same result: counseling, training, punishment, and other categories of activity remain nondifferentiating. We also asked whether nonschool personnel used the school facilities for service provision, but this comparison also yielded no difference between the two sets of schools.

#### CLIENTELE PROBLEMS

Recall that the schools reported relatively low percentages of problem youth, overall. This puts an upper limit on finding differences between schools with and schools without special status offender services, even though one would expect some service-to-problem correlation. The comparison, in fact, yields no differences with respect to physical abuse, substance abuse, status offenses, delinquency, and other problems. The reported numbers and percentages of students with no problems also do not differ. Thus, it is not surprising that service provision differed so little. The provision of special services for status offending students is not, in these six cities, a distinction that generalizes to anything else.

## Summary

The primary purpose of the YSS was to lay the groundwork for the next stages of the DSO II project. These were an in-depth survey of the agencies in all seven cities that include status offender clients and a survey of agency clients in three of these seven cities. The YSS served this function well, and the upcoming chapters on the next phases will be far more focused than would have been possible without the YSS.

This survey yielded useful data about more general youth service delivery. We see at least the following as emerging from the YSS data.

Despite the fact that the seven cities were selected from three sets of states with demonstrably different legislative approaches to the handling of status offenders, we find far fewer between-city differences than might have been anticipated. There is not, as yet, strong evidence for local service articulations of state-level philosophies.

Most youth-serving agencies do include clients with status offending behaviors. This inclusion does not markedly affect agency characteristics, as status offenders are but one category of troubled youth eliciting community response. Thus, we may really be dealing here with agencies providing general youth care versus agencies focused upon youth problems, broadly defined.

Taken as a whole, the community response to youth is not driven by youth problems, and thus there is considerable room for expansion of problem-oriented services should that be desired. There is nothing in our data that assesses the need for problem-oriented services.

## NOTES

1. Bias in response to the Youth Services Survey (YSS) could not only influence the analyses of YSS data but also jeopardize the findings from the in-depth survey. Despite repeated efforts to secure high response rates for both surveys, nonresponse was of sufficient levels to warrant examination for potential bias related to survey response.

The YSS was distributed by mail to the 1,526 entries on the seven agency census lists. Through survey returns and phone contacts, we determined that almost 45 percent (678) of these entries were not appropriate for the survey (see pp. 72–73 of this chapter for exclusion criteria). From the remaining 848 census list entries, 571 agencies (67 percent) returned the survey and are included in the analyses reported in chapter 5. By and large, these 571 agencies formed the population for the in-depth survey; attrition bias represented by the YSS data could be expected to confound analyses of the in-depth survey data as well.

In order to assess YSS attrition patterns, we attempted to collect some information

about each of the 274 nonresponding agencies—types of services offered, whether or not it was a public agency, whether it was likely to have youths engaged in status conduct among its youth clientele, and location within the city boundaries. In some instances, we were able to retrieve information from the census source descriptions (e.g., service directories); in others, we acquired the information in a phone call. We were unable to retrieve attrition data on all items from all nonrespondents.

The information collected for nonrespondents is only roughly comparable to that available for respondents on the YSS. For example, service variables are constructed from the survey response to the three most frequently offered services for respondents. For nonrespondents, the service variables usually represent services offered, with no restrictions as to frequency.

Two of the five service categories indicated significantly more agencies providing those services (i.e., training and decision making) among the survey respondent group. While statistically significant, these are not large differences. The provision of counseling, residential, or general services or whether agencies had public auspices were not associated with survey return.

On the other hand, a higher proportion of survey respondents had locations outside the city boundaries of the targeted site (22 percent) than did nonrespondents (10 percent). Finally, the nonrespondent group had a higher proportion of agencies that did not report youths engaged in status conduct among their clientele (22 percent vs. 11 percent). Given the “screening” function of the YSS (i.e., to identify agencies serving these youth for eligibility to receive the in-depth survey), this difference between YSS respondents and nonrespondents is not problematic. On the whole, we concluded that nonresponse to the YSS had only a minor impact on the findings drawn from the YSS data and caused little damage to the identification of the in-depth survey-relevant population.

## 6

# State Mandates and Agency Service Delivery to Status Offenders

*With Margaret A. Gordon*

### Introduction

In this and the following chapter, we present the core data analyses that test the hypothesis that agency service delivery to status offenders flows from the philosophical orientations articulated in state legislative mandates. In chapter 3, we have revealed our cards early, effectively removing what suspense may be derived from perusing the upcoming tables reporting the rationale-based comparisons. By and large, agency characteristics and service delivery patterns do not reflect the rationales derived from legislation, but the three philosophical approaches are alive and well in services to status offenders. In other words, the rationales are expressed in agency service delivery, but the state legislative rationale appears to have little bearing upon the types of agencies providing services to youth in those states. The data from status offender-serving agencies in seven states presented in this chapter provides partial documentation for these conclusions. The information derived from interviews with the status offender clients of the agencies in three states, which follows in chapter 7, completes the documentation of the study findings.

These chapters serve another purpose beyond the scholarly documentation of research findings. Just as the legislative coding process described in chapter 4 required us to articulate how each of the rationales might be manifested in legislative language, the analyses of agency data necessitated the specification of how the rationales should be reflected in agency service delivery to status offenders. While developing the study instruments—surveys,

interview questions, and so on—and planning the data analysis, we spelled out the implications of the rationales for each data item. This process was based upon our interpretation of the available literature, our own explanation of the rationales, and a great deal of staff discussion about what the rationales should really mean for service delivery. Thus, a considerable amount of interpretation was involved, and we invite the reader to review the basis for the rationale-based predictions presented prior to the relevant data analyses.

The results of these core analyses suggested some alternative models for investigation. The findings from one of these models—the agency rationale—have already been reported in chapter 3. The other supplementary analyses were far less productive, and these will be summarized at the end of the chapter.

### *A Note on Selection of Agencies*

The population of agencies eligible for the in-depth survey was derived primarily from the agency respondents to the YSS. Agencies without status offender clients from the seven sites were excluded, and six agencies were no longer in operation by late 1989, when the final sample of targets for the in-depth survey was under development. With these exclusions, there were 476 YSS respondents that were appropriate for the in-depth survey of services to status offender clients. The research design and resources allocated to this phase of the project defined a target pool of 400 agencies. Modification to the sample population included the following.

Forty-eight agencies were used for the two pretest phases required for instrument development. Changes to the survey protocol resulting from these pretests precluded the inclusion of these returns in the analysis.

The largest site, Baltimore, contributed a disproportionately large number of eligible agencies (more than three times the number of agencies in the next largest site). We decided to sample one-half of the 162 Baltimore agencies. However, 9 agencies in the nonsampled group appeared pivotal to the service delivery system in Baltimore. These 9 were added to the random sample of 81 Baltimore agencies.

The pretest exclusions and Baltimore modifications yielded a seven-city total of 347 eligible YSS respondents.

Despite the encouraging results from the attrition analysis (see chap. 5, n. 1), we were concerned that some important service-providers did not respond to the YSS. We hoped that these “critical nonrespondents” could be convinced to participate in the in-depth survey. We reviewed the census lists, notes from contacts with site informants, and other sources of agency descriptions to identify 44 YSS nonrespondents that seemed pivotal to the

service delivery system for status offenders. In many cases, these were the major youth-processing units of public agencies such as Children's Mental Health, Adolescent Social Services, or the local juvenile detention center. These 44 agencies were added to the list of 347 YSS respondents to yield a total of 401 agencies composing the target pool.

Agency directors or the replacements they designated were given the choice of completing the survey over the telephone or by mail. Despite repeated phone and mail attempts (including the use of telegrams) to solicit cooperation, just over 60 percent of the targeted agencies completed the survey.<sup>1</sup> Six of the seven sites had similar response rates (ranging from 67 percent to 73 percent); Baltimore, with the largest number of target agencies (104), had the lowest response rate—55 percent. An extensive attrition analysis suggested no major patterns of response bias.<sup>2</sup>

As with the YSS, the sample unit was an organizational service location. In the introduction to the survey, we defined the population of interest as youths who have ever engaged in status behaviors (i.e., running away, truancy, curfew violation, liquor possession, and incorrigibility or being beyond parental control) and who had received agency services in 1987. Respondents were asked to consult agency records and other informants when available or to provide their best estimates regarding service activities and clients for 1987. We encountered some problems with staff turnover, recall, and reorientation of a few agencies' service missions. Telephone contact was helpful in clarifying the survey terminology and appropriateness of terms to the diverse group of service providers included in our population.

A total of 245 agencies are included in the analyses reported in the following section. Sixty-six of these represent the two deterrence sites, 77 the two treatment, and 102 agencies are from the three normalization sites.<sup>3</sup>

## Tests of Legislative Rationale and Agency Service Delivery

The general characteristics of the agencies responding to the in-depth survey are similar to the descriptions in chapter 5. Slightly more than one-third (38 percent) of these 245 agencies were public, the remainder private, but only 9 percent were private-for-profit agencies. However, the majority of agencies listed public sources as the primary source of funding. One-third of the agencies had residential components.

The number of youths engaged in status offenses served in 1987 by responding agencies varied considerably. Average numbers ranged from just over 100 youth clients in deterrence sites to close to 250 in treatment sites, with many agencies reporting fewer than half a dozen clients and others serving more than a thousand. Most agencies served youths engaged in all

five types of status offenses (there was no evidence of specialization in run-aways, for example). From a detailed list of services or activities that agencies might provide for youth, the service most frequently selected by these agencies was counseling. About one-third (32 percent) of the agencies ranked counseling as the service most often provided to status offending youth.

In this section, the data are presented in four groups: the characteristics of the service-delivery system, organizational characteristics, youth characteristics, and responses to youths engaged in status behaviors. Within each category, we first describe the data predictions that derive from the three rationales. The data presentations are followed by a discussion of the implications of the findings relative to the rationale-based predictions for each group of variables.

### *Characteristics of the Service-Delivery System*

The differing intents of the three rationales would suggest that the types of agencies and organizations involved in handling youths engaged in status conduct might differ as well. This pertains not only to those in the census that actually provide services to these youths but also to those with which the service providers have contact—their referral sources and those from whom they obtain resources such as funding, information, or services.

With its emphasis on control and personal responsibility, the deterrence rationale promotes the involvement of justice system agencies in the handling of status offending youth. Because such conduct is likely to be classified as delinquent or in a separate status offense category, the justice system may have jurisdiction over all or some of these behaviors. Thus, we would predict not only that these justice agencies would handle status offenders but also that other organizations (both public and private) with status offending youth would report contact with justice agencies and name them as sources of referrals. In contrast, the normalization rationale explicitly rejects the involvement of status offenders with the justice system; therefore, we would not predict justice agencies to be a major part of the system of organizations handling these youths in a normalization site. The extent of justice system involvement in the context of the treatment rationale depends upon the degree to which controlling status conduct is emphasized. Although not expected to be as integral a part of the organizational network as in a deterrence setting, the justice agencies may nevertheless be considerably more prominent in a treatment site than in a normalization site.

The emphasis on meeting the emotional and psychological needs of status offending youngsters suggests that the service-delivery system in a treatment setting would be characterized by mental health and social service organiza-



tions, both public and private. This goes hand-in-hand with the separate legal classification of these behaviors, not as delinquent offenses but nevertheless as requiring intervention (i.e., CHINS, PINS, etc.). To the extent that the normalization rationale promotes intervention in the form of skill and opportunity enhancement, social service organizations would also be part of the status offender handling network in these sites. Clearly, much less involvement of such agencies would be predicted in the deterrence locations.

Because the normalization rationale avoids specialized response to status conduct, the organizations working with runaways, ungovernables, truants, and so forth should be those providing services and activities appropriate for a more general youth population. In particular, schools would be predicted to be an important part of any service-delivery system. The relative absence of formalized and specialized responses to this behavior paves the way for parents and guardians to turn to informal sources for help, including churches, other family, friends, and the like. Correspondingly, since both the treatment and deterrence rationales promote more formal responses to status behaviors, relatively less involvement of schools, churches, and informal channels should be apparent.

#### REFERRAL SOURCES

The survey included an extensive list of types of organizations from which the respondents were asked to rank their three largest sources of referral. To make the interpretation of cross-rationale differences easier, we collapsed the original response options into the categories listed in table 6.1.

The rankings revealed no statistically significant cross-rationale differences. When we collapse the rankings and examine each category of organizations in terms of whether or not it was named as one of the three largest referral sources (table 6.1), some minor differences emerge, but for the most part they are not consistent with the predictions.<sup>4</sup> Respondents located in deterrence sites were more likely to name social service organizations and mental health service providers as sources of referral for youths engaged in status offenses. Neither the justice system nor normalizing categories displayed significant cross-rationale differences. However, consistent with the predictions, respondents in normalization sites were significantly more likely to rank schools among the top three referral sources; 62 percent of agencies in those locations named schools as one of their three largest sources of referrals for youths engaged in status offenses, compared with 58 percent in treatment sites and 34 percent in deterrence sites ( $p = .002$ ).<sup>5</sup>

Approximately 73 percent of respondents reported that at least some of their youths who had engaged in status offenses had been referred specifically for those behaviors. Using the same categories of organizations as in

TABLE 6.1. Referral Sources for Youths Engaged in Status Offenses

Referral Source Category	Normalization (N = 95)	Treatment (N = 73)	Deterrence (N = 61)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Social service: Public social service/public welfare department or facilities; private service organizations	52	42	62	.073
Mental health: Public mental health department or facilities; private in-patient psychiatric facilities or hospitals (including hospital psychiatric units); private out-patient mental health agencies or practitioners	20	18	33	.085
Justice system: Police/sheriff's department; court/probation; juvenile correctional facilities	53	58	66	.280
Normalizing: Family, friend, other client, or self-referral (including word-of-mouth or advertising); schools/educational facilities; churches and religious organizations	80	77	66	.118
Other: Medical service organizations or practitioners; other	12	10	5	.368

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale ranking any one of the organizations included in a category as one of the top three sources of referral for youths engaged in status conduct.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

the previous question, respondents were asked to name the three largest sources of referral for these youths. Again, there is only limited support for our predictions. Agencies in normalization and treatment sites were significantly ( $p = .017$ ) more likely than those in deterrence sites to rank schools, churches and informal sources (family, friend, etc.) first (normalization, 48 percent; treatment, 40 percent; deterrence, 25 percent). On the other hand, those in deterrence locales were more likely to rank social service organizations as their top source (deterrence, 45 percent; treatment, 16 percent; normalization, 16 percent). The first finding is consistent with the rationale predictions; the second is not. Collapsing the rankings (table 6.2), respondents from the normalization cities were most likely to name normalizing sources as one of their three largest sources of referral, followed closely by the agencies in the treatment sites. This is largely a function of the fact that respondents in normalization and treatment sites were more likely to include schools as one of the top three sources (normalization, 66 percent; treatment, 63 percent; deterrence, 35 percent [ $p = .005$ ]). Locations in deterrence cities were, contrary to the predictions, more likely to report mental health providers as sources for youths referred specifically for status conduct.

Referral patterns for all clients (regardless of involvement in status offenses) represent an organizational context that might also be expected to vary across rationales, especially since many organizations do not distinguish status offending youths. This information is available from the YSS for our in-depth survey respondents. Because the purpose of the YSS survey and its target population were different from those of the in-depth survey, the organizational categories used are not entirely consistent with those on the longer survey. However, for the most part, the cross-rationale predictions can still be addressed.

Again, these data show limited support for those predictions. As table 6.3 demonstrates, organizations in deterrence and treatment sites were much more likely than those in normalization sites to include justice system agencies among the top three sources of referral. Conversely, respondents in the normalization and treatment locales were more likely to rank the normalizing sources (excluding churches). Consistent with the preceding analyses,

TABLE 6.2. Referral Sources for Youths Referred Specifically for Status Offenses

Referral Source Category	Normalization (N = 61)	Treatment (N = 57)	Deterrence (N = 40)	$p^a$
Social service: Public social service/ public welfare department or facilities; private service organizations	49	39	60	.113
Mental health: Public mental health department or facilities; private in-patient psychiatric facilities or hospitals (including hospital psychiatric units); pri- vate out-patient mental health agencies or practitioners	15	25	38	.032
Justice system: Police/sheriff's department; court/probation; juvenile correctional facilities	66	68	65	.924
Normalizing: Family, friend, other client, or self-referral (including word-of-mouth or advertising); schools/educational facilities; churches and religious organizations	82	79	62	.066
Other: Medical service organiza- tions or practitioners; other	8	9	5	.768

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale ranking any one of the organizations included in the category as one of the top three sources of referral for youths referred specifically for status conduct.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

TABLE 6.3. Referral Sources for All Youth Clients

Referral Source Category	Normalization (N = 94)	Treatment (N = 68)	Deterrence (N = 62)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Social service: Private service organizations, including religious organizations; public social service/public welfare departments	67	65	76	.353
Mental health: Private mental health agencies; public mental health agencies	15	15	26	.158
Justice system: Police/sheriff's department; court/probation	37	53	55	.048
Normalizing: Schools and/or educational facilities; self-referrals or family referrals	81	84	66	.033
Other	1	0	0	.368

*Note:* Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale ranking any one of the organizations included in the category as one of the top three referral sources for all youth clients. These data are from the Youth Services Survey; the organizational categories are not entirely consistent with those on the Status Conduct Survey.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

those from the normalization locations were the most likely to rank schools among their largest sources of referrals—61 percent of respondents in those sites, 59 percent of those in treatment sites, and 42 percent in deterrence sites ( $p = .053$ ).

Overall, the referral patterns, as reflections of service-delivery systems, provide only modest support for the cross-rationale predictions. Organizations located in normalization sites were more likely than others to report referrals from schools and, although less consistently, from normalizing sources in general. However, within all three rationales, more than 60 percent of respondents ranked schools among the top three sources of referrals. Other predicted patterns were not supported by these data, and in some instances, they contradict the predictions. Contrary to expectations, social service organizations were ranked as referral sources more frequently by respondents in the deterrence sites than by those in the normalization or treatment sites. Distinctions among the rationales are neither as sharp as nor in the direction anticipated.

## INTERORGANIZATIONAL CONTACT

The level of contact between the agencies handling youths engaged in status offenses and other community organizations also provides a picture of the organizational system responding to that behavior. Respondents were asked the frequency with which they have contact with each of the types of organizations used to elicit referral source rankings (except family, friend, other client, or self-referral). They were asked to report their level of contact separately "for the purpose of obtaining or providing *information* about youths who had ever engaged in status conduct" and "for the purpose of obtaining or providing *resources* for these youths." To clarify interpretations of the data, the original response categories were collapsed into "no contact," "contact several times a year or about once a month," and "about once a week or daily." Organization types were combined into the same categories as those used for referral sources.

Table 6.4 presents data on the frequency of contact for informational purposes. Only contact with social service organizations demonstrates a significant relationship, but not in the expected direction. Respondents from the deterrence locales were most likely to have contact with this type of organization, normalization respondents least likely, and those from the treatment sites fell in between. Frequency of contact with other categories of organizations did not differ across the rationales. One interesting but unexpected finding was that the responding agencies in normalization sites were most likely to report that they had no contact for informational purposes with churches. Instead, respondents from deterrence sites were most likely to indicate such interaction; 50 percent of those in the normalization cities reported no contact, compared with 36 percent in treatment sites and 26 percent in deterrence locations ( $p = .033$ ). Once again, the cross-rationale predictions have been contradicted by the data.

Frequency of contact with those same organizational categories, for the purpose of obtaining or providing resources, did not vary across the rationales (table 6.5). Some differences emerge when the individual types of organizations are examined, although they are generally not consistent with the predicted cross-rationale contrasts. Respondents from normalization sites reported more frequent contact with private service organizations than did treatment or deterrence site respondents (25 percent of normalization respondents reported contact about once a week or daily, compared with 14 percent in treatment sites and 9 percent in deterrence sites [ $p = .023$ ]). The same is true for in-patient psychiatric facilities (14 percent in normalization cities, 5 percent in treatment locales, and 3 percent in deterrence sites [ $p = .079$ ]). Agencies in the normalization and treatment cities reported more

TABLE 6.4. Frequency of Contact for the Purpose of Obtaining or Providing Information

Organizational Category	Normalization (N = 98)	Treatment (N = 76)	Deterrence (N = 65)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Social service				
No contact	16	11	3	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	35	46	54	
Contact about once a week/daily	49	43	43	.037
Mental health				
No contact	25	24	20	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	43	47	62	
Contact about once a week/daily	32	29	18	.194
Justice system				
No contact	12	9	8	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	55	46	60	
Contact about once a week/daily	32	45	32	.352
Normalizing <sup>b</sup>				
No contact	11	6	6	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	35	26	42	
Contact about once a week/daily	54	68	52	.190

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting each level of contact.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (4 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> The response options "Family, friend, other client, or self-referral (including word-of-mouth or advertising)" and "Other" were not included in this questionnaire item. The numbers of respondents indicating any contact with "Medical service organizations or practitioners" were too small to demonstrate significant cross-rationale differences.

frequent resource-oriented contact with public mental health departments (21 percent and 22 percent, respectively, contrasted with 9 percent of deterrence respondents [ $p = .084$ ]). On the other hand, those from deterrence locations were more likely to have contact with churches (25 percent report no contact, as opposed to 37 percent of treatment respondents and 48 percent of normalization respondents [ $p = .057$ ]), although the frequency with which it occurred did not vary by rationale. While there clearly are distinctions across the rationales, they again do not suggest patterns that lend support to the rationale-based predictions.

In addition to being asked about these measures of contact, respondents were asked whether any of these types of organizations required that they (the respondents) report to them about the participation of status offending youth. The only cross-rationale difference that emerged indicated that agencies in treatment sites were more likely than those in normalization or deter-

TABLE 6.5. Frequency of Contact for the Purpose of Obtaining or Providing Resources

Organizational Category	Normalization (N = 97)	Treatment (N = 76)	Deterrence (N = 64)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Social service				
No contact	12	8	3	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	47	50	61	
Contact about once a week/daily	41	42	36	.218
Mental health				
No contact	23	22	19	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	47	50	64	
Contact about once a week/daily	30	28	17	.280
Justice system				
No contact	18	13	14	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	55	49	64	
Contact about once a week/daily	27	38	22	.228
Normalizing <sup>b</sup>				
No contact	9	8	5	
Contact a few times a year/about once a month	44	39	50	
Contact about once a week/daily	47	53	45	.634

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents with each rationale reporting each level of contact.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (4 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> The response options "Family, friend, other client, or self-referral (including word-of-mouth or advertising)" and "Other" were not included in this questionnaire item. The numbers of respondents indicating any contact with "Medical service organizations or practitioners" were too small to demonstrate significant cross-rationale differences.

rence sites to be required to report to the police or sheriff's department (treatment, 22 percent; normalization, 10 percent; deterrence, 5 percent [ $p = .009$ ]).

#### SUMMARY OF SERVICE-DELIVERY SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

Quite clearly, our expectations for rationale-related differences in the organizational systems involved in the delivery of services to status offending youths have not been supported. Overall, there were fewer significant distinctions than implied by the rationales, and most of those that did emerge did not follow expected patterns. Although the expected differences were manifest in schools as referral sources, this contrast did not carry over into other types of interorganizational relations. Moreover, the most consistent cross-rationale distinction to emerge indicates that social service organizations are a more integral part of the organizational system responding to

these youths within the deterrence rationale than they are in the normalization or treatment rationales. In addition, a large percentage of deterrence-located respondents reported referrals from and/or frequent contact with these types of organizations. These data suggest that, despite a legislative philosophy that emphasizes control and personal responsibility for actions, private and public social service and welfare organizations constitute a major avenue of responding to status offenses. Finally, it should be noted that the data did not reveal any strong distinctions between the treatment rationale and the others. The contrasts among the three strategies, as well as the similarities, could be a function of the characteristics of the organizations within each of the rationales.

### *Organizational Characteristics*

The primary objective of the in-depth survey was to obtain information about the handling of or response to youths engaged in status offenses. To the extent that the three different legislative philosophies shape community-level response to status offending, the characteristics of organizations that provide services to status offenders should vary across the rationales.

Both the deterrence and treatment rationales emphasize formal responses to status offenders, as indicated by the facts that at least some of the behaviors are explicitly addressed in legislation and alternative avenues for responding are suggested or mandated. As a result, there should be a much greater likelihood that public agencies associated with these rationales are involved in responding to status offenders than are agencies associated with the normalization strategy. In the deterrence sites, these behaviors are likely to be classified as offenses warranting the authority of the justice system; in treatment sites, they are likely to lead to a youth being classified as "in need" and, therefore, the responsibility of social service or welfare agencies or even mental health agencies. In addition, the nature of the service emphasized by the treatment philosophy suggests greater involvement of private agencies, both for-profit and nonprofit, than in the deterrence rationale.

As discussed in the last section, the thrust of the normalization rationale is away from formal, specialized handling of status offending youths and toward informal and/or generalized responses to all youngsters. This opens the door to schools, churches, and informal sources to be involved in dealing with this behavior. In addition, private (especially nonprofit) community organizations providing activities to the general youth population would also be expected to be responding to these youths. By design, however, schools and churches, although included in the YSS population, were excluded from the in-depth survey population, as were informal responders.



Consequently, among the organizations targeted by this survey, the normalization rationale would be predicted to be characterized by private agencies, similar to the treatment strategy and in contrast with the deterrence approach.

Another characteristic of these organizations that is likely to vary across the rationales is their sources of funding. As with the public/private distinction, the deterrence and treatment rationales should produce more publicly funded organizations—including both public agencies and their contracting private organizations—than the normalization strategy. Again, for reasons discussed above, higher percentages of respondents in the treatment and normalization sites than in the deterrence locales should list private fiscal sources. Given the emphasis on mental health services implicit in the treatment philosophy, relatively greater reliance on third-party payments would be predicted for the sites characterized by such a legislative strategy. Finally, the informal, generalized thrust of the normalization rationale lends itself to community-based responses and, as a consequence, should demonstrate relatively greater reliance on local sources of funding.

This local orientation also suggests greater activity in their communities on the part of the organizations responding to status offending youths in the normalization sites. First of all, that philosophy supports methods for handling status conduct that are in and of the community. Second, because it explicitly minimizes the involvement of status offenders with formal organizational systems, it leaves room for (or perhaps necessitates) the development of community-based resources to handle this problem. Agencies in normalization sites should report, on average, higher levels of community activity directed toward responding to status offenders than would agencies in treatment or deterrence sites.

Similarly, the goals of organizations in the three different types of sites should vary. The legislative rationales suggest that those in the normalization sites should be oriented toward skill and opportunity enhancement, those in the treatment sites should be concerned with resolving the emotional and social problems that contribute to behaviors, and, finally, the agencies in the deterrence locales should emphasize learning personal responsibility for one's actions as a way of deterring further problems.

The final set of organizational characteristics that we predicted would vary across the rationales are staff descriptors. Although the rationales do not lead to predictions about absolute staff size, they have implications for the portion of the staff involved with status offending youth. The generalized approach implicit in the normalization rationale suggests that there should be little staff specialization—all staff members will be dealing with these youths and all other youths as well. The treatment and deterrence philoso-

phies, on the other hand, imply a greater degree of specialization and focus and should lead to organizational environments in which not all staff members are involved with status offending youths.

The training of staff members would also be expected to vary. The types of services promoted by the treatment orientation suggest that, on average, the staff members in organizations in those locales should have higher levels of education in comparison with those in the other two environments. The alternate two strategies rely less on specialized techniques to deal with status offending youths and, therefore, may not require staff with advanced training.

The rationales, then, imply several distinctions in the types of organizations working with youths who engage in status offending. We turn now to the data on these items to compare them across the rationales and determine whether those differences emerge in practice.

#### AUSPICES

Survey recipients were asked to indicate whether the auspices of their organization were public, private for-profit, or private nonprofit. Table 6.6 displays the percentages of responding organizations within each rationale reporting each of the three public and private categories. The predicted differences are not supported by these data. Although a larger percentage of the organizations in treatment environments was under public auspices, the difference relative to normalization and deterrence sites was not statistically significant. The rationales do not distinguish themselves along this organizational dimension.

#### FUNDING

Respondents were presented with a list of ten possible sources of funding and asked whether or not their organization received funds from each and which was the primary funding source for their organization. For this analy-

TABLE 6.6. Organizational Auspices

Auspice	Normalization (N = 102)	Treatment (N = 76)	Deterrence (N = 66)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Public	34	46	33	.203
Private, nonprofit	56	47	56	.461
Private, for-profit	10	7	11	.660

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting the category of auspices.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

TABLE 6.7. Funding Sources

Source	Normalization (N = 102)	Treatment (N = 77)	Deterrence (N = 66)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Public: Federal government; state government; local police or sheriff's department; local juvenile court or probation department; other county and/or city government agencies	86	77	71	.051
Private: Local private foundations or businesses; third-party payments; client fees; individual donations	75	68	67	.458
Local: Local police or sheriff's department; local juvenile court or probation department; other county and/or city government agencies; local private foundations or businesses; client fees	79	81	79	.966
Third-party payments	28	34	24	.638

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting funding from these sources.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

sis, the original items were combined into public, private, and local sources; third-party payments, one of the original categories, is also broken out separately.

The percentages of respondents within each rationale reporting receipt of funds from the various sources are shown in table 6.7. There is a significant cross-rationale difference in the reported level of public funding but not in the predicted direction. Contradicting expectations, the percentage of normalization-located organizations indicating fiscal support from one of the public sources was higher than the percentages for organizations from treatment or deterrence sites. This is all the more surprising since the difference is primarily a function of state funding (72 percent of normalization respondents report state funding, compared with 56 percent of treatment respondents and 48 percent of those from deterrence sites [ $p = .024$ ]). The remaining categories demonstrated no statistically significant rationale contrasts. Nor were any differences apparent when we examined the primary funding sources separately. The majority of organizations within each rationale receive monies primarily from public sources, with about 25–30 percent reporting private entities as the major supporters. About one-third in each group of sites is funded primarily by local sources, while only a small percentage relies on third-party payments.

#### STAFF ACTIVISM

We asked about three types of community activities that might involve the staffs of these organizations, all specific to the problem of status offenses: (1) trying to get more financial support from the community for programs; (2) trying to get more of the community aware of and involved in the problem; and (3) trying to make better activities and/or services available for such youths. The respondent was asked to report the frequency with which any of the staff engaged in these activities. To help clarify relationships in the data, the original five-point response scale was collapsed into three categories—"not involved," "involved a few times a year or about once a month," and "involved about once a week or daily." The activity showing the highest percentage of involvement was the pursuit of better service availability; 30 percent of respondents indicated that their staff engaged in this type of community activism about once a week or daily. However, neither this effort nor the other types of activities demonstrated significant cross-rationale differences. The majority of organizations reported involvement in all three, but those in normalization sites were no more likely than those in the other locations to do so.

#### GOALS

As described earlier, it was predicted that the different legislative philosophies would be translated into different goals at the organizational level. Respondents were asked to choose which of three rationale-derived goals best described their organization. Our prediction was not supported; there were no statistically significant cross-rationale differences in the percentage of respondents choosing each of the three goals. About 20 percent of respondents identified "emphasizing personal responsibility" as the primary goal of their organization. The remaining respondents were equally divided between "helping youth respond to emotional and social problems" and "providing youth with skills and opportunities."

#### STAFF CHARACTERISTICS

Table 6.8 summarizes the information relative to cross-rationale differences in the characteristics of staff members. It is quite clear that in terms of staff size, specialization vis-à-vis youths engaged in status offenses, and educational level, these organizations vary only minimally across the three philosophical perspectives. Once again, the predictions have not been supported by the data.

TABLE 6.8. Staff Characteristics

Characteristic	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Size <sup>b</sup>	(102)	(77)	(66)	
	16	23	14	.433
Portion of staff working with status offenders <sup>c</sup>	(97)	(76)	(63)	
A few	16	7	13	
Some	23	22	29	
All	61	71	58	.274
Education <sup>d</sup>	(102)	(77)	(66)	
Proportion with less than B.A./B.S. degree	0.27	0.28	0.34	.387
Proportion with B.A./B.S. degree	0.47	0.39	0.36	.089
Proportion with master's degree or higher	0.26	0.33	0.30	.429

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with ANOVA F-test for staff size and education, and with Chi-square (4 degrees of freedom) for staff specialization.

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries are the mean number of staff members within each rationale working with youths. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values.

<sup>c</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting each level of specialization. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values.

<sup>d</sup> Cell entries are the mean proportion of staff within each rationale with that level of education. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values.

#### SUMMARY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

These data indicate, quite consistently, that the organizations responding to status offenders are similar across the rationales. The differing legislative intents do not appear to translate into different community service contexts for handling status offending youths. The consistent absence of differences across a wide range of organizational characteristics makes us skeptical about the existence of major distinctions in the impact of legislative rationale on youth service organizations.

#### *Youth Characteristics*

Clearly, the differing objectives of the three rationales should lead to differences in the characteristics of status offending youths who are targeted for community response. In this section, we will examine cross-rationale comparisons for a variety of youth-based descriptors to determine whether expected contrasts are evident in the survey data.

Taken together, several elements of the treatment rationale lead to predictions about the types of youths one would expect to be targeted. Derived from a medical model, this rationale views problems as embedded in the individual who is the target of treatment protocols. Early intervention (i.e., before the problem gets "serious") increases the chances of successful treatment. Consistent with a medical perspective, the treatment approach views status offending as a symptom, in this case one of underlying emotional and

psychological problems. It becomes necessary, then, to consider more than just the behaviors in targeting youths for help and in selecting treatment strategies. The major implication of this direction is a focus on young clients and those defined as "at risk." In both cases, the problems are not likely to be severe and, therefore, are more amenable to treatment. Moreover, placing emphasis on youths at risk of status offending allows for attention to factors other than behaviors—that is, the characteristics and conditions that make a youth vulnerable to status behavior or to being identified as a status offender.

This philosophy suggests, then, that status offending youths in treatment sites, netted by the organizations responding to these behaviors, are more likely to be younger, female, white, from broken homes, and having problems at school. In addition, the treatment rationale lends itself to targeting youths with a history of status behavior, as well as those who have experienced physical or sexual abuse.

In contrast, the emphasis in the deterrence rationale is on status offending as a precursor to delinquent behavior; the major objective of deterrence is to prevent escalation to more serious behavior problems. The behaviors are viewed as problems, not merely as manifestations of underlying difficulties. This leads to a greater focus on youths more deeply involved in illegal behaviors rather than primarily on those at risk. Relative to organizations in treatment sites, organizations in deterrence locations would be expected to net older youths, a greater proportion of males and minorities, and, in particular, a greater proportion with a history of delinquent behavior. While school and family problems undoubtedly exist among these youths, they might not be as prominent a focus in the deterrence setting as in the treatment setting because of the reduced emphasis on underlying causes.

As we have discussed previously, the central theme in the normalization rationale is the explicit avoidance of a specific response to status offenses. To the extent that youths engaged in status behaviors are netted by organizations in the normalizing community, it is, presumably, for reasons other than their involvement in those behaviors. As a result, in contrast with the situation in the other ideologies, characteristics of such youths are more a function of the nature of the particular organizations than a function of any overarching legislative intent. A normalizing strategy would put emphasis on two types of activities: those that are appropriate for all youths and those that enhance skills and opportunities. Therefore, we would expect status offending youths netted in normalizing sites to reflect a broader range of youngsters.

The implications of this are that these youths should be younger than those in the deterrence sites but older than those in treatment locales; there

should be a higher proportion of males and minorities than in treatment but not as high as within deterrence settings. Comparing normalization with both the treatment and deterrence approaches, we should expect to see significantly fewer youths experiencing other problems or problem behaviors since the objective is to provide activities or services for the general youth population. In general, even though these youths can be identified as having engaged in status offenses, they should be, on average, a less troubled group than those netted by community organizations in the other sites.

There are two sets of data that can be used to describe the organizations relative to the characteristics of their clients. Information is available on all youth clients; thus, it describes the larger pool of youths targeted by the community organizations responding to status behavior and, hence, the context in which status offenders are handled. In addition, other items allow us to compare, in aggregate, the status offending youths served by community organizations within the three rationales and, consequently, the translation of legislative philosophies into netting practices at the community level. Several of the youth descriptors are not derived directly from the rationales, and, therefore, predictions have not been made about how they differ across the rationales. Nevertheless, these variables represent interesting characteristics of the responding organizations and will be included in the discussion below.

#### AGE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL YOUTH CLIENTS

One interesting piece of information is the proportion of youth clients—that is, those who are 12–17 years old. Respondents were asked to provide the number in that age category and the number 11 years and younger. It was predicted that agencies in treatment would net younger status offending clients than those in deterrence settings, while the latter would target older youths engaged in status conduct. Because these philosophies can be broadened to characterize the handling of all youths exhibiting problem behaviors, these predictions, although formulated specifically to status offenders, can be generalized to all youth clients. Table 6.9 lists the average proportion of 12–17-year-olds for each rationale; across all three, the majority (70–80 percent) of the clients handled by these organizations fall in this age range.

Of course, it may be that this is too broad a category to demonstrate the predicted differences. In addition, it should be noted that organizations providing services only to children 11 years old and under were excluded from our census. Yet, for those serving at least some adolescents, no cross-rationale age differences are apparent when all youth clients are considered.

TABLE 6.9. Age Distribution and Types of Problems for All Youth Clients

Age Distribution/Problem	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Proportion 12–17 years	(100) .70	(76) .74	(65) .78	.227
Abuse/neglect	(99) 40	(74) 42	(64) 49	.157
Status offenses	(99) 50	(74) 55	(64) 53	.595
Substance abuse	(100) 37	(73) 40	(63) 45	.254
Delinquency	(98) 38	(72) 38	(63) 41	.735
No problems	(100) 19	(74) 23	(66) 18	.498

Note: Cell entries for the age distribution are the average proportions of clients ages 12–17 years among all youth clients reported by the respondents within each rationale. Cell entries for the problem types are the average percentages of youths experiencing each type of problem. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with ANOVA F-test.

#### PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED AMONG ALL YOUTH CLIENTS

Respondents were asked to indicate the percentages of youth clients experiencing each of several types of problems: sexual or physical abuse or neglect, status conduct behaviors, substance abuse, and delinquency (other than the abuse of illegal substances); they were also asked to report the percentage experiencing no such problems. As previously noted, the treatment rationale would be expected to net youths with problems but not necessarily criminal behavior troubles—abuse victims, status offenders, and substance abusers as opposed to delinquents. On the other hand, organizations in the deterrence sites would be predicted to have the highest average percentage of delinquents, while those in normalization settings would be expected to have the highest percentage of youths with no such problems. Table 6.9 also presents the average percentages for these problem types (including “no problems”) by rationale. In terms of the total youth population (not specific to status offenders), there are no outstanding cross-rationale differences in the kinds of youths netted by these organizations.

Although the rationales encompass responses to youths in general, the study sites were selected on the basis of legislative strategy specific to youths engaged in status behavior. This might explain why contrasts are not apparent when all youth clients are considered, but such differences might yet emerge when characteristics of status offending youths are compared.



## NUMBERS OF YOUTHS AND TYPES OF STATUS CONDUCT

Because the number of youths to which an organization responds is shaped by so many factors apart from legislative rationale, no predictions have been made regarding differences in the numbers of status offending youths being handled by organizations in the different settings. Similarly, variations in the types of status behavior to which the rationales would respond were also not expected. Nevertheless, these items provide client-related descriptors of the types of organizations responding to status offenders within each of the three rationales.

As table 6.10 demonstrates, these organizations are, on average, dealing with large numbers of youths engaged in status behavior. Of course, the range, especially in the normalization and treatment sites, is quite broad as well. Moreover, the vast majority are, intentionally or not, responding to all of the five major status offense behaviors. Running away and ungovernability are the two most commonly cited status behaviors, while liquor possession is the least frequently reported. There is certainly no evidence of rationale specialization here.

TABLE 6.10. Numbers of Youths Engaged in Status Behavior and Types of Status Offense

Number of Youths/ Offense	Normalization (N = 102)	Treatment (N = 77)	Deterrence (N = 66)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Youths engaged in status behavior	(93) <sup>b</sup>	(72)	(55)	.101
Average number	151	243	103	
Minimum	2	2	2	
Maximum	2,500	3,500	775	
Types of status offense <sup>c</sup>				
Running away	90	92	92	.577
Ungovernability	92	96	97	.355
Truancy	89	86	91	.902
Curfew violation	85	88	91	.776
Liquor possession	89	83	86	.799

<sup>a</sup> For youth numbers, this is the probability associated with ANOVA F-test; for types of status conduct, this is the probability associated with Chi-square (4 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> Numbers in parentheses are the numbers of cases with nonmissing values.

<sup>c</sup> Cell entries are the percentages of cases within each rationale indicating that youths engaged in that type of status conduct participated in services or activities provided by the organization. Percentages are not shown for those reporting no such youth of that type or those responding, "Don't know."

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND  
PROBLEM HISTORIES

Given that sites were chosen to represent perspectives in status offense legislation, it was anticipated that the characteristics of these youths, as opposed to all youth clients, would demonstrate the sharpest contrasts among the rationales. Yet, with only a few exceptions the attributes of status offending youths reported by the organizations are very much the same across all strategies (table 6.11). In terms of gender, race, age, family situation, and school status, there is a great deal of similarity among clientele from the different rationale settings. In addition, predicted differences in the prevalence of delinquency or abuse histories did not emerge.

The contrasts that are evident are not consistent with expectations but suggest an interesting pattern. Organizations in the deterrence settings were

TABLE 6.11. Youth Demographic Characteristics and Problem Histories

Characteristic/History	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Male <sup>b</sup>	61%	63%	68%	.237
White <sup>b</sup>	66	55	61	.141
Mean age <sup>c</sup>				
11-13	15	16	8	
14-17	85	84	92	.296
Living with two parents: <sup>d</sup> > 50%	24	20	25	.919
In school full-time: <sup>d</sup> > 50%	76	78	84	.280
With delinquent history: <sup>d</sup> > 50%	23	25	35	.276
With status offense history: <sup>d</sup> > 50%	16	28	46	<.001
Chronic runaway: <sup>d</sup> > 50%	8	8	21	.066
With abuse history: <sup>d</sup> > 50%	18	12	25	.285

<sup>a</sup> For gender and race comparisons, this is the probability associated with ANOVA F-test; for mean age, this is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom), and for all other items, the probability associated with Chi-square (4 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries are the average percentages of clients in that gender/race category across respondents within each rationale.

<sup>c</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents reporting a mean age within that age range.

<sup>d</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents reporting that more than 50 percent of youths engaged in status conduct are characterized by this attribute. Percentages are not shown for those reporting 0 percent or 1-50 percent.

most likely to respond that more than 50 percent of status offending youths had official histories of status offending and had run away from home three or more times. These data suggest that the deterrence locales were more likely to net chronic status offenders than the organizations in the other settings. Given deterrence's emphasis on status offending as a precursor to delinquency, it is not surprising that the status offending youth receiving attention are those that could be considered most vulnerable to escalation to criminal activities. However, these data could also reflect a heightened awareness of chronic status offending within the deterrence rationale or an increased tendency to respond to such behavior, thereby making it more likely that youths have officially recorded histories. In any event, this represents an interesting but relatively isolated contrast between status offending youths netted in the deterrence sites and those in the normalization and treatment settings. Overall, such youths appear to be remarkably similar across all three philosophies.

#### SUMMARY OF YOUTH CHARACTERISTICS

The characteristics of the youths in general and of status offenders who are provided services by, or otherwise involved in, community organizations responding to status behavior are a reflection of the ends those organizations are trying to achieve. Consequently, to the extent that those ends are derived from the ideologies embodied in status offender legislation, they should differ from one setting to another, and so should the types of youths netted by the organizations. However, we have shown that this is clearly not the case for the organizations surveyed. While the deterrence locations were more likely to be handling chronic status offenders, other differences (including those that would be consistent with that contrast) were not apparent.

Perhaps this is because "youths engaged in status behavior" constitutes such an encompassing and varied segment of the youth population that there really are no differences from one city to another, regardless of rationale. Perhaps rationale-related differences emerge only among youths who have been "processed" specifically because of status offenses. We did not limit our comparisons to youths who were involved in these organizations specifically because of their status offending; instead, we focused on the larger pool of youths whose status offending behavior is known and is, albeit perhaps indirectly, being "responded to." Therefore, the relative absence of contrasts in the types of youths netted by the different rationales further reinforces questions about the degree to which those philosophies translate into different practices at the organizational level.

*Responses to Youths Engaged in Status Offenses*

By now it should be apparent that in theory the rationales have very different implications for the ways in which status offending youths are handled by community organizations. Although only minimal differences are evident in the service-delivery system, organizational characteristics, and youth characteristics, there may yet be marked contrasts in the ways in which these settings respond to this type of behavior. What organizations do is a function of many factors, not the least of which is availability of resources. If the major impact of the rationales is to channel resources, especially public funding, toward a selected set of responses, then, despite similarities in the types of organizations (including sources of funding), the types of youths, and the interorganizational relationships, the distribution of services or activities available for handling status offending youths could differ across these settings. It is possible, in other words, for the legislative strategies to have little impact on the context in which status offending youths are handled or on the population to which responses are directed; but they might have an effect on what those responses are.

The survey solicited extensive information about the organizations' responses to youths engaged in status behavior. These data can be thought of as representing three broadly defined attributes of services or activities: the nature and intensity of the response, the extent to which the response implies some degree of control over youths, and the specificity of the response.

As discussed previously, the normalization rationale explicitly avoids responding to status offending specifically. Youths engaged in these behaviors would not be handled very differently from other youths. To the extent that young people elicit reactions from community organizations, they are likely to be directed at more general, situational needs. Therefore, the prediction would be that respondents from the normalization sites would be more likely than those from the other sites to provide services such as job training, tutoring, recreation, general relief, and the like. Greater involvement with the community would also be expected in the context of responses that aim to normalize the problems exhibited by youths. Moreover, services would be expected to be of shorter duration and less frequency than elsewhere. Finally, the aims of the normalization strategy, unlike treatment and especially deterrence, suggest an organizational context in which youths more often participate in decision making and less emphasis is placed on maintaining control of "clients."

Within the treatment philosophy, specific response to status offending would be expected. Because these behaviors are seen as symptoms of underlying emotional and psychological problems, the focus of responses by community organizations would be on resolving the problems before they be-

come more serious and lead to more dysfunctional behavior. Thus, the respondents from the treatment locations would be expected to provide predominantly therapy-oriented services. The perceived seriousness of problems promotes greater intensity and longer duration of such services. In addition, the need to establish and maintain a treatment program suggests that these organizations would be expected to exert some degree of control over youths—that is, decisions would be more likely to be made by staff, and explicit consequences exist for rule violation.

It is difficult to characterize the deterrence rationale in terms of what community organizations do for status offenders. This philosophy is, to a large extent, manifested not so much in specific services or activities (although restitution and community service are exceptions) as in the context in which they occur (e.g., the probation department) and their purposes. For example, because deterrence promotes official response to status behaviors, and therefore the intervention of public agencies, a greater frequency of case-management activities might be expected; however, these activities are more a function of the mandates of public agencies than a product of the deterrence strategy. Since control over youths would have a high priority, we might expect to see a higher proportion of residential facilities among organizations responding to status offenders, but the purpose of this type of placement (i.e., incapacitation) is quite different from that in a treatment setting. For the most part, however, the specific activities provided will not differ substantially from those within the treatment rationale but should contrast with normalization responses. Deterrence may be most distinctive, however, in terms of how youths are handled within the organizational setting. We would expect this type of setting to demonstrate the greatest level of efforts to control youths—that is, decisions would be made almost entirely by staff, and punishment would be used to gain compliance with rules. Thus, on some dimensions of response to status offenses, respondents from the deterrence locales will not stand out, despite the marked philosophical contrast to normalization and treatment, simply because a deterrence-oriented response may be distinguished not by “what” or “how,” but by “who” and “why.”

#### ACTIVITIES, SERVICES, AND OPERATIONS

As expected, when we look at the primary (or most frequently provided) service (table 6.12), a higher percentage of respondents in the treatment sites indicated counseling or counseling-related activities. Deterrence cities yielded the next highest percentage, while organizations in normalization locales were the least likely to rank these activities first. Also consistent with the rationales, activities that are appropriate for all youths (the general ser-

TABLE 6.12. Categories of Activities, Services, and Operations Ranked First

Category	Normalization (N = 102)	Treatment (N = 77)	Deterrence (N = 66)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Counseling: Crisis intervention; counseling/therapy/psychotherapy; hotline; psychological diagnostic assessment and screening	24	42	33	.036
General: Trips to special events; recreation/sports activities; character-building activities	20	18	8	.092
Decision making: Arranging out-of-home placement; case management; referral for services	7	4	8	.605
Training: Education/tutoring; training for independent living; employment counseling, referral or training	14	8	14	.415
Support: Day care; birth control services; medical services (other than birth control); legal aid; advocacy; general relief or assistance; preparation for legal emancipation	2	4	5	.610
Prevention: Substance abuse education/prevention; sexual/physical abuse education/prevention	6	4	5	.820
Other: Residential/ shelter/in-patient care; court-ordered restitution/ community service work; parenting training (for the parents of youth clients); arbitration programs/dispute resolution	27	18	26	.333

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale ranking as having most frequently provided any one of the activities, services, or operations included in the category.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom)

vices category) were more likely to be the primary services in the normalization sites than in the other two types of locations (although the contrast with the treatment sites is negligible). But note that none of the other categories for primary services demonstrated significant cross-rationale differences.

Table 6.13 displays the same categories based on whether the activities, services, or operations were or were not provided, regardless of frequency.

Again, counseling shows strong cross-rationale differences, with respondents from normalization sites least likely to report such services and, surprisingly, those from deterrence locations most likely (although only slightly more so than treatment-located respondents). The organizations in the deterrence sites were also most likely to report decision-making activities, followed closely by those from the normalization cities, with the treatment-located

TABLE 6.13. Categories of Activities, Services, and Operations Provided

Category	Normalization (N = 102)	Treatment (N = 77)	Deterrence (N = 66)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Counseling: Crisis intervention; counseling/therapy/ psychotherapy; hotline; psychological diagnostic assessment and screening	71	83	86	.027
General: Trips to special events; recreation/sports activities; character-building activities	75	79	76	.823
Decision making: Arranging out-of-home placement; case management; referral for services	82	73	89	.037
Training: Education/tutoring; training for independent living; employment counseling, referral or training	68	69	74	.645
Support: Day care; birth control services; medical services (other than birth control); legal aid; advocacy; general relief or assistance; preparation for legal emancipation	69	69	76	.562
Prevention: Substance abuse education/prevention; sexual/ physical abuse education/ prevention	67	74	77	.287
Other: Residential/shelter/ in-patient care; court-ordered restitution/community service work; parenting training (for the parents of youth clients); arbitration programs/ dispute resolution	69	74	80	.244

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale providing (regardless of frequency) any one of the activities, services, or operations included in the category.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom)

organizations least likely to report them. It was suggested earlier that these types of operations are consistent with the official nature of the response to status offenses inherent in deterrence. The remaining categories (including general services) show no significant cross-rationale differences but (except for general services) reveal a pattern of highest frequencies being reported by agencies in deterrence sites.

One response to status offenders that is of particular interest is the provision of residential care. This has significance for two reasons. First, regardless of rationale, it represents a direct response to the urgent problem of runaways. Second, the use of residential care to respond to any form of status behavior might be interpreted as a method of exerting control. Thus, cross-rationale differences in the extent to which organizations dealing with status offending youths provide residential care are important reflections of how legislation translates into community response.

A higher percentage of respondents in the deterrence sites reported providing residential care; however, the difference between that and the percentages in the normalization and treatment locations was not statistically significant (deterrence, 40 percent; normalization, 30 percent; treatment, 29 percent [ $p = .311$ ]). Thus, while there may be rationale-based differences in the justifications for this type of service, they do not appear to translate into differences in practice.

With a few notable exceptions, the types of activities or services provided by residential facilities have not shown marked cross-rationale differences. It is possible, however, that focusing on what organizations do masks such differences; perhaps the more critical distinction is in how they do what they do. For this reason, we included several questions directed at obtaining more detailed information about the involvement of status offending youths with these residential organizations. Data were sought regarding the frequency and duration of the top-ranked activity, the focus and setting for counseling services, the number of residents engaged in status offenses and their average length of stay, and the involvement of status offending youths in community activities. Table 6.14 provides summaries of these data, and the implication is clear—none of these descriptors of the activities, services, or operations provided to status offending youths varied across the rationales. Not only is what these responding organizations do quite similar, but how they do it is similar as well.

#### CONTROL OVER YOUTHS

Table 6.15 displays, for each rationale, the average scale scores for items measuring the degree to which these youths participated in each of several decisions. Keeping in mind that the low end of the scale meant little youth



TABLE 6.14. Service Characteristics of Residential Organizations

Characteristic	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	<i>p</i>
Average length of service— several months or more <sup>a</sup>	(99) 74	(76) 76	(66) 67	.415
Average frequency of participation— once a week or more <sup>b</sup>	(98) 89	(77) 90	(64) 83	.419
Counseling focus—general focus (includes a range of problem areas as necessary) <sup>c</sup>	(63) 75	(58) 88	(49) 80	.459
Counseling setting—individual <sup>d</sup>	(62) 68	(59) 56	(48) 56	.506
Number of residents engaged in status conduct <sup>e</sup>	(25) 117	(19) 150	(20) 87	.514
Average length of residential stay—several months or more <sup>f</sup>	(29) 55	(20) 70	(23) 70	.449
Involvement in activities in the community <sup>g</sup>	(93) 46	(71) 55	(62) 45	.441

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting the average length of service was several months or more. Percentages are not shown for those reporting about one month or less. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting the average frequency of participation was once a week or more. Percentages are not shown for those reporting once a month or less. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

<sup>c</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting that the primary focus of counseling is a general focus. Percentages are not shown for those reporting substance abuse or sexual/physical abuse as the primary focus or other foci. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values; organizations not providing counseling are treated as missing. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (6 degrees of freedom).

<sup>d</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting that the counseling setting used most often was individual. Percentages are not shown for those reporting family, group, or other settings. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values; organizations not providing counseling are treated as missing. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (6 degrees of freedom).

<sup>e</sup> Cell entries are the mean annual number of residential clients engaged in status conduct within each rationale. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values; nonresidential organizations are treated as missing. The significance level is the probability associated with ANOVA F-test.

<sup>f</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting that the average length of stay for residential clients engaged in status conduct was several months or more. Percentages are not shown for those reporting about one month or less. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values; nonresidential organizations are treated as missing. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

<sup>g</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting that youths engaged in status conduct participate in activities in the community as part of their involvement with the organization. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

participation, these averages indicate that, by and large, staff exert considerable authority, especially in establishing rules, penalties, and rewards. Youth have somewhat more say in determining their own goals and level of participation. Yet, none of these items varies across rationales. The organizations

TABLE 6.15. Youth Participation in Decision Making

Decision	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Rules about appropriate conduct	(99) 1.9	(77) 2.0	(63) 1.9	.906
Penalties for breaking rules	(99) 1.8	(77) 2.0	(63) 1.8	.622
Rewards for good conduct	(99) 2.3	(77) 2.3	(63) 2.0	.485
Personal goals to accomplish	(100) 3.3	(77) 3.3	(63) 3.0	.393
Participation in services, activities, or operations	(100) 3.0	(77) 2.8	(62) 2.6	.233

Note: Cell entries are the average score within each rationale on a 5-point scale measuring the degree to which youths participate in making each decision; "1" equals youths not at all involved. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with ANOVA F-test.

in the normalization sites are at least as controlling in this regard as those in deterrence locations.

Moreover, they also employ the full range of methods for encouraging acceptable behavior (table 6.16). From behavior modification to discussions to punitive measures, there is virtually no contrast in the extent to which such techniques are used within each rationale. The one exception, group discussions, is used more frequently in the treatment and deterrence sites than in the normalization sites. Particularly in the context of a lack of differences for the remaining items, this does not support any major rationale distinctions, as had been predicted.

#### SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO STATUS OFFENDING

Finally, as detailed earlier, the rationales suggest different emphases on confronting status behavior specifically rather than indirectly or inadvertently. It was predicted that the treatment rationale would evidence the highest average proportion of youths referred specifically for status offenses and the normalization rationale the lowest average proportion. These numbers are presented in the first row of table 6.17, and the predictions receive some support. Among the responding organizations in the treatment sites, the proportion of status offender referrals averaged just over .5, while respondents in deterrence and normalization settings reported averages of about .4. The treatment philosophy does seem to produce more emphasis on dealing with these behaviors explicitly and directly.

To further examine this difference, table 6.17 also displays the average proportions referred specifically for status offenses, by type of behavior.

TABLE 6.16. Methods to Encourage Acceptable Behavior

Method	Normalization (N = 102)	Treatment (N = 76)	Deterrence (N = 64)	<i>p</i> <sup>a</sup>
Awarding/suspension of privilege or rewards	71	76	70	.649
Isolation/time-out	40	42	41	.972
Corporal punishment	2	0	0	.240
Parental/guardian notification	56	70	56	.123
Group discussions	55	70	70	.050
Assigning duties, tasks, or chores	47	61	59	.158
Threat of suspension/ termination of participation	52	45	42	.458
Threat of referral to the justice system	27	36	34	.445
Individual conference/ discussion	84	87	84	.850
Other	5	4	8	.589
None of the above	3	4	3	.939

Note: Cell entries are percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting at least occasional use of the method to encourage youths engaged in status conduct to follow rules about acceptable behavior.

<sup>a</sup> Probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

When broken down in this way, the differences are less marked. The higher levels of status offender referrals in treatment settings seems to be a function of a higher proportion of referred ungovernables and truants.

Despite the higher average proportion of specific referrals, the respondents in the treatment sites were not more likely to report handling such youth differently from status offenders referred for other reasons. Across all rationales, less than 15 percent of respondents indicated making this type of distinction. At the same time, approximately one-third within each rationale group reported providing specialized services for chronic runaways, but this too did not vary across the philosophies.

Thus, although the predicted difference in referrals for status behavior did surface, suggesting that a treatment strategy does emphasize more directed response to those behaviors, this did not carry over into differential handling within the organizational context. Once again, rationale contrasts are far less marked than was expected.

TABLE 6.17. Specific Responses to Status Offending

Response	Normalization	Treatment	Deterrence	<i>p</i>
Proportion referred for status offenses <sup>a</sup>	(83) .38	(65) .53	(52) .40	.073
Proportion referred for running away <sup>b</sup>	(51) .20	(47) .23	(30) .29	.261
Proportion referred for ungovernable <sup>b</sup>	(51) .30	(48) .43	(31) .42	.107
Proportion referred for truancy <sup>b</sup>	(51) .18	(47) .24	(31) .19	.601
Proportion referred for curfew violation <sup>b</sup>	(51) .17	(46) .21	(31) .22	.689
Proportion referred for liquor possession <sup>b</sup>	(52) .27	(46) .15	(31) .18	.101
Referred status offenders handled differently <sup>c</sup>	(44) 14	(42) 14	(32) 9	.799
Specialized services for chronic runaways <sup>d</sup>	(102) 29	(77) 29	(66) 29	.992

<sup>a</sup> Cell entries are the mean proportion of clients engaged in status conduct referred specifically for those behaviors. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values. The significance level is the probability associated with ANOVA F-test.

<sup>b</sup> Cell entries are the mean proportion of clients engaged in status conduct referred for that behavior. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values; organizations with no clients referred for any status behavior are treated as missing. The significance level is the probability associated with ANOVA F-test.

<sup>c</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting different activities, services or operations provided to youths referred specifically for status conduct. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values; organizations with no clients referred for any status behavior are treated as missing. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

<sup>d</sup> Cell entries are the percentage of respondents within each rationale reporting provision of specialized services, activities, or operations for youths who had run away from home three or more times. Numbers in parentheses are the number of cases with nonmissing values. The significance level is the probability associated with Chi-square (2 degrees of freedom).

#### SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

It was suggested at the beginning of this section that these legislative approaches might differentially shape the responses to status offenders despite the near absence of contrasts in their impact on the types of organizations involved, their interrelationships, or the characteristics of the youths in question. Only to a small degree has this been substantiated. Some predicted differences were apparent in the types of activities, services, or operations provided by organizations within the three rationales. Respondents in treatment cities were most likely to provide therapeutic types of services, while those in the normalization and deterrence sites were most involved in recreation or character-building activities and case-management operations, respectively. Furthermore, the extent to which the sites responded specifically

to status behaviors was, as expected, greatest within the treatment philosophy.

Yet numerous other rationale-relevant characteristics of responses to status behaviors did not vary across the philosophies. Thus, while the data suggest a few differential legislative impacts on community responses, these indications must be viewed cautiously in light of the many apparent similarities.

## Summary

In addition to the differences in organizational responses to status offenders previously elaborated, the data revealed a few other cross-rationale distinctions that were consistent with a priori predictions. Schools appeared to be a more important referral source in the normalization sites than elsewhere, and the deterrence locations were more likely to be handling chronic status offenders. Yet these contrasts, as interesting as they might be, are overshadowed by the volume of data indicating little cross-rationale variation in interorganizational relationships, characteristics of organizations, characteristics of youths, or responses to youths engaged in status offenses. The articulation hypothesis, the premise that legislative strategies for dealing with the problem of status offenders filter down to the community level and translate into practices and organizational contexts, is simply not supported by these data. That is not to say that legislation has no effect on community response or that there are no rationale-related differences in that response. However, to the extent that there is a link between legislative philosophy and practice at the community level, it is evidently not a direct one.

Alternative models could be proposed to depict better the relationship between rationale and practice. For instance, legislation should have the most direct impact on public agencies; private organizations (both for-profit and nonprofit) are more autonomous and are buffered by alternative funding sources. An argument could be made that the types of relationships that have been predicted should be apparent for public entities but not necessarily for private agencies. Second, it may be that aggregating the responses for residential and nonresidential agencies masked cross-rationale differences. Finally, one could postulate that the rationales do shape practice at the organizational, but not the state, level. Organizations can be characterized according to the extent to which they reflect one or another of the three rationales. As we have already shown in chapter 3, the anticipated differences in agency rationales emerged, suggesting that the rationales are meaningful distinctions and that the processes by which they influence responses to status offenses are engendered within the organizational context.

In the next section, we will present analyses that test, on a limited basis, the first two of these three alternative models. Although they are not the only alternative explanations, they have compelling policy implications. By testing these in particular, we hope to gain a better measure of the strength of the relationship between rationale and response and, in that context, the processes by which they are related, all with an eye toward the practical consequences for responding to status conduct.

## Two Alternative Models

This section provides a brief description of the findings from the supplementary analyses of two possible interpretations of the relationship between rationale and practice. We selected a subset of survey variables to test for differences among the three rationales separately for public versus private agencies and for residential versus nonresidential agencies.

Variables were selected for inclusion in the supplementary analyses according to two criteria. In early staff discussions about instrument development, we ranked the potential instrument items according to their relevance for rationale-related predictions. Only variables with the highest priority scores are included in these analyses. This provides the most sensitive test of these predictions. Second, we reviewed the frequency distributions of these variables by residential status and public auspices within each set of rationale-related cities. Some variables were excluded for inadequate distributions on the core dimensions.

The selected variables span the four groups of agency characteristics presented in the prior analysis section:

- characteristics of the service-delivery system: sources of referral (any one of the three largest sources, broken down into five categories);
- organizational characteristics: funding sources (public, private, and local) and organizational goals;
- youth characteristics: percentage of status offender clients who are white, have an official record of delinquency, and have an officially recorded status offense history; and
- responses to status offenders: services provided (without regard to frequency of provision, broken down into seven categories), duration of service provision (average length of the most frequently provided service is several months or more), intensity of service provision (average frequency of participation is once a week or more), methods for encouraging acceptable behavior (at least occasional use of ten strategies of rule enforcement), and the provision of specialized services for chronic run-aways.

### *Public versus Private Agencies*

Given the lack of differences in agency characteristics found in states with varying philosophical orientations, we reasoned that these philosophical thrusts might still be manifested differently in public as compared with private agencies. Legislative mandates could be expected to have a direct effect on public agencies while the impact on private agencies may be diffused as, for example, private agencies provide services relinquished by public agencies. On the other hand, the federal role in developing policy toward intervention with status offenders has included encouraging service provision by community-based private agencies. Aggregating public with private agencies might obscure cross-rationale differences that would be discernible if the two types of agencies were analyzed separately.

There were 87 public and 140 private agencies available for the analysis. Dividing these two groups further by the three legislative rationales limits the interpretation of standard tests of statistical significance for differences. The nature of the analysis is exploratory, and the results should be viewed with caution.

Of the five categories of referral sources, only social service sources showed a significant effect in public agencies, with the highest percentage emerging in deterrence sites (normalization, 41 percent; treatment, 21 percent; deterrence, 55 percent [ $p = .037$ ]). The low percentage reported by public agencies in treatment sites is not consistent with rationale-related predictions. Among private agencies, only the normalizing category of referral sources yielded significant differences, with agencies in deterrence sites reporting the lowest percentage of clients referred from these sources (normalization, 83 percent; treatment, 82 percent; deterrence, 63 percent [ $p = .045$ ]). The high percentage of private agencies in treatment sites reporting normalizing sources of referral is surprising.

None of the variables reflecting organizational characteristics (i.e., funding sources and organizational goals) displayed cross-rationale differences in either public or private agencies. The differences reported earlier in public funding sources for the aggregated data (see table 6.7, which shows that agencies in normalization sites reported public sources more frequently than other agencies) are not evident when public agencies are separated from private agencies.

The youth characteristics tested show some differences across the three rationales. Public agencies in normalization sites served higher proportions of nonminority youth clients (normalization, 65 percent; treatment, 43 percent; deterrence, 50 percent [ $p = .042$ ]), but private agencies did not differentiate on this feature. Differences in the proportion of clients with delinquent histories were detected in neither public nor private agencies, but both

public and private agencies in deterrence sites served higher percentages of clients with recorded histories of status offending. Forty percent of the public agencies and 49 percent of the private agencies in deterrence sites reported that more than half of their status offenders had official records for this conduct.

Finally, variables representing agency responses to status offender clients generally did not differentiate among the rationales for either public or private agencies. Out of the seven categories of service provision in public agencies, lower levels of decision-making services were evident in treatment sites (normalization, 89 percent; treatment, 60 percent; deterrence, 91 percent [ $p = .004$ ]). Among private agencies, lower levels of counseling (normalization, 76 percent; treatment, 93 percent; deterrence, 89 percent [ $p = .041$ ]) and prevention (normalization, 68 percent; treatment, 88 percent; deterrence, 80 percent [ $p = .057$ ]) services were reported in normalization sites. Duration and intensity of service provision, strategies for rule enforcement, and the provision of special services for chronic runaways did not vary across the three rationales among either public or private agencies, with the sole exception of public agencies in treatment sites reporting higher levels of parental notification as a means of encouraging acceptable behavior (normalization, 54 percent; treatment, 80 percent; deterrence, 64 percent [ $p = .072$ ]).

Taken as a whole, these comparisons do not suggest a differential pattern of rationale-related effects in public or private agencies. Approximately thirty-five variables were tested in each agency group, and only eight emerged with significant differences in either public or private agencies. A few of these differences were consistent with predictions for a particular rationale, but several were not compatible with those predictions. The vast majority of the comparisons revealed no cross-rationale differences among agencies; disaggregating agencies by public and private auspices provided no additional support for the hypothesis that service provision to status offenders would articulate legislative philosophy.

### *Residential versus Nonresidential Agencies*

As in the case of public auspices, differential impacts of legislative philosophy could be posited for agencies with residential service components as compared with nonresidential agencies. The residential analysis has direct policy implications insofar as the federal position has been to discourage residential placement of status offenders and to encourage the provision of nonresidential services in the local community. Therefore, the purpose of this analysis is to investigate whether rationale-related differences may have



been concealed by aggregating residential and nonresidential agencies in the core analyses. Our approach was to test the selected variables listed earlier on agencies with residential components separately from nonresidential agencies. Cautions stated earlier regarding interpretation of significance tests apply here as well; 73 residential and 151 nonresidential agency survey responses are available for this analysis.

Compared with the findings just reported for public versus private auspices, even fewer cross-rationale differences emerged in agencies separated by residential status. There were no differences in sources of referral, organizational goals, proportion of nonminority youth clients or those with delinquent history, and length or intensity of service provision. Nonresidential agencies in normalization cities relied more heavily on public funding sources (85 percent) than did agencies in treatment (73 percent) or deterrence (65 percent) sites ( $p = .060$ ). Residential agencies in the three types of locations had similar sources of funding.

Both residential and nonresidential agencies in normalization sites reported lower proportions of clients with status offense histories. Twenty-five percent of residential agencies in normalization sites reported that the majority of their status offenders had official records, compared with 45 percent in treatment and 67 percent in deterrence sites ( $p = .018$ ). The figures for nonresidential agencies were 10 percent in normalization, 27 percent in treatment, and 30 percent in deterrence sites ( $p = .005$ ).

The only difference in the types of services provided to status offenders appeared among nonresidential agencies; counseling services were offered less often in normalization (58 percent of agencies) than in treatment or deterrence environments (both about 75 percent [ $p = .070$ ]). Assigning duties, tasks, or chores as a response to rule violation was less common in residential agencies in normalization sites (normalization, 70 percent; treatment, 95 percent; deterrence, 88 percent [ $p = .065$ ]), and among nonresidential agencies, parental notification was least favored among agencies in deterrence sites (normalization, 22 percent; treatment, 23 percent; deterrence, 12 percent [ $p = .050$ ]). Finally, site rationale differences were detected in the provision of specialized services for chronic runaways among residential agencies (normalization, 43 percent; treatment, 25 percent; deterrence, 16 percent [ $p = .089$ ]) but not among nonresidential agencies.

Overall, these analyses do not provide support for differential impacts of the rationales on residential and nonresidential agencies. The dominant pattern is one of similarity among agencies located in states with differing philosophical orientations; disaggregating agencies by residential status does not reveal substantive differences related to rationale.

## NOTES

1. The response rate improves to 67 percent when in-depth survey target agencies that were later determined to be ineligible (34 agencies) are excluded from the calculation. Six of the initial group of 44 critical nonrespondents were determined to be ineligible. Returns were obtained from 21 of the 38 eligible agencies. A few items from the YSS were appended to the in-depth survey protocol for these agencies. Thus, responses on items from both surveys are available for the analyses from the 21 critical nonrespondent agencies.

2. Systematic patterns of nonresponse to the in-depth survey could jeopardize the validity of our conclusions. To address this concern, an analysis of attrition from the YSS to the second survey utilized YSS data from 506 agencies. These agencies reported that they had status offenders among their clients, or that percentage was missing and we assumed they would be eligible to receive the in-depth survey.

Out of the 506 "eligible" YSS respondents, 224 (44 percent) responded to the second survey. This response rate should not be confused with the figure reported in the text. The nonsampled Baltimore cases are included in the attrition analysis as in-depth survey nonrespondents. Furthermore, the "critical nonrespondent" agencies from whom we received a survey return are not included in this analysis since they did not respond to the YSS during the earlier phase of data collection.

Sixty-six variables in the YSS data set were tested for differences between agencies that fell in the in-depth survey respondent group and those that fell in the nonrespondent group. These variables included numbers and ages of youth clients; types of services provided; sources of client referral; types of problems experienced by youth clients; capability to identify status offenders and provide them with specific services; residential components; and other agency descriptors such as public auspices, founding date, and location outside city-site boundaries. Variables reflecting the mailing and follow-up procedures were included as well. Only 13 of the 66 comparisons yielded statistically significant differences.

Few differences were apparent in the number, ages, or problems experienced by youth clientele. Most service and referral service categories showed no differences. Survey respondents were slightly more likely to provide decision-making services and less likely to report residential services as the primary service offered to youth clients. Four of the eighteen variables reflecting aspects of referral sources differentiated respondents from nonrespondents, but all four were related to the higher frequency with which responding agencies obtained referrals from the justice system. The only other notable difference between the two types of agencies was that respondents were more likely to be able to identify their status offender clients.

The few differences revealed by the attrition analysis were not surprising. Agencies that can separate status offenders from the rest of their clientele found it easier to respond to the items on the survey and were probably the most interested in the subject matter. In general, the differences detected were not large, and, especially in the context of the similarities between the two groups, we found little support for our concerns about bias generated from attrition.

3. Per-city breakdowns of agency responses for deterrence sites are Boise, 27, and

Flint, 39; for treatment sites, Manchester, 22, and Baltimore, 55; and for normalization sites, Portland, 29, Wilmington, 40, and Anchorage, 33.

4. For all analyses reported in this chapter, the probabilities associated with a Chi-square test for differences beyond .10 are judged to be statistically significant. Probabilities are reported so that the reader may impose the more conservative .05 standard, if desired.

5. Data reported within the text rather than in tables include a complete citation of the cross-rationale percentages and significance tests.

## Status Offenders in Three Contrasting Settings

### Introduction

Data presented in the previous two chapters offered little encouragement in our quest for evidence of the legislatively derived rationales in patterns of service delivery among youth agencies. The philosophical thrusts regarding the management of status offending youth as articulated in state legislation seem to have little bearing on the types of agency services provided to adolescents engaged in these behaviors. A brief review of the findings provides a context for the data to follow—the depiction of local responses derived from interviews with nearly 400 status offenders in three cities.

The enumeration of youth-serving agencies in the seven cities, reported in chapter 5, revealed a broad potential for youth services and a substantial number of service agencies. While counseling or therapy was the most common service provided, a wide spectrum of services was generally available to youth. The vast majority of agencies reported status offenders among their clientele, and several distinctions emerged between agencies with status offender clients when compared to other service organizations. However, youth service delivery did not vary by city in any regular fashion, suggesting that the search for rationale-related differences in local responses to status offenders would be an uphill battle.

And, indeed, it was. In chapter 6, we presented data on numerous characteristics of service delivery to status offenders that might have reflected the philosophies embedded in state legislation. We found a small number of

statistically significant differences among sites exhibiting the three rationales, and few of these were in the predicted direction.

- **Service delivery system characteristics:** We expected to find differences in the types of referral sources and also in the types of organizations with which service providers had contact regarding youth engaged in status offenses. Although some differences across the three rationales emerged regarding schools as referral sources, this contrast did not carry over into other types of organizational relations. Contrary to expectations, social service organizations were an integral part of the system within the deterrence rationale, despite a legislative philosophy that emphasizes control and personal responsibility for actions.

- **Organizational characteristics:** We looked at public versus private auspices, sources of funding, community activities by staff, organizational goals, and staff characteristics such as size, educational level, and portion of staff working with status offenders to assess whether organizational characteristics varied across the rationales. Only funding sources showed significant cross-rationale differences, and this was not in the predicted direction. The organizations responding to status behavior were similar across the rationales.

- **Youth characteristics:** We gathered information on the demographic characteristics of status offending clients, including their family situations and school status. We also asked agencies about the proportion of clients with histories of status offenses or abuse recorded by police or court and about chronic runaways among their status offender clientele.

There was a great deal of similarity among respondents from the different rationale settings in terms of gender, race, age, and family and school situation of youths engaged in status offending. Predicted differences in the prevalence of delinquency or abuse histories did not emerge. Organizations in the deterrence sites were most likely to respond that more than 50 percent of status offending youth had official histories of status offending and had run away from home three or more times. These data suggested that deterrence locales were more likely to net chronic status offenders than were agencies in other settings. However, this was a relatively isolated contrast when compared with the remarkably similar characteristics of youths served by agencies in the three types of settings.

- **Responses to youth engaged in status behavior:** The survey instrument included items on three general attributes of services—the nature and intensity of the response, the extent to which the response implies some degree of control over youths, and the specificity of the response.

These analyses provided little evidence to support predictions that legislative strategies differentially shape the responses to youths engaged in status offending. Predicted differences emerged in the lower likelihood of counsel-

ing in normalization settings and in the higher proportion of specifically referred status offenders in agencies located in treatment cities. However, the similarities in service response across the rationales far outnumbered the differences.

Overall, the lack of differences in the status offender-serving agency data was quite remarkable. The premise that legislative strategies for dealing with the problem of status offenses filter down to the community level and translate into practices and organizational contexts was clearly not supported by these data. To the extent that there is a link between legislative philosophy and community practice, it is evidently not a direct one.

Instead, the lack of differentiation across the rationales seemed to reflect agency proclivities that override differences in such mandates. In this sense, the rationales shape practice at the organizational, but not the state, level. In chapter 3, we reported the results of categorizing agencies according to how they reflected one or another of the three rationales. The agency rationale seemed to capture more of the variance in agency characteristics than was evident for site rationale, suggesting that the processes by which the rationales influence the handling of status offenders is embedded within the organizational, rather than the legislative, context.

The original site-selection interviews and visits had strongly suggested that the legislative analysis had yielded three sets of cities meeting our needs: they were good exemplars of the deterrence, treatment, and normalization rationales. However, results from both agency surveys were discouraging on this point. Support was weak for the articulation hypothesis but strong for the habituation hypothesis. The data from youth client interviews provide another test of this same conclusion.

Interviews with status offending clients of the agencies were undertaken for three principal reasons.

First, as clients, these youth were descriptors of the agencies, in much the same way that agency size, funding, staffing, and service provisions were descriptors. In this sense, youth clients were organizational characteristics whose measurement described these operations.

Second, as with other descriptors, the clients were seen as providing tests of the DSO rationale system. Deterrence, treatment, and normalization sites, as service-delivery systems, should reflect differences in the types of clients they sought or selected out of the total population of local youth. Similarly, deterrence, treatment, and normalization agencies should engage different types of youth clients. These client types should inform us further about the rationale scheme.

Third, quite apart from these two issues, we sought the clients' responses to the way the agencies handled their cases. This goal had less to do with

the rationales than with understanding better the fit between agency service and the acceptance of that service by a very ambiguous category of youths—status offenders. We thought, additionally, that these client reactions might frame the context for another thrust of the overall project, an ethnography of chronic runaway youth or “street kids” who had fallen through the sieve of the service delivery system (see chapter 8).

### *A Note on Sites, Agencies, and Youth*

The youth interviews were limited to three cities to maximize their value to the DSO rationale scheme. Judging by a number of criteria, including the results of the original legislative analysis, and by information gathered at the initial site visits, we selected Boise, Idaho, as the deterrence site, Manchester, New Hampshire, as the treatment site, and Portland, Maine, as the normalization site.

Briefly, Boise defines status offenders as delinquents. Its probation system “contracts” clients out to various agencies for restitution and community service. Its juvenile police are located not in the police station but in the schools, where they do their investigative work. Truancy cases go directly to the prosecutor’s office for filing in the magistrate court, not the juvenile court. The police use a form of informal probation, making offenders accountable directly to the police. Most practitioners are in public agencies; private treatment was not widely available.

Manchester, by contrast, has a highly centralized treatment agency that also refers youngsters to other agencies. The police have turned over the court-petitioning process to the central treatment agency, with the result that few status offenders go to court. Truants are also referred to this central agency; runaways as well are defined more as cases for treatment than as lawbreakers.

Portland arrests no status offenders; the court is not involved since status offenses have been decriminalized. Runaways are a persistent problem but receive little official response. Practitioners in Portland speak less of treatment than of subsistence for their status offending youth. A number of runaway shelters are in operation (at one point, the jail was used as a shelter), and a system of soup kitchens provides a source of meals seven days a week. Street kids are highly visible, tolerated, and supported in their basic needs; they are not specifically targeted as crime problems or mental health problems.

These three cities approach their status offenders in contrasting fashions. As such, they provide a fine setting for our investigation of the rationales. What they did not provide for this research, however, were demonstrably

representative samples of agencies or demonstrably representative samples of youth clients. The reasons for this will be detailed below, but it is important for the reader to keep these sampling limitations in mind.

The interview data are derived from the following sources:

- in Boise, 133 youth drawn from 15 agencies
- in Manchester, 83 youth drawn from 12 agencies
- in Portland, 161 youth drawn from 14 agencies

Across all three cities, 61 clients came from 6 deterrence agencies, 107 from 19 treatment agencies, and 209 from 16 normalization agencies. Thus, the rationale-related numbers will differ when we compare across sites and across agency types.

Agencies were not equally amenable to being included as client sources for our youth interviews. Driving distance was a logistical issue in a few cases. By the time we were ready to solicit interviews with youths, a few agencies were defunct, offering different services, or no longer serving youth. A few dropped out because of their own restrictive human-subjects and confidentiality regulations. In a few cases, higher administrative levels were not willing to cooperate, even if lower-level personnel were. Some client reductions also resulted from agency insistence that they be allowed to contact clients for their consent prior to our involvement.

### *Sampling Limitations*

The types and numbers of youngsters to whom we had access even from these selected agencies were affected by a number of factors:

- their (and their parents') willingness to cooperate;
- their accessibility within the time we allotted; interviews were sought as soon after agency intake as possible, and normally within four weeks;
- the agencies' demonstrated willingness to cooperate in the data-collection endeavor;
- the agencies' actual flow of clients during the time we were in the field; and
- differences in local data-collection supervisors and their effectiveness in pursuit of our interests in the three sites.

We encountered the following illustrative discoveries and setbacks:

- Manchester's deterrence agency was a problem participant from which we obtained only 3 respondents (Portland gave us 28 and Boise 30). We had every reason to expect significantly more.
- Treatment agencies in Portland fell out at the beginning or did not yield



much compared to treatment agencies in the other two sites. (15 percent in Portland, 30 percent in Boise, 52 percent in Manchester came from treatment agencies). The difference is not necessarily due to the fact that there are fewer such entities in Portland.

- Normalization agencies may have dominated the sample, not because they represent a major component of the agency spectrum within a site but because their nature leads them to serve larger numbers concurrently. Hence, we received many respondents from them (45 percent in Manchester, 68 percent in Portland, 47 percent in Boise), which may be an accurate reflection of numbers served within a time period but would not help in the representation of range or variety of clients.

Despite these drawbacks, it is interesting to note that the largest number of deterrence agency clients were elicited in Boise, the largest number of treatment agency clients in Manchester, and the largest number of normalization agency clients in Portland. The relationship of agency client type to site was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ).

It is not clear to what extent exposure to treatment affected the variables discussed below. Many factors influenced how rapidly we could interview a respondent. In looking at the number of days between agency intake and the interview (although the means ranged only from 23.3 and 23.7 in Portland and Boise, respectively, to 27.5 in Manchester), the difference was significant at the .05 level. However, it is necessary to remember that frequency of agency contact among clients varied from zero times to over eleven within those numbers of days; hence, the issue of treatment exposure is complex and cannot simply be attributed to a delay factor.

## Youth Interview Data

If the clients we interviewed could be reasonably described as representative samples of the status offending youth in each city, then an extensive array of descriptive data would be appropriate. It would allow us to generalize to larger populations of such youth. But such is not the case, as we are dealing here only with youths involved in agency service.

Similarly, if our clients could be reasonably described as representative samples of the status offending agency clientele in each city, then extensive descriptive data could be used to generalize to deterrence, treatment, and normalization agencies. But the problems of agency access and cooperation and full access to their clients make us hesitant to attempt such generalizations.

We do present a descriptive summary of our youth respondents, but more

to allow the reader to assess their nature than to lay claim to their value as representative samples. Our emphasis for the most part will be on an analytic rather than a descriptive strategy. Our primary concern is with what the data tell us about the three rationales.

### *The Clients in Aggregate*

In chapter 1, we described the first DSO project, a massive study of status offenders diverted from the justice system into various forms of community treatment undertaken in the late 1970s (Kobrin and Klein, 1983). This first DSO assessment reported its client populations, from eight program sites across the nation, to be as follows: "The program client was likely to be a white 15- or 16-year-old youth, slightly more often female, from a nuclear or reconstituted family, dealt with . . . as either an incorrigible or runaway who was referred to the program by the police."

In that project (DSO I), the clients were either deliberately diverted from the police or courts or selected for treatment as potential justice system clients. In the current project, DSO II, the clients were drawn from the agencies directly, whether or not there might have been actual or potential justice system involvement. One would expect the DSO II clients to be less delinquent and probably less clearly troubled in general. For instance, only 19 percent of our clients reported being referred by criminal justice personnel, and only 29 percent reported that they felt forced to go to the agency from which we selected them. Indeed, 38 percent said that they themselves had initiated their agency involvement.

Do the clients from our three cities make up a relatively mild set of problem youngsters? By ordinary standards of social service, and in contrast to DSO I clients, the answer would seem to be yes and may reflect the substantial number of normalization agencies involved (as was not the case in DSO I, where counseling was the predominant service offered).

Most DSO II clients are local (77 percent on-site residents); 60 percent are male; 92 percent are white; the mean age is 15 years. Because average year of school completed is 8.3, these clients would seem to be almost a year behind in school. Seventy-seven percent are enrolled full-time. Their parents may also have had some school difficulties: 25 percent of the principal adults in the home were not high school graduates.

Family construction, on the other hand, closely resembles that of the diverted clients from DSO I. Table 7.1 reports these data. If anything, DSO II clients have had to adapt to a slightly higher proportion of alternative living arrangements. Still, one or two biological parents are in the home with most of our clients.

Also, it is interesting to note how these youths see themselves. A self-

TABLE 7.1. Structure of Ordinary Household

Study	Nuclear	Single Parent	Reconstituted	Other
DSO I	35%	33%	19%	12%
DSO II	28	31	23	18

concept scale, used in several prior research projects, was included in the youth interviews. Subscales for delinquent, disturbed, and conforming self-images were extracted and applied to these clients. Eighty-eight percent felt that the conforming concept fit them well or very well; only 17 percent said this of the disturbed self-concept, and 20 percent said it of the delinquent concept. Since each client could respond positively to all three subscales (they are empirically orthogonal), this preponderance of conforming over deviant self-concepts is quite striking in a youth agency clientele.

Finally, we can report more specifically on the status offending situation among our respondents. As part of a screening operation to ensure that we were dealing with status offenders, a self-report measure was used to ask about involvement over the prior year in truancy, curfew violations, alcohol use, running away, and incorrigibility. Any respondent falling too low on these items was excluded from the interviews, so the results in table 7.2 represent a slightly inflated level of involvement.

The prevalence of the fifth status offense, incorrigibility, was ascertained by two questions. The first asked whether the client had gone through a period of continual disobedience to parents. Eighty-one percent admitted to such periods. But because incorrigibility means habitual disobedience so serious as to lead to some parental or official referral outside the home, youth clients were asked what action was taken. Only 29 percent reported police notification, while 16 percent reported referral to a hospital or similar agency. The largest percentage—69—reported being referred for counseling, while 23 percent say they were sent to stay with other family members. There is overlap between these categories—as a number of clients reported more than one type of response to their troublesome behaviors.

These data suggest that incorrigibility, as understood by these clients, was

TABLE 7.2. Percent Reporting Prior-Year Status Offending

Offense	0	1-2	3-5	6 or More	Σ
One-day truancy	39%	17%	13%	31%	100%
Curfew violation	23	25	15	37	100
Alcohol use	29	19	12	40	100
Running away	54	26	9	11	100

the most prevalent status offense, followed closely by curfew violations and the use of alcohol. Running away from home was least common but nonetheless occurred once or more among almost half the clients. From a needs-assessment viewpoint, the data suggest a clientele somewhat deserving of agency attention. Whether this translates into a serious social problem in these three sites is difficult to determine, given the qualifications we have already offered about agency and client selection.

Still, our general impression derives from a characterization of these clients as typically white males, 15 years old, a bit behind in school, coming from disrupted family structures. They have been involved in a level of status offending seemingly justifying some adult intervention yet see themselves predominantly as conforming rather than deviant youth. We are left with the impression of a clientele more pertinent to prevention than to intensive treatment.

### Tests of Legislative Rationale and Youth Characteristics

The youth interview was relatively long and delved into a number of aspects of these clients' lives and agency experiences. In particular, there was an emphasis on self-concept and on status and delinquent offenses. A total of 275 individual and summed scores have been analyzed to assess differences attributable to the three rationales. With Boise as a clear deterrence site, Manchester as a clear treatment site, and Portland as a clear normalization site, we have 275 opportunities for across-site rationale differences to manifest themselves.

In fact, however, we find statistically significant differences in 87 of these comparisons, or 32 percent. This does not constitute strong support for the importance of the rationales represented by these three cities, although it is clearly well beyond the 5 percent to be expected by chance. But we can go further. Of the 87 significant differences, a number were in the direction we predicted, but a large number in fact were not. And in some cases we made no predictions. So the 32 percent is a considerable overstatement of the support for the rationale system.

In a sense, of course, the lack of strong support for the rationale system is not surprising at this point in the project description. The clients serve as another form of agency descriptors, as did the referral sources or service patterns. We reported earlier that the agencies aggregated in the seven cities did not differ substantially in their characteristics, so there is little reason to expect major differences in their clienteles. The differences in 32 percent of the scores noted above is thus more than might have been expected and far more than was observed on the agency data.

### *Suggested Patterns*

Nonetheless, two consistent patterns emerge among the comparisons of the three cities, one in Boise and one in Portland.

Boise, the city selected to reflect the deterrence rationale, should stand apart from the other two for its justice system involvement with status offenders. A number of the items on the youth survey do suggest such a pattern. Although the clientele in the three cities yielded substantially the same level of self-reported status and delinquent offenses, the Boise youth reported consistently higher rates of arrests for those offenses. Average number of arrests over the prior six months were .89 in Boise, compared with .55 and .48 in Manchester and Portland ( $p < .05$ ). For status offenses alone, the averages were .91, .49, and .37, respectively ( $p < .001$ ). The individual offense categories yielding significant differences included truancy, curfew violations, incorrigibility, alcohol use, and runaway, but no others, so in fact the entire effect of comparatively overarresting juveniles is a function of status offending. Idaho's deterrent approach to status offenses is specifically mirrored in Boise's official police response.

There are additional facets to the pattern. Boise clients report that the response to their incorrigibility is more likely to involve reporting to the police. Boise clients reveal more contacts with drug programs, more contacts with juvenile court and probation, and more agency referrals from the juvenile justice system. Overall, a lower number reported receiving counseling at the agency, fewer were satisfied with their peer contacts at the agency, and more felt forced to become agency clients. In short, there is a pattern, within the generally weak support of the interrational expectations, suggesting a specific articulation of the state's deterrence philosophy. Official justice system handling of status offenders does have a deterrence stamp on it.

Portland, the site chosen to represent the normalization rationale, is also characterized by its status as a "magnet" for runaways throughout Maine. The few significant differences that separate Portland from the other two cities reflect these characterizations to some extent. The Portland clients are less likely to be local residents and less likely to report families with both natural parents. Their problems more often include school difficulties as well.

They report more contact with the runaway shelter agencies, of which Portland has several, and perhaps because of this they report more contact with fellow agency clients who are seen as disturbed or delinquent. Reflecting the decriminalization of Maine's status offenders, Portland clients report the fewest juvenile justice system contacts on their behalf by their agencies. Not predicted but of considerable interest is that Portland clients report receiving more service of almost every kind at their agencies. To some

extent, this belies the fear that decriminalization will produce large numbers of unserved youth; if a city establishes a runaway-sensitive network of agencies, as Portland has done, clients in those agencies may actually receive more varied service than in either deterrence or treatment cities.

In contrast to the Boise and Portland situations, the Manchester client responses reveal no pattern differentiating them from the other two client groups. Their reported self-concepts were no different, their self-reported status and delinquent behaviors were no different, and agency responses—referrals, services, and so forth—were no different. The Manchester agency system, as described by its clientele, does not suggest a reflection of the state's legislative emphasis on a status offender treatment philosophy.

## Summary

In two of three instances—Boise and Portland—there emerges a modicum of support for the articulation hypothesis. But this minimal support is embedded in an overall pattern of no support. The habituation hypothesis is more acceptable empirically, as judged by the youth interview data. This reflects the earlier findings from the agency-screening and service data. Overall, there is little in our results to support the idea that states can successfully legislate emphases on preferred philosophies for the handling of status offenders by community agency systems.

However, we have demonstrated that the rationales are much in evidence in agency practice; the level of difference between the three categories of agency rationales is astoundingly clear. As reported in chapter 3, these analyses reveal significant differences among the three types of agencies with respect to

- status and delinquency offenses of clientele;
- stated organizational goals;
- length of client service period;
- frequency of client participation;
- length of residential stay;
- client ethnicity;
- specific services for runaways;
- referral sources;
- techniques for rule enforcement;
- funding sources; and
- types of services provided.

When we use clients as agency descriptors within these three categories of agencies, moderate support for agency rationales emerges. Regardless of city,

we can compare clients from all deterrence agencies (61 clients), those from all treatment agencies (107 clients), and those from all normalization agencies (209 clients). This time, 153 items show statistically significant differences, or 56 percent of the items. Included prominently among these, and usually in the directions predicted by the rationale scheme, were

- involvement in status and delinquent offenses;
- self-concept as disturbed or delinquent (no differences on conforming self-image);
- police contacts;
- reasons for agency referral;
- reactions to the agency experience, such as satisfaction with service, staff, other clients;
- types of services and referrals received; and
- various characteristics of agency contacts: frequency, self-initiative, being forced to attend, freedom to leave, continued contact, and perceived agency concept of client.

It seems clear, then, that the rationales are valid. As judged by both agency and client characteristics, they describe three important modes of agency response to status offending clients. That these modes do not alter aggregated community response in line with legislative intent is our singular most important finding. It supports the habituation hypothesis over the articulation hypothesis. *Service agencies respond to their own philosophies regardless of legislative intent.* If states wish to influence the way their status offenders are handled, they will have to go back to their legislative drawing boards to consider at least the following:

- the clarity and consistency of the intent;
- the incentives to local communities and agencies; and
- the strength of directives, from spelling out options to encouraging to mandating, enforcing, and monitoring the desired service approaches.

Without the strengthening of all these factors, agencies will do what agencies do.

## 8

# The Unserved Runaways in Three Cities

*Margaret A. Little*

### Introduction

In three of the national sites, street youth were interviewed to assess the types of services they need and the impediments to utilizing those services. This survey provides essential, otherwise untapped information on the youth who fall through the “cracks” in the service network. It is only by interviewing these youths who are not served or are underserved by the existing social service system that the shortcomings and weaknesses of that system are fully illuminated.

Street kids are defined for our purposes as juveniles who are living more or less autonomously without being legally emancipated. The intent was to include the range of youth who live on the street, outside the service network. So as not to truncate the sample, the definition of the eligible population was left somewhat vague. Sampling procedures, described in greater detail below, were tailored to the context of the street population in each site and largely based on a “snowball” process, wherein each interviewed youth suggested others to be interviewed.

The substantive part of this report will begin by describing street kids in terms of demographic characteristics and family histories. We will describe their perceptions of the homes they left and their reasons for rejecting parental control.

Second, the report will describe the conditions under which street kids live. Data will be presented on the types of housing they secured, the ways



they obtained food, and the general level of their health care, both physical and mental.

Third, this chapter describes, from the point of view of these potential clients, the services available for street kids in each site, the respondents' awareness of the services, and their willingness to utilize them. Three types of services are examined: social service placements, services that can be voluntarily utilized by these youths, and the informal resources they develop for themselves.

Finally, while this survey was not undertaken for the primary purpose of systematically evaluating the book's hypotheses concerning site rationales, it does provide some evidence pertinent to the relationship between the rationale existent in each site and the respondents' views of existing services. Findings illuminating the street-level interpretation of the statewide policy are discussed.

## Methods

The goal of this study was to interview youths (children under 18 years of age) who were living autonomously without parental consent. The desire was to interview those very youths who fall outside the official service network. In this sense, the study sample differs from many other studies of runaway youth, which rely largely on data from youth within the agency network (e.g., Janus et al., 1987; Roberts, 1987). While these studies provide information on runaways within such agencies, they provide little or no information on the runaways who avoid such services—the youth living on the street.

One notable exception is Webber's 1991 study of Canadian street kids. However, Webber's study includes former street kids and older youth, the oldest being 33 years old. The attempt here was to interview as "pure" a sample of street kids as possible, while they were on the street and under age. Thus, any youths over 17 years old were excluded, as were youths living in facilities. The principle exception to this was a group of youths who were included while they were living at a publicly funded "crash pad" type shelter (although only one of these subjects was sleeping at the shelter on a regular basis). Another exception was a youth who had recently begun staying at a more structured shelter in Portland but had spent years on the street prior to entering the shelter. In Boise, one respondent had been on the street but had recently returned home at the time of the interview. In Manchester, one respondent was living with her boyfriend with the consent of her parents but had been on the streets without parental consent. She was, at the time of the interview, unemployed and underage. Her boyfriend was marginally

employed, and their situation was tenuous. None of the respondents included in this study was over 17 years of age, and each one who was off the street at the time of the interview was only marginally so.

Interviews were conducted in Portland, Manchester, and Boise. Prior to arriving in each site, the interviewer was provided with information about the services available to street kids and the areas they were likely to frequent. In each city, contact was made with professionals knowledgeable about street kids in their city.

Interviews were conducted over a period of seven months. Two visits were made to Portland, in November 1990 and April 1991. A visit to Manchester was also made in April 1991. Interviews in Boise were conducted in May 1991. Four days were spent in Manchester, five days in Boise, and nine days in Portland.

Subjects were approached who appeared to be under the age of 18 and seemed to be "hanging out." Potential respondents were told that the interviewer was doing a paper on young people who were living on their own and were asked if they knew any young people like that. Once subjects were identified, they were given more details about the research, told they would be paid \$10 at the conclusion of the interview, and were read a consent form. Interviews were conducted in private.

Respondents were asked to identify other potential respondents, and they frequently did. In fact, in Portland, with the best developed network of street kids, the interviewer had three respondents approach her as she sat outside a crash pad, each of them sent down by another youth who had been interviewed on the previous day.

Interviews were conducted with twenty-eight subjects: eighteen in Portland and five in each of the other two sites. (As will be discussed in greater detail below, Portland has a visible population of street kids, and this is reflected in the volume of subjects recruited in that site.) Seventeen of the subjects were females, and eleven were males. They ranged in age from 13 to just under 18 years in age, with the oldest two being only a month short of their eighteenth birthdays.

## Who Are the Street Kids?: Descriptive Data on the Sample Interviewed

### *Demographics*

Physically, the street kids appeared much like any group of teenagers. For the most part, they were reasonably well dressed, even fashionable, albeit fairly conservative and far from opulent. They were well groomed and clean,

and their hair was styled and brushed. Many of the girls wore makeup. Thus, there was nothing in their appearance to distinguish them from their peers living at home. Certainly their appearance bore no similarities to that of homeless adults.

Most of the subjects were females, and their average age was 16 years and 8 months. With the exception of one girl in Manchester, all were Caucasian (mirroring the predominantly Caucasian populations of the three cities). All had run away before; a few had run away more times than they could remember. In the past, they had run from the homes of their parents and other relatives, youth shelters, foster homes, and psychiatric hospitals; the search for chronic runaways was successful.

Most of the respondents were not far from home at the time of the interview. Two traveled from Florida to Portland, but one of the two had been born in Portland. Another traveled from San Francisco to Portland with an older boyfriend, and reportedly they were soon leaving Portland for Wisconsin. The rest of the respondents were within hours or less of home. Some of those interviewed in Portland were from nearby cities but had been officially placed in one of the shelters in or around Portland and then had run from the shelter.

Although not living with their families, these youths were often in at least telephone contact with them. In fact, most of the youths interviewed had some contact with their families (parents or siblings) on a regular basis. Some even reported running into their parents in a store or on the street.

One 16-year-old girl in Manchester states she had left home to alleviate her parents of the financial burden of caring for her, although also states she had a difficult relationship with her mother. She initially ran from a small town near Manchester to Manchester, where she had friends, spending some nights in an abandoned building. Although this initial leave-taking was without consent, she later began living with her older boyfriend with their knowledge, and she called her parents regularly. (Manchester 5)

Yet other respondents were clearly in hiding and declined even to give their real names to the interviewer, even though only a first name was requested.

Only four of the respondents ran from intact homes. Of these four, one had been sent from home to live with her grandparents prior to running; one was sent from home by the state child protection agency for some undisclosed incident in the home (it appears he had been the perpetrator); the third was "kicked out" of the family home by his parents. Thus, only one youth ran from a home where both parents lived, and this one youth had never been placed outside the home and was not being ejected by his or her parents.

*Motives for Leaving Home*

The reasons the respondents gave for leaving home varied, but the vast majority came from what they described as abusive situations. They ran from homes in which they were physically and/or sexually abused, homes in which their parents had alcohol and other drug problems, or homes in which domestic violence was a regular occurrence.

Eleven of the total sample of twenty-eight reported having been sexually abused before leaving home, far more than the number who reported sexual abuse on the street. Over half of the girls had been sexually abused (nine out of seventeen) by a family friend or relative. Two of the eleven boys had been abused, both of them by their fathers.

A 17-year-old girl reports that her mother made her and her brother "do sexual things." She went to live with her father, then with an older boyfriend and his son. One night her boyfriend "freaked out"; he had a gun. She left his home and came to Portland because she feared her father wouldn't let her return home due to the lies her boyfriend told her family about what she said about them. (The lies were his means of retaliation against her for her refusal to engage in sexual acts she found repulsive.) (Portland 16)

A 17-year-old boy ran from two alcoholic parents and a father who sexually molested him and physically abused him. On the day he left home, his father had tried to stab him, which was the "last straw." (Portland 18)

Physical abuse was reported by fifteen respondents, seven girls and eight boys. As in the case of the 17-year-old boy quoted above, those who reported being physically abused were the same respondents who reported being sexually abused.

A 16-year-old female reports that her mother "taught me to fight; it's like she wanted a challenge." She notes it took some years for her to be able to stand up to her mother and, until she was able to do so, she received a considerable number of beatings. (Portland 5)

A 17-year-old male states his father broke his ribs and his nose. (Boise 4)

A 17-year-old male reports being beaten with a wooden spoon by his mother until he was "too big to be hit." His twin brother, however, was never hit. (Manchester 3)

A 16-year-old girl reported that her father physically abused her, beating her with his hands and a belt, and she and her mother fought. (Both parents were alcoholics.) She last remembers a "knock-down drag-out" fight with her mother when she was 13 years old. They were in the driveway in the mud; "we looked like lady wrestlers." (Portland 19)

The abuse, whether sexual or physical, was sufficiently public in almost half the sample to require the involvement of local child abuse agencies. However, for some respondents, the abuse continued in the homes they were sent to for “protection.”

Fred was molested by his father, left at his grandmother’s home by his parents at age 6, adopted by a family who beat him and then kicked him out for running away. He feels the adoptive father enjoyed hitting him—“[He] used to line us up and try to find different ways to hit us.” The adoptive parents had also taken him to visit his father (he thought for a few hours) and left him there for six months. Only after he wrote them numerous times asking them to take him back did they come back for him. (Portland 13)

Another minor was “placed” by law enforcement officers with her father to avoid the physical abuse of her mother, but her father abandoned her so she had no choice but to return to the home of her mother.

She reported being physically abused in mother’s home. One incident involved a trip to the emergency room where she denied any abuse to the medical staff and was returned home. On one occasion she ran to her father’s home; her mother came after her and attacked her father and her. The police broke up the altercation, arrested her mother, and insisted she remain in her father’s home, where she remained until her father left for Florida to avoid an arrest and left her behind. She had no warning of his leave-taking. She merely arrived home from school to see the packed car driving away. She was devastated and wanted to go with him, but he refused. “He took my little brother but not me.” She returned to her mother’s home, was sexually assaulted by her mother’s boyfriend, and then ran from there, this time becoming a runaway. (Manchester 4)

Parents were also often reported to have been verbally abusive. One Portland girl reported that her mother frequently told her she wished the girl had been a boy, and consequently, “She treated me like I didn’t exist” (Portland 8).

Not only was abuse directed toward the respondents themselves, but they also saw the abuse of other family members. Fifteen of the respondents reported that there was severe domestic violence in their homes; in each of these families, the father was reported to be the aggressor.

A Portland respondent had run away from his mother’s home and arrived at his father’s home shortly after his brother (whom he admired “more than anyone else in the world”) had poured boiling water on his infant stepbrother. Later his brother explained to him that he had found their stepmother in bed with another man, and she also tried to seduce him. She had told him he would never see his father again if he said anything about it. He justified his attack on his stepbrother as a means of revenge on the stepmother. (Portland 8)

While an abusive relationship with their parents was reported by many respondents, the absence of any relationship at all with one parent was reported by a number of respondents. For some of the street kids, their contact with one parent, or sometimes both, had been severed, and they had not seen one of their parents for a considerable length of time.

A 16-year-old girl said she had not seen her mother since she was 2 years old. When she was 12, her father left her with people her father had met the week before. (Portland 21)

A 17-year-old male [had] lived with his mother for six years after his parents divorced. While he lived with his mother, he ran away six or seven times, stating, "Me and my stepfather didn't agree." He states he was never beaten but hit with an open hand. He then made the choice to live with his father and now hasn't seen his mother in three years. His father, angry over a report card, "hinted I should leave, so I did." (Manchester 2)

It is clear, in speaking to the respondents, that they had not left home for frivolous reasons. As one respondent stated, "People don't run away for nothing. You're not going to risk sleeping on the street if your house is a great place to be."

### *Life on the Street*

Having left these abusive situations and having either exhausted or given up on other resources such as foster homes, the respondents found themselves on their own. This section describes how these youth managed, or attempted to manage, while they were living more or less on the street.

#### CURRENT LIVING CONDITIONS

For the most part, the youths interviewed had shelter of some type. None of the youths was literally sleeping on the street at the time of the interview, but many had at one time or another. Their current arrangements included living with older youths in apartments, staying with parents or friends, "crashing" in apartments after parties, and residing in youth shelters (where available). Thus, for the most part, they had a roof over their heads. However, none of these youths had a predictable shelter; their homes were not necessarily safe or adequate. The respondents themselves did not define their living conditions as adequate or acceptable:

"It's no fair being 13 and on the streets. I should be home with my mom, using her bathroom and eating her food, spending her money, and watching her TV." (Portland 4)

Not a single respondent suggested preferring life on the street to being in a loving and safe home.

“I’d trade places with anyone living at home at this point. People think it’s a big deal because they can take off and live on their own, [but] it’s not a happy life.” (Portland 1)

Six of the Portland respondents were living in apartments with other youths. In addition, a number of the youths stayed at a Portland shelter for homeless youth (the Lighthouse) but also stayed in apartments at least occasionally. These youths reported a great deal of transience in their housing; depending on how things worked out any particular night, they might sleep in an apartment or at the Lighthouse.

One youth had spent two and a half weeks sleeping on the street in Portland, although he had been living in an apartment for two days before the interview. He had slept in alleys, parking garages, and areas around the YMCA. He gained access to the apartment through another youth with whom he had struck up a friendship; he had no funds of his own.

In Manchester, four of the five youths had spent some time, from a few days to several weeks, on the street. One had slept in a doorway; another slept in a park; another spent the night wandering the street. The fourth slept in an abandoned building. While on the street, they were not homeless in the traditional sense. They usually went into homes of friends during the day, while the adults were at work, and returned to the street at night.

A 17-year-old girl initially left home when she was 16 and spent about a year moving between friends’ homes and occasionally returning to her own home for a night. She then stayed on the street for four days in March. She slept at friends’ homes during the day and wandered the streets alone at night. She met a girl who introduced her to a young woman who needed someone to care for her infant daughter while she was at work, and she moved in with her in exchange for providing child care. She states that while she was on the street, the police never stopped her and no one “hassled” her. Some people tried to talk with her, but she just walked away. (Manchester 1)

Another Manchester youth stays with a friend and his friend’s parents. His friend’s parents think his father knows he is there, but he doesn’t. (He states his father would call the police if he knew where he was staying.) Prior to staying with his friend, he stayed with an aunt (without parental permission), with an older friend, crashed at parties, and slept in a park. (Manchester 2)

A third Manchester youth spent much of the summer on the street. He had a jacket and clothes he kept at a friend’s house. He went there during the day to shower and change and eat. “That was cool ’cause I was clean. My biggest concern was not staying clean.” He was by himself at night, which was “kinda scary . . . but I had my skateboard—one chuck to the head and it was over.”

At the end of the summer he returned home. "I got sick of it. No one had an apartment and I was too young to get a job; I didn't want to freeze in winter. [I] begged to get back in; I was too old to be hit." He left again in the spring and, at the time of the interview, was living with an older youth (who had some type of government aid). (Manchester 3)

Given their ability to find shelter, these youths tended to be fairly invisible. They were not lining the streets; they were the homeless living within homes. They were, however, visible to teachers, especially those whom the youths saw as trustworthy. One such teacher at a local high school stated that she had three to four homeless youth in her class one year; another teacher had six to eight. She drove the street one winter night at 2 A.M. and saw eight youths on the street who appeared to be homeless. She criticized the local agencies for being slow to respond. "If [minors] could live with their parents, they're not [considered] homeless." In other words, if the parents have a home, the youth who leaves that home is not considered homeless.

At the time of the interview, two were staying with peers and their parents and three had apartments with adults: one girl lived with her boyfriend, another girl lived with a young woman for whom she baby-sat, and one lived with an adult roommate. Only the girl who provided child care was employed.

As in Manchester, homeless youth in Boise were not readily visible. The director of a project serving largely adult homeless in Boise noted that minors don't stay on the street because "a kid on the street is too visible." He remarked that the police are vigilant about people on the street. He observed that runaways usually stay with friends or friends' families. Nonetheless, three Boise youths reported they had spent brief periods of time (under a week) without shelter in such places as a gravel pit or a car.

However, by the time of the interview, all of the Boise respondents had found shelter. One lived with the family of one of his peers. However, this did not mean he had been fully incorporated into that family.

A 17-year-old male, he has been to California and back, lived in various group homes, juvenile detention facilities, and a psychiatric facility. He currently lives with a friend and his friend's parents. He states that they treat him as member of the family; they introduce him as his son; he calls them "Mom and Dad. They make me feel like an insider." He notes, "I like this cushion shit about parents. I may take advantage of that with [the family I currently live with]." However, by choice, he never eats a meal with them and never eats what the mother prepares for dinner. (Boise 4)

Three of the Boise respondents were living in apartments. One pays rent, but the other two had found young adults who allowed them to stay for



free. The respondents referred to “party houses,” which are apartments located near one of the high schools, rented by young people (probably adults). These provided some, albeit temporary, shelter where one could “crash” after a party.

Boise 2 rents a room in a home for \$50 a month. Her mother does not know where she is, but her probation officer does. She lives very independently from the family with whom she resides. “I don’t do authority,” she proclaims, but she misses her family. She recalls, “It was perfect when I was younger.”

Boise 3 has “crashed” at parties, spent time in-patient at an alcohol treatment center, rented apartments with boyfriends or acquaintances, lived out of her truck, and been in and out of her father’s home. Currently she rents a room from a young couple. She has been employed in the past and has been able to rent housing and even purchase a car, but she is currently recovering from a serious car accident.

Regardless of the site, housing for all of the youth interviewed is transient and unpredictable. Wherever the youths found housing, it was temporary, and none had lived in their current location for a long time. Furthermore, this transiency was not necessarily new. Frequently, their current mobility was a repetition of the life they had before becoming street kids.

Portland 4 was sent to her aunt’s house by her mother because her mother’s boyfriend was jealous of the attention her mother paid to her and her sister. At her aunt’s house she was sexually abused by her uncle, and upon telling school personnel about this, she was sent to a foster home. She was then kicked out of the foster home for sneaking out and then was placed in and also kicked out of a group facility.

Portland 6 had been a ward of the court since she was 8 as a result of being sexually molested by her “second father.” She reports having been in twenty-one foster homes; “That’s why I have a hard time telling anyone about my family.”

## FOOD

As with shelter, Portland provided more services oriented to street kids than the other two sites, and this shaped how food was obtained. In Portland, the soup kitchens provided regularly scheduled meals, even if they did not offer food to the liking of the youths. As one Portland youth commented, “They take the words ‘soup kitchen’ too seriously,” implying fare other than soup would be more appealing. At any rate, the Portland respondents did not report being hungry.

Manchester contained a soup kitchen for adults but not for youth. As a result, Manchester youths were more reliant on makeshift provisions. They

often obtained food from friends and their parents, but they also went without.

A 16-year-old girl reported she stayed with a family in Manchester, but they had limited funds so she tried not to eat too much. She was able to get some food from her boyfriend, but his mother did not like her because she was of a different ethnic group. The home was in a low income area of the city, and her clothes reflected her limited resources. (Manchester 4)

A Manchester youth who lived in an apartment with a friend reported frequently being hungry and eating only marginally. The day prior to the interview, he had only eaten "English muffins." He is a tall, broad-shouldered 17-year-old boy who probably could have outeaten most adults. When asked if he was ever hungry he replied, "Hell, yes!" (Manchester 3)

In Boise, as in Manchester, there are no soup kitchens established intentionally for an adolescent population. Boise respondents obtained food from friends but also were able to obtain employment. One girl worked in a restaurant and got at least one meal a day there; one boy occasionally simply got into the lunch line at the local high school. Hunger did not seem to be a major problem for the Boise respondents.

#### HEALTH CARE

The respondents generally did not report major health problems. All appeared dressed appropriately for the weather, except one 13-year-old girl, who preferred her more fashionable denim jacket and short skirt to warmer attire. Most of the Portland respondents knew of a medical clinic where they could obtain care; and a few had utilized this service. The one respondent who knew she was pregnant was receiving prenatal care through the clinic. However, emergency medical care did not seem to be a major concern or need for the youth.

The mental health and emotional well-being of these youths presents a far more dismal picture than the immediate state of their physical health. All of the youth presented a serious and frequently sad demeanor. It is likely that many of them would be diagnosed as clinically depressed. Simply put by one Manchester youth, sometimes he just wakes up and is sad, and he does not know why.

They speak of being lonely, although they seldom are alone. However, their friendships are short-term and transient. They make intense friendships quickly and end them equally quickly. Two respondents who were boyfriend and girlfriend one afternoon were not speaking the next morning. Two girls who were so inseparable one day that they wanted to consult each other on responses to interview questions had become enemies within

twenty-four hours, with one girl going home and the other feeling betrayed. One particularly articulate Manchester boy simply and profoundly stated that he wished he had someone to love.

“I love myself but there’s that feeling to love someone else [that’s missing]—like a girl, a father figure. I never knew my father. It means a lot to have a role model.” (Manchester 3)

Their sadness is mixed with anger, foretelling future problems for themselves and others. One youth acknowledges that he has turned his sadness into anger, noting that the sadness “usually comes out angry.” Even in the confines of an interview session, their anger and lack of impulse control are demonstrated. One Portland girl, who was articulate and calm in relating to the interviewer, suddenly became furious with a visibly intellectually limited young man who unintentionally came too close while raking the grass near where we spoke. A Boise youth spoke clearly and at some length about his deep-seated anger:

“I don’t have a conscience; I don’t give a fuck about my mom; I don’t know her. I don’t give a fuck about anyone but myself. Every institution [I’ve been in], my feelings have died. I hate a lot.” (Boise 4)

Obviously, their traumatic childhoods play no small part in their current state of mind. The abuse they have experienced was, at the time of the interview, untreated or inadequately treated. A Boise youth coined the phrase “cluster fucked” as his way of describing the overwhelming rush of thoughts and feelings about his childhood. A Portland youth stated he spent a lot of time thinking about his abusive father and described the feelings as “a puzzle.”

“It’s like a puzzle and I don’t have all the pieces. I keep wondering, ‘why me?’” He feels he needs to spend a lot of time alone to think. He commented he hoped it wouldn’t rain that evening, as he wanted to go for a walk later (it was already dark and chilly) so as to have some time away from his roommates to think. (Portland 18)

While much of their troubled emotional and mental state is attributable to their childhood experiences, their time on the street compounds their insecurities. A Manchester boy reported he was fearful when on the street at night. He had learned to “stare people down” and kept a skateboard with him as a potential weapon. He summed up, “It was kinda scary” (Manchester 3).

Living on the street also created enormous anxieties about their futures and a well-founded pessimism about their options for the future. One Portland youth looked around at the homeless adults standing near us during

the interview and wondered out loud if he would end up like them. One Manchester youth articulated a similar fear that "I'm not going to make it in life and I'll end up on the streets" (Manchester 3). A Portland youth who had spent a significant amount of time literally sleeping on the streets stated that he sometimes felt he would not live past 20.

#### ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Drugs were perhaps one of the most serious problems these youths faced. Among those who had used drugs, the use ranged from experimental to life-threatening levels of abuse. Only two of the twenty-eight interviewed had never used alcohol. Alcohol consumption was high enough that two of the respondents reported having been drunk daily over the previous six months; four reported being drunk one to four times a week over the previous six months; fifteen had been drunk between one and twenty times in the previous six months.

Five of the respondents had never used marijuana; an additional seven had not smoked in the previous six months but had smoked in the past. Marijuana use appeared somewhat more prevalent in Boise than in the other two sites; all the Boise respondents had used it in the previous six months, with one youth reporting daily use. In Portland, three youths reported never having used it, and an additional seven reported being abstinent for the previous six months. In Manchester, two had never used it, and the rest had used it six or fewer times in the previous six months. In fact, drug usage in general was relatively low among the Manchester respondents.

LSD usage was reported in all of the sites. Again in Manchester, usage was lightest, with only two respondents reporting having ever tried it, and both reported it was a one-time experiment. Half or more of both the Boise and Portland respondents reported having used LSD, although generally usage was very occasional. One youth in Boise and one in Portland reported using LSD weekly.

Only four of the respondents reported having used cocaine in the previous six months, and only one of the respondents reported using it regularly in the previous six months. This respondent reported having used it daily for a three-week period in the previous six months but claimed to have been abstinent for two months.

A handful of the respondents defined themselves as having serious drug problems.

"I knew I had to get off. I was 16 years old and had nothing—few clothes and a hat. I couldn't even have a girlfriend; girls aren't interested in guys doing drugs twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I was living in a total drug environment. I knew one time I'd O.D." In fact he'd come close twice already,

combining alcohol and pills, and was hospitalized. He is "not sure" whether he overdosed intentionally. He has since undergone inpatient treatment. He notes that the day he left the rehabilitation facility, he went to a friend's apartment and "he handed me a beer." He immediately found another apartment where he could stay and the residents only drank on weekends. He notes he would have been "taking a wicked risk" if he had stayed in the first apartment. (Manchester 3)

The youths frequently had negative role models at home for drug abuse. A striking number reported serious drug abuse by their parents. Although the parents usually admitted their own usage, they generally forbade their children to use. As would be expected, the behavior, rather than the admonishments, were emulated. Sometimes the parents clearly knew about the drug abuse and may have even encouraged it.

One Portland girl remembers drinking as a child with her parents' knowledge and perhaps even encouragement. In fact, she remembers her parents giving her liquor as a little girl. She also notes that her parents never told her not to drink, although they cautioned her not to "gulp" the alcohol down too quickly. She thinks she first got drunk in second grade. (Portland 19)

A Boise girl whose mother is an alcoholic and whose father also drank remembers her mother instructing her that the appropriate dosage of a nighttime cold remedy was the entire bottle. Although she questioned her mother's instructions, she drank the entire bottle. Soon after, she passed out but liked the feeling and repeated the behavior. By the time she was 11, she was drinking alcohol and by 13 she was enrolled in outpatient treatment, a victim of alcohol poisoning, resulting from consuming a fifth of tequila in five minutes. (Boise 3)

The respondents seemed to have little difficulty obtaining drugs, even though they generally had no money. They reported that people they associated with frequently just gave them drugs. A few reported being involved in small-scale drug dealing and gleaned some of the drugs for personal use. However, one Boise girl noted that she had sometimes gone without food in order to put all her money toward maintaining her drug supply.

### Services: Availability, Impediments to Utilization, and Self-Help

The three sites varied greatly in the number and types of services available. All of them had facilities or foster homes where some of the respondents had previously been placed, but these services failed to keep the respondents within the service network. Other services were available in each site, and respondents could use them voluntarily. However, for the youth to utilize

any of these services, they must know of its existence and define it as an acceptable place to obtain assistance.

The respondents also made use of resources other than those specifically designed to serve them. The respondents reported various forms of "self-help" they relied upon to support themselves on the street.

### *Placements*

Each of the sites had child abuse response agencies. As noted above, many of these respondents had been victims of levels of abuse that even the most stringent criteria would define as sufficiently serious to bring them into the local social services network. In fact, almost half of the respondents reported having been involved at some level with the local child abuse agency. Of the twenty-eight interviewed, eleven were currently or had been wards of the state. (By and large, these eleven respondents were from Portland, although two were from Boise. None of the Manchester respondents reported being wards of the court.) In addition, the local child abuse agency had been involved with one respondent's family regarding the victimization of another child. (The respondent had been told to leave the home within twenty-four hours, yet he reports that no provision was made for him. As it appeared he was likely the perpetrator, he was in need of counseling, not to mention safe shelter.) Two were currently on probation and several others had upcoming court appearances regarding their victimization or their own criminal behavior. Others had been placed with relatives, although it is unclear if this was an official placement or an informal arrangement made by the family.

It is clear that the majority of these street kids were known to the official social services network through contact with child abuse agencies or with law enforcement. These street kids were not "falling through the cracks" of the social service network delegated to respond to the needs of children due to a lack of knowledge of its existence.

Rather, for a myriad of reasons, they had not been effectively served. Some respondents complained that their social workers had spent too little time with them, one stating that in the years he had been a ward of the state, his social worker had spoken with him on only two occasions and for only five minutes each time. (They did spend more time talking with his grandparents, who were his guardians.) Not only did they sometimes report that they had received too little attention from social services staff; one respondent complained that the perpetrator of his abuse got too little response from law enforcement: "You get in more trouble for running away than that stuff [father molesting him]" (Portland 13).

The respondents gave other reasons for not being absorbed by the social

services network. Some respondents felt that they were simply too old to be placed in foster homes.

A 17-year-old male stated that he wished someone had put him in a foster home one and a half years ago. He feels it is too late now, as he is almost 18 and would have to leave any home placement soon. (Portland 18)

“Foster homes don’t take teens, especially males.” (Portland 1)

However, a number had been in foster placements, some more than they could accurately remember. One respondent reported that his social worker said he had been in “half the foster homes in Maine.” Sometimes these homes were abusive. Sometimes the youths reported being expelled for bad behavior or for being a “bad influence.” Sometimes they ran away. One respondent noted, “I have parents. I can’t exactly go to another family and live” (Portland 19). In some cases, the foster placements were positive but temporary and the youth was returned home or moved to another placement. In one case, the foster parent wanted to adopt the respondent, but her own mother would not allow it, which resulted in her being returned to an abusive home situation.

Some Portland respondents had had previous experiences in group living situations; often they had been in more than one. As one youth put it, he had been doing the “shelter shuffle” for some time. The respondents who had stayed in one or more of these facilities had been expelled from or run away from them. They had gotten into fights; they had been caught smoking; they had violated other rules one too many times. Yet they generally were not very critical of the facilities. However, they claimed to have been unjustly accused of the specific behavior that resulted in their being asked to leave. For example, one girl complained she was accused of setting a fire when she was really just smoking (which was also against the rules); a boy said he was accused of kicking another boy, when he really kicked the couch the other boy was sitting on. While these respondents may have been justified in stating they were innocent of committing the infraction they were accused of, they probably had difficulty conforming to the rules of structured settings. As one respondent remorsefully, but probably accurately, summarized his history in such facilities, “I’ve never been able to make it more than a week” without being expelled for his behavior. One respondent pointed out that the difference between her and the other clients of these facilities is that she feels she has been through “hell” and she cannot listen to girls crying because their boyfriends broke up with them.

Thus, whether the clients were unable to meet the requirements of the facilities or the facilities failed to meet the clients’ needs, the result was that

the respondents were no longer in these agencies. (One girl was at Fair Harbor Shelter at the time of the interview.)

Counseling was also offered to some of these respondents but was not generally well received.

A 16-year-old girl noted, "Counseling sucks; just ask questions, what you really need is a best friend." (Portland 5)

Peer counseling "friend to friend" could be OK but "I'm too bull-headed" for individual counseling. (Boise 4)

Thus, before becoming street kids, many of these respondents had been clients of formal social services agencies. To a large extent, especially in Portland, the street kid population was composed of the remnants of this system.

### *Voluntary Services*

Once on the street, service utilization becomes more voluntary, requiring that the potential client both know about the service and perceive it as an appropriate place to obtain assistance. The number of official, voluntary services known to respondents was very limited except in Portland. Manchester respondents were particularly unable to describe any official resources they might utilize.

#### MANCHESTER

In Manchester, there was only one service any of the youths knew of—the Office of Youth Services (OYS)—and only two of those interviewed had heard of it. Thus, whatever else might have been available to these youths could not really become a resource because they were unaware of it. One of the two youths who had heard of OYS avoided it, although she could not say why. She did note that she might have eventually contacted the service if she had not found her current setting living with a woman in exchange for providing child care (Manchester 1). The other youth who knew of OYS (Manchester 3) did not go to them because they only have "emotional" help, "nothing physical or financial."

The Manchester youth say they would have gone to shelters and soup kitchens if they had been available. Manchester 3 notes that the one soup kitchen he tried to eat at said he had to be 18, and he reported he had gone without food when he was hungry.

#### BOISE

Boise respondents also described little in the way of services that were available to them. One of the youth interviewed in Boise had voluntarily gone to



a group facility (Hays House), and he was the only respondent who had a clear notion of what it had to offer as a potential resource.

He spent a week at Hays House, for which he paid \$231. (His father told the agency he would pay, but his father held him responsible for the bill.) He received some counseling, which tangentially involved his parents. He did say that the counselor told him in front of his parents that if they hit him again, to call. He hasn't been hit since, but he did not attribute this to the counseling. His father is also home more, but he didn't attribute this to counseling intervention either. (Boise 1)

Boise also offers a soup kitchen and a "mission" (i.e., a religiously oriented kitchen and shelter), where residents attend a religious service prior to eating. Neither was frequented by the respondents nor intended for a teen population. Only one of the minors interviewed even knew of the soup kitchen for the homeless, and she was in the process of applying for more general aid. None had eaten there. The staff serving food at the soup kitchen stated that they rarely saw a minor. Observations there showed the usual clientele to be single men, some women, and an occasional family with young children.

The mission was not viewed as a resource by the Boise respondents, although the respondents were more knowledgeable of it. None of the respondents had eaten there, although one youth, who was not part of the sample but who had been homeless for a brief period, said he had eaten there. However, when he stated this, two friends standing nearby who had been on the streets were astonished he had done so. Basically, the mission was not viewed as an option.

A 14-year-old Boise resident boasted that he never accepted charity. "I'm never one for charity. I take from nobody." In the next breath, he stated that he stole food when he was hungry. He had never gone to the mission; "If I was that desperate, I'd go to a friend's house." (Boise 4)

#### PORTLAND

The Portland respondents were well aware of a range of services. Virtually all of the respondents had heard of, if not stayed at, the Lighthouse Shelter. The Lighthouse is a short-term shelter facility. It is located in a large, older home near the center of the old downtown area, close to the area frequented by the street kids. There are few rules, and for the most part, the residents can spend one or more nights there with few restrictions on their independence.

Ten of the eighteen respondents in Portland stayed there at least intermittently, although few appeared to have been there at any one point in time.

Generally, the Portland street kids said they liked the shelter and described the staff as “helpful,” “cool,” and “nice,” although most who stayed there did so only sporadically, staying also in apartments when they could. They complained that they could not stay there during the day. “It’s just a crash pad. I wish it were a shelter where you could stay” (Portland 1). Some also complained that they could not have friends over and had no privacy.

However, a few of the respondents could not even tolerate the unstructured setting of the Lighthouse. One youth, who had escaped from a psychiatric placement, unrealistically feared that he would be arrested while staying there because it did not have a rear exit; if the police came during the night, he feared he could not escape (Portland 13). Another youth avoided all shelters in favor of sleeping on the street until he found an apartment because he feared the “same things” would happen to him that happened in his home (i.e., violence and sexual assault). He stated, “I don’t trust many people.”

Portland offers other drop-in services in addition to the Lighthouse. The Street Program offers some meals and referrals to other services, as well as a place to stay during the daytime hours when the Lighthouse is closed. This program was well liked by the respondents. They liked the staff and found the referral services helpful. One respondent described it as “awesome—counseling for jobs, school, activities at night.” Even one particularly rebellious respondent, whose assessment of most services was, “It sucks,” said of the Street Program, “Cool—they have groups, food is good, the cook is cool,” and could think of nothing negative to say about it.

Portland’s soup kitchens were known to the respondents and were a frequent source of meals for most of them. However, the respondents expressed little enthusiasm for them. One soup kitchen was more popular than the others. This soup kitchen, Prebble Street, was frequented by many of the respondents and credited with having reasonably good food. The other soup kitchens were considered less desirable, and some respondents avoided them. Yet it would appear that the quality of the food was not the only factor considered. The atmosphere in Prebble Street is quite different from that in the other soup kitchens. Two of the other soup kitchens are in large churches and are staffed by senior members of the church. Prebble Street conveys a less religious and more youthful atmosphere.

However, the respondents cite one major shortcoming of all of the soup kitchens, including Prebble Street: the forced association with homeless adults. More than one respondent commented they did not like the other people who frequented the soup kitchens. “Some older people [who eat there] are really wacked. People my age have it more together” (Portland 13). The street kids were observed to avoid contact with the adult homeless and viewed them with disdain. Even in Prebble Street, the street kids sat

only with other adolescents, creating a high school lunch scene in a sea of destitute and often mentally ill adults. (The two exceptions to this general rule were two girls who had young adult boyfriends, who sat with their boyfriends and other peers.)

### *“Self-Help”*

The respondents relied on resources other than the official network. Housing, for example, was frequently obtained outside the services network. As noted above, the respondents found shelter with other people—families or young adults. Portland contained a readily visible population of street kids and street savvy young adults. This population presented a housing resource for street kids. The older youth could obtain employment or state aid, and the sheer numbers of them opened the possibility of grouping together to pool resources and obtain housing. There appeared to be a number of landlords in the older section of the city who were tolerant of housing groups of minors. One such apartment was in an older brick building that housed a rather run-down restaurant on the first floor. The residents reported that the landlord knowingly rented to minors, although the residents felt his preferred policy was to rent to a young adult who in turn would rent to minors. However, not all of the residents paid rent. Apparently, those who had funds paid the rent, and others who were members of the group were allowed to stay. In this particular apartment, at least two of the adolescent boys had also brought in their girlfriends. Three minors from this apartment were interviewed.

Boise also contained some apartments conducive to housing street kids. The respondents referred to “party houses” that were located near one of the high schools and housed groups of young people. However, the permanent residents appeared to be adults. One respondent resided in one of these apartments with an older roommate.

Several differences among the sites are noteworthy. Unlike respondents interviewed in the other two sites, Portland respondents did not report staying with peers and their parents or in other relatively conventional settings. In part, this may be because the Portland respondents did not associate with youths living with their parents. In Portland, street kids formed a more insular group than they did in the other two sites. In the other two sites, associations were more frequent between street kids and their peers living at home with their parents. As a result, although peers formed a major housing resource in all three sites, the nature of the housing they had to offer differed dramatically. The difference is most dramatic between Manchester and Portland. In Portland, peers were often homeless or marginally homeless themselves, and consequently what they had to offer was marginal hous-

ing—information about shelters or apartments with other adolescents and young adults. In Manchester, the peers were more likely to be youth living at home with their parents, and what they had to offer was the family residence.

Employment opportunities also varied widely among the sites. Boise contained the only respondents who were employed (if one excludes the girl in Manchester who baby-sat in exchange for her room and board). Even the Boise youths who were not working felt that they could obtain employment without too much difficulty. In contrast, the Manchester youths complained that jobs were scarce for those under 18. (The youths in Portland were not working but also spoke little of trying to obtain employment.)

Self-help can also extend into the area of criminal activity. The respondents were asked if they had done anything illegal in order to support themselves. The vast majority said they had not. However, several of the respondents had reported criminal activity related to supporting themselves. One boy admitted he had, on four occasions, beaten another youth and taken his money. A girl said she had shoplifted from a local drug store and claimed this was common among the street kids in Portland. Shoplifting and breaking into parked cars were reported by several other respondents scattered across the three sites. The most commonly shoplifted items appeared to be cigarettes and food. A male respondent had robbed homosexuals in a park with the reputation of being a homosexual meeting area. A girl was reported by another youth to be prostituting, but she herself did not acknowledge it. One boy stated he had had sex with women in exchange for money, but he did not characterize his method as outright prostitution. He would "give them a sob story and they [would] give me money." One girl stated she slept with men in exchange for drugs.

Dealing drugs (marijuana, cocaine, LSD) to peers for a small profit was reported by a few respondents. Most of those who dealt drugs were involved in dealing on a limited level. One respondent in Manchester reported making \$50 a week through dealing but said, "I could have made more if I worked at it and wasn't smoking so much. One kid made a couple of grand a week." One Portland boy reported having been approached by adults to sell drugs for them, but he said he quit because it made him too nervous.

### The Three Rationales at the Street Level

To the extent that different legislative rationales result in different police and agency behaviors, it is reasonable to speculate that street kids in each site will view existing services differently. In particular, it is interesting to exam-

ine the extent to which the respondents are aware of the potential police response to them.

In Portland, the normalization site, where police have little hold over runaways and other status offenders, the respondents are well aware of the limited authority of the police.

“Cops don’t arrest for runaway in Portland.” (Portland 4)

“Police don’t pay attention to runaways in Portland. They have more important things to do.” (Portland 5)

“Police here are cool. They don’t give [runaways] shit—rather drink their coffee.” (Portland 10)

Not only did the Portland respondents view police as not being intrusive, they also saw them as doing little by way of intervening in their situation. “It’s not up to police to find kids homes” (Portland 3). Thus, generally, the Portland kids paraphrase the Portland normalization philosophy.

In Manchester, the treatment site, the youth interviewed had had relatively little contact with police and believed the police could take runaways home or to the police station. They felt it was acceptable for police to call their parents or even take them home but thought counseling should be provided and some effort made to find out about the situation at home.

“I think [police] should help. [There should be] a place where you could stay and get help. Not a foster home—its like Russian roulette [whether you get placed] in a good home or not. [Kids need] a program with loving parents who realize you’re not a baby.” (Manchester 3)

While such a statement is consistent with a treatment philosophy, it should be noted that similar statements can be found in the other sites.

In Boise, the deterrence site, the respondents generally expressed the opinion that the police could arrest runaways and even take them to juvenile hall. In fact, one respondent reported he had spent time in juvenile hall as a result of a runaway episode. However, they were not particularly intimidated by police and did not seem to exert much effort avoiding the police. This may be because three felt they were personally immune from arrest, two because their probation officers knew their whereabouts and the third because the police knew her father was connected to law enforcement.

However, the Boise respondents were well aware of curfew laws and were careful to avoid being on the street after curfew. They also were cautious about smoking, a status offense in Idaho. In fact, their concern about smoking boarded on the ironic, given that a number of them had far more serious behavior (e.g., drug usage, robbery) to report. The respondents consis-

tently reported that they could be cited for smoking, and multiple offenders were incarcerated.

Thus, the Boise youth were aware of the fairly criminal treatment the rationale of this site would predict. In fact, one respondent complained that the police "said I was a bad boy."

In contrast to their perceptions of how the police responded to runaways, the Boise youth basically favored the police doing nothing to them:

"[The police]" sent me home. [They] should have let me live on my own or something." (Boise 1)

"[Police should] just let me go, if I'm stupid enough to leave." (Boise 2)

"Don't lock them up because of their parents." (Boise 3)

One respondent did note that police should arrest runaways if they are endangering themselves or society. "I [wouldn't want] a runaway jumping my kid going to school." Interestingly, this respondent was one of the most violent youth interviewed. Thus, the respondents were generally well aware of the potential law enforcement response to them, and their descriptions of possible police responses varied across sites and were in line with each site's rationale.

One other way in which the sites differ in a way consistent with the rationales should be noted. Portland's distinctive peer group of street kids has been previously discussed. While the sheer numbers of homeless youth in Portland, due to the abundance of shelters and other services, may be central to the development of this peer group, the normalization philosophy may also be a contributing factor. If being a runaway is "normal," then a runaway need not go "underground." The greater the ability of runaways to move openly, the greater the potential for them to associate and form groups. In some ways, the situation is analogous to the situation of homosexuals. In communities where homosexuality is accepted (i.e., normalized), gay groups are more likely to be visible.

Perhaps as a function of the support from this peer group, the Portland youth were forthcoming interview respondents. They talked freely and openly, in sharp contrast to the Manchester respondents, who were shy, terse, and withholding of information. However, the source of their reluctance to talk is unclear.

The relationship between the rationales and the perceptions the respondents have of other services is also manifest. In Portland, the youth described services that enabled them to exist more comfortably on the street—shelters and soup kitchens, for example. The youth in Boise were relatively unaware of any services that might be available to them. In fact, they could conceive of little in the way of services they desired, expressing the sentiment

that they should be left alone. The youth in the treatment site of Manchester perceived few if any services as being available to them.

### Street Life: Transition Period or Lifelong Career?

This study was, by design, a study of system failures, a study of young people who fell through the "cracks" of the social service network developed for children who cannot or will not live with their families. Existing services no doubt provide well for many youth who, because of difficulties in their families, need the support of social services. However, these youth rejected or were rejected by these traditional services. What went wrong?

First, one might wonder if these street kids were simply unknown to the social services network. Perhaps these youths were not brought into the social services network because the network never was made aware of them and their needs. However, it is clear from speaking with these respondents that they were known to the official social services network. Earlier in their lives, many of these youths were known to the service network, and the shortcomings of their families were documented. However, for many reasons, the dysfunctions in their families were not successfully addressed by the social agencies that encountered these families. Agencies intervened but did so in a manner that failed to stabilize their lives and often failed even to protect them from harm. These youths were moved from placement to placement, sometimes because their parents or the needs of the social system mandated they be moved, but not infrequently the youths' own misbehaviors resulted in their expulsion. As one study of Canada's homeless youth notes of the Canadian child protection system, "It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that many, maybe most, street kids are products of the child-protection system" (Webber, 1991:35). The experiences of the youth interviewed in this study suggest a similar indictment of the American system.

Given that many of these youths were known to the official social service network, why did the network fail to retain them as clients? While there may be a number of answers, among them the limited resources of such agencies, the interviews with these youths also point to another problem: the lack of "fit" between service-delivery agencies and these potential clients. These youths described their expulsion from agencies, whether because they were too dysfunctional, too old, too belligerent; they were not the type of client many agencies wanted. They also described rejecting some agencies that might have assisted them, making such minor criticisms of the agency or placement that one wonders what other feelings have gone unspoken. Yet these same agencies serve other runaways successfully, demonstrating that

there are different "types" of runaways who require different types of services.

In an earlier study of runaways (Little, 1981; see chapter 1 of this volume), a typology of runaways was developed. The typology was based on runaways' perceptions of their own level of personal competence and their parents' adequacy as parents. Four types of runaways were described: self-emancipated minors, forced emancipated minors, parented children, and victimized children. Individuals in the last two categories view themselves as insufficiently competent to live on their own, but the parented children view their parents as providing adequate care whereas the victimized children view their parents as abusive. The self-emancipated minors and the forced emancipated minors view themselves as able to live autonomously, although they describe different pathways to autonomy. The self-emancipated minors view their parents as providing adequate care but feel they have outgrown, at a young age, the need to live under their protection and rules. The forced emancipated minors view the care provided by their parents as inadequate and feel that autonomy has been forced upon them by the failure of their parents to protect and provide for them.

The perceptions of these different categories of runaways suggest that they demand varied responses from the social system network designed to aid them. For example, while returning a parented child to his or her parents would be an appropriate response, this response would be inappropriate and perhaps even life threatening for a victimized child, and a self-emancipated minor is likely simply to run away again.

This study suggests that one category of runaways is particularly common among the ranks of the youth living on the street: the forced emancipated minors. The youth in this study view themselves as capable of autonomy and their parents as inadequate at best and abusive at worst. Self-emancipated minors "view themselves as forced into acquiring a high level competence by a lack of adequate parenting" (Little, 1981:126).

These youth give a mixed message to agencies. Because autonomy is not freely chosen by them, self-emancipated minors are not necessarily opposed to authority. "When these runaways perceive an adult as conforming to proper parental behavior they are willing to retreat from autonomy" (Little, 1981:134). They will accept a great deal in terms of authority, even police intervention, if their expectations of care are met. "Police apprehension and various related services are only viewed as undesirable when they are placed in a situation of authority without expected levels of concern for them as children" (139).

Few agencies appear able to meet their needs. The youths in the current research share with those in the previous study a history of failed contacts with social service agencies. They are tough clients. They are scared and



angry; they can be violent. They distrust others and cannot be trusted themselves. Their parents and others in their lives have violated the most basic rules of care; they cannot be expected to adhere to rules imposed on them.

The combination of dysfunctional families and a social system unable to respond effectively to these particular clients results in these youths being on the street, trying to fend for themselves. Interviews suggest that through a combination of services oriented to street kids in some communities and various "self-help" resources (i.e., peers and the families of peers), they manage to find shelter and food. If a youth can find residence with the family of a peer and this residence can be maintained long enough, it may enable the youth to finish school and mature out of adolescence at a relatively conventional pace. Yet one wonders how many families are equipped to deal with the wounded and often angry emotions of these youths. Perhaps the major service vacuum lies in the areas of mental health and job training programs that would provide an emotionally and financially secure future for these youth.

Given the lack of services that link these youths to a more secure future, the question remains as to what the future holds for them. Is the time they spend on the street a transitional period, a time they outgrow, after which they pass into more conventional life-styles, or is their adolescent experience the beginning of a lifelong process of living on the street? While only a longitudinal study would answer this question definitively, the data available from this study suggest a fairly bleak picture.

For the most part, the youths interviewed were extremely behind in school and attended only erratically. Their chances of completing high school, not to mention more advanced training, seemed low. Either jobs were not available, or they lacked transportation to areas where jobs were available. They generally lacked the focus to pursue future goals in a realistic way. Peers are a resource in providing emotional and sometimes financial support and a sense of belonging. Depending on the composition of the peer group, it may also provide a way of exiting the street life. In Manchester and Boise, the peer group is likely to contain friends who live at home with their parents. Thus, they also are likely to present relatively conventional developmental role models. The peer group in Portland, however, is composed mostly of other homeless minors. To some extent, the more involved a youth is with this peer group, the harder it may be to leave the streets. As one youth noted, "You get involved. . . . People count on you [and it's] harder to leave" (Portland 1).

As a study of the adult homeless population found, "The longer a youth lives on the street, the more likely it is that he or she will become involved in a social network composed largely of other runaways and street people who engage in deviant, often illegal, acts to support themselves" (Simmons

and Whitbeck, 1991:227). As a result, not only do many chronic runaways become homeless adults, but when they do, they "are more entrenched in a deviant criminal life-style than other homeless persons" (243).

One of the interviews conducted during this project but discarded from the final sample was of an 18-year-old girl who had spent much of her adolescence on the street. Her experiences in her home and with the child protection services mirrored those of many of these youths. At the time of the interview, she and her boyfriend were marginally existing on public funds. She claimed to be a recovered alcoholic, although she admitted to drinking heavily on weekends. She briefly tried prostitution but "ain't going to lower myself to that" again; she dealt drugs for almost two years but also stopped when she "got caught." She had one pregnancy that ended in the adoption of the child. She noted that when she was 9, she got straight A's, even while doing all the cooking and cleaning for her alcoholic aunt and uncle, but she left school in ninth grade. Her biggest fear was that she would end up on the street again, but then she added, "I've been scared since I was 5 years old." It is simply the goal of remaining off the street that is her focus. It seems likely that without public assistance, that is where she would be.

A similar fate is likely to befall many of the youths interviewed for this study, regardless of the research site where they were found. Others may face even more limited futures. They have truly fallen through the cracks of the service network, regardless of the rationale of the site in which they lived. While each rationale no doubt responds to some youth successfully, the system failures exist in each site.

## Runaway Services

In our initial visits to the seven sites included in DSO II, we asked a number of our agency contacts the same question: "Is this a caring city?" It would be difficult for a public official or private agency administrator to answer in the negative, of course, but two roughly contrasting depictions did emerge. The first was to assert that one's city was indeed a "caring community," and examples were offered—shelter care, volunteerism, primary prevention programs, and so on. The other modal response was along the lines of, "Yes, when something really heart-rending takes place, folks here rally around the needs of the people affected. But mostly we believe people are responsible for their own."

In Margaret Little's report in chapter 8 on the street kids in our three youth-interview sites, as well as in our initial site visit impressions, we hear echoes of these two modal responses: Portland stands out as a primary prevention city with systems in place for secondary prevention as well for its runaway youth. Boise and Manchester more commonly approach the other modal response, depending first on residents to handle their own problems. The runaway reports cited by Little suggest that these contrasting philosophies of care are, if not accepted, at least visible in the attitudes of her respondents.

To make the contrast dramatic—unfairly so, but usefully—let us consider the depiction offered in the *Wall Street Journal* (Nozario, 1992) of one outcome that can arise in a less-than-caring community:

HOLLYWOOD—Five teen-agers crouch over a candle in a dark, fetid cavern under a busy roadway. Around them, the dirt floor seems to move as rats look

for food. As the teen-agers pass around a half-gallon bottle of Riesling, they talk about their latest sexual scores. This is the place the teens call, simply, the Hole. "This is my home," reads graffiti scrawled on a concrete wall.

Here at the Hole, an ever-changing group of about 30 teen-agers, who have run away from home or been thrown out, have banded together to form a grotesquely modern kind of family. Predominantly white, middle-class and from troubled backgrounds, the "Trolls," as they call themselves, come to the Hole to find empathy and love. They have adopted a street father, a charismatic ex-con named John Soaring Eagle, or "Pops" to his flock. In return for his affection and discipline, the Trolls support Pops—and themselves—by panhandling, prostitution and mugging.

No such dramatic horror stories emerged from Little's runaway interviews, but her report makes equally clear that the unattended runaway raises serious questions about a will and capacity to provide needed and appropriate services to runners. It seems appropriate, therefore, to connect her findings to a few specific sets of data from other data collection efforts in DSO II.

Among other things, we learn from Little's report that her respondents were chronic runners, not only from their original homes but also from voluntary and involuntary community placements. Most are local or regional residents. Their homes often are characterized by abuse, violence, and parental conflict; somehow the streets and shelters have become preferable. Referrals have not resolved the problems for these residual clients, although they may well have sufficed for numerous other youth.

We note that eleven of the twenty-eight respondents were state wards at the time of the interviews. As Little notes, the official social services network knew about the majority of these street kids: agencies could not claim ignorance of their existence. But Little also makes it clear that her respondents were not "easy" clients: many were distraught, or tough, or agency resistant—genuine challenges to the normal and outreach forms of youth services.

The report also provides a sense for the variety of living arrangements that constitute being "on the street." Creativity, transiency, and unpredictability are common elements of "street" life, but adequate use of available resources was not common. In Boise and Manchester, available resources were all but unknown to the chronic runners, although in Portland the service network was more visible to them. Indeed, this is about the only intersite difference to be found in Little's interviews.

We can turn to several items from the DSO II survey instruments to glean some of the background that yields this situation described by Little and her respondents. One of these was in the agency-screening questionnaire from the seven DSO cities, two from the in-depth agency surveys in the seven

cities, and two from the youth client surveys in the three cities of Boise, Manchester, and Portland.

## Informal Services

The screening survey sent to all potential youth-serving agencies in the seven DSO II sites included the following question:

We are interested in gathering information about informal services for homeless or chronic runaway youth that exist in your community. In particular, we would like to know about assistance or services, being provided by individuals or groups, that are not part of established organizational practices. If you are aware of any such assistance to youth living "on the street," please provide this information in the space below.

In Flint, most agency respondents who provided answers to this question cited shelters, hotlines, and formal runaway service agencies. Only two respondents provided appropriate answers—that is, *informal* alternatives. One cited anonymous locations known only to chronic runners themselves, while another mentioned various churches, adding "this is entirely ad hoc."

In Boise, *formal* agencies were listed—group homes, Y's, and so on. Only one respondent listed an informal provision of assistance, a Catholic priest who occasionally took in homeless youths.

In Portland, there were many mentions of shelters and soup kitchens, part of that city's organized, formal response system. The only informal resource mentioned was a recreation center that allowed street kids in for a few hours and tried to find shelter for them; it "can't do more," said the respondent.

In Manchester, no informal sources were reported, other than some possibilities elsewhere in the state.

Only in Anchorage did a notable number of respondents suggest knowledge of informal assistance, though not always in positive terms. These are the responses:

"I know of several parents who have taken in runaways."

"Safe houses provided by concerned individuals—are generally not licensed by the State."

"Innocent, unlicensed adults who harbor teens who turn to them, i.e., friends of their children etc., in order to avoid ineffectual social systems."

"Adults who illegally harbor youth for exploitive purposes."

"Bean's Cafe."

"Several families at two churches that consider housing kids."

The remaining Anchorage responses referred to the usual formal services, especially the newly opened branch of Covenant House, the Catholic shelter facility found in selected cities across the nation.

In Wilmington, respondents mentioned several informal sources: some families who took in friends of their own children; a few residents who occasionally took in runaways; some counselors at the Ferris School (a public correctional institution) who occasionally allowed youngsters to stay with nonapproved "foster" families; and some city and county police officers who informally befriended and counseled street kids. All of these mentions of informal services, it should be noted, were offered by just two of our agency respondents.

In Baltimore, a number of respondents cited the Fellowship of Lights, but this is a formal service organization providing shelter and professional counseling, mostly to formally referred clients. Although from our largest city, only two Baltimore respondents offered appropriate responses to the informal services inquiry:

"Several area residents provide food and other assistance to runaways and to the homeless."

"Several of the older youth [19–21 years of age] in our program have provided assistance to younger peers who have been thrown out of homes or run away."

These responses from the youth-serving agencies in our seven cities are certainly minimal. They may represent lack of familiarity with informal resources—our site visits certainly suggested some of this—or simply the relative absence of such services. A combination of the two is likely. Youngsters in need of informal service alternatives will probably not find access through the formal social service agencies; they are on their own.

### Special Services for Chronic Runaways

The in-depth survey of agencies that provide services to status offending youth in the seven cities asked about special attention given to chronic runners. The question read, "Please describe any specialized services, activities, or operations provided in 1987 at this location for youths who had run away from home three or more times."

As might be anticipated, far more responses were received, a total of sixty-nine (not a large number, perhaps, given the number of responding agencies in the seven cities). The range was from seven to fourteen responses per site,

with Baltimore (the largest city) and Portland (the city with the largest street youth problem) providing the largest number of responses.

Unfortunately, more than half of the responses did not fit the expectations for “specialized” services for chronic runners. They were quite standard: “counseling, tutoring, and recreation”; “individual and family counseling”; “family counseling and youth detention”; “residential care”; “counseling.” Indeed, counseling—however phrased—was the most common response, and we are left with only thirty-three agencies of all of those surveyed in seven cities that responded with services that seemed more directly geared to the specific problems of chronic runners.

Most common among these was some form of placement (out-of-home, crisis, foster care, or a variation of these), usually along with individual or family counseling and sometimes both. There were fifteen mentions of this special service category. Even at that, we must recognize that many other youngsters receive placement services, so this is hardly designed for chronic runners alone.

Next most common, with seven mentions, was some form of subsistence provision—shelters, soup kitchens, clothing, and so on. This would indeed seem fairly specialized for the chronic runners, although finding it mentioned only seven times is not encouraging. There were only four additional responses, including notification of state agencies or the court such that formal intervention with abusing or negligent families might be facilitated, and there were three (from placement centers) that offered extra security to prevent running from the facility. The other “specialized” responses were unpatterned, and we are left again with a rather discouraging picture.

Agencies that know they have status offenders among their clientele are geared, understandably enough, toward those offenders with less serious problems. This leaves relatively few who seem prepared to deal with that most difficult status offender, the chronic runaway. Thus, Little’s report may indeed portray accurately the situation of the chronic runner who does not know where to turn and does not achieve satisfaction when in contact with formal public and private agencies. The chronic runner is not well suited to the agencies, and the agencies are not well suited to the chronic runner.

### Agency Knowledge of the Youth Street Scene

To gain familiarity with the street scene in these cities, we asked the agency respondents about street kid hangouts. But the question can also serve as a measure of agency respondents’ awareness that there is a problem in their area. The inquiry was phrased as follows:

Many cities report having a number of "street kids" while others do not. Let's define "street kids" as *juveniles who are living on their own, without parental supervision* (including chronic runaways, "throwaways," homeless, vagrants, minors living with other minors, and street prostitutes). In 1987, would you say that [respondent's city] had a major, moderate, slight, or no problem of street kids. If you marked any problem, please give the locations—street names, parks, other places—where you understand the street kids tended to be found in 1987. The information will be kept confidential.

Between eleven (Boise) and twenty-four (Portland) respondents were able to respond to this question. Some responses yielded only one hangout, while others indicated several (up to a dozen locations in one instance). That more people could not respond further illustrates respondents' limited knowledge of the local street scene. However, the facts that a number of respondents were able to name hangouts and that there was considerable consensus on a few such locations in each city—including those supposedly not having a street kid problem—speak well for the validity of that information. In the following, we name general areas but not specific locations, in line with the promise of confidentiality.

In Flint, the most common locations cited were downtown and the north end. The lack of specificity is mirrored by the listing of over twenty streets, only three of which were mentioned more than twice.

In Boise, where we were so often told there was no street kid problem, the eleven respondents offering locations were almost unanimous, citing a small series of parks and bridges in an area known generally as the Green Belt. Investigating the Green Belt during site visits, we found it to be the most inviting, secluded, and unobtrusive of all the hangouts in the seven cities.

In Portland, there was almost unanimous agreement on a major downtown street (with known east and west terminal points) and a number of mentions as well of the available shelters and the park known as a meeting place for male prostitutes and their customers. We easily confirmed these locations with our own observations during site visits. Portland's street scene is open, visible, acknowledged, and, to judge from our own observations, tolerated and accepted by justice and welfare agencies in this "purest" of normalization sites.

In Manchester, a city that like Flint, yielded few admissions of street kid presence, there was close to full consensus on one particular location among the twelve responses to the question; there was also rather wide agreement as well on a series of streets of a particular category. In our final site visit, we were steered to an active location.

In Anchorage, the twenty-two respondents offered consensus on two locations. The first was a downtown street in a "seedy" location where native



youth and homeless men both tended to congregate. Our observations confirmed the area as a stereotypical homeless strip. The second consensus was on a set of shopping malls, hangouts for Anchorage youth generally. Other mentions of transit depots, hotels, and additional indoor settings reflected the weather conditions in Anchorage, where street life in winter would possibly mean death. The police reported that they permitted no one to remain on the Anchorage streets during winter nights.

In Wilmington, there was very little agreement on street hangouts. One street was mentioned by five of the fourteen respondents, but other locations were scattered about. This echoes what we heard during site visits: some agency officials were able to suggest where we *might* find street kids, but not with much certainty.

In Baltimore, respondents were nearly in accord on one downtown street, quite close to the central police headquarters, and even more so on one particular park. Baltimore for decades has been known for the cohesiveness of its various ethnic communities where “people take care of their own.” We were struck during site visits by the degree to which these two well-known street kid hangouts seemed to be unattended by the agencies we contacted. Personnel in one youth shelter within a few blocks of the park hangout admitted they had not visited the park in two years—their shelter beds were filled under contract with a public welfare agency.

This particular instance in Baltimore is mentioned because it seems to symbolize the disjuncture between two sets of agency responses. On the one hand, there is evidence for the majority of sites that street kid hangouts are known. We have heard no suggestion from any agency official that street kids are not seriously in need of help (although justice officials in normalization sites feel their hands are tied). On the other hand, the number of specialized agency services for chronic runners is low, and knowledge of alternative informal services is even lower among our agency respondents. This suggests that, to the extent one can fault agencies for their low attention to street kids, it is less because of their ignorance of the situation than because of their operational styles. The Portland response, it seems to us, highlights this disjuncture in some other cities, for in Portland there is a widespread agency response of shelters, soup kitchens, and churches based more on a subsistence-provision operating style rather than the counseling style most prominent elsewhere.

We hasten to add, however, that the Portland situation is no picnic, to judge from the reports of Little’s interviewees. Many of these youth recognize the Portland services and still reject them. Thus, we turn now to two final questions raised in our interviews with the youth clients in Boise, Manchester, and Portland.

## Youth Reports of Hangouts

For youth clients who admitted in their interviews to one or more runaway episodes, we asked whether they had ever lived in the street (“Were you ever a ‘street kid,’ pretty much on your own over a period of time?”). A series of questions on their runaway episodes also asked, “In what kinds of places did you stay?”

With one exception, responses in all three cities showed the same pattern. The most common location was friends’ homes. Out of thirty-eight locations mentioned (youth could mention more than one) in Boise, nineteen, or 50 percent, were friends’ homes. The identical percentage came from the seventy mentions in Manchester, while 42 percent of the ninety-seven mentions in Portland were of friends’ homes. The only pattern break was in the fourteen mentions of shelters in Portland; none were mentioned in Boise or Manchester.

The fact that almost half the locations referred to by the agency clients were the homes of their friends provides one answer to agency respondents’ unfamiliarity with “hangouts”; a friend’s house is unobtrusive, unlikely to come to light unless specifically reported to agency personnel (and thence to our agency respondents).

Several more points can be derived from these youth responses. With the exception of the shelter usage by Portland’s admitted street kids, there was little difference in the hangouts specified by those who had and those who had not ever been street kids. Both Boise and Manchester clients were more likely to use friends’ homes if they had not been street kids, while Portland street youth made more mention of friends’ homes. This has little comparative meaning, however, because unlike the Boise and Manchester clients, the Portland clients more often said they had been on the street (32, 39, and 71 percent of the mentions, respectively, come from youth admitting some on-the-street episodes).

Finally, to add to Little’s description of the unhappy situation of these youngsters, we can specify some of the locations mentioned: a bench, the river, under a bridge, a sand pit, cemetery, shed, campground, horse pasture, canal, under a tree, under bushes, behind buildings, the woods, the waterfront, a “fort,” in cars and trucks, a movie house, and with strangers. The Huck Finn image does not emerge here, and one can understand the preference for a friend’s home, especially in cities without runaway shelters for youth.

## Youth Reports of Informal Services

Another question posed to our youth agency clients dealt with informal services. The phrasing was:

These last questions have been about sorts of formal service places. Over the past year or two, have there also been other people who have responded to you, helped you, or tried to keep you out of trouble? Don't include your parents or stepparents. If yes: Who were they and what did they do for you? [Interviewer: probe for helper's role and kind of help given].

Once again, the pattern of responses from the three cities was much the same. Most commonly mentioned were the interviewee's friends, accounting for 37 percent of all helpers mentioned (more than one response was received in many cases). Relatives constituted another 23 percent. That is, informal sources of support were close at hand, accounting for 60 percent of the instances reported. Another, smaller batch of responses referred to teachers, and yet another to boyfriends or girlfriends. An inappropriate category, formal resources such as counselors and therapists, accounted for 11 percent of the mentions. Friends of parents and parents of friends made up an additional 9 percent. This brings us close to 95 percent of all responses, leaving surprisingly few references to such community members as ministers and priests, coaches, neighbors, fellow church members, local business people, and so on.

Clearly, the capacity for informal help from the community has hardly been tapped, to judge from these youth. Perhaps a nonclient group might have offered a different picture, but since many of these respondents were short-term clients in any case, we find this unlikely.

One, and only one, break in the above pattern emerged, and it appeared in response to the probe for the kind of help given. As might be anticipated from our data descriptions, the Portland youth clients, more often than those from Boise and Manchester, listed forms of service received: food, places to stay, and money. With a larger proportion of admitted runaways in the Portland sample, this response certainly makes sense and once again confirms the differences in the character of clients and resources to be found in a normalization site.

## Summary

In this brief chapter, we have reported the responses of agency representatives and youth clients to five questions about the situation of runaways.

These descriptions echo themes to be found in Margaret Little's interviews with street kids in the three sites. They make clear that there are some major disjunctures between the service needs of this problem-ridden clientele and what services are available and known. One gets a picture of ill-prepared clients who must, all too often, try to shape their world on their own. The provision of therapeutic instead of subsistence aid for such youngsters could easily be the subject of serious reconsideration by agencies that do or could respond to the pragmatic needs of runaways.

We are struck by the failure of these data to reveal many intersite differences. While Portland seems to provide a more subsistence-oriented service system, the overwhelming picture is one of similarities, both in youth and agency responses. Little's report also unearthed few intersite differences. It may be that the very nature of the problems presented by runaways and street kids simply overwhelms or masks any differential approaches that could reflect the legislative philosophies represented by the states studied here. In other words, deterrence, treatment, and normalization rationales may be too insubstantial to be reflected in runaway contexts.

But given the general tenor of our other DSO findings, we are inclined to take an alternative view. The three rationales are not well articulated in practice when judged in terms of the site patterns, but they are when judged by the variation among categories of agencies. The comparison of Portland to its counterparts reflects this because Portland, faced with a surfeit of runaways and street kids, has effectively altered its balance of youth-serving agencies toward those with a normalization rationale.

Thus, the potential does exist for a more differentiated municipal response to types of youth problems. The issue then becomes one of finding the incentives and the facilitators to encourage such differentiation. The status of the chronic runaway and the street kid clearly calls for a response well beyond what we have described.

## Epilogue

There is an odd and ironic bit of political history underlying the project reported in this book. It is the second national assessment of the treatment of status offenders elicited and funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), a branch of the U.S. Department of Justice. It is the second case of a massive effort designed to have major social and political impact that, upon yielding results incompatible with federal intentions, was all but ignored by those who promoted it.

The first project, which was summarized in chapter 1, was designed to demonstrate effective ways of removing and excluding status offenders from secure confinement by providing alternative community treatment for them. Analyses of project data on many thousands of youth failed to demonstrate the advantages of community treatment and in fact seemed to point to its deleterious effects on many of the youth involved. The result was that the findings were given little publicity by OJJDP, which also declined to publish the final report. Thus, we turned to commercial publication (Kobrin and Klein, 1983) but no broad dissemination to relevant policymaking bodies. Technically, the unwanted findings were not buried, but they also were not promoted by the liberal establishment that funded them.

Almost a decade later, a far more conservative establishment resurrected the issue. OJJDP solicited a new national assessment with a new request for proposals that included a caveat to the effect that applicants wishing to undertake the project keep in mind that OJJDP had a position on the issues at hand. This position was well known: deinstitutionalizing status offenders

had been a disaster, loosing thousands of young victims and predators on their communities without adequate controls.

Under the circumstances of this clearly biased offer, the current authors declined to be involved. In fact, only one proposal was submitted, and it was not found acceptable. Consequently, a renewed request for proposals was issued. This time the political caveat was deleted, and we did respond with a proposal carefully designed to cover the issues but not fall into the political trap that could still be reasonably anticipated. Our proposal was accepted, and we went to work.

But, in the now infamous phrase attributed to Yogi Berra, it was “*deja vu* all over again.” The findings reported in this book were again found incompatible with OJJDP desires. That office again declined to publish the report, commenting in part that “the reports did not make a significant contribution to current knowledge” and that “the study did not appear to focus on the most important issues concerning status offenders, e.g., are their service needs being met?”

As to the report’s contribution, we leave it up to the reader to make that judgment, though the report covers *precisely* what the accepted and funded proposal said it would. As for not assessing whether service needs were met, the accepted proposal clearly stated that this was not what was intended. This statement was clearly understood by OJJDP staff and supported by them in person and in their acceptance of the proposal and the many subsequent progress reports.

A final irony: OJJDP’s decision not to publish, and also not to report the results to Congress as we had often been told we must do, was—we were informed—based upon “an internal as well as external peer review.” We made repeated attempts to obtain these reviews (they are customarily made available without the reviewers’ names) but never could do so. They were “lost,” “temporarily misplaced,” and finally “buried down in the archives somewhere.”

The preceding chapters offer the project results that government officials declined to publish. Oddly, they were not all that controversial or difficult to anticipate. Their policy implications are important but hardly damaging to serious political agendas. In the long run, the lesson of both DSO projects comes home again that social science research, like any other scientific process, must receive the light of public and professional review. Political and bureaucratic protections must not outweigh the opportunity for broad, reasoned judgment of research results. That our editors at Oxford University Press have undertaken publication of our work is a source of satisfaction for us.

# APPENDIX A

## SCORE SHEET FOR STATE PROFILE

State # \_\_\_\_\_

Coder \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Statutory Classification of Status Conduct**

1) Place a check (✓) in each appropriate cell for each offense category:

No Dep/  
Mtn. Neg St. Del.

Runaway	a	b	c	d
Undesirable	e	f	g	h
Truant	i	j	k	l
Curfew	m	n	o	p
Alcohol	q	r	s	t
Court Order Violation	u	v	w	x

2) Circle three scores for each check (✓) at left in #1:

a	9	0	0
b	6	3	0
c	3	9	3
d	0	3	9
e	9	0	0
f	6	3	0
g	3	9	3
h	0	3	9
i	6	0	0
j	4	2	0
k	2	6	2
l	0	2	6
m	3	0	0
n	2	1	0
o	1	3	1
p	0	1	3
q	3	0	0
r	2	1	0
s	1	3	1
t	0	1	3
u	6	0	0
v	4	2	2
w	2	6	2
x	0	2	6

3) Add up circled scores:

$\Sigma =$      $\Sigma =$      $\Sigma =$

4) Divide each  $\Sigma$  by 3.5:

N<sub>i</sub> =   
 T<sub>i</sub> =   
 D<sub>i</sub> =

**B. Confinement: Score only for In-state Runaway, Undesirable, or Truant**

1) PRE-ADI: (4 pts. max)

NORMALIZATION	
If no confinement, secure or non-secure .....	4
If non-secure confinement only .....	2
Otherwise .....	0

TREATMENT	
Treatment serv. specified within custody context (e.g., ment. hith. fac./diag., crisis intervention home) .....	4
If not above, shelter or foster care .....	2
Otherwise .....	0

DETERRENCE	
If secure, past 48 hours .....	4
If not above, secure up to 48 hours .....	2
No secure detention .....	0

2) POST-ADI: (6 pts. max)

If no secure placement .....	6
Otherwise .....	0
However, if only info is prohibition of custody in state institution, delinquent facility or dept. of corrections .....	3

Long term (30 days) ment. hith. fac. or emphasis of treatment within placement .....	6
If not above, treatment mentioned within placement .....	4
Mental health fac.: diag. only .....	2
Shelter or foster care .....	2
Otherwise .....	0

If secure placement .....	6
If not generally, but secure for court ord. violators .....	4
Otherwise .....	0
However, if only info is prohibition of custody in state institution, delinquent facility, or department of corrections .....	3

3) Add up circled scores: ..... N<sub>1</sub> =

T<sub>1</sub> =

D<sub>1</sub> =

**C. Provision of Services: Score provision of services, pre- or post-adjudication. Code mentions within custodial context in B. "Emphasis" can be derived from purpose/intent statements, quantity of service mentions, or number of times mentioned.**

NORMALIZATION	
Emancipation .....	4
Youth opportunity enhancement, e.g., vocational/ educational/recreational services .....	2
Family environment, improvement, e.g., parent training, day care, housing assistance .....	2
For any service contingent upon voluntary participation of youth .....	2
If 10 pt. max. not scored above, add (up to 10 max.):	
Adoption .....	2
State funds for normalization services .....	2
Other norm. serv. not mentioned above (specify) .....	2
Emphasis on norm. services .....	2

TREATMENT	
Crisis intervention .....	2
Counseling or other non-custodial referral to mental health program or agency .....	4
Option for reclass. of any delinquent to status category .....	4
If 10 pt. max. not scored above, add (up to 10 max.):	
State funds for treatment services .....	2
Other treatment serv. not mentioned above (specify) .....	2
Emphasis on treatment services .....	2

DETERRENCE	
Community service or work project .....	4
Fines or restitution .....	4
Probation .....	2
If 10 pt. max. not scored above, add (up to 10 max):	
Other mention of deterrence service (specify) .....	2
Emphasis on deterrence services .....	2

1) Add up circled scores

N<sub>2</sub> =

T<sub>2</sub> =

D<sub>2</sub> =



**D. Final Summary and Profile**

	<b>NORMALIZATION</b>	<b>TREATMENT</b>	<b>DETERRENCE</b>
<b>Statutory:</b>	$N_s =$	$T_s =$	$D_s =$
<b>Confinement:</b>	$N_c =$	$T_c =$	$D_c =$
<b>Provision-Services:</b>	$N_p =$	$T_p =$	$D_p =$
<b>Sum to Profile</b>	$N_t =$	$T_t =$	$D_t =$

# APPENDIX B

## YOUTH SERVICES SURVEY

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

1. How many clients were provided services at this location in 1987? \_\_\_\_\_     10-14
- A. In 1987 how many of these clients were:
- 12 to 17 years old? \_\_\_\_\_     15-19
- 11 years old or younger? \_\_\_\_\_     20-24

FOR THE REMAINING QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONSIDER ONLY CLIENTS PROVIDED SERVICES AT THIS LOCATION IN 1987 WHO WERE UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE.

2. In 1987 how many of the clients under 18 who were provided services at this location were residents of the city of Baltimore? \_\_\_\_\_     25-29
3. In 1987 what 3 services were provided most frequently at this location to clients under 18 years of age? Place a "1" in the box next to the service provided most frequently, a "2" in the box next to the second most frequently provided service, and a "3" in the box next to the third most frequently provided service.

- |                                                                                  |                                                   |                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 Hot Line                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> 37 Parenting training    | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 Referral                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31 Emergency shelter care                               | <input type="checkbox"/> 38 Diagnostic screening  | <input type="checkbox"/> 46 General supervision                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 32 Recreation                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 39 Medical services      | <input type="checkbox"/> 47 Character-building activities                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 33 Crisis intervention                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 Out-of-home placement | <input type="checkbox"/> 48 Employment counseling, referral, or training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 34 Child care                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 41 Education/tutoring    | <input type="checkbox"/> 49 Other (specify: _____)                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 Residential care (other than emergency shelter care) | <input type="checkbox"/> 42 Legal Aid             | _____                                                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 36 Counseling/therapy                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 43 Case management       | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 _____                                        |
|                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> 44 Advocacy              |                                                                          |


4. In 1987 what were the 3 largest sources of referral for clients under 18 to this location? Place a "1" in the box next to the source accounting for the largest number of clients under 18, a "2" in the box next to the source accounting for the second largest number, and a "3" in the box next to the source accounting for the third largest number.

- |                                                                                         |                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 51 Private service agencies, including religious organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 Private mental health agencies     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 52 Public social service/public welfare departments            | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 Public mental health agencies      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 53 Police/sheriff's department                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> 57 Self-referrals or family referrals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 54 Schools and/or educational institutions                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 58 Court/probation                    |
|                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 59 Other (specify: _____)             |
|                                                                                         | _____                                                          |
|                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 _____                              |


WE ARE INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHAT TYPES OF PROBLEMS (IF ANY) WERE EXPERIENCED BY YOUR CLIENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE WHO WERE PROVIDED SERVICES AT THIS LOCATION IN 1987. THESE WOULD INCLUDE NOT ONLY DIFFICULTIES THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OR RESOLUTION, BUT ALSO ONGOING, UNDERLYING PROBLEMS AND THOSE THAT ARE SECONDARY TO THE MORE IMMEDIATE DIFFICULTIES. WE RECOGNIZE THAT SOME YOUTHS MIGHT EXPERIENCE MORE THAN ONE PROBLEM AND THEY CAN BE INCLUDED IN MORE THAN ONE CATEGORY.

5. For each item below, please circle the number that best estimates the percentage of youth clients in 1987 experiencing each of these problems:

A. Sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect:

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%  61-63

B. The specific behavior problems of running away, being beyond parental control, habitual truancy, violation of curfew, minor in possession of liquor, sexual promiscuity:

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%  64-66


B1. In 1987 were most youths experiencing these specific behavior problems: (Please check only one.)

- 67 ineligible for services at this location?
- 68 separately identifiable by such means as assessment or intake procedures, but not otherwise handled differently? (Please describe those procedures: \_\_\_\_\_)
- 69 separately identifiable and provided specific services? (Please specify the procedures for identifying these clients: \_\_\_\_\_)
- 70 non-identifiable (no mechanisms exist for distinguishing such youth)?
- 71 other? (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)


B2. Have there been changes at this location in the last 10-15 years in the number or proportion of youth clients who experience these specific behavior problems?

- 72 No
- 73 Yes (Please describe those changes: \_\_\_\_\_)


C. Substance (alcohol or drug) abuse:

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%  74-76


D. Other delinquent behavior:

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%  77-79

E. Other problems: (specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%  80-83

F. What percentage of the youth clients at this location in 1987 would you estimate did not experience any of these types of problems?

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%  84-86

6. In 1987 was residential or in-patient care provided at this location?



87 No (Go to Question 7.)

88 Yes: A. Which of the following best describes the residential facility at this location? (Please check only one.)

- |                                                            |                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 89 Residential treatment center   | <input type="checkbox"/> 95 Hospital in-patient unit<br>(other than mental health) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 90 Halfway house or group home    | <input type="checkbox"/> 96 Training school, ranch, forestry camp, or farm         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 91 Shelter                        | <input type="checkbox"/> 97 Other (specify: _____)                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 92 Mental health facility or unit | <input type="checkbox"/> 98 _____                                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93 Reception or diagnostic center |                                                                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 94 Detention center               |                                                                                    |

B. How many of the residents or patients admitted to the residential program at this location in 1987 were:

12 to 17 years old? \_\_\_\_\_ 11 years old or younger? \_\_\_\_\_

 99-102  
 103-106

C. In 1987 did this residential program rely on construction fixtures such as locked rooms, buildings, and fences to physically restrict free access of most residents into the community?

107 No  108 Yes

7. In completing this survey have you responded for more than one service program or service-providing unit at this location?

109 No, there is only one service program or service-providing unit at this location.

110 Yes, these responses are for more than one service program or service-providing unit. (Please list the names of those programs and/or units: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_)

8. Is the location for which you have responded a unit of a larger parent agency or organization?


111 No  112 Yes

9. If there are other service-providing locations in Baltimore and its vicinity that are affiliated with the agency or organization at this location or its parent agency or organization, please list the names of these other service-providing locations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. In 1987 was the agency or organization at this location ... (Please check only one.)

- 113 public,
- 114 private, non-profit, or
- 115 private, for-profit?

11. In what year were services first provided by your agency or organization at this location? \_\_\_\_\_  116-119

12. We are interested in gathering information about informal services for homeless or chronic runaway youth that exist in your community. In particular, we would like to know about assistance or services, being provided by individuals or groups, that are not part of established organizational practices. If you are aware of any such assistance to youth living "on the street," please provide this information in the space below.

---



---



---



---

13. Would you like to receive a copy of our summary report of the results of this survey?

- 120 No
- 121 Yes

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN RESPONDING TO THIS SURVEY.**

Because we consider the information you have provided here to be very important, it may be necessary to request additional information to help us correctly categorize your answers. We ask that you please give us your name and business telephone number. **THIS INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL.** We assure you that you will be contacted only for the purpose of helping us to collect accurate information.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

JOB TITLE/POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_



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