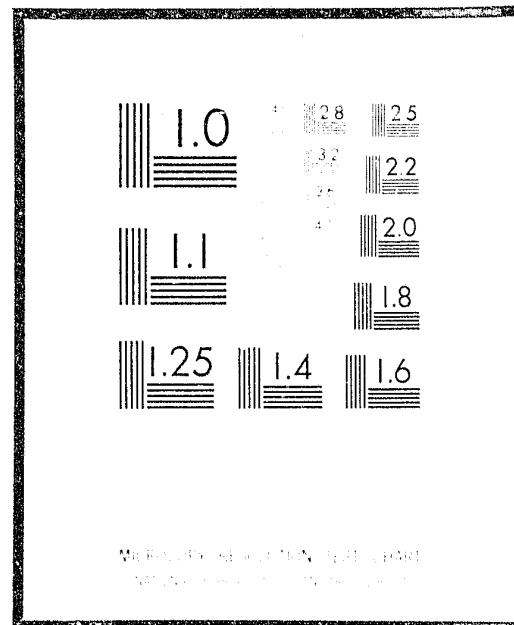


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## Volunteer Probation Officer Program

### OFFICIAL HANDBOOK

compiled by

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VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICER PROGRAM

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WELCOME

As a Volunteer Probation Officer you are about to become an important part of the criminal justice system.

This booklet has been prepared to help you meet the challenges and enjoy the reward of your new role. It answers some fundamental questions to help you understand the significance of your new position.

We hope this experience will not only help a fellow man, but also give you an inner satisfaction.

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## STATE OF MICHIGAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The Michigan Judicial System is composed of five Courts. One of these is the Michigan Supreme Court which is the highest Appellate Court in Michigan. Aside from the Appellate nature, its function is aimed at improving the administration of justice in the state.

The second Court, established in 1963, is the Appellate Court. This Court hears most appealed cases and civil cases which were formerly brought directly to the Supreme Court for review.

The Court of General Jurisdiction, given this name because of its broad powers, is the Circuit Court. It has original jurisdiction, except in matters assigned to the Probate Court, in all civil cases involving more than \$10,000.00, in all equity cases, and in all criminal cases where the offense involved constitutes a felony or Circuit Court misdemeanor.

District Court is the Court with which most people have contact. It replaces the former Municipal Court and Justice of the Peace Court. This Court has exclusive jurisdiction of all civil litigation involving equity up to \$10,000.00. This Court also has jurisdiction in all misdemeanor cases as well as the arraignment, setting an acceptance of bail, and conducting preliminary examinations in felony cases. The District Court also handles garnishments as well as eviction proceedings, land proceedings, and other cases formerly handled by Circuit Court Commissioners.

The fifth Court is the Probate Court, whose original function was to provide supervision in matters pertaining to wills and estates. Its jurisdiction has been expanded to hear cases pertaining to condemnation of land, guardianship, and the commitment of mentally handicapped and addicted persons to mental hospitals. It has also been given exclusive jurisdiction in all juvenile proceedings and adoptions. The Probate Court then, has two divisions, the Probate Court and the Juvenile Court. The Probate Judges are elected in the November general election for terms of six years. The Judges are elected in each of the various counties and the number of Judges each county elects is dependent upon its population; counties with less than 100,000 inhabitants have one Judge; counties with 100,000 or more inhabitants may elect 2 Judges; counties with more than 250,000 may elect 3 Judges; and counties with 1,000,000 or more inhabitants may have up to 6 Judges. The Governor has the power to appoint Judges if the vacancy does occur.

Bay County presently has 1 elected Judge who is now presiding at Probate Court. The Judge of Probate may designate any Juvenile Court Officer to act as a Referee in taking the

testimony of witnesses and hearing the statements of parties in Juvenile matters. The Judges, aided by the Referees, handle all cases which come under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Division; that is, all matters pertaining to children under 17 years who are delinquent, neglected, abandoned, or without proper custody. When a child falls under the jurisdiction of the Court, there are a variety of dispositions that the Court may use under the provisions of Michigan law. These may be summarized as follows:

- A. Warn the child or the parent, guardian, or custodian, and dismiss the petition.
- B. Place the child on probation, or under supervision in his own home, under terms and conditions that the Court shall determine.
- C. Place the child in a suitable boarding home which, if a home of persons not related to said child, shall be licensed by law and therefore called a foster home.
- D. Place the child in, or commit the child to a public or private institution or agency incorporated under the laws of the state.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND JURISDICTION OF JUVENILE COURT

"The responsibility of Juvenile Court is construed to the end, that each child coming within the jurisdiction of the Court shall receive such care, guidance and control, preferably in his own home, as will be conducive to the child's welfare and the best interest of the State, and that when such child is removed from the control of his parents, the Court shall secure for him care as nearly as possible equivalent to the care which should have been given to him by them."

This statement is taken from the Probate Code of Michigan, which as statutory law, governs and regulates the operation of all Juvenile Courts in Michigan. If we examine this statement, we see that the basic responsibility of the Juvenile Court is to reorient parental concern and to treat, rehabilitate, and provide adequate care for all children coming under its jurisdiction. This is to be done whenever possible in the child's own home, and when not possible, in a placement which as nearly as possible approximates the care which he should have received in his own home. Thus, according to Statute, Juvenile Court cannot be punish-oriented, but must provide programs for wards which have as their guide, rehabilitation of parents, children, the welfare of the child, and the interest of the State. This concept makes Juvenile Courts somewhat unique among all systems of justice in the United States.

Thus, the whole concept of punishment is eliminated from the tone and endeavors of this Court. We are committed to positive change so that the child, family, and community can co-exist in mutually acceptable harmony. This is our goal and continuing challenge.

We are dedicated to preserve the rights of all people brought to the attention of the Court. Whenever requested by an indigent client or felt necessary by the Court, an attorney or guardian is secured for the client. Every possible measure is taken to observe the constitutional and human rights of all persons involved in Court proceedings.

## INTRODUCTION

When the late President Kennedy, in January of 1961, spoke his first official words for his constituency, he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." The recent great movement in volunteerism has been both a response and a tribute to President Kennedy. It has demonstrated that American citizens do care about social problems and will become involved in their solution.

It should be said, however, that when President Kennedy charged the people of America with this challenge, he was calling upon the giving of self while entrenched in American society. Americans have always been a volunteering people. Yet there are differences in volunteerism today when contrasted with the movement of yesterday. Today, we are faced with problems of greater magnitude than at any time in our history; such that the present administration is looking to volunteers to provide solutions to problems that have defied solutions by the established problem-solving machinery. Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, George Romney, has set as a goal, that of enlisting every citizen in a volunteer activity of some type.

As a volunteer member of an ever-growing force of people engaged in correctional work, you are embarked on a course which will lead you to experience alternate feelings of frustration, satisfaction, dismay, anger, and humor. There may be times when you will ask yourself, "Why did I ever let myself in for this kind of experience?" On other occasions, you may experience satisfaction common to many of us who have worked in corrections professionally; the satisfaction of helping a person find meaning in his life and in his world, and the satisfaction of knowing you have helped an individual re-direct his life towards socially accepted goals.

Coming in contact, as you will, with people alienated from and, in many instances, victimized by our society is an experience that will sober you and make you count your blessings. It will give you a new perspective about life as it is lived in the various segments of our society. It will provide you with an opportunity to confront first-hand two of America's most stubborn problems--crime and delinquency. It will give you cause to question whether our approaches to the problems are workable.

If crime and delinquency have thrived under old programs, you may take pride in the fact that you are a part in the new era of corrections. This new era holds the promise that correctional practices can be reshaped as a result of what has been a knowledge explosion in the social sciences. You are entering volunteer service at a time when community programs are being pursued with



much vigor. Attempts are being made to utilize the community where the offender lives as an environment where the offender can be controlled and changed. President Kennedy once said, "One man can make a difference, but every man should try." It is in this spirit that this manual has been presented for your usage. We believe that your presence in the correctional picture will make a difference to someone, but in any event, your efforts will provide their own rewards.

Needless to say, this is a time when there is an exciting movement taking place within some 2,000 progressive Courts and probation departments throughout the Nation. It is a movement based on the realization that outmoded Court rehabilitation programs, no matter how good, cannot possibly meet the many needs of probationers referred to them for help, nor the communities in which they serve. It is the type of movement based on total community involvement that is necessary to bring about a real understanding of the so-called criminal offender, and to help prevent him from becoming in conflict with the law again. Most important, is the sincere effort made by local citizens to help change human conduct through human contact. This community concern and involvement is found in many areas of our nation and the programs formed go by a variety of names. Our county has recognized a great potential of volunteers and has founded the Volunteer Probation Officer Program of which you are the key to its success.

## THE PROBLEM

Whenever you read J. Edgar Hoover's Uniform Crime Report, read of crime in newspapers, view it on television, or become a victim, you are undoubtedly sensitive to the fact that the country today is more crime conscious than at any time in our past. Is crime on the increase, as Mr. Hoover reported, or are we simply more proficient in detecting crime and apprehending criminals? The answer seems to be "yes, in both instances". The instance of crime in relation to population growth has increased but so has our police technology. The question of whether we are simply drawing more water from the well of crime than we formerly did is circular and somewhat defeating. What should be of more concern is what we are doing with those people whom we draw from the well and inject into the criminal system.

From all indications, what we have been doing with and for offenders has been spectacularly unsuccessful. You may be interested in knowing that the correctional system of which you are now a member is, by and large, a study of failures. Briefly, we have, in the United States, spent 80% of our correctional dollar and 85% of our correctional work force in lock-up facilities and institutions which too often are associated with failure on the part of the people they are designed to help. We have only recently begun to establish new priorities and to seek new solutions. You are a part of these new, exciting solutions.

The problem is one as old as man himself - the problem of fitting into a dynamic society. When man cannot change to fit into society, he often withdraws from that society or if this does not work, he strikes out at society. The responsibility of any correctional operation is that of creating changes in society to permit participation on the part of its members as well as change in the offender's view of himself in relation to society.

## PAST ATTEMPTS AT CORRECTION

Society has not always faced a problem of correction. Maiming, banishment, execution, slavery, and penal servitude have all been practiced by man in his attempt to deal with people who deviate. Slowly but surely, however, man has drifted away from the concept of punishment toward what is referred to today as "re-integration". This shift in thinking has been, for the most part, evolutionary. As with all movements, there has been the reformers and the revolutionaries who, from time to time, have pricked the conscience of the people responsible for changes. But rapid change, where present, has been featured by conflict.

If one were to pick a predominant feature in corrections in the United States, it would have to be our inclination to incarcerate offenders rather than work with them in the community. Our jails and prisons are tributes to America's drive to do things in a big way - even building correctional institutions!

If Americans have a tendency to do things in a big way, they also have a tendency to find the means to succeed. The ability to put technology to work to solve problems has not, however, been the case in correction. The inability to find the means to control crime and rehabilitate criminals while we were solving other problems has frustrated America and, it would seem, has provided much of the impetus to incarcerate and insult the offender. If this approach is being questioned now as it seems to be, it is probably the result not of soul-searching as much as the inability of institutions to handle the vast number of people committed by the judicial system.

A 1967 report by the President's Commission of Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice entitled THE CHALLENGE OF CRIME IN A FREE SOCIETY and the supporting TASK FORCE REPORTS became landmarks in an inventory of correctional programs. The reports left little doubt that crime control and treatment in the United States has been a disjointed, disorganized effort that must give way to new thoughts and new programs.

Perhaps the real challenge of crime in a free society is whether that society can in the midst of civil unrest and turmoil, do the necessary things to bring about a viable system of criminal justice. We seem to be at the cross roads now. On the one hand, we are being pulled by forces which would bring to bear more of punishment and incarceration while, on the other hand, we're being pulled by the forces which want to expose the problems to search and research the new courses of actions.

The institution of correction, as with many of our present institutions, is being asked to perform functions for which it was not originally designed. When new tasks are asked of any organization, change must also occur in the technology utilized by that organization which places new demands on the people as well as the structure which they operate.

Correctional institutions in the past have had a task of holding and punishing the people who have been deemed offenders of the law. It was thought that punishment would by its adverse nature change offensive behavior. Thus a jail or prison, through incarceration, detained the offender, which in itself served as punishment. This required, in the way of technology, knowledge of prison management, security, and control. In terms of people, it required people who appreciate this philosophy and were conscientious about security and enforcement measures. In terms of structure it required a strong physical facility. The failure of this model to correct behavior is now well known, yet this model is still being asked to perform the correctional tasks in relation to many offenders today.

Today, the institution of correction is being asked to change the behavior of offenders and return them to society as non-offenders. In too many instances this task is being attempted in over crowded and non-functional structures and organizations. This new technology required is superimposed on personnel that lacks appreciation and understanding of this goal. Thus we have the situation where change when it occurs, becomes difficult and, at times, violent.

The new task, that of re-integrating offenders into society, requires decent, honest people such as yourself, who can meaningfully enter the offender's life in such a way as to change behavior. Needless to say, that is what the Bay County Volunteer Probation Officer Program hopes to accomplish.

## PURPOSE

With the increasing number of delinquent children being processed through the Juvenile Court, the burden of effective rehabilitation is growing at an unprecedented pace. The caseload of probation officers or counselors have, in many instances, reached such magnitude that it is unrealistic to assume that they can any longer provide as much real help and treatment for probationers as they would like. This Court believes that through the use of the Volunteer Probation Officers, effective rehabilitation in the probationer's home community can be facilitated. Therefore, the Volunteer Program accomplishes two basic tasks. The first is a more intensive supervision of probationers, and the second being the reduction of heavy case loads of the regular paid staff members.

Some advantages that the Volunteer Probation Officer can provide to the Court are as follows:

1. The Volunteer Probation Officer Program increases the amount of total Court contact with the probationers.
2. The probationer has frequent contact with some influential person who can fill various roles and act in a meaningful way to aid the child.
3. The Volunteer Probation Officer can be a positive figure, guiding the probationer as to what he can and cannot do, and/or be a friend, being with the probationer and giving friendly advice or counsel, and just doing things together and listening to problems the child may have.
4. There is an economic advantage in that the Court does not have sufficient funds to hire adequate numbers of paid-professional staff.
5. The Program helps take some of the probation load off the regular staff, allowing them to be more effective with their more serious cases.
6. The Program facilitates community involvement in dealing with the delinquents in a community and educates the community to local problems. The least it can do is to bring public support for the Juvenile Court and its endeavors.
7. Volunteer contact with probationers is often less threatening to probationers than contact with paid

court staff. Since the Volunteer Probation Officer is a volunteer, unpaid and perceived as wanting to help for its own sake, the probationers are less threatened by the volunteer and perhaps more willing to listen and respond to their advice.

8. Volunteers give the Court an additional source of information and a different viewpoint with regard to the juvenile.
9. In the case of young volunteers or college students, there is a smaller age differential between the probationer and his Court contact which, it is felt, often results in a more relaxed atmosphere and better communication. With the older, more mature volunteer, we may gain the "father figure" image, as is the case with most community volunteers, who will have a steady, positive impact on the life and behavior of the probationer.

## THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### ON PROBATIONERS

Probationer involvement with the volunteer does not radically change the personality of probationers. But a successful experience by a probationer with a volunteer does tend to make probationers less impatient, heedless, anxious and more deliberate, prudent and secure.

Three independent researchers confirm that probationers assigned a volunteer tend to become less hostile and anti-social during probation, while other groups of probationers not assigned volunteers get more hostile while they are on probation. Probationers with volunteers are less likely to have their probation revoked than probationers who do not have volunteers. Finally, statistically it has been proven that probationers with volunteers will have lower arrest rates than those probationers not assigned volunteers.

### ON THE COMMUNITY

Through the use of community volunteers the citizenry becomes more significantly involved in corrections. Observation and analysis of nation-wide newspaper and editorial coverage indicates very strong and consistent community approval of court volunteer programs. We know of no strong exception to this rule.

Volunteer Court Judges across the nation consistently report broadly increased community support for worthwhile youth programs sponsored by the Court, for increases in paid staff salaries, and other budgetary support, etc. A Boulder, Colorado study indicated that other social control and social service agencies in the community overwhelmingly approve of the Juvenile Court's use of volunteers, rather than the "professional jealousy" which might have been experienced.

### ON COURT, PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Volunteers are often assigned the less difficult cases, thereby, giving individualized attention to children who have a greater need of guidance by the professional Court workers.

The staff tends to be more deliberately into the role of authority figures. Also, the staff moves into the role of managers instead of counselors.

Generally, there is considerable alteration and even disruption in paid professional roles with the advent of the volunteer. Far more attention needs to be paid to this specific problem.

## ON VOLUNTEERS

The volunteer becomes more sophisticated about the problems of delinquency and social control. The volunteer also becomes more sophisticated about the inner workings of the Juvenile Court System.

The volunteer sometimes may become quite unhappy and frustrated about various aspects of the Juvenile System, and there does not seem to be, presently, a mechanism for adequate communication and discussion of these volunteer criticisms and frustrations, but this is presently being worked on.



## VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICER PROGRAM

The VPO Program provides the probationer a one-to-one relationship with someone who is interested in his welfare. The VPO Program is open to both males and females. This person should be someone who will lend a listening ear, but also be a disciplinarian, if necessary. Yet someone who will take the time and interest in the probationer's recreational and school activities. In the successful match, these two roles become compatible once structured guidance is established. The volunteer plays a dual role; positive figure and friend.

The Volunteer Probation Officer Program is under the supervision of the Program Director. He is in charge of interviewing, screening, and later orientating any prospective volunteers to the Program.

The individual VPOs determine their own schedules for meeting with probationers. These meetings can be within the home, on outings, or elsewhere with the parents' permission. The average volunteer spends approximately 1 to 3 hours weekly with a child and the Program presently asks a commitment of at least 6 months with that particular child. This ensures that the volunteer won't initiate a relationship and then become disinterested in the child. We try to protect our children from failure experiences such as this by carefully screening our volunteers.

It is highly recommended that the volunteer has a car. This enables him to see the probationer whenever necessary. If a volunteer is unwilling to devote the time and patience necessary to build a meaningful relationship with a child, then the Program Director would prefer another less demanding volunteer program be tried by that volunteer.

VPOs are recruited from all walks of life, primarily because the children under the Court's jurisdiction are from various backgrounds. The volunteers in our Program range from students to retirees, and from housewives to blue collar workers - all good volunteers are needed.

As a general rule, Volunteer Probation Officers are expected to participate in in-service training sessions. These sessions meet once each month usually on the first Wednesday, at 7:30 p. m. at the offices of Catholic Family Service, 1008 S. Wenona, in Bay City. Occasionally, Court personnel are in attendance at these sessions to discuss some aspect of the Court in round table discussions. Also people from community agencies are invited to the in-service training sessions to discuss the problems of the

community, and to help enlighten the volunteer on some of the many problems that may arise. The purpose of these round table discussions is to better prepare the volunteer to work with minors, as well as make the training sessions a meaningful experience.

It is noted that the Volunteer Probation Officer Program for Bay County has employed a staff member who works exclusively with the family of the probationers. The parents of the children are required to attend parent group meetings, which consist of two hours on one evening each month. In addition, the parents are attending counseling sessions at this staff member's office at Bay County Child and Family Service.

The Volunteer Probation Officer Program is described in its entirety at the initial orientation meeting between the Program Director and the prospective volunteer when he or she applies to be a volunteer.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

The most important single qualification is to have a genuine interest in helping to provide guidance for individuals who find themselves in some form of difficulty. The basic virtues of honesty, integrity, fairness, objectivity, and understanding are of prime importance. An individual who is able to establish rapport and gain respect finds these skills very helpful.

The successful volunteer relates directly and personally to the individual who needs his help. He acts with the full sense that he too will be enlarged and made richer for the gift he gives. People from all walks of life who are interested in being a friend to a probationer are encouraged to become volunteers.

Each volunteer will be required to complete an application questionnaire listing qualifications, background, hobbies, and interests. Attendance at a training session is a pre-requisite to assignment. To increase volunteer experience, sessions will be conducted on a continuing basis covering listening and counseling techniques.

Every effort will be made to assign the volunteer to a probationer who indicates similar interests. Volunteers will be assigned probationers within their geographic area if possible.

## ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER

The volunteer is not an authoritarian figure. The Judge fulfills this role. To a lesser extent, the probation officer fills this role. If the probationer does not realize that he has done something wrong by the time he gets to the volunteer, it is doubtful that the volunteer can convince him.

The concern that the Judge feels for the probationer must be expressed vicariously. To the vast majority of them, the Court purposely remains aloof and punitive. To only a very few can the Court speak informally and with compassion. Thus, the volunteer can fulfill the role of a friend and companion to the probationer. It would be a fatal error for the Court to try and fulfill this role. It is also wrong for the volunteer to act like a judge. You do not have to be judgmental, you do not have to be authoritarian, you do not have to be concerned with punishment. You are relieved of this duty. You must be a friend. Let the Court represent authority. You represent acceptance, understanding, affection, and concern.

This is difficult to do. We know it. It is easy to say these words but to practice them day in and day out for many months is quite another matter. It is this difficult task to which you must adjust yourself.

One of the Juvenile Court Judges once said, "The lack of an inspirational personality in the life of a youthful offender is not a cause of delinquency, it is the cause." Like all generalizations, this is not completely accurate nor meant to be. But it expresses a tremendous amount of the truth. Dr. Ernest Shelley of the Department of Correction, put it this way, "Our biggest job is to convince the probationer that he is not a different breed of cat." You must show him that he is like others in that his need for recognition, accomplishment, pride, and love are basically the same as everyone else. He also stated that the greatest technique in rehabilitation is to introduce an inspirational personality in the life of the probationer.

Dr. Shelley cited an interesting example: A prisoner at Ionia was considered to be incurably disturbed. Every psychiatrist agreed. However, one night a guard started talking to the prisoner. The guard did not even have a high school education. He was not "smart" enough to know that the prisoner couldn't be helped. After several months, the guard had been so effective by just listening and giving advice--by being a friend--that the prisoner was rehabilitated and discharged from prison. His life since has been a useful one.

A staff psychiatrist said, "The majority of the probationers we work with are character disorders. They lack inward control. Often inward control can be established by inserting into their lives an inspirational personality. Because of the admiration that the probationer has for this person, the probationer does not want to let him down." After this has been established, the next step, transferring the desire not to let the volunteer down, to not wanting to let himself down (the probationer), is an easier accomplishment. Thus, we can go from lack of inward control to objective inward control (I don't want to get in trouble because it would hurt the person I respect) to the final goal of subjective inward control (I have my own standards to which I must be true). Again, it is easier to talk about these things than to do them, but they can be done with patience, intelligence, and understanding.

On many occasions you will be tested by the probationer. He will seek to see how far he can push you. How easy is it to get you mad? How quickly can he make you throw up your hands in disgust? How much patience do you have? Remember, the Judge will punish, you are rehabilitating. Do not be judgmental, be patient!!!

## RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VOLUNTEER

Each volunteer - youngster assignment is different. Each volunteer has special talents to contribute. Each youngster exhibits individual needs. Yet, from experience, we have a conception of what makes a good volunteer. Successful volunteers invariably meet certain levels of performance in two major areas-- relationship with the youngster and cooperation with the Program staff. Keep in mind that we are not talking about the amount of education or experience prior to entering the Program. Instead, we are looking for a very personal commitment, a willingness to learn, and the wish to be an active member of a truly effective organization.

Enough generalizations! We have prepared a list of responsibilities that we expect our volunteer probation officers to fulfill. They may seem almost endless, but with experience, they become almost second nature. Most important, the meeting of these responsibilities will make you a more effective volunteer.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 1. Statement to the child

- A. Take the lead and maintain an on-going relationship. Make sure that you see your assigned youngster at least once a week! If you run into trouble meeting this obligation, let us know, quickly!
- B. View yourself as a resource to that child. Therefore, be an effective listener, friend, and confidant. Be willing to invest your emotions and true self in the relationship.
- C. Your assigned youngster will be viewing you as a person whose behavior he might want to copy. Make sure you're worth copying!
- D. Do things with that child. Across the table lecturing doesn't make it! Find activities mutually enjoyable and share in them.
- E. View your assigned youngster as a person-- an important person. Support his socially acceptable behavior. Disapprove that behavior which ought to be changed.

- F. Be willing to intercede, when appropriate, for the youngster in important situations. Come to his/her court hearings. Help them overcome school difficulties. Help them find a job.

2. To the Volunteer Probation Officer Program Staff

- A. The child with whom you are working has a probation officer at the Court. He is in charge of long-term Court planning. You must cooperate closely with the Program staff, who in turn work with the probation officers to help them in implementing the long-range goals.
- B. Encourage the child to report any violations of probation to his Court probation officer.
- C. Be willing to work with the youngster selected by the staff. Your wishes are important, but the needs of these youngsters come first!
- D. Provide, without fail, a brief, written monthly report concerning your relationship with the child. These reports are due on the First of every month!!!
- E. Cooperate with our research goals. We will be calling on you to aid us in various tasks. You can help us make important contributions to the whole field of volunteer utilization.
- F. Come to scheduled in-service training meetings and group activities. Your participation is essential to maintain your status as a Volunteer Probation Officer. We can help you become better at your job!
- G. If you have a problem, don't sit on it. We have resources available to help solve them.
- H. Contact our staff prior to termination of any assignment for any reason.

## BASIC ASSUMPTIONS CONCERNING PROBATIONERS

1. Believe that human beings can change their behavior patterns.
2. Expect the best from probationers, but do not be unduly upset if you get the worst.
3. Accept the probationer as he is, while not allowing your behavior or social environment to affect your respect for the probationer as a human being.
4. Remember that people will change and grow by spurts. A graph of change will likely show an upward trend with some valleys of retrogression and some plateaus showing little improvement.



## BILL OF RIGHTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. The right to be treated as a co-worker - not just as free help, not as a prima donna.
2. The right to a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education and employment background.
3. The right to know as much about the organization as possible - its policies, its people and its program.
4. The right to training for the job - thoughtfully planned and effectively presented training.
5. The right to continuing education on the job as a follow-up to initial training, and information about new developments.
6. The right to sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient, and thoughtful, and who has the time to invest in giving guidance.
7. The right to promotion and variety of experience, through advancement to assignments of more responsibility, through transfer from one activity to another, through special assignments.
8. The right to be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, to have respect shown for an honest opinion.
9. The right to recognition in the form of promotion and awards, through day-to-day expressions of appreciation and being treated as a bona-fide co-worker.

## SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN WORKING WITH JUVENILES

We realize that working with juveniles cannot be reduced to "cook-book form". Much will always be left to your own good judgment. Each case is unique and cannot be handled exclusively in terms of general rules.

As a general rule, we feel that respect is the keystone in working with the juvenile offender. Your ultimate goal, counseling, is not possible until he respects and trusts you as a person. You will never have his respect until he realizes that he cannot "con" you and that you will not "con" him. He has very probably learned that he can "con" most of the people like yourself that he has come into contact with (school, parents, employers, etc.). You must be different. You must be honest. Never make a promise or a threat that you cannot back up. When he realizes that his situation is "for real" then you will begin to make some progress. Within this general framework, here are some guidelines well worth your thinking about as points of departure or around which to build and organize your own personal experiences.

1. Case background. Sometimes a child will need to tell you the details of his case in an attempt to get your support. Don't be drawn into giving an opinion of the facts related to the persons involved. (You might say that you can understand why he might feel a certain way, agreeing, disagreeing, or having an opinion.) Turn it toward how it has affected his future and how he can compensate for it.

We need to speak to the mature part of the person. In this respect, we try to deal with the person's present and future rather than his past. To dwell in the past will only weaken the individual by giving him more opportunity to justify his present on the basis of past deprivation. The past cannot be changed; the future can!!

2. Keep in contact with the child. Rome wasn't built in a day, nor will a child's life be built in a day. Whatever your volunteer job, be prepared to invest at least one visit a week - as a minimum - with the child. Occasional contacts are unlikely to make the kind of impression that is needed.

Keep in contact not only with the child, but also with the Program staff. The reports you fill out each month are extremely important to the Program Director in charge of the children as it keeps them fully advised as to the child's progress with you. PLEASE FILE AND RETURN THESE REPORTS FULLY AND PROMPTLY. It's crucial.

Also, feel free to come in and see us as frequently as you can with your ideas, reports, suggestions, and problems. We are here to help you.

3. Patience. Don't expect miracles overnight. When things have been going wrong for years and years with the child, they can't be corrected in a few weeks or months. Indeed, the positive impact of your work may not have decisive affects until long after you've stopped working with the youngster; you may never see them.

It takes time. Even if slow progress is visible, there will be frequent setbacks.

4. Be ready for such setbacks, with patience and the ability to deal with your own disappointment and heartbreak. That doesn't mean that you can't show anger-under-control as a normal human being would respond to "bad behavior". But don't vent your frustration and anger on the child; this is a very easy trap to fall into, even unconsciously. Although we all like to achieve success with a child, remember, he does not owe it to us, he owes it only to himself.

5. Give attention and affection. The child you are working with may never have really sustained attention and affection, and (at least at first) he may not know how to handle it.

For one thing, don't expect implicit thanks and gratitude from the child or his parents. Even if the child feels it, he may not know how to express and communicate it, may actually be embarrassed by it. In fact, puzzled by what your role is, and angry at being on probation, the child may frequently focus his resentment on you, and this will be hard to take when you know you're only trying to help.

But though your work isn't rewarded by specific "thank-you's", it is in the long run appreciated probably more than you or we shall ever know.

6. Empathy, not sympathy! Empathy refers to an attitude of attempting to put yourself into the probationer's place. In essence, you are trying to imagine how the probationer must feel in the situation he is in by trying to imagine how you might feel if you were in such a situation. In that way, you can begin to understand your probationer.

Being able to feel with another person gives him strength, but to feel like him, will make him feel you are as powerless as he is. You can easily over-identify with the offender if you have had similar experiences and perceive them the way he does. Being the stronger of the two, the volunteer must maintain control of his feelings.

7. Communication. One of the child's most important problems, remember, is communication with adults; not because they haven't "talked at" him but because they haven't listened to him enough. Therefore, too much talking on your part is more likely to break communication than enhance it.

Be prepared to listen and to understand what your child says. Maybe it's easier for you to do most of the talking, even to "preach" but chances are that the child has had plenty of this before and hasn't responded to it. What he very likely hasn't had is an adult who will hear him out, who will listen to what he has to say. What the child has to say may shock you in its difference from your own set of values and standards. Try therefore, to think of it in terms of its causes, objectively, without judging or condoning.

8. Be a discerning listener. Listening doesn't mean you have to believe everything you hear. Some of the kids are pretty skilled manipulators and have come to believe that stretching the facts a bit is an effective life style (they may not know they do it). Much of this too, will just be letting off steam, getting things off their chest, and within limits, this is a good thing.

Still, don't be a naive, all-believing listener. Check the facts whenever you can; see how well what the youngster tells you accords with reality. When it doesn't, it is frequently good to let him know this, kindly but firmly, i.e. "reality tests" for him. As he comes to know that you expect accuracy (within his means to achieve it) maybe he'll get in the habit of producing it more often, and very likely he'll respect you more because you expect it.

9. Don't pre-judge, particularly at first. Keep an open mind of the probationer especially when you're first getting to know him. Avoid forming fixed and premature opinions until you've done a lot of discerning listening and gathered all the background information you can.

Your probationer is apt to come from a different socio-economic group than your own and it is important that you do not try to force your own values onto him. They may serve you well, but be useless to him. This would only lead to more difficulty for him. Your aim should be to attempt to have the youngster develop his own potentialities to the fullest.

10. Respect confidentiality. Never betray a confidence without permission from the person who has talked confidentially to you. Remember that you are being tested by a youngster who cannot quite believe that he has finally found a friend in whom he can put complete trust.

Be cautious and judicious about asking probing personal questions, especially early in the relationship. The response may only be resentment, until such time as the relationship can support discussion of personal materials. (Nor should you assume the youngster wants to hear you discuss your personal life in lieu of his.)

Anything you learn in relation to the juvenile offender/his family is not, under any circumstances, to be divulged to anyone except duly authorized Court personnel and Program staff supervising your work.

11. Report violations. Confidentiality does not include keeping known violations a secret from the Program staff in charge of the youngster.

However easy and nice it may seem to do so, in the long run, sweeping such things under the rug does the child a disservice, i.e. he continues to think he can always "get away with it", and you, by sacrificing everything to win his friendship, will end up losing his respect by being a "tool" he can do anything with. Report all violations, promptly. In general, whenever you have the slightest doubt as to what your legal or law enforcement obligations are, you should check with the supervisory person in the program. Do this immediately, before taking any action which might be seriously wrong or even illegal.

Even in discussing with the youngster possible or unproven violations, be honest and firm when you disapprove; this is not inconsistent with being supportive and friendly, whenever possible. After all, if you don't stand for something in his eyes, there are very few others who will.

12. Don't rush it, but as the relationship develops, you can encourage the youngster to think about himself, his actions, goals, etc. And from the knowledge plan together more constructive activities from which he'll derive the pleasure of self-respect and success. Many of our youngsters have previously done almost no careful thinking about themselves in any planful, forward-looking way. They seem almost to run away from self-awareness.

13. Present your ideas clearly, firmly and simply. Always mean what you say and be consistent. Never make a promise or proposal unless you've thought it through first, and you are thoroughly prepared to back it up. The juvenile will test you, call your bluff, and see if you will in fact, consistently deliver as promised, either as rewards or in backing up the limits you set. Be serious about the limits when he tests you, and the rewards when you promise them and he delivers. All this is an important part of learning to trust you (which will come slowly in any case).

Don't let the kid down on apparently small things, like showing up for appointments, and being on time. If you don't show responsibility as a model for him, you can't expect him to learn it for himself.

14. Be a good model for you child. One of the best things you can do is to become, in your own behavior, a good model for the youngster. If your own dress, language, and behavior is not of a good standard, then you can scarcely expect it from your probationer. Chances are he has had enough "bad models" already; give him a good one.

There is another respect in which it is especially important that your own conduct while working indirectly for the Court be above

reproach; in that you represent the Court and your behavior reflects on the Court at all times. You can justifiably consider a few hours of volunteer work in the Court as but a portion of your life; mainly you may be a college student, a housewife, or a businessman. Others do not make that distinction so readily. To them, you are a Court person, and expected fully to meet the high standards the Court itself expects of others. If you do not do this, the Court will come in for heavy criticism, to which it is very vulnerable, perhaps more so than you, yourself are. This is not a hypothetical situation; it has happened, and quite painfully in a few cases. Before accepting volunteer work, you must decide to live up to this special condition. If you don't feel you can, no harm is done, provided it is stated clearly to us before hand.

15. Avoid being caught in the middle. You can be a liaison between the child and his world, but be careful not to get "caught" between the child and his parents, the child and his teachers, the child and the Court, especially as an intercessor in some way used by the child against his parents, or vice-versa. Frequently, this happens when you succumb to the temptation to be liked by the child at all cost. To be a "nice guy" no matter what. It can easily happen here that the child will "use" you in the conflict with authority which is often his control problem.

To attempt to help the child without references to his family is to disregard the genesis of his attitudes, habits, and values, and to disregard one of the fundamental purposes, namely to help the youngster to become an efficient member of the family unit.

Your relations with the child's parents are a particularly sensitive area. Move with care here and inform yourself as fully as possible as to the situation, as early as possible. In general, remember that your own relationship with the child is naturally foremost in your mind, he has other important relationships as well: to his parents, peers, teachers, etc. Give some thought and attention to these too.

Recognize the teenager's close ties with peers. The volunteer must constantly be aware of the intensity of teenage friendships. It is not uncommon for a youth to run the risk of disgracing his family in order to save face with teenage friends. An attack on his friends, is a direct attack on the child. To bawl a youngster out in the presence of his friends, is fatal. You surely will set his defenses and invite discourteous behavior. If reprimands are necessary, they will be done more effectively in private.

16. Advice, if it is given from the volunteer's point of view rather than the youngster's, often goes astray. In other words, given a certain situation, you might solve it in a certain way, which would be very good for you; however, this same type of solution for the probationer might not be good at all and might not be in his best interests.

Advice is part of counseling but it is not all of counseling. It is easy to give, but there are some safeguards to keep in mind. For advice to be most helpful and meaningful, it is suggested that you look for certain things. A.) Does the person ask for it? B.) Can he take action without it? C.) Can he use the advice you are giving? The latter is the most important because if we advise someone to do something they find impossible to do, he will find it difficult to come back and face the volunteer and admit his inadequacies. This sets up an unnecessary block or wedge between the volunteer and his probationer.

17. Whose language is used, yours or the juveniles? Stress here is that the volunteer should not pick up the juvenile's vernacular. To use language that is not part of us will likely lead us to being seen as phony. At the same time, you should not be so naive as to leave the impression that you do not understand the four-letter word. A part of the re-education process is learning new ways of communicating. It is suggested that there would be a language that both can use. Words beyond the juvenile's comprehension should not be used. Speak simply and directly.

18. There is indeed a number of things to keep in mind when working with the juvenile, but much of it boils down to "be yourself" and "care sincerely about the youngster". We have always been confident that our volunteers are just that kind of people.

## BASIC CONCEPTS OF COUNSELING

1. EMPATHY. This refers to an attitude of attempting to put yourself in the client's place. In essence, you are trying to imagine how the client must feel in the situation he is in by trying to imagine how you might feel if you were in such a situation. In that way, you can begin to understand your client.

2. CONCENTRATE ON EMOTIONS. "The music is much more important than the words." You should try to understand the underlying feelings and not be overly concerned about the actual words. As we all know, words can be used to hide feelings. Another way of emphasizing this point is: "It isn't so much what is said, as how it is said."

3. QUALIFICATION OF THE COUNSELOR. The most important single qualification is to be a good human being in the best sense of that term. This includes the basic virtue of honesty, integrity, fairness, objectivity, kindness, and understanding. Obviously, if we are trying to establish rapport and to gain the client's respect, we must demonstrate these skills of qualities to him. It is not enough just to tell him that we want to help! We must conduct ourselves in such a manner to make this obvious to him.

4. SHOW RESPECT FOR THE CLIENT. This means to respect his individuality and his basic life as a fellow human being. It means to view him with the dignity that another human being in trouble deserves. There is no room for narrow prejudices, provincialism, or haughtiness. Basically, you must like a person in order to do an effective job. If you dislike a client and cannot resolve this within yourself, it is best not to treat him.

5. IDENTIFICATION. If one is to be effective, particularly with the other clients, it is important that you set a good example in much the same way as a parent would to their children. There is a great tendency for the client to identify with the counselor; that is, he may assume the mannerisms and even the way of thinking of the counselor. You, thus, have a big responsibility to conduct yourself in the most honorable, conscientious, and sincere way you can.

6. ADVICE. It is very often helpful to give clients advice, particularly when dealing with youngsters who have not had the same experience in living as the counselor's had. There also may be times when your objectivity will be very useful in terms of solving problems that the client may be too close to himself. There is a word of caution here, however, and that is to understand the problem fully and particularly from the client's view. Advice often goes astray because it is given from the counselor's point of view rather than the client's. In other words, given a certain situation, you might solve it in a certain way which would be very good for you; however, the same type of solution for someone else might



not be good at all and might not be in their best interest. It is, therefore, important to sympathize with your client and give advice from his or her point of view.

7. LISTENING AND THE DEFINING OF PROBLEMS. The most basic technique employed by the counselor is listening. This may seem like a very simple thing to do, but, in reality, it is not as simple as it might appear at first glance. There is a great tendency in all of us as human beings to want to "stick our two cents in" prematurely. There is also a great tendency to pass judgement and moralize. As human beings, we may not register what we do not wish to hear, or we may distort the meaning because it touches on something we are sensitive about. For all these reasons, as well as others, it is important for the counselor to develop an attitude of patient, objective listening. Remember, you are listening for the music and you are trying to understand the emotional situation of your client. The comments that you make or the questions that you ask ought to be primarily for the purpose of eliciting pertinent data. As the client talks and you listen, you are trying to understand and define, in your own mind, what his problems are. When you are clear as to what his problems are, you then convey it to the client so that he should understand what his problems are. Then, when there is a clear definition of the problems, a cooperative effort between you and the client can be made to solve them. It might also be stated here that listening serves a good general purpose of catharsis. That is, allowing the client to verbalize and express pent-up emotion. It might take considerable, astute listening and questioning in order to ascertain what the problems are because clients frequently hide it from themselves because these problems are painful.

8. SET UP REALISTIC GOALS. As you begin to understand your client and his problems, you should begin thinking of realistic solutions. These should be presented as tentative suggestions rather than affirmative commands. The emphasis also should be on the realities of the situation. No solution is worth anything if it is unrealistic for this particular client at this particular time. Here again, you see how important it is to understand your client's situation, his capabilities and his inadequacies. The reality of possibilities will obviously depend on his external situation.

9. THE CLIENT MUST WORK WITH YOU. When you are working in a setting such as a probation setting, and when the client, therefore, has not consulted you originally, you are faced with a certain problem that requires a certain kind of handling. Since the client has generally performed an anti-social act, and since we are trying to get him to change, we must find ways of showing him the folly of his present course of action and the value to him of a more socially acceptable type of behavior. This is stressed because if you are not able to show him that it is to his advantage then he may turn a totally deaf ear to the counseling, feeling that you are trying only to reform him and do not really care about him as a person. It might be mentioned here, also, that you would be much

more successful if you regard the anti-social activities or the delinquency as symptoms of a disturbed personality, and, therefore, concentrate on the disturbances within the individual rather than strictly on his behavior.

10. USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE. Since the educational and cultural level of the counselor is apt to be higher than that of his client, it is very important that you use simple, non-technical language so that you can effectively communicate with the client. It is obvious that no matter how astute your observations, it will be to no avail if you "talk over his head". It might also be added here, that your client is apt to come from a different socio-economic group than your own, and here again, it is important that you do not try to force your values upon him. They may serve you well but would be useless to him. Your aim should be to have the client develop his own potentialities to the fullest.

11. LETTING THE OFFENDER GET TO KNOW YOU. Set an example in terms of behavior. Serve as a new model. Stress his place here on the experience you have had intimately, present a good model, and show the importance of this model to the offender, even though he may be threatened by it. Part of good counseling is being a good teacher. The concept of a collective experience implies that new models are introduced and can correct old misconceptions.

12. HOLDING OUT EXPECTATIONS. As counselors, we can trap ourselves into thinking that because a person is a failure, he will continue to be a failure. If we feel this in terms of an attitude, we can be sure that the offender will pick up this feeling and act in a way that we expect him to act. The reverse is also true.

In this area, we also discuss the matter of anger. We do allow ourselves to express anger and disappointment when we feel this way to a client. Here is stressed the need to allow expressions of anger and disappointment as one way of showing concern. There is a differentiation between losing control of anger and rejecting, or a measured response of anger and continued acceptance of the individual. It is stressed that we should not be using our energy to keep back genuine feelings. The client needs to know that the counselor has limits to his patience and is not God.

As a part of discussion in the matter of expectations, we talk about change occurring in the adult in that we need to expect and demand a change in people, even if a pattern may have been established. We assume that an old dog can be taught new tricks. People continually mature and mellow. We need to capitalize on this process.

Part of holding out expectations for the client is to face him for his own involvement and responsibility to the dilemma. If we allow the client to perceive himself as someone that "things just happen to" we'll only support and encourage further distortion and lack of self-responsibility.

13. CAUSING THE CLIENT TO FEEL DISCOMFORT. If a person remains frustrated long enough, he will find a way of adapting to his situation. Having made this adaption, he may even become comfortable with it and consider change to be too much of a risk. It is difficult to bring about discomfort, but my suggestion is that where you notice a client's dissatisfaction with his lot in life, move in to exploit it. To the extent that is possible, attempt to bring about discomfort in terms of holding out expectations and demands. Get the person to want something and help him go after it.

14. USE OF AUTHORITY. The authority that a counselor will find most helpful is implicit authority of his personal psychological strength as demonstrated by the fact that he is a successful person. The counselor has the expertise of knowing how to get along in the world, whereas the offender does not. This kind of authority in the long run, will serve you better than the authority to penalize. The authority of enforcement and penalizing is present, but it rests with the Court and Police.

15. TIMING. It is very tempting to give immediate solutions to the offender. We should remember, however, that while he does arrive at a solution to a problem in one way, this does not mean that another person can understand that solution. The person who feels obligated to accept a solution for him may never really identify with it. He may merely go through the motions.

16. PERSISTENCE. We will probably find the client orientated to failure and expecting failure in himself. Persistence is a key part of counseling in that it conveys to the client that we will not give up on him. This, in itself, is important when we realize that the client expects to be a disappointment.

17. USING THE CRISIS. This client lives with a crisis much of the time and in fact, his whole life is often one big crisis. He is accustomed to being overcome by crises and expects to be defeated. The counselor is in a position to stand by his probationer during a crisis and may be able to help the person overcome this situation and turn habitual defeat into victory.

## TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION

The volunteer should focus on listening to and understanding the probationer, but in a way that does not interfere with the probationer's responses. Due to the probationer generally being required to see the volunteer, more is needed than questions such as: "What would you like to talk about today?" or "What's on your mind this evening?"

Some of the suggestions or hints which are proposed are the following:

"Good to see you---"  
"Where should we sit?"  
"Sure is cold---"  
"Tell me about your favorite season---"  
"Tell me about your family---"  
"What would you like me to know about you?"  
"What would you like to know about me?"

The volunteer may find that he needs to provide additional assistance in getting the probationer to respond. If the probationer has difficulty in responding, the volunteer may recognize this by REFLECTING HIS OBSERVATIONS; such as:

"You seem to be somewhat uncomfortable."  
"I'm wondering why it's difficult to talk."

To be most effective in aiding probationer communication the questions used by the volunteer should be as open as possible. By OPEN QUESTIONS, we refer to the type of wording that provides the probationer with a wide scope of answers, i.e., he is not limited to a specific answer. Consider the following examples:

"How did you feel about being criticized?" vs "You felt very badly about this criticism, didn't you?"  
"Going back to school is a possibility. What are your feelings about it?" vs "Do you want to go back to school?"

It can be seen that in each of the above examples, the probationer is provided with greater latitude for describing his thoughts and feelings in the first instance than in the second. The second instance can well invite the probationer to respond with a "Yes" or "No" answer, whereas, in the first instance he is more likely to describe his thoughts and feelings regarding the subject.

Another way of phrasing questions that should be dealt with is the INDIRECT QUESTION. The following are examples of how direct questions can be phrased as indirect questions:

"It hurts to be left alone like that, doesn't it?" vs  
"I wonder how it feels to be alone like that?"  
"It's very difficult to be out of work this long, isn't  
it?" vs "It must be tough to be out of work for that  
long of time?"

It can be seen that while a question is in fact being  
asked in the second instance of the above examples, it is not  
phrased as such and the volunteer is provided with even more  
latitude in responding.

RESTATEMENT by a volunteer lets the probationer hear  
what he has said on the assumption that it may help him to con-  
tinue speaking. The volunteer may restate exactly what was said  
word for word, or he may change the pronoun.

Probationer: "I felt very alone."  
Volunteer: "You felt very alone?"

The volunteer may restate only a part of what was said,  
the part that was most significant, or he may state in summary  
fashion what the probationer has said.

Probationer: "...I just couldn't tell her because we  
were never alone--the guys may have known  
what was going on. I don't know, but  
whenever I tried to tell her, there were  
people around and I just couldn't--with  
all those people."  
Volunteer: "You couldn't get her alone long enough  
to tell her?"

## SUGGESTIONS WHEN FIRST MEETING YOUR PROBATIONER

1. Get acquainted by listening - don't probe or press for important decisions. Try: "I'd like to know you better so I can help."
2. Make your relationship safe to explore feelings and ideas - not a cross-examination. Try: "How do you feel about this? What do you think about...?"
3. Develop any potentially good topic or attitude that comes up - even if it wasn't your idea. Try: "That really sounds important to you. Tell me more."
4. Show enthusiasm and interest in any successes - don't merely or casually acknowledge them. Try: "That's great, you must feel really good about it. How did you do it?"
5. Respond to the probationer's feelings, not just to the facts presented. Try: "You really don't care much about him, do you?"
6. Let the probationer answer his own questions where possible - do not put words in his mouth. Try: "How do you suppose you would go about it?"
7. Ask one question and wait for an answer - don't add the answer, another question, or amendments. Try: "Do you think your friends really feel this way about you?"
8. Allow the probationer time to think - do not talk just to prevent silence. Try: "Think it through if you would like."

## QUESTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS AFTER MEETING THE PROBATIONERS

The volunteer should possibly ask himself some of the following questions after his meeting with the probationer to see if they were answered during his last visit. The volunteer should ask himself the following questions:

1. What is the name of your probationer's best friend?
2. What did your probationer do last weekend?
3. What is the date of your probationer's birthday?
4. What are the names of your probationer's family?
5. What color is your probationer's eyes?
6. What goals do you and your probationer have?
7. What could you say to make your probationer laugh?
8. What does your probationer think is his most important accomplishment?
9. What does your probationer like most about you?
10. How many of these questions can you honestly answer?

## THE MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What do you do when your child runs away?

Remain calm, talk with the parents and try to determine where the child might be running to and why. If you have a lead to where the child is, attempt to contact the child, or have the parents contact their child. If the child is located and agrees to return home within a 24 hour period and the Program personnel can resolve the problem, the Program personnel may decide not to return the child to the Court. However, if the child has been missing for 24 hours, or longer, then the Program personnel must notify the Court so that the parents can contact the police to register a run away complaint. If the child returns on his own after a complaint has been filed, then the police and the Court must be notified immediately.

### 2. Can the volunteer place the child in the Juvenile Home?

A child can be placed in the Juvenile facilities only under the direct supervision of a Court officer or a Police officer who is authorized to sign certain legal forms and file petitions. Therefore, the situation becomes so serious that the only temporary solution is removal from the home, the volunteer should contact the Program personnel, who will, in turn, contact the Court so that the proper procedures can be followed. Also, if it is a situation that occurs after Court hours, the Police should be contacted. Keep in mind that we do not place children in the Juvenile Home for reasons of punishment. The purpose of the Juvenile facilities is simply a temporary holding facility until future arrangements can be made.

### 3. How long should a volunteer wait to be assigned?

After the volunteer has submitted an application and participated in an interview with the Program Director, it takes several weeks to open up the case file and process the application. It normally takes at least two weeks prior to State, Local, and FBI Police Check completion. In some cases, a volunteer will be assigned in one month. In other cases, the length of time may be longer. There are several reasons why a case may take longer to be assigned a probationer. First of all, you are assigned according to sex and geographic location. Other considerations in making assignments are the seriousness of the offense, age of the child, cooperation of the parents, length of time on probation, etc.

### 4. What is the procedure for placing a child in a foster home?

If the situation has deteriorated to the point where no alternatives are available other than removing a child from the home,



then the Program personnel must be contacted immediately. At that point, a petition has to be filed and a preliminary hearing held. From that point, an officer of the Court will do an investigation and a formal hearing will be held before the Judge with a recommendation as to the appropriate placement.

5. How often should a child be seen?

Every probationer should be seen at least once a week by the volunteer. In some cases, more frequent contacts are necessary. Volunteer Probation Officers are committed to a minimum of one hour per week with the child. This regular personal contact is very important and consistency is a must in working with youth.

There will be occasions where the volunteer will be out of town and it would be impossible to see the probationer. If probation has been going well, the volunteer should be sure the child and parents have the Program personnel's phone numbers and tell them to call the Program Director if they are experiencing any problems. On the other hand, if probation has not been going well, the volunteer should contact the Program Director to inform him that the volunteer will be out of town and the child should be contacted while you are gone.

6. What authority does the Volunteer Probation Officer have?

The Volunteer will have the support and assistance of the Program personnel in establishing the rules of probation and seeing that they are complied with. The volunteer will have the responsibility and the authority to make decisions that affect the child especially in times of crisis. However, when the volunteer believes that a decision should be made to return the child to the Court or to remove the probationer from the home, either to the Juvenile home or elsewhere, it is imperative that the Program personnel be contacted to take this action. There are several forms to be filled out that only could be signed by certain proper authorities. Also, there are specific rules and guidelines that must be followed that Program personnel and Court staff must supervise to be sure that everyone's rights are protected.

7. How long a period of time does a volunteer/youngster relationship last?

It is impossible to put an official closing point to most relationships. However, we seem to be talking about a relationship within a relationship. For some time, there is an "urgency" where every effort must be made to spend time each week with youngsters. Later, when the youngster knows you and understands what you can offer, this artificial "urgency" disappears. The relationship will still involve an event on a weekly basis, however, the initial phase of the relationship probably will only last from four to five months. It is noted that we have some volunteers working with their second and third youngster while still keeping minimal contact with their initial first two cases.

8. Does a volunteer relationship with a youngster terminate when the youngster is dismissed from the Court?

No! We feel that it is important for the youngster to realize that you are not an intimate part of the Court process. Your value as a volunteer does not coincide with the Court's legal decision-making power. More important, the fact that you will continue to be involved may influence the probation officer and Judge to dismiss a youngster from Court jurisdiction at an earlier date.

9. When do I turn to the Volunteer Probation Officer Program Staff for assistance?

When you have problems relating to techniques in relating to the youngster, or need outside resources or training, contact the Program personnel staff. If you have a question or a problem, call immediately!

10. How will I know if I am effective?

Most youngsters will not be able to tell you that you are helping them or even thank you for your efforts. Your feedback probably will come indirectly. It may be simply that the youngster is always on time for appointments and that he begins to "open up" to you. If we talk in terms of improved self-image or other psychological terms, visible changes may be extremely slow. However, much of your on-going training will allow us to set forth visible, measurable goals, perhaps involving school achievements and parental or peer relationship skills. These will help you see changes as they take place. A suggestion: You might consider keeping a journal of your youngster's contacts - perhaps 25 words per entry regarding your feelings about the meeting. Looking back over several months of these entries will probably aid you in getting a handle on your efforts.

11. How will I be received by that youngster's parents?

Every youngster referred to us and his parents have been interviewed by Program staff regarding the concept of the VPO Program and their potential reaction. In each instance, both youngster and parent have indicated a willingness to try the volunteer idea. However, there is a great variation in parental reaction. Some parents, particularly in one parent homes, welcome the volunteer with open arms. Other parents do perceive the volunteer as a potential threat. When this is the case, Program staff will help the volunteer to work through this crisis especially through the usage of the Family Case-worker. If parental response makes the volunteer/youngster relationship ineffective, we will terminate that relationship. Again, we need to know of any problem that we have in this area.

## CASE HISTORIES

The following four case histories present the range of youngsters for whom we are seeking volunteers. We have tried briefly to describe the cases, the youngsters' reactions to the volunteers, and possible approaches which might be successful in reaching the youngsters. These case histories will be your "ticket" to the personal interview. We ask you to closely read these case histories and attempt to assess how you would work with these youngsters.

### Case #1

Case #1 is a 14 yr. old youngster presently living in a Shelter Care Cottage. Case #1 is a permanent ward, meaning that there is no parental involvement whatsoever. This youngster has lived in many other residential placement facilities, making a marginal adjustment in all of them. Because of age, there is no chance for a successful adjustment in a foster home or in an adoptive placement. This youngster is not very bright, and perhaps, more important, has not experienced many of the cultural or recreational activities available today. Case #1 has had few interpersonal skills and reacts to adults in a very dependent, clinging way. When frustrated, this youngster tends to withdraw into sullen silence.

Case #1 will readily accept a volunteer, seeing the volunteer as time away from the Shelter Care Cottages; however, the relationship at first, will tend to be superficial. This youngster will be demanding and perhaps expect the volunteer to "buy" friendship.

The volunteer assigned to this case must have a good deal of time to devote. Overnight and weekends are a real possibility. In fact, one of the goals should be exposure to and gradual incorporation of this child into a healthy family unit. The volunteer should take the initiative of exposing this child to a variety of experiences, such as shopping, spectator sports, museums, even popcorn and a movie. As with most youngsters, the volunteer should weed out those activities for which the youngster has some talent and build upon these talents in a way that the youngster will feel good about himself.

### Case #2

Case #2 is a 15 yr. old and presently living in the Children's Reception Center. This child is aggressive and has committed an adult-type offense, perhaps a Breaking and Entering or an Automobile Theft. Case #2 seems to have a chip on his shoulder and demonstrates some hostility toward parents and, in fact, all authority figures. This youngster is fairly bright, especially in mechanical skills, yet Case #2 has shown no effort in school. In a word, Case #2 would be described as self-centered.

This youngster may not acknowledge a need for a volunteer, feeling that no one can possibly choose to work with him. This youngster would also question the volunteer's relationship to the Court, feeling that here is one more probation officer to deal with. Perhaps with these feelings, the volunteer could expect some testing behavior. Perhaps the child would find excuses early in the relationship, not to see the volunteer, or would misbehave, causing the institutional staff to take away his privileges.

The volunteer in this situation must be willing to put up with some rejections. The volunteer must be willing to constantly point out "reality" to this child. Limits must be set on Case #2's behavior while with the volunteer. In this relationship the possibility of crisis intervention is high. It is very important for the volunteer to build upon this youngster's obvious talents and, by providing a motto for the child, create a willingness on the youngster's part to change. Because of Case #2's intellect and interpersonal skills, there is a great potential for change, and once the relationship has "turned the corner", the volunteer can be the most important person in Case #2's life. Certain activities might include specific arts and crafts skills, or one and two hours of conversation and indirect counseling.

#### Case #3

Case #3 is a 15 yr. old, bright, sophisticated child and is presently living at home on probation. This child does well in skill and, as of yet, has had no police contact. The focus of problems in this situation is the home. Relationships between the youngster and parents has totally deteriorated. The parents have filed a complaint in Juvenile Court for home truancy and home incorrigibility. The parents do not approve of this youngster's friends and feel uncomfortable with the "radical" ideas which this child seems to want. It is obvious that probation in itself may not work, but at the same time, institutionalization seems a waste.

This youngster will probably accept a volunteer, especially if that volunteer might be an ally against parents and Court. Case #3 will want to take control of the relationship if you think she is wrong. The youngster will have excellent interpersonal skills and will demonstrate a superficial "cool". It might take a long time to get Case #3 to drop her "front" and begin to relate to more important levels.

A volunteer in this situation must be non-threatening to Case #3's parents, while at the same time, not being a parental figure to the child. The volunteer must not allow herself to be manipulated by the child and must not set herself up to be a referee in family disputes. The volunteer's goals should involve making the youngster less self-centered and more willing to understand the dynamics within the family. The volunteer might approach this youngster in terms of how present behavior might have an adverse effect on that youngster's own goals two, three, or four years from now.

#### Case #4

Case #4 is a 13 yr. old who is on probation for a series of small offenses, such as shoplifting, school truancy, and home incorrigibility. This is a one parent home with several children. Money is a problem and one parent feels overwhelmed by the daily demands of raising a large family. This youngster is not too bright and has no motivation to do well in school. The youngster tends to choose friends who approve of his delinquent image. Case #4 has no outside interests, such as Little League, or Scouting, and has never been exposed to healthy group activities.

A volunteer would be welcome with open arms by this youngster's parent, who realizes that this child obviously needs help. The youngster, too, will accept a volunteer, but in a very self-centered way. A typical reaction by this child to the volunteer would involve "Give me, take me, or buy me".

The volunteer in this situation, must be able to counteract the "Santa Claus" image. A straight counseling approach will not be helpful. The volunteer must give this child as many experiences as possible, such as bowling, arts and crafts, participation sports, or even reading. When possible, the volunteer must include the child in family activities, such as camping trips and overnights in the volunteer's home. The volunteer should be willing to help this youngster plan his own future, even in such things as planning class schedules or finding a paper route. The volunteer should help the child develop certain skills so that successful experiences can be had outside of the delinquent peer group that he is currently involved in.

## CONCLUSION

Contributing time, energy, and money to the assistance of criminal offenders is not one of the most popular causes. It is up to all of us to prove the worth of what we are doing. In so doing, we must prove the economic value of operating as we are. Many respond to the need to help people, or offenders, but most can be convinced of the worth when we can demonstrate we are ahead financially by choosing probation over jail. It is up to us to prove it! If we cannot prove it, we should return to the old ways, which obviously did not work, of locking up all offenders, but which protected, presumably, the public.

The fact is, however, that nearly 2,000 courts are currently using Volunteers. A new force is arising in our nation - a force that can change the future!

The citizens of Bay County have responded in amazing numbers, and each who has participated realized the need for continued education and continued awareness of available, current resources. We ask you to commit yourself, challenge yourself, and seek new knowledge. No one can appreciate your efforts for a job well done, like YOU!

The special relationship of the volunteer and client might best be viewed as a catalytic one: IT IS A SHARED EXPERIENCE OF TWO HUMAN BEINGS, OUT OF WHICH EACH MAKES A PERSONAL GAIN, WITHOUT DIMINISHING THE OTHER. THE PROBATIONER IS LEFT WITH THE CONFIDENCE TO GROW, CARRYING AWAY AN EXPERIENCE OF A HUMAN ENCOUNTER THAT DEMANDS NOTHING FROM SOMEONE ELSE.

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR VOLUNTEER PROBATION OFFICERS

Aichhorn, Wayward Youth  
Anastasia, Fields of Applied Psychology  
Axline, Dibs in Search of Self  
Bettelheim, Love is Not Enough  
Blomquist (MD), Marijuana  
Bode, Modern Education Theory  
Brown, Claude, Man Child in a Promised Land  
Clark, Ramsey, Crime in America  
Clarke, John R., Importance of Being Imperfect  
Coles, Brenner, Meagher, Drugs and Youth  
Crombach, Educational Psychology  
Crow and Crow, Child Psychology  
Deese, The Psychology of Learning  
Ellis, Transfer of Learning  
Farnsworth, Annual Review of Psychology, 1965  
Friedenberg, The Vanishing Adolescent  
Fromme, (PHD), The Ability to Love  
Gesell, Youth: The Years from 10 to 16  
Ginott, Haim, Between Parent and Teenager  
Glasser, William, Reality Therapy  
Glover, How to Help Your Teenager Grow Up  
Goodman, Paul, Growing Up Absurd  
Greene, Hanna, I Never Promised You A Rose Garden  
Harrington, Michael, The Other America  
Harris, Dr. Thomas, I'm Ok, You're Ok

Hart, Summerhill, For and Against  
Hochberg, Perception  
Hope, How Children Live  
Horney, (MD) Karen, Feminine Psychology  
Hughes, Education in America  
Hymann, The Nature of Psychological Inquiry  
James, Howard, Children in Trouble  
Jershd, The Psychology of Adolescence  
Johnsen, Lester, Devil's Front Porch  
Kemelman, Common Sense and Education  
Kenney and Pursuit, Police Work with Juveniles  
Knopla, The Adolescent Girl in Conflict  
Kovar, Faces of the Adolescent Girl  
Leonard, Education and Ecstasy  
Loth, Crime in the Suburbs  
Lournia, The Drug Scene  
MacIever, Re-Educating the Delinquent through Group and Community Participation  
Magary, The Exceptional Child  
Maltz, Pscho-Cybernetics  
Marchall, Christy  
Marx, Systems and Theories of Psychology  
Matheson, Guidance Policy and Practice  
May, Man's Search for Himself  
McCrudy, The Personal World  
Mellekin, Touch Love  
Meninger, (MD), Karl, Crime of Punishment and the Vital Balance



**CONTINUED**

**1 OF 2**

Merill, Problems in Child Delinquency  
Merrill, Individuality and Encounter  
Montessori, The Absorbent Mind  
Morgan, Introduction to Psychology  
Morris, First Offender  
Motley, Knock on Any Door  
Narimore, Psychology of Counseling  
Neill, Freedom-Not License  
Peters, Brett's History of Psychology  
Powell, Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am?  
Richette, Throw Away Children  
Rissman, Constraint and Variety in American Education  
Rissman, Teacher and a Tot in Abnormal Psychology  
Redl, Children Who Hate  
Robson, Juvenile Delinquency  
Rogers, On Becoming A Person  
Rogers, Person to Person  
Rogers, The Problem With Being Human  
Roucek, Juvenile Delinquency  
Salisbury, The Shook Up Generation  
Sands, My Shadow Ran Fast  
Sanford, Advancing Psychological Science  
Scheier, Volunteer Programs and Courts  
Seebald, Adolescents - A Sociological Analysis  
Sheriff, An Outline of Social Psychology  
Short, Gang Delinquency and Delinquent Subcultures  
Steere, On Listening to Another

Thurston, Considering Juvenile Delinquency

Tillich, The New Being

Trobisch, I Love A Girl

Tunley, Kids, Crime, and Chaos

Wellford, Delinquency Prevention

White, Lives in Progress

Yablonski, The Hippie Trip

Yinger, A Minority Group In American Society



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