



State of Wisconsin \ OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Kenosha County Juvenile Court  
Kenosha County Juvenile Court Services  
Unit  
#77-02-5A-SE-2894-6



53385

PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT



State of Wisconsin \ OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Kenosha County Juvenile Court Services  
Unit  
#77-02-5A-SE-2894-6

NCJRS

JAN 2 1979

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ACQUISITIONS

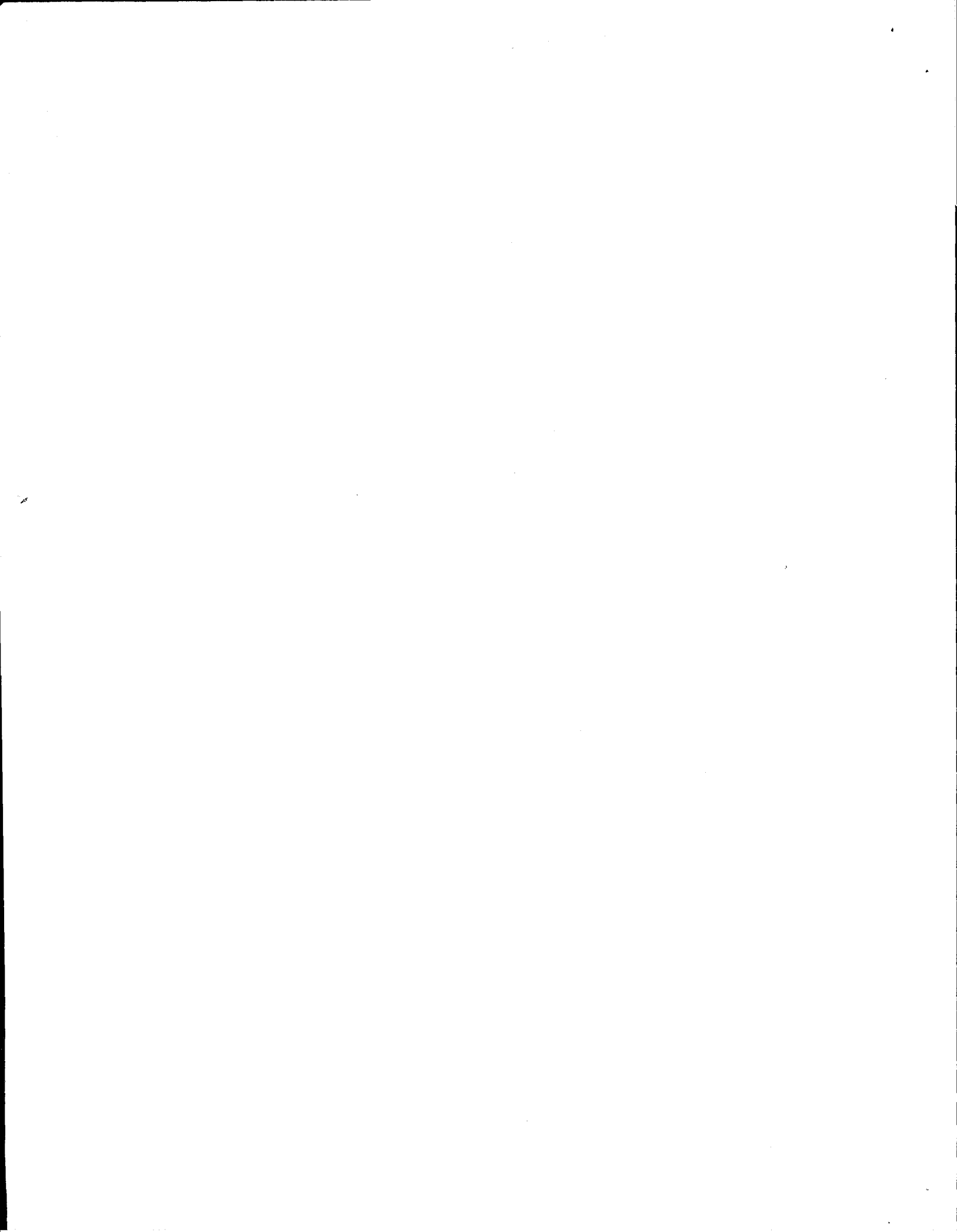
Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice  
Program Evaluation Section  
February 1978

## Executive Summary

The Kenosha County Juvenile Court Services Unit, funded by the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice in February 1977 has developed its program of both court intake and detention screening in an organized and deliberate manner. Presently, the project is performing its services at or above the level prescribed by its goals and objectives.

Although the project was not started until November 21, 1977, the two person court services unit now provides 24 hour per day detention screening coverage for the county. The policies and procedures developed are being closely followed and should result in the eventual achievement of the specific detention objectives which are to eliminate the detention of 95% of status offenders and reduce overall detentions by 15%. A court intake screening service has been provided to the juvenile court since July 1, 1977. Adhering to the screening guidelines developed, all of the diversion objectives of this service are being achieved and maintained. That is, more than 75% of status offenders and 20% of delinquency offenders are currently being diverted from formal prosecution. The court services unit has also achieved the goal of providing dispositional alternatives to the court. To this end, it has established and maintained 17 community work projects for the judge to utilize as alternatives to traditional juvenile court dispositions.

The capable performance of the project is verified by its achievement of the goals and objectives. It is difficult to judge the further impact of the project on the local criminal justice system. Although no intake unit existed prior to the implementation of the court services unit, it is difficult to make a comparison to the previous system because there is insufficient data to determine exactly how the system functioned previously.



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## I. Introduction

In February, 1977 the Executive Committee of the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice (WCCJ) approved funding for the Kenosha County Juvenile Court Services Unit. The initial funding level of \$57,463 was reduced to \$56,963 after a job description modification, and the grant period was altered twice, ultimately becoming April 1, 1977 to March 31, 1978. The project was funded under Program 5A, Judicial Administration and Support Services, of the 1976 Comprehensive Criminal Justice Improvement Plan and is eligible for refunding under Program 15E, Juvenile Court Services, of the 1977 Plan.

The original purpose of this project, as proposed in the first year grant application, was to provide two court service workers to screen and investigate cases referred to court, develop alternative dispositions, and supervise and counsel youths who participate in alternative dispositions. Several of the proposed functions were not consistent with the screening and diversion objectives of Program 5A. Five special conditions were applied to the grant by WCCJ program staff. These conditions basically limited the project staff to performing intake functions. The special conditions specified that:

- 1) no probation functions be performed;
- 2) no criminal investigative work be performed;
- 3) written guidelines for the intake activities be developed;
- 4) more comprehensive goals and objectives be developed; and
- 5) a record keeping system consistent with the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice's privacy and security policy be developed.

The revised goals and objectives, reflect the project's reoriented focus on intake services. The goals and objectives are as follows:

Goal 1: To establish 24 hour, 7 day-a-week detention screening in Kenosha County.

Objectives:

1. To develop, within the first six months of the project, with the cooperation of law enforcement and social service agencies, guidelines for detention.
2. To screen all juvenile detentions in Kenosha County.

3. To eliminate the detention of 95% of status offenders.
4. To reduce detentions in Kenosha County by 15%.

Goal 2: To provide an intake service to the Kenosha County Juvenile Court.

Objectives:

5. To screen all youth referred to the Court Services Unit by law enforcement agencies.
6. To divert from formal prosecution 75% of all status offenders.
7. To divert from formal prosecution 20% of all delinquency offenders.
8. To complete a one and four month follow-up of 70% of the cases referred to other agencies.
9. To develop, within the first six months of the project, written policies and procedures for the diversion of juvenile offenders.

Goal 3: To establish an alternative disposition for the Kenosha County Juvenile Court.

Objectives:

10. To place 50% of those juvenile offenders who are subject to court disposition into community work projects.
11. To develop 15 additional community work projects.

The goals and objectives for the project's second year, as set forth in its second year grant application, are the same as those above except for the omission of the two objectives concerning written guidelines and the addition of one objective addressing the establishment of at least one alternative to secure detention. The guidelines for both detention and court intake screening have been developed and are presented in the second year grant application.



## II. Project Performance

The goals and objectives designed for this project indicate what immediate results should be derived from the proper implementation of the Juvenile Court Services Unit. This section will review the project's effectiveness in achieving these goals and objectives.

### A. Detention Screening

Goal one specifies the establishment of a 24 hour 7 day-a-week detention screening. When the authority is delegated by the juvenile court judge, detention screening is an important function of a court intake unit and one for which effectiveness can easily be measured. Kenosha County law enforcement agencies, however, were not receptive to the transfer of the initial detention decision responsibility from themselves to the Juvenile Court Services Unit. Twenty-four hour per day detention screening by the Juvenile Court Services Unit did not commence until November 21, 1977 after some rapport between the Juvenile Court Services Unit and the law enforcement agencies had been established. If the juvenile court judge had pressed the matter, the detention screening could have begun earlier. The time span that was allowed, however, probably made the inevitable transition easier.

The detention screening process now in operation in Kenosha County calls for law enforcement personnel to contact the court service worker who is on call whenever they feel detention of a juvenile is necessary. The worker then evaluates the need for detention, using the guidelines developed, and makes the decision.

In the short time that detention screening has been in operation it is impossible to assess whether the objectives associated with it are being achieved. The Juvenile Court Services Unit does currently attempt to screen all detentions but occasionally a youth will be detained without its review. In discussing the project with the supervisors of the juvenile bureaus of the Kenosha Police Department and Kenosha County Sheriff's Office, both expressed overall satisfaction with the intake unit and its detention screening function even though there might be disagreements on a few individual cases. Any detentions not cleared through the Juvenile Court Services Unit were thought to be due to the novelty of the system, with individual officers simply forgetting to contact a court service worker. Regardless of the reasons for the exceptions, project staff hope to resolve further problems through meetings with law enforcement personnel.

Whether no more than 5% of status offenders will be detained or whether detentions will be reduced by 15% cannot yet be determined. For an initial impression of the Juvenile Court Services Unit's effect on detentions, however, information was collected for September and December, 1977, from data maintained for the State Court Administrator's Office. This data has only been maintained since July 1, 1977, so no comparison to pre-project detention rates can be made. The data presented in Table 1 shows the number of initial detentions among cases disposed by the court intake unit in the given months. The number of offenses and detentions are broken-down by offense categories. These categories are generally descriptive of the type of incident but there are no data available which thoroughly reflect the seriousness or severity of an offense. As is typical, a low volume of cases was processed in December, but it is the only complete month of data available after the commencement of detention screening. Note that only detention data for court referrals is available to be presented here. It is, of course, possible to detain a youth without eventually referring him/her to court. Since the unit now screens all detentions, it is probable that its most noticeable impact is upon these less serious cases that never reach the court.

In the data presented, 13% of the cases referred to court in each month were detained, yielding no quantitative difference between the two months. In September, however, 20% of the status offenders were detained, while none were detained in December. Although only initial detentions are recorded in Table 1, an additional difference was noted in the raw data. All four detentions in December were followed by a detention hearing while only two cases (13%) had concomitant detention hearings in September. Although there is a greater chance that this data could have been omitted in September (because the Juvenile Court Services Unit did not keep separate detention records then), this data may indicate that a juvenile's right to a detention hearing is being more conscientiously upheld since the responsibility for detention screening was given to the Juvenile Court Services Unit.

B. Court Intake Screening

Goal two specifies that an intake service be provided to the Kenosha County Juvenile Court. Since approximately July 1, 1977, all delinquency and status (in need of supervision) referrals to the juvenile court have been screened by the court services unit. Utilizing the guidelines developed for intake screening, a court services worker makes a decision to refer a case to the

Table 1  
Number of Detentions and Offenses by  
Type of Offense For Two Sample Months

	September		December	
	Number of Offenses	Number of Detentions	Number of Offenses	Number of Detentions
Violent Victimization	3	2	1	1
Non-Violent Victimization	82	10	16	3
Public Peace & Security Violation	3	1	2	0
Drug Violation	9	0	3	0
Traffic Violation	3	0	3	0
Status Offense	15	3	8	0
Misc. Offense	5	0	0	0
Total	120	16	30	4

District Attorney for prosecution or to divert the youth involved. Diversion from formal prosecution may entail:

1. Counseling and releasing the youth;
2. Referring him/her to another agency for services;
3. Utilizing an informal disposition (through the court);  
or
4. Holding open a case to await further developments.

In practice, one court service worker reviews all the referrals to the unit and makes most of the referrals to the District Attorney. If a case is to be handled by the unit and not prosecuted, the second worker will usually work with the youth.

The Program Evaluation Section (PES) of WCCJ collected data on cases disposed by the Juvenile Court Services Unit during August through November, 1977. The age and sex breakdown of these cases is presented in Table 2. This data shows that 349 (83%) of the 423 juveniles referred to the Juvenile Court Services Unit in those months were male and that the age category 15-17 contains 289 (68%) of the referrals. The Juvenile Court Services Unit's dispositions of these cases, broken-down by offense categories, are given in Table 3. Both Tables 2 and 3 show 229 (54%) of the total 423 cases referred to the District Attorney. In the two tables, these referrals to the District Attorney are respectively broken-down by age of offender and type of offense. Not surprisingly, the largest offense category is property crimes; 160 (70%) of the 299 cases referred to court are classified as property crimes, as are 251 (59%) of the total 423 cases. Overall, 46% of all cases were diverted from formal prosecution to one of the alternatives mentioned earlier. For the specific categories named in the project objectives, 40% of delinquency offenders were diverted as were 86% of the status offenders. In both cases the stated objective was exceeded.

#### C. Dispositional Alternatives

Goal three specifies that an alternative disposition be established for the Kenosha County Juvenile Court. Specifically, the intent of this goal is that the Juvenile Court Services Unit develop community work projects to which juveniles may be assigned by the court, usually after further court proceedings are deferred. The objective specifies that 15 such work projects be developed. The Juvenile Court Services Unit has developed and maintained 17. This has actually been a very small part of the unit's work and, as stipulated, no post-disposition supervision functions have been performed by the court service workers.

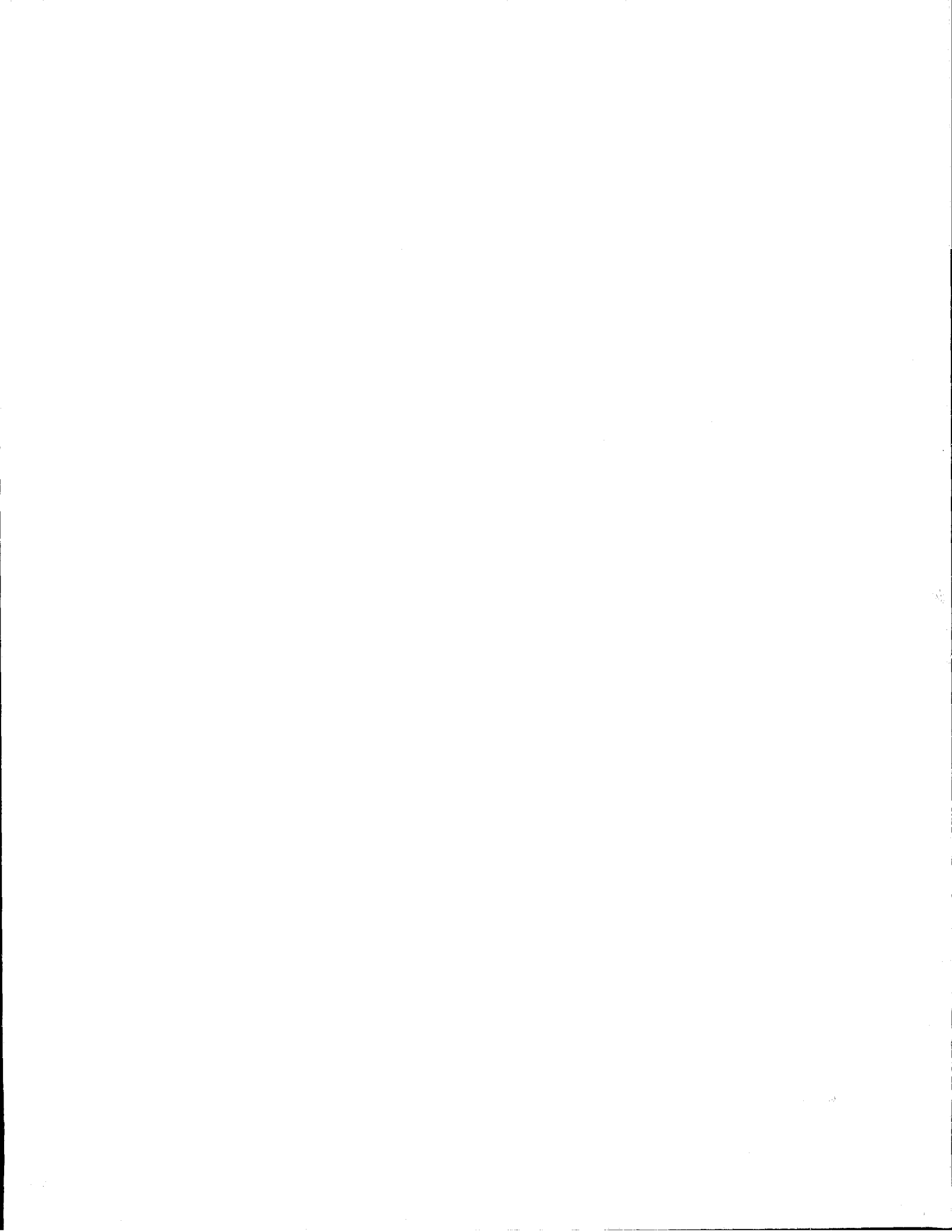


Table 2

Age and Sex for all Referrals to the Juvenile Court Services Unit (including referrals to District Attorney)

	Male	% of row	Female	% of row	Total	Referred to District Attorney	% of row
Age 10 and under	10	83%	2	17%	12	5	42%
Age 11	12	100%	0	---	12	2	17%
Age 12	10	77%	3	23%	13	4	31%
Age 13	30	73%	11	27%	41	10	24%
Age 14	44	79%	12	21%	56	38	68%
Age 15	95	90%	10	10%	105	64	61%
Age 16	65	73%	24	27%	89	52	58%
Age 17	83	87%	12	13%	95	54	57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>54%</b>

Table 3

Intake Disposition by Type of Offense for all  
Referrals to the Court Services Unit

August 1977 through November 1977

	Referred to D.A.	% of row	Counseled & Release	% of row	Informal Disposition	% of row	Referred to Agency	% of row	Held Open	% of row	Row Total	% of Column
Violent Victimization	25	93%	2	7%	0	--	0	--	0	--	27	6%
Non-Violent Victimization (property)	160	64%	70	28%	2	1%	2	1%	17	7%	251	59%
Public Peace & Security Violation	6	33%	6	33%	0	--	0	--	6	33%	18	4%
Drug Violation	13	43%	11	37%	1	3%	1	3%	4	13%	30	7%
Traffic Violation	17	53%	14	44%	0	--	1	3%	0	--	32	8%
Status Offense	8	14%	31	54%	5	9%	8	14%	5	9%	57	14%
Misc. Violation (victimless)	0	--	6	75%	0	--	1	12%	1	12%	8	2%
Column Total	229	54%	140	33%	8	2%	13	3%	33	8%	423	

The remaining objective under this goal is to place 50% of youths who go to court into community work projects as an alternative disposition. In the two quarterly reports received by WCCJ for the period that the intake unit has been operating, 36 (27%) of the 131 juveniles involved in delinquency proceedings were reportedly assigned to work projects. Although this number is far less than the stated objective of 50%, the Juvenile Court Services Unit does not have any direct responsibility for the number of cases disposed in this way. In retrospect, it is questionable whether this is an appropriate objective, since an effective intake unit would screen out most of the less serious cases which would be the ones most likely to be deferred and assigned to a work project. This objective is more representative of the court services unit as originally proposed than it is of the intake unit that was finally funded.



### III. Project Impact

The project has established an operation that should be able to achieve its detention screening objectives within the next year. It has achieved its court intake objectives and should continue to maintain that level of performance. The one alternative disposition objective which is the responsibility of the Juvenile Court Services Unit has also been achieved. All of these objectives are direct measures of the performance of the Juvenile Court Services Unit. Although the achievement of these objectives ensures better and more consistent services for juveniles in the county, none of them concern the broader impact of the court services unit on the local criminal justice system. This section examines the impact of the unit in this broader sense, focusing on the possible consequences of the court intake screening. Detention screening is also an important responsibility of the Juvenile Court Services Unit but its potential impact is less extensive and it has been functional for only a short time.

Before July 1, 1977 referrals to juvenile court were not systematically screened. Police agencies referred cases to the District Attorney if they felt the offense warranted prosecution. Cases that were considered less serious were handled within the juvenile bureau of the police agency, with the youths involved being referred to other agencies or simply turned over to their parents. The District Attorney's office reviewed all the cases it received and drafted and filed petitions on most of them. A few cases were returned to the law enforcement agencies because the District Attorney felt they could or should not be prosecuted.

Since commencement of intake screening by the Juvenile Court Services Unit, law enforcement agencies refer cases to it rather than the District Attorney's office. The Juvenile Court Services Unit diverts some of the juveniles while referring the most serious cases to the District Attorney. Aside from this referral process, the police agencies and the District Attorney's office basically function as they did before the implementation of this project. The ultimate utility of the intake screening operation depends on its acceptance by these agencies and the court, as well as its effectiveness. In the long term, an intake project of this type might be expected to have some measurable impact in at least three areas:

1. The dispositions of juveniles by local law enforcement agencies;
2. The subsequent behavior of the juveniles referred to the unit; and
3. The efficiency or "productivity" of the juvenile court.

The limited data available makes it difficult to assess impact in these areas. The data that is available, however, is presented here.

A. Law Enforcement Dispositions

The initial dispositions of juveniles by law enforcement agencies may show changes over time if the intake unit is considered to be a competent screening and referral unit. If the intake unit gains such acceptance, the local police agencies will likely do less counseling and referral to other agencies and instead refer more of the youth to the court for services. Thus, law enforcement personnel can be freed to perform other police functions. PES staff examined the data submitted by Kenosha County law enforcement agencies to the Wisconsin Crime Information Bureau to see if there is any evidence of such trends. Tables 4 and 5 represent the disposition data supplied to the Crime Information Bureau by these agencies for August through November, 1977. These are the same months for which the court intake data presented earlier was collected. Although the disposition categories given are not very specific, they are the only ones used by the Crime Information Bureau. Most of the youths represented in the second row of these two tables were referred to court, with only a few referred to probation or parole.

The Kenosha Police Department data (Table 4) is separated from the data of the other police agencies in the county because:

1. The city police handle the majority of the juvenile crime cases;
2. Their referral trends seem to be different than those of the other law enforcement agencies; and
3. Additional comparison data is kept by the police on the kinds of referrals they make.

Although the question is compounded by the large fluctuations in the number of referrals, there are no apparent changes in the types of police dispositions that could be attributed to the intake screening. There was a lower proportion of referrals to court in 1977 and a higher proportion of cases handled within the department, but this may be due to an increase in the number of status offenders. (This increase was observed in the raw data but not tabulated).

The dispositions of juveniles by the other police agencies in the county, as presented in Table 5, do show changes that may be related to the work of the intake unit. There is a pronounced increase in the proportion of cases referred to court and a reciprocal decrease in the

TABLE 4

Type of Disposition by Month and Year, as Reported to  
The Wisconsin Crime Information Bureau by the Kenosha Police Department

	August		September		October		November	
	1977	1976	1977	1976	1977	1976	1977	1976
Handled within the Department	42	43	59	46	81	37	63	40
% of column	34%	22%	31%	33%	45%	26%	33%	27%
Referred to Court or Probation	24	91	60	24	37	51	53	42
% of column	20%	45%	31%	17%	20%	36%	28%	29%
Referred to Welfare Agency	56	67	72	71	63	53	75	65
% of column	46%	33%	38%	50%	35%	38%	39%	44%
Referred to Other Police Agencies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% of column	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total Offenses	122	201	191	141	181	141	191	147

TABLE 5

Type of Disposition by Month and Year, as reported to the Wisconsin Crime Information Bureau by the Kenosha County Sheriff's Office, the Twin Lakes Police Department and the UW-Parkside Police Department

	August		September		October		November	
	1977	1976	1977	1976	1977	1976	1977	1976
Handled within the Department	53	59	29	52	41	43	18	34
% of column	60%	51%	39%	55%	53%	48%	28%	45%
Referred to Court or Probation	26	30	37	24	29	24	29	11
% of column	30%	26%	50%	25%	37%	27%	45%	15%
Referred to Welfare Agency	9	11	8	11	8	15	12	21
% of column	10%	10%	11%	12%	10%	17%	19%	30%
Referred to Other Police Agencies	0	15	0	8	0	7	5	5
% of column	--	13%	--	8%	--	8%	8%	7%
Total Offenses	88	115	74	95	78	89	64	71

proportion of cases referred to "welfare agencies." This may indicate, as hypothesized, that these agencies are referring youths to the Juvenile Court Services Unit rather than to other agencies. This interpretation is supported by the judgment of the supervisor of the Juvenile Division of the Sheriff's Office who reported that almost all juveniles with prosecutable offenses are now referred to court. This number was estimated to be twice as many as in 1976.

As mentioned earlier, the Kenosha Police Department, Juvenile Aid Bureau keeps additional data on the types of dispositions it makes. This data is more detailed than that available through the Crime Information Bureau. A review of that data shows that the Juvenile Aid Bureau utilizes a variety of agency resources including County Social Services; County Youth Advocates, Crisis Interventions, and others. Since this data includes contacts with youths not actually arrested, the monthly totals of juveniles are higher than those in the Crime Information Bureau tables. The data was condensed into categories similar to those in the Crime Information Bureau reports in order to look again for any evidence of intake screening impact. This summary, presented in Table 6, does not manifest any of the hypothesized trends. There were fewer referrals to other agencies in 1977 but the difference was made up in the "turned over to parents" category, with court referrals staying about the same.

Upon comparison of the two types of city police data, that is, the Juvenile Aid Bureau monthly data to the Crime Information Bureau data, it is evident that the number of youths recorded as referred to court is consistently higher in the Juvenile Aid Bureau data. Since juveniles referred to court must have been arrested, the Crime Information Bureau and Juvenile Aid Bureau figures should be very close. Both data sources use the juvenile as the unit of measure and the initial police disposition as the basis for classification. No one contacted in Kenosha County could explain the discrepancy. Regarding the possible impact of the court services unit, the interpretations of the two tables of Police Department data were similar. These interpretations may be accurate even though there must be doubt about the overall reliability of these data.

B. Subsequent Juvenile Behavior

While most of the expected impact of an intake unit concerns its affect upon referrals and the functioning of the juvenile court system, the behavior of some youths, particularly some of those diverted from court proceedings, should also be affected. Through proper counseling, referral to a social service agency, or perhaps through the diversion itself, a youth may be persuaded to change

Table 6

Type of Disposition by Month and Year, as reported in the  
Juvenile Aid Bureau Report of the Kenosha Police Department

	August		September		October		November	
	1977	1976	1977	1976	1977	1976	1977	1976
Referred to Court or D.A.	56	93	43	60	75	63	65	79
% of column	25%	33%	19%	22%	30%	29%	30%	31%
Referred to Other Agency	89	120	88	125	76	87	78	109
% of column	39%	43%	38%	46%	31%	40%	36%	43%
Turned Over to Parents	82	69	100	86	95	66	73	67
% of column	36%	24%	43%	32%	39%	31%	34%	26%
Total Offenses	227	282	231	271	246	216	216	255

his/her behavior. There is little information available to assess such changes and to do so would be a major evaluation in itself. In the intake data that was examined, there is a notation to indicate if a youth referred to the unit had been counseled and released earlier, after a previous referral. Thirty-six (8.5%) of the 423 cases referred during the four month sample period had been counseled and released previously by the Juvenile Court Services Unit. This number involves only one intake disposition (although probably the most lenient) over a period of five months (the period of Juvenile Court Services Unit's operation at the time). It may be an indication of the Unit's "failure rate." There is no data available to make a comparison, therefore, judgments are difficult to make. Twenty-six (72%) of the 36 repeat referrals were referred to the District Attorney the second time.

C. Juvenile Court Efficiency

The efficiency of the juvenile court is the last area in which impact was hypothesized. Efficiency or "productivity" is difficult to define for a court. Because of the work of an intake unit, a juvenile court should presumably process the most serious cases. Less serious cases, those not in need of court review, should be screened out by the intake unit. This should result in more attention and resources being focused on the more critical cases and possibly a reduction in court backlog and case processing time.

To see if the type of cases being processed by the court were different after the Juvenile Court Services Unit began operation, PES staff took a random sample of 40 delinquency cases that were referred to and disposed of by the court during August through November, 1977. These were compared to a similar sample from the same months in 1976. Table 7 presents a breakdown of the cases sampled by type of offense. For this breakdown, two of the usually less serious property crimes are taken out of "non-violent victimization" and presented separately. These are "operating a motor vehicle without owner's consent" (OMVWOC) and shoplifting. The distribution of offenses for the two years is not noticeably different. In 1977, the referred property crimes may be slightly more serious but there may be a more diverse group of offenses in 1976. Neither sample appears significantly more serious than the other.

The offense categories in Table 7 do not actually convey very much information about the seriousness of a crime. It was postulated that the dispositions of these sampled cases might convey more information about the seriousness of the crimes and, in fact, the seriousness of each

TABLE 7

TYPE OF OFFENSE BY YEAR FOR SAMPLE OF COURT DISPOSITION

	1977	1976
Violent Victimization	1	2
Non-Violent Victimization	26	20
OMVWOC*	4	5
Shoplifting	3	7
Public Peace & Security Violation	1	2
Drug Violation	1	3
Traffic Violation	3	1
Misc. Violation	1	0
Total	40	40

\*Operating a motor vehicle without owner's consent

TABLE 8

DISPOSITION BY YEAR (AND PRIOR REFERRALS) FOR SAMPLE OF COURT DISPOSITION

	1977	# with Prior Referral(s)	1976	# with Prior Referral(s)
Transfer Custody - State	4	3	3	3
Transfer Custody - County	1	0	1	0
County Supervision	10	3	18	9
Defer - Obligation	21	5	13	3
Dismissed	4	2	5	2
Total	40	13	40	17



youth's behavior as a whole. Table 8 shows the dispositions of these cases and also the number of youths who had prior referrals to court (Note that the number of prior referrals is not shown, only the number of juveniles who had prior referral(s). The number of actual referrals are 19 in 1977 and 27 in 1976.) In each year, 31 cases were either deferred or the youth put on county supervision. Only one more youth was put into the state's custody in 1977 than in 1976. The only apparent difference between the two years is that more cases were deferred in 1977 and fewer youth put on supervision. In deferring a case, the judge imposes obligations upon the youth, such as working in community work projects. This is generally the most lenient or unobtrusive type of disposition. The most common obligation imposed appeared to be writing the United States Bill of Rights a specified number of times.

From the limited data presented in Table 7 and 8 there appears to be no significant difference in the types of cases referred to court in the two years. If a judgment were to be made based on the types of dispositions, the 1977 cases would seem less serious because of the higher number of deferments. It is clear from discussions with police, prosecutors, and court staff, however, that deferment and the use of an alternative disposition reflects the sentencing philosophy of the juvenile court judge. This is the reason the project retained objectives for developing community work projects even though its main emphasis is on intake and detention screening. Because of the judge's preference for alternative dispositions for a wide variety of offenses, the deferment of a case is not a good indicator of its seriousness.

A note should be made regarding the accuracy of this court data. In both 1977 and 1976 the lists of cases referred to juvenile court during the sampled periods were obtained from the District Attorney's rosters. However, the manner of keeping these rosters changed between the two periods. The type of offense and disposition data was obtained from the District Attorney's file in 1977 and from the court's records in 1976. The manner of record keeping in both of these offices changed to some degree between the two periods. In each period the data was gathered from the most expedient source. Although every effort was made to assure the comparability of the two periods, there were differences in definitions that may have harmed the accuracy of the data.

D. Discussion of Project Impact

Although the Juvenile Court Services Unit is clearly doing a good deal of work and is performing at or above the level prescribed by its goals and objectives, the intake screening has not had much visible impact upon the local criminal justice system. There is evidence that the County Sheriff's Office is utilizing the intake screening services; however, there appears to be no change in the operation of the Kenosha Police Department or in the types of cases going to court. It is possible that impact cannot be measured by the data that is available or that visible impact will not be realized until sometime in the future. Nonetheless, the available information does seem perplexing. An examination of the flow of juveniles through the juvenile court during the periods surveyed shows why there is confusion.

During August through November 1977, Kenosha County law enforcement agencies reported 989 arrests of juveniles to the Crime Information Bureau. According to Juvenile Aid Bureau reports for the city police and the Crime Information Bureau reports for the other police agencies, 361 cases were referred to the Juvenile Court Services Unit during that period.\* Removing 57 referrals from other sources, 366 of the 423 referrals to the Juvenile Court Services Unit were from the county police agencies. Considering the possible sources of error, these numbers (361 and 366) are very close. The Juvenile Court Services Unit referred 229 cases (of the original 423) to the District Attorney in this period and the District Attorney's roster (complaint book) revealed 202 cases received. These numbers should differ slightly because the latter does not include status offenders nor most of the cases waived to adult court. Since the time lag for this process is very small (a couple of days), the bulk of cases can be accounted for during the 1977 period.

During the same period in 1976, 1,000 arrests of juveniles were reported to the Crime Information Bureau by county police agencies. Again, using the Juvenile Aid Bureau reports for the city police and the Crime Information Bureau for the remaining agencies, 384 cases were referred to court (District Attorney) during this period. Since there was no intake unit, these cases plus several from other sources should have been received by the District Attorney's office. The District Attorney's roster (a list of juvenile referrals kept by a clerk) revealed 219 cases received. In 1976 this roster included most of the status offenders referred to court. This

\*Juvenile Aid Bureau data is used here for the Police Department because its "referred to court" totals seem to be more accurate than those in the Crime Information Bureau data.

number is far less than the number reportedly referred by law enforcement. Although at least 165 cases seem to have disappeared in these four months, no one contacted in Kenosha County (including staff from the District Attorney's office, the court, police, social services and other agencies) could explain what might have happened to them.

In the two periods examined, there are a similar number of arrests, police referrals to the court, and cases received by the District Attorney. In the 1977 period, there were 194 cases diverted by the court services unit between the referral to court and reception by the District Attorney. These diversions are the major visible result of the work of the unit. In 1976 a substantial number of cases were also eliminated between these two points, but through some unclear process. The unexplained "diversion" of this number of cases in 1976 obscures the potential impact of the unit's work.

Summary and Conclusion

Overall, the District Attorney's office and the juvenile court seem to be processing about the same numbers of juveniles now as each did before the implementation of the Juvenile Court Services Unit. Not only are the District Attorney's roster counts similar for the two periods examined, but the total number of petitions filed in juvenile court in 1977 and 1976 are about equal. Table 9 shows the number of petitions as tabulated by the Kenosha County Juvenile Court.

Table 9

Number of Petitions by Year

Petitions	1977	1976
Delinquency	472	476
Supervision	54	54
Total	526	532

Although the Juvenile Court Services Unit operated for only six months of 1977, any difference it may have had on the number of referrals to prosecution/petition (a decrease would have been predicted) should be reflected

in Table 9. Since there is clearly no difference, it is evident that the "missing" 1976 cases were disposed of before reaching the prosecution stage. Another reason this appears likely is because the cases prosecuted in 1977 and 1976 were so similar. Apparently, the less serious cases were screened out and disposed of earlier in 1976, just as in 1977.

It is unlikely that the District Attorney would have "diverted" or returned many cases without the cases being recorded on the roster. It is likely that these cases were somehow disposed of by law enforcement agencies. It is possible that some of the data presented, particularly the law enforcement data, is in error or has been misinterpreted. However, the 1977 data, does "add up". It seems likely, that in 1976 some cases were referred to the Juvenile Court Services Unit in 1977. If this is the case, then the Juvenile Court Services Unit has assumed more of the system's workload than is initially evident from the data. Any judgments about its overall impact upon the local criminal justice system must be considered in this light.