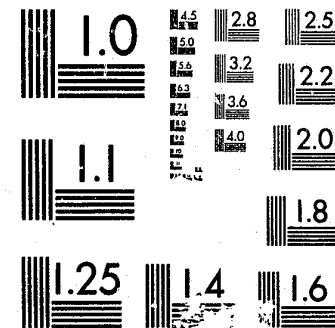


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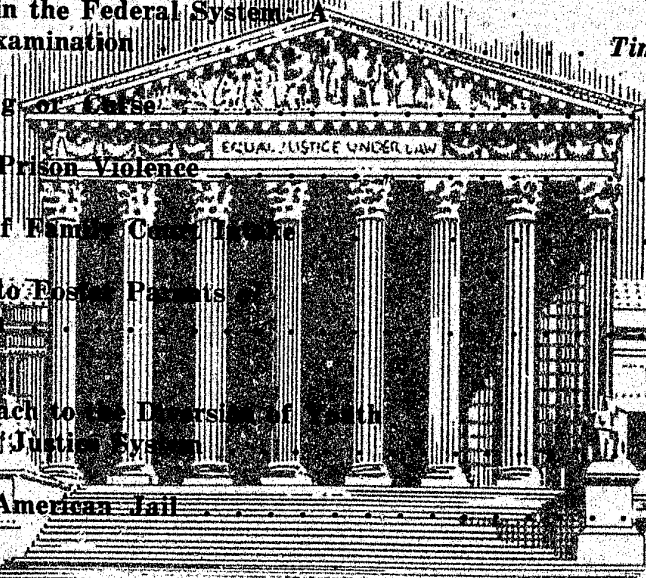
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# Federal Probation

The Future of Parole—In Rebuttal of S.1437 . . . . .	<i>Cecil C. McCall</i>
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Methadone: Blessing or Curse . . . . .	<i>George Gubar</i>
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# Federal Probation

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## This Issue in Brief

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### ACQUISITIONS

**The Future of Parole—In Rebuttal of S.1437.**—While S.1437 appears to deal with the problems of uncertainty and disparity in criminal sentences, it actually would cause more harm than good, asserts Cecil C. McCall, chairman of the U.S. Parole Commission. Disparity would increase with the elimination of the parole release function and judicial discretion would be needlessly restricted, he adds. Congress should preserve the gains made in the 1976 Parole Reorganization Act, and retain the Parole Commission in its present role as the term-setter for prison sentences of more than 1 year, he concludes.

**Social Climate and Prison Violence.**—Some explanations of prison violence center on the personal motives of chronically disruptive inmates, and assume that such persons are violence-prone in all sorts of settings, asserts author Hans Toch. Other explanations have centered on prison conditions, but have over-generalized prison impact, or (more frequently) they have highlighted deterrent features, such as security measures. This article examines and illustrates ways in which prison subenvironments may contribute to the

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<b>Criminal Diversion in the Federal System: A Congressional Examination.</b> —Timothy Kevin McPike, deputy counsel to the Senate Subcommittee on Improvements in Judicial Machinery, examines the history of Federal involvement with the pretrial diversion concept, including a chronology, a brief description of the contents of past legislative attempts, and an indepth examination of the current legislative proposal. The hearings held by the Senate and the position taken by the Subcommittee are thoroughly discussed as they reflect the trend in current thinking on several important issues in the pretrial diversion area.	The Future of Parole—In Rebuttal of S.1437 . . . . . Cecil C. McCall	3	56665
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**Methadone: Blessing or Curse.**—The use of methadone in the detoxification and maintenance of narcotic addiction has been accepted as a viable treatment method. However, diversion and abuse of methadone are becoming serious problems. This article by Dr. George Gubar does not advocate one position or the other concerning the long-standing controversy about the use of methadone. Rather, there is an attempt to describe the historical background of methadone, its diversion, and some suggestions as to possible approaches to reduce its abuse.

## One County's Approach to the Diversion of Youth From the Juvenile Justice System

BY JAMES J. FOWKES

Executive Director, Youth Services Agency, Doylestown (Bucks County), Pennsylvania

WITH the development of more systematic diversion, communication and planning, hundreds of Bucks County youth are being seen just prior to or soon after initial contact with the law enforcement system and are being offered service options other than juvenile court. In 1975, nearly 1,000 youth were petitioned to the County's juvenile court for status offenses. Hundreds were adjudicated delinquents for status offenses. As of the first 3 months of 1978, less than 25 status offenders have been petitioned to court and only two have been adjudicated as ungovernable dependents. Bucks County efforts have resulted in greater accessibility and accountability of services requested by parents, police, school personnel and agencies as well as by youth themselves. The systematic diversion of youth from the court process has led to more appropriate resolution of crisis and conflicts developing around the unacceptable behavior of troubled youth and families as well as to greater cost effectiveness. Approximately 75 percent of the youth being diverted are directed into general community resources and private programs at a further cost benefit to public agencies of the County.

County. In 1975, despite the existence of numerous youth serving programs and despite the expenditure of millions of dollars annually for services to delinquent, dependent and deprived youth, there were very few alternatives to court involvement for troublesome youth. There was a lack of active collaboration among departments and programs to appropriately handle the increased number of such youth. There was an absence of effective methods at the local level for referring status offenders to services, and follow up to confirm the suitability and delivery of services was inadequate.

If youth were to be diverted from court involvement, a process needed to be mobilized to foster maximum use of already existing community programs and resources outside the juvenile justice system. To achieve such utilization, it was considered important that mechanisms be developed to provide for increased service accessibility, communication, interaction, and mutual support.

Bucks County, which has a population of approximately 450,000, of which approximately 80,000 are youth between 10 and 17 years of age, has a total land area of over 600 square miles. Approximately 57 percent of the County's 160,000 children (ages birth to 17 years) live within 155 square miles or 25 percent of the County's total

### The Beginning

This was not always the situation in Bucks

land area. Approximately 43 percent of the County's children (ages birth to 17 years) live throughout the remaining 464 square miles. It was reported in 1975 data from the Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Research and Development, that between 5,000 and 6,000 of these youth come into some contact with law enforcement officers each year. It was estimated that upwards of 1,000 such cases involve serious or repeated status offenses. Such behavior often involved running away, truancy, drinking and being unruly or uncontrollable.

Beginning with a resolution by the County Board of Judges in February of 1975, aggressive action was taken in Bucks County to develop a systematic means of diverting status offenders from the juvenile justice system. Joint judicial and executive policy toward this end was formalized in a County Resolution of August 1975 establishing the Youth Services Agency. Working in conjunction with efforts at the community, school, students, police and court levels to divert youth from formal court involvement, the Youth Services Agency (Y.S.A.) has been able to implement effective approaches for: (1) expanding the use of community resources, (2) improving service accountability, (3) increasing community awareness and interest in the needs of youth, and (4) diverting youth from juvenile court.

#### Broad Based Support

The general management of the Y.S.A. is vested in the Y.S.A. Board of Directors. Members of this Board consist of: three county commissioners; three judges; three school superintendents; three adult citizens from the private sector, two youths under age 18; the president of the County Police Chiefs Association; Chief of the Juvenile Probation Department; the Director of the Child Welfare Department; the Director of C.E.T.A. Programs; the Director of the Drug and Alcohol Commission; the Director of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Department; the Director of Special Education for the countywide Education Unit; the County Administrator; and others participating from time to time on various task force groups.

The Y.S.A. Board meetings are held twice each month. One meeting is held to discuss current business and issues pertinent to the operation of the Y.S.A. The second meeting is set aside for a panel discussion on related youth needs and issues. These panel discussions serve as a form for

the recurrent exchange of ideas and viewpoints of community representatives, professionals, governmental leaders, and the youth themselves.

The youth serving and law enforcement agencies working in concert with the Y.S.A. staff include those participating on the Y.S.A. Board as well as the front line staff of private programs, of district justices and magistrates, of schools and of police departments throughout the County. From the beginning, local contact with youth by police was seen as a crucial point of diversion in that it precedes formal arrest or petition. It was suggested that youngsters referred to the Y.S.A. at the point of police contact would not be subjected to extensive legal processing and labeling that might occur if they were diverted at a later point. The Y.S.A. explored this notion with the Police Chiefs Association of the County at a meeting attended by the district attorney of Bucks County and the County's chief of juvenile probation. Following supportive statements on the concept by the district attorney and the chief of juvenile probation, the police chiefs expressed their interest in implementing the diversion system and suggested that regional meetings be arranged to discuss the concept with the officers in their respective departments. One of the major efforts of the three regional meetings subsequently conducted was to convince the officers that the Y.S.A. would be effective in dealing with troubled youth and in obtaining alternative services.

In addition to regional meetings, staff also met individually with police officers assigned to work with youth. The staff assured them that the Y.S.A. would be able to handle disruptive and troubled youth brought to their attention and listened to the concern and advice of officers regarding the problems of youth and the need for service. Through repeated contacts and close communication with these police officers, the staff eventually established a personal rapport with them. The mutual respect and commitment developed between the Y.S.A. and the police has been essential to the successful diversion of youth from the juvenile court.

Although local contact with troubled youth by school personnel was viewed as a step removed from the law enforcement community, it was nevertheless considered an important point of diversion. A process similar to that carried out with the police was conducted within the school community. Presentations were made to the Bucks County Student Forum (High School Students);

the Association of School Administrators and to groups of school teachers and guidance staff throughout the 13 school districts of the County. The establishment of close working relationships between the Y.S.A. staff and the school personnel has been a key factor in the successful diversion of the youth from involvement with the juvenile justice system.

The shared benefits most often expressed by the police and schools has been a reduction in the extended time and confusion that often resulted previously when they attempted to obtain help for a youngster. In addition to working Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., the Y.S.A. is available for 24-hour on-call crisis coverage through the police radio room which functions as a central emergency communications center for the entire county.

#### Agency Operations

Y.S.A. operations consist of several components. Staff operates from two offices which are located 22 miles apart. There are currently 11 full-time employees. Field placement opportunities are offered for student interns, and volunteers are utilized. To date 3,000 hours of service have been rendered on behalf of youth by approximately 100 volunteers. Forty of these volunteers make up a network of overnight and weekend housing resources for youth who were formerly placed in a lockup facility.

The intake and referral component receives referrals from juvenile probation officers, police, schools, parents, youth and agencies; classifies the youngster's need; links the youth with appropriate public and private resources in the community; and maintains regular followup on each youth. A minimum of one followup is scheduled 1 week after the first contact with the youth. Subsequently, a minimum of three followups occur in 3-week intervals and then monthly thereafter if all is proceeding smoothly. Regularly scheduled followups generally involve: contact with family and youth; contact with the agency actively addressing the problem; and contact with the initial referring agent.

Additional contacts and field interaction also occur. For instance, crisis intervention is provided for youth who require more immediate attention. With waiting lists of 3 weeks to 4 months in existing agencies, there are youth who police and school authorities feel are not getting service when need or when alternatives to court are

requested. These youth receive more active Y.S.A. contact while waiting for an appointment with an agency or while displaying what some call a "lack of motivation." In some cases, Y.S.A. suggests behavioral contracting. Contracts are prepared in positive terms and involve a direct exchange of responsibilities and privileges between youth and parents. Staff serves as temporary facilitator, performance evaluator, and arbitrator.

A life skills component has also been implemented to support the development of practical living skills by 16- and 17-year-olds caught in the situation of being "on their own" before various personal and social adjustment issues have been resolved. A Life Skills Counselor assists these youth in pursuing community resources such as employment, living quarters and educational programs.

To succeed in the above efforts and to have some impact on the goal orientation of the so-called problem youngsters, approaches need to be inclusive of the broader community. To this end, the Y.S.A. is actively engaged in the development of ways to increase opportunities for communication and interaction between governmental officials, school personnel, law enforcement officers, citizen volunteers, service agencies, community organization, parents and youth.

Growing from the Y.S.A. Board structure established to bring the various sectors of the community together, three examples of such communication and interaction include: (1) A monthly panel discussion on youth related issues and needs; (2) the publication of *Closer-Ties*, a bimonthly newsletter; and (3) the provision of the Resource Information Bank Service (RIBS).

As mentioned earlier, the panel discussions have provided an informal forum for regularly scheduled dialogue on various youth related issues. Each discussion has been transcribed by a court stenographer, and an edited compilation of the discussions is being prepared. Topics have included: "Parent-Child Conflicts"; "Integrated Service-Delivery"; "Law Enforcement"; "Parent Training"; "Youth Needs"; "The Status Offender"; "Addiction"; and "Interdepartmental Cooperation."

Publication of *Closer-Ties* is intended to keep the community informed of Y.S.A. activities and to serve as an additional opportunity for communication. Articles are written by local government leaders, youth, volunteers, school officials,

agency representatives, and police officers. The assumption behind this newsletter is that the sharing of information can promote closer ties among those interested in the successful development of youth.

The Resource Information Bank (RIBS) is a cross-referenced library on a wide assortment of programs, services, community issues, legislation, regulations and other subjects related to children and youth. Anyone wishing to include information on their programs or area of interest can submit it to the Y.S.A. offices for deposit in this central "bank." The resource bank is open to anyone interested in reviewing or using material for reference purposes.

One final aspect of Y.S.A. operations is its research and planning work. Research has centered on the assessment and identification of youth needs. Steps are being taken to develop services for youth in accordance with needs based planning. During 1976 and 1977, the Y.S.A. conducted a Community Resources Inventory and Needs Survey among 30 youth serving agencies and 40 police departments in the County. A Youth Needs Survey was also administered in 1977 by the Y.S.A. in nine public school districts and four parochial high schools to a total random sample of 1,289 youth between the ages of 12 and 18 years. The data collected in these surveys is currently being analyzed. Interim reports will be prepared to assist in planning activities during 1978 and 1979. The first report was scheduled to be completed in June of 1978. One purpose for this research is to provide the County with base-line information concerning the needs of youth as perceived by youth as well as by professionals

working with them. It is assumed that such information will foster more responsive planning for and with youth.

Y.S.A. planning efforts during 1977 also included preparation of the 1978 Annual Plan for Children and Youth Social Services in Bucks County. This Plan projects those services to be funded under the Pennsylvania law known as Act 148 and as mandated by the Pennsylvania Public Welfare Code. Services involved include: adoption, counseling, service planning, day treatment, foster care, shelter care, day care, protective services, child abuse services, group homes, institutional facilities, secure residential and detention services, homemakers and supervised independent living. These services will reach about 6,000 children and youth during 1978.

#### *Conclusion*

As described above, the organization and activities of the Y.S.A. demonstrate one County's determination and commitment to deal more effectively with an acting out but noncriminal segment of the youth population. However, the task called for more than diversion from court. It called for the organization of resources which would impact the situation of the youth following diversion.

Action taken on the County's 1975 Resolution has engendered: (1) broader use of existing community resources, (2) greater service accountability, (3) increased awareness and interest in the needs of youth, and (4) expanded opportunities for youth to resolve problems they encounter while growing up.

**T**HE NEED for effective diversion programs to help the juvenile offender has led to many innovative approaches to reduce juvenile recidivism. Effective alternatives are sorely needed within the field.

—THOMAS R. COLLINGWOOD, PH.D., et al.

# END