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Monitor Report
Mazomanie Police Youth Officer Project

Grant Number 76-05-23D-SC-2785-6

by
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Program Evaluation Section
Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice
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ACQUISITIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Police Youth Officer Program of Mazomanie was funded under 1976 Program 23D: Juvenile Justice Standards and Goals Implementation. The project has developed two major concerns: 1) A law enforcement component, which centers on the investigation of complaints, apprehension of suspects and the disposition of cases; and 2) A community service perspective, which seeks to inform and educate the public including juveniles of resources available.

Although in operation less than eight months, the Youth Officer project has made every effort to divert youth from court. The absence of accurate baseline data prohibits a comparison with the pre-project period, however. A foundation for the use of local and county resources to assist youth both in and out of trouble has been realized. Referral arrangements have been developed and the Youth Officer works to maintain close contacts and cooperation with those agencies. Community interaction between the Youth Officer and parents, teachers, youth and school officials has been initiated, and is progressing well.

MAZOMANIE YOUTH-OFFICER PROGRAM

A. Project Description

1. General Description

Grant Number: 76-05-23D-SC-2785-6

Project Supervisor: John C.H. Mueller, Chief of Police

2. Budget: Federal Share - \$12,831.00

State Buy-In - \$ 737.00

Local Share - \$ 738.00

Total Approved Budget - \$14,306.00

B. Background

The Mazomanie Youth Officer grant was initially submitted for first-round funding consideration in October 1976. Due to regional priorities and subsequent lack of funds, the application was denied without prejudice. The grant was resubmitted and funding was approved in March 1977. The Youth-Officer project had been operational for eight months at the time of this report. The Juvenile Officer, Michele McClung, began her duties in June, 1977.

The major impetus for this project came from within the Mazomanie Police Department. The key concern was the ever increasing number of juvenile contacts. According to the grant application, in 1975 there were 43 referrals handled jointly by the Mazomanie Police and Dane County Sheriff's Office. By May of 1976, one month before project initiation, that figure had already been surpassed with 49 referrals. "In March, April and May 1976, Mazomanie was the second highest in the number of referrals made county-wide, excluding the city of Madison." The problem was further compounded by the fact that, at the time of the grant application, the Mazomanie Police Department was a one-man police department. As such, both juvenile and adult responsibilities were handled by the same individual. Funding was approved with the understanding that the Youth-Officer would be full-time and not part-time as was originally requested. In addition, the Youth Officer would assist in providing services to the entire Wisconsin Heights School District, (Black Earth Elementary School, Mazomanie Elementary School, and Wisconsin Heights High School). The Youth Officer would investigate offenses committed by youth, work extensively in the area of delinquency prevention, and maintain lines of communication with the Juvenile Court, Schools, Social Agencies and the parents.

C. Service Delivery Format

Beginning with the fall school term (1977) the Youth Officer became available for consultation in juvenile delinquency prevention, providing informational lectures and offering discussions on a variety of juvenile-delinquency related topics.

In addition, a referral process was established for the requesting of services of the Youth-Officer for Youth offenses. The Black Earth Elementary School would contact the Black Earth Police Department or the Dane County Sheriff's Department who in turn would request the services of the Youth Officer. The Wisconsin Heights High School would initially contact the Dane County Sheriff's Department who would then request the services of the Youth Officer. The Mazomanie Elementary School would contact the Mazomanie Police Department. The request procedure was established to eliminate jurisdictional complications.

For classroom presentations and delinquency prevention measures, the Black Earth Elementary School was asked to route a written request to the Black Earth Police Department with a carbon copy being sent to the Mazomanie Police Department. The Wisconsin Heights High School was asked to send a written request to the Dane County Sheriff's Department with a carbon copy being sent to the Mazomanie Police Department. Those agencies would then contact the Mazomanie Police Department. The Mazomanie Elementary School would send their requests directly to the Mazomanie Police Department. This arrangement was worked out and agreed upon by the Mazomanie Chief of Police and Youth Officer, and by the Dane County Juvenile Officer and the Black Earth Police Chief.

D. Referrals - Agency Interaction

The Mazomanie Youth Officer has developed referral procedures and agreements with agencies which appear to cover most of the juvenile situations that are likely to be encountered. Most used referral agencies are:

Dane County Department of Social Services
Dane County Youth Service Bureau
RAFT (Referral and Follow Through)
Big Brothers
Big Sisters
Dane County Home Detention
University of Wisconsin Mental Health Center
University of Wisconsin Detoxification Center

E. Staff Management

The Youth Officer is supervised by Chief John Mueller, the Project Supervisor. Both Chief Mueller and the Youth Officer note 'sufficient' frequency of contact, as well as a good working relationship.

F. Progress Made Towards Fulfillment of Project Goals and Objectives

Goal 1:

Increase Police-Youth Contacts within the Communities in a Positive Sense.

Activity 1: Hiring a Police Youth Officer

The hiring process consisted of two separate panels of five members each. The Screening Panel processed the application on the basis of the information submitted by the applicant. The evaluations were graded on a point system and the top ten applicants were then given the opportunity to appear before the Oral Interview Panel. This panel again applied a point system on the basis of certain criteria; e.g., education, training in counseling, experience in investigatory work, community activities, etc. The scores of the Screening Panel and Oral Panel were combined and averaged. The names of the top four applicants were then submitted to the Police Chief/Project Director for final recommendation to the Police Committee of the Mazomanie Village Board. Michele McClung was hired over fifty-three (53) other applicants.

Activity 2: Provide Transportation for the Police Youth Officer in Job-Related Activities

An automobile has been leased for the use of the Police Youth Officer for job-related duties. According to the Project Director, the vehicle has allowed the Youth Officer an opportunity to be very visible in the community and on the street. Numerous home visits have been made to juveniles and their parents. Interviewing and counseling has been facilitated by visiting the juvenile in his/her home. Use of the vehicle has also allowed many more personal contacts with other agencies such as the Dane County Department of Social Services, Dane County Juvenile Court, and Dane County Sheriff's Department. In addition, the use of the car has made it possible for the Youth Officer to respond quickly to requests for juvenile police intervention.

Activity 3: Training

Training has centered on four areas of the Juvenile Justice system: Juvenile Court of Dane County, Juvenile District Attorney of Dane County, Dane County Sheriff's

Department and Dane County Department of Social Services. Topics covered in training included: record-keeping, court referral process, referral to social service agencies, investigation of juvenile offenses, Miranda Warnings and Court hearings and disposition. The Youth Officer is a member of the Wisconsin Juvenile Officers Association and the Dane County Juvenile Law Enforcement Association (DCJLEA). The Police Youth Officer attended the 25th Annual Retraining Conference on Juvenile Justice on October 5-7, 1977 at Wausau, Wisconsin.

Additional Activities

The Youth Officer provided police presence at two Wisconsin Heights Summer Recreation Program dances. Contacts were also made with youth through the Girl Scouts' Bicycle Registration and Safety Program in June 1977. In addition, the Police Youth Officer attended and continues to attend all extra-curricular events, i.e. football games, basketball games, dances, etc. At the Wisconsin Heights High School officials are pleased with her efforts to make herself available to students both to meet them and to answer any questions they may have. The Youth Officer has spent time meeting with local merchants in Mazomanie and explaining to them her functions and availability. Meetings with merchants are held on a regular basis to insure communication and uncover any concerns the merchants may have. The Youth Officer attended joint meetings of the Lions and the Jaycees to discuss her role in the community.

Goal 2: Provide the Schools with extended Youth Programs

A letter was sent to all school officials explaining the Youth Officer project and outlining the types of services to be provided along with a referral process for requesting such services. Personal visits were made to all school principals to introduce the project. A "Request for Police Youth Officer Services Form" has been developed for use by the various schools (see attachment A). A meeting with teachers at the Black Earth Elementary School and the Mazomanie Elementary School was held to discuss the services that could be provided by the Youth Officer. A mini-course in the area of law enforcement is tentatively planned for February 1978 for the Mazomanie Elementary School. The course is to run for one week with as many hours daily for that week as necessary.

The Police Youth Officer meets on a regular basis with students and teachers at the high school and two elementary schools. Formal and informal presentations on her role and general issues in the criminal justice system are offered. These contacts are in addition to any calls for service she may receive to work with troubled youth, i.e. counseling, referrals, etc.

School officials from all three schools involved in the project area indicated their admiration and satisfaction with the Police Youth Officer. Indeed, in telephone conversations with school officials general agreement on certain attributes of the Police Youth Officer surfaced. Specifically, officials believe that the Police Youth Officer's dedication to her work, follow-up on individual cases, and availability, at all times, to both school officials and youth for whatever reasons, were her strongest assets. All officials see the Police Youth Officer as an integral part of the community.

Goal 3

Improve Follow-up of Youth Cases in Police-Related Matters

Activity 4: Cooperating, Consulting and Working closely with Criminal Justice Agencies, Dane County Department of Social Services, and other Youth-Oriented Agencies.

According to the Youth Officer, once a juvenile comes to her attention the case is followed through until it passes through each component of the Juvenile Justice system. If an incident is a minor one or is a first offense, the juvenile is warned and released to the parent or guardian. Contact is periodically made with the Court or parent in an attempt to prevent further violation of the law. This contact frequently takes the form of informal visits coupled with supportive comments. Contact on a weekly basis is maintained with the District Attorney's Office when a juvenile is to be referred to court. This contact insures that the Youth Officer will be aware of the status of the particular case and can act accordingly. Cases referred to the Dane County Department of Social Services and other outside agencies are also followed by the Youth Officer. In addition the Youth Officer has utilized the Home Detention Program of the Juvenile Court as an effective means of follow-up on youth. The Youth Officer stays in close contact with the Home Detention Program Worker as a means to follow-up on the youth and the family.

Activity 5: Maintaining Accurate Records to Facilitate Follow-up of Youth Cases

The Youth Officer in concert with the Chief developed a case tracking system. The idea was borrowed from the Youth Officer in the Dane County Sheriff's Department. A case is tracked by entering the name of the youth, the referral date, referral source, case number, and offense or request for services. All such activities are tracked in the log. As a result, an observer can more effectively follow the program or action regarding a particular youth. In addition to the tracking system, the juvenile record-keeping within the Department has been reorganized. New filing cabinets were purchased with one entire cabinet being designated as juvenile files. Any entry into the files is logged on a file access sheet. An updated index system has also been developed to keep track of each youth who receives services from the Youth Officer. No privacy or security problems are in evidence.

Goal 4

Divert Youth from the Criminal Justice System

According to the Project Director and the Youth Officer, every effort has been made to divert youth from the criminal justice system when it is deemed possible. Status offenses and first-time minor offenses have been handled on a warned and released basis or as a referral on a voluntary basis to an outside social agency. The Youth Officer consults with the Dane County Department of Social Services to determine the most viable disposition for a particular youth. The Youth Officer has become familiar with all agencies and services available to youth within the community. Table 1 shows that during the project's first year of operation only 23% of all youth were referred to County Court.

Table 1

Warned/Release	Referred to Agency	Referred to Court	Totals
*Cases: 84 %: (55%)	33 (22%)	35 (23%)	152 (100%)

*Cases refer to the individual youth and not to the number of separate incidents in which he/she may have been involved.

The above data should be examined with the understanding that according to the Youth Officer, the Juvenile Court believes it is important and desirable to bring all delinquent and many status offenders before the Court. The Youth Officer feels that this tends to cause some problems when a major goal of the project is diversion of juveniles from the criminal justice system.

It is important to note that there are no statistics available to show the number of youth diverted from the criminal justice system for the same period one year ago. This is the result of the unique position of the Mazomanie Police Department. As a one-man department, accurate tracking and record-keeping for the disposition of youth was not formerly feasible due to manpower limitations.

In addition to the problem of an accurate data base, an explanation to those cases referred to Court is in order. The Juvenile Court acts on the recommendation report of the Youth Officer which accompanies the individual to the Court (Attachment B). The Court is not bound to the recommendation, however. Once an individual is referred to Court on an informal basis the Court may change it to a formal referral or vice versa. Indeed, some youths referred to Court are diverted to social service agencies. This is done in order to bring to the youth's attention the importance the Court attaches to counseling or other social services the youth needs. It is the opinion of the Youth Officer, however, that this system offers a good checks and balance system when dealing with youth. The experience of the Youth Officer has been that almost all recommendations sent to Court are acted upon, however. To date, of 35 juveniles referred to Court on a formal (N=27) and informal (N=8) basis, five recommendations were not acted upon. The five recommendations, as well as the youth, were dismissed because the youths were under twelve years of age.

Goal 5

Improve Contacts and Acceptance of those Youths from the Communities already involved with the Criminal Justice System, with Minimal Side Effects.

Activity 6: Being the Liaison Officer between the Mazomanie Police Department and the Parents/Guardian and the School System

Continual contact has been maintained between the Juvenile Officer and the families of those youths who have become involved in the criminal justice system. Parents have been encouraged to contact the Youth Officer to ask any questions they might have concerning the workings of the criminal justice system. Because of delays, parents and youth become alarmed, irritated and disillusioned. According to the Youth Officer, a real attempt to present the system in a fair and understandable manner has been made. Every effort is made to be fair and conscientious so those involved do not become "overwhelmed" by the process.

REQUEST FOR POLICE YOUTH OFFICER SERVICES

SCHOOL FORM

Goal 6Reduce by 10% the Number of Youths referred to
Juvenile Court

There are no statistics available to show the number of youth diverted from the criminal justice system for the same period one year ago. This is the result of the unique position of the Mazomanie Police Department. As a one-man department, accurate tracking and record-keeping for the disposition of youth was not formerly feasible due to manpower limitations.

Goal 7Increase the Clearance Rate of Youth Cases involved
in Status and Criminal Offenses

"Clearance" refers to Police Department solving reported incidents. A case may be cleared for the purpose of Police Department records but the case may still be considered "active" or "reopened." Originally, the Youth Officer project sought a clearance rate of 100%. After consultation with WCCJ a more realistic figure of 85% was determined. Table 2 below shows the clearance rate from June 1977 to November 1977:

Table 2

<u>% Cases Cleared June - November 1977</u>	
Cleared	132 (86%)
Pending	20 (14%)
Total Cases	152 (100%)

G. Summary

Although in operation less than eight months, the Youth Officer project has made every effort to divert youth from court. The absence of accurate baseline data prohibits a comparison with the pre-project period, however. A foundation for the use of local and county resources to assist youth both in and out of trouble has been realized. Referral arrangements have been developed and the Youth Officer works to maintain close contacts and cooperation with those agencies. Community interaction between the Youth Officer and parents, teachers, youth and school officials has been initiated, and is progressing well.

H. Recommendation

It is recommended that this year's statistics should serve as the baseline data for the up-coming project year.

SCHOOL: _____

TEACHER: _____

GRADE: _____

REQUESTED DATE FOR SERVICE: _____

DESCRIPTION OF MATERIAL/SERVICE REQUESTED: _____

DATE REQUEST MADE BY TEACHER/SCHOOL: _____

DATE REQUEST RECEIVED BY POLICE: _____

JUVENILE DISPOSITION

Return to:

Last Name	First	Middle	Birthdate
Case No.	Offense		

POLICE RECOMMENDATION

Date _____

- FORMAL INFORMAL _____

Comments: _____

COURT SCREENING

Date _____

- FORMAL INFORMAL _____

Comments: _____

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Date _____

- DRAFT NO DRAFT _____

- WAIVER _____

Comments: _____

INFORMAL DISPOSITION

Date _____

Case Worker _____

FORMAL DISPOSITION (COURT ACTION)

Date _____

- DISMISSED WAIVED HELD OPEN ADJUDGED _____

DISPOSITION

- SUPERVISION FOR _____ MONTHS

- RULES OF SUPERVISION ORDERED

- RESTITUTION ORDERED

Comments: _____

END