

The Florida Department of Administration

DIVISION OF STATE PLANNING

BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE



Evaluation Of The Special Intensive Group (SIG) Program

Final Report

February 1979

ARTHUR YOUNG & COMPANY

Certified Public Accountants

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ACQUISITIONS

ARTHUR YOUNG & COMPANY

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

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February 12, 1979

Dr. John Dale
Acting Bureau Chief
Bureau of Criminal Justice
Assistance
Division of State Planning
350 Carlton Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

Dear Dr. Dale:

Arthur Young & Company is pleased to transmit this final report of our evaluation of the Special Intensive Group (SIG) Program undertaken for the Bureau of Criminal Justice Assistance as part of our overall evaluation capability engagement. This final report is presented in two volumes, the detailed final report and the Executive Summary.

If you have any questions concerning the information contained in these reports, please contact either John S. Smock or Edwin R. Moline in our Tampa Office at (813) 223-1381.

Very truly yours,

Arthur Young & Company

The Florida Department of Administration

DIVISION OF STATE PLANNING

BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE



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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF STATE PLANNING
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I. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

ARTHUR YOUNG & COMPANY
Certified Public Accountants

I. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This document constitutes the final report documenting the results of an evaluation of the Special Intensive Group (SIG) program operated by the Youth Service Program Office of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. This evaluation is being conducted for the Bureau of Criminal Justice Assistance (BCJA) by Arthur Young & Company. It represents one of the major elements of the Arthur Young & Company engagement to assist the BCJA in developing a criminal justice evaluation capability. The results of this evaluation are documented in detail in this report. The results are also summarized in an Executive Summary presented under separate cover.

This introductory chapter contains the following sections:

- . Background
- . Objectives and scope of the evaluation
- . Methodology
- . Review of problems encountered in conducting the evaluation
- . Outline of the remainder of the report.

1. BACKGROUND

This evaluation of the Special Intensive Group Program funded by the Florida Bureau of Criminal Justice Assistance was conceived by the BCJA as part of its overall evaluation capability project. The initial concept called for an independent consultant to be hired to evaluate six selected areas and assist the Bureau in developing an effective evaluation capability. The six areas selected included four LEAA funded program areas, such as this evaluation, and two special studies, an organized crime control systems analysis and a cost analysis methodology for the Florida juvenile system.

Based on a competitive consultant selection process, Arthur Young & Company was selected to conduct this engagement for the BCJA. This selection process involved the development of a proposal to the BCJA by Arthur Young & Company which outlined the professional approach the Firm would use in conducting the four evaluations and the two special studies.

Subsequent to this proposal, Arthur Young & Company representatives met with representatives from the BCJA and the Youth Services Program Office and interviewed SIG counselors in HRS districts V and VI. These meetings resulted in the development of an Evaluation Plan, dated July 1978, in which the tasks to be undertaken during the course of the evaluation were more fully defined, and which would provide guidance for the overall conduct of the evaluation. The Evaluation Plan was submitted to the BCJA and reviewed by that agency and by the Youth Service Program Office and subsequently approved by the BCJA.

2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Based on the original Arthur Young & Company proposal and the meetings which were held prior to the development of the evaluation plan, the following evaluation objectives were determined.

The primary objective of this Special Intensive Group Program evaluation is:

To conduct an evaluation of the Special Intensive Group Program to identify success compared to other programs and relative success of varying approaches by counselors at different sites.

Attainment of this primary objective would include attainment of the following secondary objectives:

- . To make overall conclusions relative to the effectiveness of the program in comparison to other alternatives
- . To compare each of the intensive counseling sites in terms of activity, recidivism rate, effectiveness and other factors
- . To assess successful and unsuccessful elements of the intensive counseling program
- . To make recommendations for improvement in the program.

Like the other evaluations in the overall evaluation project, the scope of the evaluation of the Special Intensive Group Program was limited to data available after the fact. Problems encountered in obtaining data at the Youth Service Program Office, discussed later in this chapter, somewhat restricted the analysis which had been considered desirable. Nonetheless, the managerial aspects of this evaluation were not significantly impacted by data limitations.

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The specific tasks which were used in accomplishing this evaluation of the Special Intensive Group Program are presented schematically as Exhibit I following this page. Descriptions of each of the tasks involved follow:

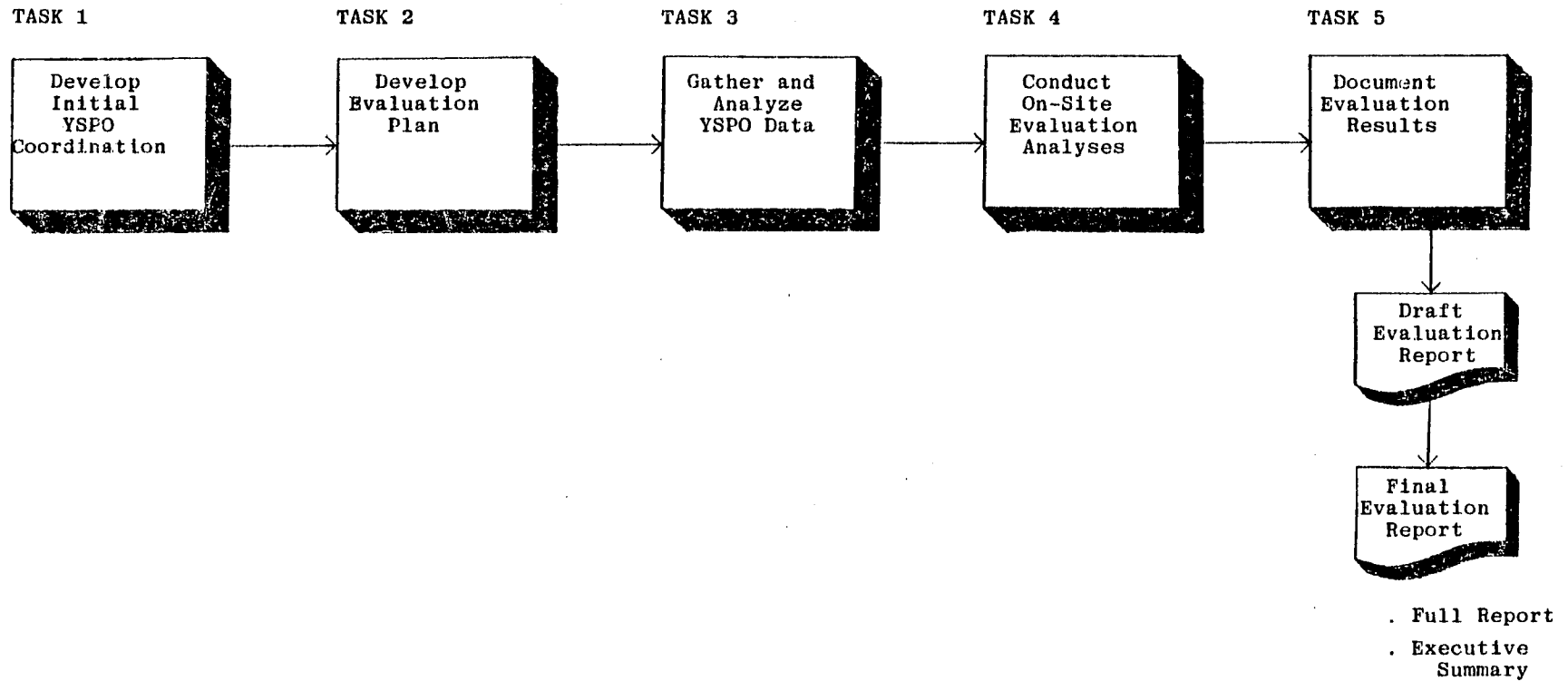
TASK 1 DEVELOP INITIAL YSPO/EVALUATOR COORDINATION

This task involved introductions of evaluators to cognizant personnel in Programs and in the Research and Statistical section of the YSPO and review of on-going YSPO evaluation efforts.

TASK 2 DEVELOP SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION PLAN

This task involved the development of the Special Intensive Group Program Evaluation Plan. Background for this task included review of grant documentation and meetings with BCJA planners, YSPO personnel in Tallahassee and SIG counselors and supervisors.

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
EVALUATION OF SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM
EVALUATION PLAN SCHEMATIC



The evaluation plan development included consideration of a range of evaluation issues, including:

- . Program objectives
- . Evaluation data and performance measures

The plan discussed these issues and determined the approach to be taken in connection with each. Evaluation measures and data collection and analysis procedures were determined based on an initial review of YSPO documentation.

TASK 3 GATHER AND ANALYZE YSPO DATA

Analysis of data maintained by the Youth Service Program Office was intended to involve a three step process:

- . Finalize estimates of sample sizes required
- . Select sample
- . Analyze data.

While this basic procedure was followed, significant difficulties were determined in the actual selection of the sample in terms of obtaining names and locating files at the Youth Service Program Office, as discussed in the next section of this Chapter. This somewhat restricted the data elements which could be obtained and raised some questions on the quality of data. The data which was analyzed is considered to be meaningful, though the scope of the analysis was more limited than planned.

TASK 4 CONDUCT ON-SITE ANALYSES

Based on the data analysis conducted in Task 3, follow-up visits were conducted to meet with Special Intensive Group counselors, Unit Supervisors, Program Specialists and Placement Coordinators in HRS districts IV, VI, VIII, IX, X and XI.

Data on the primary management systems was selected using the interview guides contained in the appendices to this report. Separate interview guides, supplemented by interview notes, were used for SIG Counselors and for the individuals who interact with the counselors but are not counselors themselves. In the course of the interviews, two former counselors were also interviewed, one who had recently left the program to work for the Half Way House in the same district and one who had become a regular Community Control Counselor upon the transfer of the SIG Counselor position.

TASK 5 DOCUMENT EVALUATION RESULTS

This final task involved documentation of the results of the evaluation analysis and resulted in this report.

4. REVISIONS TO METHODOLOGY

Circumstances unforeseen at the time of the preparation of the evaluation plan rather considerably impacted the evaluation methodology and scope. These circumstances stemmed from the structure of the data management systems of the Youth Services Program Office, which proved to be inappropriate for the specific needs of this evaluation. The following is a discussion of the methodology originally planned and changes introduced during the course of the evaluation.

(1) Proposed Methodology

The original evaluation methodology called for random samples to be taken of successful graduates from the various programs managed by the Youth Services Program Office (YSPO) and from field Probation for FY-75 through FY-76-77. The table below is a list of the programs which seemed to be valuable to consider for comparison purposes and the sample sizes that were determined to be necessary for valid statistical inferences concerning relative program effectiveness by location (where relevant) during these three fiscal years.

Proposed Programs and Sample Sizes

<u>Program</u>	<u>Sample Size</u>
Special Intensive Groups (SIG)	425
Associated Marine Institutes (AMI)	501
TRY Centers	175
START Centers	396
Group Treatment Homes	171
Half Way Houses	895
Training Schools	369
Probation	379
Total Files to be Examined	3,311

From these random samples of successful graduates of the various YSPO programs, the following information was to be collected for each graduate:

- . Age
- . Sex
- . Race
- . Selected measures of recidivism

The final phase of the evaluation required analyzing these data to arrive at a measure of effectiveness of the Special Intensive Groups (SIG) relative to the other YSPO programs in terms of recidivism, measured as a new law violation or technical violation of Aftercare.

(2) Changes Introduced

It was assumed during the early stages of the evaluation that a list of successful program graduates could be obtained from the YSPO automated data files. When it proved to be impractical to extract this information, a list of successful program graduates was developed by scanning thirty-six months of program recap sheets for each program and randomly selecting successful graduates based on the sample size determined.

Because significantly more time than planned had to be spent on obtaining the list of program "graduates", it was determined that the recidivism measures would have to be limited to five programs and sample sizes reduced to the level necessary to make statistical inferences about the state-wide program as a whole rather than sub-programs by HRS District. The table below outlines the revised list of programs and the sample sizes required for the evaluation using the most conservative assumptions.

Revised Programs and Sample Sizes

<u>Program</u>	<u>Sample Sizes</u>
Special Intensive Groups	425
Associated Marine Institutes	156
TRY Centers	133
START Centers	198
Training Schools	<u>369</u>
Total files to be examined	1,281

After the storage boxes containing the files of successful program graduates were located, the files were pulled and attempts were made to extract the following data from the files:

- . YSPO Identification Number
- . Date of Birth
- . Race
- . Sex
- . Number of Offenses Prior to YSPO Commitment which resulted in the furlough being evaluated
- . Number of Prior Commitments

- . Date of Furlough
- . Date First Offense Subsequent to Furlough
- . Total Number of Subsequent Offenses
- . Total Number of Subsequent Commitments
- . HRS District in which Program was Completed
- . Most Serious Offense Prior to Entering Program Being Evaluated

While these data elements ignore important considerations taken into account in selecting the program in which a child is placed and items which might be predictors of program success, such additional data elements are extremely difficult to quantify and are not often documented.

Problems in locating files and extracting data prevented the achievement even of the reduced sample sizes in some cases. Where sample sizes impacted the analysis, the impact is described later in this report.

5. OUTLINE OF REMAINDER OF THE REPORT

Following this introductory chapter, this report is presented in the following chapters:

- . SIG Program Description - includes a description of the SIG program purpose and history, a discussion of program structure, profiles of program participants comparing the various Districts in which Intensive Groups have operated and discussion of the comparison of participant success by District.
- . Comparison with Other Programs - includes a brief description of other programs used for evaluative comparisons, a discussion of the comparative profile of participants in various programs by age, race, sex, and numbers of prior offenses and commitments, and a comparison of the success rates by programs.
- . SIG Program Management Systems - includes a discussion of counselor background and qualifications, the operation of the referral systems, the organization and structure of groups, collateral contracts by SIG counselors and various operations of parent group.
- . Overall Conclusions and Observations - includes the evaluators' observations and conclusions concerning the program and identification of opportunities for program modification and improvement.

II. SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

ARTHUR YOUNG & COMPANY
Certified Public Accountants

II. SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This chapter discusses the Special Intensive Group Program background and structure, including discussions of the program participants and success rates. Sections of the chapter include:

- . Program purpose and history
- . Program structure
- . Program participants' profiles
- . Program participants' success rates.

1. PROGRAM PURPOSE AND HISTORY

The Special Intensive Group Program is described in the Youth Services Probation and Aftercare Manual as "a non-residential program for committed delinquents as an alternative to treatment in a training school". Originally established to deal with children taken from a training school and considered "hard core" delinquent, the program has changed in emphasis, and the Special Intensive Groups now receive their referrals predominately through the Placement Coordinator in each HRS District. In some of the program sites, a high percentage of current group participants are first offenders. In terms of weekly involvement, the Special Intensive Groups are the least structured of YSPO's commitment programs which also include (in roughly increasing intensity of structure):

- . Associated Marine Institutes
- . TRY Centers
- . Family Group Homes
- . START Centers
- . Halfway Houses
- . Eckerd Camps
- . Training Schools.

Because some of these other programs were established after the SIG Program, which was originally organized in 1974, they tend to compete with the SIGs for referral. Where this has been a serious problem, the SIG Counselor positions have been relocated.

The SIG Program has counselors funded by LEAA grant funds in the following locations:

- . HRS District IV - Jacksonville
- . HRS District v - St. Petersburg
- . HRS District VI - Tampa

- . HRS District IX - West Palm Beach
- Ft. Pierce
- . HRS District X - Ft. Lauderdale
- . HRS District XI - Miami.

Further counseling positions, not receiving Federal Grant funds, are located in:

- . HRS District I - Ft. Walton Beach
- . HRS District III - Gainesville
- . HRS District IV - Jacksonville
- . HRS District V - St. Petersburg
- . HRS District VII - Sanford
- . HRS District VIII - Lakeland.

Positions located in Daytona Beach and Sarasota which were financed through General Revenue Sharing funds were transferred to Jacksonville and Lakeland respectively, apparently based primarily on difficulties in maintaining groups at capacity.

As would be expected, over the life of the Special Intensive Group program, there has been some turn-over in counselors. Of the twell LEAA funded positions, only seven are still filled by the first counselor assigned to the position. Further, of these seve, some report a change in their counseling style over the program life, as both they and the program have evolved. This change in counselors influences the analysis of participants' success rates discussed later in this chapter. The discussion of the program management systems in Chapter IV describes some of the changes which have taken place in specific operational styles.

2. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Each Special Intensive Group has a budgeted capacity of eight children and attempts to include ten children, under an operational plan designed to relieve overcrowding in the training schools and to ensure maintaining budgeted capacity, even following furloughs from the group. This compares with a standard counselor workload which usually exceeds 60 and may range as high as 130 in more heavily urbanized Districts. According to YSPO guidelines, the low ratio of juveniles to counselors allows for total involvement by the counselors to bring about positive behavioral changes. Primary treatment is that of reality group counseling sessions, meeting a minimum of four times weekly. Counselors make collateral contacts in the community, provide special treatment through other agencies, work with teachers and employers, and provide other services the children need. Volunteers sometime also serve as a resource for the counselors to meet special needs of the youths.

Specific requirements of the structure of the SIG Program include:

- . Provision in the Child's Supervision Agreement requiring attendance at group four times weekly and providing for transfer to another and more structured commitment program if a group meeting is missed without a valid verifiable excuse
- . Requirements for a parents' contract and parental participation in weekly group sessions.

Factors which influence a child's ability to participate in a Special Intensive Group include geographic restrictions and home environment. Unlike most of the community based commitment programs, the SIGs do not provide transportation. Thus, groups are open only to children in geographic proximity to meeting sites or where transportation is not a problem. Because of the requirements for parent participation and the fact that a child in a SIG is under direct supervision only a few hours per week, the child's home environment will heavily influence his or her suitability for assignment to a SIG.

Although the factors described above are standard across all Special Intensive Group Program sites, there are some significant variations in the structure dependent on the style of the counselor and other factors of the environment, such as the role of the Placement Coordinator in making assignments to the group, the number and types of competing programs within the geographic vicinity of the Special Intensive Group counselor and different counselor emphasis on the children accepted to the group, with some favoring younger and some older children, and some groups excluding females.

3. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

Many of the factors which determine the program selected for a committed juvenile, such as attitude, maturity, record of aggressive behavior, and family structure, are difficult to quantify, and even when recorded in qualitative terms by a Community Control or Intake Counselor, they are often unavailable in the central files at the Youth Services Program Office. This restricts the analysis of comparative profiles of participants in the program to six profiling data elements, which were selected for those juveniles chosen at random from among the program successes, including successful furloughs to Aftercare and Honorable Terminations. These data elements included:

- . Age
- . Race
- . Sex
- . Number of prior offenses at time of commitment
- . Categorization of most serious prior offense
- . Number of prior commitments.

Each of these profile characteristics is discussed below.

(1) Participants' Age

Exhibit II on the following page illustrates the distribution of successfully furloughed Special Intensive Group participants by age by District. The sample sizes are sufficiently large to support analysis at the District, as well as program, level with the exception of District XI.

As the exhibit illustrates, there is some difference in the age characteristics of program participants based on the District. Approximately 45.2% of program participants program-wide were 17 or older at their date of furlough. Of the individual Districts, comparing each District to the rest of the program, only District IV roughly parallels the age distribution of the total program. Three districts - District VI in St. Petersburg, District VIII in Sarasota, and District X in Ft. Lauderdale show a smaller percentage of older participants but this proportion is not statistically significant. Of those districts with children predominantly in higher age groups only District XI in Miami demonstrates a proportion of older children which is statistically significant.

(2) Participants' Distribution by Race and Sex

The distribution of the successfully furloughed participants in the Special Intensive Groups, classified by District in terms of race and sex, is presented in Exhibit III following Exhibit II. Each of these areas is discussed below:

Race

The total universe of successful participants in the Special Intensive Group program is approximately 58% Caucasian and 39% Negro, with the balance being of unknown race. The relative high percentage of unknowns is attributable to the absence of "face sheets" in the juveniles file in the central Youth Service Program Office. Some variation in this program distribution was observed between the various districts, with Districts I, V, VI, and VIII, showing a higher percentage of Caucasians than the rest of the program. This difference is statistically significant only in District VIII. In District III, IV, VII, IX and XI, the percentage of Negro participants is higher than for the rest of the program but the difference is not sufficient for statistical significance at the 95% confidence level. These race distributions correspond with the rough pattern of race distribution for all committed children in community based programs in those districts.

Sex

As the second half of Exhibit III illustrates, the Special Intensive Group Program has been utilized predominately by male juveniles, at a distribution of 90.2% for males compared with 9.8% female. This distribution has been consistent

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED SIG

PARTICIPANTS BY AGE BY DISTRICT

AGE	DISTRICT										TOTAL PROGRAM
	I	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI*	
Less than 13 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.4%	-	-	0.3%
13 to 13.5 years	-	-	.9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3%
13.51 to 14 years	5.0%	-	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.0%
14.01 to 14.5 years	5.0	-	2.7	3.3	7.7	-	-	-	5.9%	-	3.1%
14.51 to 15 years	-	-	4.4	4.9	7.7	-	7.4%	3.4	5.9	-	4.6%
15.01 to 15.5 years	-	-	8.0	3.3	7.7	-	3.7	6.9	10.3	4.2%	5.7%
15.51 to 16 years	10.0	16.7%	15.0	11.5	17.9	11.1	22.2	3.4	11.8	4.2	12.4%
16.01 to 16.5 years	15.0	16.7	7.1	13.1	10.3	11.1	18.5	17.2	14.7	4.2	12.4%
16.51 to 17 years	15.0	-	15.0	13.1	10.3	22.2	14.8	10.3	16.2	20.8	15.2%
17.01 to 17.5 years	15.0	16.7	23.0	16.4	17.9	11.1	7.4	20.7	17.6	33.3	18.6%
17.51 to 18 years	15.0	50.0	14.2	11.5	10.3	22.2	14.8	17.2	8.8	29.2	13.7%
Older than 18 years	20.0	-	7.1	23.0	10.3	22.2	11.1	17.2	8.8	4.2	12.9%
MEAN AGE =	16.865	17.133	16.608	16.933	16.515	17.322	16.604	16.938	16.521	17.175	16.702
STD DEVIATION =	1.265	.745	1.163	1.137	1.233	.981	1.018	1.319	1.135	.751	
NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS =	20	6	113	61	39	9	27	29	68	24	

*Proportion of children over 17 is significant at a 95% confidence level.

EXHIBIT II

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED SIG
PARTICIPANTS BY RACE BY DISTRICT

<u>RACE</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>										<u>TOTAL PROGRAM</u>
	I	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII*	IX	X	XI	
Caucasian	65.0	50.0	56.6	60.7	66.7	44.4	87.5	44.8	52.9	41.7	58.0
Negro	15.0	50.0	43.4	26.2	30.8	55.6	14.8	55.2	47.1	58.3	38.8
Unknown	20.0	-	-	13.1	2.5	-	3.7	-	-	-	3.3
N =	20	6	113	61	39	9	27	29	68	24	397

*Proportion of Caucasian juveniles significant at a 95% confidence level.

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED SIG
PARTICIPANTS BY SEX BY DISTRICT

<u>SEX</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>										<u>TOTAL PROGRAM</u>
	I	III**	IV*	V	VI	VII**	VIII	IX	X**	XI	
Male	75.0	100.0	83.2	93.4	92.3	100.0	92.6	93.1	95.6	95.8	90.2
Female	25.0	-	16.8	6.6	7.7	-	7.4	6.9	4.4	4.2	9.8
N =	20	6	113	61	39	9	27	29	68	24	397

*Higher proportion of females statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

**Lower proportion of females statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

across all districts with sizable numbers of program participants, with the exception of District IV - Jacksonville, for which the higher percentage of females is statistically significant. Districts III, VII and X demonstrate a significantly smaller proportion of females than the balance of the program.

(3) Prior Offenses

In considering the distribution of the successfully furloughed participants in the Special Intensive Group program by their prior offenses at the time of the commitment which resulted in their participation in Special Intensive Group, both the number of prior offenses, which is fairly clearly defined, and the seriousness of prior offenses, which is more subjective, are of significance, because the summary data contained in the files in the Planning Coordination Unit often did not clearly indicate the disposition of each offense. As a result, the reported number of prior offenses is based on a "guilty until proven innocent". This makes it possible to compare all programs and Districts with a minimum of bias resulting from their reporting quality. In the same manner, the "most serious prior offense" is the most serious charge reported. There may have been no adjudication in connection with the charge. These two separate issues are discussed in the paragraphs which follow:

. Number of prior offenses

Exhibit IV on the following page illustrates the distribution of number of prior offenses by district and for the total program. Comparing the mean number of prior offenses for each District against the mean of all other Districts combined indicates the higher average number of prior offenses to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level in Districts V, VI, VIII and X. Districts I and XI show a statistically significant lower average number of prior offenses.

. Seriousness of prior offenses

As mentioned above, the assessment of the seriousness of prior offenses is a somewhat subjective matter. The data collected for this classification resulted from a review of the description of prior offenses, where such data was readily available, and a selection of the most serious offense or offenses. Individuals responsible for the raw data collection noted this information in the margin of coding sheets. Coding sheets were then reviewed by the Evaluation Director to determine the most serious of the charges recorded under a series of simplified charge codes. For the sake of numerical analysis, the individual charge codes were then sorted into six major categories as illustrated in the scheme below:

- Violent crime:

.. Murder

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED SIG

PARTICIPANTS BY DISTRICT BY NUMBER OF PRIOR OFFENSES

AT TIME OF COMMITMENT

NUMBER OF PRIOR OFFENSES (Percentage Distribution)	DISTRICT										TOTAL PROGRAM
	I**	III	IV	V*	VI*	VII	VIII*	IX	X*	XI**	
0	10.0%	- %	1.8%	3.3%	2.6%	11.1%	-%	3.4%	1.5%	8.3%	3.8%
1	15.0	33.3	4.4	4.9	2.6	11.1	-	-	8.8	16.7	6.3
2	20.0	-	5.3	8.2	-	22.2	3.7	6.9	2.9	12.5	6.3
3	10.0	-	13.3	6.6	10.3	22.2	7.4	10.3	7.4	12.5	10.1
4	10.0	-	13.3	9.8	10.3	22.2	22.2	13.8	13.2	4.2	12.3
5	10.0	16.7	12.4	8.2	10.3	-	7.4	20.7	11.8	12.5	11.6
6	10.0	16.7	7.1	4.9	10.3	-	3.7	6.9	7.4	8.3	7.1
7	5.0	16.7	13.3	18.0	10.3	-	7.4	13.8	4.4	-	10.3
8	10.0	-	7.1	4.9	10.3	-	3.7	3.4	4.4	12.5	6.3
9	-	-	6.2	1.6	12.8	-	3.7	3.4	16.2	8.3	7.1
10	-	-	2.7	4.9	5.1	-	14.8	6.9	4.4	4.2	4.5
11-12	-	-	3.5	11.5	7.7	11.1	3.7	-	8.8	-	5.6
13-15	-	-	3.5	8.2	5.2	-	18.5	10.3	3.0	-	5.3
16-20	-	-	2.7	4.9	2.6	-	3.7	-	3.0	-	2.5
21-25	-	-	.9	-	-	-	-	-	3.0	-	.8
26+	-	16.7	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.1
MEAN =	3.500	8.167	6.805	7.131	7.128	3.444	8.074	6.069	7.132	4.250	6.594
STANDARD DEVIATION =	2.544	10.515	5.416	4.515	3.686	3.468	4.454	3.422	4.899	3.138	
NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS	20	6	113	61	39	9	27	29	68	24	397

*Higher average number of prior offenses statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.
 **Lower average number of prior offenses statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

- .. Rape
- .. Strong arm robbery
- .. Assault
- .. Assault and robbery
- .. Aggravated assault
- .. Arson
- .. Abduction
- .. Battery
- .. Armed battery
- Other crimes against persons:
 - .. Robbery
 - .. Armed robbery
 - .. Extortion
 - .. Bomb threats
- Property crime
 - .. B & E
 - .. Burglary
 - .. Larceny
 - .. Grand larceny
 - .. Auto theft
 - .. Possession of stolen property
 - .. Retail theft
 - .. Vandalism
 - .. Property destruction
 - .. Forgery
 - .. Postal theft
- Victimless
 - .. Weapons violations

- .. Prostitution
- .. Sex offense
- .. Narcotics violation
- .. D W I
- .. Attempted suicide
- Other Misdemeanor
 - .. Trespassing
 - .. Unlawful entry
 - .. Petty larceny
 - .. Disorderly intoxication
 - .. Disorderly conduct
 - .. Unknown misdemeanor
 - .. Resisting arrest
- Status
 - .. Liquor violation
 - .. Ungovernable
 - .. Curfew violation
 - .. Runaway
 - .. Truancy
 - .. Absconder

Exhibit V on the following page illustrates the categorization of prior offenses by District into these major offense categories. For the program as a whole, 16.9% of the successful furloughs were of juveniles with a violent crime among past offenses. A further 9% had committed some other crime against persons as their most serious prior offense and the majority, 62.6% of the successful participants, had a property crime as the most serious prior offense. It is with these first three categories of more serious offenses that this analysis is primarily concerned. As the exhibit illustrates, four of the ten districts with Special Intensive Group programs had a higher than average percentage of furloughed participants with a prior history of violent crimes, including Districts IV, V, IX, and XI. None of these differences are

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED SIG PARTICIPANTS
BY TYPE OF PRIOR OFFENSE BY DISTRICT

DISTRICT	TYPE OF MOST SERIOUS PRIOR OFFENSE					STATUS
	VIOLENT CRIME	OTHER CRIME vs. PERSONS	PROPERTY CRIME	VICTIMLESS	MISDEMEANOR	
1	15.8%	----%	63.2%	5.3%	----%	15.8%
3	----	----	83.3	----	16.7	----
4	17.9	7.1	59.8	7.1	4.5	3.6
5	20.0	8.3	63.3	3.3	1.7	3.3
6	15.4	5.1	74.4	----	5.1	----
7	11.1	11.1	44.4	22.2	----	11.1
8	14.8	3.7	74.1	7.4	----	----
9	29.6	11.1	51.9	3.7	----	3.7
10	11.8	16.2	61.8	8.8	1.5	----
11	17.4	17.4	56.5	8.7	----	----
PROGRAM	16.9	9.0	62.6	6.2	2.6	2.8

statistically significant. Districts IX and XI also showed higher than average rates of offenses including other crimes against persons, and consequently lower than average rates of property crimes at the most serious prior offense. Districts III, VI, and VIII all showed a higher than average crimes at the most serious prior offense. Districts III, VI, and VIII all showed a higher than average percentage of offenders in the category of property crime.

(4) Prior Commitments

Exhibit VI on the following page illustrates the distribution of the successfully furloughed SIG participants by District by the number of prior commitments before admission to the Special Intensive Group program. As the Exhibit illustrates, program-wide, 69.8% of those who succeeded in the Special Intensive Group program were admitted to the program as a result of their first commitment. This included both those committed directly to the Special Intensive Group and those originally sent to a training school and transferred into Intensive Group, receiving the furlough after completion of the SIG program. A number of Districts showed a somewhat higher percentage of successful participants as juveniles on first commitment status.. The most extreme of these was District VII where 100% of successful furloughs were granted to individuals on first commitment status. The percentage of those on first commitment was also somewhat higher than the program average in Districts IX, X, and XI, though this difference is not significant.

4. SIG PARTICIPANT SUCCESS COMPARISONS

The comparative success of the different sites where the Special Intensive Groups have been organized can be measured in two dimensions. These include the percentage of total program participants who successfully complete the Special Intensive Group program, resulting in either a furlough to Aftercare or an honorable termination from supervision by HRS and the longer range success of these successful terminations measured in terms of recidivism, classified as a new law violation or a technical violation of Aftercare provisions. These two areas are discussed in the sections which follow.

(1) Program Success Rates

Exhibit VII on the following page distributes the SIG program losses by District in three categories. These are:

- . Success - including furlough to Aftercare and Honorable Termination
- . Failure - including Less than Honorable Termination, Abscond, Recommitments to YSPO, transfers to more restrictive YSPO commitment programs or admission to the adult correctional system

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED SIG PARTICIPANTS
BY DISTRICT BY NUMBER OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS

NUMBER OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS	DISTRICT										TOTAL PROGRAM
	I	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	
0	70.0	66.7	69.9	62.3	66.7	100.0	55.6	79.3	75.0	75.0	69.8
1	20.0	16.7	17.7	18.0	20.5	-	40.7	6.9	14.7	20.8	18.4
2	10.0	-	8.8	6.6	5.1	-	3.7	10.3	10.3	-	7.3
3	-	-	1.8	4.9	7.7	-	-	3.4	-	4.2	2.5
4	-	16.7	-	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	.5
5	-	-	0.9	6.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.3
6	-	-	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.3
MEAN =	.400	.833	.504	.852	.538	0.0	.481	.379	.353	.333	.504
STANDARD DEVIATION	.681	1.602	.992	1.447	.913	0.0	.580	.820	.664	.702	
N =	20	6	113	61	39	9	27	29	68	24	397

EXHIBIT VI

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
SIG PROGRAM SUCCESS
BY DISTRICT

	DISTRICT										TOTAL PROGRAM
	I	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	
SUCCESS, includes Furlough to Aftercare and Honorable Termination	74.3%	26.1%	69.1%	59.8%	43.4%	52.0%	57.0%	49.3%	50.4%	40.2%	53.9%
FAILURE, includes Less than Honorable Termination, Abscond, Recommitments and Transfers to more restrictive YSPO commit- ment programs or the adult corrections system	12.8	65.2	25.0	30.8	42.2	40.0	33.3	41.3	38.0	34.0	34.0
NEUTRAL, includes Transfers to less restrictive commit- ment programs, Inactive, and Other	12.8	8.7	5.9	9.4	14.5	8.0	15.7	9.3	11.6	25.8	12.1
NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS	39	23	152	117	83	25	51	75	129	97	791

Neutral - including transfers to less restrictive commitment programs, participants classified as inactive and those classified as other.

All classifications are taken from the HRS Population and Movement Reports covering the periods from January 1976 through December 1977. For the purpose of the classification between failure and neutral, transfers to full time residential programs or training schools were considered more restrictive and transfers to other non-residential programs as less restrictive or neutral. The program as a whole for this period showed a success rate of 53.9%. This rate compared to other programs is considered in the next chapter of this report. By District, four Districts demonstrated a measurably higher success rate, including Districts I, IV, V, and VIII. The failure was highest in District III at 65.2% and in District VI at 42.2%. This compared to an average failure rate program-wide of 34.0%. The classification of neutral terminations included 12.1% of total program losses district wide. This number was fairly consistent across districts, except in District XI where a total of 25.8% of all program losses over a two year period were classified as neutral, being predominantly in the "Other" category, whose actual status could not be determined.

(2) Recidivism of Successful SIG Program Terminations

For the purposes of this study, "recidivism" was defined as a reported new law violation or violation of provisions of Aftercare. This definition contains two obvious weaknesses:

- . All new law violations may not be reported to the YSPO unless or until there is some subsequent action.
- . The definition takes an approach of "guilty until proven innocent" rather than the more valid reverse.

The definition as used was selected because of the difficulty in following ultimate disposition of a juvenile whose new offense results in a transfer to the adult system and in order to achieve standardization across programs with multiple data coders.

Exhibit VIII on the following page illustrates the break-out of recidivism categorized in six month blocks for up to three years, and in the category of "no recorded recidivism". Excluding District III, which had only six individuals in the sample and District VII, which had only nine, recidivism rates ranged from a low of 12.5% in District XI to a high of 33.3% in District VIII. There is no statistically significant difference by site between recidivism rates when comparing any one District to the balance of the program.

Some subsidiary analysis of recidivism indicated the most concrete correlation to be between age and recidivism with those juveniles who were older at the time of furlough being less likely to be cited for a new law offense. This is, however, as likely to be as a result of new offenses being entered on the adult system as on actual reductions in criminal activity.

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
RECIDIVISM RATES (NEW LAW VIOLATION)
FOR FURLOUGHED SIG PARTICIPANTS
BY DISTRICT BY PERIOD AFTER FURLOUGH

TIME AFTER FURLOUGH	DISTRICT										PROGRAM TOTAL
	I	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	
NO RECORDED RECIDIVISM	77.8	83.3	70.9	77.6	76.3	88.9	66.7	82.8	77.9	87.5	76.2
1 - 180 days	16.7	16.7	25.5	12.1	7.9	11.1	29.6	6.9	13.2	8.3	16.5
181 - 360 days	0.0	0.0	3.6	6.9	10.5	0.0	3.7	6.9	2.9	4.2	4.6
361 - 540 days	5.6	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	1.5	0.0	1.3
541 - 720 days	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.8
721 - 900 days	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	1.0	1.5
TOTAL RECORDED RECIDIVISM	22.3%	16.7%	29.1%	22.4%	23.6%	11.1%	33.3%	17.2%	22.0%	12.5%	23.7%
N =	18	6	110	58	38	9	27	29	68	24	387

III. COMPARISON WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

ARTHUR YOUNG & COMPANY
Certified Public Accountants

III. COMPARISON WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

This chapter discusses the comparisons made of the Special Intensive Group program with other commitment programs operated by the Youth Service Program Office. The other programs considered include the Associated Marines Institutes and TRY Center Programs, which, with the Special Intensive Group program, constitute the non-residential commitment programs and the START Center program and training schools among the residential programs. Sections of the chapter include a brief description of each of the other programs; a comparative profile of the various program participants and a comparison of participant success rates measured at program termination and in recidivism.

1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Youth Service Program Office operates a wide range of commitment programs including four training schools, twelve Half Way Houses, five START Centers, six Group Treatment Homes, four youth camps, Project STEP, five TRY Centers, a large number of Family Group Homes, six Associated Marine Institutes, San Antonio Boy's Village, Jacksonville Youth Development Center and the Special Intensive Group Program. As discussed in Chapter I of this final evaluation report, it was originally intended that participants in the Special Intensive Group program would be compared with participants in those programs which shared locations with the Special Intensive Group program, including the Associated Marine Institutes, TRY Centers, Half Way Houses, START Centers, and Family Group Homes, as well as the training schools. In order to obtain meaningful data on the programs it became necessary in the course of the evaluation to limit these comparisons to the two other non-residential commitment programs, the Associated Marine Institutes and the TRY Centers, and to two residential programs, the START Centers and the training schools. These four programs are briefly described below.

(1) Associated Marine Institutes

There are six Associated Marine Institutes, located in Districts II (Panama City), IV (Jacksonville), V (St. Petersburg), VI (Tampa), X (Ft. Lauderdale), and XI (Miami). The Associated Marine Institutes share locations with Special Intensive Group programs at all of their sites, except Panama City.

The Associated Marine Institutes are non-residential programs, functioning as schools concentrating in training in marine sciences. Each Marine Institute consists of 30 spaces, 15 reserved for committed and 15 reserved for non-committed children. The Marine Institute Program operates eight hours a day and provides transportation, picking up the children at their homes and returning them. In addition to formal educational programs in marine sciences, group treatment sessions are also conducted.

(2) TRY Centers

TRY Centers are non-residential treatment programs for 30 youths experiencing difficulty in school, on probation or parole, or on committed status whose primary need is for an intensive day care program and basic education. The program is designed for 20 boys and 10 girls and is divided into a capacity for 15 committed and 15 non-committed youths.

Each child in the program participates in educational and/or vocational programs during the day. Staff conducts group and individual counseling sessions for the youths and many conduct parent groups. Like the Special Intensive Group program, the TRY Center is considered a useful program for transferring a child back to his or her community from a residential commitment program. All five TRY Centers are located in Districts in common with Special Intensive Groups including Districts IV, V, IX, X, and XI. In four of these Districts, the TRY Center is to some extent in competition with the Special Intensive Group for participants. In District IV, the TRY Center is located in Daytona Beach while the Special Intensive Group counselors are based in Jacksonville, so this competition is not apparent.

(3) START Centers

START Centers are short term residential treatment centers usually located in the suburbs or rural areas and budgeted for 25 boys or 20 girls. All youths in the START Center program have been adjudicated delinquent and committed to Youth Services. Two of the START Centers are located in Districts which have intensive counselors, but because of their residential nature, children referred to the START Center may not in fact come from the neighboring district.

The START Centers are designed for youths who are believed to need assistance in coping with the responsibility of daily community living because of emotional or behavioral disabilities which are not, however, serious enough to warrant institutionalization. The focus of the START Center is on treatment through daily reality therapy group meetings, working on developing acceptable social behavior. A total academic program is also provided at each START Center. Average length of stay in a START Center is approximately six months.

(4) HRS Training Schools

The youth services program office operates four training schools for delinquent youths. The schools are budgeted for a total of 1081 children and are coeducational. The schools include the Arthur G. Dozier school in Marianna, the Lancaster Youth Development Center in Trenton, the Florida School in Okeechobee (formerly the Florida School for Boys) and the Alyce D. McPherson School in Ocala (traditionally for girls).

The training schools include a teaching staff to provide both academic and vocational programs, with the academic portion concentrating on developing a child's ability in reading, writing, and speaking, and the ability to function in a normal educational program. Staff also includes psychologists and social workers who work with the children to prepare a program to develop healthy emotional growth. The normal training program within the training schools is about six months.

2. COMPARATIVE PROFILES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Data on successfully furloughed program participants for comparison of the five programs was conducted as described in the previous chapter for the Special Intensive Group program alone. Profile data includes age, race, sex, number and type of prior offenses and number of prior commitments. Each of these areas is discussed below:

(1) Program Participant's Age

Exhibit IX on the following page illustrates the distribution of successfully furloughed program participants by age for the five comparison programs and the average of all programs. Sample sizes were adequate to support analysis at the 95% confidence level.

As the Exhibit illustrates, there does not seem to be a significant variance by age for the different programs' success graduates with the exception of the START Program where the concentration of younger children (14 to 16) is evident. The Special Intensive Group program as a whole shows less variation from other "competing" programs than the variance between Districts within the SIG program alone.

(2) Program Participant's Race and Sex

Exhibit X, following Exhibit IX, illustrates the distribution of successfully furloughed participants in the five programs by race and sex. As the Exhibit illustrates, the Special Intensive Group program racial mixture more closely approximates the mix in the training schools than does any of the other programs. The greatest dispersion from program averages can be observed in the Associated Marine Institutes which have a much greater percentage than usual of Caucasian youths and the TRY Centers and training schools which have a high percentage of Negro youths.

In the lower portion of Exhibit X the distribution of the successfully furloughed participants by sex is rather more striking. Although none of the non-residential programs (SIG, AMI, TRY) is particularly representative of the percentage of females in the training schools or in the programs as a whole, the Special Intensive Group program does slightly better in this regard than either the Marine Institutes or the TRY Centers. The distribution by sex of the START Centers is fairly closely representative of the program structure, since the START Centers are non-coeducational.

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS BY AGE

<u>AGE</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>					<u>TRNG SCHL</u>	<u>ALL PROGRAMS</u>
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START *</u>			
Less than 13 years	0.3	-	-	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
13 to 13.5 years	0.3	-	-	2.3	1.1	0.8	0.8
13.51 to 14 years	1.0	-	4.8	5.5	1.9	2.1	2.1
14.01 to 14.5 years	3.1	0.6	1.2	11.1	4.5	4.4	4.4
14.51 to 15 years	4.6	1.3	6.0	13.8	3.7	5.7	5.7
15.01 to 15.5 years	5.7	3.8	6.0	12.9	8.2	7.3	7.3
15.51 to 16 years	12.4	10.1	13.3	17.1	13.1	12.8	12.8
16.01 to 16.5 years	12.4	20.1	24.1	8.8	14.9	13.9	13.9
16.51 to 17 years	15.2	23.3	12.0	9.2	15.3	17.2	17.2
17.01 to 17.5 years	18.6	12.6	9.6	7.8	15.3	13.8	13.8
17.51 to 18 years	13.7	15.1	18.1	5.1	9.7	11.3	11.3
Older than 18 years	<u>12.9</u>	<u>13.2</u>	<u>4.8</u>	<u>5.1</u>	<u>11.9</u>	<u>10.3</u>	<u>10.3</u>
MEAN =	16.702	16.897	16.438	15.642	16.534		
N =	388	159	83	217	268		

* Proportion under 16 statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS BY RACE

<u>RACE</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>					<u>ALL PROGRAMS</u>
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TRNG SCHL</u>	
Caucasian	58.0	82.6	51.8	61.1	54.5	60.7
Negro	38.8	13.7	45.8	34.8	43.7	36.2
Other	-	.6	-	.4	-	.1
Unknown	3.3	3.1	2.4	3.6	1.8	3.0
N =	397	161	83	224	279	1144

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS BY SEX

<u>SEX</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>					<u>ALL PROGRAMS</u>
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TRNG SCHL</u>	
Male	90.2	93.8	91.6	61.6	79.2	82.5
Female	9.8	6.2	8.4	38.4	20.8	17.5
N =	397	161	83	224	279	1144

(3) Program Participants Prior Offenses

As in the discussion of the Special Intensive Group program by District in the previous chapter, the consideration of prior offenses at time of commitment for those program participants who were ultimately successfully furloughed is considered for both the number of prior offenses and the "type" of the most serious prior offense. These two issues are discussed in the paragraphs below:

. Number of Prior Offenses

Exhibit XI on the following page indicates the distribution of the number of prior offenses at the time of commitment to one of the five programs from which the youth was eventually successfully furloughed. Comparisons of the distribution and the means indicates no significant difference in the raw numbers of prior offenses at time of commitment though training schools show their participants to be slightly more serious offenders in terms of number of prior offenses closely followed by the Associated Marine Institutes and Special Intensive Groups.

. Type of Prior Offense

The classification of the most serious prior offense at time of the commitment to the program from which the youth was later successfully furloughed were listed in the same classifications described in the previous chapter. The groupings included violent crime, other crimes against persons, property crimes, victimless crimes, other misdemeanors, and status offenses. This distribution for each of the five programs and for the five programs combined is illustrated in Exhibit XII following Exhibit XI. The greatest variation illustrated between programs is in the area of other misdemeanors and status offenses. Since this classification of prior offenses in all cases represents only the most serious prior record, it would not be expected that a very high percentage of successful program participants would be classified under the general misdemeanor or status categories. This was generally true, with the exception of the START Centers where over 15% of participants fall within these two categories. Interestingly enough, the START Center program also shows the highest percentage of violent crime.

In general, a review of this Exhibit indicates that the Special Intensive Group program is dealing with youths who are among the more serious offenders in the juvenile system. The percentage with prior violent crimes on their record is higher than the training schools or either of the other non-residential programs. Other crimes against persons, the second most serious general category, is also in line with the percentage at the Training Schools and above the Associated Marine Institutes.

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

BY NUMBER OF PRIOR OFFENSES

AT TIME OF COMMITMENT

PRIOR OFFENSES	PROGRAM					ALL PROGRAMS
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TRNG SCHL</u>	
0	3.0	1.2	1.3	2.2	2.2	2.0
1	6.3	3.7	13.3	6.7	6.5	6.6
2	6.3	8.1	9.6	7.6	7.5	7.3
3	10.1	7.5	10.8	9.8	8.2	9.3
4	12.3	12.4	12.0	12.9	12.2	12.4
5	11.6	18.0	10.8	11.2	9.7	11.9
6	7.1	8.1	8.4	11.2	9.3	8.7
7	10.3	5.0	6.0	7.6	9.3	8.5
8	6.3	6.8	4.8	7.1	6.8	6.6
9	7.1	8.1	8.4	7.1	5.0	6.8
10	4.5	5.0	3.6	6.3	5.7	5.2
11-12	5.6	9.3	6.0	4.4	7.5	6.4
13-15	5.3	5.0	2.4	2.7	5.7	4.6
16-20	2.5	1.2	2.4	1.7	2.6	2.2
21-25	.8	1.2	-	.9	.8	.8
26+	1.1	-	-	.4	1.2	.7
MEAN =	6.594	6.671	5.566	6.290	6.799	N/A
N =	397	161	83	224	279	

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
 SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
 DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF MOST
 SERIOUS PRIOR OFFENSE
 AT TIME OF COMMITMENT

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>OFFENSE TYPE</u>					<u>STATUS</u>
	<u>VIOLENT CRIME</u>	<u>OTHER CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS</u>	<u>PROPERTY CRIME</u>	<u>VICTIM- LESS</u>	<u>OTHER MISDE- MEANOR</u>	
SIG	16.9	9.0	62.7	6.1	2.6	2.8
AMI	15.8	5.1	67.7	8.2	1.3	1.9
TRY	15.6	18.2	58.4	3.9	1.3	2.6
START	18.5	2.4	57.8	6.2	7.6	7.6
TRAINING SCHOOL	16.6	9.4	60.0	5.3	3.8	4.9
ALL PROGRAMS	16.9	7.9	61.5	6.1	3.5	4.1

The comparison of these two measures of prior offense indicate the Special Intensive Group program is concerned with as serious a class of offenders in terms of numbers and types of prior offenses as any other committed program.

(4) Program Participants Prior Commitments

The final measure in the profile of those youths who successfully participated in a commitment program is the number of prior commitments before entry into the program from which they were successfully furloughed and selected for this sample. Exhibit XIII illustrates this distribution.

All programs indicate that the largest percentage of their successful participants were in the program as a result of a first commitment. The smaller proportion of first commitments in the training schools is statistically significant. While the Special Intensive Group was the least likely of the community based commitment programs to receive children on a first commitment, there is no statistically significant difference from the Associated Marine Institutes. However, a difference is illustrated between programs in terms of the average number of prior commitments. As would be expected, the training schools show the highest mean at .753. Next highest is the Special Intensive Group at .504 which significantly exceeds the average number of prior commitments for the other three comparison programs. It is apparent that the Special Intensive Group program as a whole does serve more as a last resort than as a first alternative, particularly so in some of the Districts.

3. COMPARISON OF PROGRAM SUCCESS RATES

The success of a program must be measured in two dimensions. First, how successful is the program in terms of its internal success. That is, what percentage of the program participants are able to terminate the program successfully, either through a successful furlough to Aftercare or an honorable termination. Secondly, it is necessary to measure the long term success of these successful graduates. That is, did they recontact HRS through new law violations or technical violation of Aftercare provisions. These two areas are discussed below:

(1) Program Success Rates

Exhibit XIV on the following page illustrates the program success rates calculated from the Population Movement Reports for January 1976 through December 1977. All losses from a program are classified into one of three categories:

- . Successful - including Furlough to Aftercare and Honorable Terminations

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

DISTRIBUTION OF FURLOUGHED
PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
BY NUMBER OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS

<u>PRIOR COMMITMENTS</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>					<u>ALL PROGRAMS</u>
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TRNG*</u> <u>SCHL</u>	
0	69.8	70.8	75.9	69.2	57.7	67.4
1	18.4	24.2	13.3	22.3	21.9	20.5
2	7.3	2.5	7.2	5.4	11.8	7.3
3	2.5	1.9	2.4	2.2	6.1	3.2
4	.5	-	-	-	1.1	.4
5	1.3	-	1.2	.9	1.4	1.0
6	.3	.6	-	-	-	.2
MEAN =	.504	.385	.410	.442	.753	N/A
N =	397	161	83	224	279	

* Lower proportion of first commitments is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION
PROGRAM SUCCESS RATES

LOSS CLASSIFICATIONS	PROGRAMS					ALL PROGRAMS EXCEPT TRAINING SCHOOLS	ALL PROGRAMS
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TRNG SCHLS</u>		
SUCCESS, includes Furlough to Aftercare and Honorable Termina- tion	53.9%	45.4%	31.3%	45.7%	66.2%	43.9%	59.7%
FAILURE, includes Less than Honorable Termina- tion, Abscond, Re- commitments and Transfers to more restrictive YSPO commitment pro- grams or the adult corrections systems	34.0%	34.0%	56.2%	42.6%	11.7%	41.4%	20.3%
NEUTRAL, includes Transfers to less restrictive commitment programs, Inactive, and Other	12.1%	20.6%	12.5%	11.8%	22.1%	14.7%	20.0%

- . Failures - including Less than Honorable Terminations, Absconders, recommitments either to Youth Services or the Adult system or transfers to more restrictive Youth Service programs.
- . Neutral - including transfers to equally restrictive or less restrictive commitment programs, and those losses identified as inactive or other.

For the purpose of these classifications, transfers from the Special Intensive Group, Associated Marine Institute or TRY Center program to other community based programs were considered neutral. Transfers from these programs to residential commitment programs were considered failures. For START Centers, transfers to any other programs except training schools was considered neutral and transfers to training schools as failures. For training schools all transfers, whether to other training schools or to other commitment programs were considered neutral. The results of these classifications are included in Exhibit XIV preceding this page. As would be expected, the training schools show the highest success rate under these classifications and the lowest failure rate, since the defined time within the training school requires only that a child not abscond to be classified as a success. Of the other programs, all community based, the Special Intensive Group program demonstrates the highest success rate at 53.9%. The next highest success is in the START Center program with a success rate of 45.7%. It is also useful to look at the reciprocal of the success rate, which includes both failures and neutrals. A very high transfer rate out of the program would indicate a high neutral content that could result in a lower success and failure rate. In ranking the failure rates, again the training schools are lowest at 11.7%. Within the community based programs, the Special Intensive Group and Associated Marine Institutes are equal at 34.0%, well below the failure rate of either the TRY Center or START Center programs.

(2) Recidivism rates

Exhibit XV on the following page illustrates the rate of recidivism by time period for the five tested programs. Once again, the recidivism is defined as a new law violation or a technical violation of aftercare. The recidivism is reported in six month blocks for a period of three years from the furlough date, with a final category of "no recorded recidivism". The recorded recidivism rate for the Special Intensive Group program at 23.7% is more than 5% below the next lowest rate in the Associated Marine Institutes at 28.9% though this difference is not statistically significant. These two programs are followed by the training schools at 35.6%, the TRY Centers at 39.7% and the START Centers at 43.6%

FLORIDA BUREAU OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION

RECIDIVISM RATES (NEW LAW VIOLATION)

FOR FURLOUGHED PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

BY PERIOD AFTER FURLOUGH

<u>TIME AFTER FURLOUGH</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>					<u>ALL PROGRAMS EXCEPT TRAINING SCHOOLS</u>	<u>ALL PROGRAMS</u>
	<u>SIG</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>TRY</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TRNG SCHL</u>		
NO RECORDED RECIDIVISM	76.3	71.1	60.2	56.4	64.3	68.6	67.6
1 - 180 DAYS	16.5	20.1	30.1	27.5	27.1	21.3	22.7
181 - 360 DAYS	4.6	6.3	7.2	10.1	4.5	6.6	6.1
361 - 540 DAYS	1.3	1.9	2.4	4.1	3.3	2.2	2.5
541 - 720 DAYS	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6
721 - 900 DAYS	<u>0.5</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.9</u>	<u>0.4</u>	<u>0.5</u>	<u>0.4</u>
TOTAL RECORDED RECIDIVISM	23.7%	28.9%	39.7%	43.6%	35.6%	31.4%	32.4%

IV. SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

ARTHUR YOUNG & COMPANY
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IV. SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

This chapter includes a discussion of the principal management systems in place at the various Special Intensive Group Program sites reviewed during the course of this evaluation. These systems include:

- . Counselor qualifications and background
- . Referral systems
- . Group organization and structure
- . Collateral contacts
- . Parent group.

Within each of these subjects the program office guidelines, if any, are described, along with more detailed descriptions of how the management systems work in actual practice and variations in practice among different Districts or different counselors.

During the course of this evaluation, Arthur Young & Company consultants interviewed Special Intensive Group counselors in the following districts:

- . District IV - Jacksonville
- . District V - St. Petersburg
- . District VI - Tampa
- . District VIII - Sarasota
- . District IX - Ft. Pierce - West Palm Beach
- . District X - Ft. Lauderdale
- . District XI - Miami.

Although it was not possible to interview all counselors at each site, the data collection related to management systems was able to determine basic operational structure of the program in each of these districts, representing 83% of the counselors operating during the analysis period and 89% of the total children terminated from the program, either successfully or unsuccessfully.

1. COUNSELOR QUALIFICATIONS

Although program guidelines (Chapter 40 of HRS Manual 175-3, Probation and Aftercare) do not specifically address the qualifications necessary in the Special Intensive Group counselors, discussion with Program Office personnel in Tallahassee indicated that certain specifics had been identified for the program. These included the fact that all

counselors should be at least Counselors IIs, and among the best qualified counselors available within Youth Services. Coupled with this, it would seem evident that one measure of counselor qualifications could be in training directly relevant to the skills needed by a SIG counselor, whether this was obtained from educational background, prior experience, or training provided while a Special Intensive Group counselor. The counselors interviewed came from a variety of backgrounds. While all interviewed were Counselor IIs at this time, several had in fact been Counselor Is when they first entered the program. All counselors were volunteers for the program and varied in background from having extensive, directly relevant, prior experience in working with small groups on an experimental basis within their Districts, to being basically the last potential choice from their field unit with no specific preparation for SIG. Of those counselors interviewed, all have received excellent evaluations on their capabilities as counselors, though not all had worked as field counselors prior to the SIG program. Several of the current counselors entered the program directly from positions as Intake Counselors and one entered HRS employment as a Special Intensive Group counselor, though with a 1-1/2 year prior experience as a Probation and Aftercare counselor as a CETA employee. One counselor, no longer with the program, received very unfavorable ratings, both in HRS monitoring visits and from the unit supervisor. This counselor was eventually terminated from HRS and the replacement counselor has excellent qualifications. Although the screening and selection of Special Intensive Group counselors from all Districts has not been as careful as the Program Office desired, the quality of counselors in terms of ability to work with groups and to satisfy other requirements of the Special Intensive Group counselor position appears to have been adequate.

The vast majority of the SIG counselors interviewed had had some prior experience in conducting groups, though most training in this regard had been on-the-job experience. The formal training obtained prior to being hired for the SIG program varied widely. One counselor interviewed has a Masters degree in guidance and counseling. Several had no formal training to supplement their experience. Some had no specific training or experience with groups.

Training of Special Intensive Group counselors after their assumption of their position has been one of the weaker aspects of counselor qualifications. Although in some areas the training has been extensive (District X is particularly notable in this regard) in most other districts training received in recent years has been limited, or nonexistent unless the counselor obtained some training on his or her own.

2. REFERRAL SYSTEMS

Program guidelines relating to referral systems indicate the placement of a child in an Intensive Group to be the decision of the Placement Coordinator. Consultation with the Special Intensive Group counselor to determine if the child meets program criteria is encouraged and consultation with the judge to determine the judge's attitude towards leaving the child in the community after commitment is strongly

recommended. Coordination is also recommended with the State Attorney and law enforcement officials involved with the child. Special procedures are also detailed for transfer of children from training school into an Intensive Group. Children deemed suitable for participation in the group but for whom no vacancy is available may be sent to training school with the arrangement being made to transfer the child to the group if an opening occurs within 30 days. This policy involves coordination between the Special Intensive Group counselor and the Placement Coordinator to keep the Placement Coordinator informed of potential group openings. The Placement Coordinator is assigned the basic responsibility of keeping the group slots filled, though provision is also made for the counselors to go to the training schools to identify candidates where this is absolutely necessary to maintain the group's budgeted capacity.

In practice, the role of Placement Coordinator varies widely by District. In some areas, where the Placement Coordinator is geographically distant from the Special Intensive Group, as is true in Ft. Pierce and was true in Sarasota, arrangements for Special Intensive Group participation are predominantly made directly with the judge or field staff, with the Placement Coordinator confirming the decision. In other Districts, where the Placement Coordinator is closer to the program, field staff may directly arrange with the Special Intensive Group counselor to accept the child and then present this arrangement to the Placement Coordinator for ratification. In still other areas, the Placement Coordinator will follow the guidelines more closely, basically making the decision that Intensive Group is appropriate, though giving the Counselor an effective veto power on the placement. Most groups have at some point in time been required to go to the training schools to obtain children in order to maintain budgeted capacity, but this is increasingly rare. Even within the same District, the maintenance of capacity in Special Intensive Groups has varied widely with a change in Placement Coordinators, with some Coordinators being very active in maintaining group capacity and others tending to send all committed children to training schools.

The role of the judge in Special Intensive Group placement has also been quite pronounced. A judge's enthusiastic support of a local TRY Center was a contributing factor in very low group population in Daytona Beach, and the ultimate reassignment of that Special Intensive Group position. The judge's input is also of great significance in Ft. Pierce where the Placement Coordinator is less actively involved, and where the only options on committed programs are the local Special Intensive Group or training school.

3. GROUP ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The program guidelines for the Special Intensive Group program indicate:

"Primary treatment is reality group counseling sessions, meeting a minimum of four times weekly."

All program sites conduct at least four group counseling sessions per week, though in the past some counselors have conducted only three sessions supplemented by individual counseling. Some counselors have chosen to organize the program to require five group sessions weekly, and others mandate four group sessions plus one individual session for all participating children. The official budgeted group size for each counselor is eight children and under the operational plan to relieve overcrowding in the training schools, the target figure has been raised to ten. Most groups have at some time or another fallen below these target figures during times of transition -- during the periods when several children have been furloughed and prior to new referrals, after a change in counselors when the group was temporarily disbanded, or during group start-up. Groups have also been larger than the targeted eight to ten, sometimes in periods of transition when a counselor wished to provide overlap and accepted new referrals prior to furloughing present group members due to depart within the next few weeks. In other cases, the overage has been the result of the willingness of the Special Intensive Group counselor to take on extra children and this has resulted in groups being as large as 14 or 15. It has been much more common for a group to be under than to be over capacity.

The operation of the group varies with counselor's style. Some groups emphasize discipline, with the group setting rules of conduct. Other groups, where the counselor so inclines are aimed more at the provision of a family structure not available in the home environment. Still other groups emphasize the acquisition of responsibility by the child. Group objectives also vary. While all groups attempt to stabilize the child and show evidence of progression, different factors go into the requirements for successful completion of the group. In most cases, the judgement of a child's readiness for furlough is somewhat subjective, based on the counselor's assessment that the child is participating appropriately in groups and doing well in his or her work or school and home environment. The amount of time spent in group is a consideration in all decisions, but one counselor in Ft. Lauderdale uses time as the sole criterion as a means for the child to demonstrate acquired responsibility. To be successfully furloughed, the child must complete at least two months on the job or in school without missing a day.

The most common expression of what a counselor hoped to accomplish in a group can be expressed in the phrase "life skills". Depending upon the kinds of children entering the group, life skills could vary from basic literacy and mathematics training to less clearly defined concepts related to society, behavior, relationships with family and peers and so forth. As the data analyzed in Chapter II indicates, there is not a clear indication that any of these approaches are superior or inferior to others. All seem to achieve good results. Data available in Tallahassee did not lend themselves to analysis of results by counselor in Districts with more than one, and it is possible that this might be a fruitful area for subsequent analysis, particularly in Districts where counselor styles are distinctive, such as Districts IV, IX, or X.

4. COLLATERAL CONTACTS

Program guidelines related to collateral contacts are defined as follows:

"Counselors make collateral contacts in the community, provide special treatment through other agencies, work with teachers, employers, and provide other services the youngsters need."

An extensive element of the supervision provided under the Special Intensive Group Program is through counselor interaction with the "significant others" in the client child's environment. The most commonly cited contacts made by counselors were with parents, schools, jobs or job placement agencies, and law enforcement and the courts. The types of contacts do not vary significantly between counselors, but the extent and method of making the contacts does show some variation. Each of these areas is discussed below.

(1) Parents

Based upon the program structure, each counselor should see the child's parents on a weekly basis in the parent group, about which more is said in the final section of this chapter. In addition to the parent group contacts, or instead of such contact, the various counselors take somewhat different approaches to their involvement with parents. Some counselors make no home visits, but encourage parents to come in, either alone or with their children, for family counseling. This is a specific attempt to maintain a pure client-counselor relationship rather than being a policy which has arisen over the years without prior thought. Most counselors, however, are directly involved in home visits. The principal differences among counselors in this regard are the reasons for home visits and the intensity of contact. Some counselors visit parents regularly and others only if some specific problem concerning the child needs to be checked out. These visits will then be more for family counseling purposes than for information collection on the child's stability at home. Most counselors do make home visits on a fairly regular basis, usually weekly visits, or visits or contact three or four times per month. The counselor contacts varied in purpose, depending at least in part upon parents' participation at parent group.

The most significant variation on the type of parental contact was based upon the time of day of contact. Some counselors contacted parents at home only if the parents were in fact at home during normal 8 to 5 working hours, whereas other counselors specifically adjusted their parental home visits for evening hours to assure that the parents would be available.

(2) Schools

The most common variance in counselor collateral contacts with schools, for those children still attending school, was in the frequency of contact. This varied from daily on site contact with every school which had children in the group to relatively

rare school visits (one school every two to three weeks) with a reliance being placed on initial contacts with the school when the child entered the program and letting the school contact the counselor if any problems arose, such as absence or ungovernable behavior within the school. The most common pattern for school visits was for a counselor to visit each school which had children in the group at least once or twice per week.

The primary purpose for school visits was a supervisory one, to assure that the child was attending on a regular basis and showing improved school participation. The data gathered during these visits to the schools would then be related to what the child reported in the group counseling sessions. Some counselors however, did visit the schools only when the child reported a problem with school in a group, or when the school contacted the counselor to report a problem.

(3) Job Contacts

Collateral contacts related to jobs made by Special Intensive Group counselors fall into two widely different categories. These include those contacts with the child at the job for verification of employment, which is a strictly supervisory sort of contact, and those contacts with such groups as CETA, job placement agencies, Job Corps and the armed services in an attempt to acquire a job or career for the child to help him or her increase stability. These job placement contacts were most commonly cited in District IX - Ft. Pierce, and District XI - Miami, where the percentage of children reported as being in school tended to be lower.

The supervisory contacts at the job varied considerably. In most cases, these contacts were relatively rare in a desire not to disrupt the child's position if the employer was not aware of the child's previous problems with the law. Most counselors use some form of review of paycheck stubs to verify that employment is as reported by the child, and some use this method exclusively. Others actually visit with him or her to identify relationships in the job environment. These verification visits varied in frequency from daily to every couple of weeks.

(4) Courts and Law Enforcement

Each counselor interviewed indicated that he or she attended court whenever needed, primarily meaning whenever a child currently in the group had a problem, related to either a new law violation or a subsequent hearing based on the violation which had resulted in commitment to the Special Intensive Group. Contacts with the law enforcement agencies were of the same sort.

(5) Other

Although perhaps not, strictly speaking, a collateral contact, several of the counselors use a supplemental supervisory technique

for the children in group. This consisted of an evening call, at random, and at the curfew hour, to determine that the child was in fact obeying curfew regulations imposed as part of the group participation.

5. PARENT GROUP

Chapter 40 of the Probation and Aftercare Manual, related to the Special Intensive Group Program, includes the following comments on the role of the parent:

"Parental Participation

The parent or guardian must agree to sign the parent's contract to attend a parent group meeting once a week (HRS-YS Form 3006)."

While the group organization and structure shows the greatest variation in style between counselors, the organization and conduct of the parent group shows the greatest variation in actual activity. Although the program guidelines clearly require that a parental group be held at least weekly, this is not done in all Districts. Further, in those Districts where weekly group sessions are held, there are times when groups are held only because program guidelines require it, and, as indicated by the counselors, the group is held "if any parents show up".

There are strong feelings among the counselors as to the value of the parents group, which contributes to the frequency with which parent group sessions are held and the amount of effort devoted to assuring parental attendance. None of the counselors indicated any impression that parental involvement in the child's counseling was not important; it was the concept of the group of parents which was sometimes held to be of little worth or impractical given the parent's work environment. Those counselors who do not hold regular parental group sessions or who hold the group with the expectation that only one or two parents will attend, have placed their emphasis on the benefit of family counseling. In most cases, these are the counselors who are most active in home visits, using them for counseling, or who specifically arrange for the families to attend family counseling on a periodic basis with the child at the appropriate HRS office.

These philosophical differences on the value of parent groups are reflected in the way groups are conducted and in the amount of effort expended in assuring parental attendance. Consequently, the level of parental attendance also varies significantly between program sites. Some specific variances in the conduct of the parental groups include the following:

Combined with children

Some parent groups always include the group's children as well, with the counselors involved claiming that this reduces the potential of manipulation by either parents or by child. The most common pattern is for counselors to involve children upon occasion with no specific pattern

involved. Others specifically exclude children, never having involvement in the parents group. A final combination includes those counselors who have never included the children but have considered it.

Combined multiple parent groups

In four of the Districts, District IV - Jacksonville, District V - St. Petersburg, District VI - Tampa, District X - Ft. Lauderdale, two or more counselors work at the same geographic location. The approach taken to parents group has varied at these sites. In Districts V and X, the parents groups are rigidly separately, conducted on different nights and with the parents from a group working with that group's counselor. In District IV, the two groups combine all of the parents, with the group conducted by both counselors. In District VI, the childrens' groups are combined on one night of the week and the parents from both groups combine at the same time. One counselor then works with the children and one with the parents, with assignments changing from week to week.

Parental attendance

Those counselors who hold parent groups relatively rarely tend to have excellent attendance when the group is held, since it is a special thing and, in regular home visits, attendance is strongly encouraged. Active attendance is maintained in other districts, primarily through concentration on the value of the contract. In essence, this consists of having the parents sign the contract in the child's presence and placing a great deal of emphasis on the significance of the contract even though none of the counselors feel it to be enforcable. Follow-up on absences at the parental group are also commonly employed by those Districts which have high attendance, with excuses being given only for the same sorts of reasons which would excuse the children, illness or transportation difficulties. Emphasis on the contract is then stressed and in some specific instances the counselor attempts to shame the parents. Guilt, whether suggested by the Intensive Counselor directly to the parents or by having pressure on attendance put on the parents by the children through encouragement by the counselor, is the most commonly used motivational technique for improving parental group attendance.

V. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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V. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains general observations and conclusions related to the Special Intensive Group program and identification of opportunities for program modification and improvement. Observations and conclusions are derived from the preceding chapters and from other matters collected during the course of discussions with Special Intensive Group counselors.

1. PROGRAM CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions based upon previously presented data are defined under seven major categories, as follows:

- . Participant profiles
- . Program success rates
- . Recidivism rates
- . Counselor qualifications
- . Referral systems
- . Program operations
- . Counselor recommendations.

Each of these subjects is discussed in the sections which follow.

(1) Participant Profiles

Observations and conclusions on the profile of participants within the Special Intensive Group program and in the other commitment programs operating by the Youth Service Program Office are presented under the five major analysis headings used in the previous discussions.

. Age

The Special Intensive Group program accepts children at all of the different ages at which they are likely to enter commitment programs operated by the YSPO. There seems to be no significant bias towards either younger or older children when compared with any other commitment program. There also does not seem to be any major variation by District, based on the data extracted from files, though counselors in certain Districts did indicate that they tended to prefer older children (District IX - Ft. Pierce and District XI - Miami). Counselors in all districts where interviews were conducted indicated examples of very young children and relatively old children who were committed to the Special Intensive Group program, but no special emphasis has been employed in the program which has discriminated for or against either end of the age spectrum.

Race

Based on our samples, the Special Intensive Group program seems to be adequately balanced in terms of racial participation when contrasted with all commitment programs operated by the YSPO. However, when compared to training schools, to which the Special Intensive Groups are intended to be an alternative, a somewhat lower percentage of Negro children participate in the Special Intensive Group program. On a program wide basis the Special Intensive Groups show a better balance than either the Associated Marine Institutes or the TRY Centers. There is no indication that the Special Intensive Group program as a whole tends to discriminate by race in acceptance of committed children. Much more variation by race is indicated between districts, with usually high percentage of Negro participants in Districts IX, X, and XI and an unusually low percentage of negro participants in Districts I, V, VI and VIII. These percentages correspond fairly closely to the distributions for all programs within their respective districts.

Sex

Although in virtually all Districts it was stressed by Counselors, Supervisors and others that the Special Intensive Group program serves an inadequate number of female delinquents, the distribution of program participants by sex does not differ radically from the equivalent distribution for all committed programs. The appropriate percentage of females is 9.8% for the Special Intensive Group program compared to 17.5% for all committed programs. Although much lower than the percentage of females in training schools (20.8%), the Special Intensive Group did rather better on this distribution than did the other community based programs. When the individual districts are examined it is clear that this total program percentage of females has been raised by the large percentage of females in District IX. Based on observations made within the various districts, the relatively low percentage of females participating in some districts (particularly Districts X and XI) is primarily due to a reluctance on the part of the Placement Coordinators to make female referrals to the Special Intensive Group. While in some districts there is a reluctance to accept girls, this has not been true in either of these two Districts. The Placement Coordinators, and to some extent the counselors themselves, seem to feel that it is difficult to work with a single girl in a group of ten juveniles. At the same time, some counselors indicated that they preferred to have at least one female in the group. It does not seem likely that a major change can be made in attitude of either Placement Coordinators or those counselors who are reluctant to accept female participants. It was not possible to make an assessment of the relative success of female participants in the Special Intensive Group program in a manner which might alleviate these worries since the

number of females on whom data were available (39 in Special Intensive Group program) is too small for any conclusive analysis.

Prior offenses

The analysis of number of prior offenses and types of prior offenses indicates that the Special Intensive Group program has, in fact, been directed at the more serious offenders within the juvenile justice system rather than concentrating on those children involved in their first contact with the law and courts. In terms of number of prior offenses, the Special Intensive Group program (mean = 6.59) is higher than any other committed programs except training schools (mean = 6.79) and the Associated Marine Institutes (mean = 6.67). The classification of seriousness of prior offenses indicated that the Special Intensive Group included a proportion of children with prior offenses in the two most serious categories as large as the proportion at the training schools, and exceeded the proportion in these categories at the Associated Marine Institutes. By District, the number of prior offenses at time of commitment did show some variation. For those programs with large number of participants checked, Districts V, VI, VII and X showed higher number of average prior offenses than did the rest of the program viewed as a whole. In terms of seriousness of prior offense, measured as violent crime or other crime against persons, some variation was shown between districts with the most serious prior offenders in Districts V, IX, and XI. Only District V is included in both of these classifications.

Prior commitments

With the "seriousness" of delinquency of program participants measured by the number of prior commitments, the Special Intensive Group program showed a higher average number of prior commitments than any other commitment program except the training school. This certainly implies that the Special Intensive Group is not simply being used for light offenders. Viewed by district, the most serious delinquents were in Districts III, IV, V, and VI.

Based upon published YSPO statistics, the Special Intensive Group program had a higher success rate than any commitment program except the training schools, where the most restrictive program makes the short-term success relatively easy to achieve. The Special Intensive Group failure rate was also equal to or lower than any other program except training school. The success rate of the Special Intensive Group program, 53.9%, is particularly impressive when it is realized that the SIG program was the only one of the community based programs, including AMI, TRY, and START which successfully terminated a majority of its participants. For those districts with more than minimal total program completions, only three of the Districts, District VI, IX, and XI reported success rates below 50%. This may also be somewhat misleading since Districts VI, and XI reported the largest number of neutral terminations, primarily in the unknown classification. In all

three of the Districts which fell short of the 50% success rate, successes still exceeded failures. In comparing the success rates against seriousness measured in number and types of prior offenses and number of prior commitments the example of District V is particularly notable. The St. Petersburg District was ranked among the highest in terms of number of prior offenses, seriousness of prior offenses, and number of prior commitments. It also ranked third in terms of number of successful terminations. The lowest rankings of success rates by districts with large numbers of participants were District VI with a 43.4% success rate and District XI with a 40.2% success rate. Checking these Districts against the seriousness of prior offenses, it can be seen that District VI ranked high in terms of number of prior offenses and number of prior commitments. District XI ranked highest among the populous Districts in terms of seriousness of prior offenses.

(3) Recidivism Rates

The measurement usually considered most valuable in assessing program benefits is the recidivism rate. Although it has not been possible to correlate recidivism with any clearly defined dimension of the juvenile offender, the analysis of the program participants indicates that, insofar as we can determine and based on those variables studied, there are no very great differences between populations at the various programs. Therefore, the finding which resulted from a check of recidivism, that the recidivism rate, measured as new law violation or technical violations of Aftercare, was 23.7% in the Special Intensive Group program is very impressive. The closest any other program came to achieving this rate is the Associated Marine Institutes at 28.9%. This is an extremely positive finding since, as far as we can tell, the participants in the Special Intensive Group are as serious offenders, with at least as much prior contact with the juvenile justice system, as participants in any other program. A Special Intensive Group, which according to YSPO budget analysis is the most cost effective of the commitment programs also gives every indication of being the most effective programmatically. Of the Districts with more than ten successful terminations who were checked for recidivism, the lowest recidivism rate was recorded in District XI at 12.5%. The highest was District VIII with a recidivism rate of 33.3%. Measuring the rates for each district against the balance of the program indicated no statistically significant difference between the recidivism rates recorded. The rate for the program as a whole is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level allowing for an error of plus or minus 5%.

(4) Counselor Qualifications

The majority of the Special Intensive Group counselors have academic and experience qualifications which particularly suit them for their positions, and with few exceptions counselor selection has been carefully made.

No specific activities have been undertaken in the program to assure that all Special Intensive Group counselors receive the training they require and that training, at least within the program, will be consistent and above defined minimum levels across Districts.

(5) Referral Systems

Under the rules of HRS, the Placement Coordinator in each District is responsible for referrals to the Special Intensive Group. Observations of program history indicates that the importance of this function, both in attitude and location, cannot be overemphasized.

The importance of attitude, the Placement Coordinator's desire to keep the program full, is obvious. Geography is perhaps less so. It is worth noting that sites which have had the most difficulty in maintaining group capacity (Daytona Beach, Ft. Pierce and Sarasota) are far removed both from the Placement Coordinator and other alternative commitment programs.

(6) Program Operations

With few exceptions, the differences in the children served in different Districts and the results of their SIG participation are not significant. Further, changes in counselors and in counselor activity over time would make it impossible to prove that the differences in program operations influences, positively or negatively, the outcome results. Two observations, however, are warranted:

- . The underlying premise of the Special Intensive Group, that a sharply limited caseload, freeing the counselor sufficiently to be involved with the children included in the caseload, does have salutary effects
- . The counselors are not adequately aware of operations in other Districts, such that they could consider modifications to operations based on others experiences.

(7) Counselor Recommendations

During the course of the on-site data collection from Special Intensive Group operations, both counselors and those with whom they interface (such as Unit Supervisors, Program Specialists, and Placement Coordinators) were asked for their recommendations to improve the program. Nothing observed by the evaluators would serve to contradict any of these recommendations, though in most of the subject areas the period of observations was inadequate to allow expression of an opinion. The recommendations by the counselors included the following:

. Consequences

Most counselors have developed internal "consequences" short of a transfer hearing for violation of group rules. Examples include:

- Automatic extension in program
- Extra counseling sessions
- Writing lines
- Push-ups.

Most counselors also felt they were limited in terms of the sanctions they could apply. In addition, in many cases, consequences are not clearly defined as they relate to aberrant behavior.

Training

Those counselors with the least applicable formal educational backgrounds frequently expressed the need for organized training, particularly in areas such as family counseling. In District IV, where there has been turnover at a site with more than one counselor, the suggestion was made to require a period of on the job training, working with an existing group before taking on a new group.

Program scope

The suggestions for changes in program scope came predominately from those who interface with the Special Intensive Group program, rather than from the counselors themselves. Suggested scope changes were predominantly expansions in scope, and fell into two major categories:

- Geographic expansion, adding counselors to serve other areas in the District
- Target expansion, adding non-committed children to existing groups, or setting up special groups for children on probation.

Length of stay

Printed guidelines on length of stay relate only to the maximum time (30 days) which a juvenile can spend in training school prior to transfer to the Special Intensive Group. The budgeted length of stay for the program is 120, which allows for 90 days in the program plus the 30 days in training school. Despite the fact that a sizable majority of participants do not go to training schools first, allowing 120 days for program participation, most counselors have interpreted the budgeted LOS as 90 days. In virtually every District, counselors felt a budgeted average length of stay (LOS) of 90 days was inadequate. The response has been to exceed the perceived budget period frequently. When asked for an estimate of an appropriate LOS, 120 days was the figure most commonly mentioned.

Transportation

Most counselors felt there were benefits to the children in group in being responsible for making their own way to the group, but several thought some assistance could be provided in areas with poor public transport, or in the form of financial assistance to use the buses where cost could be a hardship. Several counselors also indicated they felt the program should have transportation to provide the group with trips, both for education and reward.

Parental enforcement

Several counselors expressed regret that they did not have more legal authority to force parental attendance at group.

. Supervision

A difficulty with SIG supervision resulting from the HRS network structure was expressed in several districts. The primary difficulty related to communication between the counselors, Program Specialists and Program Office, which was hampered by the official reporting relationships.

. Facilities

Several Districts complained of the quality of facilities for conducting group, with problems including:

- Lack of space
- Lack of privacy
- Aesthetically unappealing.

2. PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS AND IMPROVEMENT

A summary of the conclusions discussed in the previous section of this chapter is that the Special Intensive Group program is an excellent program, which gives every evidence of achieving its purposes. It serves as a valuable alternative to the training schools and has beneficial short and long term effect on the children with which it works.

This conclusion does not mean, however, that the program should be vastly expanded without careful consideration, or that there are no areas in which change should be introduced. Areas where possible program changes should be made are discussed under the following categories:

- . Program expansion
- . Counselor communications
- . Program guidelines
- . Training
- . Support materials.

(1) Program Expansion

The Special Intensive Group program is worth expanding, but is not suitable for all areas. Careful consideration should be given to certain key elements before establishing or relocating positions:

. Population density

With few exceptions, a highly urbanized population density will be necessary to support the public transportation system which is a key element of the Special Intensive Group. While SIG has worked in less densely populated areas (as it does now in Ft. Pierce), the transportation system should be carefully

assessed in planning a new group, and assurance should be sought that the area served by a group will generate enough referrals to maintain group capacity.

. Location

Location of the counselors should be based on need areas and transport systems rather than existing office locations. Even those areas which can justify two counselors in the same location would be able to increase their coverage by separating. This point is particularly apt, since none of the Districts with co-located counselors use very precisely defined procedures for selecting to which group a child is assigned.

. Competing programs

Other programs serving the same target population should be reviewed to assure the service being provided is actually needed in that area.

. Caseload

The Special Intensive Groups will generally be most effective in those locations where Community Control Counselors are carrying the highest average caseload, since in these areas children most in need of intensive supervision are least likely to be receiving it and the SIG will best fill a need.

(2) Counselor Communications

Provision should be made for regular annual or bi-annual conferences to include all of the Special Intensive Group counselors. Communication between those individuals working with the program on a daily basis can help to standardize the program while still allowing local flexibility. Such communication will provide dissemination of successful techniques and reassurance to counselors.

In conjunction with this point, a change in emphasis by program monitors is recommended. In addition to assuring compliance with program guidelines, monitoring should be used as a means of spreading information on program operations between Districts. A brief program newsletter prepared by the Program Office in conjunction with the counselors is still another technique which can improve communications and is recommended.

(3) Program Guidelines

Program guidelines should be reviewed and revised if necessary at the regular conferences of the Special Intensive Group Counselors, recommended above. Guideline changes should be prepared by the Program Office based on input from these meetings.

(4) Training

Normal training programs in such areas as group counseling dynamics, individual and family counseling, and other areas where need is perceived by the counselors should be made available on a regular basis.

In addition, a special on-the-job training program should be prepared for new Special Intensive Group counselors, serving a brief internship with at least two other experienced counselors in other locations.

(5) Support Systems

The frequency with which suggestions were raised for better support systems for counselors suggests that such things as availability to transportation, reference materials and an adequate meeting room for group would make a contribution to group effectiveness.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP

PROGRAM COUNSELORS

SIG COUNSELORS

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I. IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

HRS District _____

Network _____

Group City _____

Counselor Interviewed _____

Position _____

II. Counselor Background

Time with SIG Program (Position when Started) _____

Experience Prior to SIG Program (length of time, agency, job description)

Educational Background (degrees, majors, internships, etc.)

Training Provided Specific to Current Position

	What	When	Sponsor
. Group Counseling	_____	_____	_____

. Other	_____	_____	_____

III. REFERRAL SYSTEMS

Describe procedures used for maintaining caseload. (Reactive/
Proactive? Contacts with Placement Coordinators, Training School,
Judges, Others)

Describe Screening Procedures (Who makes acceptance/rejection
decision? What is looked for?)

Percentage of Referrals Accepted/Rejected.

Basis for estimate. _____

Reasons for rejection	Rank Frequency (First, Second)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What do you see as the major weaknesses/disadvantages of the SIG program?

What changes (if any) do you think are needed in the scope of the program? (More differences in group sizes? Different kinds of children? Other?)

If you ran the SIG program and could influence policy without restrictions (such as budget), how would you change it? (Note: Expansion of scope above. Address such items as supervision, training, referral systems, program standards).

IV. GROUP

What determines group to which a child is assigned (where that is an option)?

Are there intentional differences in style between counselors?
(Hard Line/Soft, etc.)

Describe what YOU attempt to achieve in the group.

What are acceptable reasons^a for a miss?

How often do you refer a child to training school? To another program?

V. COLLATERAL CONTACTS

Describe your schedule (Interviewer: Special emphasis on time available/spent on collaterals).

What groups/significant others do you contact about a child? How often? What purpose? Factors about a child that influence contact.

Contact	Frequency	Why	Special Consideration
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Contact	Frequency	Why	Special Consideration

VI. PARENTS GROUP

How is parents group organized? (one or more groups, meeting times, who runs? Combined with children.)

What do YOU attempt to accomplish in a parents group?

How good is attendance at parents groups?
(numbers, frequency of repeats, stability)

How good is attendance at parents groups? (continued)

Has this attendance varied? When and why?

What do you do to get parents to attend group?

VII. GRADUATION (FURLOUGH)

What do you require for graduation?

. Time in program _____

. Group Participation _____

. Stability revealed by collateral contacts _____

. Other _____

Who participates in the furlough decision? How?

. Counselor _____

. Other Counselors/Supervisor _____

. Child _____

. Parents _____

. Responsible P&A Counselor _____

. Group _____

. Significant others _____

VIII. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

What do you see as the major strengths/advantages of the SIG program?

INTERVIEW GUIDE

SPECIAL INTENSIVE GROUP

PROGRAM INTERFACE

SIG PROGRAM INTERFACE

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I. IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

HRS District _____

City _____

Individual Interviewed _____

Position _____

II. RELATIONSHIP TO SIG PROGRAM

How is your current position related to the SIG program? How do you interface?

Have you had a previous relationship, now changed? If so, please describe. (As a result either of position change or program change);

III. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

What do you see as the major strengths/advantages of the SIG program?

What do you see as the major weaknesses/disadvantages of the SIG program?

What changes (if any) do you think are needed in the scope of the program? (More counselors for your location? More locations? Differences in group sizes? Different kinds of children? Other?).

If you ran the SIG program and could influence policy without restrictions (such as budget), how would you change it? (Note: Expansion of Scope above. Address such items as supervision, training, referral systems, program standards).