

YOUTH-AT-RISK

A Neglected Special Population

Introduction to the Subject
and
An Invitation

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The thoughts expressed are those of the author and do not directly or indirectly reflect the views of the Trustees of the Fund for Advancement of Camping, the members of the Consortium on Camping and Outdoor Education for Youth-at-Risk, or the members of the Consortium's Steering Committee. In certain areas of the subject, there are widely disparate theorems and conclusions which will need extensive research by competent investigators but, basically, the author believes one will find consensus on the need to give attention to this matter.

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A DEFINITION

Youth-at-risk is a special population which is growing in size due to changes in life dynamics, including the nature of the family, its dwelling units, population density, economic challenges and societal, cultural and attitudinal patterns. Youth-at-risk includes all boys and girls who, for any of manifold reasons, have difficulty adjusting, or are unable to adjust, to behavior patterns considered normal and wholesome for their peer group. Currently, there is considerable interest, on a broad front, in the challenges which they present.

Whereas, it used to be thought certain attitudinal and behavioral patterns were the product of poverty and limited opportunity, in the past two decades it has become increasingly evident that atypical behavior now cuts across all strata of our inner and central city, suburban, and rural society without regard to socio-economic condition. Well over 10 million youths are involved. Causation of this condition is too complex to attempt to cover here. Rather, consideration will be given to the typology of youth-at-risk, the general nature of programs now extant, and the imperative need to stimulate the availability of programs best suited to the needs of specific types of youths.

In reading this exposition, one must keep in mind that at the present time there are semantical problems due to the interdisciplinary significance of the subject and the variety of disciplinary usages of terminology. An informal survey made of fifty participants in a program which the Fund for Advancement of Camping has launched also indicates an inclination to know a great deal about one's own field of interest but little about allied alternatives also involved in serving youth-at-risk.

Early in the development of this project, it was also surprising that a number of professionals did not clearly understand the difference between "mental retardation" and "juvenile delinquency". The author's concern therefore is that the reader may misinterpret the thrust of this effort, which is on the challenge of *all* youth-at-risk — not just the adjudicated delinquent — and on the potential of camping and other outdoor experience. Although experimentation also is being conducted into non-rural programs, more or less closely related to alternative education practices, we shall not try to cover these.

Since the seeds of this Project were not sown until December of 1978, there is a great deal of data as yet ungathered which results in an imbalance of presentation, for which the reader's indulgence is sought.

FUND FOR ADVANCEMENT OF CAMPING AND THE URBAN EQUATION

Three years' ago FAC began to identify the need for the camping movement to become more intimately allied with the urban human-services delivery system. The reasons for this were that the energy crunch, plus continuing increase in cost of acquisition and maintenance of single-family dwellings, would cause migration back to the central city and immediately surrounding suburbs, including revitalization of the inner city, but the move generally would be into high-rises and smaller living units. The question, in part, would be the impact this would have not only on child rearing but upon the family as a whole. Also to be considered are the possibility of increased leisure and intensification of tensions caused by population density and other factors in the work place, community and home. Psychological renewal of persons and families would become as important as physical renewal. What would be the future role of open lands and programs for land use?

Two years ago it seemed that one underutilized resource which could be more effectively employed was the vast potential of research within the community of scholars interested in and concerned with outdoor education. So, FAC commissioned Dr. Betty van der Smissen to undertake the creation of a Computer Center to accession, store, and make available all the graduate and faculty research done in this field with a view to ascertaining how better it could be made available and augmented by other needed research. This program currently is under way including the development of a network of scholars in the field.

DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH-AT-RISK PROJECT

Eighteen months ago Campbell Loughmiller had completed his manuscript of *KIDS IN TROUBLE*. It appeared that his concepts also were applicable to Education, Corrections, Mental Health and Special Education. Reactions to this thought were sought from others representing a wide variety of academic and functional backgrounds. All agreed. Dr. Robert Havighurst of the University of Chicago suggested the creation of an interdisciplinary Consortium to consider the current situation in regard to alternatives for emotionally-troubled children.

Of the some 150 members of the Consortium organized during 1979, fifty met for a two-day Consultation in September 1979 at Illinois State Beach Park, Zion, Illinois, to explore the potential for service and the degree to which there were unmet needs. (Copies of the summary proceedings are available upon request from FAC.)

Out of this came the *National Consortium on Camping and Outdoor Education for Youth-at-Risk*, with the understanding it would not attempt to create another large organization, nor duplicate the work of others. Rather, the intent was to establish a clearinghouse, inviting the cooperation of other organizations and individuals interested in the subject and broadening the availability of services for such children.

A Steering Committee was appointed and it, in turn, suggested FAC become the parent organization with the Consortium a Project thereof. Since then, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the American Correctional Association have become "cooperating associations". Others are to be added.

All interested individuals and organizations are warmly invited to join this effort. There are no dues or specific obligations. The degree of involvement will depend on your own concern and motivation.

Our initial steps will be:—

- To gather what literature there is on the subject, making it available to persons and organizations interested in developing programs.
- To prepare a directory of existing programs for use primarily by potential "referring" agencies and individuals.
- To arrange consultations with other national organizations in order to review, jointly, potentials for service.
- To define, encourage and give leadership to projects and activities related to the use of the outdoor environment to work with youth-at-risk.
- To promote the accessibility of camping and other outdoor resources to youth-at-risk and the evaluation of outdoor-oriented programs designed to serve the special needs of youth-at-risk.
- To provide or cause to be provided bases for the development of improved policies and procedures affecting youth-at-risk and outdoor programs designed for them.
- To stimulate increasingly effective use of empirical research as *an aid to practitioners* in improving the state of the art of working with and for youth in need of rehabilitative services.

At the Consortium Consultation last September, there was consensus that the challenge of youth-at-risk was a multifunctional, interdisciplinary one deserving of the best "brains", ideas and programs which can be devised. It is not solely the responsibility of the schools, police, courts, youth and family serving agencies - or families.

The challenge is manifest in growing statistics on the record of school failure, inadequate preparation for adult life, lack of employment skills, and additions both to unemployment and public assistance rolls as a result thereof; as well as, for many, entry into a life of frustration, illegal activity and jail or penitentiary existence.

Yearly cost is great; lifetime cost horrendous.

Simultaneously, we have enough experience to know that for a significant majority there are effective potential alternatives, many of which need:

- 1) Open space and programs centering around camping and outdoor education, and
- 2) Opportunities for individual youths-at-risk to reestablish confidence in self and adults, to acquire new horizons and learn new skills.

We know there are underutilized camps, some of which are sold to developers of housing, shopping centers and industrial sites, losing forever opportunity to serve future populations.

Judges and others who work daily with these young people are seeking help to provide alternatives for these youths.

Camp site owners and Camp Directors usually are seeking ways to improve program, extend the number they enroll, and use camp facilities more effectively.

Camp experts who attended the Consortium Consultation believe there is a golden opportunity to form an amalgam of people, resources, insights and programs provided those involved in one way or another with young people are willing to join in the development and improvement of the alternatives available.

YOUTH-AT-RISK — NATURE AND VARIETY OF PROBLEM

As previously stated, the author has been concerned that the reader would form an image focusing solely upon the *adjudicated* youngster, whether male or female. On the contrary, the intent is to focus on the *maladaptive* child for whom life's experiences, in the home, on the street, and at school, have caused him to lose confidence and respect for self, to become alienated from community and adults, and to reject societal processes designed to prepare a person for adulthood, and to espouse values, attitudes and life styles which are counterproductive.

Recent research indicates a correlation between adult health and youth life style. Psychiatric research indicates the relationship between first-grader's social attitudes and reading readiness and teenager's addiction to chemicals resulting in health impairment and possibly a life of crime.

It is apparent that growing urban population density, higher percentages of working mothers, and high-rise living will cause greater estrangement, desire for anonymity and withdrawal, and that the social or human services institutions of our urban systems will lose ability to provide means for regeneration and renewal of families and individuals, unless they can avail themselves of more extensive use of open space through organized camping and other outdoor experience, not only for youths but families as a unit.

SOME BACKGROUND DATA

It is known that emotional problems can commence as early as six months of age caused by familial conditions over which an infant has no control. Some therapy is available for youths as young as six, although usually not for

youths under eight; and some is designed for teenagers as well as young adults.

Studies by the Illinois Institute for Juvenile Research and others point out that there has been growth in the number of young females-at-risk and that, in some communities, the unmet needs of girls outweighs those of boys. Yet, the apparent psychological emphasis still seems to be on planning for boys and downplaying the incidence of need of the female population.

Although some facilities seek to provide for the urban rehabilitation of such youths, it is felt generally that the most successful are those involving use of open space through camping or other outdoor experience, where simple, quiet, purposeful group living can reestablish youth's sense of self-esteem, significance of accepted values, and cooperation with peers and adults. In effect, such agencies act as receiving resources, accepting referrals from persons such as parents, psychiatrists, educators and Juvenile Court Judges, who have found that alternative systems have not met the specific need.

Admissions policies vary; some are selective in order to maintain personality balance within the therapeutic group (Loughmiller concept), as well as to avoid the disruption caused by too rapid an influx of new campers -- and thus have waiting lists. Other mechanisms, such as the stress/challenge type, start and finish with a group simultaneously; whereas, with the CCC/Forestry type work camps, those admitted have been referred by the courts and must be admitted, provided there are accommodations available.

It is estimated that 95% of all youths perform at least one delinquent act at some point in the process of growing to adulthood. Most seem to overcome the condition without need for outside special help.

Dr. Richard Gable, Director of Research, National Center for Juvenile Justice, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, indicates the major causes of delinquency are:—

- 1) Inadequate adult supervision at home.
- 2) Inadequate acculturation to compete academically in school.
- 3) Inadequate economic and social resources to become successful in society.

He observes that the difficulty is there are not enough alternatives available to avoid the necessity of institutionalizing children.

Studies of the Academy for Contemporary Problems indicate institutionalizing offenders speeds up the time to the next arrest; whereas informal supervision outside of an institution slows it the most.

Campbell Loughmiller, during the twenty years he directed the camp of the Salesmanship Club of Dallas (where he developed a year-round resident therapeutic camp for boys), confirmed that many of the boys admitted they were turned off not only on parents, teachers and other authoritarian adult figures but had reached the point where they were antagonistic toward all adults. Dr. Clifford Shaw, Dr. Eric Berne and others point out that many maladapting youths suffer one failure after another until they finally give up.

It has been said there is no such thing as a "bad" child, only adults whose effect upon a child has been pernicious. There are many examples of schools, other community youth-serving agencies, and individual families who seem to be able to provide the leadership, discipline and supportive warmth to children which enable growth to successful adulthood, while others around them drop-out, become alienated and hostile, and frequently become a social problem.

The first Surgeon General of the World Health Organization frequently used to say, "We can prevent wholesale; but we must treat retail."

It would seem, therefore, that early identification of attitudinal and behavior patterns is one essential ingredient in the rehabilitative process; the other is seeking the type of help best suited for the needs of the youth-at-risk.

It is obvious that, just as with the Feudal Baron who had only one bed for his guests and therefore stretched or shortened them to fit the bed, no one therapeutic rehabilitation program will fit the needs of all youths-at-risk. But, at this point in the development of such programs, we do not know as much as is necessary about either availability of programs or the categories of need for such services. The trend seems to be locating facilities as close as possible to the residences of the youths availing of the service, partially because of the continuing relationship of "receiving" agency staff to parents, and partially because, in the "Loughmiller type" programs, the campers go home periodically for week-ends. One difficulty is finding proper locations for such facilities, due, in part, to neighbors' opposition to the facilities being located adjacent to them.

There are about 1.5 million youths who appear in the juvenile courts of the United States each year. 70% have never been in court before. 75% are boys in the age-range of 14-17, and 66% are white.

In addition, 4.5 million youths are arrested annually by the police, who usually are given a "station adjustment" by the police youth officer, and are returned to their parents. Some of these youths, whose offenses are not serious enough to be referred to the court, may be picked up repeatedly by the police, whose lack of adequate staff prevents much of a follow-up on them.

Of the cases which do go to court:—

- 10% are for crimes against persons,
- 40% are for crimes against property,
- 10% are for drug and alcohol abuse,
- 23% are for "status" or non-criminal offenses
(now decreasing as alternatives are employed to dispose of such cases),
- 15% are for other reasons, and
- 2% are not classified.

Court dispositions approximate:—

- 45% - Little or nothing is done, assuming experience along with court experience will be sufficient;
- 35% - Supervision, formal or informal, almost always involves living in the same setting as prior to court experience;
- 10% - Removal from home and placed in open or closed facility; and
- 10% - Other.

The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse reports that annually about a million children are battered and abused, thousands dying as a result of their experiences. And, an additional million-or-more run away from home each year to escape intolerable conditions of physical and sexual abuse, rejection, hatred and other inhuman treatment.

Furthermore, there are over two million school-age children who are either drop-outs or kicked outs. Twenty per cent of this number have high I.Q.'s, and are unchallenged and unwilling to accept the norms or techniques of learning imposed by the school system, feeling they do not meet their personal needs.

These are but a few of the various types of youth-at-risk in need of help.

Many Juvenile Court Judges and others seeking placement for these children have found the camp setting best suited to effect rehabilitation, but believe Camp Administrators are not interested in delinquent kids and feel shunned by camp people in dealing with this type population. These judges also believe firmly that receiving agencies, to be effectual, must not promise what they cannot produce, nor "welsh" on achievable promises. These youths have had too many disappointments already; what they need is the fulfillment of expectations previously offered.

On the other hand, a former Camp Director says that most of these kids are no different from those sent to camp by Title XX or other programs for disadvantaged young people.

Here is a list of the major types of youths involved:—

- 1) **Status offenders** - runaways, dependent, abandoned, battered, abused, incorrigible, truant, school drop-outs and kicked-outs, drug users.
- 2) **Victims of crime** - such as physical battery, rape, shooting, robbery and sexual abuse.
- 3) **Station adjusted** - under various degrees of continuing relationship to youth officers and other police personnel.
- 4) **Probationary** - under supervision of court, or released by the court, or paroled from a correctional facility.
- 5) **Mentally ill** - as a result of emotional problems.

PROGRAM TYPOLOGIES

There appear to be ten different basic types of program sponsorship at the present time. They are:—

- 1) **Long-term resident therapeutic camping, based on the "Loughmiller model"**. Many of these camps are independent, single facilities, but the Eckerd Corporation Foundation now operates nine camps in Florida, North Carolina and Vermont. And the Anneewakee Resident Treatment Center has some four facilities in Georgia and Florida. Roughly estimated, there may be as many as thirty-seven such camps now in the United States.
- 2) **Stress/adventure experience** based on the "Outward Bound Modified" model. It is thought there are some two hundred "practitioners" either operating or available to direct such programs. Many are members of the Association for Experiential Education.
 Many of these practitioners received their initial training with Outward Bound and then continued to provide similar programs independently, either on their own or as a staff person of another agency. Participant age ranges vary as do course content. One program in New Mexico is an alternative to penitentiary incarceration upon court commitment, with the convicted person having the option of being committed to one or the other.
- 3) **Public school systems' use of outdoor experience**, usually for specific grade levels but some are using these programs for students who do not adapt to classroom regimes.
 In addition, there are an increasing number of "alternative school" programs of widely disparate types, some of which are fully urbanrooted, very imaginative and providing excellent pedagogical leadership at minimum cost. The Consortium Project does not contemplate including these, at the present time, within its project perimeters.
- 4) **Juvenile Court Judges' use of alternatives to institutional commitment** for various categories of young people. Apparently, in some instances, the Judge uses existing programs in or adjacent to his jurisdiction which may be governmentally or privately operated. In other instances, he may create or stimulate the creation of a facility available for his use. At present writing, it is not known how many judges are using these alternatives.

The Cook County (Illinois) Juvenile Court reports they have plenty of alternatives for adjudicated youths, but need more for delinquency-prone youths to reduce the volume of cases upon which the Court receives petitions; in other words, a Preventive Program is needed. The Youth Bureau, Chicago Police Department, in cooperation with the Fund for Advancement of Camping and its Consortium Project, is exploring this possibility through use of camping and outdoor experience.

- 5) **CCC/Forestry type resident camps**, governmentally operated with emphasis on work ethic. Generally in disuse for a number of decades, this type of program again is becoming popular, with modern modifications. Florida has a camp in operation and is considering expansion of program by opening others. Illinois may reactivate its Forestry Camp program.
In Florida, the Camp Administrator is inquiring into the possibility of developing a Big Brother type relationship with local Kiwanis Clubs, which would provide volunteer members to work with youths on a one-to-one basis while at camp, during probation, and subsequently until the youth is fully re-established in his community. Details are yet to be worked out. FAC's Consortium has been asked to advise on this project.
- 6) **The myriad of programs of diverse types directed by independent entities**, including churches, family and youth serving agencies, utilizing wagon trains, bicycles, rafts, boats, canoes, sailing vessels, wilderness and urban hiking facilities, and the like.
One of the most successful is the Associated Marine Industries, Inc., which has several facilities using boats and ocean-going vessels to work with teenagers in scuba diving and exploration for treasure in the waters around Florida.
- 7) **Some fifty resident therapeutic schools**, some of which apparently use camping and field trips.
- 8) **The "Shelter" residences** are primarily for "status" offenders and drug users; some are church operated.
- 9) **The use by governmental correctional institutions**, of one or more of the above categories, for some of their charges, frequently with significant modifications.
The State of Wisconsin has developed a regimen which follows a former inmate through post-commitment until he has a job and is re-established in his community. (Details are available from the Division of Corrections, Dept. of Health & Social Services, Madison, WI 53701.)
- 10) **The Residential Schools** devoted to instruction in forestry and agriculture with a modified "Outward Bound" component; such as, the Sterling Institute in Vermont, used now for college credit as an off-campus activity.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In most other enterprise groupings, there is some sort of a national organization with which there is affiliation or membership. Of the ten categories enumerated, few seem to have developed, as yet, such organizational relationships.

Some of the resident therapeutic camps are members of the American Camping Association. Under Ted Wichmann's leadership, there is being formed a subgrouping of stress/challenge practitioners within the Association for Experimental Education (AEE), and a large number of the governmental correctional agencies undoubtedly are members of the American Correctional Association. There is a loose and relatively informal relationship of the resident therapeutic schools, and some of the public school systems may hold membership in an association dealing with special education. But, basically, there are no strongly identified national organizations representing these respective fields.

On the other hand, programs affiliated with or operated by the Boys' Clubs are related to the interest of the Boys' Clubs of America in special programs for various types of maladapted children. Church programs, through their churches, will have a relationship with regional and national denominational organizations. A significant number of programs conducted by youth and family serving agencies also are interrelated through the National Juvenile Justice Program Collaboration, sponsored by the National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations (formerly the National Social Welfare Assembly).

These are a series of cross-connections, mostly around common threads other than the type of program provided for youth-at-risk.

The reason for this lengthy and confusing explanation of organizational relationships is the probable need, presently, to establish standards and some system for accreditation for these various types of activities, both as a useful guide to "referring" agencies in ascertaining program quality and to assist those seeking to establish such services to understand what is required to operate a successful program.

Currently, the American Correctional Association has a Standards Committee (Sam Sublett, Jr., Ch.); the American Camping Association has such a Committee (Mrs. Marion Henderson, Ch.); and it is reported that Ted Wichmann has appointed such a Committee on behalf of his AEE Committee. So far, there has been no discussion of how these respective interests in standards should relate to each other or how an accreditation process should blossom forth.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND PROCESS

We have not sought to gather much information on administrative process and policy as yet. Some programs seem to operate under tight administrative control from the top, with extensive use of policy and procedures manuals; whereas others seem to operate more informally.

FINANCIAL UNDERWRITING

With respect to financial arrangements, there seems to be the usual wide variety, including:—

- 1) Contributions support.
- 2) Tuition, full or part.
- 3) Purchase-of-service with a governmental agency as payer.
- 4) Governmentally budgeted funds when a governmental entity.
- 5) Grants-in-aid for start-up or program maintenance, usually as part of a Federal Program.

In instances where government is the financial underwriter, whether the program is privately or governmentally operated, one frequently runs the risk of delay in decision making, funding, authorization and payment, as well as short notice of changes in policy or emphasis. One complaint has been the tendency to fund "new" programs rather than to support successful on-going programs.

In most instances involving dependence on governmental decision making, both in private and government programs, it is essential to establish and maintain effective lines of administrative and political communication with departmental, chief executive and legislative sources.

U. S. Parole Commissioner Oliver J. Keller (formerly Secretary, Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitation, and prior to that Chairman, Illinois Youth Commission) advised the Consortium that it would be wise from both the governmental and private agency viewpoint, to continue to use a series of alternatives with respect to financing and administrative control, rather than for either government or private agencies to assume major responsibility for provision of services.

Private agencies should not become exclusively dependent upon government financing, nor should government be in a position where all services are provided privately. In the former, there is chance of losing financing; and, in the latter, governmental administrators would have no means of comparing cost and quality of service, since they would be providing no comparable services on their own.

LEADERSHIP AND STAFF QUALITY PRIME REQUISITE

There seems to be consensus that the most important requisite to success is the quality of leadership and calibre of staff.

Although we are not yet familiar with the personnel processes or practices of all the groupings of program types, it would appear there are variables even within specific typologies, both with respect to recruitment standards and length of employment.

Governmentally operated programs — particularly when required to adhere to service-wide personnel policies of position classification, pay administration, recruitment, selection and promotion as well as separation — are confronted with a number of challenges which do not confront the privately operated agency. (An attempt to analyze these, particularly as related to resident therapeutic camping, is contained in a separate paper on that subject available from the Fund for Advancement of Camping.)

In general, it would appear that staffs of agencies having programs for maladaptive children are young, that non-supervisory personnel are not considered to need professional backgrounds, and that many of the knowledges, skills and abilities required are either "corridor" or "on-the-job" acquired.

Turnover, particularly where there is intensive, long-term, 24-hour contact with the youths, is generally fairly high, with reported correlation between performance competence and length of employment before "burn out". Criteria for selection of staff is important, therefore, for the most capable provide the best service and remain on the job for longer periods.

Physical facilities are secondary, and in most programs the simpler the better.

Stress/challenge and other programs which are either mobile or utilize public lands and waters do not require the capital investment in land. But, it is understood that, if properly laid out and designed, a great deal can be done with comparatively little acreage for resident camping provided the location is well selected. The effect of wilderness isolation is considered important.

ADMISSION TO PROGRAM

In the stress/challenge programs, it would appear that those who apply or are referred are accepted. In the Resident Camp programs, which generally involve two counselors and ten youths per group, careful selection is essential, because there needs to be a balance between the acting-out and the shy retiring types. Too many of one kind reduces the chance of the group functioning effectively.

In the "Loughmiller type" Resident Camps and most stress/challenge programs, the individual has a personal choice of wanting to participate, although in some instances it may be the referral is, in effect, a commitment rather than a voluntary choice.

In the CCC/Forestry type camp, usually those who are referred or committed must be accepted, since these youths have been court adjudicated.

At this point in the development of these programs, it is felt that the "referring" people do not have sufficient information, for the most part, about the programs offered by the "receiving" people, and that an attempt should be made to develop a Directory of Receiving Agencies including a brief outline of what each provides and what types of youths benefit most in each setting.

RESPECTIVE ROLES OF REFERRING AND RECEIVING AGENCIES

Consensus indicates the on-going relationships of "referring agencies" to "receiving agencies" are crucial to success. So, likewise, is continuing relationship of "receiving agency" to parents. In this latter case, however, the joint relationships of referring and receiving agencies to the parents may vary, depending upon competence, staffing and spatial distances.

Such programs, it appears, should be operated and directed both in the public and voluntary sectors, rather than all being either one or the other. Also, it is felt there should be greater use of the purchase-of-service process to pay the cost.

In most instances there is some form of post-experience contact maintenance with youth and parents, either by the "receiving" or "referring" agency. Apparently the policy and process are determined on the basis of competence, staffing work load, spatial distance and possibly nature of the case. From information gathered thus far, it is unclear as to whether the "senior" in decision-making is the receiving or referring agency, or whether there is shared responsibility. It seems there is great variety in these arrangements depending upon a series of factors, including "pecking order", seniority, and influence of agency and respect for competence held by others as well as knowledge of and skill in applying professional judgment.

COSTS

Regarding costs, it is reported that these alternative programs are considerably less expensive than institutional incarceration. The resident therapeutic type camp is reported to cost from \$23.00 to \$28.00 per day per camper, whereas institutional incarceration costs from \$13,000 to \$29,000 a year. So far as can be determined, there are no means at this time to make a completely comparable study of costs. It has been pointed out that in "costing a program" one needs also to compute the number of days involved in effecting rehabilitation; 100 days at \$50.00 is less than 300 days at \$25.00. Of course, there is the other factor of keeping a camper so long that he becomes overdependent on the personalities, program and environment, and has increasing difficulty in adjusting to his back-home community.

The stress/challenge programs, although of varying length have a pre-determined duration, whereas the resident therapeutic camp programs usually are indeterminate, the length of stay depending upon the camper's speed of rehabilitation. In one setting the average length of stay in a resident camp is 210 days, whereas in another it is 180 days. The camps with the longer stay are seeking to reduce the average to 120 days, possibly as a result of pressure from the government which purchases the service.

In one of the CCC/Forestry type camps, the campers are committed for an average stay but can reduce it by Merit versus Demerit points they earn while in camp.

Various statements, some based on research by third parties, have been made about the lasting effect of these programs. There seems to be little doubt that the effective ones have a beneficial result, but those directly involved in such enterprises are cautious about making positive statements either on the percentage of youths rehabilitated or the degree of lasting benefit.

There is such rapidly growing interest in alternatives for youth-at-risk and so much curiosity about how one can become a part of the activity that the Fund for Advancement of Camping (FAC) concluded it would provide some leadership as the enabler, to bring together persons and organizations, of diverse disciplinary and functional backgrounds and foci, around a common interest.

Although FAC has not done anything quite like this before, on a number of occasions it has been the convener of people and groups around common interests in the field of camping.

FAC for fifteen years has been the experimental, innovative, demonstrative arm of the camping movement. This Project followed a natural progression which has been unfolding for a number of years.

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All individuals and organizations currently, or potentially, interested in one or more of the types of youth-at-risk enumerated, or having, or considering establishing, programs therefor are invited to join the National Consortium.

By exchanging information, sharing experience and participating in advancing the state of the art, we can all benefit.

Plans call for a periodic newsletter to keep participants informed of activities in the field, and meetings from time to time to enable more intensive exchange of ideas.

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