National Criminal Justice Reference Service

ncjrs

This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.

1.0	4.5 2.8	2.5
	5.0	
	5.6 3.2	2.2
	3.6	
1.1	4.0	2.0
		1.8
1.25	1.4	1.6
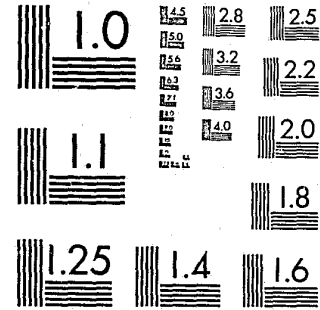
MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U. S. Department of Justice.

National Institute of Justice
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20531

10/14/83

A GUIDE FOR DELINQUENCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS
BASED IN WORK AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES:
A WORKING PAPER

PREPARED FOR:
THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Prepared By:

Sylvia Beville
Carol A. Cioffi
in conjunction with the staff of the
Westinghouse National Issues Center
Delinquency Prevention Technical Assistance Program

NOVEMBER 1979

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iii

---

1. INTRODUCTION

For the many and diverse explanations for the causes of juvenile delin-
quency, there are as many--if not more--practical assumptions about its pre-
vention. In the monograph, Delinquency Prevention: Theories and Strategies
(Johnson et al., 1979) to which this paper serves as a supplement, there is
a review of the contemporary theories and research findings pertaining to
delinquency and their implications for effective delinquency prevention pro-
gram strategies, principles, and options. Although the monograph is not all-
inclusive of the literature and studies conducted to date, it provides a
sufficient foundation to begin drawing conclusions as to what program strate-
gies appear to be the most promising.

Introduced in the monograph is the self-contained program, an
experimental effort aimed at reducing delinquency both by increasing oppor-
tunities for bonding to conventional activities and roles and by decreasing
the negative labeling of youth. Its form is adaptable for immediate imple-
mentation on a relatively small scale while requiring limited resources for
its development.

This paper describes a self-contained approach to delinquency prevention
through a proposed work experiment that would be based on paid employment and
paid or unpaid community service.* Paid employment and community service were
selected because they are two main arenas in which youth can demonstrate com-
petence and do work that is perceived by themselves and others as useful.
Currently, such opportunities are limited for many young people. If they fail
or are not entirely successful in one setting, they have little legitimate
opportunity to prove themselves worthwhile persons. Expansion of the number
and types of available jobs and community service activities would provide
young people with two major settings in which they could test their skills and
knowledge and could demonstrate to themselves and others that they were contri-
buting members of the community.

This paper extracts from leading theories of delinquency prevention prin-
ciples that are applicable to the development of work and community services
opportunities for young people. These principles provide some tentative guide-
lines for the identification, creation, and design of employment and volunteer
activities in a community. The paper is intended to aid readers in being alert
to opportunities within their own States and communities, defining strategies

---

*For the purposes of this paper, "work" is generally defined as paid
employment, and "community service" is defined as activities that are of bene-
fit to the community. Community service activities may be compensated or volun-
teer. "Job," "task," and other terms synonymous with work refer to activities
undertaken for a specific purpose in volunteer and salaried positions. "Employer"
or "supervisor" means that person with the responsibility for guiding and directing
the activity of the young person in either a standard work or a community service
setting. Statements made about young workers and jobs are applicable to both
paid employment and volunteer services.

1

for engaging young people in those settings, establishing criteria for the kinds of jobs that appear to offer the most challenge and satisfaction to young people, designing and developing the structure in which young people can prove themselves competent workers, and assessing the effects on juvenile delinquency of increased youth participation in work and community services settings.

This paper does not present a new set of ideas about the employment of young people in either a paid or volunteer capacity. Rather, it seeks to synthesize and build on existing knowledge to assist those interested in pursuing the development of work and community service opportunities for young people as a means of delinquency prevention.

Persons in a position to exert influence--even modest influence-- on the involvement of youth in work and community service should be able to use this paper to: (a) Assess their present opportunities to develop the recommended programs; and (b) project a systematic sequence of activities through which such programs can be implemented. State agency personnel, consultants, trainers, and evaluators should be able to use this paper to: (a) Project where their funds and other resources can best be used to support general programs of the intended type; (b) prepare materials supporting technical assistance, training, and evaluation; and (c) provide onsite assistance to local partners. Local practitioners from human service agencies and education systems, businessmen, and civic leaders may find this document helpful as they seek jobs and volunteer opportunities and shape organizational features that are supportive of young employees and volunteers in those positions. Each of these groups should be able to use these principles both to increase opportunities for young people to work and to improve the quality of existing and future opportunities.

The remaining chapters of this document are organized as follows:

- Chapter 2 describes the characteristics of a delinquency prevention strategy that is based in work and community service activities for youth.

- Chapter 3 presents a brief review of prevention theories that support and guide the development of a work experiment that involves young people in paid or volunteer job opportunities.

- Chapter 4 presents some of the key elements for the work experiment.

- Chapter 5 outlines a proposed sequence of activities for implementation of the work experiment.

- Chapter 6 provides a closing summary of the strategy.

2

2. GENERAL FEATURES OF THE WORK EXPERIMENT

This paper describes a small-scale experiment, grounded in theory, leading, over time, to broad changes in service and employment networks in the community. The activities described here constitute a set of guidelines and strategies that can be used to shape and direct the engagement of young people in employment and volunteer tasks within existing community organizations. The intended outcome and attributes of the proposed effort are discussed in this chapter.

2.1 Prevention Focus

The purpose of the set of activities comprising the work experiment is to prevent delinquency through the creation and provision of work and community service opportunities for young people. The goal is the prevention of delinquency; the means is the stimulation of paid or volunteer options for youth. The goal has implications for the organization and the evaluation of these activities in that the organization must take into account those factors that appear most important in producing delinquent behavior. (A brief discussion of delinquency theories is presented in Chapter 3.) The measure of success is based on the extent to which delinquent acts are reduced in, initially, the group of young persons involved and, ultimately, in the total youth population. Thus, success is not measured solely by the number of jobs created or by the improved quality of those jobs. Rather, its effect is determined by the reduction of delinquent acts.

2.2 Use of the Prevention Label

The fact that an intended outcome of the work experiment is the reduction of delinquent behavior does not necessitate its being described as a delinquency prevention program. In some circumstances, reference to or labeling of the program in terms of delinquency prevention will be appropriate. For example, the evaluation design must determine the extent to which delinquent acts are reduced, and those involved in developing the methodology must establish the measures to be employed. However, calling the attention of those in the employing organization or the community to the specific intent of preventing delinquency runs the risk of creating the image of a program for "bad" kids.

Ways should be anticipated to handle discussions so that the experiment is perceived by the participants and others as having positive merit in and of itself. Emphasis should be placed on its legitimate merits in terms of the job linkages to organizational purposes or community benefits. The contributions that young people can make should be highlighted.

2.3 Experimental Nature of the Approach

The actual conduct of the activities described herein is intended to be an experiment that tests the most promising of delinquency theories in a work or community service setting. Evaluations of youth employment programs have not shown that just any activity called "work" or "service" has had a specific effect on delinquent behavior (i.e., the provision of a job per se has not

3

been found demonstrably and reliably to reduce delinquency). However, Robin (1969) has suggested that the absence of an impact on delinquency may be explained by insufficient attention to the features of the work setting that discourage delinquency (e.g., relationships between adult and youth workers, expectations of others in the setting for youth competence, perceptions of the utility of the task). Generally, youth employment programs have relied upon activities (such as remedial education, transition counseling) directed at changing the behavior of young people.

Much delinquency research points to the institutional sources of delinquency.* Most young people are delinquent not because they are innately bad or mentally ill but because the practices of youth institutions stimulate delinquent acts. This paper recognizes the importance of those institutional features and suggests testing the following hypothesis: *If the setting is properly organized, the work or volunteer experience will serve to diminish the frequency of delinquent acts.* Thus, this proposed approach is an experiment.

As a proposal for an experiment, this paper does not present a specific model or program to be transferred to any particular setting. Rather, it suggests a series of concepts and principles for the design and organization of youth employment and volunteer activities. Recognition is given to the fact that, in each community or locale, there are factors that must be taken into account, ranging from the various kinds of options open or potentially open to young people to the types of organizations in which young people will work or serve. An element of the experiment involves testing to determine what structural arrangements in what setting appear to show more promise than others.

This paper does not project a set of program development steps that can be followed mechanically to produce a comprehensive and integrated program. The initiative described here involves negotiations of perspectives on and approaches to involving youth in work and service. The negotiations described herein are purely political. As such, they will vary from locale to locale, and from time to time as conditions change; the state-of-the-art does not permit prescribing a particular course of action.

This initiative, however, does attempt to: Anticipate the probable stages of work; identify problems, issues, and tasks that these stages will present; and suggest program strategies for improving and increasing work and community service opportunities for youth. Implementation will require considerable creativity on the part of the user. It will require both a willingness to test the theories and design features presented in this paper and a tolerance for ambiguity.

---

*See Johnson et al, (1979).

4

2.4 Incremental Change

The notions introduced here about work for young pepole are based upon the conclusion that delinquency is a result of institutional, not individual failure (see Johnson et al, 1979, as well as Chapter 3 of this paper). The claim that existing routines produce delinquency leads to the conclusion that certain practices that contribute to delinquency must change in ways supported by the theory. Changes are sought in policies and practices that unnecessarily restrict youth options for imployment or that have an undesirable impact on young workers.

The scope of the changes proposed here is small-scale. The creation of jobs for young people is made complex primarily by two factors: First, economic considerations such as adult unemployment rates and the perceived financial infeasibility of employing young people; and second, the expectations of various adults and young people with respect to youth ability and motivation. Moreover, the experimental nature of the activity suggests that certain assumptions be tested before they are applied on a large scale. Therefore, it is suggested that opportunities be sought within one or two receptive organizations to illustrate the efficacy and efficiency of employing young people, both to improve adult and youth expectations of youth performance and to determine what types of work under what conditions have a positive effect on youth behavior.

Working incrementally towards change should mean that the immediate benefits would accrue to those who receive jobs. Thus, as adult perceptions of youth capability rise and as the potential promise of youth as workers is demonstrated, the practice would become durable within those organizations first involved and then spread to other employers in the community. As the practice becomes routinized, some of the conditions that generate delinquency will disappear.

5

3. THE APPLICATION OF DELINQUENCY PREVENTION THEORY TO WORK SETTINGS

This paper draws on delinquency theory to provide some plausible guidelines for work and community service ventures. Theory suggests that, if young people are committed to the work and the organization, that if they see themselves and others see them as useful and contributing members, and if work is perceived as available, they will be less likely to engage in delinquency. Features of the work setting that appear to be the most important and useful are those that:

- Contribute to youth commitment to work-related beliefs and norms.

- Encourage the inclusion of youth as full members of the work group and the organization, thereby generating a sense of belonging and a stake in the work itself.

- Promote positive youth perceptions of themselves as workers and positive adult reactions to the contributions of young people.

- Facilitate entry to various organizations and roles within those organizations, enlarging the number of work and volunteer opportunities available to young people.

This chapter summarizes delinquency theory and its implications for the work setting.

3.1 Bonding and Control Theories

Bonding and control theories maintain that most people generally stay out of trouble because they are bonded to the conventional norms of society through their affiliations at home, school, work, and church. As long as some of these ties remain strong, an individual is likely to conform to the rules. Hirschi describes four control processes through which conformity is maintained:*

- Belief in the Moral Validity of Social Rules--If a young worker accepts the rules governing behavior in work settings, it is more likely that he or she will conform to the expectations of others in the setting.

---

*Summarized from Johnson et al, (1979), pp 89-90. Hirschi (1969), pp 16-26, is the source for the four control processes.

6

- Attachment to Other People--To violate a norm is to act contrary to the wishes and expectations of others; a low level of attachment makes violation more likely. Seeing the expectations of supervisors and coworkers within the work setting as important strengthens the ties of young people to that work setting.

- Commitment (or the Degree to Which a Person Has Interests That Misconduct Would Jeopardize)--If the young worker values the prestige, status, knowledge, skill, learning experience, or money, and if poor performance would result in dismissal or discipline that would eliminate or reduce those benefits, the chances of conforming to the requirements of the job should be greater.

- Involvement (Expending Time and Energy on an Ongoing Basis)--Expenditure of energy in job-related pursuits contributes to a sense of ownership and having a stake in the outcome.

In other words, if young persons and adults share the same beliefs about what is useful work and appropriate behavior, young people will be more strongly integrated into the work group. If they value their ties with others in the group, young people will be less likely to behave in ways that will jeopardize those relationships. If the resulting integration into the work group is sustained by involvement in service to others, the manufacture of products, and/or decisionmaking procedures, and if the young workers receive intrinsic and extrinsic rewards from employment, they will be less likely to behave in ways that are perceived by others in the setting as inappropriate.

3.2 Labeling

A second area of theory that provides some cues to those designing work/community service tasks is the labeling theory, which posits that attaching negative or derogatory descriptions to persons affects their situation and their behavior. By virtue of race, class, or ethnicity, some persons may be particularly subject to such labeling. The general process is that negative assessments of acts (John or Jane missed another deadline) become negative assessments of persons (John or Jane is an unreliable employee). Other persons begin to react to the label as much as to the actual behavior of the person labeled. Trouble is expected, productivity is not, and the opportunities for bonding to conventional activities and actors are diminished. Likely outcomes are that the labeled

7

person will behave in accordance with the label and accept the label as a self-image. The probability of delinquent behavior thus is increased.*

While labeling theories usually address the effects of the juvenile justice or school systems, the ideas also may be extended to work settings. In work settings, persons can be seen as incompetent, idle, lazy, or loners. The young persons' perceptions of themselves (and, hence, their performance) may be affected by the application of those negative labels.

The activities recommended here seek ways of generating the expectation among youth and adults alike that young people have something to contribute and will perform productively. These activities are intended to overcome adult (and youth) perceptions of young people in general as problemmatic, incompetent workers and volunteers. Although young people may be inexperienced, they can and do provide constructive energies, interests, skills, and competencies. Typical methods of organizing the work and service settings frequently increase perceptions of incompetence, and ways should be sought to build upon the positive strengths of young people to create an image of their being competent, contributing workers and members of their community.

3.3 Strain and Opportunity Theories

The third set of theories that are applicable to work opportunities for the purpose of delinquency prevention are opportunity and strain theories. These theories posit that, in our society, the same goals--wealth, important position in work and community, and the like--tend to be held out to everyone as desirable. This becomes a problem because legitimate avenues for achieving those goals are not equally available to all.

The combination of the equality of goals and inequality of opportunity makes it impossible for some segments of the population to play by the rules and still get what everybody wants. As a consequence, some people turn to illegitimate means to fulfill their desires. Others may reject both the goals and the means and retreat socially, either by removing themselves physically, or by using alcohol and drugs. Still others may engage in ritual conformity, accepting the means but rejecting or abandoning the goals; yet others may rebel, rejecting both the goals and the means and substituting new ones in their place. Many of these responses are called "delinquency."**

Work is a significant adult role and one to which young people aspire. It is the most common place, apart from school, where they can demonstrate competence. For young persons who fail in the school setting, the absence of other opportunities may be particularly damaging. Their perceptions of

---

*This theory is summarized from A Guide for Delinquency Prevention Programs Based in School Activities: A Working Paper.

**Ibid.

self-competence and the perceptions of others that are important to them (teachers, parents, peers) are limited to their experiences in that one setting. Expansion of the number of settings open to young people may diminish the impact of a negative experience in another. Success in work or service organizations may at least partially overcome the impact of the experience in another setting by allowing young people to prove themselves able and useful.

Work also is the principal setting in which adults prove themselves and gain standing in the community. A particular dilemma for adolescents is a fairly widespread feeling of uselessness. There are limited opportunities for young people to contribute in a work setting or to the improvement and well-being of their communities. In school, they are preparing to assume future careers, planning to be participating members of the community at some later date. As family members, most youth no longer have to contribute financially. They are dependent consumers and seldom are permitted to become active producers. Increasing work and community service options would permit young people to demonstrate their capacity to contribute. Thus, the first implication of opportunity theory is the need to expand the number of positions available to young people. Increasing the availability of employment opportunities may assist in the reduction of juvenile delinquency.

Entry is only one aspect of opportunity and strain theories. These theorists also have noticed that simple access or exclusion from school or work opportunities does not explain delinquency. What is important is the disjunction or the gap between aspirations and reality. If a young person aspires to employment and cannot get a job, there may be damaging consequences. If a young person is able to attain only menial employment but believes that he is capable of accomplishing more interesting or challenging work, that may have an equally negative effect. Both dimensions, opportunity and strain, should be attended to by establishing systems that increase access and expand the range and types of jobs that may be held by young people.

There is an additional factor that must be considered, that of raising perceptions of the possibility of attaining work. There are many young persons who, personally or vicariously, have repeatedly experienced rejection when looking for work. These young people tend to label themselves incompetent and to cease searching. There is no disjunction between reality as they perceive it and their aspirations; they simply no longer aspire to any job. Such young people may turn to delinquency by seeking opportunities and increasing self-esteem through illegal activities. To increase opportunity for them, this initiative seeks to eliminate many of the barriers to legitimate work and service and to find ways of improving young persons' perceptions and abilities in locating work and community opportunities.

3.4 An Institutional Explanation

In contrast to many popular views of delinquency, well-supported contemporary theories locate the sources of delinquency in institutionalized ways of dealing with youth that diminish young persons' stakes in conventional, law-abiding activities. These institutionalized practices block legitimate avenues to widely shared goals and prematurely or inappropriately label youth in a negative or derogatory way. That is, flaws in organization, not in individual character, are the main sources of delinquent behavior. Thus, this effort is based upon institutional change, not the modification of individual behavior.*

Any of the previously described theories may be and have been used to support working with individuals. The typical job program is one example. To encourage commitment, young people are counseled and paid money. To encourage conformity, they are provided with orientation sessions at which they are told to report on time, how to dress, and what to do. Young people who aspire to more creative work are counseled to make their aspirations and behavior fit the "reality" of the situation. This is the worst case approach to youth employment programs, but the majority of these programs have tried to modify the behavior of the young worker rather than the design of the work, the expectations of those within the setting, or the manner of integrating younger members into the routine of the organization.

When young people fail, the explanation is that youth are unable to adjust, not that the work setting is inappropriate. The proposed experiment seeks to shift the focus from the young worker to the pattern of belief, norms, and activities of those within the work setting.

To attain the intended impact, it will be necessary to negotiate--among the young participants, the adults who work with them, and others--an activity (together with specific roles within that activity) that is widely perceived as legitimate (i.e., useful, calling for competence, interesting, relevant to personal circumstances and aspirations, providing opportunities to belong, and providing opportunities to influence the course of the activity) and therefore capable of legitimizing its participants. This is the main link with which to create grounds for bonding to conventional activities and persons and thus to increase the correspondence between aspirations and legitimate means of attaining them.

3.5 Setting Considerations

From bonding, labeling, and opportunity theories flows a series of questions that can be used to guide the design of work and community service activities. Following are some of the questions:

---

*See Johnson et al, (1979).

- Are the rules governing behavior in the work and service setting perceived as legitimate by young workers? If not, are the rules necessary for productivity within the organization or might they be changed?

- Are the ties between youth and adults who must work together sufficiently strong to cause young people to care about disrupting or severing those ties?

- Does the job provide intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for the young worker? Is the work perceived by young people as useful, thereby causing them to see themselves as important members of the work group? Does it provide an opportunity to gain skill, knowledge, school credit, or money?

- Are young people involved in organizational routines to the extent that they will view their job as essential to the achievement of organizational objectives? Do they have a sense of ownership both in the creation of the procedures for getting the work done and in the outcome of that work?

- Is the job perceived both by adults and young people as legitimate work? Is it a task that needs to be done, or is it simply an activity engineered for some other purpose, such as generating additional earnings for low-income people?

- What organizational routines present opportunities or place artificial restrictions upon youth entry into paid or volunteer positions? Do employers or organizers of the community services activity consider young people as a source of manpower? Is the job notice distributed to a diverse group of young people or only to particular target groups?

- Do adults expect young people to be contributing, competent members of the work group or service team?

- Are there numerous job and volunteer opportunities throughout the community to accommodate a diverse youth population? Can young people who wish to work find a job that matches their interests, skills, and aptitudes?

Chapter 4 responds to these questions with some basic principles for modifying work settings to take into account both organizational requirements and the needs of young workers.

4. DESIGN FEATURES OF THE EXPERIMENT

The characteristics and organization of the work setting will determine, first, the success of a young person in a position and, second, whether assuming a job will reduce the chances of a young person's engaging in delinquency. This chapter describes features of the work setting that will increase the chances of young people's having a stake in the work, which, in turn, will result in: commitment to the work group and the task itself, their being seen and seeing themselves as competent and reliable employees and volunteers, and increased adult receptivity towards including young people in the work of the organization and the community.

Theories of delinquency (summarized in Chapter 2) and the experiences of those who have engaged in programs are drawn upon. However, the state-of-the-art of using youth employment as a strategy for delinquency prevention is so insufficiently developed that no claims have been made for direct connections between any one characteristic of the work setting and the bonding, labeling, or opportunity theories. It is through the set of activities proposed herein for the work experiment that those relationships are to be tested.

4.1 Characteristics of the Work Setting

One facet of the design of the work or volunteer setting is the identification and description of the tasks or projects to be undertaken. The type of work that would appear to be most satisfactory to young people is discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.1.1 Useful Work

The first criterion is that the work be "real," not make-work. No one intentionally sets out to put young people in the position of doing tasks that are not valued by themselves or others. However, many youth employment programs have placed young people in jobs with no apparent purpose. There are two main reasons that seem to account for this occurrence. First, many job programs have as their foundation objectives that are not directly related to employment. Their intent is to generate opportunities for young people to sample the world of work and thus make more intelligent decisions about future careers, add to the family income through the provision of training stipends, and decrease the school dropout rate. Often, these objectives become more important than the job itself. Because these purposes are unrelated to the objectives of the organization or to the needs of the community at large, the work the young people are doing frequently is peripheral to the main work of the organization or the major concerns of the community.

Second, many youth employment programs are funded by sources outside the community. The funding organizations have objectives of their own that often emphasize putting large numbers of young people to work to increase

youth income or reduce the number of school dropouts. The pressure from outside sponsors to achieve income-raising or educational objectives through the placement of large numbers of young people shifts the emphasis from the quality of the work to the quantity of the job slots. The result is that young people are placed in jobs that are important neither to them nor to others in the work setting.

Not all of the positions generated by such programs can be classified as make-work. The contributions of some young people in some positions are viewed positively by those with whom they are working. It is posited that the perceptions of those within the work setting make the difference in the definition of work as useful or useless. Useful work is work that is undertaken in the routine, necessary order of business of the community or organization and is recognized as valuable by the internal members. Make-work is work for which there is no value perceived by members of the organization or the community and that generates little, if any, product or service that is regarded as beneficial.

As an example, if a community attaches little importance to the dramatic arts, the work of establishing a community theater is likely to be considered a waste of time and money. Where plays are viewed as an important part of the cultural life of the community and where a group has been seeking ways to establish a theater, the energy of young people is likely to be viewed as a positive contribution. A human services planning study that is supported only by the director of the study and not by the human resources staff is unlikely to generate much interest in the activities of a survey team made up of young data gatherers. On the other hand, if responses to questions that have been asked by human resources department staff will be made possible by the survey, the youth work is likely to be perceived as highly useful. Thus, the value of any given activity depends upon the usefulness of the job as perceived by those within the setting.

If those adults with whom young people are to be working place a high value on the activities of young people, they are more likely to reward the young employees and volunteers with public recognition, compensation, and praise. These visible demonstrations of perceived utility are likely to have a bearing upon the perceptions of young people about the necessity of good work. If the adults show that they value the work, it is more likely to be valued by the youth. Adult demonstration of approval through rewards is likely to increase the commitment and bonding of young people to the job. Bonding theory suggests that, if the commitment is strong enough, the frequency of delinquency may decrease. Thus, the first strategy for generating youth commitment is to place youth in positions where the work is viewed as useful by and for the organization.

4.1.2 Interesting and Challenging Work

Work that is assigned to young people should appear as interesting or challenging tasks. This is not to suggest that any job will be interesting

to all young people, but that the person selected to fill the position should be sufficiently interested to give time and energy for the accomplishment of the required tasks. Young persons should be sought whose interests either currently or potentially coincide with those of the organization. This is not intended to exclude young people but to place them in a position that has a reward beyond pay. The commitment generated by intrinsic rewards increases the chances of success on the job.

Work that is interesting and challenging also may serve to improve the match between youth aspirations and the realities of work. Too often, young people are placed in positions which they see as menial, believing they are incapable of assuming more challenging and greater responsibility. To ensure that work is and remains challenging, organizations might develop career ladders that steadily move young people into positions requiring the application of more complex skills and knowledge and the exercise of greater responsibility.

In addition to being afforded opportunities for advancement within the organization, young people should be able to develop skills that are transferrable to other organizations and applicable to other community service needs. That is, jobs for youth should provide credible, useful credentials that would be recognized as valid by various employers throughout the community.

Responding to the diverse interests and aspirations of the youth population ultimately means expanding the types of positions that are available to young people. Youth employment strategies then should aggressively seek to expand approval within the business, government, and volunteer service sectors of the community for youth entry into a variety of work settings (see Chapter 5).

4.1.3 Realistic Jobs

The third criterion relating to the tasks themselves is that the jobs for which young people are being recruited be realistic. That is, demands of the work should reflect the capabilities of new and inexperienced workers. Placing young people in a position that calls for knowledge, skills, and experience they do not have surely will guarantee failure.

This criterion should not provide an excuse to avoid hiring young people or to lower the requirements of the job. Instead, jobs for which young people are being recruited should be at the entry level to allow for their successful participation. The interests and capabilities within the youth population are as diverse as those in the adult population, and serious efforts should go into matching job requirements with those young people who have the appropriate interest, knowledge, or skill. However, it might mean that, in an aggressive attempt to encourage the hiring of

young people, the work of the organization would be scrutinized and jobs previously held solely by adults broken down into component tasks--some of which might be performed by young people and others by more experienced adults. It also might mean that, more intensive supervision and training would be required for young, usually inexperienced employees than was provided for adult workers.

4.1.4 Agreement Among Adult Workers

The fourth criterion is that those who will be supervising and who will be working with young people have common notions about the task, the procedures, and the schedule. Frequently, diverse expectations for youth performance exist among members of an organization. Those potentially conflicting and frequently ambiguous expectations create two dilemmas for the young worker--discovering what the job means and maintaining direction so as to be productive. In the absence of a shared understanding among members of the work group about objectives and procedures, the young worker often may be perceived by others as incompetent and unreliable. A statement of the job that is the outcome of negotiations among adult members of the organization and between the young employee and his or her supervisor will diminish the chances of a negative evaluation of performance and will increase the chances of the young worker's success in that position.

4.1.5 Youth Ownership of the Work

Where possible, young people should participate both in the development of the job and in the evolution and refinement of the tasks as the work progresses. However, the preponderance of positions will be created in response to a public or private organizational need, and young people will be recruited to fill positions without any peer group consultation prior to actual employment. In these instances, increased commitment may be generated through young people's helping to design the tasks and the procedures that will be followed. Soliciting youth input at the earliest possible stage will strengthen commitment for the work to be done.

4.2 Features of the Setting

The characteristics of the systems and procedures within business, public agencies, and community service groups will tend to promote the failure or success of the young employee or volunteer. This section identifies features of organizational systems that should make jobs available to a diverse group of young people, cultivate the strengths of youth, and increase the chances of approval of young workers by their adult co-workers and supervisors.

4.2.1 Recruitment and Hiring

With respect to young people, the purpose of a personnel system should be to encourage the entry of young people into employee or volunteer positions and, at the same time, meet the requirements of the organization with respect to particular skills, knowledge, and experience. To encourage the employment of young people, recruitment procedures and hiring practices should be perceived as fair by young people. These youth perceptions of equity are based in part upon recruitment practices that should encourage applications from all young people who meet the qualifications for performing the work. Policies and procedures should reflect a desire to recruit and hire a mix of youth, since programs serving a large number of youth regarded as troublesome, unproductive, or incompetent acquire a "spoiled" image. Such programs are as likely to compound negative labels as to overcome them. These programs actually should draw from all segments of the youth population. Targeting should be directed at whole youth populations that are characterized by unemployment status, skill level, place of residence, and visible or spoken interest in work and community service activities.

In the past, many jobs (other than special employment programs) were not easily accessible to young people with delinquency records or with a history of school problems, or to those who did not have access to jobs through the adult network of social connections with potential employers. Therefore, recruitment practices must be extended beyond simply placing notices with employment services and advertisements in help-wanted sections of newspapers. Drawing in young persons who have limited confidence in their ability to attain employment will require aggressive tactics, ranging from placing notices where those young people will see them (in community centers, hangouts, etc.) to holding direct conversations with young people to encourage them to apply.

In addition to outreach recruiting efforts, for youth perceptions concerning their access to employment to improve, hiring decisions must be regarded as fair. The criteria for selection should be perceived by young people as legitimate and applied in the same way to all applicants. This simply means that the criteria related to the work to be done should be known and understood by young people and that the decision to hire by the employer is based solely upon those criteria. The criteria then will be seen as fair rules of competition and screening.

To meet the second objective of organizational requirements for able employees, the qualifications for the position should be established by those adults most familiar with the work to be done. While the criteria should take into account the relative inexperience and lack of knowledge of young people, they should include a realistic statement of the kinds of tasks that must be performed. This may have the additional effect of setting the stage for approval of youth workers by ensuring the adult workers that the young employee will be capable of carrying out his or her duties.

The features of the recommended recruitment and hiring system are that it will be perceived by young people as fair and by the adult workers as providing desirable employees.

4.2.2 Training and Supervision

The training and supervision of young workers generally will stem from two sources: The formally designated supervisor or head of the work group, division, or organization, and/or an informal mentor. As part of his or her routine work, the formally designated supervisor should assume responsibility for the guiding and training of young employees or volunteers. Typically, youth employment programs have recruited a special person to assume these functions for a group of young people. That has the effect of saying to members of the organization that young workers are somehow different, that the youth group is not a part of the primary organizational structure. To integrate young people into the organizational structure and to encourage their inclusion as competent, contributing members, the supervisor should be perceived (or perceive himself or herself) as a leader, not of a youth group but of a task group. (This requires an integrated work force of both youth and adult workers, which is discussed in Section 4.2.3.) Guiding and directing young workers should be a routine part of the supervisor's job, in the same way that supervising adults is.

Formal supervision and training may have to be more extensive for young people than for adults, given their relative inexperience. Therefore, the supervisor should be encouraged to spend extra time with new and untrained workers. Mentorship should also be encouraged. Young people who have little experience in the work place simply do not notice informal cues concerning such job elements as coffee breaks, obtaining supplies, asking questions, dress, and informal talk. A mentor with a personal interest can serve as a guide to the informal norms of the work group and reduce the number of instances in which the young employee unwittingly errs and causes others to be dissatisfied with his or her performance.

4.2.3 Youth/Adult Work Groups

To increase the degree to which young people are socialized into the organization (i.e., accept the beliefs and norms of the organization), groups composed of both older and the young workers are desirable. In the groups, young people will learn what behaviors are approved and disapproved. Young people will form attachments to others that may reinforce their commitment to the organization. It is a place where young people can come to understand the procedures for getting the work done, the standards for performance, and the norms for dress, talk, and reporting for work. It is also the place where negotiations about the work for work. It is also the place where negotiations about the work.

take place and where young people can negotiate the demands of the job. The social consequence of an age-integrated work group is youth membership in the organization.

Many youth employment programs have created groups of young people on the assumption that they can support each other. Yet, it is the creation of that group--visibly apart from the remainder of the organization--that hinders young people's socialization and retards commitment to the organization. Work groups limited to youth should be created only if the benefits appear to outweigh the potential effects of isolation from the remainder of the organization. An example would be a youth group that assumed, under parks and recreation department supervision, the voluntary responsibility for landscaping a vacant lot. Since the work would not be accomplished without the team, no adults are available or inclined to work directly on the project, and the redesign of the park has such a visible outcome, this work would result in a clear benefit to the community. With some such few exceptions, the benefits of the age-integrated group appear to outweigh those of the youth group.

4.2.3.1 Organization Around the Task

Age-integrated work groups do not occur automatically. They run counter to past practices for organizing the work of young people, and part-time status and age often exclude many young people from a lot of the informal and social interactions that occur during coffee breaks, drinks after work, and at other times. The organization might take deliberate steps to rearrange schedules or places for staff get-togethers to ensure at least some youth participation in these events. Moreover, care might be taken to seek them out to report on meetings they miss because of their school schedule but at which information pertinent to their task has been given. However, if the primary criterion for group composition is the personnel required to get the work done--and young people have some of those skills-- much of the difficulty of creating an age-integrated group may be overcome.

4.2.3.2 Participation

Within the planning and decisionmaking processes of any group, there are expectations for participation and occasions for involvement, and young people should be included to the extent dictated by the job. When the work calls for participation, young people should be involved in organizational brainstorming sessions and regular staff meetings. They should be on the list to receive both the formal and informal messages about organizational decisions and activities. That participation provides them information they must have to do the work and confirms for them and other members of the organization the usefulness of their work.

4.3. Evaluation of Performance

Frequently, employee failure to perform (adult and youth) is attributed to some personal characteristic that often encourages inappropriate labels. Where young people do not succeed, it is frequently because one or several of the factors addressed in this paper have been ignored. Modification of institutional policies and practices may well generate success where failure existed previously.

The purpose of evaluation should be to provide the young employee with feedback, and such occasions should be routine and frequent. Assistance and problem solution, rather than negative criticism, should be the intent. Opportunities should be exercised to recognize good performance as well as to correct vocational deficiencies. Evaluation should be intended to strengthen the capabilities of the young employee.

Criteria for performance and procedures for evaluation should be negotiated by the young workers and the supervisor from the beginning. These criteria should be understood by the young employee, the supervisor, and by others within the immediate work group. The criteria selected should be linked to the requirements of the job, not to performance in external settings such as a school. The criteria should be realistic, thereby avoiding the possibility of setting up the young people for failure because of unreasonably high standards.

Under some circumstances, the young worker may be unable or unwilling to meet a particular employer's requirements or the demands of the community services project. For that young person, those expectations are unrealistic, and every opportunity should be taken to find a setting in which there is a greater chance of successful work performance.

Rewards to increase the commitment and the attachment of young people to the work setting should result from the evaluation session. These include financial and social benefits, an increase in job responsibilities and accountability, opportunities for promotion, and the benefits and opportunities that result from increased access to work-related information--all of which will serve to increase commitment to the organization.

4.4 Training

Formal training programs may be necessary to prepare young workers to assume new and more complex responsibilities. Such training should be job-related, to avoid the labeling problems inherent in a special youth employment program that have been discussed in previous sections. The content of these sessions may cover organizational procedures and specific information required to complete assignments. Where possible, the training should be

conducted at the same time for all involved in the work, youth and adults
alike. By relating training to the requirements of the job and organizing
it around existing work groups, the chances of labeling young people as
"different" or "incompetent" should be decreased.

4.5 Special Services

Young workers frequently are seen as inferior employees because they
are recipients of special remedial services. Often, this assistance is
interpreted by other members of the setting as addressing problems that
are not directly related to job requirements or performance. It may be
that some young people require intensive tutoring to overcome poor reading,
math, or other skills. However, if the criteria of age and skill related-
ness are applied to jobs as they are developed, such services should be of
minor importance in allowing the young person to succeed. In addition,
these activities are appropriate functions of other institutions (e.g.,
teaching youth to read is the responsibility of schools). Arrangements
should be made with other institutions to provide these kinds of assistance,
removing such services from the immediate work setting and reducing the
possibility of other workers' viewing youth as inadequate or incompetent
members of the organization.

4.6 Summary

The features of the work setting that are claimed to contribute to
successful youth performance have been described in this chapter. Jobs
that are interesting and challenging to young people and are perceived as
useful both by young people and by all members of the work group and the
organization are posited as the basis of competent youth performance. The
structuring of the job is a reflection both of the expectations of those
within the setting and of the perceptions of organizational members concern-
ing youth capability. As described in this chapter, organizational features
(recruitment and hiring practices, supervision, work group composition and
activities, performance evaluation, and training) will require reform in
many organizations. A suggested sequence of activities leading to those
changes is presented in the following chapter.

5. SEQUENCE OF WORK

This chapter presents a series of steps that can be taken by those
interested in stimulating work and community service opportunities for
young people. This sequence should be considered as experimental. It
is a set of activities to be modified through experience and research.
It is an activity that is designed not only to determine what factors
within the work setting affect delinquent activity and young worker pro-
ductivity and satisfaction but also to discover ways in which the prac-
tice of placing young people in jobs and volunteer positions can become
routine.

While these activities are presented as sequential, in reality, the
events often occur simultaneously. For example, work within an organi-
zation to prepare it for receiving young workers often occurs at the
same time that conversations are being held with policymakers and employers
throughout the community to set the stage for increased work opportunities
for youth.

It can be expected that the changing of expectations for youth per-
formance and associated modification of work settings will occur over an
extended period of time. For example, design, training, and materials
development may occur during the first year, with recruitment of young
people taking place in the second half of that year. The second and third
years may be used for modification. (It is recognized that most young peo-
ple do not remain in the same job for that period of time. It is also
recognized that some jobs, particularly special community projects, do not
endure for a similar period. However, it is assumed that the practice of
employing young people in those settings will remain, and it is the char-
acteristics of the work setting that are the focus of the effort, not
individual youth in specific positions. If the structure of the setting
provides positive benefits for the first group of young people, this should
hold true for forthcoming youth.)

Any State or local agency, group, or person may choose to initiate
work and community service activities for the purposes of delinquency
prevention. Local groups and organizations directly influence the hiring,
production, and service delivery systems. State agencies are in a position
to help by bringing to any activity resources of money and technical assis-
tance for innovation. In addition, State agencies have the capability to
expand the constituency--to transfer tested practices to other places. The
sequence then is presented as a general guide for all those working at the
local level.*

---

*For a discussion of strategies State agencies can employ to stimulate
local activities, see State Options for Supporting Delinquency Prevention.

5.1 Developing an Action Plan

In the implementation of an experiemental work program, as proposed herein, the initial activity is the development of an action plan. The steps outlined in this plan may comprise two or more tasks, including:

- An informal survey of the opportunities present for work and community service, and

- the identification of the available resources of influence, money, and time to support such a long-term venture.

A series of questions follows that should assist in considering the implementation of an experimental delinquency prevention initiative in youth employment. The answers to these questions may be derived from past conversations and observations with key organizations and community representatives.

- Is there a recognition by other persons, agencies, or groups of the need for employing young people? Are there one or two persons who might be willing to jointly pursue delinquency prevention?

- Is there time and energy available, considering existing responsibilities and tasks, to sustain an experimental activity over time? If not, is changing existing assignments to add these activities a practical possibility?

- Is delinquency prevention and/or youth employment an area that is recognized by others as an appropriate function of your agency (i.e., they are not areas for which other agencies are responsible and in which your agency would be perceived as an outsider or as a newcomer)?

- Is there money available (or are there possible sources) to pay the developmental costs of organization, technical assistance, and research?

Affirmative answers suggest that there may be some receptivity to the concepts proposed herein and that there would be a measure of approval in some sectors for your agency's undertaking the effort. Negative answers would tend to suggest that deliberate actions must be taken to promote the ideas in this paper and stimulate endorsement of others before a full-scale effort can be launched. The support of policymakers, employers, and leaders of community service volunteer activities will increase the chances of a successful experiment by expanding the group of active proponents.

22

If the situation appears promising, the next step is to write a preliminary plan that will serve to establish the philosophy, objectives, and strategies for generating youth employment and volunteer options. That plan might include:

- A description of the characteristics of "meaningful" jobs for young people, a statement of the hypotheses about how the structuring of jobs within an organization might affect young workers' success on the job. (Chapter 4 of this paper can serve as a guide for this plan.)

- Criteria for an evaluation.

- A procedure for identifying employers who have jobs or service opportunties.

- A strategy for cultivating the support of those within the employing organization or group.

- A long-term strategy for expanding support for youth employment throughout the community.

This plan serves only as a general guide for the beginning stages of negotiation and organization within the community. Specificity will increase as employers are identified and questions concerning job descriptions recruitment, hiring, and training are encountered. Modification may occur as other individuals and groups become involved and their interests are taken into account. However, having a plan makes possible the deliberate and selective recruitment of other participants and the maintenance of jobs to which young people are assigned.

5.2 Assessing the Setting

The preliminary plan provides guidelines for activities that involve other persons and organizations. In order to implement that plan, an assessment of the potential for support of that plan and identification of the obstacles to be overcome may be the next step. To identify potential support, one should first identify the expectations of those within the community and of specific employers regarding youth employment and delinquency prevention. A review of the political realities of the community would be undertaken next, to discover what resources policymakers and administrators might be able to make available. Local economic and labor market conditions should be analyzed to determine if the economic health of the community will support the entry of young people into the labor market and, if so, in what sectors. It is also important to note public and private organizational and community needs that are not being filled that might be met through the involvement of young people.

23

5.2.1 Procedure

The procedure for the assessment could range from a formal survey to the collection of existing reports and conversations with local persons. Given the scarcity of resources in most areas, the decision to undertake a formal research effort should be carefully reviewed. The main purpose of this stage is to assess the community's level of enthusiasm within key sectors for employing young people in positions that are more satisfactory to both employers and youth than those provided in earlier programs. An understanding of this attitude can be obtained through discussions with adult community members, along with an examination of past youth participation activities in the locale. Any resources that are set aside for a formal assessment should be channelled into an evaluation effort that is well integrated into the work project. Through this activity, information can be gained on the types of work settings that exhibit the most promise of directing young people toward legitimate opportunities to contribute to their community and to demonstrate competence. Thus, this initial assessment should be a brief, informal survey to obtain as much information as possible, relying heavily upon existing reports of community conditions and verbal exchanges with key participants in the community. This type of survey can furnish a broad range of information without consuming much program money or time.

The following information, at a minimum, should be collected through this assessment: Adult and youth unemployment rates; reports on past and present youth employment projects; perceptions of key employers, associations of employers and employees, and policymakers about present and future community and organizational needs, and ways in which young people can help to meet them; and observations from these groups about available local sources of time and money.

5.2.2 Expectations for Youth Employment

The first result of the assessment should be an understanding of the variety of expectations within the community, public and private organizations, businesses, and labor unions regarding youth performance, community and employer needs, and ways of meeting those needs. Part of this information should be the identification of factors (past experience, values regarding work) that contribute to these views. The attitudes of those in the public and private sectors who are influential in creating and administering delinquency prevention and youth employment policy will determine whether an experimental activity will meet with approval or disapproval, active resistance, aggressive support, or just general interest. When people consider youth capabilities positively and regard the provision of work opportunities as a necessary (though possibly unexplored) responsibility of various organizations or groups, the chances of a successful

experiment are enhanced. When youth employment is thought to be unimportant or when there is little recognition of the potential of youth employees or volunteers, there may be resistance to placing young people in new jobs or making them responsible for community services and projects.

Formal and informal conversations in which questions are asked about past experience and future prospects for employing young people provide valuable insights. Examples of such questions include: Was the experience satisfactory? Or was it perceived as a failure? Why? These questions might lead to a conversation about organizational purpose and community needs, and, finally, the employment of young people for meeting the identified needs.

5.2.3 Establishing Priorities

The amount of concern about delinquency prevention is a factor that could reduce or enlarge the scope of the experiment to be tried. If there is vigorous community concern expressed to policymakers and administrators, that concern could be mobilized to support youth employment and community service as a tactic for delinquency prevention. If past efforts have been considered failures, people might be more receptive to an experiement with a new approach. On the other hand, if neither delinquency nor youth unemployment is viewed as a priority problem or concern, new ideas might be discouraged.

In every locale, some needs are given precedence over others. In a community where human services are perceived as a response to real community needs and are the responsibility of local agencies, organizations, business, and industry, the reallocation of resources and redefinition of jobs for young people may occur more readily than in a locale where physical facilities and economic growth are priorities. Policy statements of elected officials, municipal and county budgets, and organizational plans and budgets are effective indicators to determine the importance attached to youth problems.

The economic health of the community may be a strong factor in determining whether or not youth employment and community service will receive support. Arguments against the employment of youth are frequently grounded in the conviction that jobs should not be taken away from adults, particularly when adult unemployment rates are high. The activities proposed in this paper are based upon the premise that, even in high unemployment areas, numerous community and organizational needs are not being met because they are often viewed as unsatisfactory adult work opportunities. These unmet needs may, nevertheless, demonstrate the efficacy of developing the capabilities of youth.

The first discoveries, then, are about the general setting in which youth employment and community service initiative is to take place.

5.2.4 Selecting Partners

The second phase of activities for the conduct of this work experiment involves the identification of community partners who share common expectations for youth performance and common program strategies for encouraging the employment of young people. Members of this group might be associated with an employment agency, or they might be employers or active members of an organization such as the chamber of commerce or a a labor union.

Criteria for their recruitment comprise several factors, namely: they should:

- Support program efforts to generate youth involvement in work and community service activities through the conduct of change-oriented, experimental initiatives. The goal is to create settings in which young people can assume responsibility for meaningful work.

- Represent diverse and influential sectors of the community that are necessary for the conduct of a prevention effort based on work or community service. Because of formal organizational authority or a history of activities, they should be seen as proper channels for exercising influence to create jobs for young people. Further, they should have sufficient influence in both the public and private sectors to cause others to listen and act, and should have relationships that will facilitate this initiative.

- Demonstrate tenecity and imagination in the solution of social problems.

- Be receptive to a fresh perspective for the solution of local problems and to the addition of resources that are not now suitable.

At the conclusion of the initial assessment phase, sources of support and potential resistance within the community should become obvious. Support generated during this stage will provide only a general concurrence with the proposed ideas and practices. As ideas and practices become more specific, the potential for conflict and opposition arising from differences in values and attitudes about appropriate behavior becomes greater. Therefore, continued assessment and persistence in maintaining and cultivating support is a requisite for promoting the employment experiment.

5.3 Generating Jobs in the Employment and Community Service Areas

Efforts to create work and community service opportunities for youth should begin with the identification of jobs within formal public and private organizations that are not presently filled or are burdensom and unattractive to adult employees. Because the economic and social rewards are not sufficient to warrant adult involvement, young persons are logical candidates for these positions. Examples include housing renovation projects that are economically infeasible for building contractors; the delivery of tutoring and other support services to children when professionals lack the time; data collection and simple planning tasks to assist local government efforts; and the conduct of preapprenticeship programs in unions or labor organizations that are experiencing difficulty recruiting new members.

Volunteer activities are also envisioned in the community service sector, when the absence of resources has made their implementation previously unlikely. Typical activities of this sort might include the erection and operation of a community theater or the delivery of services to local elderly residents.

5.3.1 Expanding Existing Systems

Members of the community who wish to base delinquency prevention programs on work and community service seem to have two basic choices: they can attempt to establish an independent program of work or service specifically for purposes of delinquency prevention, or they can work to expand and improve existing systems of work and services while striving to increase their potential for reducing delinquency. Given the difficulty of expanding and improving work and service opportunities for youth in general, independent programs will probably be marginal at best. They will probably be on the fringes of the employment network and will have little influence on the recruitment and hiring patterns that have, for the most part, excluded young people.

The feasibility of generating jobs will be improved if few additional funds or personnel are required. Thus, the program should be undertaken within existing work and service organizations as much as possible. The intent is not to create groups of young workers, but rather to involve youth with adults in viable, organized pursuits. Verification that organizations do exist to perform the work or provide the service is an indication of the viability of the proposed methodology. The existence of an organization that is capable of including youth (as distinct from merely putting them to work on their own) demonstrates the potential for the continued employment of young people.

5.4 Preparing the Setting

The time period between reaching an agreement to employ young people and the actual hiring of an employee or selection of a volunteer is crucial. During this stage adult workers, administrators, and supervisors decide on the work to be done and the procedures for its accomplishment. As noted in Section 4, expectations for performance shared by organizational members lend clarity and certainty to a situation frequently ambiguous for inexperienced young people.

5.4.1 Creation of a Work Group

Of primary concern in the early negotiation stages is the membership of the team that will decide: The details of the work to be performed, recruitment and hiring procedures, orientation and ongoing training programs, modifications necessary to make young people members of the work group (examining planning and decisionmaking processes, communication patterns, meeting attendance, etc.), an evaluation design, and feedback mechanisms for those on the organizational work team and the local supporters or partners.

Creating a receptive environment for young workers is essential, first, for the successful performance of the young worker and secondly, for making youth hiring practices a routine, durable part of organizational policy. The possibilities of shaping an environment receptive to young employees appears greater if those who must recognize the young person as a coworker and who will supervise the young worker or volunteer are involved from the beginning. Once there is consensus on the rules of employment, if it is clear that no one's job is threatened and that the standards for performance are to be upheld, then sources of resistance from within the organization may be fewer.

The group of partners should be sensitive to professional and efficiency concerns of the organizational staff and should be prepared to justify youth involved in terms of the achievement of organizational objectives, describing in nonthreatening ways the contributions that young people can make. Other successful youth activities can be drawn upon to illustrate. If their suggestions are taken seriously, the chances of the beliefs and practices of those within the setting changing as a result of actual contact with young people should increase.

5.4.2 Tone of the Group

During group sessions, disagreements about work should be resolved. While it may appear a cumbersome, inefficient procedure, a routine, group problemsolving process may enhance each member's sense of team or belonging to both the work group and the organization. If adult coworkers are

28

not convinced that young people will be useful members of the work team, they will be less than supportive when problems arise. This stage of the task may take several months.

Youth should participate in this stage; however, if group support is not certain, it might be better to allow the adults to work through the details of the job to be done, including recruitment procedures, and postpone the negotiation and orientation stage until the young workers are hired.

5.4.3 Preparing the Job Description

The group should first describe the work to be done. This process should begin with a statement of the objective of the work team of which the young person is to become a member. This should be an organizational productivity objective, not the objective of youth employment or delinquency prevention. To what objective will the young person contribute? What function will be performed?

This description should include: a general-purpose statement (the desired outcome), a list of responsibilities, a list of tasks, to whom the youth is accountable, qualifications for the work to be done, a schedule of work, and salary and benefits. These elements should be stated in terms easily understood by young people.

The difference between the description of a job to be held by an adult and that held by a young person is the degree of complexity and level of responsibility that may be assumed by the young person. The difficulty of the first tasks to be assigned to an employee with little job-related experience should be weighed carefully. Since young people must be challenged if they are to maintain their interest in and commitment to a job, a series of positions should be developed, each progressively more difficult and calling for increased responsibility that could be assumed over time by the young person.

5.4.4 Criteria for Evaluating Performance

At this stage, the proposed means of evaluating youth performance should be agreed upon. While young workers must be encouraged, they should also be held accountable for their actions and should be aware of the consequences of any deliberate failure to conform to expectations. Evaluation criteria and conduct of the evaluation are discussed in Section 4.

5.5 Recruiting and Hiring Young People

The characteristics of a fair, aggressive recruitment system were listed in the previous chapter. The length of the recruitment period should be somewhat flexible in order to succeed in reaching the youth population, yet should be held to organizational deadlines. The interviewer should be able

29

to explain the job to young people in terms that they will understand. He should also be able to indicate the kinds of support the young worker will receive in such a way that the young person can realistically assess the chances of succeeding in the position and the benefits that could accrue from accepting the position and, therefore, could decide whether or not the work would be interesting and challenging. The interviewer should attempt to establish a tone for the interview that encourages the young applicant to ask questions. This first round of negotiations between the organization and the prospective young worker will influence both the youth and the adult in their perception of the work.

Workers should be selected based upon their qualifications to meet the requirements specified in the job description. It should be apparent that nondiscriminatory procedures are used, in order to preserve the accord of those in the design group, to reinforce the young employee's confidence that he will be capable of doing the work, and to reinforce the perception among the youth population that the hiring was fair.

5.6 Youth and Adult Training: Sustained Support

Young employees are like other new employees in many respects--they are unfamiliar with organizational requirements and require orientation. Unlike adult employees, they may not notice cues about behavior and performance that would be picked up by those more familiar with the work or community service experience. Therefore, young employees will require more attention, at least in the beginning, and mentorship should be encouraged.

Both reinforcement of the young persons' relationship with the supervisor and the scheduling of more formal training sessions may be strategies for ensuring competent performance, encouraging participation, and resolving difficulties. The orientation of young workers through one-to-one supervision and training should include both procedural and content instruction. Procedural instruction may include personnel, policies, procurement of supplies, and schedules for carrying out the assigned tasks. Content instruction refers to job-related knowledge and skills. Those involved in training should anticipate youth needs by providing instruction in common work language and techniques that are not commonly understood by inexperienced workers.

Adult workers will require sustained support as coworkers and supervisors of young people. The problems caused by the inexperience of many young workers may elicit either of two responses from adult coworkers-- that the young worker is stupid, incompetent, lazy, and belligerent, or that insufficient explanation has been given to the youth. The latter attitude should be encouraged.

Adult workers might break the total job down into smaller and simpler tasks to assist young workers to acclimate to the new setting and responsibilities. This approach is not used routinely in adult work settings. Supervisors or trainers may require consultation in restructuring "career ladders" or job assignments to accommodate youth.

Adults should find ways to provide intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for competent work. The use of the product instills a sense of achievement and a concrete illustration of the utility of the work. Giving credit by recognizing authorship, asking for a repeat performance by noting the successful prior performance, and giving praise are all means of making a young worker feel competent and useful. Asking them to participate in meetings where decisions will be made about the work and taking their comments into account as seriously as those of any other member of the work team is another effective strategy. Giving them access to the kinds of information and privileges available to other members of the organization confers a sense of belonging and provides them with the knowledge they need to carry on their work.

Adults may also require instruction in communicating with youth about unsatisfactory work performance. One simple approach that is recommended is t' conduct of "teaching" sessions at which both the supervisor and the employee have the opportunity to raise problems. If they are initiated at the beginning of the job, they will be taken as a matter of course by both parties. If problems are allowed to go unresolved, they often assume out-of-proportion dimensions, tension arises, and the potential for destructive conflict is greater than is such situations are dealt with routinely.

Relationships between members of a work group should be based upon trust and a recognition of the need for mutual help with task-oriented problems. Members should not hesitate to bring up problems they are having and draw upon the knowledge and resources of those within the group to solve them. If the consequence for the young employee is approval for seeking to remedy problems, not disapproval and punishment, then they will be more likely to raise problems at the time they are encountered.

It is unlikely that the work group will be able to anticipate all the information the young workers and adult workers will require. A certain tolerance (which many of us exhibit with older workers) should be encouraged. If members of a work team share expectations for youth performance and perceptions of organizational responses, support may be more eagerly and appropriately given.

5.7 Budgeting

This initiative is based upon the assumption that the resources of funding and personnel are present within public and private enterprise

organizations. It further assumes that funds are available for young workers and for routine materials from existing organizational budgets. Funds previously committed to paid work opportunities will be diverted to young workers. This is not intended to deprive adult workers of salaries. It is assumed that routine work options are available to organizational administrators and policymakers. When a task arises, such positions can be filled solely with adults or with a combination of adults and young people, with young people taking paraprofessional, apprenticeship, and junior positions.

While the same financial base is not typically available for community service positions, there are existing sources of funds within communities that may be drawn upon: Comprehensive Employment and Training Administration funds, State arts and humanities councils, and other public sources. The routine salary and materials costs may well come within existing budget categories or from local fundraising campaigns or foundations.

During the developmental and experimental stages of this initiative, some costs could be borne by organizations other than the employer. They include the time the organizational staff spends on developing job descriptions, supervision practices, training curricula, support systems within the organization and the larger community, and the evaluation. These are short-term costs that disappear as the practice of employing young people becomes routine.

5.8 Evaluation

Following the statement of work and the relationships of those involved, the evaluation plan may be designed and a time schedule for implementation established. The scope and depth of the evaluation is, of course, contingent upon available money, staff and consultant time, and data processing facilities. This section will address only those issues of specific relevance to the content of the evaluation plan and the intention to test the connections between youth employment, volunteer service, and delinquency.*

During the developmental stages of the work, hypotheses about the connection between the structure of the work and youth performance, and the structure of the work and delinquency were established. These hypotheses form the basis of the objective and, hence, the evaluation, and should raise questions such as the following:

- Bonding--Did the belief in the validity of social rules, attachment to other people, commitment, or involvement of young workers change over the course of the job?

*There are many research and evaluation texts available to guide the actual design. Upon request, a bibliography is available.

- Did young people endorse the procedures and standards employed by the organization?

- Was the job viewed by the young workers as providing both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards? Was the job valued by others in that setting?

- Did the young person perceive the relationships formed with others in the immediate work group as helpful? As relationships that are important? Were the opinions of others in the work group seen as important?

- With what frequency on what occasions were young people involved in decisionmaking In what types of decisionmaking sessions did they participate? What kinds of decisions did they make? Describe the interaction between adults and youth.

- Did young people remain interested in the work during their tenure?

- Did organizational practices for including young people and encouraging participation in various organizational processes change during the course of the employment of young people in the job? How many youth were employed before the program and how many after its implementation?

- Are young people considered likely applicants for other positions?

- What were the organizational tactics for encouraging participation?

- What were the tactics for transmitting the conventional job practices for those in the setting?

- What procedures were used to reward youth performance?

- Did youth perceive their membership in work groups?

- Did youth perceptions of control
  (powerfulness) increase?

- Were work groups made up of young persons and adults? Or were they youth
  work groups?

● Labeling--Are young workers perceived by themselves
and others as competent persons contributing to
the achievement of organizational objectives?

- Do young people perceive themselves as
  increasing in competence over the course
  of employment? What new knowledge and
  skills do they feel they have acquired?

- What do they perceive as contributing
  most to increased competence/incompe-
  tence: Supervision, training, a mentor
  relationship, knowledge and skill ses-
  sions, or organizational procedure
  sessions?

- Do the adults in the work group (in larger
  organizations) perceive young people as
  competent? What useful work did they per-
  form? In what ways was their performance
  less than satisfactory? What responsi-
  bilities did they assume? What functions
  did they fulfill?

- Were performance evaluation perceived by
  young people as helpful? Were evalu-
  ations seen by adults as sessions where
  problems were resolved and youth per-
  formance strengthened?

- Did youth self-esteem rise over the course
  of employment?

- Are these skills and knowledge seen by
  young people and adults as transferable
  to other positions or other organizations?
  Do others (schools, unions, private, and
  public employers) see them as useful,
  transferable skills?

- Was there a mixture of young persons employed?

● Opportunity--Do young persons perceive greater access
to work and community service opportunities?

- Do young people see other jobs, either in
  the same organization or in other organi-
  zations, as more available than they did
  when they assumed this position? What were
  youth perceptions of the chances of se-
  curing paid or volunteer employment prior
  to being hired? After being hired?

- Was the organization successful in encour-
  aging applications from a diverse popu-
  lation? What procedures were used?

- Were hiring practices perceived by young
  people as fair? That is, if they met the
  qualifications, did they feel they had as
  good a chance at being hired as any other
  young person?

- Has the organization changed its definition
  of jobs so that more young people are
  eligible?

● Delinquency--Did the rate of involvement in delinquent
acts decrease for those who were employed?

5.8.1 Schedule

The schedule of evaluation work should coincide with the design and
implementation of youth work activities if the evaluation results are to
be used to guide decisions on program effectiveness and efficiency. If
the evaluation results are to be the main source of information for
those participating in the program, the evaluation should address the
objectives of the activity and data should be available on a schedule
that meets the needs of those involved in the work setting and in tech-
nical assistance. The requirement for timely data may mean that the
design will be less "scholarly" than is usually the case. Compromises
may have to be negotiated between those in the work setting and the
evaluation staff, trading off the benefits of in-depth research on
work settings with the requirements of the organizational staff for
information. The objective of the evaluation staff should be to iden-
tify characteristics of the work setting that contribute to bonding,

positive labeling, and increased access and to test the hypotheses that suggest the degree to which characteristics of the work setting contribute to bonding, positive labeling, and access, and that influence the rate of delinquent acts. The evaluation then is an integral part of the project. The evaluation and project staff form a team to test assumptions about work and its relationship to juvenile delinquency.

5.9 Assessment and Modification

At any time, both youth and adults can return to more traditional procedures for work assignment and performance, supervision, and evaluation. Two tactics may be useful in confirming new practices. The first is conducting regular sessions where members of the work group, either among themselves or facilitated by an outsider, can discuss both successes and failures. The second tactic is to have scheduled feedback from the evaluator, to draw upon their services on a regular basis throughout the life of the experiment and use those results to modify practices. Either may call for retraining or further training of young people and adults, redefinition of the tasks and relationships between youth and adults in the work group and the larger organization, and occasionally transfering a young person who does not do well in this setting.

5.10 Routinization of Youth Involvement in Work and Community Service

One of the objectives described in this paper is the creation of the expectation that young people will be engaged in useful work and volunteer service. Previous sections described ways in which that practice might be made durable within an organization. The following paragraphs contain a few suggestions about expanding these practices throughout the community.

To encourage positive community and organizational sentiment regarding young workers, employers and volunteer organizers must begin to view youth as a personnel resource. There are two possible strategies for encouraging these perceptions. First, existing opportunities for the employment of young people should be actively sought and promoted. The most common opportunities for youth are as health or community aides, assistant landscapers or groundskeepers, and participants in community or history or restoration projects.

The second option is to locate highly visible work assignments for young people. Many of these opportunities provide regular contact with the general public. Fundraising or advertising campaigns are prime examples.

A deliberate campaign can be undertaken to transmit positive information to potential employers and key policymakers. At the beginning simply let them know quietly that young people are being sought to do a

specific task or project and describe the objectives and design of the work. The first round of conversations is simply for information. As more is known about the setting in which young employees and volunteers flourish, the conversation can state more specifically the benefits for both employers and employee. These conversations may be the first stage of negotiations with future employers.

These tactics, demonstration and persuasion, often increase the number of people who understand, approve, and support generating options for young people. Over time, more people will expect young people to become valuable employees, hopefully resulting in more work and community service options for youth.

6. SUMMARY

The concept of self-contained delinquency prevention programs does not constitute a new or unique approach to youth programming. Several of the more promising program development techniques, derived from the information presented in both the monograph and in this supplement, are suggested with slight modifications. As mentioned in the introduction, these program principles require extensive planning and creativity by the lead local partner. Unfortunately, the state-of-the-art of prevention programming remains very limited in its ability to provide guidance to ensure the systematic implementation of effective local initiatives.

However, based on our current knowledge, practical experience, and the positive merits of work and community service projects, the groundwork for a self-contained program for youth employment and participation projects has been developed. The primary principles underlying this approach are easily translated into practice. In summary, they include the following guidelines:

- Description of the program not as a delinquency prevention program, but rather in terms of its positive work and community service activities.

- Targeting of the program to a mixed group of youth participants, defined by generic, nonlabeling characteristics such as unemployment status, residence, age, or scope of interest.

- Design and implementation of unbiased selection and recruitment criteria and mechanisms to preserve the positive image of the program, as well as to increase its visibility.

- Systematic and consistent building of community support for and promotion of work and community service opportunities for youth.

- Ongoing monitoring and provision of necessary remedial or special support services for individual participants.

- Augmentation or expansion of the basic work or community service activities of the program to encourage organizational and community internalization of policies to continue the involvement of young people in various work assignments.

Application of these principles for the implementation of these programs is suggested through conducting several phases or tasks. First is the *assessment* of opportunities for action, gathering information, and undertaking preliminary negotiations to examine the set of community and agency conditions under which a project is being attempted. The purpose of this assessment is to identify organizations or key local agents that could sponsor the project, to determine the processes and procedures of host organizations that might require modification to accommodate delinquency prevention efforts, to explore relations between the host organization and other organizations and groups that need to participate in the initiative, and to investigate the possibility of involving existing associations and organizations capable of providing or promoting work and service opportunities in program efforts to expand and improve such opportunities.

The second general stage is *organizing* the *support* needed to design and implement a project. In general, this means converting the possibilities discussed in the assessment into statements of shared intent, cultivating relationships among the various players who may or may not have cooperated in the past, preparing to deal with possible sources of resistance, obtaining specific commitments for collaboration in program design, and translating the various perspectives and descriptions of the options into an agreement that a consortium could support.

Third is the set of activities required to *design* the actual project, considered not just as the technical matter of developing an approach likely to influence delinquent behavior, but also of cultivating agreements that are organizationally and politically feasible. Here, the recommended principles for the program have to be addressed with the utmost specificity.

A fourth general stage is called *getting underway*. It is recognized that a set of oral and written agreements is not the same as a set of practices and program routines. Possibilities are considered for the systematic support of program operations and for the general preparation of program implementation for initial training in the rehearsal and piloting of program activities, for supporting monitoring, troubleshooting, and sharing of experience; for providing opportunities for the partners to work together as a group in order to resolve difficulties; and for routinizing the new initiative to encourage its growth and expansion.

Equally important to the design and operation of self-contained programs based on work and community service activities is the need to monitor and evaluate the progress of the programs. Evaluation is not a sequential *step* in the implementation process; rather, it is a vital component of the program from its very beginning.

The most crucial feature of this program is the ongoing encouragement of positive perceptions of young people's capabilities and the generation of expectations that young people are able to contribute and should be encouraged to participate in work and volunteer settings. People's views of themselves and the world do not shift rapidly. Changes in expectations and perceptions will occur over time as the types of work available to young persons are negotiated between policymakers and administrators, among members of organizational work groups, and between members of the youth population and various employers. The result of those negotiations--increased numbers of young employees and volunteers working in various positions throughout the community--will serve to illustrate the diversity of ability within the youth population and will demonstrate the capacity of youth for able performance.

END