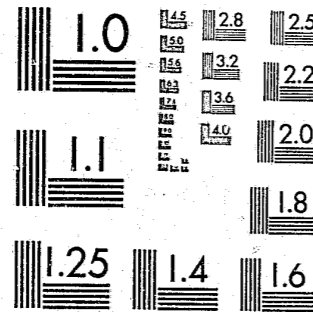


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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



PROJECT NEW PRIDE



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PROJECT NEW PRIDE

Serious juvenile crime continues to be a problem in the United States. Few communities are untouched.

The juvenile justice system has many ways to treat youths appearing in court for the first time, or even the second. Several options include restitution or community service, a fine, probation, a group home or foster home, or a detention center.

Some youths, however, continue to commit crimes. They struggle with a host of social and personal problems even after the traditional sanctions of the courts.

Mickey is 16 and has been on probation for over a year. He lives with his mother and three sisters. Mickey doesn't know his father, and the family's only income is welfare assistance. Mickey has a history of violent outbursts—he has assaulted a teacher and a bus driver; he has now been arrested for attempting to rob a liquor store at knifepoint.

Typically, the families of juvenile delinquents can't handle them or don't care. The youths have histories of poor school performance or have dropped out. They are unemployed or unemployable. They have physical or health problems. They rebel against discipline.

Each juvenile delinquent has his or her own unique combination of problems. Attempting to alleviate one or two of a child's difficulties still leaves him or her with too many to cope with. What these juveniles have in common is that people have "given up" on them—they have "given up" on themselves.

Rosa is 17. Her parents threw her out of the house when she got pregnant. She dropped out of school and moved from place to place, staying with friends whenever she could. She snatched purses for money. She abandoned her baby, leaving deep emotional scars.

She has been arrested in the past for prostitution; she has now been arrested once more.

Is there anything that can be done for these young people?

Imprisonment is, of course, one alternative. But it is not always successful in restoring them to acceptable behavior when released back into their communities—where they face the same problems they had when they went in. They quickly revert to their old behavior—they get arrested once more.

"A ship in the harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are for."

Another answer is a program that has proved successful for over 10 years—a program that offers such a wide range of services that a unique treatment plan can be mapped out which will address all of a youth's individual needs. It blends these services together through intensive supervision by counselors. This is Project New Pride. It is a nonresidential community-based program for juvenile offenders that provides a blend of counseling, alternative schooling, correction of learning disabilities, vocational training, job placement, recreation, and cultural activities.

Project New Pride embraces its title literally; it creates "new pride" within its youth—a pride long lost or never before felt. It can turn a youth's defeatist attitude into one of self-worth. New Pride operates on the premise that juvenile delinquents need to confront their problems within their own environments. It guides them in adjusting their behavior while remaining in their own communities. The program takes a holistic approach. It focuses on the youth as a total person whose delinquent life is a total of several problems. It confronts all of the youth's needs at one time.



John at 17 had been in four different high schools in the country. His family moved constantly to avoid bill collectors. He finally dropped out of school and began driving the getaway car for a gang involved in a number of robberies. After another arrest he was sent to New Pride. Following several months in the program he received his high school diploma through the alternative school, and now drives a taxi. His family has been guided toward some financial assistance.

A Brief History of Project New Pride

New Pride was begun in 1973 in Denver, Colorado, by the Denver Anti-Crime Council. The program expanded rapidly to meet the needs of delinquent youths; most of the youths were performing below their last grade level and many had at least two learning disabilities. By 1974, Denver New Pride received national recognition by being named a "model program" by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

In 1977, Denver New Pride was one of 23 programs nationwide designated as "Exemplary Projects" by the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. These programs were chosen for "overall effectiveness in re-

ducing crime or improving criminal justice; adaptability to other jurisdictions; objective evidence of achievement; and demonstrated cost effectiveness." In 1979, on the basis of New Pride's continued success in treating delinquent youth, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention provided funds for the program to be replicated at 10 other sites. An evaluation of these programs is being conducted by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, Walnut Creek, California, and will be published soon.

Today's New Pride Youth

The target group for Project New Pride is serious or violent youthful offenders from 14 to 17 years old. They have at least two prior convictions for serious misdemeanors and/or felonies, and are formally charged or convicted of another offense when referred to New Pride.

The percentage of females in the New Pride population is generally low, ranging from 10 percent in Denver New Pride to 15 percent in the Juvenile Resource Center in Camden, New Jersey, one of the replication sites.

Will any "hardcore" youth be accepted into New Pride? The only youths not eligible for participation are those who have committed forcible rape or are diagnosed as severely psychotic; New Pride believes this restriction is necessary in the interest of the safety of the community and of the youths themselves.

What Can New Pride Do for Its Youth?

The project's specific goals are to work these "hardcore" youths back into the mainstream of their communities and to reduce the number of rearrests. Generally, reintegration into the community means reenrolling in school, getting a job, or both.



"They feel nobody cares about them, so why should they care about rules and regulations."

Greg LeMar,
Juvenile Resource Center
Camden, New Jersey

"A child comes to New Pride and there is a whole package of services waiting for him."

Tom James
Denver New Pride



Schooling

New Pride youths receive alternative schooling and are then reintegrated into the public school system, or directed toward vocational training. Some youths get jobs and pursue a GED certificate. Some of them complete high school in the alternative school (certified by the public school system). Those with learning disabilities receive specific attention to their problem within the alternative school. The program encourages all youths to obtain a high school diploma, and it urges those who must work to participate in a GED program.

Jobs

New Pride places specific emphasis on vocational training. The staff recognizes that money is the key to independence for these youths and the most socially acceptable way to get money is to work for it. On coming to New Pride, few know how to apply for a job, much less keep one. New Pride finds jobs for the majority of its youths and many of them work very successfully in project-owned small businesses. Most of the jobs are part-time to allow the youths to continue their education.

Getting a job is crucial to these young people; not only to their ability to become self-sufficient but to their emotional and psychological well-being as well. This need is borne out by the fact that Denver New Pride youths without jobs get rearrested at three times the rate of those with jobs.

Family

Not only do the youths benefit from intensive counseling, but counselors are also available for their families. New Pride encourages family members to visit the project facility in order to observe the daily operation, involve themselves in their child's treatment, and to get to know the staff. Often, by understanding and supporting the objectives of the program, the family is helped to remain together as a

"With children, to have any impact, you have to work with the family and environment, in addition to working with the child."

*A Juvenile Judge
Denver, Colorado*



unit. For example, it is not atypical for family members to demand most of a youth's pay; this can reduce motivation to work. But New Pride does feel that a youth's contributing to his or her own support can play an important role in preparing for independent living. Family members sometimes need guidance in financial assistance, and in dealing with domestic violence, alcoholism, or drug abuse.

Community

New Pride community-based programs are extremely cost-effective when compared with the cost of placing a child in an institution. In Colorado and New Jersey, for example, it costs approximately \$28,000 per year to incarcerate a youth; the cost for Denver New Pride and the Juvenile Resource Center in Camden is approximately \$4,500. Through successful treatment of these youths, they become taxpayers and put dollars back into the community rather than being supported by taxpayers.

An overall benefit to the community is New Pride's ability to reduce juvenile crime, to reduce illiteracy, to reduce the number of troublemakers in the public schools, and to increase the work force.



Most important, Project New Pride has demonstrated the effectiveness of a community-based program of integrated services as an alternative to incarceration to change the negative behavior of juvenile offenders. This is accomplished with little risk to the community due to the intensive supervision of the program.

The Services of the Program

Participation in New Pride involves 6 months of intensive involvement and a 6-month followup period, during which the youth slowly reintegrates into the community. During the followup period, the youth continues to benefit from as many services as necessary and works closely with counselors.

The integrated delivery of all services is extremely important in meeting all of the needs of juvenile delinquents in New Pride. Youths with poor vision will not perform well in school; those not able to read or write well may not be able to get a job.

Needs Assessment and Testing

When a youth is referred to New Pride, usually by a juvenile court judge or department of corrections, the staff collects background information from as many different sources as possible. These sources include the courts, social workers, schools, teachers, parents, friends, and siblings.

While the staff is gathering this information, the youths are screened and tested for academic functioning, vocational interests and aptitudes, psychological or emotional problems, health or physical problems, or specific learning disabilities. The staff combines the results of this testing with the other information gathered and maps out an individualized plan of realistic goals in the areas of education, social adjustment, employment, or vocational training for the youth. This plan can be revised when the need arises, but it remains the framework within which the youth is directed throughout his stay in New Pride.

Alternative Schooling

The majority of New Pride youths have dropped out of school at the time of referral to the program. Many have at least one learning disability. Participation in the alternative education provided by New Pride is encouraged and the youths are generally required to show progress in school before being considered for job placement. As a result of years of negative feedback, these youths fear and avoid educational activities.

A focus of New Pride is to develop a more positive attitude toward learning. In a relaxed, casual setting, the youths benefit from a 5 to 1 student to teacher ratio—with volunteers, a 1 to 1 ratio is achieved—where the staff is strongly supportive of student efforts and encourages their strengths. All youths participate in some form of New Pride alternative education; some work toward reintegration back into the public schools (academic credit is awarded for New Pride schools); some study in a GED

"Eighty percent have been told they are going to fail; it is a self-fulfilling prophecy."

*Stella Forton,
Juvenile Resource Center
Camden, New Jersey*





program while working part-time; some need treatment for specific learning disabilities while increasing their academic achievements; and most need to get jobs and require vocational training.

Through arrangements with local small businesses, and through New Pride-owned small businesses, the project offers youths successful on-the-job training. Because of the unique integration of New Pride services, most youths benefit from a combination of different types of schooling to meet their multiple needs.

Job Placement

Job preparation is a key function of Project New Pride since most youths are without skills and have unrealistic expectations in regard to the demands of a job. Before attempting to place youths in jobs, New Pride guides them in such basics as filling out a job application form and interviewing. The employment component is designed to introduce the youths to the expectations of the work world first, then to provide them with on-the-job training under close supervision, and finally to place them in jobs when they have developed some marketable skills.

Through arrangements with local businesses, placements for on-the-job training are possible. These are often in fast food restaurants, small construction companies, or auto repair shops, for example. New Pride sometimes



pays the initial 3 months of minimum wages to the youths, and the employers provide supervision and training.

Economic Development

To supplement opportunities for prevocational training, and to return some profit for the program, New Pride successfully developed its own small businesses. The types of business operated vary with the location of the site, the needs of the local community (based on a market analysis), and the extent of volunteer support by local business people. These profit-oriented businesses include housing renovation, a pizzeria, lawn maintenance, a bakery, janitorial services, a vegetable farm, and a garden nursery.

The youths are trained in all aspects of working and running a business, and are encouraged to make responsible business decisions. Skills developed in these enterprises are readily transferable to other jobs later.

Youths in New Pride-owned businesses are closely supervised since all work is performed under the direction of professional staff. In addition, supportive classroom training and counseling is integrated into the youths' work experience, in keeping with New Pride's holistic approach to treatment of juvenile offenders.



Why Is Project New Pride Unique?

New Pride is unique in its ability to address all of a youth's needs together due to the flexibility of the program in providing services. New Pride gives "hardcore" youths some hope; it gives them choices. They learn that they can graduate from school; they can get jobs. They also learn the consequences of not following the program. While New Pride expects each youth to participate in all aspects of the program, the services are not rigidly structured. They accommodate individual needs and interests. Thus, an individualized treatment plan can be developed for each youth through which he will be guided by intensive supervision and counseling. No two treatment plans are exactly alike. No two juvenile offenders are exactly alike.

The Importance of Counseling

Underlying New Pride's holistic approach is the belief that the needs of the "total child" must be met. Close supervision and counseling are imperative to identifying and understanding each youth's deficiencies. Generally, the program assigns youths to counselors by personality or role model needs, and by limiting counselors' workloads the program assures youths of individual attention. The counselor involves himself or herself in all aspects of the youth's life and maintains frequent contact with family, teachers, social workers, and probation officers and, most importantly, meets frequently with other New Pride staff members to keep informed of progress or shortcomings in the youth's overall treatment plan.

The counseling relationship remains very important during the 6-month followup period when the counselor works closely with the public school system, employers, and family to monitor the youth's gradual independence from the project and its staff and to ensure that the desired behavior changes have occurred.

The Integration of All Components

The integration of all of the program's components is vital to making New Pride youths acceptable members of their communities.

All facets of the child's life must be examined and all treatment services must be coordinated to ensure the greatest benefit for the youth. Raising a youth's academic performance is not sufficient if the family income is so low that he or she is hungry; warning a girl of the penalty for prostitution is not sufficient if she has no job skills; getting a job for a youth is not sufficient if he or she doesn't know how to apply for another job later; enrolling a youth in the school is not sufficient if he or she needs professional help with a severe emotional disturbance. New Pride youths usually suffer from a combination of problems. It takes a combination of services to help them. New Pride achieves "one-step programming" through intensive supervision from the youth's intake through the end of his or her involvement with the program.

The staff philosophy of New Pride programs, greeting youths at the door, aptly describes the theory behind the unique operation of Project New Pride:

"IF WE FISH FOR YOU
YOU WILL LIVE FOR A DAY.
IF WE TEACH YOU TO FISH
YOU WILL LIVE FOR A LIFETIME"
• STAFF PHILOSOPHY •

Could Your Community Benefit From Project New Pride?

More New Pride information, including a training manual for instituting a New Pride program, is available by contacting Paula Seidman at the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at (800) 638-8736, or at the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse/NCJRS, Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20850.



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