PROGRAMMING FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF

Youth Policy

School of Social Work
The University of Michigan

NOVA University
Shepard Broad Law Center

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This publication was made possible by a gift from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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Printed: January 1991

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FOREWORD

Needs of young women who come into contact with the juvenile justice system have been neglected. This is, in large part, due to the fact that relatively few girls are arrested and adjudicated for delinquent acts compared to boys. Effective intervention and rehabilitation of these young women is essential if they are to become productive citizens.

Like their male counterparts, these young women need coping and survival tools such as remedial education, job training, and independent living skills. Moreover, they often require linkages to family planning, parent education, and child care resources. A number of public and private organizations have begun to recognize the special needs of delinquent young women. This booklet describes some of the special needs of this population and highlights programs which have been designed to meet their emotional and skill development needs.

We hope that policymakers and practitioners will find this booklet a resource and a catalyst for planning services for these neglected children.

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INTRODUCTION

A Case of Neglect

Juvenile delinquency in the United States is largely a male phenomenon, hence programs are often tailored to meet the needs of male juveniles. Males under the age of 18 account for the overwhelming majority of arrests, the bulk of the referrals to juvenile courts, and the largest proportion of young people in detention centers and training schools across the country.[1]

Despite these realities, many young females enter the juvenile justice system each year. Unfortunately, they tend to be forgotten by service providers and policymakers. For example, juvenile justice officials and child advocates in virtually every state acknowledge that there are few, if any, meaningful community-based programs for troubled and delinquent girls. Needs and issues confronting young females continue to be neglected by policymakers and juvenile justice professionals who, instead, address public concern about violent juvenile crime, primarily committed by male adolescents. The result of this neglect is tragic and costly.

Inappropriate Institutional Placement

The best available evidence indicates that most girls locked up in detention centers and training schools are confined for relatively minor delinquent acts. In 1987, only one-third of the nearly 2,800 females confined on any one day in public training schools throughout the country were incarcerated for having committed a Part I crime (murder, rape, armed robbery, aggravated assault, auto theft, larceny, and arson). Similarly, less than one-quarter of those incarcerated in public, state and local detention centers were accused of committing a serious crime.[2] Not only is this a waste and misuse of public resources, but no serious follow-up studies after release has shown that locking these girls in institutions designed for hard core juvenile offenders has done any good.

Most young female offenders can be managed and treated in the community without compromising public safety. However, unless accurate information about female youth crime and effective programs for such offenders is disseminated and used to build public

1 Steketee, M.W., Willis, D.A., & Schwartz, I.M., Juvenile justice trends: 1977-1987. November, 1989.

2 Ibid.

support for enlightened policies, we will continue to neglect this population and rely on traditional, and more costly approaches.

Why Are Girls Being Locked Up Unnecessarily?

Girls are being inappropriately institutionalized largely because community-based alternatives are unavailable. Community-based alternatives are both effective and generally less expensive than detention centers, training schools, and other long-term residential care programs. Moreover, the number of female juvenile offenders is small enough to make program implementation and evaluation manageable and the unique needs of young females easily targeted.

Steps to Take

Much can be done to expose the unequal treatment that female juveniles face, dispel the misconceptions, and highlight the promising programs which, although scarce, are available in some communities. Advocacy for young women at the community, state, and federal levels is critical. In-service training sessions for judges, police, prosecutors, public defenders, probation officers and private agency service provider can help promote the development of sound policies and needed services.. Involving female offenders—through membership on relevant committees, advisory boards, and conferences—is another vehicle that must be explored. These young women, who have dealt with the system and experienced the frustrations of inadequate services, can convey an understanding of the specific needs of young women, better expose the conditions of confinement, and offer valuable suggestions for change.

Special Needs of Female Offenders

Special needs of young female offenders are well known, yet too few services accommodate or address them. For example, young women are often victims of sexual abuse. They will often run away in an attempt to find safety from such abuse. Unfortunately, the only safety they find is on the streets, particularly if no other options are available. Crisis intervention services, shelter care, day treatment, therapeutic foster care and independent living arrangements are needed in order to address these problems. Also, programs need to use trained sexual abuse counselors to detect prior abuse and provide appropriate treatment. Special care must be taken to ensure that a sexually abused young woman is safe from her abuser and not placed back into a high risk and potentially abusive setting.

Close attention to gaps in education, while important to all juvenile offender programs, is particularly important for young female offenders. Of the U.S. training school population surveyed in 1987, less than 30 percent of the females were in school at the time of commitment. Also there is a tremendous need for educational programs serving pregnant and parenting teens. Becoming a parent is often a major factor in a young woman's decision to drop out of school.

Teen motherhood adds considerable stress to the already hectic lives of juvenile offenders. Not only are teen parents dealing with whatever brought them to treatment, but they have the additional concern of teen motherhood. Young mothers are frequently put in residential care away from their children, disregarding the importance of early parent/child attachment to healthy child development. Further, child care arrangements, while the young mother is in residential care, are often made hastily or overlooked completely. Day treatment programs, on the other hand, can provide on-site child care, allowing young mothers to visit their children throughout the day. This arrangement provides the opportunity for programs to include the child in treatment. In cases where the young mother cannot live with her family, therapeutic foster care is a way to keep the mother and child together, in the community, and with a positive role model. Effective programs include the foster or birth parents in treatment, emphasizing their crucial roles in educating, supporting, and advising the young mother.

Barriers specific to women in our society also need to be recognized by programs. Educating young women on sex-role stereotyping and gender biases and encouraging females to take advantage of opportunities often reserved for males are much needed services. Unfortunately, female offender programs too often provide job training for stereotypically female employment, and education on women's issues is surprisingly limited.

Hopefully, this booklet will shed light on the difficulties and challenges facing the adolescent female offender. Although it is in no way inclusive, it is a step in uncovering what we know about treatment of adolescent female offenders. Moreover, we hope the descriptions of promising programs for young female offenders will stimulate the thinking of policymakers and professionals and serve as catalysts for the development of desperately needed services for this population.

P.A.C.E. CENTER FOR GIRLS, INC.

by Vicki Burke

Introduction

Serving troubled young women between 14- and 18-years-old, Florida's Practical and Cultural Education Center for Girls, Inc. (P.A.C.E.) is a unique and exciting non-residential, community-based comprehensive education program. Through education and motivation, P.A.C.E. nurtures and inspires these young women to become independent, self-supporting and productive citizens in their communities.

Opened in January, 1985, P.A.C.E. was initially located in Synder Memorial Methodist Church and served ten girls with two voluntary staff. P.A.C.E./Jacksonville is now located on the campus of Florida Community College at Jacksonville and serves a minimum of 100 girls a year with ten full-time and four part-time staff. In July, 1989, the program expanded to Bradenton, Florida, and P.A.C.E./Manatee employs five full-time staff who serve a minimum of 30 girls each year. In 1991, P.A.C.E. is scheduled to open another program in Orlando, Florida which will serve approximately 80 young women a year.

Objectives

Dedicated staff work to meet program objectives which include preventing juvenile delinquency, high school drop-outs, runaways, and teen pregnancy; providing "high risk" young women with the necessary skills to become self-reliant and self-supporting individuals; fostering personal growth and strengthening family ties; and providing an alternative to intervention by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services or juvenile justice system. P.A.C.E. provides long-term permanent solutions to breaking the cycle of teen pregnancy, abuse, neglect, and dependence on the welfare system.

Education

Education is the core of P.A.C.E. and the key to bringing many of the girls out of broken homes, poverty and low self-esteem. Each girl attends school while at P.A.C.E. and works toward her high school credit diploma or the G.E.D. The academic curriculum includes remedial, high school, college preparation and vocational classes. The staff/student ratio in academics is 1:4. Independent living classes have a staff/student ratio of 1:8. Areas of study include:

- Health/Physical Education (i.e., education concerning health issues such as drug abuse, smoking, nutrition, etc.; CPR and First Aid; personal fitness including aerobics, nautilus, swimming, and other activities).
- Life Skills (i.e., parenting skills; family planning; dealing with pressure at home and from peers; communication skills; decision making; and information on sexual abuse).
- Art and Drama (i.e., attending city cultural events; using music/art/drama to express individuality; and performing for day care centers, local schools, churches and the elderly).
- Career Development (i.e., budgeting for home, car, food, clothing; preparing for college or vocational school—applications, financial aid forms and registration; and world of work—interviewing skills, resume writing, and appropriate dress).
- Home Economics (i.e., budgeting and money management for household expenses; basic cooking and sewing classes).

Community

The enhancement of self-esteem and promotion of self worth are integrally related to pride and involvement in a community. P.A.C.E. students participate in two or three community service projects a month. These have included sponsoring parties for day care children, volunteering weekly at a retirement home, taking care of animals at the local shelter, and supporting a 15-year-old Indian girl residing on a reservation.

Program

The program is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., however, staff are on call 24 hours, seven days a week. Individual and group counseling and home visits with parents/guardians are conducted to ensure success in obtaining the goals set while enrolled in the program. Although the average length of stay is six months, the program is based upon the individual's needs, so length of stay can vary from four months to one year.

Students receive awards for attendance, credits earned, course completions, and most outstanding or most improved student at graduation ceremonies held every six weeks. Point cards, kept daily, are used to bid on trips or earn t-shirts. To graduate from P.A.C.E., each girl must be enrolled in further education, employed, or enlisted in the military.

Follow-up on each girl enrolled in P.A.C.E. is maintained for three years. Thirty-one clients have re-enrolled in the program since inception, returning to take advantage of the opportunities at P.A.C.F and becoming excellent role models while there. P.A.C.E. has served 436 clients since beginning the program, with 167 receiving high school diplomas. Information recorded includes living arrangements, family status, employment, and academic achievements. Besides gathering data, follow-up coordinators also help girls find jobs, enroll in school, get counseling, and find housing.

Of the 288 girls currently on follow-up, 89 are attending school, and 164 are employed. Table 1 shows totals by type of educational institution and employment status, and Table 2 presents enrollment statistics.

TABLE 1

Academics	
Attending High School	48
High School & Employed Part-time	7
High School & Employed Full-time	3
High School & Married	1
Attending Vocational School	16
Vocational & Employed Part-time	4
Attending College	9
College & Employed Part-time	1
Academics Total	89
Employment	
Full-time Employment	84
Employed Full-time & Married	1
Part-time Employment	13
Seeking Employment	66
Employment Total	164
Other	
Currently pregnant	8
Staying home with children	9
Married, staying home with children	1
Married, staying home	4
Treatment program	4
Legal action pending	1
Runaway	1
Unable to locate	7
Total	35

TABLE 2

Enrollment Statistics

Age at Enrollment	
Age 12	2
Age 13	3
Age 14	41
Age 15	154
Age 16	166
Age 17	66
Age 18	4

Living Status	
Both parents	106
Mother	177
Father	16
Mother/Stepfather	46
Father/Stepmother	7
Guardian	32
Foster Home	23
Group Home	25
Relative	4

Referral Status	
Status Offenders	356
Delinquents	56
Dependents	24

Income Level	
Low	308 (71%)
Middle	110 (25%)
High	18 (4%)

Education Level	
Grade 4	1
Grade 5	3
Grade 6	23
Grade 7	85
Grade 8	120
Grade 9	116
Grade 10	72
Grade 11	15
Grade 12	1

Race	
Caucasian	302 (70%)
Black	128 (29%)
Hispanic	3 (.5%)
Oriental	3 (.5%)

Teen Parents

Percentage of girls pregnant when they enrolled in P.A.C.E. (8%)
Percentage of girls who had dependent children when they enrolled (2%)

Abuse

Girls who have been physically abused (22%)
Girls who have been sexually abused (69%)
Combination of both (11%)

Substance Abuse

Drugs (52%)
Alcohol (36%)
Cigarettes (39%)

Funding

Like most non-profit organizations, funding comes from many available sources. P.A.C.E. receives approximately half of its funding (in-kind or financial) from public sources (state, city, or federal government). Private sector monies (in-kind services and financial) come from women's organizations, foundations, grants, churches, civic organizations or individuals.

Conclusion

The motto of P.A.C.E. is "Inspiring the Spirit of Responsibility." In order to succeed, students must overcome problems for which they have little control such as divorce, parental substance abuse, poverty, and sexual, physical and emotional abuse or neglect. At P.A.C.E. young women are encouraged to accept aspects of their lives they cannot change, take responsibility for their own behavior, and focus on their own goals for the future.

The YWCA of Portland, Oregon Girls' Emancipation Program:

HELP GIRLS CREATE INDEPENDENT FUTURES

by Ruth Herman Wells, M.S.

> "Oregon's at-risk girls and young women are the mothers of the next generation yet they are virtually invisible until one of their sons slashes your tires."
>
> *Oregon Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee's At-Risk Girls and Young Women's Study Group, 1988*

When Neil Goldschmidt, Governor of Oregon, toured the YWCA Girls' Emancipation Program (GEP) as part of his state-wide "Children's Agenda" campaign, a long-time teen prostitute who had joined the program confronted the new governor with the system's years of neglect of older girls:

> "How could you let this happen to me? First my family let me down and when I needed help, nobody ever noticed me except the pimps. I did the same things as the boys but there was no way to get help. There was nobody there when I needed them."

These accusations were well-founded as preceding governors had not addressed the state system's failure to provide older adolescent girls with the help they needed. A 1989 Catholic Community Services Foundation study showed that Oregon's Children's Services Division (CSD) devoted 60% of its resources to boys even though girls were 56% of the child abuse victims, 75% of the sexual abuse victims, and 54% of the physical abuse victims. In the state's most populous county, Multnomah County, CSD noted that 34% of the boys on their caseloads were provided treatment services while just 10% of the girls were given the same option. During the last two years, both the state and local CSD, along with the state's Child and Youth Services Commission, have committed themselves to identifying and rectifying statewide service distribution for girls.

The Portland YWCA secured one year of limited foundation support to begin a project addressing the gap in services for delinquent and troubled girls. A novel program design was created from "scratch." Once opened, it became apparent that there was an

overwhelming need for an intensive, short-term program preparing delinquent and troubled older adolescent girls for successful independent living. Few existing resources provided short-term emancipation preparation in a safe environment away from males who often were their victimizers and abusers. The new program was inundated with calls from as far away as Texas. Requests for admission exceeded available space by a 10:1 ratio. Teen prostitutes and street kids arrived with their belongings requesting immediate admission. It was clear that even with the addition of the Girls' Emancipation Program, Oregon still seriously lacked needed programs for distressed, older teenage girls.

What the Girls' Emancipation Program Offers

The Girls' Emancipation Program is designed to quickly and effectively help delinquent and troubled older adolescent girls make the transition into independent living. Girls between the ages of 15-1/2 to 18 years are served. Clients experience diverse types of problems ranging from prostitution and running away to co-dependency and depression. The program is primarily state funded through one- and two-year contracts with supplemental help from the United Way. Clients are never charged for services, but must meet funder guidelines on delinquency and residence among other requirements.

Profile

Nearly all young women admitted to the GEP have documented or undocumented histories of delinquency. Often the girls exhibit behavior that is self-destructive, (e.g., running away or prostitution). This differs from the "typical" delinquent behavior of boys that is primarily destructive to others in the community (e.g., auto theft or vandalism). Generally, only those who require in-patient psychiatric care, drug treatment, or secure lock-up, and those who do not wish to participate in the program are excluded from admission. A mix of client problem areas, ages, and backgrounds is maintained to best facilitate an effective treatment environment.

Service records maintained on clients are extensive and indicate the intensive nature of the program. Each month, clients receive approximately 40 hours of group therapy, five hours of one-to-one counseling, ten hours of community coach contact, 25 hours of social skill training, ten hours of employment readiness and maintenance preparation, 20 hours of milieu contact, eight hours of leisure skill training and five hours of casework services. The GEP's small staff of counselors is heavily supplemented by practicum students, interns, and volunteers. In a typical month, over 30 volunteers contribute

more than 500 hours of service as community coaches, class instructors, and counselor assistants.

The GEP's relationship-based program is designed to give girls what they so clearly need and deserve: nurturing, boundaries, control, autonomy, and help to come to grips with the incest, abuse or other traumas they have survived. Providing this help in a safe environment, away from the victimizers, and using techniques that are designed specifically for youths are also critical. No demand or expectation for change is made unless accompanied by practical, doable steps to follow. With the young people taking an authority role in all aspects of daily program operation, their expertise is fully utilized. There is no more potent agent of change than carefully facilitated peer pressure.

Services

GEP service normally continues for about six months. This includes a three-month initial phase followed by a three-month out-client/graduate phase when the girl has her own apartment. Each GEP client is provided a volunteer Community Coach who takes a "Big Sister" role for a full year.

The First Phase

The GEP offers each client a dorm room and provides all daily living needs for the initial three-months. During this phase, clients attend late afternoon daily group therapy to resolve and address past and present emotional concerns. Typical issues include how to cope with past sexual abuse, surviving family dysfunction, coping with addicted parents, developing judgment and impulse control, fending off aggressive pimps, living legal lives, and refraining from drug and alcohol abuse. One group session a week is devoted to substance abuse and co-dependency issues. One-on-one counseling supplements the daily group sessions.

Group is structured on a "Positive Peer Culture" model that puts young people in charge of the group and gives them the responsibility for making appropriate decisions in cooperation with staff. Thus, at the GEP, youths are the authority. They quickly learn the complexities and subtleties of being in charge while developing empathy and respect for authority figures. These young women tend to have higher expectations and are more demanding of each other than adults are, making them far more effective agents of change.

In Group Workshop, a structured therapy class, issues from group are not just talked about, but model situations are drilled and rehearsed. Such active participation is necessary for the girls to

improve in areas such as impulse control and judgement. For example, to learn impulse control, actual problem situations are re-created. Large red "Stop and Think" signs are inserted at the appropriate time to cue the girls to think prior to selecting an illegal or problematic choice. Clients then rehearse and are assisted in generalizing new habits to actual situations.

After group each evening, the GEP participants attend social skill training classes. Using an engaging curriculum[1] of experiential learning techniques such as role-plays, group experience exercises, and games, the clients become "veterans" at using the social skills needed for living independently in the community. Other skills classes include:

- Health (i.e., low cost health care with a special focus on women's health issues);
- Living Skills (i.e., banking, apartment hunting, budgeting, and tenants' rights and responsibilities);
- Job Skills (i.e., how to interact with bosses, what to expect the first days on the job, and how to keep your job); and
- Job Hunt Class (i.e., helping unemployed youth to secure employment). This class helps participants develop a job hunt strategy, secure job hunt clothes, devise a resume, and find transportation. Most clients obtain part-time work within two to three weeks. Program members also learn to manage a kitchen in their Food Shopping and Cooking Class.

The GEP's unique School Skills Class prepares clients to succeed in school by teaching all aspects of school behavior from interacting with teachers to locating dependable transportation to and from school. Over the weekend, program members attend a Leisure Time Management Class that offers no-cost/low-cost, legal, safe recreation opportunities.

Employment must be in place within about four weeks of admission, and each employer is contacted weekly. School is not required but is strongly encouraged. Almost any educational option can be pursued during the morning and early afternoon hours before the GEP's groups and classes start. Weekly contact with clients' schools is maintained.

1 The Personal Power Curriculum, a series of volumes addressing success with self, success with others, and success in school, published by Pro-Ed out of Austin, TX, is used.

The Graduation

By the end of the first three-months, the client is employed part-time and complying with program and community rules. She has stabilized emotionally, and bonded with her group, counselor, and community coach. She has developed a budget and saved money, and has passed a test of social skill readiness. She has also been managing increasing freedom and responsibility. At this point the client is graduated into the community.

A large graduation ceremony is held to mark each girl's move into independent living. The graduate, her counselor, coach, peers, court workers, and friends attend the graduation ceremony along with program staff and volunteers. Each person brings a gift for the girl's new apartment. The ceremony begins with those present telling stories about the girl's time in the program and making wishes for her future. The new graduate is presented with a diploma and is asked to give a speech. The transformation of a withdrawn, emaciated street kid or hardened, "old for her years" teen prostitute into a beautiful, successful young woman, excitedly opening her graduation gifts, is a hard experience to capture and convey. One former teen prostitute did capture her own transformation in her graduation speech in 1988. She said, "You've helped me to see me the way I should be. You've helped me understand myself better, to know that I am important, that I come first and should always be first. You've helped me to get a grip on life."

Movement to Independent Living

Once situated in her new apartment, the graduate begins an individualized schedule of GEP groups and classes. Weekly calls are made to the apartment manager to ensure successful transition, and visits and phone calls are conducted. The client is allowed to return to the building, to use the dorm kitchen, and to request a dorm room if needed any time, day or night. Twenty-four hour crisis counseling, support, transportation, and crisis intervention continue to be available. During this second phase, support of the GEP winds down, and the client is encouraged to seek new, long-term, community activities.

Each coach remains actively involved for an additional six months after the program has been completed. GEP maintains an "open door" policy and remains available to serve any graduate through her 18th birthday. This help includes immediate emergency on-site housing, crisis intervention, financial aid, counseling, and referral assistance.

Results

The Girls' Emancipation Program compiles extensive data on its services. Over half of the girls admitted are graduated by the program. During 1988, 100% of the program's graduates secured employment. All graduates of the program passed a rigorous test of independent skills. Ninety percent of the graduates obtained independent housing in the community. Approximately 80% of them completed, or were in the process of completing high school; most had been long-term dropouts. The local juvenile courts do not provide programs with recidivism data, but based on informal follow-up, the data suggests that less than 10% of the graduates have been charged with additional offenses following graduation.

The results achieved by the GEP suggest that when troubled older adolescent girls are offered help in a way that properly addresses the emotional roots of their delinquent and self-destructive behavior, significant change can be facilitated.

Conclusion

Because girls are seldom a threat to the community, and their problems are less visible, intrusive, and "marketable," they are a low priority for funding in an industry where chronic under-funding is the norm. Until we decide to invest in girls, in our future, only then will we truly begin to attack and solve the real forces that cause and maintain the delinquency, drug abuse, and other traumas facing the American family.

Fostering a New Way of Life:

THE CHILD, INC. OF DELAWARE EXPERIENCE

by Joseph M. Dell'Olio and Patricia H. Jacobs

A Need for Change

In 1984 Judith Brower studied the residents of Delaware's Woods Haven-Kruse School for Girls (WHK). She found that only one of the 19 female residents had been incarcerated for a felony charge.

Incarceration of females, the study suggested, especially status offenders, resulted from failure or absence of placement alternatives rather than a need to protect delinquent females or society. The study also showed that a number of these girls might benefit from placement in the community, provided some special services were in place. Further, such placements would be more cost effective in both human and fiscal terms.

Responding to this need for change, the newly created Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families (DSCYF), the Criminal Justice Council (CJC), CHILD, Inc., and the Delaware Council on Crime and Justice mounted advocacy efforts to close WHK.

Beginnings

In early 1985, using federal funds, CJC awarded grants to establish two alternative placements for troubled girls, the YWCA Independent Living Program and CHILD, Inc. Specialized Foster Care. Child, Inc. is now funded on a contractual basis by DSCYF, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (YRS).

CHILD, Inc. became licensed as a Child Placing Agency with established basic policies and procedures. Through advertising and personal contacts, the program director was hired, and over a dozen potential foster parents were identified. A parent educator, already employed by CHILD, Inc., was assigned to the program one day per week to provide consultation, and initial as well as ongoing foster parent training. By June 30, 1985, four foster homes were approved, and the first foster parent class had completed six of the required 12 sessions.

Girls were eligible for placement who were unable to live at home, but for whom incarceration was unnecessary: they had to be low-risk, non-violent, not psychotic, and could not have untreated

serious substance abuse problems. An unexpected task was the need to "recruit" eligible girls. Initially, the residents of WHK were reluctant to leave an institution that had become known and safe. Foster care had negative connotations for many of them due to previous experiences.

The CHILD, Inc.'s program director participated in weekly group sessions, individual interviews, and some recreational events at WHK. Gradually some trust was established, aided by fear of the impending closure of WHK and move to Delaware's Ferris School for Boys (FS), where 42% of the residents faced felony charges. On June 27, 1985 the first placement was made.

By mid-July the second placement brought a new situation: a teen mother and her newborn son were placed together. Although the program had been planned for adolescent females, no provisions had been considered for placing adolescent mothers and their child(ren). Fortunately, several families were willing to accept a young mother and her infant, and, to date, six infants have been included in the program.

Expansion

In July, 1986, to increase use and address unmet needs, CHILD, Inc. expanded by admitting males and youth on probation.

In May, 1988, another CJC grant permitted the addition of respite care. (One foster parent is paid a fee to maintain one placement available at all times, with additional reimbursement for actual days of care.) Respite has been used to facilitate family visits, permit foster parent vacations, and provide transition between placements. It is also available to ease some foster home tensions. Respite care is now included in the DSCYF contract.

In July, 1988, placements were expanded from 10 to 16. The growth necessitated increasing staff and a move to a separate branch office. In addition to servicing a caseload, a second counselor has provided shared coverage of emergencies, co-leadership of meetings, recruiting of additional foster parents, increased contact with community resources, and peer supervision. The parent educator position is no longer funded.

Philosophy and Services

The program has adopted the motto, "Fostering a New Way of Life." The entire service team (program staff, foster parents, YRS and DCPS case managers, community resources, and, in some cases, the birth family) introduces youth to a new way of life. Some basic rules and

expectations are clear before placement, for example, honesty, respect for persons and property, and constructive use of time. Other limitations may be imposed as situations arise, such as curfew, chores, and money management. The team develops and reviews a service plan, and behavior contracts are developed to address specific issues.

Nontraditional components, such as caseloads of 10 or less, weekly meetings of the counselor with youth and foster parents, a Foster Parent Support Group, and 24-hour emergency consultation, are integral to the program. These foster parents are paid substantially higher than traditional foster parents, including an additional Difficulty-of-Care fee.

Group sessions address issues as diverse as nutrition, fire safety, and AIDS prevention. Medical, dental, mental health, educational and other services are also provided from within the community as arranged by the program counselor and/or YRS case manager. Some youths also receive services from DCPS.

An important service is the assessment and development of independent living skills. Youths are encouraged to identify their specific problems and solutions for them. Helping youths maintain a degree of independence while still meeting unfulfilled dependency needs is a major task. Once a youth decides to adopt a "New Way of Life," team members serve as catalysts, supporting and guiding attempts to change.

"So What" is the program's nickname, derived from the three-step approach used to deal with the "poor-me" syndrome, often used by youngsters to excuse negative behaviors. First and foremost, honest concern and empathy are expressed. Then wishes for an ideal family and grief over loss of the ideal are shared. The bottom line response is "so what?" Not, "so what, your problems don't matter." Rather, "so...what are you going to do...be a loser and prove that your parents were correct to discard you...or...be a winner and succeed? ...that's the only chance you have to be somebody." Individual and group meetings are used to help answer the "so whats."

Teen Pregnancy and Parenting

One frequent concern addressed in the program is pregnancy. Serving a teen mother and infant intensifies the challenges of the foster parent role. Teaching the teen parent rather than providing direct infant care requires incredible patience.

The teens are highly motivated but often lack parenting skills. The narcissistic characteristic of normal adolescence is contrary to the unselfishness required for parenting. CHILD, Inc. parenting classes and home visitors, visiting nurses, day care and child development

programs are all effectively used resources. Birth control and responsible sexuality are also stressed to all program youths.

There have been no known abortions, one miscarriage, and one very premature infant who died soon after birth. Two mothers chose adoption after many months of successful but stressful parenting. One of these mothers placed a second baby after discharge, with continued support from the former foster mother.

Eligibility requirements have limited financial support for infants, requiring creative use of multiple resources. In spite of many hardships, the six infants served thus far have received excellent care. Even after discharge some visits have occurred, and those children continue to thrive. It's very rewarding to facilitate improvement in what is often a multi-generational pattern of poor parent/child relationships.

Profile

As of October 15, 1989, 32 males and 24 females have been placed. Of the 42 youths discharged, seven have re-entered the program. Age at placement has ranged from 10 to 19 years, with the average being 15 years and 6 months. Length of placement, not limited by the contract, has averaged about 4-1/2 months, ranging from 2 hours to one year and 9-1/2 months.

Although they are at least of average ability, most program youths have had serious school problems, learning disabilities, or vision or hearing deficits. Yet six program youths obtained their GED, two graduated from high school, and at least five have attended college.

Family dysfunction is sadly familiar to most program youths. Four youths were born into two-parent families which were still together at the time of placement. Many had an absent or unknown father, six had a deceased mother and six were adopted, two by a step-parent. At least 16 had a seriously troubled relationship with a parent's partner. Nearly every youth has reported some type of physical abuse and/or parental neglect. Many females also describe some form of sexual abuse, often resulting in a continuance of the victim role in other relationships.

A sense of parental rejection is one of the most pervasive problems shared by program youths. Anger and fear dominate their relationships and behaviors. Most common problematic youth behaviors include a negative, self-defeating attitude, ignoring household rules, and problems at school or work. The most frequent reason for premature discharge from the program is repeated serious curfew violations (AWOL).

Evaluation

In December, 1988, the CJC conducted a study of youth recidivism rates. The first 27 youth discharged from foster care were compared to a control group of 44 youths discharged from FS. The recidivism rates for the study groups were 61 percent for FS and 44 percent for foster care.

One half of the females in the FS sample had been rearrested compared to 37 percent of the females from foster care. Of the males studied, the re-arrest rate was 65 percent for FS and 54 percent for foster care.

Re-arrest was for felony charges in 55 percent of the FS group and 33 percent of the foster care youths. Many of the 67 percent of non-felony arrests of foster care youths were for technical charges such as violation of probation. This evaluation indicates that the foster care program has been relatively effective in reducing recidivism.

The Child Placing Agency License has been renewed yearly. Additional program oversight is conducted by DSCYF contract monitors.

Cost

It is difficult to compute the cost of incarceration, as many expenses are not labeled separately. In FY85, the annual cost per girl at WHK was over $33,000. In 1988, the annual cost at FS was over $47,000. In FY89, the annual budgeted cost per foster care placement was under $20,000.

Issues

Recruiting foster parents, especially for girls, is an ongoing concern. Foster parents are wary of some behaviors which can be coping devices for sexually abused females. They especially are concerned about unfounded accusations of sexual abuse; however, to date, only one such incident has occurred. Although an investigation found no impropriety, the experience was very stressful for all concerned.

Word of mouth has been the most effective means of recruiting foster parents. Future plans include targeted approaches to select groups for specific youths. For example, carefully screened recovering addicts might best reach addicted youths.

Current trends indicate that the need for services to young women will continue to increase. Ongoing adjustments to the program will be needed to meet changing problems. Recent referrals have included drug dealers as well as users, several helping to support a parent's habit. Expanded treatment resources are needed,

as well as transitional programs. Also vital to improved service is greater coordination among the several concerned public and private agencies. One hope for expansion of CHILD, Inc. is to develop an office serving the less populous down-state region. Foster care is being used on a limited basis as an alternative to traditional detention. This effort will be evaluated and possibly expanded.

Credits

"Fostering a New Way of Life" is a challenging, taxing, and ultimately rewarding effort. Any degree of success demands the cooperation of a highly-motivated youth, a supportive birth family, a network of foster parents, extended family, friends and community, program staff, DSCYF staff, and other resources. Other agencies and individuals contribute in many ways. The CJC, in particular, has provided initial and ongoing support. DSCYF administrators, members of the judicial system, the legislature and the media have contributed various types of assistance.

The entire CHILD, Inc. agency "family" also contributes invaluable encouragement, assistance, and resources. Foster care is a family program which demands great tolerance on the part of staff and their families. Being available to help troubled youth when they are ready to change is exhausting and exhilarating. Team members consider it a privilege to participate in "Fostering a New Way of Life."

COMMUNITY-BASED OUT-OF-HOME CARE: A MILWAUKEE MODEL

by Janet Friedman and James Sampson

Introduction

Typically, juvenile girls in Milwaukee were committed to Lincoln Hills School, Wisconsin's only state training school for females. Located in Merrill, 200 miles from Milwaukee, Lincoln Hills is in the northern woods of Wisconsin. Length of stay for females was longer than for males, even for less serious offenses. Factors such as distance from Milwaukee and client needs made effective and meaningful programming unrealistic, and, once committed, it was difficult to get the girls back to Milwaukee.

St. Charles Boys Home, now known as St. Charles Youth and Family Services, had a history of traditional residential care for court-ordered juvenile males. After having developed home-based programs and a continuum of care program for boys, the agency was searching for other ways to serve the community.

The Continuum of Care for Girls (COC-G) in Milwaukee was born of cooperative planning efforts of a private agency, a community-based juvenile justice advocacy group, and the public agency responsible for operating juvenile justice programs. During the spring of 1986, the Milwaukee Coalition for Juvenile Justice decided to create local community-based program for juvenile females.

After state and local lobbying by the Milwaukee Coalition for Juvenile Justice, the County Department of Social Services agreed to allocate $430,000 of its state subsidy to fund a community-based continuum of care program for girls. It was anticipated that girls committed to Lincoln Hills would be diverted to this program, offsetting the high cost of institutional care. St. Charles was selected to operate the new program, with the first clients accepted in February, 1987.

Program Description

The COC-G is a multi-phase community-based program serving 12- to 17-year-old females found delinquent or in need of protective services by the court. Typically, youth are court-ordered into the program for one year. Girls often have extensive histories of antisocial and aggressive behavior, and have experienced numerous out-of-

home placements, ranging from group care to secure institutional settings. Accordingly, the program's structure incorporates a community and client safety focus into its treatment principles.

The agency provides short-term, community-based and family-centered services while functioning as a diversion from correctional and traditional residential placements. COC-G's goal is to provide intensive corrective living and learning experiences through a continuum of less restrictive services, by using family and community resources and strengths. Depending on the amount of supervision, structure, and services a girl requires, she enters the program either as a residential care resident (most restrictive), a day treatment program participant, or an intensive in-home service participant (least restrictive), and moves to less restrictive settings as she progresses through the program.

The ***residential phase*** provides youths with a highly structured, accountable, and supportive environment. Youths live in the on-grounds facility and initially attend the on-grounds school. Most youths start in this phase because of the seriousness of their situation. This allows clients to stabilize behavior and overall functioning, preparing themselves to return to their homes and communities.

The stay in residential treatment averages five-and-a-half months. The treatment team and county representative determine the move to a less restrictive phase based on a girl's personal and social functioning skills, improvement in impulse control, successful participation in community programming, no new delinquencies, and stabilization in the family system.

Youths receiving ***day treatment services*** live at home but attend the on-grounds classroom. They participate in treatment groups and family and individual counseling. The quantity of time a client spends at the facility varies, and her specific time schedule is flexible depending on individual needs.

The ***intensive in-home service*** phase is designed for youths in their final phase of the treatment program. Through careful and continuous treatment planning, the decision to move to in-home services is made by the treatment team. To ensure consistency of staff involvement, delivery of services, and case coordination, the entire team remains involved with each girl during the in-home service phase.

Youths spend approximately four to six months in the intensive in-home phase. Services include a minimum of two individual and family counseling sessions per week during the first two months; a minimum of once a week sessions beginning the third month; 24-hour on-call crisis intervention; coordination of educational, vocational, and medical services; and linkages to recreation and support group activities.

Staffing Model—A Generalist Approach

Staff work with youths throughout the various phases of treatment. Using a generalist model of human service delivery, teachers, social workers and child care professionals assume the position of Youth Development Generalist. Each generalist provides services in his or her respective specialty area, direct care by staffing unit shifts, and assumes case management roles. This approach provides for efficient and effective use of staff expertise, increases direct service hours spent with families and youths, and facilitates a comprehensive relationship between staff, youths and their families.

Each team member is the case manager for an average of three clients. Case managers ensure smooth treatment delivery, coordinate case services, conduct individual counseling sessions, and perform liaison responsibilities for their clients. For those youths who are not in the residential phase, the case manager and family worker (assigned at intake) continue to provide direct service activities, while the remaining team members are involved as necessary.

Treatment Program

The generalist staffing model allows for a comprehensive treatment program. Program components include education, family work, human sexuality, recreation and leisure time, alcohol and other drug abuse, social skills training, vocational education, and individual counseling.

Educational services meet the various needs of the girls. They may attend the on-grounds school and follow an individualized educational plan. Plans focus on remedial/adult literacy, credit/basic academics, or vocational/basic instruction. A combination of classroom/community instruction is an optional plan. The girl spends a portion of her day in the classroom and the remainder in community-based vocational employment or the public school system. The third educational opportunity is a community placement, or full-time enrollment in a public, vocational, or alternative educational program.

A belief in the basic need of girls and families to continue in their relationships and establish permanency in their homes and communities underlies the ***family work*** component. It includes working with the families and girls in the areas of parenting skills, communication, discipline alternatives, as well as economic, medical, legal, educational, employment, and recreational activities. The family work component uses weekly family sessions, parent support groups, youth support groups, and includes advocacy activities and linking

families to community services. The ultimate aim of family work is to facilitate change that will be sustained after program services expire.

The aim of the ***human sexuality*** component is to provide youths with a broader knowledge base and increased awareness. Through individual, group, and family sessions, the areas of human growth and development, anatomy, risks of early pregnancy, contraception, nutrition, relationships and intimacy, self esteem, responsible decision-making, and teen parenting are addressed. To meet the needs of teen mothers, great effort is put into maintaining frequent contact between mothers and their children. Mothers in the residential phase have regularly scheduled visits with their children, particularly making use of weekend hours.

Recreation and leisure time programming is designed to develop special interest areas and positive leisure time skills which girls can incorporate into their lives. These activities enhance cooperation skills, build self esteem, and develop positive personal and social functioning.

Alcohol and drug abuse programming educates girls, heightening their awareness and allowing them to make informed choices. Programming also addresses how alcohol and other drug abuse issues affect family members. Based on the assessment, referral material, and social histories, individual and group plans are implemented. Girls requiring supportive services are connected to community support groups and other chemical dependency services for continued care in their home communities.

Through formal ***social skills training***, girls learn and practice appropriate social and personal functioning skills. Weekly group work focuses on negotiating skills, compromising, decision-making, accepting positive and negative feedback, and problem-solving.

The ***vocational education*** component of the program teaches girls necessary skills and provides resources for finding a job. Programming includes assessment, education, training, and the development of a network to private industry, community, and government-subsidized work programs.

Weekly ***individual counseling*** sessions as well as less formal interactions occur between the client and her case manager. This individual attention is important for positive relationship-building skills and developing a girl's sense of trust. Additionally, girls work on understanding functional versus dysfunctional behavior.

Results

The generalist staffing model has proven successful in providing continuity of service, a holistic awareness of clients, and increased

client contact. The program has maximized staff resources and availability by having family workers work weekends and evenings, unit workers provide in-home services, and all staff work shifts on the unit.

The number of runaways have decreased significantly since the implementation of new procedures to handle high-risk youth. These include 24-hour supervision, regularly calling and visiting parents' homes, and immediately returning runaway girls to the program when located.

The rate of new delinquencies has been minimal. Of the approximately 100 clients placed thus far, only 10% have been involved in new delinquencies. Over 50% of youths' time in the program has been in one of the home-based phases. Approximately 75% of the girls were discharged to their homes or to a relative.

Girls in the program face extreme deficits in educational and social skills functioning. The structure of the on-grounds education program has been successful in enhancing cognitive and academic skills. Average academic gains of 2.7 months per month of instruction in reading and 2.5 months per month of instruction in math indicate the value of individualized and small group remedial instruction, individual education plans, and a favorable student/teacher ratio.

In addition to the positive client effects, COC-G has proven to be a fiscally wise alternative. Traditional out-of-home care and secure care is between $3,000 and $3,700 per month, while COC-G costs approximately $2,300 per month.

Discussion

The COC-G has forged new territory for juvenile justice public policy in Wisconsin. The program has received the attention of community leaders, heightened awareness of the need for community-based programs for juvenile females, and provided a meaningful resource for girls and their families. Unfortunately, placements have continued to rise in expensive long-term secure facilities. In 1987, a traditional eight-bed residential treatment facility opened in Milwaukee, and enrollment at Lincoln Hills School has risen. This is a problem that must be addressed more carefully and systematically in the future.

The COC-G program is one of the most innovative undertakings for juvenile females in recent Milwaukee history. With the changing face of our urban areas, including Milwaukee, it seems logical that COC-G could be effectively replicated in other cities across the country.

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