

Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan Full Report.

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The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan

Report

Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

March 1996

Foreword

Every day, crime shatters the peace in our Nation's neighborhoods. Violent crime and the fear it engenders cripple our society, threaten personal freedom, and fray the ties that are essential for healthy communities. No corner of America is safe from increasing levels of criminal violence, including violence committed by and against juveniles. Parents are afraid to let their children walk to school alone. Children hesitate to play in neighborhood playgrounds. The elderly lock themselves in their homes, and innocent Americans of all ages find their lives changed by the fear of crime.

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's National Juvenile Justice Action Plan (Action Plan) presents innovative and effective strategies designed to reduce violence and victimization. Through these efforts, communities and citizens are working to bring about positive change. They are establishing neighborhood watches and citizen patrols and working with law enforcement and other agencies to close down drug houses. They are cleaning up playgrounds and parks and creating drug- and weapon-free school zones. They are forming community planning teams to identify risk factors for delinquency, assess resources and needs, and provide programs designed to prevent juvenile involvement in delinquency and crime. They are creating opportunities for youth to take part in community-building activities. In concert with community oriented policing and strict accountability for offenders, these local prevention efforts are our Nation's most effective long-term weapons against crime and violence.

Although the public is deeply concerned about juvenile violence and victimization, many Americans do not know how they can help. Because the effects of juvenile violence are felt by entire communities, the search for solutions must be a communitywide effort, and every citizen needs to be involved.

The Action Plan describes how communities can generate solutions and how individuals and groups can prevent or reduce violence in their own block, public housing unit, or neighborhood. Cooperative partnerships among justice, health, child welfare, education, and social service systems can lay the foundation for measurable successes. Working together, individuals, groups, and communities can make real and sustained changes. The Action Plan also provides important information about Federal training, technical assistance, grants, research, evaluation, and other resources that support these efforts.

The Coordinating Council recognizes that much work needs to be done. However, by continuing to build partnerships throughout our government and communities, we can promote early intervention and prevention of youth violence. The solutions are within reach. The power to change America is within ourselves. Together, we can redeem the promise that every young life holds.

Attorney General Janet Reno
Chair
Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Acknowledgments

The problem of violent crime committed by and against juveniles is a national crisis. The work of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in developing the Action Plan represents an extraordinary accomplishment. The Action Plan frames the fight against juvenile violence through eight objectives that can be supported by activity at the Federal, State, local, community, and individual levels--and bases its recommended actions on research and program evaluations that give us reason to believe that we can be successful. The Action Plan also provides an annotated bibliography and technical assistance resources that can assist in ensuring that success.

While all of the members of the Coordinating Council participated in the development of the Action Plan, a Coordinating Council Working Group that includes the practitioner members and staff from both the member and other participating Federal agencies helped make this a document truly reflective of the needs of the field. The individuals and groups spent countless hours reviewing, refining, and finalizing the Action Plan. I thank them for their significant contribution. Special thanks are due to the Department of Justice's youth violence working group and to the bureaus of the

Office of Justice Programs.

There are several members of the staff of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) without whom this Action Plan could not have been produced. Gina E. Wood, Director of Concentration of Federal Efforts, guided this project with patience and vision to its conclusion. OJJDP Deputy Administrator John J. Wilson helped refine the document into its present clear statement. Sarah Ingersoll, Special Assistant to the OJJDP Administrator, served as the Action Plan's primary author. OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Resource Center provided invaluable support in developing the Action Plan.

The Action Plan was designed to provide a framework and strategy for action to address the problem of juvenile violence facing communities, their youth, and the juvenile justice system. I believe it has accomplished this goal. I look forward to implementing the action steps and seeing the emergence of a stronger juvenile justice system and a safer America.

Shay Bilchik
Vice Chair
Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Table of Contents

Foreword

Acknowledgments

Introduction

Objectives

1. Provide Immediate Intervention and Appropriate Sanctions and Treatment for Delinquent Juveniles
2. Prosecute Certain Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders in Criminal Court
3. Reduce Youth Involvement With Guns, Drugs, and Gangs
4. Provide Opportunities for Children and Youth
5. Break the Cycle of Violence by Addressing Youth Victimization, Abuse, and Neglect
6. Strengthen and Mobilize Communities
7. Support the Development of Innovative Approaches to Research and Evaluation

8. Implement an Aggressive Public Outreach Campaign on Effective Strategies To Combat Juvenile Violence

Conclusion

Introduction

An Urgent Call to Action

In the 1990's, pervasive problems with juvenile violence threaten the safety and security of communities across the country, and projections for the future are cause for nationwide alarm. Demographic experts predict that juvenile arrests for violent crimes will more than double by the year 2010,¹ given population growth projections and trends in juvenile arrests over the past decade. It is clear that our children--and the juvenile justice system--need immediate help.

There is, however, reason for hope. Projections and trends are not destiny. We can successfully intervene to reverse these trends based on identified positive and negative characteristics--protective and risk factors--that are present or lacking in communities, families, schools, peer groups, and individuals. These factors either equip a child with the capacity to become a healthy, productive individual or expose that child to potential involvement in crime and violence. Of equal importance, communities are learning that they can make dramatic changes in delinquency levels by taking steps that successfully reduce the risk factors and strengthen the protective factors in children's lives.

In partnership with State and Federal agencies, communities are beginning to mobilize to combat juvenile delinquency through prevention, early intervention, and community-building strategies that address local needs. They are reducing serious and violent juvenile delinquency by using multi-agency, coordinated approaches and innovative programs and services in the juvenile justice system.

In support of these efforts, the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention offers The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan. This plan for local, State, and Federal action is an eight-point statement of objectives and strategies that are designed to strengthen State and local initiatives to reduce juvenile violence and to increase the capacity of the juvenile justice system to respond to, and prevent, delinquency.

A Cooperative Effort

To combat juvenile violence, all citizens must recognize that they can make a difference in their communities, both through individual action and by joining with others in comprehensive, collaborative initiatives. While the Action Plan recognizes the critical Federal

role of providing support and a national perspective, State, local, and individual commitment is the key ingredient if community efforts are to succeed. All individuals can play crucial roles in protecting and nurturing children in their communities.

Efforts to reduce juvenile violence can be as basic as parents setting clear expectations and standards for children's behavior or as far-reaching as a local government forming an anti-violence task force or implementing community oriented policing. Another effective strategy involves setting up local resource centers that offer positive educational, social, and cultural activities to provide youth with alternatives to crime. Many national organizations are committed to supporting the implementation of community-based initiatives to reduce juvenile violence and can provide information about local projects across the country. The Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders² and its companion piece, the Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders,³ published in 1995 by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), are valuable resources for community planning and action. The Action Plan supports implementation of the Comprehensive Strategy and the Guide's framework for establishing a continuum of programs and services designed to reverse the increasing trends of juvenile violence and delinquency.

To support implementation of State, local, and community activities, the Action Plan provides:

- o A statement of resources that Federal member agencies of the Coordinating Council will commit to the eight priority objectives, including training and technical assistance, financial assistance, research, legislation, evaluation, and information dissemination.
- o A summary of research that supports the plan's objectives, which State and local communities can use to guide their policy, planning, and communication activities.
- o Model program examples that can be adapted to meet local needs.
- o A list of technical assistance providers, with addresses and phone numbers, and an annotated bibliography.

Objectives of The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan

The Action Plan is a blueprint for community action designed to address and reduce the impact of juvenile violence and delinquency. It is founded on the premise that no single individual, organization, or agency can address the causes of juvenile violence in isolation. Working together, however, State and local leaders, representatives of public and private groups, and individual community members--including youth--can base their actions on what works and direct their energies to meeting the eight Action Plan objectives. The following objectives, all of equal importance, can

be achieved by communities that address public safety concerns while making a commitment to services for children:

Objective 1. Provide immediate intervention and appropriate sanctions and treatment for delinquent juveniles.

Objective 2. Prosecute certain serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders in criminal court.⁴

Objective 3. Reduce youth involvement with guns, drugs, and gangs.

Objective 4. Provide opportunities for children and youth.

Objective 5. Break the cycle of violence by addressing youth victimization, abuse, and neglect.

Objective 6. Strengthen and mobilize communities.

Objective 7. Support the development of innovative approaches to research and evaluation.

Objective 8. Implement an aggressive public outreach campaign on effective strategies to combat juvenile violence.

These objectives are supported by research underscoring their importance for strengthening the juvenile justice system and addressing the crisis of youth violence. Each section of the Action Plan addresses one of these objectives and includes a set of actions based on research, evaluated programs, and successful strategies.

A Safer Tomorrow Through Action Today

The sobering projections about the future of juvenile violence underscore the need for strong, immediate, well-planned, and decisive action to intervene early with efforts to prevent younger children from following in the self-destructive footsteps of many of their older brothers and sisters. At the same time, it is imperative that we effectively respond to that small percentage of juvenile offenders who repeatedly victimize the community and who account for the vast majority of serious and violent delinquent acts. We must take immediate steps to improve the capacity of the juvenile justice system to respond to juvenile offenders. If we fail to respond to their needs, the potential costs to society in human lives and productivity will be an onerous and tragic burden to future generations.

In taking action, States and localities have a variety of choices that are both critical and difficult. Funds must be allocated for juvenile justice program options, ranging from secure facilities to day treatment, probation placements, and improvements in research and data collection and dissemination of information about juvenile violence issues. Also, funding must be made available for a broad spectrum of effective youth development and delinquency prevention

programs, including afterschool programs, childcare for low-income working families, community policing efforts, summer recreation and job opportunities for low-income youth, and Head Start.

In addition to funding programs, there are many actions that States and local communities can take that build on their commitment to the safety, health, development, and well-being of children. By starting new initiatives, implementing the objectives, accessing the resources, and engaging in the activities of the Action Plan, leaders at the Federal, State, and local levels working together can make a difference.

Endnotes

1. Snyder, H., M. Sickmund, and E. Poe-Yamagata. 1996 (February). Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1996 Update on Violence. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.
2. Wilson, J.J., and J.C. Howell. 1993. Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders. Program Summary. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.
3. Howell, J.C., ed. 1995 (May). Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.
4. The classification of juveniles as serious, violent, and chronic offenders is an important legal distinction. In some jurisdictions, identification of a juvenile as a serious, violent, and chronic offender determines how the juvenile is processed in the system--for example, whether a juvenile is subject to established minimum periods of secure confinement or subject to criminal court jurisdiction. Additionally, the consequences of being placed in one of these categories are critical to the allocation of scarce treatment resources. Generally, such determinations are made at the State and local levels.

Definitions used in different research and statistics-gathering efforts often vary. OJJDP has developed the following definitions of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders for purposes of general guidance.

- o Juvenile refers to a person under the age established by a State to determine when an individual is no longer subject to original juvenile court jurisdiction for (any) criminal misconduct. While this upper age is 17 in a majority of jurisdictions, it ranges from 15 to 17 years of age.

- o Serious juvenile offenders are those adjudicated delinquent for

committing any felony offense, including larceny or theft, burglary or breaking and entering, extortion, arson, and drug trafficking or other controlled dangerous substance violation.

o Violent juvenile offenders are those serious juvenile offenders adjudicated delinquent for one of the following felony offenses-- homicide, rape or other felony sex offense, mayhem, kidnaping, robbery, or aggravated assault.

o Chronic juvenile offenders are juveniles adjudicated delinquent for committing three or more delinquent offenses.

These definitions include juveniles convicted in criminal court for particular offense types.

1. Provide Immediate Intervention and Appropriate Sanctions and Treatment for Delinquent Juveniles

Overview

The increased volume and changing composition of juvenile delinquency caseloads have overloaded the juvenile justice system. Slightly more than half of the juveniles in detention and 62 percent of juveniles in long-term placements in the United States in 1989 were housed in facilities where juvenile populations exceeded design capacities.¹

To accurately assess the juvenile justice system and its role in delinquency prevention, it is imperative to take into account the nature and volume of cases coming before the juvenile court. In 1992, an estimated 1 million juveniles in the United States were charged with approximately 1.5 million delinquent acts, a 26-percent increase from the volume of cases reported in 1987. In addition, a disproportionate increase occurred in violent offenses (56 percent) and in weapons offenses (86 percent) among young people.²

Statistics also indicate that violent juvenile female offending is rising and that the increase is greater proportionately than that of males. Between 1988 and 1992, the number of females under age 18 arrested for all violent crimes increased 63 percent, whereas the number of males under age 18 arrested for violent crimes increased 45 percent.

Most arrested juveniles, whether male or female, have not committed serious or violent crimes, but rather property crimes or status offenses. Even violent juvenile offenders rarely commit crimes exclusively against persons. They are likely to also engage in significant property or drug-related crimes.

Juveniles are responsible for a far greater share of all property crime arrests (33 percent) than either violent crime arrests (18

percent) or drug arrests (8 percent).³ In 1992, the highest percentage of juvenile arrests, compared to adults, was for arson (49 percent), vandalism (45 percent), and motor vehicle theft (44 percent). The juvenile property crime arrest rate in 1992 was five times greater than the juvenile violent crime arrest rate.⁴

In addition to handling increased delinquency cases, juvenile courts have jurisdiction over status offenses--acts that would not be considered crimes if committed by an adult. Compared to delinquency cases, the number of status offense cases is modest. In 1992, an estimated 97,000 status offense cases were formally adjudicated, an increase of 18 percent from 1988, with the largest increases in run-away (31 percent) and truancy (21 percent) cases.

The juvenile justice system must be equipped to address the full range of juvenile problem behaviors. Often the presenting offense is merely the "tip of the iceberg," and good case management and needs assessments can help to identify and address individual service needs.

However, the juvenile justice system is often so overwhelmed that juvenile offenders receive no meaningful interventions or consequences, even for relatively serious offenses. This neglect serves neither rehabilitation nor accountability goals, and young people need to know that if they break the law, they will be held accountable. Clearly, a revitalized juvenile justice system that ensures immediate and appropriate accountability and sanctions is a key to reversing trends in juvenile violence.

This section of the Action Plan discusses the causes of increased juvenile violence and delinquency and sets forth the "balanced and restorative justice" model as a philosophical underpinning for the juvenile justice system's handling of juvenile offenders. The keys to this model are individual assessment and case management, a system of graduated sanctions, and an emphasis on aftercare services. This section also supports the rights of victims, including the right to receive information about juvenile offenders. It also provides examples of programs that support the balanced and restorative justice model, and a summary of issues surrounding disproportionate minority confinement and gender-specific services.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

A separate juvenile justice system, which originated in the United States in 1899 and quickly spread to all the States and Territories, has not been able to respond effectively to the increases in juvenile violence this society currently faces. In fairness, however, it has never been given sufficient resources to operate effectively to meet this challenge.

At the turn of the century, the juvenile justice system operated in a world very different from the one we live in today. Then, more Americans lived in rural areas and small communities, juvenile

offenses were generally less severe, and victims would be more likely to know the consequences for individuals who had harmed them. Today, the juvenile justice system is unable to devote sufficient resources to dealing with status offenders and minor delinquency because of the growing number of serious and violent juvenile offenders. These offenders require a greatly enhanced response, and greater coordination among the system's components. Use of the balanced and restorative justice model of accountability, multidisciplinary assessment teams, and a system of graduated sanctions can help to provide the response and coordination that are required to effectively address juvenile violence and delinquency.

Causes of Delinquency

What causes juvenile delinquency? Before formulating proposed remedies to a juvenile justice system in need of support, the causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency need to be examined to ensure that those factors are targeted.

There is no single cause of delinquency and violence. Delinquents, especially chronic delinquents, exhibit a variety of social and psychological deficits in their backgrounds. These deficits, often referred to as risk factors, stem from breakdowns in five influential domains in juveniles' lives: neighborhood, family, school, peers, and individual characteristics.⁵

Risk factors, such as community disorganization, availability of drugs and firearms, and persistent poverty, make children more prone to involvement in delinquent behavior than if those factors were not present. Additionally, when a child's family life is filled with violence, problem behaviors, poor parental monitoring, and inconsistent disciplinary practices or maltreatment, a child's risk of delinquency increases. Youth exhibiting combinations of these deficits in multiple domains of their lives are at highest risk of delinquency.

In sum, delinquency and violence have multiple causes, which often occur simultaneously, exacerbating one another and making them more difficult to ameliorate. Identifying those factors most prevalent in a community is the essential first step toward developing effective programs to prevent or control delinquent behavior.

The second step requires identifying programs that help youth, families, and communities protect themselves from these risks. (See Objective 4 for a discussion of protective factors.) Recent research sheds considerable light on the issue of "what works" in the prevention and control of delinquency.⁶ Based on thorough analyses of the research literature and programs identified in a nationwide search, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders (Guide), provides examples of effective prevention programs and concludes:

The most effective programs are those that address key areas of risk in the youth's life, those that seek to strengthen the personal and institutional factors that contribute to healthy adolescent development, those that provide adequate support and supervision, and those that offer youth a long-term stake in the community.⁷

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

Balanced and Restorative Justice

A strong juvenile justice system must build upon the research and evaluations of promising and effective programs, and must work to reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors to successfully address serious, violent, and chronic delinquency. The establishment of such a system can be guided by the conceptual framework of balanced and restorative justice.

The balanced and restorative justice approach to juvenile justice consists of three related objectives: community protection, accountability, and competency development.

Accountability refers to the requirement that juvenile offenders receive sanctions for their offenses and that they make amends to the victim and the community for harm caused. Competency development suggests that youth who enter the juvenile justice system should exit more capable of being productive, responsible citizens. Community protection requires that the juvenile justice system ensure public safety.

Operating in the "best interest of the child," the American juvenile justice system has traditionally focused on the individual juvenile offender's extenuating circumstances and treatment needs. Delinquency case reviews are generally conducted behind closed doors to safeguard the confidentiality of children, distancing or excluding victims from the proceedings. In contrast to the adversarial criminal court, the juvenile court has not relied as much on victims' impact statements in sentencing. Further, it has often been assumed that victims would prefer not to meet their offenders face to face.

In recent years, the juvenile justice system has embraced community service and restitution programs, which emphasize the need to hold juveniles accountable for their actions through repayment of their debts to society and their victims. The balanced and restorative justice approach calls for active participation by the juvenile justice system, the juvenile offender, and community organizations.

Many Native American and Alaska Native communities rely on dual systems of justice, one based on a common law model of justice and another based on indigenous concepts of law and justice. In handling juvenile offenders, these indigenous justice systems have common inherent features based on restorative, reparative, and

distributive justice principles. Victim and offender, surrounded by their extended family members, confront each other to resolve conflict in an environment that is emotionally and physically safe. This holistic approach promotes problemsolving in a non-adversarial environment and addresses the healing needs of the victim, the offender, and their families.

Although forcing victims to meet with juvenile offenders is inappropriate, many victims agree to participate in mediation programs. The mediation process personalizes the crime and forces offenders to face the harm they have caused.

Responding to Victims' Concerns

As a civilized society, we need to feel safe in the company of people who walk our streets and attend our schools. Even if we improve the juvenile justice system so that it is capable of providing treatment, skills training, and rehabilitation, mechanisms must be in place to provide information about juvenile offenders and support the rights of victims. Simultaneously, however, we need to ensure that reasonable confidentiality protections are afforded to juvenile offenders.

The Action Plan endorses the presence of victims in the courtroom, particularly in felony cases. Victims of juvenile offenders should be given the opportunity to address the court and be notified of the disposition, parole status, and release of perpetrators. It also supports programs that help young offenders understand the long-term effects of their behavior and learn how to control anger and resolve conflicts without violence. It is in agreement with a number of the recommendations of the American Correctional Association's Victims Committee relating to juvenile offenders and will support Federal activity that assists in their implementation.⁸ These recommendations include:

- o The rights of victims of juvenile offenders should be recognized, including notification; restitution; return of property; victim impact statements; protection from intimidation, harassment, and harm; and information and referral services.
- o Victims must have access to information about their offenders' status.
- o Any treatment and/or education programs for juvenile offenders must include a victim awareness component.
- o Juvenile justice, victim service, and allied professionals should collaborate on efforts to incorporate the balanced approach of restorative justice in their agency and system philosophies, policies, programs, and services.
- o Juvenile justice personnel--including administrators, managers, and line staff--need victim sensitivity training and must adopt protocols, programs, and policies to respond to victimization

incidents.

- o Crime data and statistics must be categorized and analyzed according to the age of the offender, the classification of the crime, and the type of victim.
- o Existing victim service and awareness programs within the juvenile justice system must be evaluated, with the data utilized to enhance, expand, and replicate effective programs nationwide.
- o Victim services personnel need training in the juvenile justice system, and juvenile justice practitioners need victim services training.

Texas has provided victim access to juvenile court hearings. Specifically, the court may not prohibit a victim from attending a hearing unless the victim is to testify in the hearing and the court determines that the victim's testimony would be materially affected if the victim hears other testimony at trial.

The California Youth Authority's Impact of Crime on Victims classes provide a model approach to both rehabilitating offenders and involving victims in the juvenile justice system. As part of the recovery process, victims tell offenders about the impact of crime on their own lives, their families, and the communities in which they live. This approach has been adopted by a number of corrections, probation, and parole agencies for use with both adult and juvenile offenders.

Risk Classification, Needs Assessment, and Case Management

Risk classification and needs assessment. Risk classification and needs assessment are central to an effective juvenile justice system and critical to ensuring the three goals of the balanced and restorative justice model. A National Council on Crime and Delinquency study of 14 States found that an average of 31 percent of incarcerated juveniles could be safely placed in less secure community-based settings.⁹ This finding should have a significant impact on how States approach the problem of facility overcrowding. Because estimates of the annual cost of incarcerating a youth fall between \$34,000 and \$64,000,¹⁰ reducing unnecessary training school placements would reduce overcrowding and produce considerable savings that could be used to develop and implement effective graduated sanctions programs designed to address the needs of each juvenile requiring intervention services.

Communities developing a graduated sanctions system need tools to determine which and how many youth should be placed at each security level and in an appropriate program in the continuum of services. An effective juvenile justice system uses risk classification instruments and needs assessments to appropriately place juvenile offenders.¹¹ The placement is determined by clearly designed, objective criteria that focus on the seriousness of the delinquent act, the potential risk for reoffending based on the

presence of risk factors, and the risk to public safety. Objective risk classification can also be useful in addressing bias in placement decisionmaking, thereby reducing disproportionate incarceration rates for minority populations.

Needs assessments help to ensure selection of the most appropriate program within the determined security level. The needs assessment may identify chronic or multiple needs that warrant placement in specialized programs (for example, programs for sex offenders or violent offenders, or a rigorous wilderness program). Needs assessments can also be used in case planning to identify appropriate youth service needs.

Case management and assessment teams. An effective case management system is also crucial to a strong juvenile justice system. Continuous case management results in greater service coordination and accountability. The case manager follows each youth from the point of intake through initial needs assessment, probation, incarceration, and aftercare to monitor progress and adjust the treatment plan appropriately. Whenever possible, it is best for the youth to be in community-based programs, allowing caseworkers to develop community support networks and to involve the family.

The assessment team approach is an innovative method for integrating the risk classification and needs assessment process of the juvenile justice system, the goal of appropriate treatment, and the need to maximize the use of scarce system resources. The assessment team can serve as a central information or data gathering point within a jurisdiction for all agencies with juvenile service responsibility.

Effective rehabilitation requires maximum use of a broad range of community resources, including health and mental health care, social services, recreation, education, and employment and training services. Each member of an assessment team should be knowledgeable about individual differences that can stem from race, gender, culture, and ethnicity. Central to the assessment team approach is its ability to refer each juvenile, even the most serious offender, to programs and services that address identified needs and integrate the family into the treatment plan. This approach is designed to prevent a youth's further involvement in the system by inducing law-abiding behavior as early as possible through a combination of appropriate intervention and treatments.

Family Assessment Service Teams (FAST), a part of the Norfolk (VA) Police Assisted Community Enforcement effort, use an interagency approach to coordinate resources and improve the effectiveness of juvenile services, such as early intervention and prevention and family counseling and followup.

Statistics show that crime has dropped markedly in neighborhoods targeted by the FAST program. According to one 1993 report, crime decreased by 29 percent in the target areas, police reported fewer service calls, and there was a significant drop in street drug

trafficking and gunfire. Participants also believed the program had reduced fear of crime in target neighborhoods.¹²

If implemented properly, the assessment team concept has the potential to facilitate the delivery of the right "front end" services to the right juveniles in a timely manner. If team approaches are institutionalized and centrally located in assessment centers that either provide comprehensive services or make referrals to community services, the juvenile justice system would have an important tool to achieve the goal of effective and coordinated service delivery.

Graduated Sanctions

For interventions to be maximally effective, they should be swift, certain, and consistent. An effective system of graduated sanctions must also incorporate increasingly severe sanctions when a juvenile fails to respond to initial interventions. As the severity of sanctions increases, so must the intensity of treatment. At each level, offenders must be aware that continued violations of the law will subject them to more severe sanctions and may ultimately result in secure confinement, ranging from a community-based intensive treatment facility to a training school, camp, or ranch.

Effective and fair graduated sanctions that hold juvenile offenders accountable can discourage them from continued involvement in delinquency and crime. In addition, an OJJDP-funded study of existing graduated sanctions systems found that they appear to be more effective and less costly than juvenile incarceration.¹³ The Guide includes descriptions of promising and proven programs at each graduated sanctions level. The graduated sanctions system set out in the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders includes the following components:

- o Immediate intervention for first-time delinquent offenders (misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies) and many nonviolent repeat offenders.
- o Intermediate sanctions for many first-time serious and repeat offenders and some violent offenders.
- o Secure corrections for many serious, violent, and chronic offenders.

Immediate intervention. First-time delinquent offenders (charged with misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies) and many nonviolent repeat offenders should be placed in programs designed to reduce the probability of their committing more serious or violent offenses. Nonresidential community-based programs, including prevention programs serving at-risk youth, may be appropriate for many of these offenders. These programs are small and open, located in or near juveniles' homes, and involve participants in program planning, operation, and evaluation. They also foster family participation in treatment and facilitate the establishment of law-

abiding patterns of behavior.

Intermediate sanctions. Offenders for whom immediate intervention is inappropriate (first-time serious or violent offenders) or offenders who reoffend despite immediate intervention (for example, repeat property offenders or drug-involved juveniles) are appropriate subjects for intermediate sanctions. These sanctions may be residential or nonresidential. For many serious and violent offenders, placement in an intensive supervision or other intensive service program may be appropriate.

In a South Carolina study of 39,250 males born between 1964 and 1971 who had official delinquency records, researchers identified offenders who had been incarcerated or placed on probation as adults. They found that those who had been institutionalized as juveniles were substantially more likely to reoffend as adults. The authors concluded that their findings "effectively underscore the need to bolster programming for early effective intervention in order to prevent the recurrence of delinquent behavior."¹⁴

OJJDP's Intensive Supervision of Probationers (ISP) Program Model is a highly structured, continuously monitored, and individualized plan that consists of five phases with decreasing levels of restrictiveness:

- o Short-term placement in community confinement.
- o Day treatment.
- o Outreach and tracking.
- o Routine supervision.
- o Discharge and followup.

The Bethesda Day Treatment Center Program in West Milton, PA, is a model day treatment program.¹⁵ Initiated with OJJDP formula grant funds, the program is currently funded through county service contracts. The Center's services include intensive supervision, counseling, and coordination of a range of services necessary for youth to develop skills to function effectively in the community. Client-focused services include intake, casework, service and treatment planning, individual counseling, intensive supervision, and study skills. Group-focused services include group counseling, life and job skills training, cultural enrichment, and physical education. Family-focused services include counseling, home visits, parent counseling, and intervention.

The program provides delinquent and dependent youth, ages 10 to 17, with as many as 55 hours of services a week without removing them from their homes. A unique program feature requires work experience for all working-age clients, with 75 percent of their paychecks directed toward payment of fines, court costs, and restitution. This intensive treatment program has shown promising results. A

preliminary study revealed recidivism rates far lower than State and national norms.

Secure corrections. The criminal behavior of many serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders requires the imposition of secure sanctions to hold them accountable and to provide a structured treatment environment. Large, congregate-care juvenile facilities, such as training schools, camps, and ranches, however, have not been effective at rehabilitating juvenile offenders. The continued use of large facilities will remain a necessary alternative for juveniles who require enhanced security to protect the public. Even so, small, community-based facilities providing intensive treatment services and special programming in a secure environment offer the best hope for successful treatment of juveniles who require a structured setting.¹⁶ These services include individual and group counseling, educational and training programs, medical services, and intensive staff supervision. Proximity to the community permits direct, regular family involvement with the treatment process, independent living, and a phased reentry into the community.

Since closing its traditional training schools in 1972, Massachusetts has relied on a sophisticated network of small, secure programs for violent youth coupled with a broad range of highly structured, community-based programs for most committed youth. Secure facilities are reserved for the most serious offenders. A study of the State's community-based juvenile system revealed recidivism rates equal to or lower than those of other jurisdictions. In addition, Massachusetts has saved an estimated \$11 million a year by relying on community-based sanctions.¹⁷

Juveniles whose presence in the community would constitute a threat to public safety or juveniles who have failed to respond to community-based corrections may require extended correctional placement in training schools, camps, ranches, or other secure facilities that are not community based. These facilities should be accredited by the American Correctional Association and offer comprehensive treatment programs that focus on reversing criminal behavior patterns through education, health, skills development, victim impact awareness, teen parenting, and vocational or employment training and experience. In addition, some serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders who have been waived or transferred to and convicted in the criminal justice system prior to the age at which they are no longer subject to the original (or extended) jurisdiction of the criminal justice system may be appropriate candidates for placement in juvenile correctional facilities as part of their criminal court sentence, where State statute permits.

The Florida Environmental Institute (FEI), also known as "The Last Chance Ranch," targets the State's most serious and violent juvenile offenders. Located in a remote area of the Florida Everglades, FEI offers both a residential phase and a nonresidential aftercare program. Two-thirds of its referrals are adjudicated delinquents from the criminal justice system. Yet,

because of its strong emphasis on education, hard work, social bonding, and aftercare, recidivism rates of juveniles who have gone through the program are substantially less than rates of traditional training school programs: 30 percent instead of 50-70 percent.¹⁸

Intensive aftercare. Standard parole practices, particularly those that focus on social control, have not been effective in normalizing high-risk juvenile parolees' behavior over the long term. If youth successfully complete treatment programs, they should not be abruptly returned to the environment where the misconduct occurred without appropriate supervision and transitional support. Consequently, intensive aftercare programs that provide high levels of social control and treatment services have gained substantial support.

OJJDP has supported the development of an intensive aftercare program, currently being demonstrated in four jurisdictions, that incorporates five principles:

1. Prepare youth for progressive responsibility and freedom in the community.
2. Facilitate youth-community interaction and involvement.
3. Work with both the offender and targeted community support systems, such as families, peers, schools, and employers, to facilitate the youth's constructive interaction with these groups and gradual community adjustment.
4. Develop needed resources and community support.
5. Monitor and ensure successful reintegration into the community.¹⁹

Cooperation between schools and the juvenile justice system. Two key ingredients for implementing a system of graduated sanctions are (1) strengthening cooperation and communication between school districts and probation departments, and (2) providing schools with alternative strategies for dealing with students who exhibit behavioral problems or students who are suspended or have been expelled from school.

The Allentown, PA, school district developed the Student Assistance Program (SAP) to address the increased number of dropouts, violent incidents, behavioral problems, and drug abuse problems among its students. SAP incorporates three main objectives:

- o Educating school personnel about the duties, functions, and limitations of the juvenile justice system.
- o Providing liaisons among the juvenile's family, the probation department, the school district, and the police department so that the educational interests and needs of the student can be met.

o Involving probation officers in the program.

School-based probation officers are the key to SAP's effectiveness. They act as student advocates and coordinators to refer targeted students to resources in the school and the community. Probation officers also visit classrooms to talk to students and faculty members about the juvenile justice system and to clarify the program.

The development of excellent working relationships among education, juvenile justice, law enforcement, other social agencies, and families has been one of the program's most important accomplishments. School-based probation officers are now considered a vital element in the schools' overall operation. Since implementation, the program has served from 91 to 104 students annually. In addition, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency has allocated more than \$2 million to replicate the SAP model in other Pennsylvania jurisdictions. To date, 29 Pennsylvania counties are implementing SAP programs.²⁰

Disproportionate minority confinement and issues confronting juvenile female offenders. Another key component of graduated sanctions is a focus on alleviating disproportionate minority confinement and gender bias in the juvenile justice system. Persons of color, particularly African-American and Latino-American males, are disproportionately represented at every stage of the juvenile justice system. Research shows that disproportionate minority confinement tends to result, in part, from a number of discrete decisions made throughout the system, from the point of arrest through intake and sentencing.²¹ The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, as amended in 1988,²² requires States to make efforts to reduce the proportion of minority juveniles detained or confined in secure detention or correctional facilities, jails, and lockups if such proportion exceeds the proportion of representation in the general population. Response to this over-representation, as well as to demographic shifts, requires additional or redirected resources, staff training, recruitment, language and cultural programs, and materials and documents translated into languages other than English for juvenile offenders, their families, and crime victims.

Similarly, the 1992 Amendments to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act addressed the issue of gender bias, requiring States to plan for an analysis of the need, types, and delivery of gender-specific services. Delinquency by female offenders has risen dramatically in the past decade, accounting for 23 percent of juvenile arrests as of 1991. Recent data indicate that because of the relatively small number of adjudicated female juvenile offenders, little attention has been focused on their special needs.²³ A comparative study of 348 violent adolescent females and a similar number of males revealed that, although half the male offenders were admitted to rehabilitation programs or alternative programs, only 29.5 percent of female offenders

received some alternative treatment.²⁴

According to data provided by 85 State corrections institutions, female offenders face many special problems, including the perpetuation of a cycle of generational sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, early parenthood, and emotional dysfunction. Other research²⁵ supports the conclusion that girls become self-destructive more often than boys when acting out problems. Young females who run away, for example, more often become involved in prostitution or turn to other unhealthy, exploitative, or abusive environments for shelter or survival.

Front-end assessment through the assessment-team approach may help to address some of the race and gender issues in the juvenile justice system and ensure that judgments about treatment and rehabilitation respond to the individual needs of each youth.

Federal Action Steps

Assist in the Development of Model State and Local Programs Through Training and Technical Assistance

OJJDP will provide training and technical assistance to jurisdictions in developing a balanced and restorative justice model.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), through its Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and National Institute of Justice (NIJ), will underscore the importance of accountability for juvenile offenders by recognizing the rights and concerns of victims and by emphasizing community service restitution programs. This will include support for and strengthening of indigenous tribal justice systems that apply reparative and restorative justice principles.

Ensure That the Rights of Victims of Juvenile Offenders Are Recognized

OVC will provide funding for crucial victim services and for training of a broad range of professionals who work with crime victims and will develop projects to enhance victims' rights and services. In addition, OVC will fund workshops to increase the number of trainers qualified to train others in assisting victims of juvenile offenders.

Provide Communities With Guidance for Implementing a Comprehensive Strategy That Reflects Delinquency Prevention and Effective Graduated Sanctions

OJJDP will widely disseminate the Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders to practitioners, educators, community activists, policymakers, city managers, governors, State attorneys general, and others to aid in establishing effective prevention programs and improving State and local juvenile justice systems.

OJJDP will also provide communities interested in implementing a continuum-of-care model with a range of training and technical assistance through a series of regional conferences, satellite video teleconferences, a CD-ROM package, and focus groups to determine community needs for building capacity to implement the Comprehensive Strategy.

OJP will support demonstration programs that provide a continuum of treatment services and sanctions. These programs might include weekend detention, inpatient treatment for drug abuse, electronic monitoring, and community-based residential facilities.

Provide Model Protocols for Intake, Assessment, and Aftercare

OJJDP will support programming to develop and demonstrate methodologies to improve the front end of the juvenile justice system through refined assessment protocols and interdisciplinary case management teams. The Guide provides sample forms and guidance for developing a risk classification process for making placement, detention, probation and parole, and institutional custody decisions. The Guide also provides information on placement projections, client needs assessments, continuous case management, and management information systems. Programming, training, and technical assistance will be provided to assist communities in strengthening their assessment processes and the delivery of aftercare services.

OJJDP will continue to support the 3-year multisite implementation and evaluation of its Intensive Community-Based Juvenile Aftercare Program (IAP). The overall aim of IAP is to identify and help high-risk juvenile offenders make a gradual transition from secure confinement into the community. This program is being implemented in Denver, CO; Las Vegas, NV; Camden and Newark, NJ; and Norfolk, VA. OJJDP will also continue to support aftercare training and technical assistance to these sites and to other jurisdictions across the country.

In addition, OJJDP will continue to support the Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP). This information and case management program seeks to improve efficiency in handling serious habitual juvenile offenders by providing relevant case information for more informed decisionmaking by juvenile-serving agencies and organizations. The SHOCAP identification and intervention process is included in OJJDP's Police Operations Leading to Improved Children and Youth Services (POLICY) training courses provided to local law enforcement representatives and interagency teams.

Provide Research on the Effectiveness of Intermediate Sanctions

In a collaborative effort, NIJ, OJJDP, the OJP Corrections Program Office, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) will provide funding to develop boot camp programs and research the

effectiveness of high-intensity, short-term programs, such as boot camps, wilderness programs, and other intermediate sanctions that combine vocational education, discipline, and life skills. This intra-agency research will assess the rationale underlying boot camp programs and examine boot camps nationwide.

Address and Support Efforts To Reduce Disproportionate Minority Confinement in Secure Facilities

As a condition of full participation in the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Formula Grants Program, States must gather and analyze data to determine whether disproportionate minority confinement exists and, if so, to plan, implement, and evaluate programs designed to address the problem. Program planning should be accompanied by training, education on the issue, policy revision, and legislation.

OJJDP will continue to provide training and technical assistance to State and local governments, community-based organizations, national organizations, and others on all aspects of this statutory core requirement.

OJJDP will disseminate a planning manual to assist States in addressing disproportionate minority confinement. This manual will include sections on data collection and analysis, corrective action planning, program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This information will assist communities in effectively responding to demographic shifts that are leading to increased confinement of Latino-American and African-American offenders.

Highlight and Address Issues Confronting Female Juvenile Offenders

OJJDP will provide training and technical assistance to States that have demonstrated a commitment to addressing gender bias and lack of gender-specific programming within the juvenile system.

OJJDP will also support innovative community-based programs that provide comprehensive, gender-specific prevention, intervention, treatment, and rehabilitative care. OJJDP's Program To Promote Alternative Programs for Juvenile Female Offenders will include case management and followup for at-risk and delinquent females as both a freestanding program and as a component of its overarching demonstration program, SafeFutures.

In addition, OJJDP will develop and disseminate a report synthesizing current literature and best practices that address the problems of at-risk young females and juvenile female offenders. The report will contain information on trends and risk factors for female delinquency as they relate to behavior, family and community experience, the amelioration of those risks, and best practices for prevention, intervention, and treatment models. OJJDP will hold a national conference to share information in the report with policymakers, researchers, practitioners, judges, lawyers, and the media.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Include key elected and justice agency officials, grassroots community leaders, crime victims, and diverse groups in community planning and implementation of a comprehensive multidisciplinary strategy to address juvenile delinquency.
- o Develop local prevention policy boards to assess risk factors for delinquency in the community, review current juvenile justice laws, and identify priorities.
- o Incorporate key concepts of the balanced and restorative justice model and indigenous justice models, particularly those addressing youth accountability, competency development, and public safety.
- o Develop and implement a range of graduated sanctions that combine accountability with treatment and provide increasingly intensive treatment and rehabilitation services for delinquent juveniles.
- o Develop or improve nonsecure and secure community-based correctional facilities for juvenile offenders who must be removed from their homes.
- o Establish a comprehensive system of youth service agencies to reduce fragmentation in service delivery and to provide a full continuum of service options. The work of justice personnel must be coordinated with that of community members and other youth-serving agencies to maximize the timely identification of delinquents and to identify the earliest point of intervention.
- o Provide victim and community restitution opportunities for youth to help enhance public safety and improve the quality of life.
- o Work with victims' rights organizations to ensure both juvenile accountability to victims and a strengthened community commitment to rehabilitation.
- o Develop ways to provide for the involvement of crime victims in juvenile offender programming.
- o Develop legislation, policies, and procedures to ensure that crime victims have rights in the juvenile justice system.
- o Develop assessment centers to coordinate community resources and improve services to juveniles and their families.
- o Use risk classification tools based on offense severity and risk of future offending to determine appropriate security levels for youth entering the system and to estimate program facility needs.
- o Establish a process for ongoing assessment of disproportionate minority confinement and implement strategies focused on system improvement and program development (prevention, early

intervention, treatment, and aftercare services). If disproportionate minority confinement exists, actively seek technical and evaluation assistance to identify the causes and implement corrective action.

- o Address the issues of gender bias and lack of gender-specific programming within the juvenile system and actively participate in Federal training and technical assistance programs.

- o Develop prevention and intervention strategies for juvenile sex offenders.

- o Expand and provide services to meet the physical and mental health needs of juvenile delinquents.

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2. Prosecute Certain Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders in Criminal Court

Overview

Juvenile violent crime is increasing at an alarming rate. Between 1983 and 1992, juvenile arrest rates for Violent Crime Index offenses increased nearly 60 percent, while adult rates increased by 47 percent.

In 1994, the Federal Interdepartmental Working Group on Violence concluded that we as a Nation have failed the juvenile justice system, which, in turn, is failing us.¹ Without adequate resources to handle the growth of youth violence, the system has been unable to successfully fulfill its role in securing community safety. Our failure to support the juvenile justice system and to increase the system's capacity to succeed has created an immediate need to target certain serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders for prosecution in the criminal justice system. While many types of juvenile offenders can be treated in the juvenile justice system, the Coordinating Council recognizes that prosecution in criminal

court is a necessary option in State and Federal juvenile justice systems for those juveniles whose offenses are particularly serious or violent or who are not amenable to rehabilitation in the juvenile justice system.

It is important to note, however, that the vast majority of juvenile cases can be appropriately handled in the juvenile justice system. For example, in 1992, 70 percent of juveniles referred to juvenile court were handled informally or not adjudicated, while most adjudicated delinquents received dispositions of formal probation.

The juvenile justice system is in the midst of a revolutionary period of change. A slow trend during the past decade to remove more serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders from the juvenile justice system and turn them over to criminal courts has escalated. A recent national survey of State corrections agencies showed a 39-percent increase in the number of juveniles transferred to, convicted in, or sentenced in criminal courts between 1988 and 1990--from 5,797 to 8,067.2 In 1992, 38 States reported 5,212 new court commitments of juveniles to State prisons.³

The behavior of a relatively small percentage of juvenile offenders has had a devastating impact on the public's sense of security, on victims, and on the families of victims. Research shows that, although these serious, violent, and chronic offenders comprise only 6 to 8 percent of the total juvenile offender population, they account for a disproportionately large number of offenses. These juveniles are involved in a wide range of offense types and are likely to commit both serious offenses and violent crimes. Because of its frequency and seriousness, the violent behavior of this group of offenders must be controlled to ensure public safety and security.⁴

Transferring targeted juvenile offenders who commit the most serious and violent crimes to criminal court enables the juvenile justice system to focus its efforts and resources on the much larger group of at-risk youth and less serious and violent offenders who can benefit from a wide range of effective delinquency prevention and intervention strategies. However, in their efforts to ensure that certain juvenile offenders are transferred to the criminal justice system because of the seriousness of their offenses, the Federal Government and the States must be sure that only those youth who truly require this alternative under the laws of their particular jurisdiction are placed in the criminal justice system. We must also remain vigilant about the juvenile's right to counsel and about the potentially harmful impact of placing juveniles in adult jails, lockups, and correctional facilities, including problems associated with overcrowding, abuse, youth suicide, and the risk of transforming treatable juveniles into hardened criminals.⁵ Most of all, the continuing need for transfer of juveniles to criminal courts should strengthen our resolve to intervene at the earliest possible time to decrease the risk of future criminal behavior.

This section of the Action Plan describes the three primary mechanisms for transferring targeted juveniles to criminal court and summarizes current State legislation pertaining to juvenile transfer. It also addresses the trend toward increased transfer and describes innovative and alternative approaches to responding to serious, violent, and chronic offenders, and providing the treatment they need. This section includes proposed action steps assisting Federal and State jurisdictions in focusing on these offenders in order to secure the greater public safety. The Action Plan also encourages further study of the effectiveness and impact of transfers on both juvenile offenders and the justice system.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

Transfer Cases

A number of studies that have examined the offense characteristics of juveniles transferred to criminal court show that the presenting offense for most transferred juveniles is a property offense.⁶ This trend, however, appears to be changing.

Other research has focused on seriousness and chronicity. One study found that juveniles transferred by judicial waiver in Virginia tended to be older, more serious offenders, with prior records and commitment histories, except in metropolitan areas of the State.⁷ Another study found that juvenile robbery offenders transferred to criminal court in Philadelphia were more likely to have used guns in their offenses than those who were not transferred.⁸

Transfer Mechanisms

The three legal mechanisms for transferring juvenile cases to criminal court are judicial waiver, prosecutorial discretion, and statutory exclusion. The use of all three mechanisms is being expanded as the problem of youth violence and the fear surrounding it increase.

Judicial waiver. Most States have established mechanisms to waive jurisdiction over a case to criminal court, generally after consideration of a motion made by the prosecutor.⁹ Juvenile court judges in all States except Nebraska, New York, and New Mexico have the authority to waive jurisdiction over a case to criminal court. An estimated 11,700 juvenile delinquency cases were referred to criminal court by judicial waiver in 1992, a 68-percent increase from 1987.¹⁰

Prosecutorial discretion ("concurrent jurisdiction"). Twelve States authorize prosecutors to file certain categories of juvenile cases directly in criminal court (direct file). This discretion is generally constrained by the age of the alleged offender and the type of offense. Although national statistics are unavailable on juvenile cases transferred to the criminal court as a result of prosecutorial discretion, one expert estimated that there were

2,000 prosecutorial direct files nationwide in 1978.¹¹ By 1993, Florida prosecutors alone had filed criminal charges in 7,000 cases involving offenders under age 18.¹²

In addition to a national increase, there are indications that instances of prosecutorial discretion now outnumber judicial waivers in States allowing such transfers. In Florida, which has both judicial waiver and direct file provisions, two cases were filed directly in criminal court for every one case transferred by judicial waiver in 1981. By 1992, there were more than six direct filings for every case of judicial waiver.¹³

Statutory exclusion. Although not typically considered transfers, large numbers of youth age 17 and younger are tried as adults in the 11 States where the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction is less than 18 years. This type of statutory exclusion accounts for the largest number of youth under age 18 being tried in criminal court. Nationwide, an estimated 176,000 cases involving youth under age 18 were tried in criminal courts in 1991 because the offenders were considered adults under State law.¹⁴ Another statutory exclusion mechanism is to provide for statutory waiver or transfer of certain juveniles to criminal court for specific offenses -- generally older or repeat offenders for violent offenses. In such cases, the prosecutor must file a case in criminal court for the particular offense.

State Trends

Since 1978, at least 41 States have enacted legislation to expand the use of transfer mechanisms. In 1994, at least 13 States enacted measures establishing or expanding statutory transfers of juveniles to criminal court by expanding offense categories or reducing age eligibility for certain offense types.

In any particular State, one, two, or all three transfer mechanisms may be in place.¹⁵ By 1993, 28 States had at least two of the three mechanisms for transferring juveniles to criminal court for prosecution. Three States had statutory provisions for all three methods, and at least 18 States were considering additional legislation in 1994.

While every State provides one or more mechanisms that allow juveniles charged with serious and violent criminal behavior to be tried in criminal court, the waiver and direct file criteria vary from State to State. Age 14 is the most common minimum age at which transfer can take place. The crimes that are most commonly authorized for transfer are aggravated felonies -- usually serious, violent, repeat offenses.¹⁶ Several States also have provisions for transferring "excluded" or "direct filed" cases from criminal court to juvenile court under certain circumstances. This is sometimes referred to as "reverse waiver" or "transfer back." A summary of some recent actions of State legislatures follows:

- o Only one State, Wyoming, lowered the upper age -- from 18 to 17

-- of its juvenile court jurisdiction during the past 20 years, joining the other 39 States that had established age 17 as the upper age limit for original juvenile court jurisdiction. In 1995, however, two of these States, Wisconsin and New Hampshire, enacted legislation to lower the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction to 16, effective January 1, 1996.

- o North Carolina lowered the age of juveniles who can be tried as adults to 13; Oklahoma can now prosecute as adults juveniles age 13 and older accused of murder; and Tennessee removed the age limit for trying juveniles accused of certain serious and violent offenses as adults.¹⁷

- o Five States have recently enacted or expanded concurrent jurisdiction legislation, bringing the total of States having such legislation to 12. In Michigan and Florida, prosecutors may now elect the court of original jurisdiction for certain classes of adolescent offenders.

- o Eighteen States now have excluded-offense provisions (statutory waiver or transfer) for serious or violent crimes. For example, New York's juvenile offender law gives the criminal court original jurisdiction over juveniles ages 13 to 15 charged with murder, and those 14 or 15 years of age charged with Class A or B felonies, as defined by New York's Criminal Code. The State's 1978 juvenile offender law also provides for the "reverse waiver" of these juveniles from the criminal court to the juvenile court.

Depending on the decision point (judge, prosecutor, or legislator), various transfer criteria are to be carefully considered, such as the type of offense, age of offender, offense history, and receptiveness to rehabilitation. Statutory exclusion is clearly the most rigid method of determining how a juvenile offender will be processed, and most determinations are based on serious offenses and age limits. Several States also exclude juveniles charged with felonies from juvenile court if they have prior felony adjudications or convictions. Prosecutorial discretion, or direct file authority, is also typically limited by age and offense criteria.

The judicial waiver process typically focuses on age, offense, offense history, and the juvenile's amenability to treatment. A judicial waiver, therefore, should be predicated on an assessment of the youth's history of prior delinquency, counseling, attempts at rehabilitation, school record, and other relevant factors. The decision of the court must be in writing, exercised in open court, and predicated on an adversarial hearing with full due process, including an opportunity for presentation of evidence by the defense and the right to cross-examine witnesses.

Based on these varying requirements, each transfer mechanism is generally applied according to the age of the youth and the seriousness of the offense. For older offenders, when the offense is more serious or when the juvenile is a repeat offender, the

tendency is to move away from judicial discretion and toward prosecutorial discretion and statutory exclusion.

Sentencing and Dispositional Outcomes and Effectiveness

Criminal court handling of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders raises many philosophical, legal, program, policy, and research questions. Unfortunately, in recent years, an inadequate amount of research has been conducted on the impact of criminal court processing on reducing violent juvenile offending.

Some studies have shown relatively lenient treatment of juvenile offenders transferred to criminal court by judicial waiver, concurrent jurisdiction, and/or excluded offense.¹⁸ These studies are primarily based on data collected from the late 1970's and the 1980's. However, three more recent studies are available.

A Cook County, IL, study examined juveniles transferred to criminal court for drug and weapons violations under several Illinois excluded-offense statutes during 1991-92. The study found that most of the transferred juveniles were not viewed by criminal court judges as serious offenders. More than half received probation, supervision, or conditional discharge. Twelve percent, most of whom judges ruled eligible for boot camps, were sentenced to incarceration in Illinois prisons. Among the remainder, 18 percent were found not guilty.¹⁹

At least one study using more recent data shows a trend in transfers reflecting changes in the profile of offenders and case dispositions. A 1994 followup study by the Virginia Commission on Youth showed increased incarceration of transferred juveniles between 1988 and 1990 compared with those retained in the juvenile justice system. Among the more than 1,000 juveniles transferred between 1988 and 1990, 63 percent were sentenced to prison, 15 percent were sent to a local jail, and 22 percent received no incarceration. Those sentenced to prison served an average of 17 months, compared with less than 8 months served by those adjudicated in juvenile court and committed to juvenile institutions.²⁰

A 1981 Ohio study of juveniles transferred to criminal court under judicial waiver found that most were involved in property offenses, and less than 40 percent were involved in violent offenses. In contrast, a study conducted a decade later found that almost two-thirds of the transfers were for violent offenses.²¹

The relative merits of juvenile versus criminal justice system handling of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders are difficult to determine conclusively.²² Few comparative studies have been made, and those that exist are outdated. None has focused on innovative sentencing options, such as "blending" of juvenile and criminal justice system handling. A 1980 study demonstrated the importance of examining the seriousness of offense and age of the offender in these studies in order to obtain a clear picture of

what is happening in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.²³ This study confirmed that these are critical control factors in determining future case study outcomes.

Likewise, it is difficult to develop updated policy when the majority of the studies were generated in the 1980's, and it is impossible to determine from the existing research the impact of either criminal or juvenile system handling on subsequent offenses. While much activity is taking place in State legislatures to address mechanisms for the prosecution of juveniles in criminal court, very little evaluative research exists to guide such legislative change. The extent to which these transfer options are being used and the effectiveness of the various policy options are not yet known. The need for such information is substantial. Unless we fully understand how that body of law shapes the processing of cases as they move -- or fail to move -- through the juvenile and criminal justice systems, the efficacy of various provisions of State law will remain unknown. Without empirical assessments of the application and impact of various recent adjustments to juvenile law, those who favor or oppose such changes can do little more than speculate or make rough projections based on personal experience or limited research.²⁴

The Climate That Drives Waivers

The trend toward treating more juveniles as criminal offenders is a reaction to a number of factors. First, it is a response to the increasing incidence and seriousness of juvenile violence and an overcrowded and overburdened juvenile justice system. Second, it is based on a concern that the juvenile justice system does not dispense sufficiently tough sanctions to provide accountability to victims and society. Third, because frequently there is no reliable system for the retention of records and identification of offenders, it is perceived that the juvenile justice system is not able to track and suppress a blossoming criminal career.

Lack of capacity. As discussed in the first section of the Action Plan, juvenile justice practitioners are confronted daily with moving juvenile offenders through the juvenile system. Overwhelmed by burdensome caseloads, they are often unable to assess the individual treatment needs of each juvenile, provide appropriate and sustained services, or ensure adequate supervision to effectively monitor the youth's behavior and compliance with a dispositional order. The lack of system capacity and graduated sanction programs are central deficiencies in the juvenile justice system that may tilt the frustrated decisionmaker (prosecutor, judge, or legislator) toward the decision to transfer increasing numbers of offenders. As noted in the Interdepartmental Working Group on Violence's *Violence: Report to the President and Domestic Policy Council* and in Objective 1 of this Action Plan, the already strained juvenile justice system lacks sufficient resources to accurately and reliably identify serious, violent, and chronic offenders and to intervene effectively with them.

Confidentiality. Currently, in keeping with long-held confidentiality rules, most juvenile courts do not provide victims with formal notification about offenders or the disposition of cases. Often, the only way the victim can receive such information is by attending the hearing, where statute permits. In addition, the media historically have had little access to information that they could use to demonstrate the lack of resources and programs facing individual offenders and the system. In more than 20 States, juvenile codes do not allow the names or pictures of juveniles involved in delinquency proceedings to be released to the media.²⁵ However, recent court decisions have "opened the doors" of some delinquency proceedings, expanding public and media access.²⁶ In addition, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges has declared that:

Traditional notions of secrecy and confidentiality should be reexamined and relaxed to promote public confidence in the court's work. The public has a right to know how courts deal with children and families. The court should be opened to the media, interested professionals and students and, when appropriate, the public, in order to hold itself accountable, educate others, and encourage greater community participation.²⁷

Confidentiality within the system of youth services also hinders the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. Courts, schools, mental health and health facilities, law enforcement, and other social service agencies unintentionally impede effective rehabilitation of youth by restricting the exchange of appropriate and critical information about their individual histories. In the majority of cases, the resistance to sharing information is not based on laws or regulations but on institutional reluctance to violate privacy interests. Overly restrictive confidentiality rules and practices substantially weaken the juvenile justice system as a viable arena for trying serious and violent juvenile offender cases. Until we know the history and service needs of juveniles who enter the system, we can neither provide adequate services nor fully protect the public.

Lack of records or record availability. A State may manage its juvenile recordkeeping systems through a variety of methods. All are variations on the theme of "nondisclosure," a concept that means the records are not ordinarily available outside the court. The disclosure rules for each State vary, but the elements of the formula are generic. The parties before the juvenile court are entitled to the contents of the juvenile record file. Unfortunately, however, most States do not permit additional disclosure without specific authorization of the court or some other statute. Thus, while several States are now either considering or revising juvenile codes in response to growing public concern over juvenile crime and increasing demands by victims, it is likely that offender history information will remain unavailable to other agencies and individuals with an interest in a particular juvenile. Moreover, under varying conditions, every State permits requests to expunge or destroy juvenile records.

Many State and local jurisdictions do not maintain accurate or complete records of juvenile offenders or do not share these records with other jurisdictions and State repositories. This is primarily due to confidentiality concerns and the limited automation of juvenile records. As a result, it is sometimes impossible to determine whether a juvenile who gets into trouble is a first offender, a repeat offender, or a chronic offender. Ideally, when a juvenile first comes in contact with the juvenile justice system, appropriate records are established and maintained and all relevant agencies can share information to ensure positive identification. This record sharing also makes possible a proper treatment and rehabilitation plan designed to prevent the juvenile from coming into further contact with the juvenile justice system. Records of adjudications should be compiled and made available for subsequent proceedings in the juvenile and criminal justice systems, even after the juvenile reaches the age of full criminal responsibility, and the length of time records are held should depend on the seriousness of prior offenses.

Making juvenile records electronically accessible requires more than collecting and automating record data. Some States require electronic information systems, and others may need a change in their laws. A number of institutional components are involved, and assurances of appropriate confidentiality must be carefully considered and provided.

Problems with record maintenance may contribute to prosecutors seeking to transfer juvenile cases, particularly violent offenses. Otherwise, when the juvenile reaches age 18, or a statutorily provided time period, there may be no record of his or her delinquent history. For example, citizens, crime victims, school personnel, and law enforcement professionals express a legitimate concern about not having access to the history of juveniles adjudicated for sexual assault (even those who were treated) who are now free to apply for a job working with children or other vulnerable populations.

Length and termination of sentences. Another factor that drives the increased number of transferred juveniles is concern that placement in programs is often delayed because of waiting lists, and release is too often determined by a slot-driven system in which the critical factor is the need for a bed for the next offender. Furthermore, the juvenile justice system generally loses jurisdiction over a juvenile offender when the youth reaches a certain age, whether or not treatment is completed or the juvenile remains a threat to the public safety. This loss of jurisdiction may also contribute to the transfer of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders to the criminal justice system in order to ensure that public safety is not threatened with the release of a violent offender who has reached the upper age of dispositional jurisdiction, which generally ranges from 18 to 21.

Issues of Juveniles in Federal Custody

Relatively few juveniles are in the Federal juvenile and criminal justice systems. The Federal Bureau of Prisons reports that, as of March 17, 1995, it had custody of 270 offenders who were 17 years or younger at the time they committed their offenses. Of this total, 130 were held as criminal offenders in adult institutions, and 140 were housed in contract juvenile facilities.

Federal prosecutions of juveniles, whether as delinquents or as criminal offenders, account for less than 1 percent of all Federal prosecutions. Apart from prosecutions of juveniles on Native American reservations and military bases, the Federal Government typically prosecutes only those juveniles who are members of large-scale narcotics-trafficking organizations or violent criminal organizations, such as gangs. In other instances, juveniles are prosecuted in Federal court for violent acts that have some Federal nexus, such as civil rights violations, carjacking, or bank robbery.

Even though the Major Crimes Act asserts Federal jurisdiction over certain offenses committed by Native Americans on their lands, tribes and tribal courts have expressed concern over the handling of serious crimes being committed by Native American youth in their communities. While tribes exercise concurrent jurisdiction over these crimes, they lack many of the resources needed to handle these cases properly. Specifically, they lack secure placement options, treatment resources, and sentencing capabilities. The Indian Civil Rights Act²⁸ prevents tribal courts from sentencing any person convicted of a serious or violent offense to more than 1 year in jail and a fine of greater than \$5,000.

Similarly, the prosecution of juvenile Federal offenders in cases involving Native American youth, and the impact on tribes and tribal courts when Federal prosecution is declined, need to be explored. Virtually no studies have been conducted on their impact on Federal and tribal criminal justice systems.

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

Information Sharing

A number of States have recently passed laws authorizing or requiring information on alleged violent delinquents or adjudicated juvenile offenders to be shared with schools, child welfare agencies, or other social service providers. This information sharing provides all systems involved with a better understanding of the youth with whom they are working and the best way to work with that individual. It is also an important consideration for protecting the rights of victims of juvenile offenders. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is currently working with the Department of Education to develop a fact sheet on sharing school information with the juvenile justice system so that at-risk and delinquent youth can be identified and services provided prior to their involvement in serious and violent crime.

The Illinois juvenile court model for interagency information sharing, passed by the General Assembly in 1992, supports law enforcement, State attorneys, probation departments, juvenile courts, social service providers, and schools in the early identification and treatment of habitual juvenile offenders. This 1992 amendment to the Illinois Juvenile Court Act of 1987 authorizes an interagency committee to gather and disseminate comprehensive data to agencies in the juvenile justice system to produce more informed system decisions. This is being accomplished, in part, through the establishment of a statewide Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP). Developed by OJJDP, the SHOCAP multi-disciplinary interagency case management and information-sharing system establishes an interdisciplinary committee. The committee develops criteria to identify juveniles who are serious habitual offenders and adopts a written interagency information-sharing agreement.

The Florida model for interagency information sharing authorizes the juvenile court to maintain records of all cases brought before it. The model also provides that the court shall preserve records pertaining to juveniles charged with committing delinquent acts or violations of the law until they reach age 24, or age 26 in the case of serious or habitual delinquents. Florida has recently developed a statewide SHOCAP in 15 sites and will be adding another 10 sites in 1996.

Youthful-Offender Laws, Blended Sentencing, and Intermediate Facilities

Some States are improving the response of their juvenile justice systems to serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders by developing intermediate (third system) facilities or blended sentencing models. Other States have created separate youthful-offender institutions for juveniles adjudicated delinquent for serious or violent crimes or convicted and sentenced criminally under youthful-offender statutes. These typically permit the juvenile court to treat older, more aggressive juvenile offenders as youthful offenders, rather than as delinquents, by placing them in specialized youthful-offender facilities. Conversely, some statutes permit criminal courts to treat juvenile criminal offenders, and sometimes younger adults who have committed less serious crimes, as youthful offenders. California, Montana, and New York have long had such statutes.

Colorado's Youthful Offender System, created in 1993, is designed to break down gang affiliation and youth violence by concentrating on treatment, discipline, and intensive reintegration services through a low staff-to-offender ratio. In Wisconsin's program, the State mandates that some youthful offenders stay in the program for 5 years. If they have committed felonies that would have been punishable by life imprisonment, juveniles must stay in the program until they are 25 years old.²⁹

In some jurisdictions, either through legislation or agency procedures, judges and correctional officials have available a range of both juvenile and adult correctional sanctions for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders who have been adjudicated delinquent and/or convicted criminally. This blending of sanctions may be strictly age based (for example, on reaching a certain age, the delinquent offender is transferred to adult prison under a criminal conviction).

In 1995, Minnesota enacted a blended sentencing law that creates a new category called "extended sentence jurisdiction juveniles" for serious and repeat offenders over age 14. When found guilty of a crime, these juveniles receive both a juvenile disposition and a suspended criminal sentence. If they fail to conform to the requirements of the juvenile disposition, juveniles can receive the criminal sentence that, in most cases, would result in confinement in an adult jail or prison. The law extends the continuing jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system to age 21.

Florida has led the way in an unusual blending of traditional features of the juvenile and criminal justice systems through a three-tiered approach that gives prosecutors expanded discretionary power in making jurisdictional decisions as the age of defendants and the severity of offenses increase.³⁰ In criminal court, the judge has a variety of sentencing options, including sentencing the offender as an adult or as a juvenile. The criminal court judge retains jurisdiction over an individual sentenced as a juvenile to monitor the sentence and, if there is a violation of the court order, to resentence the offender as an adult. Thus, Florida's law grants its criminal court judges broader dispositional power than that of juvenile court judges, creating a "last chance" provision.

Related statutory provisions in some States target serious, violent, or chronic juvenile offenders by creating an official record that will follow the offender into the criminal system and/or by authorizing enhanced commitments by the juvenile court. Colorado, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Texas have enacted enhanced commitments. The Texas law, for example, gives the juvenile court authority to provide determinate juvenile sentences of up to 40 years in prison for 12 violent felony offenses, with the sentence to begin with treatment in the juvenile correctional system to age 18, at which time transfer to an adult facility following a court review is authorized. Such transfer is automatic at age 21. Juveniles subject to this Texas law have a right to all the due process and procedural rights of accused criminal offenders, including jury trial and bail.

The distinction in appropriate dispositional alternatives between younger adult and older juvenile offenders is not always clear. Justice system practitioners have strong and differing opinions about what should be done to address these individuals. Consequently, blended sentencing and extended jurisdiction statutory schemes are gaining favor in an increasing number of States. In order to address public safety needs, States should

continue to experiment with the development, implementation, and evaluation of these types of dispositional options. At the same time, however, we must also invest in the juvenile justice system so that it can meet the treatment needs of juvenile offenders.

The Action Plan suggests providing increased flexibility for the transfer of appropriate juveniles to criminal court until the juvenile justice system has the capacity to provide adequate program services to serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders and to ensure public safety. Specifically, it proposes a two-tiered system of extended jurisdiction in the juvenile court for serious, violent, and chronic offenders and consideration of innovative blended sentencing options for juvenile offenders under criminal court jurisdiction.

The two-tiered system would provide for the transfer of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders contingent upon age, presenting offense, and offense history, allowing greater prosecutorial discretion for the older, more serious offender. State laws should consider appropriate discretionary powers for prosecutors to proceed to criminal court as the ages of juvenile offenders and the severity of the offense increase, thereby allowing for individualized case review and decisionmaking. Extended jurisdiction of the juvenile court can be predicated upon a judge's determination that a juvenile is a serious, violent, or chronic offender based upon the current offense and the juvenile's prior history in the justice system. The court could be authorized to use this extended jurisdiction to keep an adjudicated delinquent in the system beyond age 21 if there were a reasonable expectation of successful treatment.

The use of innovative blended sentencing options can function as a supplement to the provision of extended jurisdiction by authorizing the criminal or juvenile court judge to utilize or, when appropriate, to combine juvenile and adult responses into a continuum of sanctions appropriate to the offense history and age of the juvenile. The Action Plan advocates a clear judicial role in either the decision to proceed against a juvenile as a criminal offender or at the dispositional stage through discretion in sentencing options, as outlined above. However, while not advocating for statutory exclusion or lowering the age for criminal court jurisdiction, the Action Plan recognizes that, in some instances, State law may use more than one transfer mechanism and expressly provide for the imposition only of criminal sanctions for specific classes of offenses at specific ages.

If the graduated sanctions model recommended in the Action Plan is fully implemented in a jurisdiction with adequate programming and resources, then the numbers of juveniles being transferred into the criminal court or classified for extended jurisdiction should decrease. In the interim, however, a more flexible mechanism is needed that ensures public safety and provides appropriate sanctions for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders. With flexibility in court sentencing, the criminal court judge can

access juvenile court programming as a "last chance" option for these offenders, while also enhancing the supervision of the court and heightening the motivation of the offender, who is accountable to the criminal court and faces a potential prison sentence upon violation of sentencing conditions.

Federal Prosecution of Juveniles

At the Federal level, the Action Plan suggests examining the advisability of amending the Federal Juvenile Delinquency Code to remove procedural barriers to the transfer of juveniles under Federal jurisdiction for criminal prosecution, including adding prosecutorial transfer authority (direct file) for certain serious and violent offenses.

Federal Action Steps

Promote Innovative Options for the Appropriate Maintenance and Sharing of Juvenile Records

OJJDP and the Department of Education (ED) will continue to review Federal Educational Records Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations to clarify and enhance the ability of schools to share information with other agencies responsible for handling juvenile offenders.

OJJDP and ED will also develop technical assistance mechanisms to build the capacity of law enforcement and educational institutions to share juvenile records.

Improve Targeting, Apprehension, Prosecution, Treatment, and Correctional Facilities and Programs for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

The Department of Justice (DOJ) will provide funding through its Correctional Facilities/Violent Offender Incarceration Grants for construction of, or planning for, prison facilities for criminal offenders and for boot camp programs for adult or juvenile offenders (to make available secure space in prisons or juvenile correctional facilities for violent offenders).

OJJDP will increase its focus on programs to identify and target these offenders, such as SHOCAP; arrest and prosecute them, as appropriate; and provide treatment programs for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders within the juvenile justice system. These programs combine accountability and sanctions with increasingly intensive community-based intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation services correlated with the seriousness or nature of particular offenses.

Assist States and Local Governments To Identify Juvenile Offenders

DOJ supports improved juvenile records that are accurate and accessible, where appropriate, in both the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and OJJDP have produced publications to assist State recordkeepers in understanding the technical, legal, and policy issues relating to juvenile records. Statistical and legislative solutions from States were compiled.

Based on this information, BJS will continue to address the issue within the context of its ongoing program to assist States in upgrading criminal records. Specifically, BJS will:

- o Sponsor a national conference to address issues associated with the use of, and access to, juvenile records in the criminal justice system.
- o Sponsor a study to analyze legal and policy issues associated with the collection, use, and exchange of juvenile delinquency records, including the relationship between juvenile and criminal records.
- o Convene a national conference to discuss issues involved in linking juvenile and adult records.

OJJDP's Systems and Statistics Development (SSD) Program--which collects, analyzes, and disseminates national statistics on juvenile victims and offenders and documents the system's response--will continue to raise the level of attention to juvenile record issues. SSD's actions are helping States recognize the entire range of issues associated with juvenile records: fingerprinting and other forms of biometric identification of juveniles, classification of juvenile offenses as compared with adult crimes, automation of juvenile records, expunging or sealing of records, and types of records to be made available in national criminal history recordkeeping systems.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) will sponsor research to examine the use of juvenile record information in the adjudication and sentencing of criminal offenders. The study will consist of two phases. Phase one will be a national assessment of legislation and practice to determine the extent to which States are authorized to consider juvenile record information in criminal prosecutions. Phase two will examine how juvenile record information is used in Sedgwick County (Wichita), KS, and in Montgomery County, MD.

OJJDP and ED will develop a fact sheet on sharing school information with the juvenile justice system.

Examine Transfer Statistics and the Impact of Innovative Sentencing Options

In order to assist in developing this information, OJJDP will carry out the following studies:

- o A statistical assessment of national transfer trends in the context of State legislative requirements.

o A comparison between juvenile and criminal justice system management of juvenile offenders.

These studies will control for presenting offense, offense history, and age of offender in order to provide accurate data.

Develop and Support Innovative Options for the Handling of Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders

OJJDP will survey innovative system practices in managing serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders in both the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Review Procedural Barriers to Prosecuting Violent Federal Juvenile Offenders as Criminal Offenders

DOJ will facilitate prosecuting certain serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders as criminals in Federal court by proposing that Congress amend the Federal juvenile delinquency statute to accomplish the following:

o Remove unnecessary procedural barriers for prosecuting and transferring violent juvenile felony offenders as criminals in the Federal system.

o Authorize juveniles prosecuted as criminal felons to be detained and incarcerated separately in adult facilities through a reasonable process and on a case-by-case basis.

o Permit expanded use of fingerprinting and recordkeeping and expanded access to those prints and records for juveniles adjudicated delinquent.

o Address the Federal system's lack of victim rights, including notification; restitution; return of property; victim impact statements; protection from intimidation, harassment, and harm; and information and referral services for those juveniles under Federal delinquency jurisdiction.

o Permit use of supervised release for juveniles adjudicated delinquent after their release from terms of confinement.

Provide Training and Technical Assistance to Federal, State, and Local Prosecutors and Judges Handling Juvenile Cases

The DOJ Criminal Division, in conjunction with the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, will disseminate to all U.S. Attorneys' Offices a manual outlining the issues in federally prosecuting juvenile offenders. The manual will cite relevant case law and include form indictments and pleadings to aid Assistant U.S. Attorneys. In addition, a publication examining these issues, entitled Federal Prosecution of Gangs and Juveniles, is available from DOJ's Office of Legal Education.³¹

Through the Anti-Violent Crime Initiative, the Criminal Division will encourage Federal prosecutors to continue working with their State and local counterparts to develop strategies to reduce youth violence. For example, all U.S. Attorneys have met with their violent-crime workgroups to implement the Youth Handgun Safety Act in their districts. As part of that effort, they have focused on identifying the sources of firearms possessed by juveniles and getting guns out of schools as part of a larger strategy to address violent crime.

OJJDP will continue to support a prosecutor training center developed by the National District Attorneys Association. This project provides workshops on juvenile justice-related executive policy, leadership, and management for chief prosecutors and juvenile unit chiefs and provides background information to prosecutors on juvenile justice issues and programs.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Review mechanisms for prosecuting, adjudicating, and sentencing juveniles in the criminal justice system.
- o Assess the impact of proposed transfer mechanisms before they are enacted into law.
- o Establish and maintain a well-structured system of graduated sanctions for juvenile offenders.
- o Establish automated record-keeping systems in all local juvenile courts. Collect and centralize juvenile records at the State level. Forward records of adjudication for serious delinquency to the Federal Bureau of Investigation to facilitate information sharing and accurate criminal history records.
- o Assist schools and juvenile justice system practitioners to obtain court orders allowing information sharing on juveniles in the justice system, where such orders are necessary to authorize information sharing.
- o Adopt policies and standards for prosecuting serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders in criminal court.
- o Develop innovative and/or alternative sanctions such as community-based corrections options.
- o Fingerprint and photograph youth charged with delinquent acts in the juvenile justice system.
- o Request technical assistance and training through OJJDP to institute needed system changes.
- o Work with the media (print and broadcast) to promote greater public understanding of the scope and complexity of the transfer

issue.

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3. Reduce Youth Involvement With Guns, Drugs, and Gangs

Overview

The involvement of judges, prosecutors, social service providers, law enforcement officers, crime victims, community-based organizations, and others is critical to improving the juvenile justice system and reducing youth violence. The Action Plan supports interagency law enforcement teams, or task forces, that coordinate the investigative efforts and suppression tactics of Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies in weapons, drug, and gang arrests.

In many communities, law enforcement has taken the lead in implementing innovative juvenile crime prevention and intervention efforts as part of an overall community oriented policing approach. Successful public safety and prevention strategies provide comprehensive, targeted community services and support to youth to keep them from becoming the next generation of offenders. Youth-focused community oriented policing that is effectively linked to the juvenile justice system can significantly contribute to the reduction of crime, restoration of order, and eradication of fear in local communities.

This section addresses four primary problem areas in which law enforcement plays a critical leading role: juvenile gun violence; the combination of youth, guns, and drugs; the link between drugs and delinquency; and youth gangs. Examples of programs illustrate effective ways of finding solutions to each of these problems in local communities. The Action Plan supports strong measures to prevent juveniles from using guns illegally and to remove guns from schools through youth-focused community oriented policing, reducing the availability of firearms to youth, strengthening anti-drug and anti-gang measures, and building healthy communities through expanded youth opportunities.

The Action Plan also supports the development of model juvenile handgun legislation to facilitate law enforcement activities. Further, it encourages the efforts of school officials to remove guns from schools, and supports the dissemination of information on promising juvenile gun violence reduction programs, and the provision of technical assistance to achieve those goals.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

Juvenile Gun Violence

A trend analysis of juvenile homicide offenses shows that since the mid-1970's, the number of homicides in which no firearm was involved has remained fairly constant. However, homicides by juveniles involving a firearm have increased nearly threefold. In addition, during this same period, the number of juvenile arrests for weapons violations increased 117 percent. When guns are the weapon of choice, juvenile violence becomes deadly.¹

Because recent crime statistics--excluding homicides--gathered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation do not show all chargeable offenses involved in a particular incident, there is no reliable

way to determine how many crimes involved a weapon, what was the nature of any injury, or whether the crime involved illicit drugs. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the precise role that guns and illegal drugs have played in the recent increase in violent juvenile crime. Although there are gaps, the data make a compelling case that the role of guns in juvenile-related homicides is increasing at an unprecedented level.

During the period 1976 to 1991, firearms were used by 65 percent of juvenile homicide offenders (44 percent used handguns). Firearms were used in nearly 8 out of 10 juvenile homicides in 1991, compared with 6 out of 10 in 1976.²

Young black males have the most elevated homicide victimization rate of any race or gender group. Homicides involving firearms have been the leading cause of death for black males ages 15 to 19 since 1969, and the rates more than doubled in the decade from 1979 (40 deaths per 100,000) to 1989 (85 deaths per 100,000).³ Teenage boys in all racial and ethnic groups are more likely to die from gunshot wounds than from all natural causes combined.⁴

Between 1979 and 1991, the rate of suicide among youth ages 15 to 19 increased 31 percent. In 1991, 1,899 youth ages 15 to 19 committed suicide, a rate of 11 per 100,000 youth in this age group. Firearms were used in 6 out of 10 suicides among youth ages 15 to 19 in 1989.⁵

In 1990, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveyed a nationally representative sample of 9th- to 12th-grade students about the number of times they had carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club during the prior 30 days. One in 20 students indicated he or she had carried a firearm, usually a handgun. A number of additional surveys confirm an increased propensity among young people to carry guns.⁶ The increased availability of guns and access to guns by youth have had devastating consequences on schools and communities. In many schools, learning is no longer the top priority; survival concerns lead many students to avoid school entirely or carry weapons for protection. Educators must divert attention from academics to monitor and control student aggression. In neighborhoods, people are apprehensive about going outside their homes, and fights that once involved fists have become deadly exchanges.

Youth, Guns, and Drugs

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is currently supporting research on the causes and correlates of delinquency and has found a strong relationship among illegal gun possession by juveniles, delinquency, and drug use. Nearly 3 in 4 juveniles who illegally possessed guns committed some type of street crime; 1 in 4 committed a gun-related crime; and 4 out of 10 used drugs.⁷

Drug activity appears to exacerbate juvenile violence in two ways.

First, firearms are more prevalent around drug activity.⁸ In 1984, the United States saw a dramatic increase in juvenile gun homicide, coinciding with the introduction of crack cocaine into urban communities. Studies show that as the use of guns by drug-involved youth increases, other young people obtain guns for their own protection. This cycle of fear or "diffusion" theory⁹ is supported by recent research on the "ecology of danger."¹⁰ A 1993 Louis Harris poll showed that 35 percent of children ages 6 to 12 fear their lives will be cut short by gun violence,¹¹ and a longitudinal study of 1,500 Pittsburgh, PA, boys revealed that their frequency of carrying a concealed weapon increased when they began selling drugs.¹²

The second way drugs and juvenile gun violence appear related is through the impact of drugs on a young person's perceptions. Adolescence is a time of taking risks and seeking stimulation, and juvenile delinquents report a certain level of excitement as well as fear of apprehension in the commission of a crime. Many youth revel at the thrill of roller coasters, some ignore cautions about "safe sex," and others seek an "ultimate high" from illicit drugs or possession of a deadly weapon.

Drugs and Delinquency

Although researchers have not established a definite causal link between drug use and delinquency, they have confirmed a delinquency-illegal drug use correlation. In the 1987 Survey of Children in Custody, 81 percent of wards in State-operated institutions responded affirmatively when questioned about lifetime use of drugs.¹³ Nearly half (48 percent) admitted to being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while committing the offense for which they were institutionalized. Although there is some variance across offense categories, the percentage of institutionalized wards who reported being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the offense ranged from 34 percent in the case of rape offenses to 51 percent for robberies and 59 percent for drug possession.

Although the link between drug use by juveniles involved in serious delinquency and by those not attending school is well documented, drug use by another segment of the youth population not considered to be at risk--students who have progressed to their senior year in high school--also continues to be the focus of serious concern. According to the results of a 1994 national household survey, monthly marijuana use among 12- to 17- year-olds nearly doubled from 1992 to 1994--from 4.0 percent of students surveyed to 7.3 percent--following a steady decline in drug use from 1979 to 1992. The survey also reported that 2 million youth rate themselves as heavy alcohol drinkers, with over 1 billion cans of beer being consumed annually by junior and senior high school students alone.¹⁴

Youth Gangs

Today, youth gangs exist in nearly every State. One expert estimates that more than 3,875 youth gangs with a total of more than 200,000 gang members are established in the 79 largest U.S. cities.¹⁵ Gang activity has extended beyond the inner city of major population centers into smaller communities and suburbs. Today's gangs are best characterized by their diversity in ethnic composition, geographical location, organization, and the nature and extent of members' involvement in delinquent and/or criminal activities.¹⁶ In the 79 U.S. cities with populations over 200,000, 91 percent reported having a gang problem that had spread from the streets into areas traditionally considered safe havens, such as schools.¹⁷ In the Chicago metropolitan area, all public and some parochial high schools, including many in suburban Cook County, reported evidence of gang activity.¹⁸

Researchers have identified a number of factors that put youth at risk of gang involvement: poverty, school failure, substance abuse, family dysfunction, and domestic and societal violence.¹⁹ Easy access to illicit drugs and the perceived financial rewards of drug dealing pose attractive alternatives for youth with inadequate education and limited employment opportunities, leading them into high-risk behaviors and potential gang involvement. Gang recruits often have a poor self-image, low self-esteem, and little adult participation in their lives. Some of them are children of gang members and are choosing a familiar lifestyle. Many are seeking the recognition they fail to receive from home or school. Even parents with strong parenting skills cannot ensure that their children will not become involved in gangs, particularly in low-income, problem-ridden neighborhoods.

Youth gang research has focused extensively on the gang-drug nexus. Recent research, however, suggests that there is also a significant connection among gang involvement, gang violence, and firearms. In one study based on responses from 835 male inmates in 6 juvenile correctional facilities in 4 States, researchers found that movement from nongang membership to gang membership brought increases in most forms of gun-involved conduct. Forty-five percent described gun theft as a regular gang activity. Sixty-eight percent said their gang regularly bought and sold guns, and 61 percent described "driving around shooting at people you don't like" as a regular gang activity.²⁰

Additionally, experts report that gangs appear to be increasing their organizational sophistication and their propensity for individual and collective violence.²¹ These structural and behavioral changes are often, but not universally, attributed to the impact of the drug trade and the availability of firearms. Another study indicates that gang homicide settings differ from nongang homicide settings in that they are more likely to involve public areas, automobiles, and firearms, among other elements.²² The researchers further speculate that location, automobile involvement, and gun presence suggest potential points of intervention.

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

Getting Guns Out of the Hands of Juveniles

Research suggests that to reduce the environment of fear and achieve the greatest reduction in the number of weapon-carrying youth, efforts must be directed at frequent weapon carriers.²³ Youth gun-reduction and fear-reduction strategies should reinforce one another. One expert suggests a "market disruption" approach, such as that used to fight street drug markets.²⁴ Police have been successful in reducing drug trafficking in communities by using community allies to report new dealing sites, making buyers feel vulnerable by publicizing reverse sting operations in which police pose as dealers and arrest buyers, and interfering with business by loitering around dealer sites. Community support and youth involvement in planning and implementation are critical to the effectiveness of such an operation.

The Kansas City (MO) Gun Experiment is an example of a successful effort. The Department of Justice (DOJ), the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Kansas City Police Department worked together to form a working group consisting of law enforcement, human service agencies, and community organizations to focus police efforts in high-crime neighborhoods by routinely stopping traffic violators, youth in violation of curfews, and individuals involved in other infractions of the law. During these routine stops, police look for any infractions that give them legal authority to search a car or pedestrian for illegal guns. Special gun-intercept teams have proven to be 10 times more cost effective than regular police patrols.²⁵

Targeted on an 80-block neighborhood with a homicide rate 20 times the national average, the Kansas City program reduced crime by at least 50 percent during a 6-month period. In addition, the program did not displace crime to other locations--gun crimes did not increase significantly in any of the surrounding seven patrol beats. Despite the fact that previous police campaigns had drawn protests of discrimination, the gun-intercept program did not experience such protests. Police had involved community and religious leaders in initial planning, and neighborhoods had actively sought greater police activity. Results of a recent program evaluation funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) indicate that this strategy appears very promising: gun crimes in the target neighborhoods declined 49 percent and drive-by shootings and homicides also dropped significantly.²⁶

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms' (ATF's) Achilles Program coordinates ATF's resources with State and local law enforcement to combat armed, violent gangs and armed narcotics traffickers in 21 of the Nation's communities with the highest levels of firearms-related violence. This initiative focuses on the enforcement of tough Federal firearms laws that require minimum/mandatory sentencing with no chance of parole for convicted offenders. The Achilles Program targets gangs that lure juveniles

into a life of crime. Because firearms, unlike narcotics or other forms of contraband, are not easily disposable, they often provide a history of the criminal and can link the individual to other crimes and provide valuable intelligence about the offender's criminal associates. Consequently, firearms can be an Achilles' heel for gangs and violent criminals.²⁷

Focusing on Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression Strategies

A combination of prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies has been implemented in communities across the United States to address the problem of gangs. It is imperative that any program, whether prevention, intervention, suppression, or any combination of these, be based in sound theory and work closely with the juvenile justice system. Specifically, policies and programs must be based on appropriate targeting of both institutions and youth, as well as their relation to each other at a specific time and place. For example, it is important to focus on youth entering or leaving a gang and on the developmental stage of the gang problem.²⁸

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, OJJDP supported the completion of two phases of a National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program. This program has provided an assessment of youth gang research, including definitions, the nature and causes of the youth gang phenomenon, and the effectiveness of the program strategies used by various agencies and organizations in the community.²⁹ The need for conclusive evaluations of these strategies was emphasized, but the following common elements appear to be associated with the sustained reduction of gang problems:

- o Leaders must recognize that gangs are present in the community and that suppression strategies must be complemented by prevention and intervention strategies.
- o Community leaders must reach a consensus on the nature of the problem and the critical points for intervention.
- o The combined leadership of the justice system and community-based organizations must focus on the mobilization of political and community resources to address gang problems.
- o Leaders must create a mechanism or structure to coordinate communitywide efforts.
- o A team comprising representatives from law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, probation, corrections, schools, community-based organizations, grassroots agencies, and other groups must prepare a set of policies and practices for the design and mobilization of community efforts.

OJJDP's Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression (Gang Suppression and Intervention)

Program provides policies and practices and a detailed analysis of how various components of a community can, in partnership, approach chronic and emerging gang problems.

OJJDP is in the process of completing the final phases (implementation and testing) of this program through A Comprehensive Response to America's Gang Problem (Comprehensive Response Initiative). Five jurisdictions have been awarded funds to begin a 3-year effort to implement the comprehensive model developed under the Gang Suppression and Intervention Program. These demonstration sites, which are experiencing an emerging or chronic gang problem, are Mesa and Tucson, AZ; Riverside, CA; Bloomington, IL; and San Antonio, TX.

Other components of the Comprehensive Response Initiative are:

- o The National Youth Gang Center, operated by the Institute for Intergovernmental Research located in Tallahassee, FL, which is designed to assist State and local jurisdictions in the collection, analysis, and exchange of gang-related statistics, legislation, research, and promising program strategies.
- o An independent evaluation of the Gang Suppression and Intervention Program to determine how the five demonstration sites, confronted by chronic or emerging gang problems, can effectively plan and implement a comprehensive anti-gang violence model program and to test the efficacy of such a model.
- o Training and technical assistance in areas such as community mobilization, youth gang problem assessment, program strategy design, and data collection and analysis to support communities in their planning and implementation efforts.
- o Targeted dissemination and acquisition of youth gang-related resources, including publications, manuals, and research findings through OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse.

These components represent a comprehensive Federal effort to prevent, intervene, and suppress youth gang violence and to help communities learn what programs and strategies are effective.

With support from OJJDP, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America has successfully expanded its Targeted Outreach Program through its local clubs. This program, designed to serve at-risk youth, is currently used as a strategy for youth gang prevention and to intervene with gang members in the early stages of gang involvement. This program has been implemented in over 200 clubs, reaching tens of thousands of young people. The clubs offer positive activities as alternatives to the lure of gangs. The organization's national office provides training and technical assistance to local clubs that are potential expansion sites. A 1992 evaluation of this program found that 90 percent of the youth served by the program attended the club once a week or more and that 48 percent showed improvement in school behavior. Over one-

third reported improved grades and an additional one-third reported increased attendance.³⁰

ATF continues to support gang prevention efforts nationwide through the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) Program. GREAT is an educational, school-based gang prevention program that was originally developed in response to an escalating youth gang problem in metropolitan Phoenix, AZ. Representatives from ATF, area law enforcement agencies, and local educators designed GREAT to help children set goals, make sound judgments, learn how to resolve conflicts without violence, and understand how gangs and youth violence negatively affect the quality of their lives. The GREAT curriculum provides teenagers with critical skills and information to resist gang involvement and learn to become responsible members of society. GREAT also offers optional curriculums for grades three to six, as well as a followup summer recreation program.

To date, 1,300 officers from more than 530 agencies representing 45 States, the District of Columbia, and military bases overseas, have been trained to present the core curriculum in elementary, junior high, and middle school classrooms. Since the program's inception in 1992, more than 2 million children have received GREAT program training.

Nuestro Centro (Our Center) Gang, Drug, and Dropout Intervention Program in Dallas, TX, inaugurated in 1991 with OJJDP funds, took a grassroots preventive approach to the problem of juvenile violence. Citizens and community leaders in a predominantly minority neighborhood decided to take back their streets by converting an abandoned fire station into a community-run youth center. Participants in the afterschool program are unemployed and undereducated youth affected by drug abuse, gangs, school problems, family problems, physical and sexual abuse, and delinquency. Through the dedicated work of counselors and volunteers, most of whom live in the neighborhood, the program has shown significant success in deterring gang violence and drug use, with 95 percent of participants surveyed involved in educational activities, including school, general equivalency diploma (GED) preparation, and vocational training.³¹

A joint effort between the Chicago Police Department and the Chicago Housing Authority Police Department provides another promising model that specifically targets public housing. Funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the Building Interdiction Team Effort (BITE) secures the perimeters of buildings, challenges suspicious persons, patrols and searches common areas and vacant apartments, and conducts searches of occupied units with tenant consent. This concentrated effort on the part of police is sending a clear message to the gangs that these buildings contain family homes and are neither havens for criminal activity nor turf to be claimed. Preliminary results indicate that the program has improved overall safety and reduced drug trafficking in one housing development and drug-related violence in another.³²

The San Diego Urban Street Gang Drug Trafficking Enforcement Demonstration Project, funded by BJA, is another example of a successful approach. It targets young adult (ages 18 to 25) gang leaders identified by law enforcement as being involved in drug trafficking and gang-perpetrated violence and whose apprehension and prosecution would significantly alleviate or prevent an increase in drug trafficking, related violence, and economic disruption of the community. During the first 2 years, over 160 hardcore gang members were arrested and successfully prosecuted through these operations. Using enhanced prosecution strategies, targeted gang members received lengthy prison terms, which reduced gang violence in San Diego.³³

Enhancing Youth-Focused Community Oriented Policing

Research from the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence suggests that violence may be a response to young people's perception that the authorities cannot protect them or maintain order in their neighborhoods.³⁴ Other researchers believe that the fundamental challenge with youth and firearms is to convince youth that they can survive in their neighborhoods without being armed.³⁵ Successfully reducing firearm possession means reducing both perceived environmental dangers and actual opportunities for weapon-associated violence.³⁶ Because the fear of assault is often stated as the reason youth carry firearms, programs should be implemented that address the risk of victimization, improve school safety, and foster a secure community environment.³⁷

Law enforcement agencies increasingly emphasize that juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention are key elements of community oriented policing. However, many law enforcement agencies and community organizations lack the information and resources to intervene effectively in situations involving youthful offenders. Public safety and prevention strategies can provide comprehensive, targeted, community services and support to at-risk youth. The Action Plan supports youth-focused community oriented policing and believes it has the potential to contribute significantly to the reduction of crime, disorder, and fear.

In 1992, the New Haven (CT) Police Department and the Yale Child Study Center initiated the Child Development-Community Policing Program. Although not specifically dedicated to gun, gang, or drug reduction, this police department uses officers to work with children and their families to prevent violent juvenile crime and to help them cope with the stress caused by living with violence. A key element of the program is to increase police officers' level of confidence and competence in working with youth who have been victims of or witnesses to violence, recognizing a child's emotional needs, and understanding family dynamics. This approach is also intended to enable clinicians to intervene at the time of crisis and have a better understanding of the risk factors and problems that lead to violence and crime.

Other youth-focused community oriented policing strategies and

programs that have demonstrated promise and/or effectiveness include:

- o Reintegrative Policing Strategies, in which law enforcement officers help juveniles make the transition into the community following secure confinement.
- o Police Athletic Leagues (PAL), in which police provide a wide array of youth activities and programs that serve as alternatives to gang involvement, drug use, and other delinquency.
- o Futures Programs in Philadelphia, PA, and other jurisdictions, in which police officers serve as mentors and role models, focusing on the academic achievement of at-risk students.
- o Kids and Kops Day, part of the Santa Ana (CA) Police Department's youth-related activities, in which police officers spend a day with at-risk youth attending recreational and cultural events and participating in community activities.
- o Multidisciplinary team building, such as the Family Assessment Services Teams of the Norfolk (VA) Police Assisted Community Enforcement project, which addresses the needs of multiproblem families in targeted neighborhoods and serves as a vehicle for information sharing and problemsolving at the neighborhood level. The program led to a drop in violent crime in the targeted neighborhoods.

Promoting Maturity and Respect for Life

Developmental issues associated with a lack of maturity can contribute to youth violence. Young people seldom understand the full impact of their behavior.³⁸ This lack of awareness of consequences coupled with a tendency to respond with violence can be a lethal combination. Prevention strategies that help youth to understand the impact of and take responsibility for their actions and that demonstrate ways to handle problems without resorting to violence can be highly effective.³⁹ Such programs should be available to high-risk youth between the fifth and sixth grades, when violence-prone attitudes appear to increase and become entrenched.

Research has shown that in addition to the environment of fear in which many youth live, the culture of the illicit gun trade has popularized firearms and made backing down from arguments and "losing face" difficult for young people.⁴⁰ Self-defense, the need to show off, or the need to ensure respect and acquiescence from others can also contribute to youth gun violence.⁴¹ Other studies indicate that youth who respond aggressively to shame, who find guns exciting, who feel comfortable with aggression, and who believe that guns bring power and safety are most likely to engage in gun violence.⁴² Thus, prevention programs that promote self-esteem, respect for others, cultural pride, and nonviolent conflict resolution can be an effective antidote to the culture of

violence.⁴³ Adult programs focusing on parenting skills can complement youth gun violence prevention programs. Classes on gun violence and its impact on victims should be provided in juvenile justice programs, schools, and community settings.

Reducing Firearms Availability, Strengthening Regulations, and Applying Technological Innovations

Safer gun design, regulation, product liability, increased sales tax, firearm registration and licensure, background checks, and ammunition modification are ways to reduce the dangers and availability of guns.⁴⁴ Stricter legislation and assault weapon and illegal handgun bans are approaches almost unanimously suggested by researchers as ways to limit the accessibility of guns to youth.⁴⁵ The National Rifle Association also favors regulations relating to the access and misuse of firearms by minors, particularly at the State level.⁴⁶ In addition to these States, all but three of the States and Territories have code provisions relating to juvenile possession of firearms.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of local gun laws and policies shows that mandatory sentencing laws for felonies involving a firearm have prevented gun-related violent crime.⁴⁷ Restrictive handgun laws also show indications of effectiveness.⁴⁸ Other types of laws have not been evaluated adequately to determine their effectiveness.

Technological changes are an important approach to reducing both youth gun violence and the extensive use of guns against their owners. Low prices⁴⁹ and innovations in firearm and ammunition manufacturing⁵⁰ further increase the lethal nature of youth gun violence. Firearm design requirements are both technological and legal interventions that can decrease accessibility of deadly weapons by young people.

Preventing and Treating Drug Abuse

Additional support for drug and alcohol prevention and treatment is also an effective anti-violence strategy.⁵¹ Reducing the illicit drug trade would reduce drug-related violence as well as drug-induced violence. In addition, researchers have shown that a reduction in the number of juveniles selling drugs is likely to reduce the carrying of concealed weapons, particularly guns.⁵²

The 1995 National Drug Control Strategy⁵³ empowers communities to respond to their own drug problem through initiatives such as community policing and the Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Program. The Strategy seeks to reduce chronic, hardcore drug use through treatment, including the support of drug courts, substance abuse treatment in detention and secure confinement facilities, and a Substance Abuse Performance Partnership, which coordinates the activities of national substance abuse prevention organizations. Finally, it places critical emphasis on source countries, focusing on programs to achieve democratic institution

building, dismantling narcotics trafficking organizations, and interdicting drugs.

OJJDP supports the implementation of the Congress of National Black Churches' National Anti-Drug/Violence Campaign's (NADVC's) Technical Assistance and Training Program. This program implements national training and technical assistance designed to increase public awareness and mobilize residents to address the problems of drug abuse and related crimes in targeted communities throughout the United States. It also works to summon, focus, and coordinate church, public, and community leadership to launch local anti-drug campaigns. This campaign is being implemented in 37 cities involving 1,760 clergy and affecting about 500,000 members. NADVC has helped the sites leverage over \$13.4 million in direct funding to local site anti-drug, anti-violence initiatives.

Through its Community Anti-Drug Abuse Technical Assistance Voucher Project, OJJDP assists the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise (NCNE) to extend its outreach to community-based grassroots organizations that are working to solve the problem of juvenile drug abuse. The project has three goals:

- o To allow various neighborhood groups to inexpensively purchase needed services through the use of technical assistance vouchers disbursed by NCNE.
- o To demonstrate the cost-effective use of vouchers to help neighborhood groups secure technical assistance for anti-drug abuse projects to serve high-risk youth.
- o To extend OJJDP technical assistance to groups that are traditionally excluded because they lack the administrative sophistication, technical and grantsmanship skills, and resources to participate in traditional competitive grant programs.

NCNE provides support to community groups in developing and implementing a strategy under DOJ's Operation Weed and Seed program; functions as a clearinghouse for information on community anti-drug prevention initiatives; and reviews technical assistance applications to select up to 25 eligible community-based, anti-drug programs for award vouchers. Vouchers, which range in value from \$1,000 to \$10,000, can be used for planning, proposal writing, program promotion, legal assistance, financial management, and other activities.

Selection of voucher awardees and amounts is determined by the degree to which applicants meet the following criteria: not previously funded by NCNE; lack of access to traditional funding sources; need for technical assistance and training; small budget; comprehensiveness of youth anti-drug programs; and clarity and feasibility of strategies presented in the application to NCNE.

Building Community and Increasing Opportunity

Youth gun and drug violence researchers agree that the strategies suggested above should be accomplished by a broad coalition of individuals and organizations.⁵⁴ Crime control professionals, public health and other health professionals, victims' families, educators, lawmakers and criminologists, gun control groups, community-based organizations, the elderly, the armed services, the Federal Communications Commission, and the U.S. Civil Rights Commission can all participate in advocating for the freedom of our youth from gun, gang, and drug violence.

Youth who embrace the culture of violence are most likely to be those who feel that they have no stake in society and no trust in the adults who are supposed to provide them with safety and guidance. Communities must address the culture of violence and lack of opportunity and alternatives, reaching out to youth who feel disenfranchised from the adult world and providing them with positive opportunities.⁵⁵ An effective strategy is one that includes young people as a resource and provides legitimate activities and opportunities for them.⁵⁶

Research has shown that high levels of poverty, high rates of single-parent households, educational failure, and a widespread sense of economic hopelessness exacerbate the cycle of fear or diffusion phenomenon and increase the use of guns by young people.⁵⁷ Youth drug involvement, crime in neighborhoods, and violence portrayed in the media are also factors contributing to the use of guns by young people.⁵⁸ Therefore, the Action Plan endorses support and service systems for families and neighborhoods that complement any intervention focused on the individual.

In the past decade, Knoxville, TN, along with many other cities, experienced a growth in crime and drug-related problems in its public housing communities. During this same time, communications and liaison between the police department and the municipal housing authority, the Knoxville Community Development Corporation (KCDC), were unsatisfactory. Many field officers were unhappy with KCDC because they felt the housing authority was not sufficiently addressing crime. KCDC saw its role as limited to the housing business and felt the police department should be the agency to address all crime-related issues.

Members of the police department and KCDC took action to become involved in a citywide, multiagency committee to look at the city's crime problem. From this group, members of the police department and KCDC developed a strong working relationship and collaborated to examine ways to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in KCDC housing projects.

Significant outcomes in KCDC housing projects have been produced through Operation Safe Home, which is part of the broader collaborative efforts of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and DOJ. Drug dealing has been disrupted. Many drug offenders have been evicted, making housing developments safer. Fences have been installed. Shrubbery has been cut back to

reveal criminals' hiding places. Where there was little or poor lighting, new high-pressure sodium lights have been installed, and a general cleanup has taken place. Diversity training is being provided to police department employees to help them gain a better understanding of cultural differences and to facilitate the process of community oriented policing. As a result of the drug abuse prevention education initiatives and the progressive intervention of the collaboration, violent crimes in Knoxville for 1993 were on the decline.⁵⁹

Implementing Comprehensive Curfew Initiatives

Communities are increasingly recognizing the importance of integrating curfew legislation with youth services such as job training and placement opportunities, individual and family counseling programs, and youth development recreational programs, in an effort to further reduce juvenile crime and victimization.

The curfew program in Phoenix, AZ, illustrates one city's multifaceted response to juvenile curfew violations. A review of an ineffective curfew ordinance enacted in 1968 led to the formation of a partnership between the police department and the Parks, Recreation, and Library Department. Curfew violators, detained by police, are supervised by recreation specialists at the city's gymnasiums. They are counseled and engaged in recreational activities until parents arrive. An additional aspect of the Phoenix curfew program involves targeting juvenile curfew violators who are also gang members. They, too, are counseled and exposed to positive alternatives to gang affiliation. Some curfew offenders receive followup care to determine if further support services are needed. These curfew programs have worked because other services, such as recreation and parental counseling, are part of an integrated strategy.

Federal Action Steps

Enhance Law Enforcement's Capacity To Respond to Juvenile Crime and Drug Trafficking

Through its law enforcement and training contract, OJJDP will provide training and technical assistance to help law enforcement agencies improve their capabilities to respond to serious juvenile crime and contribute more effectively to delinquency prevention.

HUD will support agency efforts to combat drug trafficking in public and Native American housing developments by encouraging housing authorities to address drug-related activities, reimbursing local law enforcement agencies, enhancing security in housing developments, and providing social services to residents.

ATF's Project Uptown will address the problem of armed gangs and armed narcotics trafficking in public housing. The New York City Uptown initiative involves the concentration of enforcement resources by ATF, the New York Housing Authority Police Department,

and the Office of the U.S. Attorney in selected public housing developments to reduce gang-related violence.

With experience gained through Project Uptown, ATF, in cooperation with HUD, developed a successful strategy and guidebook entitled Addressing Violent Crime in Public Housing Developments,⁶⁰ which it will disseminate to interested individuals.

To enable the criminal justice system to react more effectively to the problem of youth and drugs, NIJ will fund research to assess the magnitude of youth gang involvement in drug trafficking.

Support Interagency Gun and Drug Interdiction and Suppression Strategies

The Coordinating Council will support the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) in implementing its National Drug Control Strategy to eradicate drug sources and reduce the demand for drugs.

BJA will establish and fund a national law enforcement organization to provide training and administrative support to the Interstate Firearms Trafficking Compact, composed of 14 States and the District of Columbia, which works to eliminate illegal gun trafficking and to improve the investigation and prosecution of cases involving the criminal use of firearms.

DOJ will support continuation of interagency partnerships that promote comprehensive, community-based gun interdiction strategies and will work with community organizations to ensure that schools, public housing developments, and other high-priority settings are free from gun violence.

ATF will implement the Violence Reduction Alliance (VRA), a comprehensive, nationwide strategy to stop illegal firearms trafficking. VRA will coordinate the resources of Federal, State, and local law enforcement to combat and prosecute violent criminals and also target for prosecution illegal firearms traffickers who supply firearms to violent criminals. Through VRA, ATF will provide support to investigative efforts with Project LEAD, the illegal firearms trafficking data base, and ATF's National Firearms Tracing Center.

BJA will document promising suppression and interdiction strategies to assist other jurisdictions that wish to implement such approaches.

BJA and OJJDP will provide funds to assist State and local jurisdictions to develop and implement new or enhanced strategies to prevent the illegal possession and use of firearms by youth.

Get Guns Out of Schools

The Department of Education (ED) will provide guidance to local schools and law enforcement agencies to implement the Gun-Free

Schools Act of 1994, 8 U.S.C. Section 14601. The law requires States that receive Federal elementary and secondary education funds to require school districts to expel for at least 1 year any student who brings a gun to school, subject to certain exceptions. The law also requires local education agencies that receive Federal funding to adopt a mandatory policy of referring students who bring firearms or other weapons to school to law enforcement agencies.

ED will work with OJJDP to support alternative education programs to keep youth expelled for weapons violations off the streets.

ATF will continue to trace all firearms recovered from juveniles at school or at the scene of a crime through the juvenile firearms tracing initiative operating at the National Tracing Center. When warranted, ATF will investigate and recommend to the local U.S. Attorney's Office for prosecution those individuals found to be providing firearms illegally to juveniles. ATF will also analyze the juvenile firearms trace data to determine trends in armed juvenile crime and frequent sources of firearms for juveniles. This program will permit Federal law enforcement to more accurately gauge the extent of firearms in schools and to direct limited Federal prosecution resources in the most effective manner.

Support U.S. Attorneys' Efforts To Advance Local Anti-Crime Initiatives

U.S. Attorneys' offices in each Federal Judicial District will work with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to identify, target, and investigate individuals who engage in illegal trafficking, sales, possession, or use of firearms. Prosecution will be vigorously pursued through the Federal and State courts. Each office will implement the following strategies to support State and local efforts to get guns out of the hands of young people:

- o Enforce laws and prosecute violators in order to disrupt the illegal gun trade.
- o Work with State and local officials to enhance enforcement of laws concerning illegal trafficking in firearms and the use of guns to commit crimes.
- o Provide encouragement to State and local agencies to trace guns seized from juveniles through ATF's juvenile firearms tracing program.
- o Launch targeted enforcement efforts related to juveniles' involvement in firearms trafficking, sales, possession, or use.
- o Actively participate in delinquency prevention efforts through Operation Weed and Seed and other community-based initiatives.
- o Use public outreach to promote increased personal responsibility among youth concerning the use of guns.

Target Youth Gang Violence

Federal agencies will increase their efforts to work cooperatively at the national, State, and local levels to intervene in youth gang activities. The agencies will use their particular areas of expertise in a comprehensive effort to address the pervasive, multifaceted problems of youth gangs and associated violence. DOJ will provide leadership in implementing gang suppression and intervention strategies, coordinating its efforts with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which has traditionally focused on community-based prevention efforts.

In a key element of the DOJ strategy, U.S. Attorneys will work with law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels through the operation of task forces to identify, apprehend, and prosecute certain gang-involved juvenile offenders in Federal and State courts.

NIJ will fund research to examine the criminal behavior of gang members, including motivation to join and remain in gangs, the role of gang life in criminal activity, and involvement in the illegal economy. In addition, NIJ will conduct research on the effectiveness of special anti-gang legislation and gang prosecution units.

BJA, OJJDP, and HHS will coordinate, evaluate, and enhance their gang prevention, intervention, and suppression activities. Research will focus on identifying the prevalence and characteristics of violent gangs; examining gang behavior; evaluating prevention and intervention strategies; and analyzing the relationship among gang participation, gang delinquency, and individual violence.

BJA will continue to support the Comprehensive Gang Initiative, which provides funds to eight local jurisdictions including four sites that participate in the Comprehensive Communities Program.

OJJDP will continue to support the Comprehensive Response Initiative, including the activities of the National Youth Gang Center, the five demonstration sites of the Gang Suppression Intervention Program, the independent evaluation of this demonstration effort, the provision of training and technical assistance to these demonstration sites, and the targeted acquisition and dissemination of youth gang-related resources through the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse.

OJJDP will expand the implementation of the comprehensive model developed through the Gang Suppression and Intervention Program by up to six additional demonstration sites, as part of OJJDP's Safe-Futures program. These additional demonstration sites will also benefit from the other components of the Comprehensive Response Initiative.

OJJDP will establish a Gang Consortium, as part of OJJDP's

Comprehensive Response Initiative, to facilitate and expand ongoing coordination and enhance youth gang prevention, intervention, and suppression policies and activities, including information exchange and technical assistance services of the many Federal agencies with program emphasis on youth gangs and related problems.

OJJDP will continue to support research of various gangs and gang-related issues. OJJDP will also continue to support the expansion of the Boys & Girls Clubs' Targeted Outreach Program to over 30 more sites, which will serve more than 1,500 additional high-risk and gang-involved youth.

HHS' Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) has awarded six grants to implement action plans developed through the Youth Gang Drug Prevention Program. In FY 1994, FYSB awarded 21 grants under this program to develop 5-year action plans to transform the environment, circumstances, and attitudes that put youth at risk for unhealthy behaviors. The grantees were required to work closely with youth, parents, community-based organizations, police departments, schools, churches, and local businesses to determine the most critical developmental needs of youth, identify gaps in services, and support schools, health systems, and other agencies in collaborative efforts to serve youth.

Advance Youth-Focused Community Oriented Policing

In a joint effort, DOJ's Community Oriented Policing Service Office, the Community Relations Service, and OJJDP will develop a Youth-Focused Community Oriented Policing Initiative designed to assist up to 31 communities in implementing effective community oriented policing strategies that focus on juvenile crime, disorder, and related community problems.

Although each program implemented will focus on a different set of problems within the community, a set of similar activities will be undertaken to:

- o Involve the community and youth in problem identification and resolution.
- o Enhance law enforcement in the community.
- o Increase information sharing among key agencies, organizations, and the community.
- o Enhance linkages and cooperation among community agencies and organizations.
- o Provide a common framework for decisionmaking and a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to problemsolving.
- o Focus on prevention as well as intervention for delinquent and at-risk youth.

A youth-focused community oriented policing training and technical assistance package based on these principles will be developed.

Provide Information on Curfew Programs for Juveniles

In response to heightened concern among community residents as a result of increased violent juvenile crime and victimization, many jurisdictions have sought various means to protect themselves and the community at large while addressing the need to reduce the incidence of such crime and victimization. One method that has gained widespread use and attention is juvenile curfew ordinances. In order to help jurisdictions better understand curfews and the surrounding controversy, the elements of effective curfew ordinances, and their accompanying enforcement programs, OJJDP is developing a summary document designed to assist jurisdictions interested in establishing a juvenile curfew ordinance and enforcement program.

The document will describe the two-pronged strict scrutiny test some jurisdictions have addressed and satisfied for a curfew law or ordinance to be valid on Constitutional grounds. Up to seven curfew ordinances and their community-based curfew enforcement programs will be highlighted with information on resources, organizations, and jurisdictional contacts provided.

Disseminate Information on Model Youth Handgun Legislation and Strategies for Reducing Gun Violence

Pursuant to the Youth Handgun Safety Act, OJJDP funded the National Criminal Justice Association to survey State handgun laws and ordinances and convene a broad-based group of experts to develop a draft model youth handgun law, with commentary, for the Attorney General's consideration in formulating a proposed Model Code. Following the submission of the Model Code to Congress, DOJ will work with governors, attorneys general, and State legislators to encourage consideration and adoption of youth handgun legislation in all States and U.S. Territories.

To support community efforts to curb youth gun violence, OJJDP will also disseminate a directory of effective anti-gun programs. The directory will contain a summary of current research on youth gun violence, legislation, and contact information for organizations working to address this issue.

In addition, OJJDP will develop a guide to implementing promising strategies to reduce youth gun violence based upon site assessments of innovative programs by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Working with ED, OJJDP will broadly disseminate this information to U.S. Attorneys, chiefs of police, education organizations, juvenile justice specialists, and other agencies and individuals.

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) will provide information on youth violence and guns to agencies,

organizations, and individuals. This service will bridge the gap between criminal justice and public health research by synthesizing and integrating existing research and cataloging ongoing projects in these areas. In addition to providing an automated data base of criminal and juvenile justice firearms research, NCJRS provides specialized support services to assist clearinghouse users.

Provide Research on the Efficacy of Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Models

NIJ will support a project to develop a comprehensive analysis of drug treatment methods and programs for both juvenile and adult offenders.

Promote the Development of Juvenile Drug Courts

DOJ, through the Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Office, will provide grants to local governments to establish and operate drug court programs, including juvenile drug courts, that provide judicial supervision over nonviolent offenders with substance abuse problems. Drug court programs typically include mandatory, periodic drug testing; substance abuse treatment; diversion, probation, and other types of supervised release; and offender management and aftercare services. In addition, NIJ will continue to fund research to evaluate the effectiveness of drug court programs.

Support Community Efforts To Prevent Substance Abuse and Help Youth Resist Pressure To Use Drugs

The HHS Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) will provide Federal leadership in promoting the development of comprehensive, long-range, multidisciplinary, communitywide programs to address alcohol and other drug use prevention through the Community Partnership demonstration program. This program supports the development of coalitions or partnerships comprising public and private organizations, agencies, and institutions to identify the needs and service gaps in each community, to establish priorities, to coordinate new and established prevention programs in the community, and to help public and private organizations promote and support drug abuse prevention programs.

CSAP will also support the High-Risk Youth Demonstration Program,⁶¹ which seeks to counteract factors that place a child at risk for using alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Projects funded through this initiative will focus on three specific areas:

- o Decreasing the incidence and prevalence of alcohol and other drug use among high-risk youth.
- o Identifying and reducing factors in the individual, parents, extended family, school, peer group, and neighborhoods that place youth at risk for using alcohol and other drugs.
- o Increasing youth resiliency as a way to counter peer pressure to

use alcohol and other drugs.

CSAP will disseminate a directory of Federal programs that make grants to States, communities, and private agencies for drug abuse prevention and intervention activities. The directory describes the Federal grantmaking process, provides a catalog of applicable Federal grants and other funding programs, and includes information on additional Federal and private resources.

ONDCP will promote Federal agency partnerships with State, community, and national substance abuse prevention organizations to establish a united front against drug abuse.

Advance Technological Interventions To Reduce Gun Violence

Through its Science and Technology Division, NIJ is working to identify technologies to aid law enforcement in preventing the illegal acquisition and use of firearms. NIJ will continue to fund demonstration projects to assist in designing guns that are harder to conceal and have trigger safeties, fingerprint identification, and loading indicators.

ATF will explore and expand the investigative application of canines in firearms detection. This application was discovered as a result of training methodologies and protocols designed and developed by ATF for canines in explosives detection. ATF has instituted a program that uses its own canine team to detect explosives or firearms, recover evidence, and present demonstrations. Efforts are also under way to make this program available to State and local law enforcement.

NIJ will support the publication of Smart Gun Technology Requirements: A Preliminary Report. The primary purpose of the report is to state the requirements for a smart gun technology that would limit the use of firearms to authorized users. The secondary purpose of the report is technology transfer. For this report, Sandia National Laboratories has collected information from law enforcement agencies, firearm manufacturers, and others. In addition, NIJ will sponsor technology development to create a concealed weapon detection system.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Seize firearms from juvenile offenders in school and ensure that firearms information is submitted to ATF for tracing.
- o Develop appropriate intervention programs for youth who bring guns to schools.
- o Develop a broad-based, multi-disciplinary strategy to inform youth about the dangers of using firearms, prevent them from illegally possessing firearms, and rigorously enforce existing firearms laws as they relate to youth.

- o Review existing State firearms statutes in light of the Youth Handgun Safety Act and DOJ's Model Code, and make appropriate revisions to eliminate illegal handgun possession and use by youth.
- o Initiate interagency law enforcement efforts to develop comprehensive gun prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies such as gun buy-back programs.
- o Involve youth in planning and implementing youth-focused community oriented policing programs.
- o Consider using juvenile curfew laws and related programs as one element of a comprehensive approach to reducing juvenile violence and victimization.
- o Promote community-based collaborative efforts to assess community gun, gang, and drug problems; develop appropriate suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies; and mobilize community resources.
- o Establish juvenile drug courts or sessions as a community resource to address youth substance abuse.
- o Establish, support, and enforce drug-free and gun-free zones.
- o Teach youth about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and help youth develop positive social skills.

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4. Provide Opportunities for Children and Youth

Overview

What future do children envision for themselves? What opportunities are presented to them as they grow up? Many children grow up amid poverty, violence, and illness. They see their families, friends, and communities suffering from the effects of alcoholism, unemployment, incarceration, AIDS, or a lack of educational opportunities. Many children, however, are resilient and manage to succeed despite a negative environment. Although not all children are faced with adverse circumstances, our Nation's well-being requires that every child in every community be guaranteed the opportunity to reach his or her full potential.

Providing children with the opportunity to develop positive behaviors is the foundation of most efforts to prevent youth crime and violence. For nearly three decades, educators, policymakers, and criminal justice professionals have sought effective crime prevention strategies. Although some communities are experiencing success, the country is plagued with escalating juvenile violence, which has compelled policymakers to turn their attention from prevention to "get tough" approaches. But we know now what works. Effective strategies include comprehensive approaches that provide opportunities for education, mentoring, conflict resolution training, and safety; engage youth and their families; and are community-based and integrated.¹

This section of the Action Plan emphasizes the importance of enhancing delinquency prevention efforts and coordinating them throughout the community. It focuses on what we know about factors that put youth at risk of becoming delinquent or serious and violent offenders as well as those that protect youth. It encourages communities to take steps to reduce characteristics that contribute to delinquency while strengthening characteristics that nurture youth. This section emphasizes the importance of truancy reduction and safe school programs and illustrates the Coordinating Council's strong support of youth involvement in community crime and violence prevention strategies. The section concludes that

positive youth skill building, through mentoring, conflict resolution, and community service, can work to prevent or reduce juvenile delinquency and serious juvenile violence, especially when coordinated with broader communitywide efforts.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

Most adolescents are on a healthy path to productive adult lives. There is evidence, however, that 25 percent of adolescents are at significant risk of veering off that path because they frequently engage in behaviors with negative consequences, such as alcohol or other drug abuse, unprotected sexual activity, delinquency, or violence. Another 25 percent of adolescents, who engage in fewer of these behaviors, are at moderate risk.²

A 1992 study conducted by the Carnegie Foundation determined that only 60 percent of an adolescent's nonsleeping time is taken up by school, homework, chores, meals, or employment. Many adolescents spend the remaining 40 percent of their nonsleeping time alone, with peers without adult supervision, or with adults who might negatively influence their behavior.³ A recent study found that 27 percent of eighth graders spent 2 or more hours alone after school and that low-income youth were more likely than others to be home alone for 3 or more hours.⁴ It is not surprising, therefore, that most violent crimes committed by juveniles take place at the close of the school day, when fewer opportunities for constructive activities are available.

In recent years, the capacity of America's low-income rural and urban communities to provide critical positive activities or environments has declined. Public schools in many areas have deteriorated, and the quality of public education has been compromised. City parks and recreation centers are in disrepair, and financial support for youth facilities and programs has decreased,⁵ leaving high-risk environments for youth.

The demand for an immediate solution to this problem, which commands considerable public attention, has been compounded by a historical impatience with prevention strategies in which results may be long in coming and benefits--that is, crimes not committed--are extremely difficult to measure. The good news, however, is that three decades of seeking effective prevention strategies finally have netted results.

The public health model has been particularly useful in developing a strong scientific process and assessment of prevention activities.

Risk Factors for Delinquency

Some youth lack healthy parental guidance and monitoring. Some youth have cognitive and psychological deficits that make social and academic success difficult. Some attend disorganized and disruptive schools and fail to engage in academic pursuits. Some

live in chaotic neighborhoods with few resources or outlets for positive social activities. Some are excluded from prosocial peer groups and have few, if any, wholesome friends.

These risk factors, particularly when several are present, increase the likelihood of delinquency and violence. Conditions such as maltreatment or neglect by family members and others, a community with a large population of delinquent juveniles and gangs, ready access to drugs and guns, and an unsafe school increase the chance that a youth will make unhealthy or unlawful choices.

The study of Causes and Correlates of Delinquency, sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP),⁶ found the influence of peers and parents to be strong risk factors in the causes of delinquency.

Protective Factors

Some youth who experience child abuse, neglect, poverty, poor health, or other risk factors do not become juvenile delinquents, school drop-outs, or teenage parents. These youth have the benefit of a combination of protective factors that help guide them in making healthy choices.

A resilient temperament and the development of close relationships with parents and other role models who provide encouragement, healthy beliefs, and clear standards of behavior offer protection from negative environmental influences.⁷ In general, healthy youth have resources in their families and communities that help them control their behavior and provide them with the skills and opportunities to be successful. Often referred to as protective factors, these resources reduce the chance that youth will become involved in serious delinquency.

Prevention strategies seek to reduce existing risk factors and provide protective factors that are missing from a youth's environment. In many ways, prevention strategies attempt to provide for at-risk children what effective parents and communities provide in the natural course of youth development. The most effective prevention strategies attend to family and community deficits over a sustained period of time.

The Social Development Strategy suggests that opportunities, skills, and recognition lead to healthy behaviors. The underlying theme of this strategy is to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in the lives of at-risk children. The identification of risk factors and protective factors has been an important step in prevention, assisting educators and practitioners in developing more effective programs for youth.

Experts studying the impact of cultural influences on youth believe that conditions such as poverty, unemployment, discrimination, poor health, poor education, and despair lay the foundation for alcohol and other drug-related problems. These conditions must be

alleviated. Risk factor research has become more comprehensive and now includes the following domains: individual, family, school, peer group, and community. Protective factor research, however, has primarily identified strategies that focus on the individual.

Although it is important to focus on increasing skills or abilities of the individual, it is equally imperative to focus on changing and improving social systems that create these conditions. The following elements increase the likelihood of successful change:

- o Protective factors in the family, including having parents who demonstrate love and caring for their children, who are involved in their children's activities, and who monitor and supervise their children's behaviors. Other family-oriented protective factors include family stability and adequate financial resources.

- o Positive personal attributes such as intelligence, a steady disposition, social skills (including the ability to solve problems without resorting to violence), and a conventional belief system.

- o Schools that positively shape behavior of young children and teenagers due to strong policies on violence and drugs. Teachers who care about students and demonstrate concern for their students' social and academic growth also help to ensure successful development. When youth are prepared for school, succeed in school, and are committed to the education system, they are less likely to become delinquents.

- o Communities that provide opportunities and social controls. Communities that exhibit a high level of organization and cooperation, with neighbors working together to meet common objectives, channel youth behavior toward positive outcomes. For example, communities with active PTA's, afterschool activities, churches and religious organizations, and youth social clubs help to protect youth from the temptations and hazards that exist in society.

- o Youth participation in and acceptance by prosocial peer groups. Peer influence is particularly important during adolescence.

- o Adult supervision of and involvement in youth peer group activities, to provide added protection against developing delinquent behavior.

Cumulative Impact of Protective Factors

Healthy growth and development are most likely to occur when protective factors are sustained throughout these areas of influence. A nurturing family, positive friendships, a good education, and career opportunities combine as important factors to ensure positive outcomes for youth, not only in preventing delinquency but also in preventing substance abuse, violent behavior, teenage pregnancy, and school dropout. Parents should attempt to provide their children with this constellation of protective factors continuously over the course of their

development.

Comprehensive Delinquency Prevention

The best delinquency prevention strategies are comprehensive, reducing risk and developing protective factors in each child and in families, schools, communities, and peers. Researchers have found that collective strategies with multiple protective programs, rather than those that address single risk factors, have a sizable impact on reducing delinquency.⁸ Activities that take place under one roof in the community and that reflect the cultural values of participants are more likely to engage the individuals they are meant to serve. This means that to effectively reduce youth violence, strategies must engage the entire spectrum of systems and individuals impacting a young person's life.

Serious delinquency and youth violence are most likely to occur in youth exposed to multiple risk factors, multiple deficits of protective factors, and multiple concurrent problem behaviors. Consequently, prevention strategies need to deal simultaneously with a host of problems and require comprehensive strategies. Moreover, because risk factors and concurrent problem behaviors tend to interact with one another, it is important that prevention strategies deal with all of these factors in an integrated fashion. This recommendation is consistent with what we know about resilient youth. Even high-risk youth can avoid involvement in delinquency if they experience many protective factors.⁹

Improving education and youth employment opportunities, enhancing social skills, and providing youth with mentors and adult role models are essential components of delinquency prevention. Three decades of research indicate that increased opportunities for success, meaningful activities, positive role models, consistent moral standards, and viable educational and employment opportunities have a prominent place in the Nation's crime control strategy.

Decades of research also demonstrate that delinquency prevention is cost effective. According to one conservative estimate, the average cost of incarcerating a juvenile for 1 year is close to \$34,000.¹⁰ Others put the figure between \$35,000 and \$64,000.¹¹ In addition, the total cost of a young adult's (ages 18 to 23) serious, violent criminal career is estimated to be \$1.1 million.¹² In contrast, the current cost of Head Start's intervention program, which is effective in developing school readiness skills among high-risk children and reduction in later delinquency, is \$4,300 per year per child. Similarly, a delinquency prevention program in California produced a direct savings to law enforcement and the juvenile justice system of \$1.40 for every \$1 spent on prevention.¹³

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

Delinquency Prevention Works

We know that there are effective programs that reduce delinquency and show promise for stemming the rising tide of delinquency and youth violence. Materials on this research published by OJJDP and others summarize much of the treatment and evaluation literature and identify model programs that are worthy of replication. Among the best of these reports are those of Lipsey,¹⁴ Tolan and Guerra,¹⁵ Howell,¹⁶ Thornberry,¹⁷ and Mendel.¹⁸

Truancy Reduction

Too many of America's young people attend school on an irregular basis, resulting in their failure to gain a solid foundation of basic academic skills. These young people have not yet officially dropped out of school and they are not on an extended absence due to illness. They are truants--at risk of academic failure and dropping out of school at age 16, or earlier, and never obtaining the skills necessary to become contributing members of society. Truancy has been rated among the top 10 problems facing schools, with the daily absentee rate as high as 30 percent in some cities. As a number of studies have documented,¹⁹ high rates of truancy are linked to high daytime burglary rates and vandalism. Truancy is not a problem restricted to the education and law enforcement communities. It has an even more important impact on the truant's ability to learn, develop interpersonal relationships, and ultimately complete school and gain the knowledge and skills necessary for higher education and/or future employment. In order to comprehensively address the truancy problem, a range of interested parties must join together to coordinate a response. These parties include schools, law enforcement agencies, parents, businesses, judicial and social services agencies, and community and youth organizations.

Communities have a responsibility to provide an appropriate education for all youth in a disciplined, safe, and secure environment. Yet school systems are frequently presented with students who have specific instructional and/or social problems that make it difficult to achieve in the regular school environment with a traditional curriculum. A host of problems from the home and the community emerge in the classroom and require special handling. Teachers may observe signs of hunger, child abuse, neglect, alcohol or other drug abuse, learning disabilities, developmental problems, socialization problems, behavior disorders, gang involvement, and a general lack of school readiness.

In order to provide prevention and early intervention for youth at risk of truancy, as well as youth who are truant, the school system needs the active support and participation of parents, students, the community, law enforcement, and businesses. A number of jurisdictions across the country have truancy prevention and intervention programs that are collaborative initiatives, and they are listed in the National School Safety Center publication *Increasing Student Attendance*.²⁰ In addition, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' (NCJFCJ) report, *A New Approach to Runaway, Truant, Substance Abusing and Beyond Control*

Children,²¹ describes innovative processes and approaches that individual communities might adopt to more adequately address this population of youth. NCJFCJ has also updated its Disposition Resource Manual²² that informs judges and juvenile court personnel about various programs that hold promise or have proven positive results. Within the Manual, several programs are provided that address the problem of truancy.

Truancy reduction programs are having positive effects on both school attendance and juvenile crime. A truancy reduction program in the Oklahoma City public school system reported a steady decline in the dropout rate from 5.9 percent to 4.1 percent during the 1991-92 school year.²³ The Truancy Habits Reduced, Increasing Valuable Education (THRIVE) program is a partnership between the school system and law enforcement to reduce truancy and crime during school hours. Law enforcement officers bring in juveniles who are out of school without an excuse and notify parents who must pick up their children. If parents cannot be located, juveniles are sent to the Oklahoma County Youth Services Agency until they can be picked up.

Another truancy prevention program impacting elementary and middle school attendance and disciplinary referrals is Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) of Portland, OR. SEI is a community-based organization that began in 1981 and has served more than 12,000 inner-city school students. The program offers classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, cultural enrichment, career counseling, and summer outreach for 450 high-risk children every year. SEI staff work with participants in their schools, provide tutoring, encourage academic excellence, and respond to crises in the school.

In addition, SEI sponsors field trips, sporting activities, and afterschool supervision. A key component of the program is for staff to work with families and help parents become more active in preventing truancy. In 1994, SEI participants had improved school attendance and disciplinary referrals dropped dramatically. Students in elementary school raised their grades by 47 percent and middle school students by 70 percent.²⁴

Mentoring

Mentoring has been defined as a "sustained, close, developmental relationship between an older, more experienced individual and a younger person, with the goal of building character and competence on the part of the prot, g,."²⁵ Usually the relationship involves regular contact over a sustained period of time and involves mutual commitment, respect, and loyalty.

Mentoring has proved to be a valuable strategy for helping disadvantaged youth. A mentoring relationship can enrich children's lives, address the isolation of some youth from adult contact, and provide support and advocacy for at-risk children. Research has indicated that mentoring relationships can have a positive impact on a youth's attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.²⁶

Other studies document the positive effects of cross-cultural mentoring.²⁷

Bigs in Blue is an innovative mentoring program developed by the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Warren County, NJ, that matches at-risk youth with police officer mentors. They employ prevention and intervention strategies to help youngsters from chaotic home environments cope with peer pressure, succeed in school, receive career guidance, and make sound life choices. Evaluations completed by parents, volunteers, and youth indicate reductions in delinquency and court involvement and improvement in school attendance, behavior, and grades.²⁸

Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago, IL, the largest public housing development in the country, has implemented a Mentoring and Rites of Passage program designed to assist adolescents in their transition to adulthood. Mentors meet with groups of 10 to 15 youths of similar ages at least twice a week and address such areas as self-concept, sexual identity and awareness, communications and decisionmaking, and cultural heritage appreciation. Evaluations of participants are conducted every 6 months to track their interpretation of standard social interactions and situations, self-reported violent behavior and self concept, hospital visits related to violence, and calls to the police about violent events in the housing project.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution encompasses creative problemsolving strategies in which parties in dispute collaborate by expressing their points of view, voicing their interests, and finding mutually acceptable solutions. Conflict resolution programs recognize that conflict is natural and that people can learn new skills to deal with conflict in appropriate, nonviolent ways. The programs appear to be most effective when they are comprehensive and involve multiple components such as moral reasoning, anger control, social skills development, and collaborative problemsolving methods.

William DeJong, a lecturer at the Harvard School of Public Health, reports in the 1994 fall issue of *School Safety*: "The best school-based violence prevention programs seek to do more than reach the individual child. They instead try to change the total school environment, to create a safe community that lives by a credo of nonviolence and multicultural appreciation."²⁹ Effective conflict resolution programs achieve the following goals:

- o Enable children to respond nonviolently to conflict, using the conflict resolution strategies of negotiation, mediation, and group problemsolving.
- o Develop educators' competence to manage behavior in school without coercion, using a program that teaches students responsibility and self-discipline.

o Mobilize community involvement in violence prevention through education programs and services, such as expanding the role of youth as effective citizens beyond the school into the community.

Conflict resolution programs in schools generally fall into one of three models: mediation, curriculum integration, or peaceable schools. The peaceable schools model synthesizes the elements of the first two models.

Recognizing the importance of directly involving youth in conflict resolution, many school communities are employing peer mediation as a violence prevention strategy. In these programs, specially trained student mediators work with their peers to find resolutions to conflicts. Mediation programs reduce the use of traditional disciplinary actions such as suspension, detention, and expulsion; encourage effective problemsolving; decrease the need for teacher involvement in student conflicts; and improve school climate.

An example of a mediation program is We Can Work It Out, developed by the National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law and the National Crime Prevention Council. The program promotes mediation, negotiation, or other nonlitigating methods as strategies to settle unresolved confrontations and fighting. The program emphasizes the importance of showing students that many of the problems that are often taken to court might be solved more effectively through cooperative methods, such as peer mediation.

In the curriculum integration approach, teachers deliver daily lessons in conflict resolution, infuse conflict resolution concepts and skills into core curriculum areas, and model effective conflict resolution in their management of the classroom. Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) is a curriculum integration approach to conflict resolution for children from kindergarten through sixth grade. It is designed to enhance the social competence and understanding of elementary school children and to facilitate educational processes such as self-control, emotional awareness, and interpersonal problemsolving skills that are integrated into the curriculum. An evaluation of PATHS shows that the program is effective for both low- and high-risk children in increasing management and understanding of emotional experiences.³⁰

Peaceable school programs seek to create schools in which conflict resolution has been integrated at every level. Ultimately, conflict resolution skills are adopted by every member of the school community, creating a school climate that encourages caring, honesty, cooperation, and appreciation for diversity. Peaceable school programs incorporate conflict resolution skills and noncoercive school and classroom management strategies directly into the classroom curriculum. Peaceable schools challenge youth and adults to believe and act on the understanding that a nonviolent, diverse society is a realistic goal.

In schools in New York and other cities, the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) is implemented as a peaceable schools

model of conflict resolution. The RCCP approach requires schools to participate in the curriculum for a year or more; in schools with a strong core of teachers who regularly use the curriculum, the student mediation program may be added. The RCCP approach to conflict resolution integrates two primary components: the RCCP elementary and secondary curriculum and the RCCP student mediation program. A third component-- the parent training curriculum-- introduces RCCP principles into the home to send youth a consistent message from parents and teachers, who thus reinforce each other on this crucial issue.

Safe Schools and Safe Havens

Community schools and family centers provide youth with safe spaces for productive alternatives to occupy out-of-school and weekend time. They also provide a central space for integrating various promising strategies and programs, such as mentoring, conflict resolution, and employment training. These programs generally provide a range of educational, recreational, and cultural activities in a supervised environment with trained staff.

For years Boys and Girls Clubs of America have been engaged in comprehensive strategies to help their members build self-esteem, acquire honest values, and pursue productive futures. These clubs also work specifically to prevent gang involvement. Supported in part by Federal funding, the clubs have developed partnerships with corporations, private foundations, individuals, and government agencies. According to a Columbia University study, Boys and Girls Clubs have been effective in increasing rates of school attendance and improving academic performance. In addition, Clubs in public housing projects have reduced the juvenile crime rate by 13 percent.³¹

Members of the Corporation for National Service's (CNS') AmeriCorps program have established a Safe Corridors program in eight elementary schools in Philadelphia. The program is designed to ensure the safe passage of youth to and from school by using 80 parent volunteers who patrol the streets around the schools in the mornings and afternoons. The volunteers design the program structure, uniforms, and policies, and are responsible for recruiting other parents to carry out the program. The Safe Corridors program has been so successful in increasing safety that the city is offering it as a model for statewide implementation.

In Seattle, WA, AmeriCorps members staff 7 Safe Haven sites that provide an opportunity for 1,000 at-risk youth to participate in workshops, tutoring and mentoring programs, and conflict resolution sessions. The programs are designed to increase self-esteem, provide educational opportunities, and reduce violent behavior.

National and Community Service Opportunities

CNS, established in 1993 to engage citizens of all ages and backgrounds in community service, operates AmeriCorps and Learn and

Serve America. AmeriCorps participants provide a year or two of public service in exchange for education awards to finance college or other educational training or to pay back student loans.

Volunteers have helped elementary school students improve their reading skills and scores in Kentucky, patrolled recreation areas in New York City, assisted law enforcement and community members in closing crack houses in Kansas City, and helped residents recover from natural disasters in California and the Midwest.

Through the Learn and Serve America program, school-age youth serve their communities by teaching younger students about violence prevention; designing crime prevention and public safety exhibits for local fairs; helping other youth to combat negative peer pressure; eliminating graffiti in their communities; establishing Junior Neighborhood Watch programs; and helping to identify physical problems in the community, such as broken lighting, overgrown foliage that blocks clear views of public places, and run-down parks.

One example of an effective community-building program is the Teens as Resources Against Drugs (TARAD) project, funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This youth-led prevention program combats delinquency by inspiring teens to fight drug activity in their communities. Teens in New York City, Evansville, IN, and three South Carolina communities led the way in their schools and neighborhoods by creating anti-drug messages on murals; disseminating accurate facts about drugs and teaching their peers healthy life choices; writing, choreographing, and producing plays and puppet shows dramatizing the dangers of drug use; and organizing community events such as fairs and substance-free New Year's Eve parties. The teens report positive attitude changes about drug use among their peers. Another measure of success is that local agencies, groups, and organizations have assumed funding of most of the programs.³²

Federal Action Steps

Launch an Initiative To Address the Problem of Youth Outside the Educational Mainstream

The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Education (ED) will implement a joint initiative directed at youth who are in danger of leaving or who have left the educational mainstream. The initiative will heighten public awareness of this increasing problem and identify effective and promising programs that are finding solutions. It will provide assistance to selected jurisdictions and sites to develop or enhance programs for youth outside the educational mainstream, including youth who are truant, dropouts, afraid to go to school, suspended, or expelled (for example, for weapon possession), or need to be reintegrated into the mainstream from the juvenile justice system.

To help achieve the goals and objectives of this initiative, 4 regional forums and 10 training and technical assistance programs

will be held to address the needs of these youth. One component will be a partnership between schools, law enforcement, and juvenile and family court judges. Collaborative efforts will focus on prevention, early intervention, and supportive services.

Provide Mentoring Opportunities for Youth

OJJDP will provide programmatic support, technical assistance, and training to 41 mentoring programs, funded under the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP).

The Interagency Council on Mentoring, which includes representatives from the Domestic Policy Council; the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Labor (DOL), Defense, Education, and Justice; and the CNS, will continue to identify existing mentoring programs, investigate research issues, and explore opportunities for collaboration. The Council is publishing a report entitled Making the Most of Mentoring, which summarizes current mentoring efforts and proposes a three-part mentoring strategy.

Provide Guidance on School-Based Conflict Resolution Programs

OJJDP, in partnership with ED, will publish a guide and provide training seminars to help school administrators, teachers, and other interested parties understand the concept of conflict resolution and its usefulness in preventing violence and teaching positive life skills. The guide will be a tool for schools and communities to use in their strategic planning for implementing effective conflict resolution programs that meet their specific needs. By answering typical questions asked about conflict resolution, the guide will give readers a description of the essential elements of effective school-based conflict resolution programs, as well as information useful for establishing and sustaining conflict resolution programs in their schools. Six case studies incorporating models of peer mediation, curriculum integration, and peaceable schools will be included in the guide. Other helpful features include annotated lists of conflict resolution programs, resources, and trainers with contact information.

Increase School Safety To Improve Opportunities for Learning

Federal reforms such as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Educate America: Goals 2000, and School to Work Transition are first steps in addressing the crisis facing our public school system. Title I, Part A of ESEA provides grants to States to support standards-based educational reform and improve the ability of schools to help educationally disadvantaged children. Before these improvements can be effective, however, students must be assured that they can learn in a safe environment.

ED's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program (SDFSP) was established in 1994 to provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to prevention

of school violence and alcohol, tobacco, and drug use by young people. SDFSP administers State formula grant and discretionary grant programs and also provides technical assistance to schools in the development of comprehensive programs to prevent violence and drug use.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) will provide funding to assess the effectiveness of the organizational structure and operation of a variety of these programs nationwide. This assessment will try to determine how school-based drug prevention programs, such as Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE), can be tailored to better meet the needs of specific populations. The study will also recommend new structures and operations to improve and expand DARE and other existing drug prevention education programs.

NIJ will also do the following:

- o Fund evaluations of school-based programs aimed at reducing youth violence and promoting school safety.

- o Support a study of juveniles who have been involved in school violence in an attempt to clarify the dynamics leading to violence. The information gathered from this study will be used to design and implement a school curriculum that better addresses those dynamics.

- o Explore risk factors that contribute to delinquency (relationships among school discipline and control practices, behavior problems, in-school victimization, and school location) and school crime. This will be accomplished through analysis of information from interviews of students, teachers, and principals.

HHS has provided funds through the Community Schools/FACES grant programs to support the development or expansion of programs that are designed to improve the academic and social development of at-risk students at selected public schools in eligible communities. Activities in these schools include homework assistance and afterschool activities, such as educational, social, and athletic programs; nutrition services; mentoring programs; family counseling; and parenting programs.

To assist in ensuring the safety of these and other sites, OJJDP will support the National School Safety Center in providing training and information on school safety techniques through the School Administrators for Effective Police, Prosecution, and Probations Operations Leading to Improved Children and Youth Services (SAFE POLICY) program. This program addresses the problem of increased serious juvenile violence in schools. A team of school personnel develops strategies for sharing information and improving school safety, as well as supervision, control, and delinquency prevention.

Provide Youth With Activities That Encourage Positive Youth Development

To ensure that resource and family centers can implement programs, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) National Youth Sports Grants will provide funds for positive alternative activities for at-risk youth, including sports, recreational, cultural, and educational programs. This grant program is a vehicle for youth to develop leadership skills, gain self-esteem, learn the value of teamwork, and exercise self-empowerment in a positive and drug-free environment.

OJJDP's Pathways to Success will promote business, entrepreneurial, educational, recreational, and job skills, as well as arts programs for afterschool and weekend hours. In addition, OJJDP's grant with the Academy for Educational Development will support the development of a curriculum that trains youth workers to apply a youth development approach.

Provide Training and Opportunities for Youth Employment

HUD will continue to fund the YouthBuild program, which works with AmeriCorps to help disadvantaged young adults who have dropped out of high school obtain employment and education skills that will help them achieve economic self-sufficiency.

To encourage the involvement, investment, and participation of educators, businesses, students, and parents, DOL's School-to-Work Opportunities Initiative will integrate a career employment, education, and learning program. The program will be geared to all youth to prepare them for the highly technological and rapidly evolving workplace. The link between unemployment and lack of opportunities and delinquency is strong, and a national commitment to this issue is critical. DOL administers the Job Corps to address the multiple barriers to employment faced by disadvantaged youth. Job Corps, which serves about 60,000 youth each year, provides a comprehensive mix of coordinated and integrated services in one facility. These services assist young adults to become more responsible, employable, and productive citizens.

The Department of the Interior and OJJDP will jointly sponsor the Youth Environmental Services (YES) program. The purpose of the YES program is twofold:

- o To increase the capacity of States and communities to correct, treat, and rehabilitate adjudicated delinquents.
- o To prevent at-risk youth from entering the juvenile justice system by implementing environmental work programs on federally owned land.

In addition, OJJDP will explore opportunities to include high-risk and juvenile court-involved youth in employment and training programs.

Establish and Support Family-Based Community Centers That Integrate

Service Delivery Through a Range of Promising Prevention Programs

HHS will continue to fund community-based family resource programs to help States develop and implement, or expand and enhance, comprehensive statewide systems of family resource services. These services will be provided through innovative funding mechanisms and collaboration with existing education, vocation, rehabilitation, health, mental health, employment and training, child welfare, and other social service agencies. The goal will be to reduce barriers to the delivery of high-quality, community-based services for families, with an emphasis on interagency collaboration, service integration, public and private partnerships, interdisciplinary governance of lead agencies, and full partnership between families and professionals.

HUD awards grants to public housing authorities to provide families and youth with better access to education and employment opportunities. The objective is to help these individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency, improve their quality of life and, ultimately, decrease drug and crime problems. In 1995, \$10 million was made available to support the Family Investment Centers and Youth Development initiative sites that are providing youth-related activities and services such as training and assistance in obtaining General Equivalency Diplomas (GED's) and entrepreneurship skills.

NIJ will continue to support an evaluation of the Boys and Girls Clubs program in public housing.

Provide Opportunities for Youth To Serve Their Communities

CNS will continue to establish full- and part-time community service programs such as AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America, which involve individuals of all ages in violence reduction initiatives and other public service activities. These include school-based initiatives for kindergarten through 12th grade and higher education programs that make service an integral part of college education.

OJJDP will continue to support Teens, Crime, and the Community, a program conducted by the National Crime Prevention Council and the National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law, that seeks to direct the energies of young people toward constructive activities designed to reduce crime and violence.

All Federal agencies administering programs that address the problem of juvenile violence will encourage communities to include youth in the planning and implementation of their programs.

Coordinate Federal Crime Prevention Programs

There is a substantial need to coordinate Federal programs that are designed to prevent and intervene in specific youth problems, improve the environments in which youth live, and foster the

overall positive development of youth. The President's Crime Prevention Council, created by the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, has published and disseminated a delinquency prevention catalog that highlights major Federal programs and offers guidance for communities seeking to plan and implement comprehensive crime prevention strategies. Over the next year, the Prevention Council will work to identify ways to coordinate and integrate existing Federal prevention programs to ensure better collaboration and to maximize their impact on communities.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Establish and enhance programs that bring together teachers, school administrators, social service providers, police, juvenile justice practitioners, and citizens.
- o Develop partnerships between parks and recreation agencies, libraries, public housing agencies, community centers, and gymnasiums to furnish safe sites for positive activities for youth.
- o Advocate volunteerism for mentoring and tutoring programs.
- o Develop safe passage community patrols to ensure that youth get to and from school safely.
- o Invite parents, law enforcement officers, business leaders, and others into school buildings to provide additional supervision and positive role models.
- o Provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to manage their behavior and resolve conflicts in a nonviolent manner.
- o Implement developmentally appropriate conflict resolution programs for students at all grade levels.
- o Expand existing programs to include artistic and cultural activities, and implement activities designed to promote the values of individual and civic responsibility.
- o Implement national service initiatives at the local level to provide youth with opportunities to serve their communities.
- o Review and modify personnel policies in the private sector to encourage employees to serve as community volunteers with youth.
- o Increase funding for youth employment and training programs.
- o Review allocation of funding to ensure equitable distribution of resources for delinquency prevention programs in schools.

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5. Break the Cycle of Violence by Addressing Youth Victimization, Abuse, and Neglect

Overview

As the most vulnerable members of society, children have the right to be protected from victimization. We as a Nation must act decisively to uphold that right. Although media attention often focuses on youth who commit acts of violence, children are also increasingly becoming victims of violent crime and neglect.

This section explains how early experiences of violence not only harm children but also can lead to later violence and delinquency. It describes effective intervention strategies to break that cycle of violence, a strengthened dependency courts system that works more closely with child protective services, and improved delivery of services through unified family courts, administrative reform, written protocols, and the use of court appointed special advocates (CASA's).

This section also examines how parents who have abused or neglected their children can learn to change their behavior and how authorities can determine when children should be removed from their homes because of the threat of abuse or neglect. Finally, it describes ways to intervene with at-risk families before abuse, neglect, or family dysfunction arise or become entrenched.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

Each year, abuse and neglect leave 18,000 children permanently--

often severely--disabled and inflict lifelong psychological damage on thousands of victims, siblings, and family members.¹

Abuse statistics are similarly tragic. In 1994, public welfare agencies received reports of 3.1 million children being abused or neglected. The increasing trend in child maltreatment reports over the past decade is believed to be the result, at least in part, of a greater willingness to report suspected incidents. Greater public awareness both of child maltreatment as a social problem and the resources available to respond to it are factors that contribute to increased reporting.

The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect provides national data on child victimization. In 1991, there were an estimated 2.9 million reports of child abuse and neglect involving 1.9 million children.

Each year an estimated 2,000 children--most under age 4--die at the hands of parents or caretakers, about 5 children every day. According to a 1988 Bureau of Justice Statistics study of murder cases, 4 out of 5 children under age 12 who were murdered by a parent or caretaker had been previously abused by the person who killed them.²

An analysis of police data on child victims under the age of 12 (victims not covered in the National Crime Victimization Survey) estimated that as many as 2.2 million violent victimizations--murder, rape, robbery, and assault--of children under the age of 18 occurred in 1992. The analysis also revealed that the perpetrators of violent crime against children under the age of 12 were most likely to be acquaintances of the child (54%) and family members (33%) rather than strangers (13%).³

Two years later, statistics showed similar trends. In 1994, a study revealed that children ages 5 and younger who are victims of violent crime are more likely than older juvenile victims to be victimized by a family member.

Even when children are not subjected to violence themselves, they increasingly live in a world permeated by violence. Many children are exposed to chronic violence in their homes and communities. A recent study conducted at Boston City Hospital reported that 10 percent of children seen in its primary care clinic have witnessed a shooting or stabbing before age 6. In a survey of inner-city elementary school children in New Orleans, LA, 80 percent reported witnessing acts of violence, and 60 percent had seen a dead person. Similarly, in a study of 6th, 8th, and 10th graders in New Haven, CT, 40 percent reported having witnessed at least one violent crime in the past year.⁴

The Cycle of Violence

Numerous studies demonstrate the connection between child abuse and neglect and later violent delinquent behavior.⁵ A National

Institute of Justice (NIJ)-funded study found that experiencing childhood abuse and neglect increases the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 53 percent, of arrest as an adult by 38 percent, and of committing a violent crime by 38 percent.⁶ An Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) study found that adolescents from families reporting multiple forms of violence are more than twice as likely as their peers from nonviolent homes to report committing violent offenses.⁷

Due to the disproportionate number of neglect cases in comparison to abuse cases, youth who were neglected as children are almost as likely to be arrested for violent crimes as those who were physically abused. Consistent with this finding, of the maltreated children who were arrested for violent acts, 8 out of 10 were neglected as children.

Structural violence--harm inflicted on individuals by social institutions or the social and physical environment--also has a major influence on children. Children living in economically deprived areas are more likely to engage in crime than other children and are more susceptible to violent and other criminal behavior.⁸

Child Protective Services and Dependency Courts

The system of child protective services (CPS) and dependency courts, which addresses family violence and child abuse and neglect, has reached a crisis point. The complexity, seriousness, and ever-increasing volume of maltreatment cases have undercut CPS' ability to process reports of child abuse and neglect; conduct sound investigations; communicate findings to the court; provide protective supervision; arrange appropriate foster care; monitor placements; and develop thoughtful, timely, and suitable permanency planning. As a result, children frequently languish for years in a series of temporary placements, such as foster homes, shelters, group homes, and hospitals. In one out of five cases in which maltreatment was indicated or substantiated in 1992, the child was removed from the home. More than 440,000 children were in some type of substitute care at the end of 1992--60 percent more than 10 years earlier. Recent projections estimated that 550,000 children would be in foster care by the end of 1995.⁹

Juvenile and family courts must make critical legal decisions and oversee CPS agency efforts when families refuse to cooperate with protective services or when a child must be removed from the home. However, both judicial and agency caseloads have increased dramatically. One expert has found that in many jurisdictions, the demands made on juvenile courts in neglect and abuse cases far exceed the number of judges and courtrooms to conduct the hearings.¹⁰ It is no exaggeration to refer to this situation as a crisis in many large urban courts.

This crisis arose in part from the increased demands on family courts. In the 1970's, juvenile and family courts were required

only to determine whether a child had been abused or neglected and, if so, whether the child should be removed from the home and placed under court or agency supervision. State and Federal legislation, particularly the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA) of 1980,¹¹ sharply increased the scope of judicial oversight responsibilities to include ensuring that every abused and neglected child who comes before the court is placed in a safe, permanent, and stable home. The court must remain involved in a case until a child is returned home safely or placed in a new permanent home. Judicial oversight may extend over a period of years until the case is finally closed. Yet most judges can spend an average of only 10 minutes on each of the 35 to 40 cases on their daily calendars. This time constriction underscores the need for additional resources and assistance, such as trained CASA's for abused children, a strategy that is working effectively in many communities.

Communities need to provide financial resources to improve child protective services and dependency courts, including better management of the system and training for CPS workers, social case workers, judges, and court counselors. A community CASA program is one way to augment the professional staff.

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

State Court Improvement Program

Since 1980, the responsibilities and caseloads of many juvenile and family courts have sharply increased. These increases are partly due to the judicial oversight functions imposed by AACWA, requiring certain court determinations in foster care and adoption proceedings for children who enter into State care as a result of abuse or neglect. Additionally, the incidence of drug-affected children and families and the reporting of child abuse and neglect have increased steadily in recent years, resulting in higher court caseloads.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-66) established a new grant program to help State courts focus on their role in proceedings relating to foster care and adoption and improve their handling of those proceedings.¹² Forty-eight States, including the District of Columbia, began to implement the program beginning in FY 1995.

The State Court Improvement Program is operated by the Children's Bureau within the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS') Administration on Children, Youth, and Families. This grant program provides State courts with the opportunity to collaborate with other interested parties to review laws and procedures regarding foster care and adoption proceedings, supporting alternatives and improvements. State courts have the flexibility to design assessments that identify barriers, highlight practices that are not fully successful, evaluate areas they find to be in need of improvement or added attention, and implement reforms that address

specific needs.

Unified Family Courts

Despite problems facing child welfare services and dependency courts, many successful systemic improvements are underway. There has been increased coordination of information sharing about family cases among juvenile courts. Some courts emphasize nonadversarial dispute resolution in family conflicts and have developed an array of domestic violence, visitation, divorce education, child advocacy, and litigation resources. The most promising development is the emergence of unified family courts that handle the full range of family-related cases, including delinquency, dependency, status offenses, paternity, custody, support, mental health, adoption, family violence, and divorce. Properly administered, unified family courts such as those in Hawaii, New Jersey, and Rhode Island, can effectively address the needs of children in the context of the family.¹³ A unified family court should have authority equal to the highest trial court of general jurisdiction and be staffed by specialized judges and other professionals.

For unified family courts to be effective, judges must be interested, committed, and qualified. They should receive specialized training and have the authority to develop alternative dispute resolution forums. Judges could further improve the family court system by making more informed and effective decisions regarding children and families through the use of integrated family court management information systems, eliminating the problem of conflicting court orders in children and family cases, and providing the leadership required to develop an integrated service delivery system. They should also ensure that children and families have complete and open access to the protective and restorative powers of the court.

Children's Advocacy Centers

Children's advocacy centers provide a community-based approach whose goal is to improve management of abuse and neglect cases, increase the rate of prosecutions, and ensure that victims and their families receive coordinated treatment services. Over the past 10 years, nearly 300 communities have established children's advocacy centers. Multidisciplinary teams conduct joint interviews and share in decisionmaking concerning the management and investigation of cases, providing a range of services for victims and their families. Some advocacy centers have special teams that focus on preventing child fatalities arising from abuse and neglect, including providing child abuse prevention education.

Children's advocacy centers provide increased substantiation and prosecution of abuse cases, decreased post-abuse trauma to victims through centralized intake procedures, and enhanced support to victims of abuse and their families. Children's advocacy centers provide two additional long-term benefits: they focus community attention on child abuse prevention and raise community awareness

of the problems of child abuse. They also provide locally developed infrastructure that facilitates collaboration among key local government agencies. Communities that have developed such infrastructures increase the efficiency of their systems, improve the quality of care in a cost-effective manner, and address a multitude of local juvenile justice and human services issues with increased cooperation.

Court Appointed Special Advocate Programs

The CASA program is another local approach to improving the lives of abused and neglected children. CASA programs use trained volunteers, sometimes known as guardians ad litem, who help stabilize the lives of victimized children. Appointed by the courts and working under court supervision, CASA's serve as advocates for children during court proceedings and help to ensure that a child is quickly placed in a safe, nurturing, and permanent home. They recommend plans that will effectively serve the best interest of the child based on an independent, thoroughly researched investigation of the child's circumstances.

Because CASA's typically handle only one or two cases at a time, they are able to devote significant attention to individual children and obtain a full understanding of each case. They appear at all appropriate court proceedings and monitor court orders, ensuring compliance by all parties. They also bring changes in the child's circumstances to the court's attention. Their work aids overburdened court officials and social workers and enables judges to make more informed decisions.

Nearly 700 communities nationwide have established CASA programs. In 1994, some 37,000 court appointed special advocates represented more than 128,000 abused and neglected children--about 25 percent of such children who came before the courts.¹⁴

One exemplary program is successfully meeting the needs of children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect and who need safe shelter, counseling, and other assistance. In Cincinnati, the Hamilton Juvenile Court, the Cincinnati Bar Association, and the Junior League developed ProKids to serve as court appointed special advocates for youth. When ProKids was created in 1981, only 25 programs in the Nation used community volunteers as child advocates for abused and neglected children. By 1994, ProKids had trained more than 450 child advocate volunteers, and 1,200 children have been served by the program.¹⁵

Family Preservation, Family Support, and Independent Living

During the past two decades, the focus on abused children and their families has shifted within the child welfare system. Rather than removing abused children from their homes as the first course of action, efforts are made to preserve families by addressing the problems of abuse and changing behavior within the family. This new approach is based on the following assumptions:

- o Children's safety and security is the first priority.
- o If their safety can be ensured, children belong with their families.
- o Families are the best environment for socialization.
- o Being placed in a series of temporary foster homes can seriously impair a child's emotional development.
- o Removing a child from an abusive home does not automatically ensure the child's safety.

The shift in emphasis toward family preservation and changing family behavior grew out of research showing that family bonding is essential for healthy cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development, and that families that receive assistance can most often overcome problems. A 1984 study by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) found that for every 1,000 children placed in out-of-home care, 30 experienced additional abuse. By contrast, among 2,505 children and their families who participated in the Families First family-strengthening program, only one child reported an incident of abuse during the first 12 months of the program.¹⁶

Homebuilders of Tacoma, WA, one of the first local family preservation programs, has operated with impressive results since its establishment in 1974. In the first 12 months after entering the program, 88 percent of the children identified by case workers as candidates for out-of-home placement remain in their homes, and both child and family functioning show significant improvement on standardized measures. A similar program begun in 1987 in the Bronx, NY, to test the Homebuilders treatment model in an urban setting also achieved a high level of success.

Family Ties of New York, another program modeled after the Homebuilders approach, is underwritten by New York City with matching State funds. From 1991 to 1992, 80 percent of juveniles who participated in Family Ties remained out of the juvenile justice system during the 6 months after starting with the program. During a period of a year or more, the success rate for program participants was 82 percent. Recidivism rates were significantly lower for the program group than for a comparison group.¹⁷

Early Family Strengthening and Support

Research has shown that juvenile delinquency prevention strategies are most effective when they are applied early in life--as early as prenatally and perinatally.¹⁸ Waiting until middle or late adolescence, when violent behavior patterns are well established, makes remediation efforts more difficult. By that time, serious delinquents generally exhibit multiple, interwoven, and recurring problem behaviors and a severe deficit in protective factors.

A review of violence research suggests that predatory and psychopathological violence is most effectively treated by early family-focused comprehensive interventions.¹⁹ Reducing multiple risk factors and increasing several protective factors will increase the likelihood that children will develop into productive, competent adults.²⁰ Programs such as Prenatal/Perinatal-Healthy Families, Healthy Babies provide prenatal and perinatal medical care, intensive health education for pregnant women and mothers with young children, and prenatal and infancy home nurse visits. Services such as these have been known to reduce the risks of head injuries, exposure to toxins, maternal substance use, perinatal difficulties, and child abuse--all delinquency-related risk factors--and enhance parenting skills.²¹

The Healthy Start Program in Hawaii seeks to reduce child abuse by offering postnatal counseling to high-risk parents when mothers are still in the hospital. By using 15 effective screening indicators, the program targets parents for early intervention services, which have been accepted by approximately 95 percent of parents. The program continues until the child is 5 years old, providing a connection to a "medical home" that emphasizes preventive healthcare and home visits by trained health service personnel. The program offers parent training, family counseling, enhancement of parent-child interaction, child development activities, and social service linkage. Early evaluation findings provide evidence that the program is successful in reducing the likelihood of child abuse.²²

The Elmira Home Visitation Program in New York provides a wide range of maternal and child health services to poor, unmarried teenagers during pregnancy and the first 2 years of their children's lives. The program has demonstrated the following results: 75 percent reduction in State-verified cases of child abuse and neglect, 32 percent fewer emergency room visits during the second year of life, 84 percent increase in unmarried mothers participating in the workforce, and 43 percent fewer subsequent births by unmarried women than by their counterparts assigned to comparable services.²³

The Memphis Home Visitation Program showed the following outcomes among participating African-American mothers: 46 percent less alcohol consumption and 26 percent fewer cigarettes used during pregnancy, 24 percent fewer cases of preeclampsia, and 26 percent fewer second pregnancies. In addition, more mothers breast fed their infants, fewer women reported attitudes that are associated with child abuse, such as lack of empathy for children and belief in physical punishment as a means of disciplining infants and toddlers; and fewer were seen by health care professionals for injuries.²⁴

In Tennessee, lawmakers adopted an "earlier is better" crime prevention plan that provides a range of services to at-risk infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The State legislature also

enacted the Childhood Development Act of 1994, expanding family support and preservation services and requiring development of a statewide early childhood education plan.²⁵

Other early prevention strategies targeting children and their families in the first 5 years of life have shown dramatic results.²⁶ For example, during the preschool years, home visitation programs that provide health and parent education and enhance family social support systems have been shown to be effective. Also, preschool programs and structured educational day care have demonstrated success in reducing risk factors and involvement in delinquency.²⁷

Several other States emphasize early intervention approaches, such as Minnesota and Tennessee. In recent years, Minnesota has used funds earmarked for crime prevention to augment Head Start, learning readiness, and family support programs. In addition, the State legislature has established a Senate Crime Prevention Committee.

Other successful prevention strategies include parent training and multisystemic family therapy. Parent training programs teach skills that can improve parenting practices. Multisystemic family therapy includes parent training within a wider range of interventions for improving family cohesiveness. Both programs have been shown to reduce antisocial behavior and delinquency.²⁸

Victimization Prevention Programs

Prevention strategies should also address victimization among teens. An exemplary victim education program is the Teens, Crime, and the Community school-based curriculum that makes youth aware of crime and the high rate of teen victimization through real-life issues. Formal evaluations have documented that the program has resulted in local youth-led victimization prevention measures and changed students' attitudes about crime and victimization.²⁹

Federal Action Steps

Improve Juvenile and Family Court Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect Cases

With support from OJJDP, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) will help replicate in several jurisdictions the successful demonstration juvenile and family court reform project in operation in Hamilton County, OH. NCJFCJ will widely disseminate comprehensive resource guidelines for improving the handling of child abuse and neglect cases, developed on the principles of the demonstration project. The Departments of Justice (DOJ) and HHS will support the implementation of this model in juvenile and family courts across the country.

The National Child Protection Act of 1993, as amended by the 1994 Crime Act, requires the Attorney General and DOJ to develop

guidelines for the adoption of appropriate safeguards by care providers and by States for the protection of children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities from abuse. The Attorney General will consult with Federal, State, and local officials, including those responsible for criminal history record systems, and representatives of public and private care agencies and health, legal, and social welfare organizations. DOJ will use research by the American Bar Association to draft guidelines.

DOJ will make available a set of protocols to assist decisionmakers in law enforcement, public health, drug treatment, and other relevant areas in making reasonable efforts to enable drug-exposed children to remain safely at home.

NIJ will support a scientific study of the effects of hearsay evidence on juror decisionmaking in child abuse cases.

HHS' Children's Bureau operates the State Court Improvement Program, which provides State courts with the opportunity to collaborate with other interested parties to review laws and procedures regarding foster care and adoption proceedings.

Enhance Local Efforts To Investigate and Prosecute Child Abuse and Neglect Cases and Strengthen Child Protective Services

NIJ will fund research to examine the use of parent drug testing to facilitate judicial and social services in the prevention of further maltreatment in child abuse and neglect cases.

NCCAN, established by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974, will assist States and communities in child abuse prevention, identification, investigation, and treatment. NCCAN will support State grant programs, research and demonstration grant projects, clearinghouses, resource centers, and an Interagency Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect.

OJJDP will provide training in investigative techniques to law enforcement, child protective services, and other justice system agencies involved in investigating missing children cases and child abuse, sexual exploitation, and pornography. Courses will include the most advanced concepts in investigative process and will provide information on interagency development, advanced interviewing techniques, team activity involving investigations, case preparation, and prosecution.

OJJDP will continue to provide local children's advocacy centers with funding, training, and technical assistance through the National Network of Children's Advocacy Centers and with training, consultation, resource materials, and other technical assistance through the four regional children's advocacy centers. OJJDP will also seek to increase the number of children represented by court appointed special advocates through continued support of the development and enhancement of local CASA programs.

Strengthen At-Risk Families and Support Healthy Start Programs for Children

HHS will provide nearly \$1 billion through the Family Preservation and Family Support Services Program to States and a limited group of tribes for family support services and services to families at risk or in crisis. The program offers States an extraordinary opportunity to make sweeping changes in their child welfare systems to assist children at risk for abuse and neglect.

Under Title XX of HHS' Social Security Act (enacted in 1974), the Federal Government provides grants to States for social services aimed at preventing or remedying abuse and neglect while preserving families and preventing inappropriate institutional care. Grants are also set aside for evaluation, research, and training and technical assistance.

HHS' Children's Bureau began to provide grants to State courts in 1995 to improve foster care and adoption proceedings. Without the services these programs provide, most children who are at risk for serious child abuse, family conflict, and mental health problems would be immediately removed from the home.

HHS will provide Maternal and Child Health Improvement Grants to improve the delivery of health care services to mothers and children, particularly those families in low-income and isolated areas. The Department will also continue to support Healthy Start sites to increase awareness of infant mortality and overcome barriers to delivery of child and maternal health care; streamline and coordinate services between public and private agencies; and build partnerships among families, volunteers, companies, and health care and social service providers.

In FY 1995, HHS began to award grants to implement Early Head Start programs that provide intensive and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income families with children under age 3 and to pregnant women. In addition, HHS will continue to support the Head Start program to provide comprehensive health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services to bridge the gap between economically disadvantaged children and their peers.

NIJ will provide technical assistance and training to the nationwide Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program. The primary goals of this program are to prevent juvenile delinquency in these at-risk children, improve the parenting skills of incarcerated mothers, and reduce the probability of recidivism.

OJJDP will establish a national family-strengthening training and technical assistance effort. One or more agencies will be funded to provide a range of technical support to help communities establish or strengthen family support programs.

Support Community-Based Services That Reduce Family Violence and Victimization

HHS will continue to fund the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program to assist States and Native-American tribes in the prevention of family violence and the provision of immediate shelter and related assistance for victims of family violence and their dependents. The program also funds discretionary grants to support research into the causes and prevention of family violence, to support the training of family violence personnel and provide technical assistance in the conduct of family violence programs, and to support the operation of a national resource center on family violence.

These funds are also used to provide grant awards to nonprofit private sector organizations in each State to form State Domestic Violence Coalitions that are dedicated to the prevention of family violence in general and spouse abuse in particular. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 requires State coalitions to work with local domestic violence programs and providers of direct services through training, planning, disseminating information, and collaborating with other governmental systems that help battered women.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) will fund three Violence Against Women demonstration sites to identify mechanisms and procedures to help jurisdictions coordinate criminal justice agencies, victims services, social services, medical services, and others, as appropriate, to ensure that issues and problems about violence are handled effectively. These pilot programs provide BJA with a basis for determining a prototype to enhance and coordinate jurisdictionwide responses to issues concerning violence against women.

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) will provide funds to help DOJ implement the recently enacted Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). OVC funding will be allocated for the development of model policies and procedures on implementation and enforcement of the Full Faith and Credit provisions, and to train State and local criminal justice components and advocates.

NIJ will sponsor research on youth victims of domestic abuse in an attempt to provide a better understanding of their needs and how they can be more effectively addressed. NIJ will also support research to clarify understanding of the prevalence of partner violence among young adults.

Provide Training and Technical Assistance To Strengthen Agencies Serving Children and Their Families

HHS will continue to fund national child welfare resource centers focusing on critical topics such as family-centered practice, permanency planning, organizational improvement, youth development, and legal and court issues. These centers provide training and technical assistance to build the capacity of State, local, tribal, and other publicly administered or publicly supported child welfare

agencies in the development, expansion, strengthening, and improvement of the quality and effectiveness of services to children and their families.

HHS will continue to provide discretionary child welfare training grants and promote the use of Social Security Act Title IV-E training funds to enhance child welfare practice in ways that make positive differences for children and their families.

HHS will also continue to fund and work with States to strengthen the design and delivery of Independent Living Initiatives to assist children who have reached the age of 16 in making the transition from foster care to independent living. The National Resource Center for Youth Development, funded by HHS, is responsible for identifying and disseminating information to the field on innovative, successful transitional and independent living programs dealing with issues such as effective parenting and adolescent input into program design.

Improve Services to Children Who Are Victims of Abuse and Other Crimes

OJJDP will work with OVC to improve services to children through expansion of resources for multidisciplinary teams and extension of the teamwork concept used by children's advocacy centers to a wide range of crimes, including family violence. OJJDP will also work with OVC to improve services to children who are victims of crimes under Federal law, including those living on Native-American lands.

OJJDP will support an initiative to provide more conflict resolution programming for young people to equip them with the skills necessary to resolve conflict nonviolently. A training and technical assistance provider will assist interested communities in selecting an appropriate conflict resolution model and in implementing it in schools, youth facilities, recreation centers, and other institutions serving youth.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Foster substance abuse treatment approaches designed for parents, including residential treatment programs that allow children to accompany their addicted parents.
- o Provide financial and other resources to enable parents to take part in treatment.
- o Eliminate punitive policies such as those that require parents to give up parental rights in order to be eligible for treatment.
- o Develop a network of State and local victim assistance strategies that serve children and their families.
- o Establish victim awareness activities in juvenile corrections facilities to help young offenders understand the impact of their

crimes on others, the roots of their own violent behavior, and ways to become nonabusive spouses and parents.

- o Support comprehensive adolescent pregnancy prevention programs.

- o Support victim education for teens through community- or school-based programs.

- o Advocate for manageable caseloads and properly trained child protective workers.

- o Reform juvenile and family court administration to better address needs of victimized children and improve dependency case management.

- o Encourage formation of local CASA and other children's advocacy programs.

- o Launch local Healthy Start programs.

- o Involve young men in parenting programs, especially those placed in juvenile justice facilities and those incarcerated in correctional facilities.

- o Establish and maintain an effective and inclusive planning effort focused on family preservation and family support services.

- o Provide mental health and treatment services and parenting skills training for confined abusers and/or young offenders who are victims of abuse.

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6. Strengthen and Mobilize Communities

Overview

Communities play the primary role in preventing juvenile delinquency and the criminal victimization of juveniles. With Federal and State leadership and support, communities can successfully change local conditions to help youth become law-abiding, productive citizens.

All community members--business leaders, media representatives, teachers, parents and grandparents, young people, policymakers, clergy, elected officials, and law enforcement--are responsible for ensuring the health and well-being of children. When all members of the community work together to achieve common goals, everyone benefits from the strength of a working partnership.

Even medium- and small-scale community mobilization efforts can be effective. The Community Responses to Drug Abuse (CRDA) Initiative, a program researched by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and designed and implemented by the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), found that modest neighborhoods with limited resources can make significant strides in reducing drug activity, protecting youth, and improving the physical environment.¹

The Subgroup on Violence and Place of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Violence summarized the advantage of using the community as a frame of reference to solve the problem of violence in the following manner:

Using community as a unit of analysis shifts attention from individual incidents of crime as such (the undifferentiated categories of murder, assault, drug trafficking, etc.), and generalized responses (law enforcement, gun control, drug interdiction, stiff sentences) to local dynamics, local impact, and local opportunities. [Community analysis] suggests that the fear caused by violence is as much a problem as violence itself; that local responses can successfully fight the drivers of violence (street gun and drug markets). It emphasizes the power and potential of local resources, local alliances, and local experiments in violence prevention.²

This section describes why strong communities are critical to reducing delinquency and violence and provides fundamental elements essential to successful community change. It also presents examples of efforts that prove community mobilization strategies work.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

Community Deterioration

Earlier sections of this Action Plan describe categories of risk factors that research has shown can contribute to juvenile delinquency. They include individual, family, peer, school, and community factors. Community risk factors include the availability of drugs and firearms, community laws and norms favorable to drug use, the nature and extent of crime, media portrayals of violence,

neighborhood transition and mobility, reduced interaction among residents causing community disassociation, and economic deprivation.

Community life has changed significantly in recent decades, resulting in a decline in essential youth nurturing, supervision, and guidance. In many instances, the deterioration of the community has isolated parents and their children from the network and support of extended families, and fear of children has replaced fear for children.³

Poverty exacerbates social disorganization and is both a source of stress and a risk factor for communities, individuals, and families. In 1992, 22 percent of youth lived below the poverty level, a 42-percent increase since 1976. Poverty rates are higher among children under age 6 (25 percent) than among older youth (19 percent). Poverty is also higher among minority youth, particularly African Americans (47 percent) and Hispanics (40 percent), than among white youth (17 percent). Youth growing up in inner cities are most likely to live in poverty.⁴

Historically, government has responded to youth problems by providing services to address the symptoms, often resulting in inefficient use of scarce resources. Children labeled as delinquent enter the correctional system, which has been unable to pay attention to underlying family and other problems. Youth intervention agencies identify some children as abused, neglected, or dependent, remove them from their homes, and place them in foster care, but the agencies fail or are unable to provide preventive family support or mental health services. Some children with mental health needs are placed in secure psychiatric settings with little opportunity for treatment in community-based, family-oriented programs.⁵

This fragmented human services system does not serve anyone effectively--youth, families, or communities. The system is expensive; it often fails to solve youth's problems; and youth are referred from agency to agency with little followup. Comprehensive and targeted collaborative efforts can more effectively assess the needs of at-risk youth, implement promising strategies, and maximize community resources.⁶

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

Although evaluation has not yet proved the effectiveness of efforts to produce positive and lasting community change, several community-building strategies appear to be promising. A communitywide approach to reducing violence and delinquency is promising for several reasons. First, it affects the entire social environment by focusing on community norms, values, and policies as well as on conditions that place children at risk for adolescent problems. Second, all members of the community can apply their expertise where it is most effective. Community mobilization holds the promise of investing every local resident in solving what is

truly a shared goal--to help young people grow up to maximize their potential and reduce their likelihood of involvement in violence and delinquency. Federal and State governments can assist communities by showing them the most effective ways to tap into fiscal and human resources.

Community planning teams that include a partnership of agency and lay participants can help create a consensus on priorities and services to be provided. They also build support for a comprehensive approach that draws on all sectors of the community for participation, such as the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems; other service systems such as health and mental health, child welfare, education, assisted housing providers, recreation, and law enforcement; business; media; religious institutions; and grassroots organizations, including parent groups, youth clubs, crime victim groups, and civic and social groups.

The Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) supports the concept of successful community policing through close, mutually beneficial ties between police and community members. COPS uses a long-term problemsolving approach that targets persistent or recurring problems in communities. One of the key COPS components is enhanced communications among police, the community, and other public and social service agencies. The community must be viewed as an active partner with law enforcement in identifying problems and determining appropriate tactics and measures of success.

In the Texas City Action Plan To Prevent Crime (T-CAP),⁷ NCPC worked with seven municipal governments, local leaders, private entities, and citizens to adopt and implement strategies to reduce violence. Through this partnership, the initiative has accomplished the following:

- o Violence reduction through environmental design, such as improved street lighting.
- o Job creation and training programs.
- o Mandated parent education and enhanced childcare.
- o Youth recreation and senior citizen safety projects.
- o Community oriented policing strategies aimed at community disorder.
- o Conflict resolution training.
- o Substance abuse reduction programs.
- o Improved juvenile justice processes.
- o Block teams and jurisdiction-wide teams to address specific

problems.

In 1989, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) provided funding to establish the CRDA National Demonstration Program in 10 sites across the country. The purpose of the program was to help communities develop and implement effective strategies to reduce drug abuse and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. A process and impact evaluation funded by NIJ identified a number of positive changes in target areas compared with control areas. The evaluation found that local organizations in these neighborhoods, assisted by NCPC and the National Training and Information Center, could successfully develop and implement a wide variety of anti-drug strategies.

Many of these strategies involved cooperative efforts with law enforcement workers who helped community organizations increase levels of citizen awareness and participation in anti-drug activities. These community interventions also resulted in increased social interaction among residents, favorable attitudes toward the police, and positive perceptions about their neighborhood as a safe place to live. The CRDA program also helped grassroots organizations develop partnerships with criminal justice agencies, fire and housing departments, city councils, school boards, and recreation departments.

One of the key CRDA projects was the Oakland (CA) Community Organization. Residents learned to work in partnership with law enforcement, which resulted in increased funding for the police department's Beat Health Unit. Beat Health has been directly responsible for mobilizing residents to take direct action in drug abuse prevention, organizing a neighborhood cleanup, and closing more than 300 drug houses.⁸

Community Assessment

The public health model of youth violence prevention encourages a partnership of community leaders to determine their community's readiness for a comprehensive risk-focused prevention effort and to identify or create a community prevention board. The board assesses the community's risks and existing resources by collecting data on risk indicators and analyzing existing programs. With this information, the community board prioritizes risk factors, identifies programming gaps, and reviews effective approaches to address high-priority risk factors.

With a complete community assessment, the board can develop a strategic plan to implement and evaluate a comprehensive risk-reduction strategy tailored to the unique risk and resource profile of its community. Such a strategy includes helping communities reduce critical risk factors; helping youth develop protective factors such as healthy beliefs, clear standards for behavior, and skills for economic self-sufficiency; or implementing a combination of both approaches.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Title V Initiative, Local Incentive Grants for Delinquency Prevention Programs (Title V Initiative), provides an example of effective resource allocation combined with training. During 1994, the Title V Initiative distributed grants to 49 States and 6 Territories to promote local momentum and attract local financial and human resources. Nearly 2,500 local participants attended OJJDP-sponsored training sessions and learned how to implement an effective prevention planning framework, design new approaches to interagency collaboration, and conduct valuable risk and resource assessments.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has funded several promising pilot programs based on the public health model through its Maternal and Child Health Block Grants. The Communities That Care process formalizes the public health model into a tool for mobilizing communities to address issues of delinquency, violence, substance abuse, school dropout, and teen pregnancy.

Youth Involvement

Many young people feel a deep sense of alienation and disconnection from their own communities, contributing to a lack of self-esteem. Youth need opportunities to establish their self-worth and receive affirmation of their place and role within the community. Adult leaders often fail to tap into essential youth skills, such as problemsolving and decisionmaking, that can effectively change conditions and attitudes within a community.

Adults must recognize that youth have a stake in their communities and need to be substantially involved in addressing community problems, particularly juvenile violence and victimization.

Youth involvement has two beneficiaries: the community benefits from the high energy and creative talents of young people, and young people benefit from the critical realization that they can make positive differences in their community. Many community programs attribute their success to activities designed to help youth realize that they are valuable to their families and communities and to convey a sense of respect and pride in the positive contributions that youth can make.⁹

Communities should initiate activities and services that help youth resist violence and develop skills to mediate conflicts peacefully. They should take steps to help youth replace their mistrust toward the law and law enforcement with a sense of trust and a willingness to cooperate. The Youth as Resources Program, operated by NCPC, is an example of a program with strong youth and community involvement. Guided by a board of local leaders, including youth, young people take active roles in planning, implementing, and managing community service projects. The program, which began in 3 Indiana cities, has spread to more than 35 sites in 17 States and abroad.¹⁰

Neighborhood-Targeted and Place-Based Strategies

Strategies that benefit communities include those that foster a return to the informal social control once provided by stay-at-home neighbors and senior citizens, who would "watch over" their neighborhoods and their neighbors' children. Programs that encourage informal community involvement and emphasize community partnerships with law enforcement and social service agencies can strengthen a community's ability to serve as its own guardian. A good example is found in community oriented policing strategies, which seek to give law enforcement a highly visible presence in communities and build positive relationships with residents. These community-based programs, which promote police-community partnerships to solve problems that lead to crime, have proven to be successful in fostering this kind of neighborhood responsibility.

Private initiatives funded by foundations have taken the lead in supporting communitywide and neighborhood-based strategies. Over the years, national foundations such as Ford, Rockefeller, McArthur, Robert Wood Johnson, Clark, Casey, and Carnegie have supported these programs. These programs have reached out to the corporate and business sectors that have been supportive in enhancing their success.

The Administration's Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community initiative applies the principles of community mobilization to neighborhood economic development strategies. Other examples of place-based violence prevention strategies include the Office of Justice Programs' (OJP's) Operation Weed and Seed, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Public Housing Drug Elimination Program, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP's) Community Partnerships, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) violence prevention projects.

Operation Weed and Seed "weeds out" violent crime, gang activity, drug use, and drug trafficking in targeted high-crime neighborhoods, and then "seeds" the area by restoring social and economic revitalization. In many areas, Operation Weed and Seed has reduced crime, fear, and violence, and helped communities develop innovative planning and organizational strategies to address neighborhood problems.

HUD's Public Housing Drug Elimination Program has encouraged cooperative working relationships among housing authorities, law enforcement, and tenants to enhance local resident control and accountability for buildings, conditions, and responsible tenancy.

Local/Federal Partnerships

Federal agencies can collaborate as partners in local efforts to improve communities. Key to the success of a Federal/local partnership is a willingness to compromise and sustain involvement over time. Agencies must be prepared to allow flexibility and

leeway in decision-making and in framing local initiatives.

In the Pulling America's Communities Together (PACT) program, Federal representatives of the Departments of Education, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Labor have worked with Atlanta, GA; Denver, CO; the District of Columbia; and the State of Nebraska to coordinate efforts to reduce community violence by building healthier communities. Through NCPC, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, and Developmental Research and Programs, Inc., BJA and OJJDP have provided technical assistance to the PACT program.

As a result of these partnerships, PACT has stimulated cooperation among many agencies that have no prior history of collaboration, providing a comprehensive framework for community leaders to address the problem of violence. It has also produced innovative local actions, often beyond traditional jurisdictional boundaries, to prevent and reduce violence.

Training and Resource Utilization

Community leaders need to know how and where to target and generate local resources. They also gain from establishing mechanisms that sustain linkages among local resources. A number of Federal agencies, ranging from HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing to CSAP, have developed training programs and clearinghouses to support efforts to identify and sustain resources. AmeriCorps and other service-oriented initiatives provide information about human resource opportunities. OJJDP has established a Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Training and Technical Assistance Center. These agencies are complemented by a host of private nonprofit agencies that have strong records of success in supporting local mobilization efforts.

OJJDP's Title V Initiative, described earlier, not only provides a sound strategy for assessing risk and protective factors but is an example of effective resource utilization combined with training. The program encourages communities to pool delinquency prevention resources and systems in several ways. First, by developing comprehensive needs assessments and objectives, grantees enable communities to make more effective use of local prevention funds. Second, grantees must match at least 50 percent of the Federal award with State or local funds or in-kind services, thus stimulating local public and private funding. Third, local leaders must develop and implement comprehensive, community-based Title V initiatives and gain support from key leaders from the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. Finally, the Title V Initiative encourages existing prevention coalitions and programs to expand to delinquency prevention programming, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and scope of community systems.

To support the effective use of Title V Initiative funds, OJJDP makes available a two-phase training program on risk-focused prevention to local leaders and community planning teams. During

1994, nearly 2,500 local participants attended OJJDP training sessions and learned how to implement an effective planning framework, design new approaches to interagency collaboration, and conduct valuable risk and resource assessments. These communities are joining forces to aggressively address their juvenile violence and delinquency problems.¹¹

Information Sharing

Newsletters, bulletins, computer linkages, and other vehicles for sharing information can generate action as well as convey critical information. Information sharing can identify programs that are founded on successful strategies. However, rather than reproducing successful programs, communities must adapt the underlying strategies to their own structure and needs. Experience suggests that methods and strategies are more transferable than programs and more portable than institutions. Sharing information about the results of successful strategies is vital not only to publicizing successful models but also to encouraging communities to set realistic program goals and devise useful evaluation mechanisms.

Outcomes: Short- and Long-Term Successes

Tackling the complex problem of juvenile delinquency will not necessarily produce immediate results. Long-term successes are usually built on a layered foundation of many short-term efforts and successes. Short-term objectives, when successfully met, create confidence and generate energy and enthusiasm toward working on the longer term issues. They also help develop skills and capacities that will be valuable in working on more complex long-term goals.

Federal Action Steps

Support Concentrated Strategies To Improve Distressed Neighborhoods and Reduce Violence Citywide

The Federal Government will support community efforts to assess and identify local needs, resources, and priorities in order to identify and respond to the needs of high-risk youth and juvenile offenders. Federal agencies will continue to support community mobilization models such as the Title V Initiative, Comprehensive Communities Program, Project PACT, National Funding Collaborative on Violence Prevention, Operation Weed and Seed, and Hope VI public housing Urban Revitalization Grants.

NIJ will continue to support evaluations of Operation Weed and Seed. The Administration will continue to support Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities as an economic model for concentrating resources on and strategically planning action for distressed urban areas.

CDC, through its Community Demonstration Grants, and OJJDP, through its Title V Initiative grant program, will help communities design and implement multifaceted juvenile delinquency and violence

prevention programs.

Link Federal and Private Initiatives at the Community Level

Improving the coordination of comprehensive community-based efforts to prevent crime is critical. OJJDP's SafeFutures program will provide funding to six jurisdictions that create exemplary public-private partnerships in the areas of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, demonstrate a comprehensive strategy to strengthen the juvenile justice system, and provide a continuum of services and sanctions. It will also establish technology and protocols to replicate its successes in other jurisdictions.

Other Federal agencies, including the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and Education will join with the Corporation for National Service (CNS) and private agencies to provide training and technical assistance to SafeFutures communities.

The President's Crime Prevention Council will provide small grants in support of community efforts to develop comprehensive plans to assess neighborhood-based programs, ensure a continuum of responses to youth problems (violence, delinquency, drug use, gangs, and teen pregnancy), and coordinate or integrate service delivery and funding.

In support of creating these linkages, OJJDP has disseminated the Matrix of Community-Based Initiatives to inform communities about existing sites with successful public and private comprehensive, community-based strategies to prevent violence and strengthen economic development. The report provides a broad narrative description of each major initiative, a local contact, and a contact within the Federal department or the foundation that can provide additional information.¹²

Advance the Public Health Approach to Assessing and Reducing Violence in Communities

OJJDP will continue to widely disseminate its Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders and will continue to make available timely research findings and program strategies to help communities understand the issues surrounding youth violence, including the use of firearms, and potential responses to these problems.

CDC will distribute guidelines on violence prevention and intervention to communities to help them develop their own violence prevention programs. As part of this dissemination strategy, CDC will disseminate proceedings from a National Conference on Violence on issues such as domestic violence, suicide, violence in the workplace, and youth violence.

Hold Satellite Video Teleconferences To Share Information on Delinquency Prevention and Juvenile Justice Programs

OJJDP has begun a series of video teleconferences to permit local officials, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention practitioners, and others to share a wide range of promising strategies. The teleconferences provide information about training and technical assistance, discuss principles of prevention and intervention, and address techniques for implementing successful juvenile justice reform.

The first teleconference focused on community planning, mobilization, and coordination of services as a followup to OJJDP's Title V Risk-Focused Prevention Training Program. Subsequent teleconferences concentrate on delinquency reduction topics, including proven programs that address serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders; community policing; boot camps; truancy reduction; mentoring; and conflict resolution.

Encourage Youth and Adults To Contribute to the Safety of Their Communities

CNS provides opportunities for youth and adults to become involved in violence reduction activities through programs such as AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and JustServ.

AmeriCorps' VISTA, a CNS program, will continue to assist men and women age 18 and older who commit themselves to helping low-income people with neighborhood safety and revitalization through employment training, housing, literacy, and health education.

The National Senior Service Corps will continue to draw on the skills, talents, and experiences of older Americans to address community needs through the Foster Grand-parent Program, the Senior Companion Program, and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

HUD's Heinz Neighborhood Development Program will continue to assist neighborhood groups in organizing and improving their environments.

Improve the Existing Communications Infrastructure and Utilize State-of-the-Art Technology To Share Information

OJJDP is expanding JUVJUST, an electronic list service that will facilitate the sharing of information on juvenile violence reduction. It will supplement efforts such as the Partnerships Against Violence Network (PAVNET), the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, OJJDP's on-line information on reducing youth gun violence, and HHS' PrevLine. PAVNET is a coalition of Federal agencies (Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor) that integrates data and resources, removing barriers to information sharing. It provides an online search and retrieval system; a printed directory of programs, technical assistance resources, and funding sources; networking among Federal clearinghouses and resource centers; and an Internet mail group.

OJJDP will also provide local jurisdictions with an interactive CD-ROM program through which they can obtain information about implementing programs and strategies that can be effective in reducing youth violence. The interactive nature of CD-ROM technology will enable local users to apply the forms and protocols, risk assessment information, and research and guiding principles provided on diskette to strategies that address local needs.

Establish a Center That Coordinates Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Training and Technical Assistance

OJJDP has established and will continue to support a Training Center to provide an inventory of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention training and technical assistance resources and to establish a resource data base.

OJJDP will also conduct needs assessments that will support new training and technical assistance program development and implement specialized training, including training of trainers.

Promote Federal and Other Joint Funding

DOJ will publicize and promote funding efforts with other Federal agencies and other public-private funding sources and encourage joint funding of efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Consider innovative ways to mobilize communities that break out of traditional institutional practices.
- o Develop partnerships with community-based organizations, schools, businesses, parents, and others.
- o Assess and identify local needs, resources, and priorities to target high-risk youth and juvenile offenders.
- o Use the Federal communications infrastructure to gather information about successful prevention and intervention programs that can be adapted to local needs.
- o Develop and implement locally based strategies of integrated prevention and graduated sanctions to target youth violence.
- o Create a youth commission or task force that involves young people in designing and implementing community activities that affect them.
- o Develop a clearinghouse and information hotline and hire a youth services coordinator to evaluate programs and assist youth in finding services in their communities.

- o Coordinate activities in local communities by linking law enforcement efforts with economic empowerment, youth development, education reform, and an improved juvenile justice system.
- o Assist the private sector and local governments to form partnerships by identifying Federal resources that are committed to promoting public-private partnerships.
- o Foster neighborhood crime watches, cleanups, and public awareness events.
- o Enforce anti-noise ordinances, housing codes, health and fire codes, anti-nuisance laws, and drug-free rental clauses in residential and business environments.
- o Organize a hotline number for reporting criminal activity and information.

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7. Support the Development of Innovative Approaches to Research and Evaluation

Overview

Effective public policy, laws, and intervention strategies to prevent and reduce juvenile crime and violence require a solid knowledge base. Building a knowledge base requires a thoughtfully developed, comprehensive portfolio of statistical systems, research programs, and evaluation capabilities. This combination is necessary for the following reasons:

- o Statistical systems monitor changes in juvenile crime, violence, and risk factors that have been shown to be related to these phenomena.
- o Focused long-term research improves our understanding of the causes and correlates of juvenile crime and strengthens our ability to develop successful prevention, early intervention, and graduated sanctions programs.
- o Effective evaluation tools to measure progress--to tell us if we are on the right track--are critical for refining and modifying existing prevention and early intervention strategies as well as graduated sanctions programs.

The Nation's ability to address the problems of juvenile violence and delinquency has been hampered by an incomplete understanding of the nature and extent of these problems. Recent research has

greatly increased knowledge about juvenile crime, its origins, factors that place youth at risk for involvement in criminal activity, and factors that protect youth from turning to violence and delinquency. Research is providing information on violence in some major cities and helping the cities develop a plan to solve this problem. Building on solid research into the causes and correlates of delinquency, we must continue to evaluate strategies and programs to determine what works to prevent juvenile delinquency and crime. Strong evaluation data are essential to create national, State, and community partnerships to effectively prevent and intervene in juvenile delinquency.

Techniques have become increasingly sophisticated for collecting, storing, managing, and analyzing large amounts of data on juvenile delinquency. This information contributes to our understanding of the problems of juvenile violence and delinquency, provides the basis for new research, and aids in evaluating the effectiveness of the programs and strategies contained in the Action Plan.

To enhance evaluation and research efforts, we need to improve three critical areas: national statistical information and systems on the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency and violence; longitudinal research to strengthen our understanding of the complex relationships between risk and protective factors; and rigorous evaluation of programs designed to address juvenile crime and delinquency. In each of these areas, we must develop data collection instruments that are sensitive to ethnicity, culture, and gender and that can better measure the complete context of youth development.

This section addresses each of these critical areas. It presents a clear description of the issues involved in juvenile justice system data collection and the challenges faced by researchers and evaluators. This section also looks ahead to future directions required by effective juvenile justice research, evaluation, and data collection and proposes a series of steps that the juvenile justice system can take to improve the outlook for effective research and evaluation.

Current Status and Limitations of Existing Knowledge

Statistical Information and Systems

Statistical information on juvenile justice comes both from the juvenile justice system and from data on delinquent behavior generated by other disciplines. Ideally, data collection systems should complement and enhance each other. For example, analysis of juvenile arrests should reveal information about causes of delinquency and juveniles' entry into detention, their processing in juvenile court, and their placement in the juvenile correctional system.

Much can be learned from nationwide statistics about juvenile arrest and victimization rates, the number of cases handled

annually in juvenile courts, and the number and types of juveniles in custody. This information contributes to the development of national policy on a wide range of issues. However, enhanced analysis of State and local data and research findings can lead to even greater refinements in the approach to juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. State and local jurisdictions are the primary sources of juvenile justice policies and procedures, and improvements in national data are largely dependent on information generated from the State level. An example is data on the deinstitutionalization of status offenders and disproportionate minority confinement. As each State addresses these issues, a national data system tracks progress and gathers and disseminates information that can be helpful to other States and local jurisdictions.

In addition, each component of the juvenile justice system, from law enforcement to corrections, has its own data collection system that provides unique perspectives on the problems of juvenile delinquency and the operation of the juvenile justice system. Each perspective is important to understanding the entire picture of juvenile justice. However, in order to obtain a comprehensive portrait of delinquent behavior, we need a data collection system that tracks the offender from arrest through court proceedings to disposition, identifying successful techniques within programs.

If we clearly understand the goals of a national data collection system, we are better able to assess its effectiveness. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system annually collects national data on the number of reported crimes and arrests.¹ UCR uses standardized definitions of crimes and provides information on crime at the State and local levels. Throughout its 60-year history, UCR has gained the cooperation of every State and nearly every local police department. Despite its high quality and comprehensiveness, UCR does not serve as an accurate indicator of the total number of juvenile crimes because it includes only reported crimes. Further, UCR includes incidents of criminal activities and arrests but not court data.

Although the UCR approach is logical from a law enforcement perspective, it does not work as well in other sectors of the juvenile justice system. The juvenile court data collection system, for example, counts case records but not arrests. In most jurisdictions, it is not possible to assess the number and types of cases that the juvenile court handles based on the number and type of juvenile offenses or arrests. The issue is complicated by differences among States in defining "juvenile." Depending on State law, the maximum age that an individual is considered a juvenile ranges from under 16 to under 18 and, for purposes of continuing juvenile court jurisdiction over alleged or adjudicated delinquents, can extend to age 25.

Juvenile court data are more disparate than UCR data. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funds the

National Juvenile Court Data Archive (NJCDA) project, which collects automated data files from many States and localities and publishes reports from a number of others.² NJCDA illustrates the promises and difficulties of State-level data collection. Although automated information systems provide accurate and complete pictures of juvenile court activities within each State, the level of data collection varies considerably among States. Some States have basic information systems that enable users to make simple comparisons but do not allow for indepth analysis. Other States have expansive systems that facilitate longitudinal analysis of court careers. Still others have no individual data collection. In order to obtain an accurate nationwide picture of the juvenile justice system, all States and localities need to collect standardized core data.

OJJDP's current data collection on juvenile custody reflects still another system of gathering national information. As with other systems, it has its strengths and weaknesses. The main source of custody data since 1974 has been the Children in Custody (CIC) census, that surveys all facilities that can hold juvenile offenders.³ This census collects information on the population of these facilities on a given day by age, race, and sex. As with other data sets, however, it cannot discern State and local policies that directly affect the numbers. Also, CIC cannot connect with other data sets (given differing definitions and units of measurement) to track offenders individually or generically through the juvenile justice system.

Since 1990, OJJDP has pursued another avenue for collecting custody statistics: the Juveniles Taken Into Custody (JTIC) program that provides the same population detail as CIC but in greater depth.⁴ Under this program, States supply individual data on juveniles in their custody. By tracking each juvenile through the entire custody experience, JTIC collects both admission and release information, providing length of stay measures for juveniles in custody at both the national and State levels. Unlike CIC, JTIC does not collect information on the conditions of confinement for these juveniles. As with CIC, its ability to link to other parts of the juvenile justice system is limited by the compatibility of individual data systems. Together with CIC, JTIC provides an expansive view of juvenile custody in the Nation.

The other main division in national juvenile delinquency data collection relates to information on delinquent behavior. Data on delinquent behavior are frequently gathered from surveys and self-reported data, or may be drawn from other sources that contribute to our knowledge of delinquency and delinquent behavior. For example, the Department of Labor's (DOL's) National Longitudinal Survey of Youth collects some reports of delinquent behavior and law enforcement contact.⁵ Other surveys supported by the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) collect information on substance abuse and education and include questions about delinquent behavior. Research studies have tracked comprehensive self-report measures of delinquency, but

these studies are limited in geographic distribution and time. Unfortunately, such disjointed analyses of the correlates of delinquency provide limited insights into delinquent behavior.

Longitudinal Research

The development of effective delinquency prevention strategies requires that we support research into the factors that place children at risk for delinquent behavior as well as those that protect children. While the body of research in the field is increasing, three trends have hampered its development and application:

- o Inadequate support for research and longitudinal studies.
- o Inadequate funding for replication of successful research projects.
- o Inadequate planning for research and dissemination of research findings.

These deficiencies must be remedied before we can fully identify and target prevention, intervention, and treatment programs that effectively reduce delinquency as well as make broader social policy decisions and foster systemic change.

Inadequate support for research and longitudinal studies. Historically, there has been a shortage of empirical research on the factors that put youth at risk for involvement in delinquent activity and the protective factors that help at-risk youth avoid delinquency. A recent comprehensive meta-analysis of 30 years of research on risk and protective factors represents a significant advance in this area.⁶ However, more empirical research is essential to developing a full range of programs that will be successful in preventing juvenile delinquency and reducing recidivism.

With the alarming growth in violence among youth gangs, gang-related research has attracted increased attention. Recent gang research has been valuable, but gaps remain in our understanding about why youth join and leave gangs and about the interrelationship between gang participation and other forms of delinquency and violence.⁷

Inadequate funding for replicating successful research projects. One important way to find solutions to juvenile delinquency is to replicate models of programs that work. Once the replication has been evaluated, the researcher understands whether and how a successful strategy drawn from research will be successful in other settings. The final step in the research process is dissemination and technical assistance to those who wish to establish successful programs.

Inadequate planning for research and limited dissemination of

research findings. A 5-year plan for research would enable policymakers, practitioners, legislators, and researchers to determine what information is valuable and how limited funding can be used responsibly. This plan would include designing basic research questions, testing theories, and developing successful programs. The final step would be technology transfer and dissemination of the information to the field.

In addition to funding long-term research, research findings need to be translated into effective community strategies. Research findings can be used to develop better information about causes of crime and how to intervene successfully, information that needs to be both accessible and useful to communities. The involvement of nonprofit organizations, service providers, and practitioners in the juvenile justice system is critical to this process.

Evaluation of Programs

Evaluation research can contribute tremendously to the development of effective juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs. This potential can be fully realized with strong support for a program evaluation strategy that addresses the following critical needs:

- o Develop effective evaluation strategies and capabilities.
- o Improve evaluation information.
- o Link evaluation to program development and practice.
- o Target funds to long-term evaluation.

Develop effective evaluation strategies and capabilities. The current state of evaluation research underscores the need for more sophisticated evaluation methodologies and data collection capabilities to address complex programs. Many prior evaluations of juvenile justice programs have suffered from weak research designs that have lacked sufficient rigor to clearly demonstrate program impacts.⁸ Additionally, many evaluations have focused more on process evaluation issues (exploring what activities were undertaken and why) than on impact evaluation issues (determining program outcomes and impacts).

Prevention programs in particular pose a number of challenges for evaluation. First, preventive efforts focus on reducing or eliminating certain behaviors or conditions in at-risk populations.⁹ Unlike typical program evaluations that measure what happened or what changed as a result of a program, prevention program evaluations must assess what did not happen; for example, a crime that would have been committed by a juvenile but did not occur. Moreover, it must show that the crime would have happened without the prevention program. Second, primary prevention efforts often target large population groups, such as entire schools or communities, rather than specific individuals. The results of these

efforts on the full population can be difficult to measure, especially when multiple interrelated interventions are being conducted simultaneously. Increasingly sophisticated evaluation methods are needed to address these challenges.

Problems in conducting evaluations of prevention, intervention, and treatment programs are compounded by deficiencies in data collection systems nationwide. Impact evaluations of juvenile justice programs rely on an ability to track changes in a variety of community and individual data components related to juvenile offense rates, juvenile justice system processing rates, indicators of risk, and other outcomes. These data components are not always easily accessible, comprehensive, or easily linked to individual participants, and inconsistencies often exist among different data collection systems.

Evaluation challenges posed by prevention and intervention programs are particularly problematic for many local communities that do not have access to sophisticated evaluation tools or data collection systems. There is a great need to build local evaluation capacity both to conduct self-evaluations and to participate more meaningfully in national evaluation efforts.

Improve evaluation information. Although research on the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency and violence has increased substantially over the past 30 years, more knowledge is needed of what works, for whom, and under what conditions.¹⁰ A recent exhaustive review of evaluations of prevention and corrections programs and strategies identified several interventions that consistently demonstrate positive effects. It also revealed, however, that the uneven quality of evaluation research makes it difficult to determine program effectiveness for many program areas. Most evaluation research could be improved by stronger research design, longer term followup, and better documentation of program implementation.¹¹ We are able, however, to offer communities an array of strategies and programs that have shown promise and some programs that have been carefully evaluated and found to be effective.¹²

Link evaluation to program development and practice. Too often, evaluations are not designed with the user audience in mind; and too often, they are not put to good use by communities that could benefit from their practical information. Consequently, important findings about what does and does not work often fail to reach front-line practitioners who could put this valuable information into action. Intervention efforts should consist of significant long-term investments to be most effective. To ensure the development and testing of new, high-quality, scientifically based prevention strategies, funding partnerships between service agencies and research institutes are needed, in addition to increased investment in well-planned, rigorous evaluations.

Target funds to long-term evaluation. Historically, agencies have tended to provide resources for the delivery of services rather

than for an evaluation of the long-term effectiveness of these services. Where evaluations have been funded, often they have been added to programs as short-term efforts, resulting in weak evaluations based on limited data. In addition, the short-term nature of some federally funded programs has precluded long-term evaluations. Demonstrating the effectiveness of prevention programs (especially early interventions with children, families, and schools) requires collecting impact data over long periods of time—sometimes 5, 10, or more years. Funding agencies and service providers need to build in evaluation at the front end of programs and sustain the evaluation over the full term of the program.

Future Directions in Juvenile Justice Statistics, Research, and Evaluation

Statistics

In 1990, as part of a comprehensive effort to define and address gaps in data and data quality, OJJDP funded the Juvenile Justice Statistics and Systems Development (SSD) project to analyze the current state of data about juvenile victimization and delinquency and generate discussion about improvements. In the early phases, the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) conducted an inventory of all Federal data systems that focus on juvenile offending and delinquent behavior. From this inventory, NCJJ identified systems that support particular analyses, such as substance abuse, child victimization, health and poverty issues, and delinquent behavior.

With this comprehensive picture of existing data systems, OJJDP and NCJJ are working with other Federal and public- and private-sector experts to identify the most critical information needs on a particular topic and determine the most effective methodology for collecting those data. In addition, OJJDP will continue to update *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: A National Report*.

Efforts to improve national statistics will involve the active participation of the following interagency collaborations:

- o Department of Justice (DOJ) Crime Statistics Working Group.
- o Interagency Panel on Improving National Statistics on Children and Families.
- o Interagency Working Group on Violence Research.
- o National Neighborhood Indicators Project.
- o Interagency Forum on Early Childhood Research.

Participants in these projects will identify and pursue opportunities to improve measures and statistics on juvenile victims and offenders. These opportunities may include sharing information or planning and cofunding collaborative initiatives.

This collaboration will emphasize juvenile violence and delinquency, the populations involved, and the systems' responses.

The result of these efforts will be a plan that reflects the culmination of development activities by the year 2001. The 5-year plan will propose:

- o A portfolio of data collection efforts including their purpose, cosponsors, periodicity, content, and methods with an outline of expected analyses and uses.
- o Plans for specific methodological research, with the necessary feasibility and pilot test objectives and plans.
- o System development plans associated with the collection of data requested from operational agencies. These could include the development of software to assist in the collection of data or products containing statistical feedback to be sent to the participating agency.
- o A publication plan with descriptions of products and services to be made available from a given data collection (or series of collections), lists of intended audiences, methods for evaluating the usefulness of the products, and dissemination strategies.

Research

Federal agencies have implemented several effective and promising research initiatives to promote knowledge of the patterns and trends in juvenile delinquency and violence. These include efforts to build understanding in the following areas:

- o Causes and correlates of crime, delinquency, and violence.
- o Drug use.
- o Youth gangs.
- o Juvenile sex offenders.
- o Youth development.

Understanding the causes and correlates of violence. In 1986 the Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency (Causes and Correlates), sponsored by OJJDP, began drawing data from three sources: (1) Denver Youth Survey, (2) Pittsburgh Youth Study, and (3) Rochester Youth Development Study. Causes and Correlates studied 4,000 youth over a 5-year period, allowing researchers to identify a pattern of causes and risk factors leading to delinquency, including data on drugs, guns, peers, school, and family. This longitudinal research with a shared measurement approach is a milestone in delinquency research. Interviews with 60,000 test subjects and caregivers confirmed the direct relation between youth involvement with drugs and

delinquency.13

Causes and Correlates findings suggest that involvement in violent behavior begins early for many youth, often before the teenage years. By the mid-to-late teenage years, approximately 20 percent of males and 10 to 15 percent of females are involved in violent behavior.¹⁴ Not all youth involved in violence are involved at the same rate. One group of offenders, an estimated 14 to 19 percent, is responsible for approximately 75 percent of offenses. The encouraging news, however, is that 82 percent of juveniles who have nine or more protective factors are able to resist the pressure to become involved in delinquency. This research offers evidence of our ability to solve the problem of juvenile delinquency through prevention programming.¹⁵

HHS' Family and Youth Services Bureau recently conducted a national study of substance use, suicide, and other at-risk behaviors among juveniles with runaway, throwaway, and homeless experiences. Although the results of the study are not yet available, one study goal was to determine the prevalence of substance use, suicide attempts, and other problem behaviors (delinquent activity, victimization, and sexual activities) in this population.

In addition, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and OJJDP have supported several studies focusing on the cycle of violence that establish the relationship between experiences of childhood violence and adolescent delinquent behavior:

- o An NIJ-sponsored longitudinal study of childhood victimization followed more than 1,500 cases from childhood through young adulthood. This study found that childhood abuse increases the likelihood of future delinquency and adult criminality by nearly 40 percent.¹⁶ Data from the study subsequently were used to examine the specific criminal consequences of child sexual abuse.¹⁷

- o The Rochester Youth Development Study collected extensive data through personal interviews and agency records, finding that a history of maltreatment increases the chances of youth violence by 24 percent. In addition to adolescents who were themselves abused or neglected as children, adolescents growing up in homes where partner violence existed also exhibited higher rates of violence.¹⁸

Understanding the role of drugs in delinquency. Since 1990, NIJ has collected quarterly data and recorded trends in drug use among a group of high-risk male juvenile arrestees or detainees in 12 U.S. cities. Ten of the sites also collect data from female juvenile arrestees and detainees. This Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program documented a dramatic rise from 1992 to 1993 in the use of marijuana among juvenile arrestees/detainees, underscoring the importance of providing intervention programs for youthful offenders. The program shows that many juveniles who use illegal drugs falter in school attendance and eventually enter the juvenile justice system.¹⁹

From the Causes and Correlates study, OJJDP has also found that the number of violent offenses increased after the onset of drug use. Drug use is closely related to violent crime and juvenile offending.²⁰

Understanding youth gangs. The Family and Youth Services Bureau's Youth Gang Drug Prevention Program supports ongoing gang-related research projects, including:

- o Gang Families in a Public Housing Project, which examines the dynamics of family life as they relate to gang membership and the transfer of gang habits and values among family members.

- o Factors Related to Gang Membership Resistance, which uses comparison group studies to explore how some at-risk youth avoid gang activity.

The National Youth Gang Center, a key component of OJJDP's Comprehensive Response to America's Gang Problem initiative, maintains and expands critical knowledge about youth gangs and how communities can respond to them effectively. The center collects and analyzes gang-related data; analyzes anti-gang legislation; reviews current anti-gang literature; identifies promising gang prevention program strategies; and coordinates activities of the Gang Consortium, a coalition of representatives of Federal agencies. The center also supports a national baseline study of the locations and characteristics of violent gangs.

Understanding system response to juvenile sex offenders. Recognizing that juvenile sex offenders have become an increasingly visible and particularly problematic offender population, OJJDP has supported an initiative to describe and assess the ways in which the juvenile justice system and other related systems respond to juvenile sex offenders. This ongoing research initiative, conducted by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, includes a comprehensive literature review, an indepth assessment of system functioning at 8 sites, and multistate retrospective data tracking of a cohort of 450 juvenile sex offenders from the point of court referral through disposition and treatment.

Understanding the positive and resilient aspects of youth development. The first principle in designing youth development research should be to move away from the "deficit model" that focuses on discrete problem behaviors, such as teen pregnancy, to a more comprehensive approach that describes experiences of youth in high-risk situations, including their capacity for change, resourcefulness, and full potential. Research should describe youth in the context of peer group, family, neighborhood, and community rather than solely in the context of individual behavior. We also need to understand the adaptive and protective behaviors of youth in high-stress environments and pay greater attention to positive developmental outcomes. A research framework that considers the full context of youth development would:

- o Identify the developmental needs of youth in general and within the context of distressed environments.
- o Focus attention on the interaction of risk factors and protective factors.
- o Support studies that identify needs that are being met and those that are not so that youth programs can include appropriate goals.
- o Support longitudinal studies that examine processes of individual development and change as well as change in communities and institutions.
- o Specify the most effective combination of community supports and opportunities for youth to develop the skills and strengths they will need to become productive adults.

When developing effective community strategies with measurable results, program designers should pay attention to the circumstances in which youth live and grow, addressing a broad spectrum of areas associated with a healthy community and healthy human development (for example, economic opportunity, safety, health, and education). Research in this area needs to include an understanding of the developmental needs of adolescents in relation to the environment.

The proposed model for inquiry would move beyond measuring individual actions and circumstances to include data that illustrate the importance of positive developmental outcomes among youth. Rather than using research activities to focus simply on individual problem behaviors and the categorical funding streams by which most current programs are supported, this model would focus on the interaction of risk factors and normal processes of human development, positive adaptation, and resilience among youth. Examples of areas for future research include the following:

- o Availability of recreational and educational activities and employment opportunities.
- o Existence of family and community supports.
- o Developmental needs served by gang participation and other high-risk behaviors.
- o Cultural and ethnic characteristics as well as intergenerational influences on gang participation and other high-risk behaviors.
- o Patterns of drug use and violent delinquency among youth to determine whether they are part of a single syndrome or a developmental stage.
- o Correlation among family variables (for example, parental supervision and/or involvement) and high-risk behaviors to determine whether there is a concurrent or predictive relationship.

Dissemination and implementation of research findings. OJJDP published the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders (Comprehensive Strategy) in 1993 and the Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders (Guide) in 1995. These documents are the foundation upon which the Action Plan rests. The Comprehensive Strategy and the Guide integrate more than 30 years of research into the causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency and violence, risk and protective factors for delinquency, and the effectiveness of a wide variety of prevention programs and juvenile justice system graduated sanctions. These documents help to translate research into practical information that can be used at the community level.

Evaluation

Several effective and promising strategies have been implemented by Federal agencies over the past several years that have resulted in useful evaluations to drive successful program development. These include:

- o Making evaluation funding an integral part of program development.
- o Using evaluability assessments and constructing logic models.
- o Enhancing local evaluation capacity.
- o Linking evaluation findings to program development and practice.

Making evaluation funding an integral part of program development. A number of recent delinquency prevention initiatives have made evaluation an integral part of the program. The Cities in Schools (CIS) program, for example, is a dropout prevention program implemented in 665 sites in 197 communities nationwide and funded by OJJDP in collaboration with ED, HHS, and the Departments of Commerce and Defense. The program's continued operation has been supported by preliminary evaluation results that indicate significant success in keeping at-risk students in school. Eighty percent of students who entered the program during the 1989-90 and 1990-91 school years were still in school in 1993, and 70 percent of students with high absenteeism prior to entering CIS improved their attendance.²¹

Other examples of recent and on-going demonstration projects with integrated evaluation components include:

- o Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP's) Community Partnerships, a program that launched a variety of drug-prevention activities tailored to the needs of target communities.
- o Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA's) Comprehensive Communities program, a strategy to control violent crime through community

mobilization.

- o Office of Justice Programs' (OJP's) Operation Weed and Seed, a multiagency strategy supporting law enforcement and community revitalization.

- o OJJDP's Title V Initiative, Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs (Title V Initiative), a comprehensive risk-focused approach to developing community-based delinquency prevention strategies.

The results of these evaluations are being used to enhance knowledge of what is effective and to guide ongoing program implementation and replication efforts.

In recent years, several agencies have strengthened their institutional evaluation capabilities and management evaluation systems. In addition, OJJDP has established an evaluation contract capable of planning and performing independent evaluations of a variety of OJJDP projects.

The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) created the National Evaluation Data and Technical Assistance Center (NEDTAC) to serve as a program evaluation system and resource center to support the needs of CSAT staff and grantees and substance abuse treatment evaluators. NEDTAC provides a wide range of technical assistance and data base development services to support grantees in meeting evaluation requirements and utilizing evaluation data. Under its program evaluation system, NEDTAC also conducts special studies to inform policy decisions and program planning.

Using evaluability assessments and constructing logic models. Evaluability assessments have been gaining increasing popularity as a tool to help ensure that an evaluation will be both technically feasible and capable of answering research questions important to decisionmakers.²² Evaluability assessments address important issues related to a program's measurable goals and objectives, hypothesized causal links between activities and outcomes, and data collection capabilities. Addressing these issues before the evaluation begins strengthens the potential reliability of the evaluation.

Logic models are also useful tools to help program planners create program activities and expected outcomes. The principal purpose of the logic model is to present graphically the logical connections among conditions that contribute to the need for a program in a community, the activities aimed at addressing these conditions, and the outcomes and impacts expected to result from the activities.²³ These models, which have been required of CSAP grantees in several programs and recently by OJJDP in its SafeFutures program, can also play a key role in conducting evaluability assessments of newly designed programs.

Enhancing local evaluation capacity. Enhancing local capacity is

critical to conducting successful, sophisticated evaluations of complex prevention and intervention strategies. In recent years, a number of evaluation manuals have been developed and disseminated to local communities, including:

- o What, Me Evaluate? A Basic Evaluation Guide for Citizen Crime Prevention Programs. National Crime Prevention Council (1986).
- o Evaluating Drug Control and System Improvement Projects. NIJ (1991).
- o Handbook for Evaluating Drug and Alcohol Prevention Programs: Staff/Team Evaluation of Prevention Programs (STEPP). HHS, Public Health Service (1987).
- o Evaluating Juvenile Justice Programs: A Design Monograph for State Planners. DOJ, OJJDP (1991).
- o Prevention Plus III: Assessing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs at the School and Community Level. HHS, Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (1991).
- o Understanding Evaluation: The Way to Better Prevention Programs. ED (1993).
- o How Good Is Your Drug Abuse Treatment Program? A Guide to Evaluation. HHS, National Institutes of Health (1995).

These manuals explain key evaluation concepts and list the steps necessary for communities to more easily evaluate their own programs. In addition to disseminating manuals, several agencies, including CSAT and CSAP, have provided community members with substantial training and technical assistance about conducting evaluations and collecting and assessing relevant program data.

Linking evaluation findings to program development and practice. OJJDP's recently published Guide is a current example of transferring evaluation findings to program development and practice.²⁴ The Guide describes the community planning and organizational steps necessary to design and implement local prevention and graduated sanctions strategies and to link them to provide a complete continuum-of-care system. Findings from available research and evaluation are explained in easily understandable language to support prescribed steps in program implementation, management, and evaluation.

The development of performance standards is another tool used to link evaluation to practice. DOL has been developing performance indicators and standards for youth employment programs. If the objective of a program is youth employment, for example, standards (based on prior research and evaluation) might be set for the percentage of youth placed in jobs and the average wage earned. Performance standards such as these could help to keep programs accountable while providing objective measures for assessing

program effectiveness.

Federal Action Steps

Build Local and Federal Evaluation Capabilities

OJJDP will expand the technical assistance and training role of the evaluation contractor under its umbrella evaluation contract. In addition to conducting evaluations of individual projects, the contractor will be responsible for helping to build local evaluation capacity and strengthening national and local partnerships to evaluate Federal initiatives.

OJJDP will continue to build local capacity in prevention program implementation and evaluation through the Title V Initiative. Local communities will receive training and technical assistance related to implementing risk-focused prevention strategies and assessing risk and resource data. OJJDP will provide local grantees with Delinquency Prevention Program Community Self-Evaluation Workbooks to assist them in building self-evaluation capacity.

This workbook will contain a series of forms and instructions to assist local communities to assess and evaluate youth violence reduction and delinquency prevention activities in three key areas: (1) documenting their prevention plans, resource allocation, organizational structure, and decisionmaking processes; (2) monitoring implementation of programs, activities, and services; and (3) tracking changes in the indicators of risk.

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Crime Act) mandates the allocation of 20 percent of every new Crime Act grant program to evaluation. NIJ and OJJDP will continue to include evaluation requirements in their grant solicitations and encourage applicants to initiate partnerships with researchers, evaluators, and management information systems specialists at the outset of their projects.

Develop a 5-Year Plan To Improve National Statistical Data

OJJDP has made a significant investment in improving national statistics on juvenile offenders and victims and the justice system's response to juvenile delinquency and violence. OJJDP's Statistics and Systems Development (SSD) program has examined more than 50 national data collection efforts, identifying many gaps in basic information and specific needs for improvement. The resulting report, *Developing a National Juvenile Justice Statistical Program* (1994), outlines both general strategies for filling critical information gaps and a detailed continuum of options for a comprehensive juvenile custody statistics program.

OJJDP is currently implementing recommendations for improving juvenile custody statistics, starting with an extensive redesign of the Children in Custody census. Other planning work focuses on juvenile probation and transfers of juveniles to criminal court.

In 1996, OJJDP will issue a 5-year plan, Juvenile Justice Statistics 2001, a blueprint for achieving long-term gains in our ability to monitor trends in juvenile delinquency, violence, and victimization.

Develop a 5-Year Violence and Delinquency Research Plan

To close the gaps in research on delinquency and crime, the Coordinating Council member agencies will continue to support many of the research efforts discussed earlier and will also introduce new studies of interest.

OJJDP will develop a 5-year research plan to organize and develop new knowledge on violence and delinquency and will confer with experts on the plan.

Implement Additional Long-Term Studies To Increase Understanding of the Causes and Correlates of Youth Crime and Violence

HHS, through the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), will launch a new effort in adolescent health that is its largest and most comprehensive to date. Using longitudinal surveys of over 19,000 middle and high school students and their parents, researchers will collect data about adolescents' health status, health behaviors, family behavior, neighborhood, and community. The goal of the study is to better understand the complex forces (i.e., what they are and how they may be shaped) that promote good health in young people.

NIJ will continue research related to drug use and criminal activities, including the expansion of juvenile research protocols under its multi-year DUF program.

NIJ will also continue to fund the Project on Human Development in Chicago neighborhoods, which is a longitudinal study on child development and risk factors for violence.

OJJDP will conduct additional analyses using data collected under the Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency. These analyses will be used to support further development of OJJDP's Comprehensive Strategy.

OJJDP will continue to support studies on the incidence and characteristics of violence committed by or against juveniles in Los Angeles, CA, and Washington, DC, and will report on studies being completed in Milwaukee, WI, and South Carolina.

OJJDP will fund the Gangs, Groups, Individuals, and Violence Intervention study panel. This panel will assist in the implementation of OJJDP's Comprehensive Strategy by providing up-to-date information about prevention and intervention strategies that work effectively for specific types of individuals, at specific stages of development, and under specific conditions. This

study should be completed in 1996.

OJJDP will also consider funding a longitudinal survey of youth to gather self-reported data concerning juvenile crime and violent acts. Other areas of future research interest include: assessment centers; child abuse and neglect and other related issues; youth and guns; developmental pathways of juvenile offenders; family influences, such as absent or teen fathers; and victims and witnesses of violence in the home.

Address Gaps in Youth Gang, Gun, and Drug Research

NIJ and OJJDP will address gaps in research about youth involvement with gangs, guns, drugs, and their interconnections.

OJJDP will examine the interrelationships among gangs, guns, drugs, and violence through research on causes and correlates of delinquency in Rochester, NY; Pittsburgh, PA; and Denver, CO.

OJJDP will continue its research on juvenile gang involvement, collecting information on gang members who commit murder. It will also conduct a national assessment of the scope and seriousness of gang violence.

NIJ will conduct a study about the nature and extent of gang migration to provide data to law enforcement, community members, and policy-makers and to enhance the capability of the juvenile justice system to effectively address this problem. The results of gang-related research will be shared among Office of Justice Programs agencies through the Gangs Working Group and among Federal agencies through the National Gang Consortium.

OJJDP will supplement the baseline study on the presence of violent gangs with two studies designed to develop detailed information on various aspects of gangs such as the proportion of violent crime attributed to youth gangs. NIJ has funded several studies (Huff, Klein, and Maxson) that will supplement these efforts and further define the relationships among gang participation and other forms of delinquency and violence.

OJJDP's Field-Initiated Research program will support research ideas generated in the field. Priority research topics may include factors related to joining and leaving gangs, ethnographic studies on the dynamics of gang creation or enlistment, and prevention or intervention approaches aimed at diverting at-risk youth from becoming gang members.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms is studying how the disruption of illegal weapons markets impacts juvenile violent crime rates and gun homicides.

NIJ is conducting several firearms studies, including a national survey of high school students, to examine firearm acquisition, ownership, and use as well as victimization experiences; a study on

firearm prevalence in and around urban, suburban, and rural high schools; and a study that applies the principles of community oriented policing to the interruption of illicit youth gun markets in Boston, combining prevention strategies with policing strategies used against illegal drug traffickers.

OJJDP will evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive strategy to reduce juvenile gun violence in the Atlanta metropolitan region.

HHS will fund, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a research project to examine the risk factors for gun use and injury among young males in inner cities. The research will examine two aspects. First, it will compare young males whose violence and/or injuries involve guns, and those whose violence and/or injuries involve gangs whose violence does not involve guns. Second, it will determine the characteristics and processes of personal interactions where gun injuries occur compared to nongun injuries. The research will identify modifiable risk factors in the daily routines of youth in areas of concentrated violence, and will contribute to the development of a framework for process analysis of violent events.

NIJ will continue to fund research to measure the incidence of drug use among juveniles using three modes of drug-use detection: self-report, hair analysis, and urinalysis. NIJ will also continue to document the prevalence and use of drugs through 11 of its DUF sites. Also through its DUF program, NIJ will measure firearm access, possession, and use by 6,000 booked juvenile and adult arrestees in 11 sites.

Examine the Impact of Options for Processing Juvenile Offenders

OJJDP will support a study of the processes by which juveniles are transferred to criminal court and the comparative effectiveness of the criminal justice system's handling of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders with juvenile justice system processing. This research is expected to provide legislatures and other policymakers with empirical information about juvenile transfer mechanisms, such as court processing, case dispositions, and outcomes. The comparative effectiveness of different processing options for protecting public safety and reducing subsequent recidivism is of particular interest.

Translate Research Findings Into Programs and Practices

DOJ will continue to support research and evaluation of programs and effective and promising approaches to youth violence. This knowledge will assist in program design and focus, resulting in more effective ways to prevent and stop juvenile offending, and will include:

- o Gathering data about the extent and demographics of the problem of youth crime and violence to examine the influence of factors such as location, age trends, gender, ethnicity, and situational

precursors. These data should provide information about specific types of victims (such as the elderly) and offenses (such as domestic violence).

- o Supporting further research on the effectiveness of different intervention strategies for different populations, groups, and individuals. This research will promote flexibility in evaluation methodologies ranging from randomized controlled trials to qualitative assessments with the goal of building knowledge of effective practices. Research and evaluation, including data on cost effectiveness, should be built into all prevention and intervention funding.

- o Coordinating research funding efforts with other Federal agencies and public and private funding sources and encouraging joint funding of projects. Also, encouraging university partnerships with local community-based organizations and service providers through proposal requests that require such partnerships.

- o Summarizing, packaging, and disseminating relevant juvenile justice and delinquency prevention research findings in a user-friendly format to other Federal agencies and State and local juvenile justice practitioners. Identifying and referencing juvenile justice and delinquency prevention research, promising programs, and proven models at each stage of youth development. Providing information about funding availability for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention research from various Federal agencies.

- o Reviewing plans for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention research projects and offering recommendations for coordination. Reviewing final reports and findings of relevant research projects.

NIJ will continue to support research to examine the relationship between early childhood abuse and neglect, subsequent violent criminal behavior, and intervention strategies that help prevent progression to this behavior.

NIJ will also fund research to explore the influence of peer groups in the development of career criminals.

OJJDP will convene a study group consisting of experts in the juvenile delinquency field to continue development and refinement of the Comprehensive Strategy.

BJA will continue to collect program and evaluation data and disseminate them through the What Works series. NIJ will also continue to evaluate and disseminate information through the Research in Brief series, evaluation bulletins, and other publications.

NIJ and OJJDP will develop additional mechanisms to disseminate research findings and data, such as conferences, meetings, clearinghouse services, research reports, and research briefings.

The Coordinating Council and its member agencies will support efforts to translate the findings of evaluation activities into effective programs and practices. OJJDP will continue to update and disseminate the Guide as additional evaluation findings are available.

NICHD will continue to support community-based studies to determine the factors influencing risk-taking behavior, including violence in various minority and ethnic adolescent populations. This knowledge will then be used to develop and test targeted intervention programs.

Integrate Evaluation Into Demonstration Projects

Coordinating Council member agencies will enhance the role of evaluation in Federal juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs by building Federal and local evaluation capacity.

OJJDP will support a national evaluation concurrent with the funding of six SafeFutures demonstration sites that will test OJJDP's Comprehensive Strategy. The participating SafeFutures communities will be expected to demonstrate a strong capacity for data collection and analysis to support an evaluation component addressing both process and outcome measures. Partnerships between local and national evaluators will be encouraged.

OJJDP will also support the development of a long-term national evaluation strategy for the Title V Initiative to assess the impact of community-based, risk-focused prevention efforts. This strategy will aggregate data from individual communities participating in the Title V Initiative and will integrate preliminary findings from the current implementation evaluation.

The Executive Office for Weed and Seed and BJA will continue to support NIJ's evaluation of the Comprehensive Communities and Weed and Seed programs to assess strategies for crime and drug control. Other agencies will also begin or continue national evaluations of related prevention or intervention programs. For example, HHS will support a national evaluation of its new Family Preservation and Family Support Services program.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Develop linkages with colleges, universities, and nonprofit research centers for the purpose of expanding their research and evaluation capabilities.
- o Expand and coordinate management information systems across youth service agencies.
- o Work cooperatively with national evaluators to enhance program effectiveness.

- o Support research into causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency at the State and local levels.
- o Develop new programs based on state-of-the-art research and evaluation.
- o Support randomized assignments for assessing program effectiveness.
- o Make data available for monitoring changes in risk and protective factors.
- o Serve as learning laboratories for the field.

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8. Implement an Aggressive Public Outreach Campaign on Effective Strategies To Combat Juvenile Violence

Overview

Public information about juvenile crime presents a paradox. In some ways there is too much information--and in other ways there isn't enough. While the media frequently focus on the increase in youth gangs, drugs, and juvenile violence, few people beyond the juvenile justice field realize that a relatively small number of youth become involved in serious criminal activity. Most people are also unaware that a significant body of research exists on the causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency and crime, serving as a foundation for effective Federal, State, and local programs and strategies.

Researchers have verified that long-term public education campaigns on violence prevention, family education, alcohol and other drug prevention, and gun safety curriculums in school are effective strategies to help prevent delinquency.¹ They also concur that involving youth² and developing community consensus are essential to an effective public education process.³

A well-designed public education campaign can make a positive impact on public opinion, target specific audiences, and be a cost-effective way of providing critical information to a large number of people. For example, it can enhance community understanding about the nature and value of the juvenile justice system. It can educate all members of the community about effective prevention and intervention strategies. It can help communities identify and access local resources. And it can inform policymakers of tested, proven options for effective juvenile justice at all levels.

This section documents the effectiveness of mass media public education efforts and suggests a range of successful strategies that can bring about measurable change in communities. It also encourages communities to enlist support for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention and intervention efforts by engaging the media as partners. The section concludes with an outline of public information efforts being planned by the Federal Government and coordinated with national organizations to inform communities about what works to reduce juvenile delinquency and violence.

Current Status and Analysis of the Problem

As youth violence has increased, the media have expanded national and local coverage of the problem, often using images that build upon community fear. However, the media frequently overlook the more complicated messages about the causes of violence and approaches to redress it, including the importance of community involvement in finding solutions.

Public debate over prevention program funding tells the tale: unless the public understands the effective strategies underlying prevention programs, communities will face difficulties getting

support and implementing many of these strategies. A dynamic public education campaign can herald the service-oriented efforts of resilient young people who are improving safety in their communities and spotlight policymakers whose decisions result in positive outcomes for youth. Most importantly, it can focus on what works, what does not work, and for whom, when, and why. Translating data and research into straightforward language and providing this information to those who need it is, therefore, an essential component of reducing youth violence and crime.

Government and the media share important roles in this process. In recent years, some media have spearheaded public education campaigns to address various social problems and have disseminated information, for example, on the serious health risks of tobacco use and alcohol overconsumption. Government has sounded the alarm about these and other health-related hazards, pushed for greater media responsibility, and offered guidance on promising strategies to address the problems. Throughout this process, national organizations that directly serve teachers, police, and local governments have been key partners in getting the message out.

It is imperative that a public information campaign make effective use of innovative media efforts, such as new dissemination techniques and outreach materials, to convey the complicated, but critically important, messages of the causes of youth violence and the effective strategies for violence prevention.

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

Effectiveness of Mass Media Public Education Efforts

The effectiveness of mass media campaigns is well documented. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration linked the sharp decline in drunk driving crashes and deaths over the past two decades to effective behavior modification and explicit changes in community attitudes and values due to public information campaigns.⁴ The positive effects of increasing knowledge about HIV infection and AIDS through entertainment television were demonstrated when the number of calls received by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National AIDS Hotline increased from the Saturday average of 4,900 to nearly 84,000 after the ABC network broadcast a 2-hour entertainment and AIDS outreach special.⁵

These campaigns are among dozens of national media efforts, publicizing a variety of issues, that have increased public awareness and generated positive action. Notable among these are the campaigns for individual responsibility for forest fire prevention (Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires), safety belt use (Buckle Up for Safety), community crime prevention (Take a Bite Out of Crime), and support for historically black colleges and universities (A Mind Is a Terrible Thing To Waste). Similarly, mass media education campaigns can directly and indirectly generate public support for the actions proposed in this Action Plan.

Many national, Federal, State, and local organizations have conducted information campaigns on a wide variety of criminal justice issues. Both the private and nonprofit sectors have initiated media campaigns aimed at reducing all types of violence, including domestic and other family violence, child abuse, violence with guns and other weapons, and juvenile violence. Some networks have provided a focus on family violence. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting produced "Act Against Violence" and encouraged local media to get involved. The California Wellness Foundation has contributed millions of dollars to a statewide Campaign to Prevent Handgun Violence Against Kids. The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), Harvard University School of Public Health, and Children's Defense Fund have also developed media information campaigns on violence.

The National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign conducted a large-scale public education effort, symbolized by McGruff, the "crime dog." Locally, crime prevention practitioners view the McGruff campaign as an effective catalyst to generate citizen action, galvanize police-community partnerships, and rally local and State crime prevention efforts. In the past decade, the campaign has received more than \$500 million in funds and in-kind support, distributed hundreds of thousands of timely publications, provided training to crime prevention practitioners, and conducted hands-on demonstration programs to help citizens work with law enforcement and other public and private service providers to build safer, healthier, and more nurturing communities.

An extensive independent evaluation⁶ funded in 1991 by the Department of Justice (DOJ) found that the McGruff anti-crime campaign can teach an individual about crime prevention for only 2.2 cents in Federal funds, and the campaign spends only 2.9 cents to generate individual action. Additionally, the campaign's public service messages generate \$50 or more in donated print space and air time for every \$1 of Federal funds spent in their development, a remarkable public-private partnership.

National Night Out, supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), provides an example of a well-publicized yearlong campaign to support the development of community-based policing initiatives in thousands of neighborhoods across the United States, its Territories, many Canadian cities, and at U.S. military bases around the world. In 1994, public service ads about this program, involving youth, families, educators, business, law enforcement, and other service providers, encouraged the participation of 27 million people in 8,750 rural, urban, and metropolitan jurisdictions.

Partnerships

One of the important benefits of a successful public education campaign is the opportunity for individuals, groups, public and

private agencies, and others to form partnerships to share responsibility in combating juvenile violence and other delinquency problems. Through public service advertising and public outreach to print and electronic media, more community members become aware, and can become essential members, of existing prevention activities. These partnerships, forged through a shared understanding of the strategies and principles underlying local programs, can draw on diverse skills and talents to broaden the scope of efforts to reduce juvenile violent crime.

As community leaders begin to collaborate with State or local level groups and individuals, it is important that they consider the following as partners in a public information campaign strategy:

- o Groups that can impact public policy, such as the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, and State and local agencies.
- o Groups that can bring law enforcement support to juvenile crime and violence prevention as a matter of public safety, such as the National Sheriffs' Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Crime Prevention Coalition, the Police Executive Research Forum, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the Fraternal Order of Police, the Hispanic Law Enforcement Officers' Association, and the National Association of State Troopers.
- o Professional organizations that have a stake in the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system to reduce juvenile violence and other juvenile crime, including the American Bar Association, the National Association of State Attorneys General, the National Association of District Attorneys, the American Psychological Association, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the American Medical Association.
- o Service providers and private organizations that can contribute ideas, resources, and strategies to anti-crime information campaigns, such as child advocacy groups, religious organizations, entertainment and sports leaders, business and industry, and foundations.

Some groups have accumulated substantial experience in helping local communities with media campaigns and partnerships. NCPC, for example, distributes an action kit, Partner With the Media To Build Safer Communities, containing reproducible materials that communities can use to reach the public with their anti-crime, anti-violence messages.

NCPC has partnered with the media in a Turn Off the Violence Campaign, inaugurated in Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN. In this effort, the community engaged the help of local print and electronic media to convince residents that violence is an unacceptable way to resolve conflict. The campaign also encourages media to reevaluate

their own violent entertainment programming. This grassroots partnership, which required limited funding, has spread throughout Minnesota and is being adopted by other States and cities.⁷

Sharing communications market research and polling information about juvenile delinquency and violence can form the foundation for an effective communication strategy. Again, many organizations have already gathered this information and can be of assistance in formulating sound strategies that respond to public concerns. Collaborating to develop anti-violence messages for use in public service announcements (PSA's) and other mass media is fundamental to a successful campaign.

Getting the Message Out

The goal of public information efforts must be twofold: to change public perception about youth violence and available solutions and to convince adults and youth that their active involvement is essential to success. To achieve these goals, public information campaigns should enable people to reach informed judgments about preventing crime by and against juveniles. The message should reflect an awareness of the increasing cultural diversity in this country, be sensitive to gender-related differences and problems, and appeal to the priorities of key decisionmakers.

Generally, the public information campaign should:

- o Provide accurate information about the causes, nature, and extent of juvenile delinquency and victimization problems.
- o Provide needed information to convince the audience that juvenile delinquency and victimization are preventable.
- o Inspire individuals and communities to address these problems because they have a stake in the outcome.

Ideas for Action

Communities can begin immediately to take short-term concrete steps to get the message out, while larger, overarching public information campaigns get underway. Local action can include:

- o Speeches, interviews, and public statements.
- o Town hall meetings and focus groups.
- o Electronic dissemination of information on juvenile violence and solutions by CD-ROM and online access.
- o Teleconferences and audio conferences.
- o Meetings with government officials and legislators.
- o Articles in journals and news magazines.

- o Opinion pieces and letters to the editor.
- o Press releases about anti-violence events highlighting juvenile justice activities.
- o Outreach to youth through schools and youth organizations to learn their views, discuss alternatives to violence and crime, and enlist their leadership and involvement.

Matching the Message to the Medium and Increasing Local Awareness of Resources

Research and experience have shown that public information campaigns directed at different audiences require differing approaches, strategies, and creative execution. The issue is not simply to target a mix of television, radio, newspaper, magazine, and other communications outlets, but rather to determine what combinations within these media prove most effective. Communities wishing to publicize their delinquency prevention and intervention strategies can consult with media experts to determine which type of medium is best suited to their audience and their activities. Effective communication requires tailoring each message to a specific audience, such as youth victims, minorities, women, or the elderly, and knowing the desired result.

It is essential that juvenile justice practitioners, including court personnel, probation officers, law enforcement officers, and youth service workers, collaborate with local leaders to inform the public about the strategies they are using and their successes. Their experience brings credibility and an immediacy to the concerns being addressed and to the solutions being described.

Communities should also develop localized campaigns that increase residents' awareness of Federal, State, and local resources for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. Lists of resources can be posted in community gathering places, at agency offices, and in other sites where clients are most likely to see them. Foreign-language radio PSA's in special programming can also include appropriate information to reach residents who are unable to read or understand English.

Communities that design local targeted public information campaigns should include an evaluation mechanism that will provide important data on the effectiveness of structured, public communications efforts as well as information to help identify ways to increase awareness and the use of resources that can prevent or reduce violence among youth.

Through effective media campaigns, young people can receive public recognition for community service and neighborhood or school improvements. Elderly residents can begin to feel confident again about the safety of going out of their homes. Neighborhood leaders can turn their discouragement about pervasive violence into action

toward ridding their streets of the causes of juvenile violence with strategies that work. Parents can learn about the positive effects of local youth programs. And policymakers can support local groups with resources for programs that have documented records of success.

Federal Action Steps

DOJ will convene national organizations in support of a public information campaign that will consist of several components: a series of PSA's to highlight solutions to youth violence, a booklet developed with the President's Crime Prevention Council on ways to reduce youth violence, a CD-ROM and videotape combining the messages of the PSA's, and a public information campaign on gun violence. These mass media components will be disseminated through intensive outreach to State and local constituencies.

Disseminate Public Service Announcements

DOJ proposes the production of PSA's by a public-private partnership, using donated airtime and print space, when possible. The PSA's are aimed at a variety of audiences and have a three-part message:

- o Persuade young people to turn away from violence and dangerous lifestyles.
- o Educate parents and other community residents about solutions to youth violence.
- o Demonstrate to youth, parents, and youth-serving professionals how they can be part of the solution.

Develop a Document on Ways To Reduce Youth Violence

A user-friendly document will communicate to the public "what works" in prevention and early intervention. This publication, being developed by the President's Crime Prevention Council, will communicate the goals of prevention programs and suggest ways for community leaders, parents, and youth to become involved in prevention efforts. This document will include the objectives set forth in the Action Plan.

A response pamphlet will also be available through an 800 telephone number that will be advertised during the PSA's, and by the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse. Linking the information in this pamphlet online with the Partnerships Against Violence Network (PAVNET) will offer additional distribution opportunities.

Produce a Videotape and CD-ROM on Reducing Youth Violence

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is producing a CD-ROM demonstrating the tools and implementation strategies of effective youth violence prevention programs.

Additionally, OJJDP will explore the possibility of producing a state-of-the-art videotape with a well-known and admired public figure as narrator. It would combine the messages of all delinquency prevention PSA's into a coordinated and compelling production.

This video will be the visual media equivalent of OJJDP's Delinquency Prevention Works and the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders.

Produce a Media Message on Reducing Youth Gun Violence

DOJ will continue to support a public information campaign to specifically address youth gun violence. Although the Department advocates comprehensive gun interdiction strategies, it is clear that youth gun violence raises unique problems requiring additional forms of intervention. The message articulates youth's perspectives on gun violence and also dramatizes for parents the problem of an unsecured gun in the home.

Link Successful Local Initiatives With a National Public Information Campaign

BJA has developed a technical assistance package for public information campaigns that communities can use to showcase local juvenile justice prevention successes and other achievements. The package identifies local programs that have successfully demonstrated and documented delinquency prevention and intervention strategies. Local media can support this public information sharing by contributing space, airtime, and programming.

As the national campaign develops, a working group consisting of media representatives, organizations with experience in mass media campaigns, key constituents, and the philanthropic sector could join forces to maximize the use of existing resources and to strengthen and coordinate the message. Members of this group could include, but would not be limited to, the National Association of Counties, the National Funding Collaborative on Violence Prevention, the Police Executive Research Forum, the Crime Prevention Coalition, the National League of Cities, the National Governors' Association, the National School Board Association, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The working group would have the capacity to engage in a number of activities:

- o Share market communications research conducted in the area of youth violence.
- o Combine and leverage resources to support public outreach efforts.
- o Develop a statement that could be integrated into individual

media projects, such as billboards, PSA's, and radio and print announcements.

- o Create collaborative projects.
- o Access and highlight Federal programs or best practices in the area of youth violence.

Suggestions for State and Local Action

- o Engage local media in highlighting positive youth activities.
- o Encourage mayors, police chiefs, sheriffs, and others to deliver local anti-violence prevention announcements to local station managers.
- o Showcase youth successes in local communities.
- o Include PSA's with contact numbers and resource information hotlines after programming on youth violence.
- o Develop a local teen talk show hosted and produced by youth.

Endnotes

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Conclusion

Reduce Tomorrow's Violence: Take Action Today

In a healthy society, citizens should neither have to fear for the safety of youth nor fear being victimized by them. Today, however, many children are exposed to the threat of violence in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods. At an alarming rate, the entrepreneurial talents and skills of some of our brightest youngsters are employed in the lucrative but lethal trade of distributing illegal substances. They war with each other, deface buildings, terrorize neighborhoods, and engage in other malicious acts. Youthful prostitutes and runaways live in the streets, merchants are robbed at gunpoint, and the elderly are attacked. Easy access to guns has added to the lethality of juvenile violence.

Researcher and child advocate James Garbarino likens American communities plagued by gang violence to urban war zones where more than one in four children have witnessed a homicide. Garbarino concludes: "Environmental danger of this magnitude is equaled only in the lives of children who live in situations of armed conflict."¹

It is disheartening to see the growing numbers of violent youth who value neither their own lives nor those of their victims. In this Action Plan, the Coordinating Council has presented its broad vision for reforming the juvenile justice system and strengthening communities to reduce both the number of juvenile victims and the number of juvenile offenders. The vision is responsive in terms of advocating intensified law enforcement and prosecution of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders and responsible in terms of advancing strategies to bolster the system of support and intervention for those children and youth confronted by violence in their communities, their schools, and their homes.

Self-assessment or external evaluation is critical to success in this field. The Coordinating Council urges all communities to find a clear way to measure and demonstrate the outcome of the actions they take to address their juvenile violence and delinquency problem.

The Nation can ill afford to make the wrong choices. The Action

Plan presents examples of community commitment to solutions that work. We have an opportunity to build on these accomplishments and implement them in our own communities.

Endnote

1. Garbarino, J., K. Kostlmy, and N. Dubrow. 1991. No Place To Be a Child: Growing Up in a War Zone. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books.