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Report to the President.
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U.S. PRESIDENT'S
COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE
DELINQUENCY AND YOUTH
CRIME

REPORT TO THE
PRESIDENT

1962

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The President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime was established by Executive Order on May 11, 1961. This action by the President expressed great concern about the loss to the Nation reflected in the steady growth of youth crimes and related problems of school failure and youth employment. It created a new structure for coordinating the distinctive contributions of youth-serving organizations within the Departments of Justice, Labor, and Health, Education, and Welfare into a unified attack on these national problems. It signified that the Federal Government would accept greater responsibility to find creative and effective solutions in partnership with local communities.

During the past year, the Committee has discovered throughout the country a growing anxiety and sense of urgency about the rising incidence of youth misconduct. Proposals by the Committee to join with local communities in a number of carefully planned, comprehensive demonstration projects in the most troubled urban neighborhoods have met with an enthusiastic response. There is great eagerness to attack these youth problems, to reappraise and revitalize existing services. And there is willingness to search for the talent, support, and authority to do the job.

Frequently, the persistence of delinquency is attributed to insufficient funds. If only more money were available, it is argued, for proper facilities, expansion of existing programs, and enlargement of youth service staff with better qualified personnel, the problem could be overcome.

Undoubtedly, effective solutions to delinquency will require additional financial investments from both public and private sources. It is

equally clear, however, that more money alone is not the answer. The President of the Borough of Brooklyn noted recently that New York City's grand total for fighting juvenile delinquency now comes close to \$90 million a year. Seven years ago it had been about twenty-three and one-half million dollars. In spite of this overwhelming dollar increase, he reported, the number of delinquency cases disposed by the Children's Court rose 163.3 percent between the years 1950 and 1959, inclusive.

It is the opinion of the President's Committee that additional funds in this field can only return their full value when local communities have carefully planned the redevelopment of their youth services. Throughout the Nation we must speed the development of our planning, program and training instruments to implement successful prevention programs. The Committee further believes that Federal assistance to local communities is essential at this time to accomplish this objective.

The President's Committee has evolved a set of policies for this purpose. It calls for development of a coherent pattern of technical assistance and demonstration grants by the Federal agencies concerned with various types of youth problems or communal activities which affect youth opportunities. It requires close coordination of these activities with the planning, program and training efforts of local communities whenever they are ready to mobilize a comprehensive redevelopment of youth services. It commits the Federal Government to a partnership role with these communi-

ties in financing new demonstration programs and in collecting and disseminating information about these delinquency prevention activities to other communities as well. In the long run, it looks toward the development of a tested body of knowledge about the scope of existing youth services, the gaps in these services, the new programs that are needed, the sources of financial aid, and the types of new legislative or administrative enactments which will create the necessary resources.

The work of the Committee has stimulated a new mobilization of public and private resources from Federal, State, and local agencies. Much has been learned about our youth problems, our best programs, and the prospects for successful action. The Committee is convinced that the Nation possesses the knowledge and capacity to deal effectively with these problems. We can open new horizons of service and opportunity for our young people. We have already begun to mobilize our resources to meet this great challenge.

The Challenge

A review of the evidence makes it abundantly clear that our current efforts as a Nation to prevent or control delinquency and related youth problems must be redoubled in the years ahead. The President has appropriately called delinquency "a national problem of major concern." What is the nature of the challenge we face?

Dimensions of the Task

Each year during the last decade the courts have had to commit more and more young people to correctional institutions. State governments are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain adequate facilities to

reform these youthful offenders. Furthermore, each year greater numbers of young people are being subjected to official control as probationers or parolees, and a growing number of cases not reflected in official statistics are settled by informal processes prior to court appearance.

The size of the task is revealed in this dramatic increase in delinquency activity over the years. The rise has been persistent since 1948--faster than the growth in the child population. For example, juvenile court cases increased by six percent in 1960 over the year 1959. Yet, the population growth for the same age group was only two percent. A total of 443,000 youth aged 10-17 appeared on delinquency referrals before our courts in 1960, and a greater number estimated at 600,000 were handled by the police. But the full dimensions of the challenge can be understood best in the results of special studies of specific areas.

In one of our major cities, it has been shown that nearly 15 percent of all the children of the city were destined to come to court on delinquency charges before reaching their 18th birthday. For boys alone the citywide figure was 22 percent, and for Negro boys the rate was about 40 percent. In some neighborhoods of this city, 59 percent of the children who had resided in that neighborhood from the age of 7 had been to court on delinquency charges by the age of 18.

These figures, unfortunately, are not unique. Comparable rates appear to be characteristic of most of the Nation's large and expanding urban centers.

Such statistics, however, reveal only part of the picture. In recent years, youth offenses have become more violent and destructive. Juvenile homicides arising out of youth gang warfare are more frequent, as are self-inflicted deaths arising from the spread of narcotic use. Juvenile arrests for major felonies are increasing. Furthermore, serious delinquent activity, especially auto theft, vandalism, sex offenses, alcohol and narcotic use, has spread out. Whereas it was previously confined largely within urban slum areas, it has now become common to other sectors of the metropolitan region, as well as rural communities.

Unless these trends are reversed, there is every reason to believe they will rapidly become much worse. This prediction takes account of the great increase during this decade of the youth population in the high risk age groups from 12 to 21 years of age. It also reflects the fast changing character of the labor market with its increasing demand for formal academic training and advanced vocational skills; attributes which most youth drawn into delinquency feel unable to achieve under present conditions. The decreasing opportunities for unskilled workers create a new set of barriers and make it easier to blame society for one's troubles. Such conditions justify a delinquent career in the minds of many frustrated and alienated youth. The importance of these related problems of youth unemployment and school achievement is evident in the current estimates for the decade, 1960-1970. It is forecast that 26 million new workers will enter the labor market during this period. Nearly a third of these (7.5 million) will not have completed high school, and one in every 10 (2.5 million) will not even have finished grade school.

Clearly we face a task that deserves our greatest efforts. But we also face a challenge to the depth of our understanding and the strength of our determination to see clearly what is needed and to act vigorously to achieve it. What then are the crucial points from which a successful new attack can be launched? To obtain an answer we must study our current social service programs which address the problems of youth. The Committee's analysis revealed several key areas where more vigorous action would enhance our prevention and control efforts.

The Basic Areas for Action

An effective organization of youth services within a local community should reflect adequate planning, programming, and training. Unless we invest sufficiently in each one of those areas we will inevitably face rising rates of youthful misconduct.

Planning: A review of various planning operations for organizing programs to prevent and control delinquency revealed four essential components which must be reinforced for a renewed attack:

(1) coverage of multiple causes, (2) sufficient authority for change, (3) full utilization of resources, and (4) integration of research, evaluation, and action.

(1) Coverage of Multiple Causes: A common approach in many planning efforts is to regard delinquent behavior as an individual problem, rooted in the delinquent's emotional disturbance, family inadequacy, bad companions, reading deficiency, etc. The source of trouble is attributed to a personal deficiency of the individual delinquent. This view ignores the converging pressures and effects of the

social conditions under which he lives, such as inadequate opportunities, discrimination, etc. Furthermore, there is often a tendency to search out a single, common cause and to neglect other equally important sources of delinquency. If such limitations are not overcome, the prevention programs will attack only part of the total problem. By focusing only on individual offenders, they will neglect the underlying social conditions which would continue to generate new acts of deviance. The solution would be only partial, serving to mitigate but not to prevent delinquency.

(2) Sufficient Authority for Change: Closely related to this danger of oversimplifying the problem is the necessity for mobilizing sufficient authority for organizational change behind the planning process.

Depriving social conditions within the local community generate many pressures toward delinquency. Planning an effective prevention program may require pervasive changes--changes which reorganize existing youth services and create new ones. Inevitably many organizational or personal investments in the community will be affected. These interests need to be represented and to participate for the planning process to succeed. They must lend authority and support to the changes contemplated by the planning operation. No planning organization can hope for success if it lacks sufficient authority or excludes sources of community influence whose support is mandatory if the necessary social changes are to be achieved.

(3) Full Utilization of Resources: Inadequate exploitation of community resources and talent can materially hamper the planning operation.

We must not risk a serious gap between our understanding of social problems and the use of this knowledge in planning. This advanced knowledge tends to accumulate in institutions of higher learning or organizations for specialized study and research. There are relatively few communities without some access to such resources. It is essential that planning groups in delinquency prevention develop effective communication and working relationships with them. The most fruitful enterprises are bound to be those in which the practical skill and understanding of the youth service practitioners are integrated with the theoretical and research competence of the academic professions. To weld these resources into a unified planning team is to promote better solutions to delinquency.

(4) Integration of Research, Evaluation, and Action: Every new program for youth services should plan for adequate evaluation of the results. Many promising delinquency prevention measures throughout the country have been tried and then forgotten. Their potential usefulness has been lost for lack of adequate means to evaluate and communicate their impact. Usually this happens because of the great pressure to undertake new services immediately. The need of young people for these services is generally so painfully obvious that no time is left to develop a proper evaluation research plan to report the strong or weak points of the new action program. Instead reliance must be placed upon the subjective judgments of the practitioners administering the action program. Consequently, evaluations tend to be sketchy, biased and superficial. It is sometimes clear that the program has helped to

control or reform in outstanding cases, but its impact in ameliorating significantly the problem in the community is seldom ascertainable. Clearly, the immediate goal of an effective action program for many new communities requires a close integration of program and research activities.

Furthermore, unless we build evaluative research into our action programs, we may also suffer serious long-run costs. We must accumulate a tested body of knowledge about the programs that work best to prevent delinquency and related youth problems. Otherwise, we may waste financial resources that might have been invested more prudently and effectively. If no solid factual ground is laid for determining future program priorities, the allocation of new welfare service funds is likely to be haphazard.

Programming

Adequate planning is the foundation on which a successful prevention program is built. The sources of delinquent conduct, especially in our large urban centers, are exceedingly complex. We require more advanced planning today than may have been necessary in a simpler society. We face heavy competitive demands from a wide variety of services for our welfare dollars and our training personnel. We need firmly established priorities to guide the investment of these scarce resources. We must have a well integrated set of prevention programs to mount a successful attack against the diverse sources of delinquency. In the Committee's judgment, there are two primary conditions which we must establish if a broad new attack on youth problems is to succeed.

(1) Integration of Programs: In surveying prevention programs throughout the country, the Committee has been favorably impressed with the number of useful and promising projects now in operation. Some attack

problems in the home situation. Others deal with the education, employment, recreation, and emotional problems of young people. These programs, however, are widely scattered. The challenge is to bring all of them together to form a comprehensive attack on youth problems in a single community. We cannot charge each specialized program with solving the total problem of delinquency by itself. Their full preventive impact requires supportive programs in related problem areas which need solution at the same time. We must avoid a situation in which useful programs are picked up one after the other as total panaceas and just as quickly dropped, because they failed to provide the complete solution. Such fragmentation of services would not build the accumulating body of knowledge about successful prevention which we sorely need and would sacrifice many promising ideas.

(2) Coordination of Program: Useful programs dealing with youth problems in the school, home, job, recreation or correctional services must not be allowed to function in comparative isolation from one another. Under such conditions, conflicts in method and orientation remain unresolved and the effective impact of each program is sharply reduced. To deal with each part of the total delinquency prevention problem in a separate agency with relatively little inter-communication obviously is wasteful and self-defeating. Such a complex problem cannot be solved by any single treatment agent alone. It requires the application of many different skills and bodies of specialized knowledge working in close concert.

Training

Effective planning and program activities depend on an adequate supply of well-trained professional and volunteer persons to do the job. One of our greatest challenges is to furnish this trained body of workers as rapidly as possible.

(1) Adequate Supply of Staff: The rapid increase in the size of the delinquency problem and the number of proposed prevention and control programs makes the acute shortage of trained staff progressively more serious. Strong competition is emerging for a limited number of professionally trained practitioners to service a broad range of welfare functions. We must not permit limitations of budget, nor inadequate investment in training, to make it necessary for us to staff new youth service programs with persons not adequately qualified for the task.

(2) More Specialized Training: Even professional staff personnel usually require special training for understanding or coping with the complex problem of delinquency. To facilitate this, more knowledge about the sources and patterns of delinquency must be developed into specialized training courses. We need more instruction in techniques for identifying and attacking these sources in the conditions of community life as well as in individual cases. To make our attack successful, we must be prepared to support more intensive and specific training in this field for both professional and volunteer personnel.

One further observation should be noted about the steps we must take to meet the challenge of youth problems today. We must stress the prevention of delinquency as much as the control of delinquency. Ordinarily the consequences get more attention than the sources of the problem.

Of course we need delinquency programs concerned with remedial or control measures after the fact as well as with primary prevention. Citizens must be protected by adequate law enforcement and correctional treatment programs against repetitions of socially destructive acts by young people. Preventing additional acts of delinquency by young offenders is an essential part of any total prevention and control program. However, an equal investment of resources in basic prevention activities will offer a more stable and effective solution. Programs confined solely to control and rehabilitation of adjudicated delinquents do not reach the basic sources of the problem in the community. Only a broad attack on youth problems will accomplish this vital mission. The immediate objective of the President's Committee is to assist communities in achieving this balance.

The Solution

The Federal program in delinquency prevention aims to institute three types of experimentation in selected communities throughout the Nation. These are taking the form of planning, program and training demonstrations. Each demonstration will serve as a possible model to produce tested ideas, methods, and techniques capable of being utilized by other communities and institutions in their efforts to solve the delinquency problem.

Program Demonstration

The demonstration of a new pattern of youth service programs is the central goal of the Federal program. The planning and training demonstrations are designed to support the attainment of this objective.

To do this each project community must mobilize itself for a comprehensive attack on the sources of delinquency. It means coordinating a broad combination of social services and related resources. The idea is not only to combat the pressures which urge youth toward delinquent behavior, but to create the opportunities that are essential, if these young people are to realize creative and productive lives.

Such experimentation cannot rest solely on an expansion of existing community services. It must also incorporate well planned ideas for service which offer a fresh, innovative approach to delinquency prevention. In addition, the demonstration must proceed within a framework of solid research evaluation. This will allow the results to be communicated successfully to other communities as part of an evolving body of knowledge in this field.

Planning Demonstrations

The potential effectiveness of a comprehensive youth service program is directly related to the quality of the planning operations from which it emerges. Since appropriate planning efforts are an essential prerequisite, the Committee will support a number of planning demonstrations in partnership with local communities. They will test the effectiveness of different types of planning organizations and operations for re-building the structure of youth service in local communities. Several of these experimentations have already been started. The approach differs somewhat from one community to another. However, each undertakes to correct deficiencies revealed in past planning operations.

A representative group of public and private agencies in the local community provides policy directives for the planning demonstration. This top policy group carries the authority to undertake a broad investigation of the scope of existing youth services. It can formulate and implement a new comprehensive plan for these services to achieve an effective delinquency prevention program. In each case, a staff unit directly accountable to this policy group incorporates a broad range of planning skills. The staff unit is expected to work as an integrated team. It combines organizational ability and both theoretical and practical knowledge about delinquency with special talent in program development and research competence. During the process of developing a comprehensive plan, constant efforts will be undertaken to mobilize appropriate community resources and participation in a common effort to rebuild the structure of youth services within the area.

Training Demonstration

Without well trained leadership, such complex planning and program demonstrations cannot succeed. To stimulate work in the area of training, three types of new developments are being undertaken by the Committee.

(1) Training Centers: A number of new training centers are being established at accredited universities and colleges throughout the country. These centers will mobilize and foster training competence in youth services. They will train persons who may function in turn as training staff in their own communities. The course of instruction will offer an interdisciplinary orientation to youth problems, together with specific training in speciali-

areas of practice, such as law enforcement, correctional treatment, youth education, youth employment, family and child welfare, and recreational services. These centers may also become focal points for the collection and dissemination of new information on the extent of delinquency and related youth problems and appropriate methods of coping with them. Furthermore, related research projects will be encouraged at the centers to feed new knowledge into the training experiences.

(2) Curriculum Development: New theoretical and research findings in the behavioral sciences must constantly be applied to improve practical programs of youth service. New insights must be woven into the established body of training material. It is not enough to increase the amount of training now available in the field. The general quality and relevance of the training experiences must be greatly enriched. A grant program to develop new course material is thus an essential part of a broad approach to training needs.

(3) Short-term Traineeships: An extended program of short-term institutes, workshops and seminars is a third major concern of the Committee in the area of training. Many professional and volunteer youth workers are unfamiliar with existing material which would enhance understanding of youth problems and appropriate methods for handling them. A grant program encouraging short-term traineeships for various categories of personnel actively involved in youth services affords a way of communicating this established knowledge to the front line workers.

The Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961

The chief means for implementing the program of the President's Committee was provided by the enactment of P. L. 87-274, entitled "The Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961," on September 22, 1961. This law authorizes a total of \$10 million per year, for a three-year period to finance demonstration grants, training grants, and a technical assistance and information studies service for the prevention and control of delinquency. The Act is administered by the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, in consultation with the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime.

Grants are made to applicants on the recommendation of technical review panels composed of expert professional persons. One panel reviews applications for planning and program demonstration grants, and the other considers requests for training grants.

The objectives of the President's Committee are also fostered by the advice of a Citizens Advisory Council of 21 members. It is composed of persons from all parts of the country and various fields of service selected for their interest and contribution to the welfare of the Nation's youth. This Council furnishes the Committee recommendations on broad matters of policy and procedure in the field of youth services.

The President's Committee is further assisted by a group of regional advisors throughout the country. This group of professional and lay persons does not meet as a body, but provides advice and aid to the Federal program on delinquency through direct contact with field personnel in the various regions of the country.

The staff of the President's Committee is contributed by the three cooperating Departments to coordinate delinquency prevention activities at the Federal level and in local communities. These coordinating functions of the President's Committee staff are enhanced by the specialized consultation provided by newly established technical assistance units for youth development in the Departments of Labor and Justice, and in the Children's Bureau and Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. These services are rapidly building up a network of effective communication about delinquency prevention programs throughout the country. This work is being strengthened further through the development of new information studies, data collection and dissemination procedures.

The resources provided by P.L. 87-274 have made it possible for the President's Committee to pursue the objectives set forth in the Executive Order of May 11, 1961. The members of the President's Committee are convinced that the pattern for an effective attack on delinquency and related youth problems has been built in this past year. We are confident that its continued development will promote the welfare of the Nation's youth. Ultimately it should foster a redevelopment of youth services in our most disadvantaged communities. This in turn should immeasurably enhance our capacity to halt the spiraling growth of delinquency and related youth problems.

Activities of the President's Committee

Professional and lay groups in communities throughout the country have responded vigorously to the challenge and new opportunities afforded

by the objectives and policies of the President's Committee. They see a chance to make a fresh attack on a broad range of related youth problems. Initial requests for assistance from the Federal program were received from individual agencies with somewhat narrow, specialized program interest in their local communities. However, as the Committee's analysis of the delinquency prevention problem took shape and its objectives and policies were communicated to interested groups throughout the country, the pattern of requests for assistance has changed. Applications now seek support for a comprehensive planning process for youth services.

Thus far six communities have received planning demonstration grants; Cleveland, Houston, Los Angeles, New Haven, Minneapolis and Philadelphia. It is anticipated that funds will permit three additional planning grants in the current fiscal year, and four more in the next fiscal year. New forms of coordination have been organized in the planning grant communities. In each city, except Houston and Minneapolis, a new non-profit corporation has been created representing all of the major institutions in the community; business, labor, health and welfare agencies, education, employment services and strong backing from city and State administrations. In all the cities the planning process is already beginning to reveal new possibilities for improving the structure of youth services.

Only one major grant has been made as yet for a program demonstration project. This grant is to the Mobilization For Youth Board, Inc., a non-profit organization representing public and private youth serving agencies in the City of New York, including the project area in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Since 1958, this organization has been engaged in a program

of planning and development in the project area. During the last two years, they have operated with the assistance of a planning grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. With these funds an integrated planning unit was created of expert research and program personnel. The research team launched fact-finding surveys within the area to establish justification for new programs and a baseline for measuring the impact of future changes. They also designed evaluation procedures for the new action programs. The program staff analyzed existing services within the area and charted a new structure of youth opportunities for the community. Agencies and groups in the community were mobilized to support the planning and program demonstration phases including the major city departments.

The comprehensive plan developed by Mobilization For Youth calls for a redevelopment of services in the area of youth work, education, recreation, child and family welfare, and group services. It actively involves adults in the community in creating for their young people a new environment of opportunity. The new project also offers an extensive program of training for new workers in various fields of youth service.

A grant of \$7 million has been made to this project through joint action by the President's Committee and the National Institute of Mental Health. An additional sum of \$2 million is being procured from private foundation sources and \$1.4 million for the first year has been contributed by the City of New York. It is estimated that the City's contribution will total \$4.5 million over a three year period.

In the judgment of the Committee, this is the most advanced program yet devised to combat delinquency on a broad scale. Never before have neighborhood workers, the city government, the Federal Government, private agencies, and a great university of the stature of Columbia University joined together for a planned, coordinated attack on the sources of delinquency. Mobilization For Youth is the first concrete example of the comprehensive local action we believe necessary to meet the complex problems facing today's youth. It is significant that the leadership and much of the financial support of this program will come from local and private resources. This project promises to be of the greatest national importance. It is contemplated that five such demonstration projects can be developed with assistance from the President's Committee in the next two years.

In the past year the President's Committee has undertaken a broad survey and analysis of youth programs in different communities throughout the country. These surveys proceeded with the assistance of other public and private youth welfare organizations. With this information, objective policies and criteria were established for processing grant applications in the area of planning, programming, and training. The application process has involved extensive consultation and technical assistance to communities, universities and interested groups throughout the country. Within the Federal Government, meetings have been held with other youth-serving agencies and grant programs, to coordinate the granting activities and technical assistance services. In addition, new efforts have been initiated to establish better statistical reporting on youth problems throughout the country. The President's Committee has worked in close

cooperation with the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency of the Governors' Conference to promote more effective collection of information in this field. Close working relationships have also been established with such organizations as the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, the National Education Association, and the National Committee on Employment of Youth, to coordinate public and private data collection and dissemination procedures.

The area of youth services covers many different types of program needs. From the projects already underway it should prove possible within the coming year to secure a far more accurate understanding of youth needs throughout the country than we have had in the past. We may find new areas of need not now being met. New legislative proposals may prove necessary. However, the program undertaken by the President's Committee has thus far clearly demonstrated that the area of youth problems must be seen as a whole. The entire field of youth services is becoming more critical and more problematic with the rising youth population and the prolonged dependency of youth in an adult society requiring a higher level of technical skill for useful employment. There is clearly an important role for the Federal Government to play. The problems of youth in our urban society today transcend the resources of individual families or local communities. The problems which they face are generated by broader trends in the social economy of the country. Thus, the Federal Government can give leadership, but, in the last analysis, the job can only be done by the States and local communities. The President's Committee feels certain that the

projects already initiated will help provide a clearer definition in the future than we have had in the past of the way in which this partnership between the Federal Government and local communities can effectively solve these great and pressing problems.