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Lessons from an Evaluation of Five State Supported Delinquency Prevention Projects

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ABSTRACT

This bulletin presents an overview of findings from an evaluation of five state supported delinquency prevention projects that was conducted between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002. Each of the projects evaluated was funded as part of the Kentucky Community Partnerships to Prevent Delinquency Initiative. This initiative represented a major effort by the Commonwealth through its state Department of Juvenile Justice to assist communities in their efforts to develop local delinquency prevention plans and to fund programs that address local needs in eight geographic areas within the state that were identified by DJJ as having high levels of juvenile crime.

The bulletin describes the criteria used for selecting programs for the evaluation, the general methodology used, an assessment of the extent to which programs targeted at-risk youths, a summary of the evaluation results, and a description of the risk factors included in this study that best predict delinquency. The bulletin concludes by reviewing several lessons gleaned from the evaluation that can assist DJJ, and others, in efforts to develop effective delinquency prevention programs.

A COLLEGE OF JUSTICE AND SAFETY "PROGRAM OF DISTINCTION" RESEARCH GRANT REPORT

LESSONS FROM AN EVALUATION OF FIVE STATE-SUPPORTED DELINQUENCY PREVENTION PROJECTS

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INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents an overview of findings from an evaluation of five state supported delinquency prevention projects that was conducted between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002.¹ Each of the projects evaluated was funded as part of the Kentucky Community Partnerships to Prevent Delinquency Initiative directed by the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The initiative represents a major effort by DJJ to assist communities in their efforts to develop local delinquency prevention plans and to fund programs that address local needs in eight geographic areas within the state that have been identified by DJJ as having high levels of juvenile crime.² As a result, since July 1, 1999, over 90 separate delinquency prevention projects have been funded through local delinquency prevention councils in these eight areas.

Although EKU personnel had provided a variety of program development and evaluation services to DJJ and to individual programs since the initiative was launched in 1998, a more focused evaluation approach targeting a small number of programs was deemed to be more feasible for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The feasibility of using a more focused evaluation approach was primarily due to the fact that DJJ lacked the resources to support intensive technical assistance and evaluation services for all of the programs being funded. There were, also, several other good reasons for focusing attention on a small number of programs. A targeted evaluation approach makes possible a more detailed assessment of the extent to which each of the selected programs has been able to achieve its stated goals and objectives. In addition, an in-depth assessment of selected programs can provide a broader range of feedback to program managers that can be used to improve program effectiveness and inform policies designed to improve the overall ability of the initiative to reduce juvenile crime in the Commonwealth.

The following describes the criteria used for selecting programs for the evaluation, the general methodology used for the evaluation, an assessment of the extent to which programs

targeted at-risk youths, a summary of the evaluation results, and a description of the risk factors included in this study that best predict delinquency. The bulletin concludes by reviewing several lessons gleaned from the evaluation that can assist DJJ, and others, in efforts to develop effective delinquency prevention programs.

THE PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria called for the evaluation of programs that: (1) had been in existence the previous year, (2) employed commonly used approaches supported by the Community Partnerships Initiative, (3) used approaches to delinquency prevention that were unique, (4) represented diverse geographical areas within the state, including urban and less populated areas, (5) possessed minimal evaluation resources, and (6) were amenable to evaluation. With these criteria in mind, and after considering data collected in previous years on continuing programs and discussions with program managers, one program from five of the eight geographic areas supporting DJJ funded projects was selected for evaluation. No program from Warren County was selected because there were no continuing programs in that county during the 2001-2002 fiscal year, the program selected for evaluation from Hopkins County refused to cooperate with the evaluation, and the program selected for evaluation from Fayette County had already hired a competent evaluator. This left five programs, one each in Jefferson, Hardin, and Daviess/Henderson counties and Northern Kentucky.³ These programs were:

1. The CAMPS Program, Family Nurturing Center, Northern Kentucky.
2. Club Farley, Farley Elementary School, McCracken County.
3. Project Aspire, Henderson Public Schools, Daviess/Henderson counties.
4. WES House, Genesis United Methodist Church, Jefferson County.
5. The Destiny Center, Sign of the Dove Church, Hardin

County.

Together, the projects provided a diverse range of services to various populations of youths within different social contexts. For example, Club Farley provided a range of services, including some services to parents, to all third, fourth, and fifth graders ($N=310$) in an elementary school that serves predominately lower-middle and lower class white youths. WES House operated an after-school program that primarily served African-American youths ($N=25$) who live within a ten block high crime urban area in Louisville, while the Destiny Center housed an after-school program that primarily served elementary, middle, and high school age African-American youths ($N=35$) who live in suburban communities in Hardin County. In contrast, the CAMPS Program provided family focused interventions that included a residential component for families with high risk youths ($N=25$), many of whom have been involved with the juvenile courts and/or child welfare and protection agencies. The final program, Project Aspire, provided pull-out counseling and mentoring services to school identified at-risk youths ($N=53$) in several schools in Henderson County.⁴

GENERAL EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The overall strategy employed to examine the diverse programs selected for the evaluation was to collect data on goals, objectives, and operations that were common to each of the programs. These goals and objectives consisted of reductions in levels of delinquency among program participants; improving youths' attachment to school, school attendance, and academic performance; improving youths' self-concept; lessening their association with negative peers; enhancing their ability to respond to anger and conflict in socially appropriate ways; decreasing alienation among participants; improving youths' relations with their family and supportive adults; and improving youths' sense of social acceptance.

Once common goals and objectives were identified,

the next step was to develop sound measures of each of these constructs. This was accomplished by reviewing the literature related to each construct and selecting measures that had been found to have good reliability and validity. In several instances, however, good measures of goals and objectives identified by programs were not readily available. In these cases, the literature and discussions with program staff were used as guides in the development of measures that were believed to have good face validity, and, it was hoped, would prove to be reliable measures of program goals and objectives.

Once appropriate measures of common program goals and objectives were identified, a pre-test/post-test survey instrument, the "Community Partnerships Initiative Youth Opinion Survey" was developed. The survey instrument contained indices designed to measure each of the common goals and objectives identified by the five programs.⁵ These indices were: (1) Attachment to School, (2) Youth Alienation, (3) Self-report Delinquency, (4) Self-concept, (5) Anger Response, (6) Negative Peer Influence, (7) Family/Adult Interaction, and (8) Social Acceptance.

The survey also contained three indices intended to help understand the social environment in which program participants live. These indices were: (1) School Crime and Conflict, (2) Neighborhood Crime and Conflict, and (3) General Strain.⁶ In addition, the survey instrument contained individual items intended to measure (1) School Attendance, (2) Academic Performance (grades), (3) After School Adult Supervision, (4) Perceptions of Safety at Home, (5) Perceptions of Neighborhood Safety, (6) Involvement in School and Other Activities, (7) Adult Support, and (8) Neighborhood Activities, and it contained demographic items designed to measure youths' (1) Gender, (2) Race/Ethnicity, (3) Grade in School, and (4) Family Composition.

Copies of the "Community Partnerships Initiative Youth Opinion Survey" were mailed to the programs in the late summer and early fall as programs were beginning operation for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. With the exception of the Family

Nurturing Center CAMPS Program, post-test surveys were mailed to programs in the spring, 2002. CAMPS program post-test surveys were administered to youth clients at the end of each CAMPS session that lasted approximately eight weeks.⁷

The primary methodology employed in the evaluation consisted of a pretest/post-test youth survey designed to measure potential program effects after six to seven months exposure to the program.⁸ Pre-Post-Test data were collected from 72% of the students in the Club Farley program, 77% of those involved in the Sign of the Dove program, 92% of the on-going participants in Project Aspire, 76% of those involved in the WES House program, and 88% of those who participated in the Family Nurturing Program. In addition, program observations and interviews with program staff, service providers, and recipients were used to supplement data collected via the youth survey. Finally, a teacher and parent survey was developed to measure teacher and parent perceptions of and support for the Club Farley program. Parent responses were received from 63% of the parents of Club Farley participants.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH PROGRAMS TARGETED AT-RISK YOUTHS

This section examines the extent to which the clients in the programs examined in this evaluation represent an at-risk population. In order for delinquency prevention programs to produce meaningful effects on delinquency, they must target youths who are either involved in or at risk of involvement in illegal behavior.

An examination of the demographic characteristics of program participants indicates that approximately half of the clients served were male, almost 81% were white, 82% attended elementary school, and slightly over one-third (35%) lived with both natural parents. However, it should also be noted that there were significant differences among projects in the demographic makeup of youths served. Only 32% of the clients involved in Project Aspire were female, almost all youths

served by the Destiny Center and WES House were minorities, 35% of the youth clients in the Family Nurturing program attended elementary school, and only about 18% of the youths participating in the Destiny Center, Project Aspire, and Family Nurturing Center programs lived with both natural parents.

Data on participants' involvement in delinquency and exposure to risk factors associated with illegal behavior indicate that almost 55% of the youths surveyed on the pretest indicated involvement in at least one delinquent act during the year prior to the survey, and 18% reported involvement in three or more delinquent acts. The most common types of delinquent/problem behaviors reported by youths were bullying others (22%), fighting where groups of youths were involved (22%), damaging others' property (21%), beating up another person (20%), and using verbal threats (20%). Interestingly, youths involved in the five programs examined in this study reported more involvement in offenses against persons than property offenses. There were, however, significant differences between programs in self-reported delinquent behavior on the pre-test. Students at Farley Elementary reported significantly less involvement in delinquency than youths participating in Project Aspire or the Family Nurturing program. This is not surprising because Club Farley involves all third, fourth, and fifth grade students in the program, not just those identified as high risk. In contrast, the Family Nurturing program and Project Aspire targeted, on average, somewhat older youths who were more heavily involved in delinquency than youths in the other programs.

An examination of the risk factors to which program participants were exposed indicated that between 30 and 35% of program participants reported that they moved to a new home, changed schools or someone in their home had become seriously ill or died during the past year. In addition, one in five reported that their parents divorced, a parent married, or someone at home had been in a serious accident, arrested, in legal trouble, or lost their job within the previous year. Indeed, one-third of youth respondents indicated that they had

experienced at least three major stressful events during the previous year. Project Aspire youths and those in the Family Nurturing Program reported the greatest exposure to strain. Club Farley participants reported the least.

Program youths' reports of exposure to school and neighborhood crime and conflict indicate that almost half (47%) reported exposure to school crime and conflict and almost one in five (19%) reported exposure to neighborhood crime and conflict. Students at Farley Elementary reported significantly less exposure to school crime and conflict than other youths. Once again Project Aspire clients reported greater exposure to school and neighborhood crime and conflict than other program participants. Overall, these data indicate that substantial numbers of youths involved in these programs are exposed to a number of risk factors associated with delinquency. Consequently, they represent a logical target population for delinquency prevention programming.

EVALUATION RESULTS SUMMARY

An analysis focusing on program effects indicates that at least three of the five programs appear to have produced hoped-for reductions in delinquency or they may have mitigated risk factors associated with juvenile crime. Participants in two programs, Club Farley and Project Aspire, indicated pre-post reductions in self-reported delinquency. In addition, Club Farley youths maintained high levels of attachment to school, and reported reductions in alienation. Youths served by Project Aspire also showed improvements in their ability to handle anger and conflict, self-concept, family and adult relations, and they indicated reductions in alienation. Family Nurturing Center participants reported improvements in their ability to appropriately handle anger and conflict, family and adult relations, self-concept, and they reported reductions in negative peer influence. Youth at the Destiny Center indicated over time improvements in their ability to handle anger and conflict and self-concept, while those who participated in the WES House

program reported improvements in their ability to handle anger and conflict, although the small numbers of youths who completed surveys at WES House make conclusions about the program tenuous.

Three of the programs involved in this evaluation are associated with a number of positive outcomes that merit further attention. Club Farley, Project Aspire and the Family Nurturing Center CAMPS Program appear to be promising programs that demonstrate some potential as delinquency reduction strategies. However, additional efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs, particularly through the use of experimental designs where feasible, is needed in order to further refine program interventions, document the extent to which they meet client and community needs, and improve their ability to reduce delinquency among program participants.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RISK FACTORS THAT BEST PREDICT DELINQUENCY AMONG PREVENTION PROGRAM CLIENTS

An assessment of the risk factors included in the research that best predict delinquency among youths included in the study has obvious policy implications. By understanding the measures (risk factors) that predict delinquency, program personnel gain insight into the types of interventions that are most likely to make a significant impact on their clients.

The results of an analysis designed to determine the best predictors of delinquency among the measures employed in the evaluation indicate that youths' ability to respond to anger and conflict was the best predictor of delinquency, followed by self-reported grades, and youths' perceptions of social acceptance.⁹ This model accounted for approximately one-third (33.8%) of the variance in self-reported delinquency. Youths who indicated they respond appropriately to anger and conflict were less likely to admit involvement in delinquency than those who reported inappropriate responses. Youths' ability to respond appropriately to anger and conflict was by far the strongest predictor of delinquency. Nevertheless, program participants who reported receiving better grades in school

were less likely to indicate involvement in delinquency than those who reported receiving poor grades. In addition, increases in youths' reports of social acceptance were found to be associated with lower levels of delinquent involvement compared to those who indicated low levels of social acceptance.

It should be noted that each of the programs involved in this study focused some attention on helping participants develop better conflict resolution skills. Indeed, for each of the programs that demonstrated the most positive outcomes (Club Farley, the Family Nurturing Center Camps Program, and Project Aspire), special attention was given to helping clients develop interpersonal skills that would allow them to respond more appropriately to anger and conflict. These programs targeted a risk factor that is a strong predictor of delinquency and likely contributed to the positive outcomes they achieved. Indeed, there is some evidence that schools, as well as community-based programs, can help youths develop pro-social skills,¹⁰ including anger management and impulse control. There is also evidence that some conflict resolution programs produce reductions in aggressive behaviors and increase positive social behaviors among participants.¹¹

School performance was also an issue that was addressed either directly or indirectly by each of the programs evaluated in this study. Like efforts to help clients develop conflict resolution skills, efforts to help youths succeed in school represent viable delinquency prevention strategies. Both the literature on delinquency and the results of this study indicate that youths who experience academic failure are more likely to engage in delinquency than those who do well in school.¹² Consequently, programs that helped youths improve their academic performance addressed an important risk factor among their client population.

The final measure, social acceptance, that was found to be significantly related to self-report delinquency among the study population was not directly addressed by any of the programs in the evaluation. Indeed, the measure itself has

rather low reliability ($\alpha=.67$) and was constructed post hoc from items on the youth opinion survey that were not used in other indices. The index appears to measure the salience of social bonds to friends and school. There is, however, strong evidence that the development of social bonds between youths and conventional others and institutions acts as a protective factor that insulates youths against delinquency.¹³

Although anger response, self-reported grades and social acceptance accounted for one-third of the variance in delinquency, it should be noted that youths' race, gender, grade in school, family composition, exposure to strain, family and adult relations, self-reported absences from school, level of alienation, association with negative peers, degree of attachment to school, exposure to neighborhood and school crime and conflict, and self-concept were not found to be significant predictors of offending behavior among this population. These findings are important for several reasons. First, they indicate that factors other than those examined in this report need to be addressed in efforts to effectively reduce or prevent delinquent behavior among the youths in this evaluation. Second, they indicate that programs, even those designed to address several of the known risk factors associated with delinquency, will not necessarily be effective unless they address the right *mix* of risk factors. Third, these findings make evident the importance of carefully evaluating prevention programs in order to determine their impact on delinquency and to assist their efforts to refine program interventions and optimize their effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has made a substantial investment in delinquency prevention efforts over the past five years. Through the state Department of Juvenile Justice, local delinquency prevention councils have been established in eight areas around the Commonwealth and these councils have recommended funding support for a number of delinquency prevention projects designed to address local

concerns. Large scale initiatives to prevent delinquency around the United States, such as those found in Kentucky, represent a novel approach to dealing with problem youths; most states continue to rely heavily on police, court, and correctional responses to youth indiscretions.

This research bulletin has presented a review of the results of an evaluation of five state supported delinquency prevention programs. These programs are located in different geographic areas of the state, and they are designed to provide a variety of services to a diverse population of clients, many of whom are at risk of delinquent behavior. Indeed, substantial percentages of the youths in the evaluation reported involvement in illegal behavior— particularly offenses against persons—exposure to school crime and conflict, or exposure to a variety of other stressful events such as moving to a new home, changing schools, or experiencing parental divorce or marriage. Moreover, one-third of youth respondents indicated that they had experienced at least three major stressful events during the year prior to the evaluation.

A significant finding of the evaluation and an important lesson derived from the research is that some of the programs supported by local prevention councils and funded through DJJ appear to be making a difference. Indeed, there is good evidence that two of the five programs have produced reductions in delinquent behavior among program clients, and there is evidence that a third program has had a positive impact on a number of risk factors that are strongly associated with delinquency. Given the human and financial costs associated with involvement in the juvenile justice process, this is welcome news.

Although two of the programs examined in the evaluation were associated with reductions in delinquent behavior among program clients, there is no evidence that two others had any appreciable influence on youths' illegal behavior. These programs may be helping youths in a variety of ways, and they may discourage delinquency among some program youths. Yet, it appears likely that, at this stage in their

development, they are not effective delinquency prevention programs for the majority of clients they serve.

The finding that only some programs are effective points to another critical lesson gleaned from the evaluation—it is imperative that steps be taken to assess the operation and effectiveness of each prevention program. The ability to document program effectiveness is crucial because it ensures that taxpayers' money is being wisely spent, and it provides evidence of practices that improve the lives of children and families within the Commonwealth. Evidence of program effectiveness also serves as a basis for program development and replication that can aid others interested in similar pursuits. In contrast, evidence of program failures can be helpful in avoiding unnecessary waste of public funds, funds that are always in short supply, and it can help policy makers and program developers avoid practices that produce little, if any, social benefit.

At the program level, good evaluation can help service providers improve interventions and operate more efficient programs. It can help service providers identify effective practices, pinpoint populations that are most amenable to particular interventions, and identify clients who are in need of program services. Similarly, good evaluation can uncover ineffective and wasteful practices that should be discontinued or that might be improved in ways that allow them to more effectively meet client needs. For example, the evaluation revealed that, of the risk factors targeted by the programs, two (youths' ability to respond appropriately to anger and academic achievement) were found to be significant predictors of delinquency among their clients. This highlights the value of program interventions designed to teach youths anger management and conflict resolution skills. Moreover, it draws attention to the reality that another risk factor, Social Acceptance, was not directly addressed by any of the programs examined. Had programs focused more attention on trying to develop positive social relationships between participants and significant others and institutions, improvements in program

effectiveness may have been achieved. Furthermore, each of the programs focused some resources on efforts that have little relationship to delinquency. Had these resources been directed toward risk factors associated with delinquency, more positive outcomes could have been expected. Importantly, evaluation can help program personnel identify activities that are most likely to produce positive outcomes.

The development of interventions that address the risk factors associated with delinquency is a necessary step in the development of effective prevention programs. The programs examined in this bulletin identified a number of risk factors that had been found to be related to delinquency within the literature. The evaluation revealed, however, that among program participants only three risk factors were significantly related to delinquency, and these risk factors explained only a small percent of the variance in delinquency. This finding is significant because it points to the need for program personnel to identify other risk factors contributing to delinquency among the study population. This leads to another important lesson indicated by the evaluation. Programs should consider other risk factors that contribute to delinquency among their client population and they should strive to identify the right mix of

risk factors that are associated with delinquency in order to maximize program effectiveness.

A final lesson derived from the evaluation is that program development and evaluation efforts need to be on-going. For example, the evaluation has revealed a considerable amount of information related to the operation and effectiveness of the five programs included in this report. Equally important, it has also provided a number of insights related to why particular outcomes were achieved and what might be done to improve program performance. This information is important because it can be used by program personnel and others in attempts to develop efficient and effective responses to delinquency. Consequently, on-going evaluation should be seen as an essential component of the development and operation of state supported delinquency prevention programs. Without such efforts, the documentation of effective practices will be hindered, precious human and financial resources will be wasted, the ability of the state to support viable delinquency prevention programs will be impaired, and the goal of reducing delinquency in communities will, in many instances, go unfulfilled.

Kentucky Corrections:

Luther Lockett Correctional Complex and Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women

The Finnish Polytechnic students' visit to the Kentucky Prisons on 29.9.2003

A group of Finnish Polytechnic Laurea students visited Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond and two Kentucky correctional facilities, the Luther Lockett Prison and the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women at Peewee Valley. This field trip was conducted as a cooperative effort between the Prison Personnel Training Centre of Finland and Eastern Kentucky University to enhance their degree program of Criminal Sanctions. The trip proved to be most successful, and we wish to thank our host, professor Chuck Fields for organizing the program.

This article relates our experiences at the two Kentucky facilities and compares them to those in Finland. The state of Kentucky has about 3.5 million inhabitants. The amount of prisoners in 2001 was almost 15,000

(www.cor.state.ky.us). In Finland, the amount of prisoners at the end of year 2002 was 3469 (Finland has 5.1 million inhabitants). More than half of the prisoners in Kentucky are serving a sentence for violent or sexual crimes, less than one fourth for crimes against property and the same amount for drug offenses. Less than five percent of all prisoners are incarcerated for other crimes.

About 40% of Finnish prisoners are sentenced for violent offenses, which includes robberies, assaults and homicides. About 20% are in prison for drug offenses. The amount of people sentenced for drug offenses is rapidly increasing in Finland, but as it appears on the Kentucky Corrections home page, the amount of drug offenses in Kentucky has also rapidly increased to twice as many as in 1992-2001.

Principal offense of prisoners serving a sentence according to their age on 1 May 2002 in Finland

Principal Offense	AGE												YHT TOTAL	
	15-17		18-20		21-29		30-39		40-49		50-		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Robbery	5	26,3	18	13,0	89	8,2	84	8,0	22	3,5	7	2,3	225	7,0
Theft	1	0,0	27	19,6	284	26,2	143	13,6	46	7,3	13	4,3	513	15,9
Other Property Offense	0	5,3	9	6,5	45	4,2	76	7,2	54	8,6	45	14,9	230	7,1
Homicide	10	52,6	37	26,8	155	14,3	210	20,0	171	27,3	100	33,1	683	21,2
Other Crime of Violence	2	10,5	17	12,3	148	13,7	149	14,2	76	12,1	28	9,3	420	13,0
Sexual Offense	0	0,0	4	2,9	11	1,0	19	1,8	22	3,5	14	4,6	70	2,2
Other Offenses Against Criminal Law		0,0	8	5,8	23	2,1	29	2,8	23	3,7	11	3,6	94	2,9
Drunken Driving	0	0,0	4	2,9	66	6,1	110	10,5	96	15,3	40	13,2	316	9,8
Narcotics Offense	0	5,3	10	7,2	234	21,6	216	20,6	111	17,7	39	12,9	611	19,0
Other Offense	1	0,0	4	2,9	28	2,6	15	1,4	5	0,8	5	1,7	57	1,8
Total	0	100	138	100	1083	100	1051	100	626	100	302	100	3219	100
Age Breakdown %	19	0,6		4,3		33,6		32,6		19,4		9,4		100

Principal offense means the offense for which the longest sentence has been imposed.

There are several reasons explaining why the prison population in Finland is so low compared to the number of citizens. The crime rate doesn't always strictly correlate to the number of prisoners. In Finland, a locked institution is usually the last place to be sent ("the last resort"); minor offenders are sentenced first with fines, community service, juvenile punishment or conditional sentence, before facing an unconditional sentence. Also, sentences are enforced differently. First-timers are paroled after having served half of their sentences, and recidivists after two thirds of their sentences. Juveniles serve for only one third of their sentences. The Kentucky prison system also has good time and educational good time systems which decrease sentences, but they have less effect on time served than the Finnish system.

The Luther Lockett Prison has 1100 convicts. The prison is separated into units containing about 200 inhabitants. Every unit has housing wings and prisoners live in small two-person cells. The cells are open 24 hours a day and staff supervise prisoners from a control center placed in the middle of the unit. The main doors in the corridor are locked up at night.

The prisoners are not allowed to leave their housing units. The housing units are marked with different colors, and every inmate wears clothes marked with colors that match their unit, enabling correctional officers to recognize the prisoners moving rights and housing units. Eating schedules are staggered.

Finnish prisons are smaller in size. The biggest institution, the Helsinki Prison, has 250 beds for inmates but maintains a daily prisoner population a little above 300. The problems are very similar to the ones in Kentucky, mainly overcrowding, which necessitates placing two convicts in a small single cell. In Finland a closed institution must close the cell doors overnight. Closing times vary with the type of unit—some are more open than others. Due to the old age and structure of the units the supervision would not work otherwise. Most of the cells have toilets

but many cells have only a "palju," a chamber pot, during the night.

Smoking at the Luther Lockett is prohibited in all inside areas, even in cells, but inmates have access to the yard. Every unit has a small yard and the prisoners are allowed to go out any time of day. Finnish prisons restrict smoking only in common areas—smoking is allowed in every cell. Outdoor recreation is scheduled a few times a day, more frequently during the summer. However, most prisoners spend their time inside, even in their own cells, having only one hour of outdoor recreation allowed per day.

We were told that violence between the inmates—dispute and feuds—and drug dependence are the main problem of Luther Lockett Prison. The same stands for Finnish prisons. Violence, threats and anxiety that come along with prisoners' drug abuse must always be considered when planning any activities in prison. Arranging activities involves high security in different ways. It means sufficient inspections, surveillance and prohibitions to prevent illegal drugs or other contraband from finding its way inside the prison. The Finnish prison population consists of several nationalities, languages and cultures, which causes problems and breeds racism between inmates. Most of the foreign prisoners come from Estonia or Russian and are involved in organized crime groups which makes security more difficult in the prison system.

Our study group was most interested in learning about activities for prisoners. Luther Lockett Prison maintains a wide range of activities. Prisoners are offered drug rehabilitation along with educational and vocational opportunities. Participation is based on the same type of risk analysis used in Finnish prisons. There are similarities even in work programs. Both Luther Lockett and the Helsinki Prison manufacture vehicle registration plates. Who knows, maybe we even share the same supplier! In Finland sentences are based on the idea that inmates must be accustomed to regular work and life. Convicts have been offered educational programs instead of work only for

the last three decades. Other rehabilitation programs, such as treatment for alcohol or drug abuse and target-oriented procedure method programs stem from legislation of the last ten years which has created them as an alternative for working and studying. This trend has altered the composition of staff in prisons. The number of rehabilitation staff has increased while the total staff has diminished.

Recruiting personnel has created problems as well. The rate of pay is weak compared to others in the public sector. Job satisfaction is low and career advancement is difficult. In recent years, study programs for prison service have been evolved to be more open compared to other study programs.

There were differences between the Kentucky and Finnish systems, too. In Finland the inmates are not categorized by risk, even though we make the same risk analysis. Risk and means analysis is aimed towards the convicts' needs and placement is considered using that information. Finnish institutions are not formally categorized, either, but obviously prisoners-at high risk are placed in the most secure facility. No segregation inside maximum security prisons is made, unless the prisoner himself demands it, usually because of threats from other prisoners.

Another difference involves visiting rights. In Finland visitations are granted easily but the meetings occur in more restricted conditions. We have visiting areas with thick glass windows separating the inmate and visitor. Anyone can visit with the prisoners' permission, but visits can be denied other visitors except for their family members and attorneys. On the other hand we arrange so-called family (conjugal) meetings that aren't controlled at all except by searching afterwards and taking urine samples from the inmates. Unsupervised visitation is also easy to lose if the rules are broken.

Our impressions of good order, well-organized activities and great atmosphere in both facilities remain in our minds. But I guess if you've seen one prison anywhere in world you've seen quite many of them. The interesting thing is to exchange experiences and opinions with your colleagues from around the world.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ The complete report is found in Preston Elrod (2002). "Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice Community Partnership Delinquency Prevention Initiative Program Development and Evaluation Services Annual Report: July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002." Richmond, KY: Eastern Kentucky University, Department of Correctional and Juvenile Justice Studies.
- ² The eight geographic areas supporting DJJ supported projects were as follows: (1) Fayette, (2) Hardin, (3) Hopkins, (4) Jefferson, (5) McCracken, and (6) Warren counties, (7) Daviess/Henderson counties, and (8) Northern Kentucky (Boone, Kenton, and Campbell counties).
- ³ Because they are contiguous jurisdictions, Daviess and Henderson counties have one delinquency prevention council. Similarly, the Northern Kentucky area consists of Kenton, Boone and Campbell counties, and has one council.
- ⁴ With the exception of Club Farley, each of the programs provided some services to more clients than are indicated by the *N* sizes. In some cases, clients received services for a brief period or intermittently. Consequently, the *N* sizes for each of these programs indicates the number of clients that were documented as receiving program services over a more extended period of time.
- ⁵ A number of the indices used in the evaluation have excellent reliability. However, some of the indices have moderate to low reliability (Alphas below .80). This is not surprising given the number of social constructs measured in the evaluation and the limited time available for the development of the indices. Consequently, future efforts to measure these constructs should make attempts to improve these measures where possible. Nevertheless, the bivariate correlations among all of the measures are strong in many instances, most are significant, and all are in the expected direction.
- ⁶ Agnew, R. (1997). "Stability and change in crime over the life course: A strain theory explanation." Pp.101-132 in T.P. Thornberry, (Ed.), Developmental Theories of Crime and Delinquency, Vol. 7, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- ⁷ Ideally, follow-up surveys with participants at intervals of six and twelve months after the program would have been conducted. However, a lack of program and evaluation resources precluded these follow ups.
- ⁸ A true experimental design could have been used with two of the programs initially chosen for the evaluation. However, one of these programs, The Big Buddy Mentoring Program in Hopkins County was resistant to the evaluation and was dropped as an evaluation site. The other program, Project Aspire, Henderson County, was initially opposed to using an experimental design. Later, they indicated they were willing to explore this possibility, however by this time the program was well underway which precluded random assignment of subjects to experimental and control groups.
- ⁹ Forward multiple regression was used to determine which independent variables (negative peer influence, grade in school, attachment to school, neighborhood crime and conflict, school crime and conflict, exposure to strain, self-concept, alienation, family and adult relations, social acceptance, anger response, race, gender, family composition, self-reported school absences, self-reported grades, and participation in structured activities) predicts self-reported delinquency. Several steps were taken to evaluate the extent to which the data conforms to the assumptions of multiple regression. Data were screened for outliers and extreme cases were altered so that they fell within the accepted distribution. In addition, an evaluation of assumptions led to the transformation of nine of the variables included in the regression analysis.
- ¹⁰ Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional Intelligence. New York: Bantam.
- ¹¹ Grossman, D.C., Neckerman, H.J., Koepsell, T., Asher, K., Liu, P.Y., Beland, K., Frey, K., and F.P. Rivara (1997). Effectiveness of a violence prevention curriculum among children in elementary school." Journal of the American Medical Association, 277(20), 1605-1611. See also J.C. Howell (1995). "Guide for implementing the comprehensive strategy for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders." Washington, DC: OJJDP.
- ¹² Maguin, E. and R. Loeber (1995). "Academic performance and delinquency." Pp. 145-264 in M. Tonry (Ed.), Crime and justice: A review of research, Vol. 20, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ¹³ See T. Hirschi (1969). Causes of delinquency. Berkeley: University of California Press; J.C. Howell (Ed.), "Guide for implementing the comprehensive strategy for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders." Washington, DC: OJJDP.

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Allen Ault

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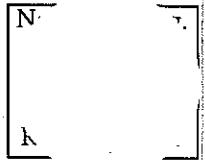
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