

5-25-1990

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City Club of Portland (Portland, Or.)

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Recommended Citation

City Club of Portland (Portland, Or.), "Information Report on Recent State and Local Efforts to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency" (1990). *City Club of Portland*. Paper 446.

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INFORMATION REPORT ON RECENT STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS TO PREVENT JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

I. Introduction

In 1987, the City Club membership adopted a report on "Juvenile Services in the Portland Metropolitan Area." That report focused on prevention of delinquency, diversion from the juvenile justice system, and detention and treatment within the system. The City Club committee concluded that there is no integrated juvenile services system in Oregon, that competition among agencies for funding leads to uncoordinated and short-term programming of services, and that a consistent emphasis on prevention is the best way to break the multi-generational cycle of delinquent behavior. Among the Club's recommendations were development of a long-term comprehensive plan to prevent juvenile delinquency, adequate state funding, and intensive efforts at the local level to create a coherent network of prevention services using the public schools to identify at risk youth.

After the adoption of the report, the Board of Governors established a Juvenile Services Follow-up Committee, composed of members of the Law and Public Safety and the Education Standing Committees. The follow-up committee was charged with preparing an information report on recent state and local efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency.

II. Summary

A. Prevention and early intervention services have become a higher priority among state and local government agencies and among community programs serving children in recent years. Public funds are limited, and pressure for increased voluntary efforts continue. Improved coordination among agencies is reported at both the state and local levels.

B. Neighborhood involvement has also improved, especially in North/Northeast Portland. The African-American community's sponsorship of prevention, early intervention, and treatment programs for high risk youth has increased. Most of these programs remain largely dependent on volunteer help and limited funding.

C. The state Juvenile Services Commission was renamed the Community Children and Youth Services Commission and may, through its local commissions, provide a vehicle for comprehensive planning and community development of services for children and adolescents through coordination with other local providers and the community. It may also provide opportunities for innovative approaches through its Great Start, Student Retention, and Juvenile Services grant programs.

D. Much positive action has occurred in recent years particularly in the areas of planning and prevention — two major concerns addressed in the 1987 City Club report. That report also identified the need for focused leadership and committed advocates for children to avoid fragmented services. That need still exists.

III. State Efforts to Prevent Delinquency

A. The Governor's Children's Agenda

Governor Neil Goldschmidt's 1989-91 budget sought about \$30 million as the state's share of a Children's Agenda. "Great Start," the centerpiece of the Governor's Children's Agenda, called for \$8 million for counties to develop and improve services for children up to age six.

In addition, the Governor proposed: 1) a Children's Community Office in the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to distribute Great Start funds and provide technical assistance to local communities; and 2) a clearinghouse, composed of heads of state agencies serving children, to oversee and coordinate all state children's programs.

B. 1989 Legislative Actions

The 1989 Legislature responded to concerns about fragmentation of planning and services by adopting HB 3466 which incorporated the Great Start proposal and the Student Retention Initiative under the state Juvenile Services Commission. The bill also changed the name of the commission to the Community Children and Youth Services Commission (CCYSC) and revised the duties of related commissions in local communities. In addition, \$5 million in grant funds for Great Start projects were approved for distribution to local commissions. Local commissions are now established in all 36 counties in Oregon.

A companion bill (SB 1018) was also adopted by the legislature and provides a state policy to guide state agencies in budgeting and planning services for children, youth and families, and created the Oregon Coordinating Council for Children and Families. The council includes representatives from the Department of Human Resources, CCYSC, state Department of Education, Community Colleges Division, and a citizen member appointed by the governor. These officials will be responsible for convening the council and assuring participation from other state agencies serving children. The council's goal is to achieve a unified state budget for children's programs.

The legislature authorized or increased appropriations for other preventive or early intervention services. Included were services for homeless and runaway youth, prenatal care, family planning, school-based teen health clinics, high risk infant screening, treatment and housing for women with substance abuse problems and their children, and psychiatric day treatment for preschool age severely abused children.

Other laws adopted by the 1989 legislature require schools to develop policies and programs to combat drug and alcohol use, allow judges to order substance abusing parents who have contributed to the circumstances which have placed their children under juvenile court jurisdiction to undergo substance abuse treatment, and ban corporal punishment in public schools.

C. State Agency Activities

1. Children's Services Division (CSD)

The Children's Services Division reorganized its central office into three entities:

- a) A Child Protective Services Unit investigates abuse and neglect reports and makes an initial service plan for a child, including placement in foster care if necessary.

- b) A Family and Child Service Unit provides intake services for certain dependent children and provides family preservation services.
- c) A Juvenile Corrections Unit is responsible for delinquent youth committed by a court to a state training school or released on parole.

The Multnomah office of CSD is one of five branch offices now testing this separation of functions. The branch also oversees a new foster care project for drug-using mothers and their drug- or alcohol-affected infants. The branch also has begun to place services closer to some of the communities it serves.

2. Community Children and Youth Services Commission (CCYSC) (formerly the Juvenile Services Commission)

The 1987 City Club report recommended that the state Juvenile Services Commission propose a 20-year plan for containing and preventing juvenile delinquency. Although this goal has not been met, passage of the 1989 legislation gives the new Community Children and Youth Services Commission a central role in state and local planning.

3. Mental Health and Developmental Disability Services Division (MHDDSD)

Focusing primarily on seriously disturbed children, many of whom are delinquent, the newly named MHDDSD contracts with county mental health programs statewide to provide outpatient services directly or through subcontractors. Reportedly, only one-third of the seriously disturbed children found to need mental health services are receiving care.

During 1989, the division gained funding for two new and two continuation projects for young children at risk of developing emotional or behavioral problems. One program is currently operating in Multnomah County as a joint project with Morrison Center and Centennial School District for children in kindergarten through third grade.

The division also received a National Institute of Mental Health grant for improving the mental health service system for children with severe emotional disturbances. Called the "Child and Adolescent Service System Program" (CASSP), the project addresses service needs of severely emotionally disturbed youth who are served by several agencies.

4. State Department of Education

In the 1987-89 biennium, the State Department of Education launched pilot projects (similar to Headstart) to assist high-risk pre-kindergarten children and to train parents as teachers. In Multnomah County, the Albina Ministerial Alliance and the Mt. Hood Headstart programs both received initial grants. The state program was continued this year to serve an additional 480 children statewide. The department's eventual goal, subject to legislative approval, is to build a state-wide pre-kindergarten program for three- to five-year-olds and to develop services for at-risk children up to nine years old. If approved by the legislature, programs will include child care and family support services, and improved teacher-child ratios.

IV. Local Efforts to Prevent Delinquency

This section highlights county, city, private and neighborhood activities directed toward preventing delinquency. Multnomah County statistics show that minority youth in general, and African-American youth in particular, are more likely to be placed in the juvenile justice system. A number of organizations have increased efforts to meet minority youth needs. They include the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners, the Community Children and Youth Services Commission (state and local), and the Leaders Roundtable.

A. Multnomah County

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners placed high priority on prevention and early intervention services. A "Little Kids" package is part of the 1989-90 Human Services budget. Among changes, the former Youth Planning Network (comprised of public agency directors and United Way) was replaced by the new local CCYSC as the county's primary planning body for youth services.

1. Juvenile Services Commission

The county Juvenile Services Commission took a number of actions during 1988-89 and include:

- placing additional emphasis on prevention and early intervention, and adding provider and community representation from outside the commission;
- publishing a "Youth Planning Document" that relies on the recommendations of the City Club report in establishing a basis for Multnomah County funding and advocacy decisions; and
- revising funding guidelines to take into account the needs of minority youth and supporting four community-based conferences during this past year for the African-American, Asian, Native American and Hispanic communities.

2. Mental and Emotional Disabilities Services Office (MED)

The County MED Office has representatives in seven high school teen health clinics, operated by the county Health Division at Jefferson, Cleveland, Roosevelt and Marshall, Grant, Madison, and Parkrose. County mental health workers also serve the 11 Albina Ministerial Alliance Headstart programs.

The county contracts for more mental health services than it did two years ago. For example, Emanuel Hospital's Care project is a national model for evaluating the extent of abuse children have sustained.

Both the Morrison Center and the Parry Center operate day treatment programs for emotionally disturbed, severely abused pre-school children. The Children's Services Division estimates that at least 200 more Multnomah County children ages 3 to 5 currently in its custody could benefit from such assistance.

In 1989 Multnomah County was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson planning grant of \$1.2 million to develop services for severely disturbed children who are served by more than one agency. Children will receive intensive individual case management, with emphasis on avoiding duplication of services and increasing the availability of resources through sharing of costs among agencies. Despite improvements, all private agencies that provide outpatient services are serving more than they contracted to serve, and still have waiting lists.

3. Health Division

The Health Division operates five primary health clinics that provide services on a sliding fee scale. Services include Women-Infant Care programs for nutrition; well-child care and family planning; community health nurse home visits to high risk families with infants and preschoolers, and teen health clinics in the schools. Since 1987, the division has established the AIDS Youth Outreach program for street and shelter youth.

Despite capacity to provide more home nurse visits, through increased Medicaid payments from Adult and Family Services, the Health Division reports it still must turn away three out of four referrals. Of great concern are reports from the nurses that the rising requests for information on drug issues and need for help, particularly regarding substance-addicted infants, cannot be met.

4. Alcohol and Drug Services

Multnomah County subcontracts for ten residential, 12 day-treatment and 120 outpatient youth slots with a mix of state, federal and county funding. A recent federal grant to the state Alcohol and Drug Program Office will allow an additional 15 outpatient and six residential slots for youth in Multnomah County.

5. Juvenile Justice Division (JJD)

Although not often considered an agency concerned with prevention and early intervention, the Juvenile Justice Division has been involved in two initiatives in early intervention. The division staff participate in outreach programs, with the Northeast Neighborhood Coalition, to encourage "wanna be" youth into non-gang activities. The division also will participate in a multi-agency "Gang-Affected Focus Unit," using a \$57,000 federal grant to initiate an early intervention program for gang members.

JJD also operates a street law program designed to reduce recidivism for youth on probation or who have been diverted from being adjudicated but have contracted with an intake counselor to participate in the program. Through four twelve-week sessions in 1989, JJD and law enforcement volunteers explained the fundamentals of law and its effects to these youths. Evaluations indicate greater success with the diverted youth and a need for program changes for youth on probation.

B. Portland Public Schools

Portland schools sponsor a variety of delinquency prevention programs, beginning at the preschool level. Volunteer doctors, dentists and counselors conduct periodic screenings for three- and four-year-olds at high-risk elementary schools to identify health and developmental needs and to make appropriate referrals. Even with the "Little Kids" package adding a screening site in East County, only one-fifth of the estimated 2,000 children in need of screenings receive them. Forty-five percent of the 160 children screened in 1988-89 needed referrals. The Leaders Roundtable has adopted this program as a priority, and has a goal of reaching an additional 1,000 children.

Programs like "Project Read," an alternative language arts program offered to grades 1-6 in 31 Portland elementary schools, enable most "at risk" readers to succeed, along with their classmates, through regular classroom instruction. The school district also provides alternatives for middle and high school truants and drop-outs.

To provide incentives for minority youth and increase the potential for recruiting ethnic teachers, the Portland Public Schools' Teacher Internship Program was launched three years ago. Free tuition at Oregon colleges is provided in return for a three-year commitment to teaching.

C. Other Community Agencies and Activities

1. Self-Enhancement, Inc., is a private non-profit agency that operates a year-round program targeted at 600 North/Northeast Portland youth (second through twelfth grade) and their parents. The program helps youth set goals, assume civic responsibilities, improve family relationships, and resist peer pressure to use alcohol and drugs.

2. The Portland Parks and Recreation Department and Portland Public Schools jointly support "Tender Loving Care-Think and Try" (TLC-TNT), a program aimed at changing patterns of school failure and anti-social behavior through recreational activities and personal outreach to families. Over 400 families have been served in the Portsmouth Middle School/Columbia Villa community. Since TLC-TNT inception, behavioral referrals are down 50 percent and school attendance increased from 70 to 94 percent; 75 percent of summer program participants are now involved in school activities as contrasted with a five percent rate previously, and only 10 percent of the target students are still considered "at risk" of gang involvement.

3. The Leaders Roundtable is composed of top executives of business, the schools, United Way, the Urban League, Private Industry Council, and city, county and state officials. The purpose of the Roundtable is to promote communication and coordination among these leaders. While previously emphasizing youth employment programs, the Roundtable is also getting involved in prevention and early intervention opportunities for younger children, e.g. promoting and expanding school health screening services for preschoolers.

4. Women's and Children's shelters complement other intervention programs by offering mothers and children an escape from dangerous family environments. The shelters are able to provide short-term counseling and referral services and parenting assistance to families in crisis. These shelters serve a critical community need, but each depends heavily on private support to remain open.

5. A few charitable organizations, notably the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust, Oregon Community Foundation, and United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, are funding a variety of beneficial youth programs for both younger children and their families, and adolescents.

6. The Portland Chamber of Commerce recently established a crime prevention committee and raised funds for programs for young children. Business has also contributed to mentoring and counseling programs, to the Oregon Children's Trust Fund, to the Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement, and to the House of Umoja.

7. Community-based programs with little or no money, but heavily reliant on volunteers, have begun or increased within the last few years to serve African-American youth. The Coalition of Black Men serves as mentors and advocates for youth already in the juvenile justice system. The Albina Ministerial Alliance sponsors a Saturday school for children in grades 1-6, its purpose being to instill a sense of pride in African-American culture, enhance self esteem and improve math and

reading skills. The One Church, One Child Program is designed to recruit African-American families to adopt children through churches serving the African-American community.

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Approved by the Research Board on March 14, 1990 for submittal to the Board of Governors. Approved by the Board of Governors on April 16, 1990 for publication. NOTE: BECAUSE THIS REPORT CARRIES NO CONCLUSIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS, NO OFFICIAL ACTION IS REQUIRED OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

