Intensive Supervision Alternatives for Adjudicated Juveniles

by
William H. Barton
Jeffrey A. Butts

A study conducted in the Detroit, MI area evaluated three in-home intensive supervision programs providing an alternative to state commitment for juvenile offenders. State commitment in most cases meant institutional placement. A randomized experiment followed more than 500 cases for two years each, and found that the recidivism of youths placed in the intensive supervision programs did not differ substantially from youths committed to the state. However, the intensive supervision programs cost only about one-third as much as commitment. During the four years in which the Michigan programs were being evaluated, the state saved an estimated $9 million in placement costs by using the community programs in lieu of commitment.

INTRODUCTION

A number of well-known studies have evaluated community-based correctional alternatives for juvenile offenders during the past 30 years. Researchers have tested the effectiveness of group homes and residential centers that used techniques such as Positive Peer Culture and Guided Group Interaction (Empey and Lubeck, 1971; Weeks, 1958). Other studies looked at specialized probation programs that tailored their services to match the emotional and behavioral characteristics of young offenders (Palmer, 1974; Lerman, 1975). Some studies examined a range of interventions and programs simultaneously, testing the extent to which they "suppressed" the rate of delinquent behavior

(Murray and Cox, 1979), or whether they prevented delinquent youths from being further involved in the juvenile justice system (Kobrin and Klein, 1983). Other evaluations have measured the impact of shifting juvenile correctional systems away from large institutions and toward greater utilization of small, community-based facilities (Ohlin, Miller and Coates, 1977; Austin, Krisberg and Joe, 1987).

Over time, these studies have been criticized widely, sometimes regarding their research designs, frequently in relation to their measurements and/or interpretations. No single study has been able to prove that community-based programs are effective as alternatives to incarceration. However, none of the studies have proven that such programs are ineffective. Most students of juvenile corrections have concluded that the jury is still out on the effectiveness of community-based alternatives.

This chapter presents the results of a randomized experiment that tested the effectiveness of intensive supervision programs as an alternative to state commitment for youthful offenders. Researchers from the University of Michigan evaluated three in-home, intensive supervision programs in Wayne County (Detroit), MI between 1983 and 1987. The three programs, created explicitly as alternatives to state commitment for adjudicated delinquents, were not remarkably successful in reducing delinquency. Yet the evaluation showed them to be cost-effective. At about one-third the cost of state commitment, the programs had comparable effects on recidivism, self-reported delinquent behavior and other critical outcomes. The evaluation concluded that, although the implementation of the programs could have been improved, they were demonstrably viable as an alternative to commitment.

THE CONTEXT

The original impetus for the Wayne County programs was a combination of fiscal pressure and the perception that the juvenile court lacked dispositional alternatives. Unless a youth is transferred to the adult criminal justice system, commitment to the state is the most restrictive disposition available to Michigan juvenile courts. When a youth is committed to the state, the Department of Social Services (DSS) is charged with deciding the most appropriate placement for that youth. Some youths might remain in the community after they are committed. The great majority, however, are placed out of the home, usually in training schools or other residential institutions. The cost of these placements is shared equally by the county and the state.

As the most populous, urbanized county in Michigan, Wayne County usually produces more juvenile commitments than any other area in the state. During the early 1980s, legislators and other officials from outside of Wayne County began to complain that they were being asked to subsidize placement

costs for the county's youths. Something had to be done, they argued, to reduce the large number of these commitments. The state responded by placing a ceiling on the number of delinquency commitments it would accept from the Wayne County Juvenile Court. Local officials were faced with an urgent need to develop program alternatives. In 1982, the county had committed 708 youths to the state for placement. Beginning in 1983, it would be limited to 500 per year.

Using a combination of state and local funds, Wayne County implemented three nonresidential, intensive supervision programs in 1983. Although the programs varied somewhat in their approaches to working with delinquent youth, they shared a common model of intensive supervision in which caseloads were kept relatively small and program workers were required to make frequent contacts with the youth and their families. State and county officials hoped that the programs would be a cost-effective alternative to commitment, that supervision and services in the community could be as effective in handling some juvenile offenders as removing them from their homes and placing them in correctional facilities.

THE EVALUATION

To evaluate the programs, the court agreed to a randomized design in which comparable groups of youth would be assigned to each alternative program and to a control group that would be committed as usual. All cases recommended for commitment by court referees were screened for program eligibility.[1] Youth who were charged with violent offenses, had serious psychiatric problems, or had no viable home to return to (such as neglect cases) were automatically ineligible. The study was limited to males because the number of females committed to the state was usually quite small. After these exclusions, the study sample consisted of 511 youths, about 40% of all male juveniles recommended for commitment between February 1983 and March 1985.[2] In all, 326 youths were assigned to one of the three in-home programs, while 185 were assigned to the control group.

Most of the youths in the study sample were black (68.7%) and lived in the urbanized areas of Wayne County (76.3%). Upon entering the study, their average age was just over 15. Over two-thirds of the youths had been on regular probation at some time prior to the evaluation. They averaged 3.2 prior delinquency charges; almost one-fourth (23.5%) had five or more priors. Comparing the program cases with those assigned to the control group revealed no systematic differences on these and other variables. Thus, the randomization was considered successful.

Every case was followed for two years from the time of assignment. Information was gathered from a variety of sources: the youths themselves;

their parents; program staff; and police, court, and agency records. Interviews were conducted with the youth and their parents on three separate occasions (two times for the control group). "Initial" interviews were conducted soon after assignment, and "exit" interviews were completed upon each youth's termination from one of the in-home programs.[3] Two years after the random assignment, a final follow-up interview was conducted. Each round of interviews contained a wide range of items pertaining to the youths' and parents' living situation, employment status, income, attitudes and family relationships. In addition, the youth interviews included a battery of self-report delinquency measures.

The evaluation also collected archival data. Police and court records were used to measure official delinquency. Juvenile records were supplemented by data from the adult courts for those youths who had turned 17 years of age and thereby came under the jurisdiction of the adult system during the study. The frequency and nature of contacts between program staff and the study youths were collected from case files maintained by the programs. The workers in each program also completed questionnaires that characterized each youth's problems and progress during the program, and the effect of the services he received.

THE PROGRAMS

One of the programs, the Intensive Probation Unit (IPU) was located within the juvenile court. The other two programs were operated by private agencies under contract to the court: Michigan Human Services (MHS), and the Comprehensive Youth Training and Community Involvement Program (CYTCIP).[4] The IPU workers focused primarily on monitoring the youths' attendance at school and court-ordered counseling. They met with parents and teachers, and generally kept an eye on the youths' behavior. The CYTCIP and MHS programs, in contrast, were more treatment-oriented. CYTCIP focused on job training and job preparedness, and educational and recreational activities. MHS adopted a therapeutic approach that emphasized youth and family counseling. MHS and CYTCIP also provided behavioral supervision and probation-type services.

All three programs restricted caseload size. Each primary worker supervised six to ten youths and their families. Other than maintaining small caseloads and providing an intensive level of behavioral supervision, the programs were relatively free to develop their distinctive service emphases and treatment philosophies. Each program was designed to have a capacity of about 50 cases. The average cost of the in-home programs during the two-year study period was about one-third of what would have been spent on commitment. In 1986, for example, the average cost of the intensive supervision programs was about

$26 per youth per day. Had all the program youths been committed instead, the average cost would have been approximately $89 per youth per day (Barton and Butts, 1988).

Service Contacts

The program workers were required to keep a record of all contacts made with and on behalf of each youth. These records were submitted to the court every three months, along with a narrative summary of each youth's progress. The evaluation study used this information to develop several indexes of worker-client contact. Contacts could be made at the youth's home, at the program site (e.g., for group sessions and office visits), at other agencies (schools or other social service agencies, sometimes called collateral contacts), or via telephone.

Table 1 shows the average number of monthly contacts of the various types for the youth in each program. Overall, MHS workers made significantly more contacts than the other two programs. MHS staff reported contacting each client an average of nearly 14 times each month, or about three and one-half contacts per week. The other two programs averaged between 10 and 11 contacts per month, or slightly fewer than three contacts per week. MHS staff reported the most home contacts (six per month); CYTCIP, the least (about two per month). However, CYTCIP workers reported significantly more contacts at the program site than did the other programs (more than five versus less than two per month). Differences in the other contact frequencies were smaller, although MHS's frequency of collateral contacts (2.49 per month), was significantly higher than that of IPU (1.83 per month) which, in turn, was significantly higher than CYTCIP (0.70 per month).

These patterns of contact were consistent with the programs' different service emphases. The most family-oriented program was MHS, and the

Table 1: Average Monthly Contacts, by Program

Index	MHS N=93		IPU N=95		CYTCIP N=102
All contacts	13.77	>	10.81	≈	10.44
At clients' homes	6.38	>	4.41	>	2.02
At program site	1.63	≈	1.50	<	5.39
At other agencies	2.49	>	1.83	>	0.70
Telephone contacts	3.28	≈	3.06	>	2.33

ANOVA results:
>First mean significantly higher than second ($p < .01$).
≈First and second means not significantly different.
<First mean significantly lower than second ($p < .01$).

workers in that program reported the most home contacts. The CYTCIP program had an educational and recreational emphasis, and those workers reported more on-site contacts. The IPU program within the juvenile court emphasized behavioral supervision, resembling regular probation at a more intensive level. Its workers reported more home contacts than CYTCIP but fewer than MHS, an intermediate number of collateral contact and relatively many telephone contacts.

Participation in Program Components

The three agencies attempted to provide an array of services to the youths and their parents. The range and intensity of services, although not uniformly delivered to all clients, exceeded what would be expected from regular probation. Questionnaires completed by staff regarding each terminating case contained items about the perceived helpfulness of each service. These items indirectly provided an indication of whether a particular activity was used with each case. By examining the relative percentages of cases participating in each program component, one can get a sense of the range of services used by each agency.

Table 2 presents, for each program, the percentage of cases reported by staff to have participated in the various program components. The resulting participation rates are divided, somewhat arbitrarily, into categories representing high (more than 75%), medium (25% to 75%) and low (less than 25%) utilization. All programs utilized behavioral supervision and individual counseling with nearly every youth. Conversely, community service and volunteers were rarely used by any of the programs. In other respects, the programs' utilization rates reflected their different emphases. CYTCIP had the highest participation rates in youth-oriented, on-site educational and recreational activities, while MHS workers sought and obtained more family involvement. The IPU program appeared to function as one might expect of a court-operated program, with an emphasis on behavioral supervision and counseling supplemented by collateral casework activities.

OUTCOMES

Rather than a single—and necessarily incomplete—measure of program outcomes, the study used several, distinct perspectives: (1) recidivism (both official and self-reported); (2) other related outcomes (e.g., changes in self-concept, family relations); and (3) program success rates (whether youth completed the programs successfully).

Recidivism

Recidivism can be thought of as the reoccurrence of a delinquent act by someone previously adjudicated for a delinquent offense (Waldo and

Table 2: Participation Rates of Youths in Program Components, by Program

IPU (N=110)		CYTCIP (N=107)		NHS (N=99)	
High Participation (more than 75%)					
Behavioral, supervision	96.4%	Individual counseling	98.1%	Tokens/rewards	99.0%
Individual counseling	78.2%	Behavioral supervision	92.5%	Behavioral supervision	98.0%
School placement	75.5%	Recreational activities	92.5%	Individual counseling	93.9%
		Youth group	92.5%	School placement	88.9%
		Social skills training	83.2%	Parent counseling	81.8%
		Camping	80.4%	Youth group	79.8%
				Social skills training	78.8%
				Recreational activities	77.8%
Moderate Participation (25% to 75%)					
Tokens/rewards	69.1%	School placement	74.8%	Parent group	63.6%
Youth group	64.5%	Tutoring	70.1%	Tutoring	49.5%
Recreational activities	60.0%	Parent counseling	67.3%	Job counseling	44.4%
Social skills training	51.8%	Job counseling	48.6%	Job training	35.4%
Parent counseling	47.3%	Tokens/rewards	37.4%	Job experience	28.3%
Temporary detention	40.9%	Job training	29.9%	Temporary detention	25.3%
Tutoring	27.3%				
Low Participation (less than 25%)					
Job counseling	18.2%	Parent group	24.3%	Community service	17.2%
Job experience	17.3%	Community service	21.5%	Volunteers	5.1%
Job training	10.9%	Volunteers	16.8%	Camping	2.0%
Parent group	9.1%	Temporary detention	8.4%		
Volunteers	7.3%	Job experience	7.5%		
Camping	1.8%				
Community service	0.9%				

Griswold, 1979:229). Recidivism has proven quite difficult to operationalize in previous evaluations. One key question is where the data should originate. Reports of offenders themselves or actual observations of their behavior can differ from official records or justice system outcomes (cf. Palmer, 1974; Lerman, 1975). Since the introduction of self-report measures more than 40 years ago (Porterfield, 1946; Short and Nye, 1957), most delinquency researchers have come to accept that self-report measures have an important role to play in program evaluations (Kulik, Stein and Sarbin, 1968; Farrington, 1973; Hardt and Peterson-Hardt, 1977; Hindelang, Hirschi and Weis, 1979, 1981). Policymakers, however, continue to be almost exclusively interested in official arrests, adjudications and reincarcerations.

Official Recidivism. During the two-year follow-up period used in the Wayne County evaluation, 78% of the in-home program youths reappeared in a juvenile or adult court at least once; among the control group, only 53% appeared for a new charge. Before arriving at conclusions, however, a number of other factors must be taken into account, such as the seriousness of the offenses for which the youth were charged, and, especially, the relative amounts of time they were at large in the community during the two-year period. After adjusting for such considerations, the official recidivism of the two groups was quite similar.

The charges analyzed here are those occurring during the two years following assignment to the in-home programs or the control group. The data reflect all alleged offenses rather than just final charges, which are often reduced after plea negotiations. Measures used in the analysis include (for each case): the number of charges filed during the two-year period; the most serious offense charged; and the average seriousness of all the offenses charged.

Official records for each youth were obtained from five sources: the juvenile court, the state parole and review board (for all committed youths), the state police information system, the Detroit city court and the county prosecutor's office. The adult system records, coupled with information supplied by the DSS and the juvenile court, also permitted a measure of the amount of time each youth spent incarcerated (i.e., in detention, institutional placement, jail or prison) during the two-year study period. Youth were considered to be "at large" if no record of their incarceration was obtained from the above sources. Control-group youths averaged much less time at large (10.7 months) than did in-home program youths (18.3 months).

Table 3 lists the incidence of specific charges filed against the program and control-group youths during the two-year study period. The 326 program youths were charged with a total of 868 offenses, for an average of 2.6 charges per youth. The 185 control-group youths were charged with 242 offenses, an average of 1.3 charges each. Status offenses accounted for about one-fourth of all charges against the program youths, while violations of program rules accounted for an additional 5%. The control-group youths were charged with proportionally fewer status offenses and greater proportions of serious offenses than the program youths.

As shown in Table 4, charges were about twice as likely to be filed against program youths as against control-group youths. This difference was greatly attenuated when adjustments were made for offense seriousness. The average number of criminal charges per case, for example, still favored the control group, although the difference was smaller (1.17 vs. 1.85). Additional analyses of offense seriousness grouped the offense categories from Table 3 into six levels of seriousness.[5] In addition to simplifying the presentation of findings by reducing more than 20 offense categories to six, this system allowed seriousness weights to be assigned to each charge. The seriousness weights were used to calculate the total seriousness of a youth's charges and the

Table 3: Incidence of Offenses During 2-Year Study Period, Juvenile and Adult Court Charges

Offense	Program Cases N	(%)	Control Group N	(%)
Status offenses	214	(24.7)	25	(10.3)
Violation of probation, program, rules	42	(4.8)	1	(0.4)
Littering, loitering	8	(0.9)	—	—
Resisting, arrest, fleeing and eluding	57	(6.6)	31	(12.8)
Drug possession, sales	14	(1.6)	10	(4.1)
Vandalism, malicious destruction	25	(2.9)	4	(1.7)
Weapons possession	28	(3.2)	13	(5.4)
Receiving or possessing stolen property	36	(4.1)	13	(5.4)
Simple assault	19	(2.2)	10	(4.1)
Larceny	65	(7.5)	13	(5.4)
Auto theft	112	(12.9)	36	(14.9)
Breaking and entering	89	(10.3)	29	(12.0)
Aggravated assault	58	(6.7)	16	(6.6)
Unarmed robbery	28	(3.2)	7	(2.9)
Armed robbery	38	(4.4)	16	(6.6)
Arson	5	(0.6)	—	—
Kidnapping	4	(0.5)	—	—
Rape, other sexual offense	12	(1.4)	12	(5.0)
Attempted murder	12	(1.4)	6	(2.5)
Murder	2	(0.2)	—	—
TOTAL CHARGES[a]	868		242	

a. Total charges exceeds number of cases (326 program: 185 control) because many youth had more than one charge filed during the two-year study period.

average seriousness of his charges. For example, a boy who had one charge for truancy (level 1) and one for vandalism (level 4) would have a total seriousness score of 5, with an average of 2.5, whereas a boy with just one charge for auto theft (level 5) would also show a total seriousness score of 5 but his average seriousness would be 5 as well. Table 4 indicates that the average seriousness of the control group's charges was significantly higher (4.19) than those filed against program youths (3.44). Control-group youths had fewer charges on average, but when they did appear their offenses were more serious.

Table 4: Comparison of Program and Control Cases on Charge Incidence, Charge Seriousness and Time at Large During 2-Year Study Period

	Program Cases	Control Group	F	p
Mean number of charges (N)	2.63 (326)	1.31 (185)	40.47	<.0001
Mean number of charges (N)	1.85 (326)	1.17 (185)	13.73	<.001
Mean charge seriousness (N)[a]	3.44 (254)	4.19 (99)	21.19	<.0001
Mean number of months incarcerated (N)	5.64 (326)	12.81 (185)	123.05	<.0001
Mean number of months at large (N)	18.30 (326)	10.68 (185)	138.10	<.0001
Mean number of weighted charges[b] (N)[c]	5.41 (326)	4.05 (160)	3.26	.07 ns
Mean number of weighted criminal charges (N)[c]	3.69 (326)	3.58 (160)	0.04	.85 ns

a. Number of cases is smaller because mean seriousness is based only upon cases with at least one charge.

b. Weighted charges are adjusted to compensate for cases' differences in months at large during the two-year study period. Weighted charges are the number of charges that would have been filed in 24 months at large had the youth's frequency of being charged remained constant.

c. Excludes cases who were never at large during the two-year study period.

Control-group youths also spent relatively more of the two-year study period locked up. They were incarcerated for an average of 12.8 out of the 24 months, whereas program youths were incarcerated for an average of only 5.6 months. What would have happened had all the youths spent 24 months at large, with the program youths having received the in-home services? That question cannot be answered unequivocally, but a reasonable estimate is possible if we assume that the youths' behavior while at large during the two-year study period was typical. The charges filed during the youths' time at large can be divided by the number of months at large to derive a rate of charges per month. That rate can be multiplied by 24 to yield an estimate of the

charges expected had each youth been at large during the full 2-year follow-up period.

The last two rows in Table 4 show the number of total charges, and the number of criminal charges that would be expected had the youths been at large for 24 months. Considering all charges, program youths would be expected to show 5.41 charges each vs. 4.05 charges for those in the control group, a difference which is not statistically significant. Regarding criminal charges only, the two groups had nearly identical expected rates, 3.69 charges per program youth and 3.58 charges per control-group youth.

The results in Table 4 suggest that all of the apparent differences in official recidivism favoring the control group can be attributed to the following factors: (1) program youths were much more likely than control-group youths to be charged with status offenses and minor violations after their assignment to the study; and (2) program youths spent much more of the two-year study period at large in the community. When these two factors were controlled, the recidivism of the two groups, in terms of criminal charges, was nearly identical. Such a conclusion, while less troubling than a finding of truly greater recidivism for the program youths, is still sobering for the in-home programs. Despite their best efforts, small caseloads and retention of youths in the community, the outcome was no different than that of commitment and out-of-home placement. Yet, to achieve results that are no worse than commitment at a fraction of the cost could be considered a positive achievement in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Self-Reported Recidivism. During each interview, youths were asked how often in the preceding four months they had engaged in 26 different behaviors, ranging from status offenses (e.g., "skipping school without an excuse") to serious crimes (e.g., "injuring someone with a weapon"). Responses from the initial interview provided a profile of each youth's delinquent behavior in the four months preceding program entry. The exit interview indicated the youth's delinquent activity during the four months prior to program termination, while the follow-up interview yielded reported delinquency for the last four months of the two-year study period.[6]

Due to the successful randomization procedure, program and control-group youths did not differ initially in self-reported delinquency. Thus, the self-report delinquency (SRD) measures can address a major question of the evaluation: Two years after program entry (i.e., at follow-up), did the program youths differ from the controls in self-reported delinquency? As shown below, the answer is generally "no," although the program youths did report committing significantly fewer *violent* crimes than the control-group youths at the two-year follow-up.

Rather than look at results for each of the 26 self-report items, the behaviors were grouped into empirically and logically defined categories. A factor analysis of the SRD items from the initial interviews produced four meaningful factors. Four indexes were created by adding the scores on the

items within each grouping. Thus the minor-offense index contains the number of times a youth ran away, skipped school, trespassed, etc. during the four months in question. The other three indexes summarize drug/alcohol offenses, property offenses and violent offenses. In addition to these four indexes, a total delinquency index was constructed by adding the responses on all 26 items.

A common-sense way to examine individual change would be to look at the differences between the first and last interview. Such simple change scores, however, would be plagued by "regression-to-the-mean." Researchers have noted this problem in previous evaluations of delinquency programs (cf., Murray and Cox, 1979; Maltz et al., 1980). The effect of this statistical artifact is that individuals initially scoring high on a measure will tend to score lower on subsequent occasions, and vice versa, simply as a result of measurement error and sampling variation, and not as a reflection of real change. One way to adjust for this bias is to control statistically for an individual's initial score and derive "adjusted" change scores that represent change independently of the individual's initial scores.[7]

Table 5 compares adjusted change scores for the program cases and the control group on the various SRD indexes. Most of the mean values are close to zero, suggesting very little overall difference at the aggregate level. On every measure, however, the program youths reported a small mean decrease, while

Table 5: Adjusted Change Scores for SRD Indexes, Wave 1 to Wave 3

Delinquency Index		N	Mean Change	Reduction N	Reduction (%)	No Reduction N	No Reduction (%)
Minor:	Programs	143	-0.42	87	(60.8)	56	(39.2)
	Control	71	0.54	39	(54.9)	32	(45.1)
Drug/alcohol:	Programs	143	-0.42	80	(55.9)	63	(44.1)
	Control	73	0.57	38	(52.1)	35	(47.9)
Property:	Programs	147	-0.61	108	(73.5)	39	(26.5)
	Control	69	1.33	43	(62.3)	26	(37.7)
Violent:	Programs	141	-1.07*	99	(70.2)	42	(29.8)
	Control	71	1.67*	42	(59.2)	29	(40.8)
TOTAL:	Programs	124	-2.66	79	(63.7)	45	(36.3)
	Control	64	4.32	32	(50.0)	32	(50.0)

*Mean change of program cases is significantly lower (i.e., reflects greater reduction) than that of control group cases ($F=4.8$; $p<.05$).

the control-group youth reported a mean increase. Overall, program youths reported a decrease of about three delinquent acts, while the control group youths reported an increase of more than four. On the violent behavior index, the difference between the groups was statistically significant: The program youths' mean adjusted change (-1.07) was significantly lower than that of the control group (+1.67), which increased slightly.

Comparing the percentage of youths from the two groups that showed a reduction in self-reported delinquency further illustrates this difference. On every index, a slightly higher percentage of program youths reported a reduction. Overall, about 64% of the program youths reported reduced levels of delinquency, compared with 50% of those in the control group. On the relatively serious property and violent behavior indexes, more than 70% of the program youths reported reductions, compared to about 60% of control-group youths.

At best, the programs achieved a slight reduction in the level of delinquent activity over the two-year study period. Yet commitment to DSS was accompanied by a very slight increase in the average level of delinquent behavior. The two groups differed significantly only on the violent behavior index, a difference favoring the in-home programs. These results are consistent with the findings on official recidivism and suggest that the recidivism of the two groups did not differ substantially during the two-year study period.

Other Outcomes

There are factors other than recidivism that could be considered program outcomes. The in-home programs were designed to keep families together and improve family functioning, to advocate for youths with community institutions such as the schools, and to enhance educational and job skills. The evaluation interviews included indexes of functioning in several of these areas: family relationships, values and attachments to social institutions, self-concept, and future aspirations and expectations. On all of these indexes, the results were comparable to the analysis of recidivism; there were few significant differences between program youths and committed youths.

Family Relationships. The quality of family relationships was assessed by a series of indexes regarding parental "closeness" and "authority." The "closeness" indexes contained items such as "I agree with (mother's) ideas and opinions about things," and "I feel close to (father)." The "authority" index included items such as "(mother) makes rules I have to obey" and "(father) tells me how to spend my spare time." Indexes derived from the parent interviews measured patterns of interaction and "closeness" to the youth. One of the parents' interaction indexes, for example, contained items indicating how often the parent and youth communicated about "what (the youth) is doing in school," "important issues," etc.

Table 6 compares the program and control-group cases on these indexes. Very little change can be seen across the interviews on the closeness indexes. At follow-up, however, the parents of control-group youths reported significantly higher frequencies of communication than did the parents of the in-home program youths. The lower scores of the program cases at follow-up may be due to the lesser likelihood that program youths were living with their parents two years after assignment to the study, either because they were incarcerated (many of the program failures) or living on their own (some of the program graduates). At the time of the follow-up interviews, most control-group youth were at home, having recently completed several months of out-of-home placement.

Table 6: Family Relationship Index Means, by Interview and Group

Index	Group	Initial N	Initial Mean	Follow-up N	Follow-up Mean
Youth Interview Indexes[a]					
Close to mother	Programs	289	3.87	155	3.82
	Control	140	3.98	82	3.83
Authority mother	Programs	289	3.29	155	2.80
	Control	140	3.33	82	3.00
Close to father	Programs	156	3.48	92	3.40
	Control	70	3.75	40	3.41
Authority father	Programs	155	3.04	92	2.52
	Control	70	3.13	40	2.50
Parent Interview Indexes[b]					
Communication	Programs	303	2.85	199	2.82*
	Control	156	2.83	109	2.98*
Conflict	Programs	303	2.61	198	2.29
	Control	156	2.69	108	2.18
Close to youth	Programs	295	2.09	190	2.03
	Control	154	2.00	104	1.85

* $p<.05$

a. Scores on the youth interview indexes range from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating greater perceived closeness or parental authority.

b. Scores on the communication and conflict indexes range from 1 to 4; on the close-to-youth index, from 0 to 4. High scores indicate greater communication, conflict and closeness, respectively.

Both authority indexes and the conflict index show a reduction between the initial and follow-up interviews. The youth perceived their parents as less controlling, and the parents reported less conflict. Program and control group cases, however, did not differ on these measures. Overall, the indexes measuring family relationships revealed no systematic differences.

Jobs and School. At follow-up, the study youths were just over 17 years of age on average. Many were still school-aged, while others could have been entering the job market. Juvenile correctional programs almost always emphasize educational goals and often provide training in job skills. The in-home programs made various efforts in this area. How were the youths in this study faring with jobs and school at follow-up?

The percentages of youths at follow-up that were in school, working, both in school and working, or neither in school nor working did not differ between the program youths and the controls. About half of the youths in both groups were in school, 13% to 14% were working, and an additional 14% to 16% were both in school and working. Slightly more than 20% were idle. In-home programming did not appear to affect the likelihood that these youths would be working or in school two years later.

Education is an area where one might expect institutional programs to have an edge over many community-based alternatives. All of the institutional placements utilized for control group cases included a school component. School is a major emphasis at these placements because it occupies much of the youths' time. Obviously, attendance is more regular at classes held in such institutions than at regular public schools, especially for delinquent youths. Education was also a focus of the in-home programs. Program staff worked hard to reintegrate youths into the public schools.

The youth interviews contained several items regarding school attendance and attitudes. These were combined into an index of school attachment. In addition, the follow-up interview contained a set of items regarding confidence in school-related abilities. The results for the school attachment and school confidence indexes are shown in Table 7. Unfortunately, it was not possible to assess *change* in the school attachment index because the items in the initial and follow-up interviews were not identical. Still, program and control-group cases did not differ on this measure in either the initial or final interviews. At the two-year follow-up, they were similar on the school confidence measure as well. The evaluation also measured academic achievement by use of the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) in the follow-up interview. The program and control-group cases did not differ significantly on any of the WRAT measures.

Values. Many correctional programs attempt to break down antisocial norms while fostering more conventional values. Training schools are often referred to as "schools for crime" under the assumption that commingling with other offenders reinforces deviant values and skills. Yet many juvenile institutions use methods such as Positive Peer Culture or Guided Group

Table 7: School Attachment, by Interview and Group

Index	Group	Initial N	Initial Mean	Follow-up N	Follow-up Mean
Attachment[a]	Programs	290	3.21	139	4.23
	Control	142	3.18	77	4.37
Confidence[b]	Programs	—	—	161	3.29
	Control	—	—	86	3.25

a. The school attachment index was not constructed identically in both interviews. Only a subset of the initial items were used in the follow-up interview. An attempt was made to make the scales have the same mathematical range (1 to 6, with 6 indicating high attachment), but they are not standardized and are not strictly commensurate. Comparisons of scores across interviews should be made with caution. However, group comparisons within interviews are valid.

b. School confidence measure employed only in the follow-up interview.

Interaction that utilize peer group processes to promote prosocial values. It is not clear what one should predict when comparing the program and control-group youths on measures of conventional and deviant values. Would retention in the community avoid matriculation in "schools for crime," or would it continue a youth's exposure to the negative influences of the street culture while preventing the potentially positive effects of the institutional peer group methods?

The apparent answer is that it makes no difference. The conventional values indexes in Table 8 were composed of items such as approval of peers who "obey their parents" or are "good athletes." The deviant values indexes contain items regarding approval of peers who "like to fight," "steal cars," "use drugs," etc. Both the in-home program and control-group youths reported greater approval of conventional norms than deviant ones. They were more likely to report that peers adopted deviant values than that they themselves did. Little change was evident from the initial to follow-up interviews. There were no significant differences between the program and control-group youths on any of the measures of conventional and deviant values.

Self-Concept. The relationship between adolescent self-concept and delinquency has been the focus of much theoretical and empirical inquiry (Barton, 1985; Cohen, 1955; Gold and Mann, 1972; Kaplan, 1975; Lofland, 1969; Reckless et al., 1956; 1957; Stebbins, 1971). Most commonly, the self-concept has been operationalized as self-esteem, with low self-esteem considered a precipitator of delinquency and high self-esteem assumed to be an inhibitor. More recent work has portrayed the self-concept as more complex, not easily portrayed as a single dimension. Fine points of self-concept theory

Table 8: Conventional and Deviant Values, by Interview and Group

Index[a]	Group	Initial N	Initial Mean	Follow-up N	Follow-up Mean
Self: Conventional	Programs	297	2.26	161	2.24
	Control	146	2.33	86	2.25
Friends: Conventional	Programs	297	2.18	160	2.16
	Control	145	2.22	86	2.16
Others: Conventional	Programs	297	2.31	160	2.31
	Control	144	2.25	86	2.25
Self: Deviant	Programs	297	1.46	161	1.35
	Control	146	1.50	86	1.41
Friends: Deviant	Programs	297	1.75	161	1.64
	Control	145	1.76	86	1.64
Others: Deviant	Programs	297	1.71	161	1.79
	Control	144	1.77	86	1.78

a. Scores on the conventional and deviant values indexes range from 1 to 3, with 3 indicating approval of "conventional" or "deviant" acts, respectively. The youths responded once for themselves, then indicated their perceptions of the values of their friends and other peers.

notwithstanding, delinquency programs often seek to boost the self-image of their clients, hoping thereby to lessen some of the presumed impetus to deviant behavior.

The evaluation used a multidimensional measure of the self-concept, based on the youths' responses to a battery of descriptive terms. On these items, respondents indicated how they saw themselves ("real" self-concept indexes) and how they would like to see themselves ("ideal" indexes). As shown in Table 9, three dimensions of self-description emerged: *Power* contained such descriptive terms as "strong," "powerful," and "brave"; *sensitivity* included "delicate," "gentle," and "smooth"; and *competence* summarized "smart," "quick," and "good looking." In addition to the descriptive self-concept indexes, a measure of satisfaction with the self was derived by calculating the total discrepancy between each youth's real and ideal descriptions. The lower the discrepancy, the greater the satisfaction.

Several observations can be made from the data in Table 9. First, the youths rated themselves more highly on the power and competence indexes than on sensitivity, and in all comparisons their "ideal" ratings were higher than their "real" ratings. In the initial interviews, the in-home program youths rated themselves as more powerful than did the control-group youths. Over time, the ratings remained relatively stable, although the youths appeared to report

Table 9: Self-Concept Indexes, by Interview and Group

Index	Group	Initial N	Initial Mean	Follow-up N	Follow-up Mean
REAL:[a]					
Power	Programs	296	5.29*	160	5.26
	Control	145	5.03*	86	5.18
Sensitivity	Programs	296	4.35	160	4.26
	Control	145	4.16	86	4.45
Competence	Programs	296	5.15	160	5.34
	Control	145	5.12	86	5.39
IDEAL:[b]					
Power	Programs	296	5.93	160	5.86
	Control	145	5.81	86	5.69
Sensitivity	Programs	296	4.67	160	4.68
	Control	145	4.45	86	4.72
Competence	Programs	296	6.19	160	6.37
	Control	145	6.34	86	6.26
DISCREPANCY[c]	Programs	296	1.37	160	1.26
	Control	145	1.45	86	1.28

* $p < .05$

a. "Real" self-concept indexes are based on responses to "how I am" items. Scores range from 1 to 7, with higher scores reflecting more of an attribute.

b. "Ideal" self-concept indexes are based on responses to "how I'd like to be" items. Scores range from 1 to 7, with higher scores reflecting greater desire for an attribute.

c. The discrepancy index is the sum of the absolute differences between the real and ideal versions of each item. Higher scores indicate greater discrepancy or dissatisfaction with one's self-concept.

lower real-ideal discrepancies at follow-up. None of the other program vs. control group comparisons showed a significant difference. Diversion from commitment had no apparent effect on any aspect of self-concept.

Future Aspirations and Expectations. Some theories of delinquency suggest that the key to interrupting delinquent behavior is to improve a youth's perceptions of his or her "opportunities" (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960), or to reduce the "strain" between one's aspirations and the perceptions of one's chances for success in life (Merton, 1957). How did the experience of the

in-home programs or state commitment affect the youths' hopes for the future?

The interviews contained items measuring general levels of optimism as well as more specific indexes of conventional aspirations (e.g., "Someday I want to have a good job and support my own family") and material aspirations (e.g., "What I want most is to have a lot of money and enjoy it all I can"). Table 10 compares the responses of the youths on these measures. In general, their initial aspirations were quite high, near the top of the scales. At follow-up, they fell slightly but would still be considered high. If they seemed slightly unrealistic at the outset, they were somewhat less so at follow-up. Program and control-group cases did not differ on any of these indexes.

Respondents were also asked how much education they would like to get as well as how much they thought they actually would receive. As Table 10 shows, in the initial interviews, nearly two-thirds of the youths indicated that

Table 10: Aspirations and Expectations, by Interview and Group

Index	Group	Initial N	Initial Mean	Follow-up N	Follow-up Mean
Optimism[a]	Programs	296	4.28*	161	4.53
	Control	146	4.14*	85	4.45
Conventional[a] aspirations	Programs	295	4.45	161	439
	Control	146	4.55	86	4.27
Material[a] aspirations	Programs	295	4.04	161	3.94
	Control	145	4.09	86	3.85
College[b] aspirations	Programs	294	0.62	160	0.54
	Control	145	0.64	85	0.56
College[b] expectations	Programs	294	0.35	160	0.43
	Control	144	0.35	84	0.44
Educational[c] strain	Programs	288	0.37	159	0.23
	Control	144	0.38	84	0.26

* $p<.10$

a. Optimism, conventional aspirations and material aspirations index scores range from 1 to 5. Higher scores indicate higher hopes.

b. College aspirations and expectations measures reflect the proportion of respondents who would like and expect to get at least some college education.

c. Educational strain reflects the proportion of respondents whose aspirations exceed expectations.

they would like to go to college, while only a third thought they really would attend college. More than one-third had aspirations exceeding expectations, a condition that could be termed educational "strain." At follow-up, aspirations appeared to have declined (about 55% hoped to go to college) while expectations had risen (nearly 45% expected to do so), resulting in fewer cases of educational strain (about 25%). Once again, these patterns were identical for the in-home program youths and the controls.

The results presented thus far are striking in their consistency. The findings demonstrate repeatedly that the in-home program youths did not differ significantly from the controls at the two-year follow-up. Coupled with the recidivism results, this analysis argues that the in-home programs were neither more nor less effective than state commitment.

Program Success Rates

The final perspective on the outcomes of the programs concerns their success with individual cases. How well were the programs able to maintain their cases in the community? Did assignment to the in-home programs successfully prevent or merely delay commitment to the state? One way of answering these questions is to compare youths who graduated successfully from the programs with those who were terminated unsuccessfully. As in previous sections, the results are mixed.

An unsuccessful program outcome was any termination (case closure) that involved further legal sanctions against the youth (e.g., commitment, waiver to the adult system, or a new adjudication or conviction). Successful cases were closed when the program staff believed a youth's progress to be satisfactory and the youth graduated from the program. Occasionally, relatively inactive cases were closed when a youth turned 17 years of age and would no longer be under the original jurisdiction of the juvenile court. While these cases could not be termed "graduations," they were considered to be successful from a recidivism perspective because they involved no additional legal sanctions.

Altogether, the programs successfully graduated just under half of their cases (46.3%). MHS had the highest success rate at 51%, while that of IPU was lowest at 41.6%. The differences among programs were not statistically significant. Of the 151 successful cases, almost all (94%) were program graduates, while the remaining few (6%) were terminated because of their age and not because of subsequent legal problems. Among the 175 unsuccessful cases, most were committed to DSS (88.6%), while a few (8%) were convicted by an adult court; fewer still (3.4%) were transferred to the adult system for an offense committed as a juvenile.[8]

What happened to the youths who were able to complete the programs successfully? Once the intensive supervision was removed, did they resume offending and reappear in a juvenile or adult court? The great majority did not. Nearly 80% of the program graduates (78.1%) showed no subsequent charges

during the remainder of the two-year follow-up period. Because the average tenure for successful cases was 13 months, these results are based upon nearly a year of post-program follow-up.

The programs varied only slightly in the percentage of graduates who were free of subsequent charges, from a high of 85% (MHS) to a low of 72% (IPU). The MHS program, however, tended to retain cases somewhat longer than the other programs, so MHS graduates had relatively less post-program time within the two-year study period. Overall, case outcomes did not differ greatly from program to program. Such a finding suggests that no single program approach can claim to be the best, but that any of them can work given the right combinations of staff effort, client motivation and, probably, a measure of luck.

It is important to recall that all of the 326 program youths would have been committed to DSS had the in-home programs not been introduced. In the next two years they would have been incarcerated for an average of nearly 13 months, at an average cost of about $100 a day. Yet 118 of these youth (36%) not only remained in the community with about a year of intensive supervision, but also stayed out of the justice system for (nearly) another year at least.

DISCUSSION

The main question addressed by the Wayne County evaluation was whether intensive supervision was an effective alternative to commitment for already delinquent youths. With the important exception that commitment seemed to be associated with more violent behavior, this analysis suggests that impacts on recidivism were slight. Additional outcome measures such as self-concept, family relationships, personal aspirations and values also failed to reveal any substantial differences between the program youths and the controls. After two years, it seemed to make little difference whether commitment-bound youths were diverted into community-based programming or were committed and incarcerated as intended.

Perhaps the intensive supervision programs failed to show strong effects not because their service models were inadequate but because they had been poorly implemented. Such an interpretation has been offered in rebuttal to the familiar dirge that nothing works (Sechrest, White and Brown, 1979). The evaluation analyzed the extent to which the programs were implemented as designed. While they may not have satisfied the most rigorous definition of "intensive," the programs nevertheless exhibited an intensity and range of activities far beyond those of regular probation and qualitatively different from residential programs.

Even the finding of "no difference" demonstrates that the intensive

supervision programs provided a viable alternative for many youth who were facing their first commitment. At about one-third the cost, the programs were able to achieve case outcomes at least no worse (and in some cases better) than those of commitment. The issue for policymakers is how to judge the costs and benefits of intensive supervision as an intermediate sanction. Benefits include monetary savings, comparable outcomes and the less quantifiable value of keeping some youths in the community with their families. The primary cost is a marginal loss of "incapacitation"; despite the overall equivalence in recidivism, it is clear that the in-home program youths had more opportunity to commit new offenses immediately following their assignment to the programs. It is also clear, however, that all but the most serious offenders eventually returned to the community. The average length of incarceration among the control group was just over a year.

The bottom-line policy question is how effective do alternative, intermediate sanctions have to be for their cost advantages and rehabilitative potential to outweigh the short-term public safety benefit of removing some young offenders from the streets for a few months each? The findings of the Wayne County evaluation demonstrate that by investing in sound community-based programming, juvenile justice systems can reduce their reliance upon costly out-of-home placements, and stretch limited resources to serve more youths and families at no appreciably greater risk to the public safety.

NOTES

1. Most delinquency cases in Wayne County, MI are heard by referees rather than judges.

2. The evaluation continued to monitor the entry and exit of cases assigned after March 1985, but no interviews or other detailed data were collected from them.

3. Exit interviews were not sought with the control-group cases because most of them experienced a variety of placements during their state wardship, making it unclear what would constitute an "exit" comparable to a termination from one of the in-home programs. Furthermore, this study made no attempt to evaluate the treatment afforded control-group cases.

4. CYTCIP inherited its program from another agency that was unable to fulfill its initial contract after several months of operation. Although CYTCIP gradually replaced existing staff and revised the program to its own specifications, the evaluation cannot draw firm conclusions about CYTCIP's effectiveness with its particular program.

5. *Level 1*: The least serious offenses (status offenses and violations of probation resulting from failure to obey program rules). *Level 2*: Minor offenses such as littering, loitering and disorderly conduct. *Level 3*: Drug offenses. *Level 4*: Vandalism, carrying a concealed weapon and simple assault. *Level 5*: Relatively serious offenses such as larceny, auto theft, breaking and entering, and unarmed robbery. *Level 6*: Serious and violent offenses such as armed robbery, rape, attempted murder and murder.

6. The proportion of the study sample responding to the interviews fell to 50% between the initial interview and the two-year follow-up. Sample attrition resulted

from refusals, as well as the fact that the whereabouts of some youths were unknown. All the evaluation's analyses were examined for nonresponse bias. Respondents were not systematically different from nonrespondents.

7. In other words, the raw change score (follow-up minus initial delinquency level) is regressed on the corresponding initial score for each index. The residuals of these regressions are the adjusted change scores.

8. In addition, two study youths died while in the in-home programs. Three other former program youths and one control-group youth died during the two-year follow-up period.

REFERENCES

Austin, James, Barry Krisberg and Karen Joe (1987). *The Impact of Juvenile Court Intervention, Draft Report*. San Francisco, CA: National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

Barton, William H. (1985). "The Self-Concept and Delinquency." (Doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.) Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International.

—— and Jeffrey A. Butts (1988). "The Ever Widening Net: System Adaptations to the Introduction of New Programs in a Juvenile Court." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Chicago, IL.

Cohen, A.K. (1955). *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Cloward, Richard A. and Lloyd E. Ohlin (1960). *Delinquency and Opportunity*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Empey, LaMar T. and Steven G. Lubeck (1971). *The Silverlake Experiment: Testing Delinquency Theory and Community Intervention*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.

Farrington, David P. (1973). "Self-Reports of Deviant Behavior: Predictive and Stable?" *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 64:99-110.

Gold, M. and D.W. Mann (1972). "Delinquency as Defense." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 42:463-479.

Hardt, Robert and Sandra Peterson-Hardt (1977). "On Determining the Quality of the Delinquency Self-Report Method." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 14:247-261.

Hindelang, Michael J., Travis Hirschi and Joseph G. Weis (1981). *Measuring Delinquency*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

—— (1979). "Correlates of Delinquency: The Illusion of Discrepancy Between Self-Report and Official Measures." *American Sociological Review* 44(6):995-1014.

Kaplan, H.B. (1975). *Self-attitudes and Deviant Behavior*. Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear.

Kobrin, Solomon and Malcolm W. Klein (1983). *Community Treatment of Juvenile Offenders: The DSO Experiments*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Kulik, James A., K.B. Stein and T.R. Sarbin (1968). "Disclosure of Delinquent Behavior Under Conditions of Anonymity and Non-Anonymity." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 32:506-509.

Lerman, Paul (1975). *Community Treatment and Social Control: A Critical Analysis of Juvenile Correctional Policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lofland, J. (1969). *Deviance and Identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Maltz, Michael D., Andrew C. Gordon, David McDowall and Richard McCleary (1980). "An Artifact in Pretest-Posttest Designs—How it Can Mistakenly Make Delinquency Programs Look Effective." *Evaluation Review* 4(2):225-240.

Merton, Robert K. (1957). *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Murray, Charles A. and Louis A. Cox, Jr. (1979). *Beyond Probation: Juvenile Corrections and the Chronic Delinquent*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Ohlin, Lloyd E., Alden D. Miller and Robert B. Coates (1977). *Juvenile Correctional Reform in Massachusetts*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Palmer, Ted (1974). "The Youth Authority's Community Treatment Project." *Federal Probation* 38:3-14.

Porterfield, A.L. (1946). *Youth in Trouble: Studies in Delinquency and Despair with Plans for Prevention*. Fort Worth, TX: Leo Potisham Foundation:

Reckless, W.C., S. Dinitz and B. Kay (1957). "The Self Component in Potential Delinquency and Potential Non-Delinquency." *American Sociological Review* 22:566-570.

—— and E. Murray (1956). "Self-Concept as an Insulator Against Delinquency." *American Sociological Review* 21:744-746.

Sechrest, Lee B., Susan O. White and Elizabeth D. Brown (eds.) (1979). *The Rehabilitation of Criminal Offenders: Problems and Prospects*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.

Short, James F. Jr. and F. Ivan Nye (1957). "Reported Behavior as a Criterion of Deviant Behavior." *Social Problems* 5:207-213.

Stebbins, R. A. (1971). *Commitment to Deviance: The Nonprofessional Criminal in the Community*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Waldo, Gordon and David Griswold (1979). "Issues in the Measurement of Recidivism." In *The Rehabilitation of Criminal Offenders: Problems and Prospects*, edited by Lee B. Sechrest et al. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.

Weeks, H. Ashley (1958). *Youthful Offenders at Highfields: An Evaluation of the Effects of the Short-Term Treatment of Delinquent Boys*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.