

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE BROWARD COUNTY  
JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER**

**Fort Lauderdale, Florida**

by

Russell K. Van Vleet  
Administrator, Second District Court  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Jeffrey A. Butts and William H. Barton  
Center for the Study of Youth Policy  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

June, 1988

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The authors of this report conducted a three-day site visit at the Broward County Juvenile Detention Center in April, 1988. Among the results of this site visit, it was found that:

- \* The detention center is chronically over-crowded. With a design capacity of 109 and an adapted capacity of 133 detainees, the daily population in the center during the past year was usually at least 150 and frequently as high as 180 to 200 youths.
- \* It is surprising that more violent incidences have not occurred in the center. The facility is visibly overcrowded and undoubtedly dangerous for both residents and staff.
- \* The youths in the detention center are relatively young (26% under the age of 15), predominantly Black (63%), and for the most part have been charged with non-violent offenses (more than two-thirds).
- \* There is *virtually no intake process* to regulate and monitor entry into the detention center. Youths are referred almost exclusively by police and nearly always held at police request.
- \* Police and state's attorney control the process of initiating holds while the Judiciary controls release. Noticeably absent from the process are the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and the Public Defender's Office.
- \* In order to make a real difference, new detention guidelines will have to be supported with administrative or state legislative action.
- \* Judicial support is critical to any lasting improvement in detention practices.
- \* Residential and non-residential alternatives to secure detention must be developed and then evaluated carefully. Well-designed evaluation is critical not only for measuring the success of Broward County's efforts, but as a means of encouraging effective alternatives to detention in other jurisdictions.

## INTRODUCTION

This analysis of the Broward County (Florida) Juvenile Detention Center was initiated by The Center for the Study of Youth Policy at the University of Michigan, Ira Schwartz, Director. The authors conducted a three-day site visit at the Fort Lauderdale detention facility in April, 1988. Their report and recommendations are presented here for distribution to the Juvenile Justice Key Decision Maker Project and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Representatives of the Casey Foundation have expressed their desire to assist Broward County in reducing its detention population by providing program alternatives that will not only benefit troubled youths in Broward County, but serve as a model for detention diversion in other jurisdictions.

The report begins with a brief description of the information gathering activities employed by the authors. It continues with a description of the detention facility itself and a statistical profile of the youths who have been detained there during the past year. The report concludes with the major findings and recommendations of the authors regarding detention practices in Broward County and a brief exposition of current plans for implementing an evaluation of new approaches to juvenile detention.

## METHOD OF STUDY

During three days in late April, Russ Van Vleet and Jeff Butts toured the Broward Detention Center, met with key staff including those from the Center and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS), attended an afternoon of detention hearings, and collected demographic and criminal-history data on a sample of youths who had been detained recently in the Center.

The individuals who met with the authors include: Greg Johnson, Detention Superintendent, and approximately ten to twelve members of his staff; Steve Ray and Bill O'Connell from the state HRS office in Tallahassee; Paul Freedlund, District 10 HRS Administrator; Susan Anamony, Supervisor in the State's Attorney office; Doug McNeil and Sandra Freedman, Public Defenders Office; Judge Budetti, Juvenile Court; Janet Abee and Arlene Wilson, District HRS staff; as well as several brief visits with detained youth.

The data on the detention population were obtained from the records of the Center and/or from the information systems of HRS. While time did not allow a comprehensive census of the detention population, the authors used a sampling procedure which enabled them to draw a reasonably accurate profile of the types of youths being held in Broward County.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE FACILITY

The Broward County Detention Center is a one-story, multi-winged building, similar to many detention facilities throughout the U.S. It was designed as a 109-bed facility. In response to chronic over-crowding its capacity was increased so that the Center is officially capable of handling 133 detainees. The population during the authors' site visit, however, was 168; earlier that same week it had been 185. The Center has had daily populations as high as 203 youths in the recent past. It is currently under litigation due to overcrowded and unsafe conditions.

The facility is well maintained and its population reasonably controlled despite the severe overcrowding. The management of this situation is made possible by a strong detention director and a staff that appeared very cohesive and dedicated to their work. Even during the site visit for this report, however, there was an incident in the Center in which a staff member was beaten severely and hospitalized. Although any one incident cannot be attributed solely to the overcrowded conditions, it is certainly surprising that more have not occurred. It was apparent to the authors that this facility is overcrowded and physically dangerous to both residents and staff.

To accommodate the overcrowding, an honors dorm is being used to store fold-away cots during the day and then converted back for sleeping in the evening. One "multi-purpose" room is used for everything from ping-pong and weight lifting to TV viewing and general visiting. During the authors' tour, there were at least 40 youths in this room designed for 20 or less. Not only was general recreation impossible, but the noise level made common conversation difficult.

The medical, recreational, educational, eating and counselling areas were generally poorly furnished, poorly ventilated, and could not be conducive to resident living or staff performance. This is not so much due to poor design (the Center is relatively well-equipped compared to detention centers in the rest of the country) but simply the result of too many people in too small a space. It would seem that a routine

visit by either the local health or fire department would result in numerous violations and that the residents of the Center, both staff and detainees, are being subjected to unsafe and dehumanizing conditions.

## THE DETENTION POPULATION

The data for this analysis were generously provided by staff from the Broward County Detention Center and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The data themselves are of two types:

1. **Month-by-month data** for several key indicators of detention operations in Broward County such as average daily population and the number of admissions and releases. These data are monitored and compiled by HRS.
2. **Cross sectional data** which provide a profile of the secure detention population. The detention center compiles daily "rosters" of detained youths.<sup>1</sup> Five randomly chosen days, evenly spaced throughout the 1987-1988 period, were identified by the analysts. The rosters for those days were pulled by detention center staff and adapted by the authors for computer analysis resulting in a series of five cross-sectional populations. This approach avoids the distortions of relying upon a single day or week to characterize the detention population, and was feasible within the short time-frame required by the analysis.<sup>2</sup>

These two types of data can be used together to construct an image of recent detention center operations. The month-by-month data provide overall population trends and indicators of system performance. The cross-sectional data can be used to derive basic demographic characteristics of the juvenile detention population in Broward County during the past year.

As one reads the following analysis, it is important to understand the nature of the cross-sectional data collected by the authors. The five detention rosters can be thought of as a sample which is used to make estimates about the "population" from which it was drawn — i.e., all the daily rosters between April 1987 and April 1988. Just as political pollsters rely upon a random sample of a few hundred individuals to make educated guesses about opinions held by the whole country, this analysis relies upon

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1. Each day's roster contains names, ages, ethnicity and sex for all the youths then being held in detention. Also on these lists are N.C.I.C. codes for the "instant" offenses associated with each youth's current detention stay, as well as the length of that stay.

2. Three of the five days fell on a weekend, which required the analysis to use the rosters prepared on the following Mondays. To the extent that the weekend rosters differ from the rest of the week, this "sample" of days may be slightly unrepresentative. The effect this could have on the results of the analysis was not considered dramatic enough, however, to warrant a departure from the randomization procedure.

the characteristics of the youths in detention on five random days to estimate the characteristics of the detention population in general during that year.<sup>3</sup>

When introducing data from the five cross-section days, information from each day will be presented. The most important figure, however, is the average of all five days. For any particular population characteristic, the average of the five sample days can be taken as an estimate for the whole year. Any fluctuations between the five cross sections may be entirely random. Patterns of change during the year, therefore, are suggestive at most — although further data collection and analyses may focus on the demographic shifts which are apparent in these data.

### **Population Levels**

Figure 1 portrays the average daily population in the detention center for each month during the period from July, 1987 to March, 1988. The number of youths detained at any one time was consistently over 150 during this period. In January and February the average daily population climbed to 172 and 195 respectively. These levels are well above 133, which, as discussed above, is the maximum allowable capacity for the detention center.

The existence of this over-crowding is verified by the one-day counts which comprise the cross sectional data. Figure 2 depicts the detention population for the five cross-section days. On these days, the number of youths in the detention center ranged from 134 to a high of 185 on April 25, 1988. Four of the five sample days exceeded the 133-bed goal by relatively wide margins.

Figure 3 offers additional information about fluctuations in the daily population. It portrays entries and exits from the center since July of 1987. Transfers from non-secure detention are included with admissions, just as transfers to non-secure detention are added to releases. In months where exits from the center (the dotted line) are substantially fewer than entries (the solid line), the population of the center would, of course, be increasing. The rather dramatic rise in the average daily population during January and February of 1988, as seen above in Figure 1, is discernible in Figure 3. The discrepancy between the two lines is greatest in January, when entries into the center out-paced exits by 28 youths.

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3. The cross-sectional analyses were limited to 1987 and 1988 as the Center's current method of keeping daily rosters was implemented in January, 1987.

Figure 1

Average Daily Population  
Broward County Detention Center

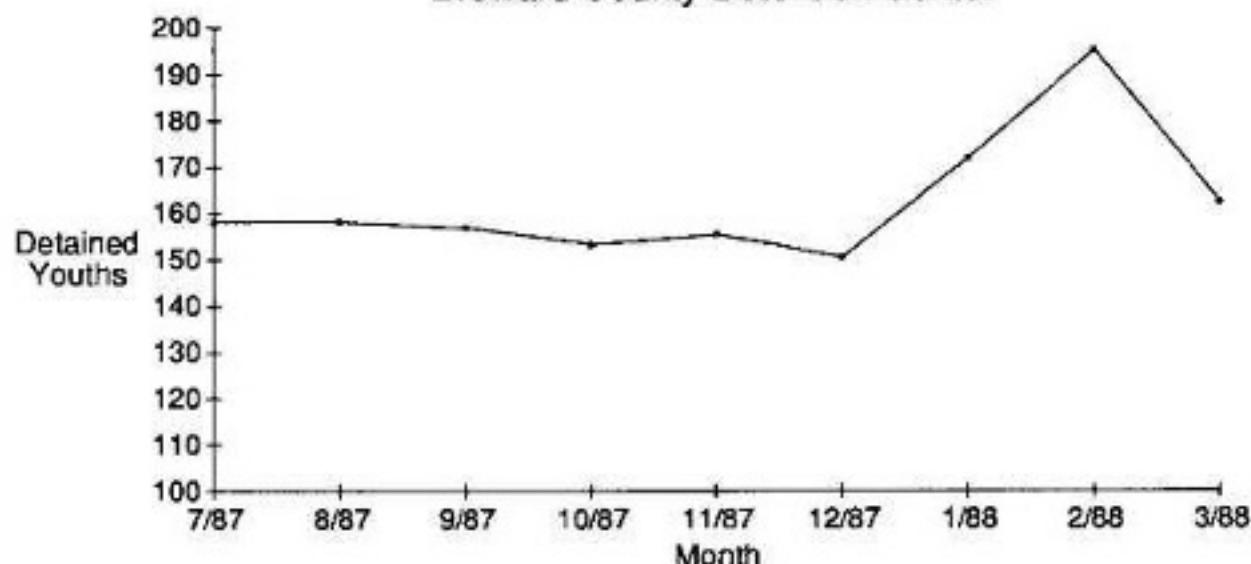


Figure 2

One-Day Population Counts:  
Randomly Selected Days

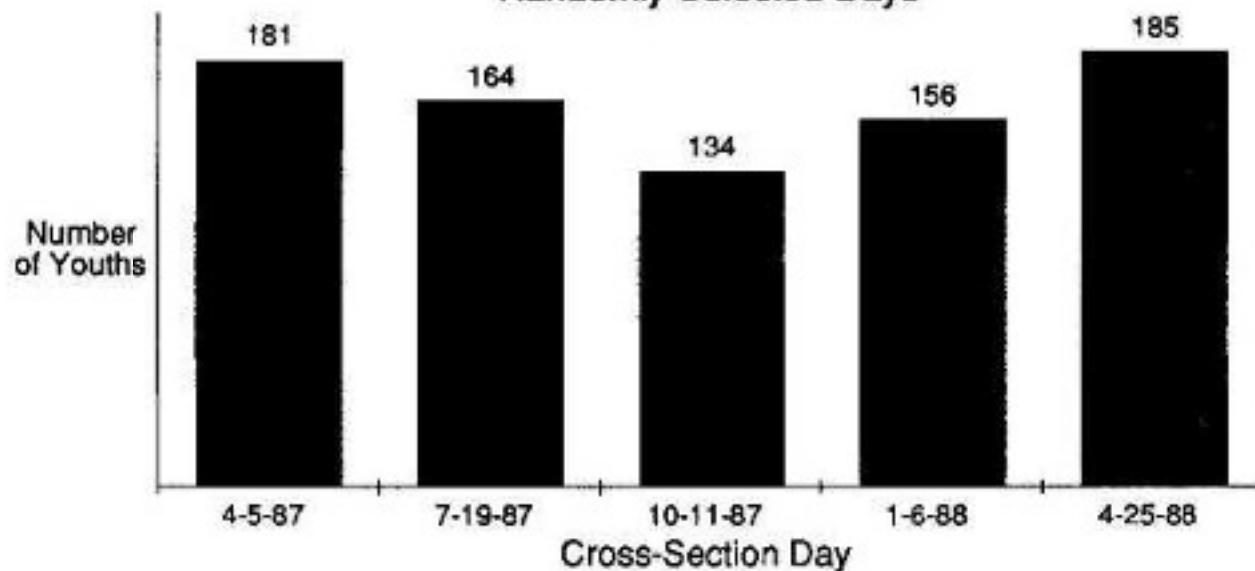
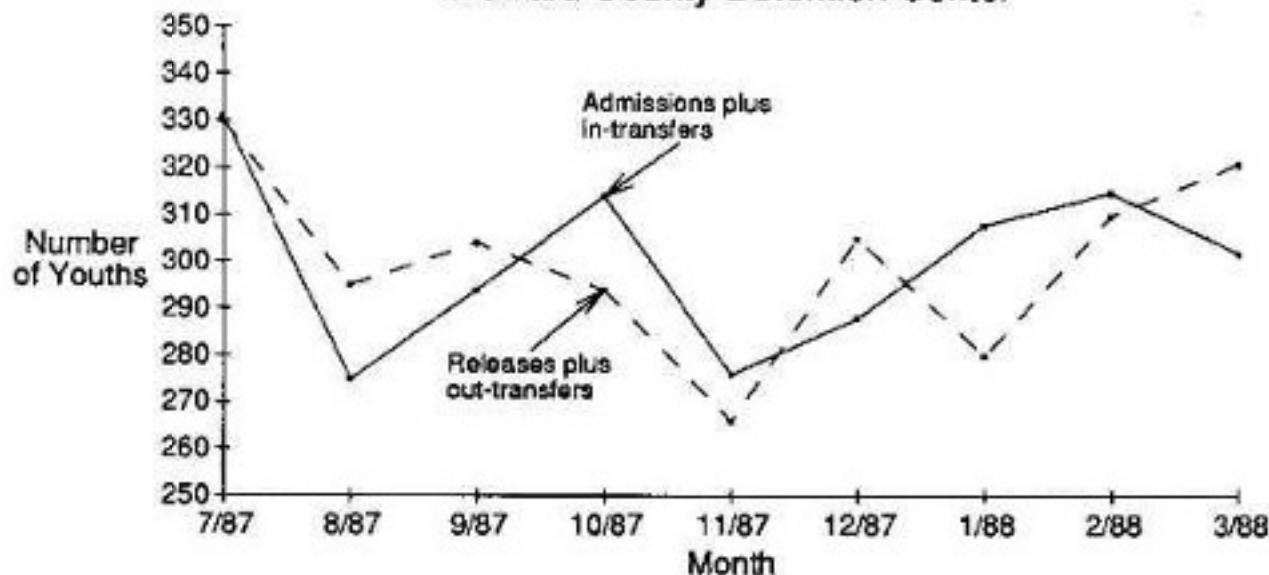


Figure 3

Total Entries and Exits  
Broward County Detention Center



### Population Characteristics

Tables 1 and 2 present information on the gender and ethnicity of the detention population. As seen in Table 1, the proportion of males in secure detention seems to fall between 80 and 85 percent, with the average for all five cross-sections being 83.8 percent.

Table 2 provides the typical proportion of Blacks among the detention population. It would seem that Black comprise just over 60 percent of the youths detained in the Center at any one time. It is impossible to estimate the number of Hispanics and other ethnic groups among the detention population. The data collection practices of the Center categorize all youths as either Black or White. It is not possible to tell, for example, if the proportion of minorities in detention is actually much higher than 60 percent but is under-counted as a result of many Hispanics being classified as White.

Table 3 depicts the ages of youths in detention. During the five cross-section days, the detainees ranged in age from eight to nineteen years. On average, more than a quarter of the youths in the Center are under the age of 15. On one of the rosters

Table 1  
Sex by Cross-Section Day

SEX	CROSS-SECTION DAY					AVERAGE
	4-5-87	7-19-87	10-11-87	1-6-88	4-25-88	
Male	145 (80.1%)	140 (85.4%)	111 (82.8%)	135 (86.5%)	156 (84.3%)	(83.8%)
Female	36 (19.9%)	24 (14.6%)	23 (17.2%)	21 (13.5%)	29 (15.7%)	(16.2%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>181</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>164</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>134</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>156</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>185</b> <b>100.0%</b>	

Table 2  
Ethnicity by Cross-Section Day

ETHNICITY	CROSS-SECTION DAY					AVERAGE
	4-5-87	7-19-87	10-11-87	1-6-88	4-25-88	
White*	71 (40.6%)	55 (35.0%)	51 (38.9%)	46 (31.3%)	76 (41.1%)	(37.4%)
Black	104 (59.4%)	102 (65.0%)	80 (61.1%)	101 (68.7%)	109 (58.9%)	(62.6%)
<b>TOTAL**</b>	<b>175</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>157</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>131</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>147</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>185</b> <b>100.0%</b>	

\* The daily population data collected by the detention center characterize ethnicity only in terms of Black or White. It is suspected that the staff classify Hispanics and other ethnic groups as either Black or White depending on the individual's appearance.

\*\* The totals for each cross-section day vary due to the incidence of missing data.

Table 3  
Age by Cross-Section Day

AGE IN YEARS	CROSS-SECTION DAY					AVERAGE
	4-5-87	7-19-87	10-11-87	1-6-88	4-25-88	
8 - 13	26 (14.4%)	17 (10.4%)	8 (6.0%)	11 (7.1%)	17 (9.2%)	(9.4%)
14	34 (18.8%)	29 (17.7%)	24 (17.9%)	26 (16.8%)	23 (12.4%)	(16.7%)
15	31 (17.1%)	27 (16.5%)	29 (21.6%)	42 (27.1%)	50 (27.0%)	(21.9%)
16	47 (26.0%)	33 (20.1%)	38 (28.4%)	39 (25.2%)	47 (25.4%)	(25.0%)
17	40 (22.1%)	52 (31.7%)	30 (22.4%)	32 (20.6%)	43 (23.2%)	(24.0%)
18 - 19	3 (1.7%)	6 (3.7%)	5 (3.7%)	5 (3.2%)	5 (2.7%)	(3.0%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>181</b> 100.1%	<b>164</b> 100.1%	<b>134</b> 100.0%	<b>155</b> 100.0%	<b>185</b> 99.9% <i>(due to rounding)</i>	

\* Age of youth was missing for one case in the January 6, 1988 roster.

examined by the authors (April 5, 1987), nearly a third of the youths were under 15. The youths held in the Detention Center would seem to be relatively young. Further consideration of this issue would require an analysis of the influence of waivers to the adult system; a high rate of waivers would, of course, tend to lower the average age in detention.

As mentioned above, the daily rosters compiled by detention staff also list the charge(s) which are associated with each youth's current stay in detention. These "instant" offenses are coded using an NCIC taxonomy. For this analysis, each youth is placed into one of eight categories according to his or her most serious offense. The eight categories are shown in Table 4.

Table 4  
Eight Categories of Instant Offenses

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Minor:	Status Offenses; Disorderly Conduct; Traffic Offenses; Simple Assaults; Prostitution; Trespass; Resisting Arrest (unless involving violence).
"Orders":	Some cases had "pick-up order" or "court order" as the only offense listed. It was not possible to discern with what previous offense, if any, these orders were associated.
VOP:	Violation of probation, or "community control" – unless explicitly associated with some other new offense.
Property I:	Theft; Larceny; Shoplifting; Fraud; Extortion; Possession of Stolen Property; Damage to Property.
Property II:	Burglary; Burglary From Residence; Possession of Stolen Vehicle.
Drugs:	Possession, or Possession for Sale of any controlled substance (mostly Cocaine).
Violent I:	Assault; Robbery; Street Robbery; Strong-Arm Robbery; Minor Sex Offenses; Arson; Possession of Weapon.
Violent II:	Homicide; Rape; Armed Robbery; Aggravated Assault.

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Table 5 contains the distribution of these eight offense categories among the detention population. As seen in Table 5, on average 27.5 percent of the youths in detention have instant offenses which involved some degree of violence. Almost 31 percent were charged with property crimes as the most serious offense, while more than 10 percent of the youths have a drug offense as their most serious charge. The vast majority (82.4%) of these drug offenses were for the possession or sale of cocaine.

Additional analyses considered the proportion of youths for whom at least one of their instant offenses was a drug charge. On average, 12.6 percent of detained youths had a drug offense listed among their instant offenses. Interestingly, this percentage was 4.7 among White youths but 17.3 for Blacks (or non-Whites). Whether this is a true difference, of course, remains to be tested through more rigorous analyses of data which are not cross-sectional.

**Table 5**  
**Instant Offenses of Youths by Cross-Section Day**

<u>OFFENSE</u>	<u>CROSS-SECTION DAY</u>					<u>AVERAGE</u>
	<u>4-5-87</u>	<u>7-19-87</u>	<u>10-11-87</u>	<u>1-6-88</u>	<u>4-25-88</u>	
Minor	3 (1.7%)	19 (11.6%)	9 (6.7%)	9 (5.8%)	10 (5.4%)	(6.2%)
"Orders"	33 (18.4%)	25 (15.2%)	25 (18.7%)	27 (17.3%)	34 (18.4%)	(17.6%)
VOP	11 (6.1%)	20 (12.2%)	11 (8.2%)	9 (5.8%)	6 (3.2%)	(7.1%)
Property I	11 (6.1%)	9 (5.5%)	10 (7.5%)	11 (7.1%)	9 (4.9%)	(6.2%)
Property II	48 (26.8%)	41 (25.0%)	27 (20.1%)	33 (21.2%)	56 (30.3%)	(24.7%)
Drugs	20 (11.2%)	11 (6.7%)	21 (15.7%)	15 (9.6%)	19 (10.3%)	(10.7%)
Violent I	22 (12.3%)	18 (11.0%)	14 (10.4%)	32 (20.5%)	22 (11.9%)	(13.2%)
Violent II	31 (17.3%)	21 (12.8%)	17 (12.7%)	20 (12.8%)	29 (15.7%)	(14.3%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>179 99.9%</b>	<b>164 100.0%</b>	<b>134 100.0%</b>	<b>156 100.1%</b>	<b>185 100.0%</b>	

Thirteen percent of youths typically in detention are charged with violations of probation (or "community control" in Florida) or other minor charges as their most serious offense. It was not possible to tell the extent to which these violations were for new, and more serious charges. Unfortunately, more than seventeen percent of the cases had only "court order" as the instant offense. Some of these youths undoubtedly had other instant offenses which prompted the order, but this information is not available under current data collection practices of the Center.<sup>4</sup> For purposes of instant offense analyses, it may be prudent to consider the "court order" category as similar to missing data.

4. This information, as well as prior offenses, is available on the criminal histories maintained in the HRS computer system. Further analyses may utilize these data, but time constraints prevented their use here.

## **Summary**

From these data, it is clear that the Broward County Detention Center is overcrowded, especially if the official capacity of 133 youths is taken as a target population level. A cursory inspection of the cross-sectional data reveals a relatively young population, predominantly Black, with high numbers of youths who have not been charged with violent offenses. Further analyses with better quality data (e.g., longitudinal measures following a cohort of youths upon admission to the Center) would clarify the accuracy of these estimates. Even at this level of accuracy, however, there would seem to be ample evidence to support the development of alternatives for the Broward County youths now being detained at the Center.

## **FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS**

During the site visit, the authors spoke with many people about the detention situation in Broward County. The following findings and recommendations are based upon the impressions and facts gathered during these interviews.

### **Current Detention Practices in Broward County**

There is virtually no intake process to regulate and monitor entry into the detention center. Youths are referred almost exclusively by the police, with the exception of administrative holds which are non-law violations. At the time of the site visit there were no clear policies in place and little coordination of intake staff. The intake function had recently (only the day before the authors arrived) been transferred from the district office to the Detention Superintendent. This could greatly facilitate the development of intake, but it will require much more than a shift of responsibility to make it operational and effective.

Several aspects of current practices would appear to be problematic:

1. Upon police referral, Intake staff ask the officer if youth is to be detained. Police usually respond in the affirmative, and youth is detained.
2. States attorney is called if hold is in doubt – states attorney almost always says to hold.
3. No such thing as NJ (non-judicial handling).

4. No diversion procedures in place (other than return to home).
5. No intake releases – only released after hearings (24 hrs.).
6. Community programs seem to use detention for "jail therapy".
7. There is a great need for clear intake policies, staff with specialized intake functions, and consistent supervision at intake.
8. There is essentially no advocacy for youth.
9. All youth referred are detained at least 24 hours – almost no option.
10. States Attorney is always present at detention hearings – Public Defender is not present.
11. Magistrate holds hearings on weekends – nearly always holds for Judge.
12. Youth may be held for 15 days preceding filing of petition — the 15 day limit is often ignored.
13. Petitions are usually filed within 21 days. If petition isn't filed by then, youth is released. Thus youths may be held 21 days without charges.<sup>5</sup>
14. Public defender, by statute, is not required to be involved until a petition is filed. Prosecutor is involved from the time of detainment to petition filing (usually 21 days).
15. Public defender is in courtroom at hearing but is usually not active, except to allow youth to sign for public defender services in the event that a petition is filed.
16. All releases are judicial – no staff discretion.

In summarizing current intake practices, it is clear that the Police and state's attorney control the process of initiating holds while the Judiciary controls release. Noticeably absent from the process are the Department and the Public Defender.

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5. Youths are being held pending the filing of petitions. Petitions are not always filed and some youths are held even beyond the 21 day limit. Many people thought that youths are routinely held while the state's attorney asks for continuances to file a petition, even if after lengthy delays a petition is not filed.

Currently, the state's attorney is not following the 15-21 day guideline. New guidelines may not make a difference without state legislative or administrative action.

### **Administrative Issues**

"Empowerment". The current administrative structure separates policy and program responsibility. Line authority is not clear, and there seems to be confusion about responsibility and authority at many levels. The overcrowding at the Broward Detention Center certainly has the interest and attention of all concerned, but the locus of responsibility for reducing the population is not certain.

Power appears to be concentrated in the Police and the state's attorney. For any diversion-type innovation to be successful, HRS Secretary Coler and his staff must clarify responsibility throughout the district, including the local staff at the detention center. Intake staff need to be empowered with the authority to exercise discretionary release at admission.

### **Public Defender**

The Public Defender is not required to represent youth until a petition is filed. HRS could use administrative pressure to insure that youths are properly represented at detention hearings and that petitions are filed in a timely manner. The Public Defender could become an effective youth advocate in the detention process if given support and training through HRS.

### **Bobby M Impact**

The consent decree regarding reductions in Florida's training school population has also adversely affected the detention population. Motions to waive youths to the adult system have increased dramatically resulting in longer stays in detention. The dilatory effects of the 21-day filing guideline, motions to waive, continuances, etc., combine to produce an average 3-month delay in placing youths.

## Judges

A major effort by HRS is needed to educate and recruit the support of judges for alternatives to current detention practices. There is concern, for example, that judges sometimes appear to hold prosecutorial points of view in conducting juvenile detention hearings. Judicial support is critical to any improvement in the overcrowded conditions in detention.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This may be a propitious time to assist Broward County and hopefully other jurisdictions with their detention problems. Given the apparent (albeit short-lived) success of earlier efforts at imposing objective detention guidelines in Florida, there is reason to believe that current detention practices could be significantly improved using careful administration and monitoring.<sup>6</sup>

The application of objective detention screening guidelines would reduce the number of youths requiring secure detention. Of those not requiring secure detention, some would require non-secure residential alternatives (e.g., foster care, group homes, etc.) while others could be returned home with supervision. These program alternatives, outlined in more detail below, would need to be developed and evaluated carefully. Before any committal of funds, however, several conditions should be met:

1. There should be administrative assurance of appropriate authority at the intake level.
2. Foundation funds should **not** be used to replace lost federal or matching dollars.
3. Clear, objective intake guidelines should be developed and in place prior to funding.
4. Funds should **not** support an "assessment center", or mental health alternatives to detention.

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6. See "A Report on the Impact of Detention-Related Changes Made in the Juvenile Justice Act in 1980", by the Office of Evaluation and Children, Youth and Families Program Office, Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, State of Florida. April, 1981.

5. Funds should **not** be used to fund a new position to do what the public defender should already be doing.
6. Specific plans should be developed for detention alternatives, possibly including:
  - \* **Shelter care:** Place youths (pending hearings) in a network of homes throughout the county receiving daily rates.
  - \* **Home detention (parental supervision):** Provide monitoring and surveillance of youths placed at home.
  - \* **Extended shelter:** Implement several smaller facilities for youths not eligible for shelter or home detention but also not appropriate for detention.
  - \* **Intensive community supervision (or tracking):** Utilize caseloads small enough to allow for proper supervision; include an administrative expectation that community control workers not use detention for "jail therapy"; build in a strong intake component supervised by detention and overseen by HRS District 10 staff.
  - \* **Day treatment:** Provide alternative programs including skills centers, specialized education, computerized teaching machines, etc., as a substitute for residential programming.

The recommendations contained in the report by HRS's Steve Ray are quite acceptable to the local administration. The authors also found them to be useful. Staff from the detention center and HRS are clearly committed and anxious to do a good job. With proper administrative support, the project could be very successful. Judge Orlando (Ret.) should serve in an oversight capacity and local staff should meet with him or his designee on a regular basis. Finally, staff from the Center for the Study of Youth Policy should return to Florida in approximately 2 to 3 months for a program review and administrative analysis before final commitment of funds.

## POTENTIAL FOR EVALUATION

The implementation of alternatives to secure detention must be evaluated carefully. Well-designed and executed evaluation is critical not only for measuring the success of Broward County's efforts, but as a means of encouraging effective alternatives to detention in other jurisdictions. Key considerations for the evaluation will be the selection of cases for assignment to the alternative(s), and the extent to which randomization can be used in assigning cases. If the Broward County innovations incorporate a rigorous evaluation component, the project could result in clear and useful research findings.

The Center for the Study of Youth Policy, in conjunction with local officials, can develop the alternative program(s) and establish the eligibility criteria for them. The strongest design for an evaluation would be a randomized experiment focusing exclusively on a defined target population. The target population in Broward County should consist of those youths currently subject to secure detention who could be assigned to non-secure alternatives without posing unacceptable levels of risk to the community.

All youths meeting the eligibility requirements for the non-secure alternatives (i.e., excluding the high risk youths who must be detained and those low risk youths who would not normally be detained) and who give their consent to participate would be randomly assigned either to secure detention (as usual) or to a non-secure alternative. Those cases randomly assigned to secure detention would serve as the control group. If more than one alternative is implemented, randomization will also permit a direct comparison among them as well as with the control group.

The purposes of pre-adjudicatory detention are: 1) to insure that a youth appears for his or her adjudicatory hearing; 2) to protect the community from the possible delinquent activities of that youth; and 3) protection of the youth. Effectiveness, therefore, would be measured by how well the non-secure alternative achieved those purposes. Measures could be obtained primarily from court and program records supplemented by interviews with the youths themselves and would include: the percentage of non-securely detained youths who appeared at their adjudicatory hearings; the incidence of new complaints filed against them while in the program(s); the percentage who were brought back to secure detention for violation of the terms of their non-secure detention; the incidence of harm to the youths

themselves. The per diem cost of the non-secure alternative(s) could be compared to that of secure detention.

Data analysis would involve straightforward group comparisons between the experimental and control group cases. Procedures such as analysis of variance (ANOVA), t-tests, and contingency analysis (chi-square) should be sufficiently powerful and easily interpreted.

The results of such an experimental study would demonstrate whether the target population can be effectively handled with non-secure alternatives to detention and at considerably less cost. The study could also provide a clearer picture of which youths can be best handled by detention alternatives and with what kind of programs. The evaluation could contribute an empirical base upon which Broward County and other jurisdictions could build effective detention policy.