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YOUTH "AT RISK" IN OTTAWA-CARLETON:  
A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Colleen Ryan

Submitted to the Department of Criminology,  
University of Ottawa, in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this thesis is to assess the service needs of area youth "at risk". The research project came about as a result of a series of concerns. Local agencies and organizations dealing with these young people in the Ottawa-Carleton region recognized the need for sharing of information and coordination of services. Recognition of the ineffectiveness of the Young Offenders Act in meeting the special needs of area young people raised concern about looking at alternatives to the formal court process in dealing with chronic criminal adolescents. In addition, the need for better utilization of the present services and the planning of additional services required to meet existing needs was raised. The collaborative efforts of these agencies has resulted in the following study.

The study involved a review of the academic literature which addressed some of the major theoretical and empirical questions related to explanations about delinquency. In addition, the understanding of the concept of youth "at risk" was explored in terms of what it encompassed and what was being done in Canada and around the world to address the issue.

The main points of Chapter Two suggest that there are a number of issues that need to be addressed when talking about youth "at risk". The first principle issue is

understanding that the risk factors associated with children and youth are very broad-based. From the risks of victimization of such things as physical and sexual abuse to the risks that young people expose themselves and others to when involved in criminal activity, these are the factors that are regarded as integral to the understanding of "risk". Many of the international, national, provincial, and local initiatives described in this thesis recognize and are beginning to address this reality. The second major issue addressed is the understanding of a common "risk" population. Children and youth who are "at risk" of victimization by their peers, parents and society in general, are often the same young people who are "at risk" to themselves and the community by becoming involved in criminal activity. This link in the conceptualization and use of the term youth "at risk" is important in that it points to the obvious link to made in responding comprehensively to the problem.

Each theory presented in Chapter Three has its own strengths and weakness, but no one theory is capable of explaining the complex nature of chronic criminal activity that has been identified by the empirical research reviewed. Of particular interest, however, are those theories which focus on explaining the primary causes of delinquency, such as, the "social control theory", and those theories which try to understand the maintenance of chronic criminal activity, such as the "labelling theory".

Also in Chapter Three, a number of important factors were identified by longitudinal and retrospective research reviewed with respect to the issue of "risk" - particularly "risk" of chronic criminal activity. The important factors highlighted by the research include a number of issues related to the family, school and community. In particular, chronic criminal activity was highly correlated with: economic deprivation; troublesome behaviour; poor parenting skills; parental criminality; being victims of abuse; poor school achievement, delinquent peer associations; substance abuse; and physical and mental health problems.

The factors and theories highlighted by a review of the literature in Chapter Three provided the basis for this research and its exploration of the risk factors associated with persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton region. The development of an inventory of services and a "snapshot" or profile of the young offender in Ottawa-Carleton served as the basis for the identification of the risk factors associated with persistent and serious adolescent activity and the extent to which area services are able to meet the needs identified.

A total of 22 agencies participated in this project. These agencies are involved with young offenders or youth at risk in the Ottawa-Carleton region. They range from government agencies to agencies in the private and voluntary sector. Each was responsible for assisting in the development

of a study questionnaire which was specifically designed to address their needs and concerns and those of their clientele. In addition, many of the agencies were involved in overseeing the project and providing feedback.

The main findings of this research are discussed in Chapter Six and they indicated that persistent and serious adolescent offenders were more likely to have more negative composite profiles. In particular, they were more likely to come from families with: a single parent; another member with a criminal history; a lower class background; alcoholism; and poor relationships within the family. Similarly, persistent and serious adolescent offenders were significantly more likely to: be unemployed and not in school; be truant; and have dropped out of school. It was also discovered that area persistent and serious adolescent offenders were more likely to: have negative motivation/response to present intervention; have rejected or expelled from another program/service; be more aggressive; abuse alcohol and drugs; and have negative attitudes toward both their delinquency and the criminal justice system.

The complex needs identified by the research in Chapter Six suggest that there is an intricate interrelationship between many of the factors identified. Individual factors alone do not appear to contribute to the persistent and serious adolescent offending witnessed in this study. It is the combination of a variety of these factors

that thrusts a young person into chronic criminal activity. The area services identified in Chapter Five do not adequately reflect the complex nature of the needs identified. The relative gaps and duplications in available services which are discussed in Chapter Seven indicate that a holistic and unfragmented approach to responding to these young people is not yet in place. Through the development of a more collaborative, less fragmented approach to the delivery of services amongst the schools, social services and the criminal justice system, the community can begin to capitalize upon a more proactive means of identifying and responding to the needs of area youth "at risk".

The recommendations proposed in Chapter Eight reflect an effort to try to understand who the key players are and what their respective roles can be in the development of comprehensive and collaborative community-based responses to youth "at risk" in Ottawa-Carleton. Area social service agencies must begin to make more creative and effective use of existing resources. The educational system must recognize and capitalize upon its role in identifying youth "at risk. Finally, agents of the criminal justice system, particularly the police, must begin to become more involved in community-based interagency initiatives which focus on the preventative or proactive role of their activities.

CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION

Practically no day passes without the appearance of some news item carrying a story of a crime committed by youth. From shoplifting to murder, the accounts continue to appear. A quick glance at national crime statistics indicates that young people, under the age of 18, are disproportionately involved in major crimes of theft and violence (Statistics Canada; 1989). Adolescent criminal behaviour involves all types of activity, and is often committed by youth from all backgrounds. The key concern in criminology, however, is the high number of offenses that are committed by a small group of young people.

The study of adolescent criminal activity or delinquency has always been a concern. In essence, society has been concerned about the miscreant behaviour of their youth for centuries. Perhaps this worry and attention derive from the perception that a nation's future rests on the development of its youth. Within the field of criminology, concern over youthful deviance stems from the thought that today's delinquent is tomorrow's criminal. This is particularly the case if nothing is done to address the problem. Be that as it may, when young people are known to have been involved in criminal activity, people become concerned. Why did they do it? What should we do with them?

These are the questions asked, and the demand for answers becomes stronger with each new generation.

Within the field of criminology, the question of "what should we do with them?" has been the focal point of much debate in past years. The development of appropriate policies and legislation which seeks to better respond to the issue of adolescent criminal activity within the context of the criminal justice system has been the centre of much effort. This kind of response reflects the largely reactive role that society has played to date in attempting to address the criminal activity of our nation's youth. More recently, however, through the leadership of several national, provincial and municipal initiatives, there has been an increased interest in taking a more proactive role. A role which more frequently addresses the question "why did they do it?"

In attempting to better understand why young people become involved in criminal activity, youth "at risk" is increasingly being used to identify specific groups of young people; young people "at risk" of long term or chronic involvement with the criminal justice and social service agencies. The concept of "risk" has gained increasing popularity as many front-line professionals are recognizing the need for effective intervention before or shortly after initial contact with official agencies.

A review of the academic literature indicates that much of the empirical research conducted in recent years has examined the risk factors associated with adolescent criminal activity (West, 1984). The literature points to a number of key characteristics which are highly correlated with persistent or chronic criminal activity (Farrington, 1986). The literature recognizes the need for early intervention and targeted social programs directed at addressing these risk factors (MacKillop and Clark, 1989). It is evident that current academic research is attempting to change the conceptualizations of youth from simply perpetrators of crime to young people "at risk" of victimization and "at risk" to themselves and others as a result of their victimization.

In many instances, addressing the issue of youth "at risk" has resulted in the adoption of a broad approach. An approach which goes beyond focus on the immediate behaviour that has brought a particular young person to the attention of the authorities. An approach which attempts to surpass simple representation in principle, but is implemented in a way which reflects the broad nature of the problems associated with youth "at risk". A broad approach was reflected, in principle, in the Young Offenders Act. Although the complexity of the problems associated with adolescent criminal activity was recognized in the development of the act, it has been difficult to implement.

Adolescent criminal activity is often regarded as symptomatic of larger, more deep seated problems. How to better address them by reducing the chances that they will become involved in or will continue to be involved in criminal activity is a primary concern for youth serving organizations and the juvenile justice system. Considering this, the current study sought to explore the reality of the nature of these problems. In particular, the problems faced by the young people who come into conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region.

The following exploratory research includes an attempt to address the issues associated with chronic criminal activity and the problems associated with the implementation of the YOA by attempting to identify the key characteristics associated with those who have come into conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region. In particular, those characteristics which are most commonly associated with persistent and serious criminal activity. The following thesis was developed with three specific objectives in mind:

- (1) To work directly with the community agencies involved in dealing with youth in the region.
- (2) To assess the needs of youth "at risk" through an examination of the characteristics of those young people who have come into conflict with the law.

- (3) To examine existing regional services in relation to the needs identified by the findings of the research.

This research is designed to serve the needs of the community agencies dealing with area youth "at risk" and youth in conflict with the law. The primary objective was to assist local programmers to more effectively and collaboratively respond to the needs of these young people.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the trends witnessed recently in identifying and addressing the problems associated with children and youth "at risk." Trends being witnessed in Canada and around the world. Chapter Three seeks to better understand the concept of youth "at risk" as it is defined and applied in a variety of contexts including: the theoretical explanations of delinquency; the findings of longitudinal research on the factors related to chronic criminal activity; and other "at risk" research. Chapter Four provides a detailed discussion of the methodology employed for this active research endeavour. In addition, the limitations of the data collected are presented. Chapter Five provides a synopsis of some of the services available for youth "at risk" and youth in conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region. This chapter includes a brief discussion of some of the gaps and duplications witnessed around the kinds of services being provided for specific groups of young people.

Chapter Six provides the basic findings of the "snapshot" of the young offender. In particular, this chapter highlights those individual factors and composites which are significantly correlated with persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton region. The next chapter, Chapter Seven, provides a comparative analysis of the findings of this particular local research project with that of other "at risk" studies. Specific attention is made to the similarities and discrepancies between this study and those of comprehensive longitudinal research. Chapter Eight explores the implications of what has been learned. What do the findings of the research tell local programmers about the servicing of youth "at risk" in the Ottawa-Carleton community? Several key recommendations are proposed for program planning and the development of policies for responding to the regions youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law. The final chapter, Chapter Nine, summarizes the work conducted for this thesis and looks at the future of policy development in addressing the needs of youth "at risk".

CHAPTER 2FOCUS ON YOUTH: EMERGING TRENDS  
IN IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF  
YOUTH "AT RISK"

The problems experienced by children and youth have been the focus of widespread attention over the last decade both in Canada and around the world. Much of the work conducted in this area in recent years has been directed at developing a better understanding of and, ultimately, a more effective response to the problem of youth "at risk." This chapter will examine the concept of youth "at risk" and will explore the various initiatives which have only recently begun to address this issue.

To date, many have tried to better understand the notion of "risk." For many, the "at risk" population generally includes those who are perhaps socially and economically disadvantaged. The same population may also experience family, school and community problems. The concept underscores the value of early intervention, but is less concrete in the specifics. The specifics related to "who" or "what" should be targeted for early intervention.

Examining the Concept of Youth "At Risk"

One of the primary concerns encountered in dealing with a concept such as "risk" in Canada, in particular "youth at risk," is the variability that exists in the way it is

defined and applied. The concept itself often changes in definition when applied in various communities and the nature of various agencies and organizations (Caputo & Ryan, 1991).

As with other concepts that enter into popular usage, the concept of youth "at risk" has grown rapidly in popularity and it has been used to refer to a variety of young people in a number of different situations. One obvious problem with this is that as the definition grows and becomes more complicated, its value or usefulness may be diminished. In the case of the concept of "youth at risk", this refers specifically to the ability of individuals and agencies using the concept to classify the young people as in need of assistance while emphasizing the importance of early intervention. One of the consequences of this particular classification is that as the term "youth at risk" is applied to more and more individuals and situations, the reality of the problems associated with children and youth become obscured. The sheer magnitude of the problems faced by "youth at risk" can become an excuse for not acting (Caputo & Ryan, 1991).

Recently, national consultations were conducted across Canada to assess the usefulness and implications of the concept of "youth at risk" for criminal justice and community-based policy and programs. The information gathered suggests the problems associated with "youth at risk" are complex and broad based and they need to be understood and responded to as

such.

"At Risk" Of and "At Risk" To

To a certain degree, being young means being at risk. Adolescence is recognized as one of the most difficult periods in the life cycle; a time of great physiological, psychological and emotional change. However, it is important to note that "at risk" youth are not a homogeneous group. In order to adequately address their needs, we have to be more sensitive to the various dimensions of what it means to be a youth "at risk."

A key distinction is often made between the concept of "at risk" as it applies to 15 to 24 year olds as opposed to infants and children (generally understood as 0 to 12 years of age). Both age group are regarded as being "at risk" of such things as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and a variety of health and psychological problems. In addition, the older group of young people are at greater risk of other behaviours including violence, dropping out of school, drug abuse, prostitution, AIDS, and multitude of other behaviours often associated with street life (Caputo & Ryan, 1991).

In order to escape their troubled lives, some youth take to the streets (McCormack, Janus and Burgess, 1986). Other young people who may not be welcome in their homes are thrown out onto the streets which gives them the name "throwaways" (Adams, Gullotta and Clancy, 1985). Life on the

streets often forces the youth to depend on alternative and often illegal means of survival through behaviour such as theft, drug dealing, gang involvement, prostitution and other various activities (Windle, 1989; Price, Scanlan and Janus, 1984). This style of life creates the risk of being subjected to problems such as pregnancy, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Radford, King and Warren, 1989).

It is not known what proportion of young people on the streets engage in prostitution, unsafe sex, violent sex, and IV drug use with shared equipment. However, two studies of HIV infection in youth conducted in Vancouver and Toronto indicate that the spread of HIV in the street population has begun (Radford, Kind and Warren, 1989). There is some evidence to suggest that this group has limited and possibly inaccurate information about AIDS, its transmission and its prevention.

There is a common differentiation made between the concept of "at risk" of and "at risk" to. The perception of being "at risk" of often refers to the youth as victims. The perception of being "at risk" to is more easily understood in our society and refers to the view of youth as perpetrators of criminal acts and a danger or burden to others. In this usage, the term "at risk" refers to a variety of behaviours including crime and street gang activity or other behaviours which ultimately threaten the real or perceived safety of others. Others use the concept of "at risk" to in a slightly

different context: that of a youth being "at risk" to him or herself. This perception stems from the recognition that many youth continually put themselves in a great deal of physical and emotional danger by engaging in self-destructive behaviour. These kinds of behaviours are often related to the skills required to survive on the streets. This includes engaging in behaviour that puts these young people in danger of AIDS, violence, life threatening drug use, and other potentially risky behaviour. Many of these situations threaten the mental well-being of these young people as well, often culminating in the ultimate risk to themselves, suicide.

There has been an ongoing debate over the concept of "at risk" for several years and it can be anticipated that this will continue for the foreseeable future. In trying to assess the utility of the term and place it into some meaningful context, it is necessary to consider what puts a human being at risk. There is a certain degree of risk that we all have to deal with, but the concern being witnessed is often not with respect to the situation itself, but with how certain young people deal with the situation (Caputo & Ryan, 1991).

A particular situation may place a young person "at risk", but depending upon the repertoire of the person, the level of risk actually encountered varies. The development of repertoires is largely based upon the nature of the socialization process that young people experience or are

exposed to from infancy and throughout their adolescent years (Caputo & Ryan, 1991). If the young people possess adequate problem-solving skills, they may fair well in difficult situations. The level of risk depends, to a certain extent, upon an individual's ability to respond appropriately to what is going on around them. Prioritizing who really is "at risk" and needs the greatest and most immediate assistance should not entirely be determined by the situation they are in, but by their ability to effectively identify and deal with the situation.

An overwhelming consensus exists across the country about which young people are most "at risk" in our society (Caputo & Ryan, 1991). Children are often regarded as the most vulnerable. They are the ones with the least amount of power and who have very little control over the world around them. Children rely totally on others and the extent to which they are or become "at risk" depends to a large extent on the repertoire and resources of those they depend upon. For this reason, some of the most vulnerable children are those who are abused either physically, sexually, or emotionally and psychologically; those whose vulnerability has been taken advantage of by those they rely on. A second group of children who are often considered extremely vulnerable are new Canadians and Native Canadians. These are children who rely extensively on others in order to adjust to a world they do not understand; those whose key resources, namely their

parents and families, often lack the repertoire to assist them in successfully adapting to a different way of life.

The complex and rather broad based understanding of the concept of youth "at risk" indicates that there are a host of issues that must be addressed in dealing with the causes of crime. Many of these are associated with participation in life on the streets and the nature of the experiences that often lead young people to turn to the streets. Moreover, these include behaviours placing young people "at risk" of being victimized and not experiencing well-being as well as "at risk" to further involvement with the criminal justice or social service system. The most important notion of which is that these are often the same group of young people.

#### The Young Offenders Act (YOA)

A number of significant developments during the last decade have had a significant impact on the conceptualization and experiences of children and youth. In particular, changes that have been made to Canada's juvenile justice system have fundamentally alerted us to the way in which we deal with young people in conflict with the law. Prior to the enactment of the Young Offenders Act (YOA) in 1985, young offenders were dealt with under the Juvenile Delinquents Act (JDA). The JDA established the state as a kindly parent who would treat a young person in trouble with the law not as a criminal, but as a "misdirected child requiring help and guidance and proper

supervision" (Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, 1981; 1).

The JDA was regarded as insufficient in emphasizing the principles of the protection of society or the responsibility of young people for their behaviour. Thus the YOA was introduced and largely reflects some of the dramatic changes that Canadian society has witnessed in the last decade. The new act represents changing attitudes towards young people, towards crime and towards how to deal with young offenders.

The new philosophy of the YOA provides for the blending of three principles: that young people should be held more responsible for their behaviour but not wholly accountable since they are not yet fully mature; that society has a right to protection; that young people have the same rights to due process of law and fair and equal treatment as adults, and these rights must be guaranteed by special safeguards (Reid & Reitsma-Street, 1984). Thus, the YOA was intended to strike a reasonable and acceptable balance between the needs of youth and the needs of society.

For many, this new Canadian legislation for young people represents the return of the "iron-fist" in addressing the special needs of many of the youth who appear before the courts. Although the legislation argues in principle for the balancing of the needs of youth and the needs of society, the implementation of this balance has been next to impossible to

achieve. It has, unfortunately, resulted in inability of our juvenile justice system to address the special needs of many of these young people.

The welfare philosophy which governed the implementation of the JDA had its problems. However, this particular philosophy allowed for the recognition of the special circumstances or "risk" factors that often lead young people to come into conflict with the law. Without the recognition of these special needs, particularly the recognition of a great number of these youth as victims, there is virtually little hope that anyone will take the time, effort and resources needed to identify and address them.

This argument largely stems from a body of evidence which suggest that the juvenile justice system has, since the implementation of the YOA, become more punitive (Leschied and Jaffe, 1987). Many of those who operate and supervise custodial facilities across the country have noted a markable increase in the number of young people given custodial dispositions, particularly open-custody. This is only one example of what appears to be an overriding concern for the protection of society over the needs of youth. More recently, the impact of a number of high profile media hipes about adolescent murderers has lead to much public outcry for still harsher sentences. These incidences are few and far between, however, they appear to have had an incredible impact on the overall functioning and philosophy of the juvenile justice

system.

The criminal justice system faces the same challenges as the social service and educational systems in defining who is "at risk". The YOA recognizes, if only in principle, that many of the young people who come into conflict with the law are or have been victims of others' crimes. The need to identify and address the "risk" factors associated with becoming and continuing to participate in criminal activity must be addressed not only by the criminal justice system, but by the community at large. A number of encouraging trends have begun to be witnessed in Canada and around world. Trends which may ultimately have an impact on the way which adolescent criminal activity is conceptualized and addressed.

#### International Developments

Increased understanding of and concern for the problems facing youth "at risk" have been witnessed recently on several fronts. From an international perspective, the focus on young people has received considerable support as a result of the efforts of the United Nations. The United Nations has been particularly effective in drawing attention to the needs of children and youth. The impetus provided by the United Nations declaration of the Year of the Child in 1979 was very important in this regard. The United Nations has also been instrumental in asserting children's rights and establishing international standards for the fair and

equitable treatment of young people. In accordance with the declaration of the rights of the child proclaimed in 1959, the United Nations recognized the following principles: that the child shall enjoy special protection by law and by other means; society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support; the child shall in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief; and that the child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. These principles reflect several major steps toward reducing the perceived vulnerability of our youth which often places them "at risk."

In 1989, a great deal of support for a broader approach to the needs of young people grew out of the European and North American Conference on Urban Safety and Crime Prevention. At this conference, the complex nature of the issues facing young people was emphasized. In particular, the Conference forwarded a number of declarations related to children and youth at risk. These declarations included: early investment in children; pre and postnatal care and nutrition assistance for mothers and children; the availability of day care; the provision of quality education and opportunities to acquire skills to enter the work force; and the provision of fulfilling work opportunities, particularly for drop-outs (European and North-American Conference on Urban Safety and Crime Prevention, 1989). The

need for coordinated, multi-faceted early intervention responses involving various agencies in the community was stressed. This included the sharing of information and the linking of police services with those offered by other community agencies. Such a coordinated strategy appears increasingly important in an era of diminishing resources.

In August of 1990, the prevention of delinquency and the protection of the young were two issues receiving attention at the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The Congress has made major advances in juvenile justice by establishing a set of universally accepted principles. The Beijing Rules and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty were highly regarded as an instrument for promoting justice for juveniles, while at the same time making an important contribution to the prevention of juvenile delinquency (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, 1990).

#### Canadian Initiatives

In Canada, increased attention has been focused on the issues facing "at risk" young people as a result of several initiatives. In the 1980's, the issue of "at risk" was brought to the forefront in Canada as a result of the extensive research by the Badgely Committee on Sexual Abuse in 1984 (Badgely, 1984). This research indicated that all

children are at risk. Much public concern revolved around data collected by the Commission through a National Population Survey that found that about one-third of the males and one-half of the females surveyed reported being victims of at least one unwanted sexual act.

In August of 1987, a Special Advisor to the Minister of National Health and Welfare was appointed with a mandate to prepare a report on the long range direction of federal initiatives regarding child sexual abuse, their implementation and coordination. The Special Advisor's report was released in June of 1990 and contained over 70 recommendations, all recognizing the important value of Canadian children and emphasizing action to protect them and their rights (Rogers, 1990).

Public concern over the problems facing young people resulted in several other studies on the nature and extent of young people "at risk." In December of 1985, the Missing Children Research Project was undertaken as part of the Federal Ministry of the Solicitor General's Missing Children Initiative. This research project was designed to increase public understanding of the problem of missing children while providing police and social service agencies with information that could assist them in devising effective operational strategies. The results of this research project indicated that the majority of missing children cases reported to the police were runaways, and that a significant proportion of

these were repeat runners from dysfunctional families (Fisher, 1989).

As part of the Ministry's Missing Children Initiative, the Ministry, in cooperation with the RCMP, established a national Missing Children's Registry. The purpose of the registry was to provide information and assistance to police forces and other agencies across the country dealing with the problem of missing children. The attention directed at missing children led to a focus on issues of family violence, child physical and sexual abuse, runaways, and street kids. Various research initiatives were undertaken and the need for staff training and the development of appropriate protocols for front-line staff working in this area were identified (Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada; 1989).

#### Provincial Prevention Programs

A number of key initiatives have been implemented in the Province of Ontario which reflect the province's increased concern with the issues of children and youth. In particular, the province has devised several interesting and long-term strategies and studies which specifically address the issue of "risk."

In 1983, a province-wide survey of the mental and physical health of a randomly selected sample of more than 3,000 Ontario children aged 4 to 16 was carried out (Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1990). This initiative

entitled "The Ontario Child Health Study (OCHS)" was the first part of a longitudinal study. The study reported on groups of children at risk of three outcomes: (1) psychiatric disorders; (2) perceived need of professional help for emotional or behavioural problems; and (3) poor school performance. The research focused on how well three risk indicators could identify groups of children with increased rates of these three outcomes. The risk indicators were: (1) family on social assistance; (2) one parent in the home; and (3) family living in subsidized housing.

The results of the OCHS indicated that the risk factors were found to be strongly associated with each other such that children living in subsidized housing with a single parent were more likely to be on social assistance. In addition, researchers found that the strength of the risk indicators varies by outcome and by population subgroup. These results have provided some important information for the identification of preventive factors and important program suggestions.

In February of 1988, the then Minister of Community and Social Services, the Honourable John Sweeney, announced the formation of the Advisory Committee on Children's Services. The Committee was charged with the task of developing a strategic framework leading to an agenda for action for services to vulnerable children and youth and their families. The committee engaged in a series of consultations

with experts in various fields related to child development and invited submissions from key organizations with an interest in services to children and their families.

The Report of the Advisory Committee on Children's Services entitled Children First, was published in November of 1990 and contained a number of recommendations which addressed the issue of risk (Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1990). The Committee believed that the trends in children's problems indicate that a new approach to meeting the needs of children and families is required. The report indicated that although there has been a decline in some risk factors, such as child poverty, other risk factors, notably abuse and dropping out of school, persist despite the sophisticated systems of services that have evolved in Ontario.

In the spring of 1988, the Ministry of Community and Social Services also released a consultation paper Investing in Children: New Directions in Child Treatment and Child and Family Interventions. One of the major directions for Children's Services suggested in that paper is the development of primary prevention programs for at risk populations. In an effort to reduce the risk for children living in economically disadvantaged communities, the Ministry of Community and Social Services decided to support a number of well-evaluated primary prevention research demonstration projects.

In late May, 1988, the Ministry asked a Technical Advisory Group, consisting of 25 researchers and program

directors from the province of Ontario, to review the literature and programs in primary prevention of emotional and behavioural problems for young children living in economically disadvantaged communities. Based on this review, the Technical Advisory Group first wrote a paper summarizing the findings and recommending a model to the Ministry for implementation in a research demonstration project. In conjunction with the Ministry, the Technical Advisory Group then decided to produce a publication entitled Better Beginnings, Better Futures to inform program directors, agencies and communities, interested in implementing state-of-the-art primary prevention programs, of the current status of such programs (Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1990).

#### Ottawa-Carleton: A Community's Response

Many of those who work with young people at risk of initial or further involvement with the juvenile justice system and those of risk of further victimization continue to recognize the need for alternatives to the formal court process and community based initiatives as a more effective means of addressing the special needs of these young people. In addition, many began to concern themselves with the issue of youth "at risk" of initial or further contact with a system that did not appear to address their needs.

In 1988, a group of community service representatives

in the Ottawa-Carleton region decided to come together to examine services for young offenders and youth "at risk." This assessment included the identification of gaps in services and looking at ways of responding to the unmet needs of young persons in order to prevent initial or further involvement of the region's young people in criminal activity.

The committee membership (found in Appendix A) included those directly involved in the juvenile justice system such as the police, crown's office, and probation officers from the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Correctional Services, and those agencies concerned with young persons in conflict with the law, such as the Children's Aid Society, the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and others. In addition, agencies providing services to youth "at risk" who often received referrals from the above types of agencies are also involved, such as the schools, the Youth Services Bureau, employment services, housing, counselling, and others.

Initially the committee identified the following areas of concern which might occupy an interagency effort:

- . information sharing;
- . co-ordination and co-operation amongst agencies providing services to young offenders;
- . community support for present services and expansion of services;
- . public education and advocacy;
- . program development.

However, after initial consultations it became evident that a common knowledge base about existing services and the nature

of their clientele was needed to proceed with coordinated efforts. Therefore, there was a need to: obtain information about existing services; and gain a better understanding of the social characteristics of the youth presently involved with the juvenile justice system. The purpose for this much needed information was twofold: (1) to enable area programmers to more effectively plan services within the juvenile justice system and the community which would address the special needs of their clientele; and (2) to provide some knowledge about which factors should be targeted in the development of intervention and prevention programs for youth "at risk." The latter of which is to be addressed by this thesis.

This strategy is only one of number of initiatives which have been or are presently being conducted in the Ottawa-Carleton region which addresses the issue of youth "at risk." The "Beat the Street" initiative, which was initiated in Toronto, is presently being developed in the Ottawa community. The initiative was developed in response to a number of concerns about street youth in the city's downtown core. A working group composed of researchers, planners and business representatives has been formed to identify what needs to be done to reduce and prevent criminal activity being conducted by these young people. A needs assessment is presently being developed based upon already existing literature, research in the community, and available program

materials in the community to assist these young people in getting off the street.

Another recent initiative which is being developed not only in Ottawa-Carleton, but across the country is the increased involvement of local police officers in area schools. This has been happening, in greater or lesser degrees, in a variety of cities for a number of years. With the further development of community-based policing it is quickly becoming a more popular mode of policing and has been met with varying degrees of success.

Schools have often been identified as having a key role in the identification of youth "at risk." The schools are one of the few institutions outside the family which have frequent enough contact with the young people to make an appropriate assessment. Some of the more focused initiatives which have taken place between the police and area schools include a strategy which looks at violence in schools and a family violence program.

Finally, a cooperative strategy between the District Health Council and the Ministry of Community and Social Services has recently been implemented. This strategy involved the development and implementation of a health needs assessment study for youth in the Ottawa-Carleton region. This study explored a variety of issues including the health promotion needs of area youth and their rehabilitation and treatment needs.

All of these strategies offer some insight into the needs of area youth "at risk." Each provides an assessment of the special needs of many of our community's young people and seeks to better understand these needs in relation to the development of more effective and comprehensive responses. Strategies designed not only to better understand adolescent criminal activity, but to provide appropriate and targeted services which will ultimately reduce or prevent chronic criminal behaviour.

#### Summary

The specifics related to "who" or "what" should be targeted in early intervention for youth "at risk" is based upon our understanding of what it means to be "at risk". The main points of this chapter suggests that there are a number of issues that need to be addressed when talking about youth "at risk". The first principle issue is understanding that the risk factors associated with children and youth are very broad-based. From the risks of victimization of such things physical and sexual abuse and the victimization of young people by others once they are on the streets, to the risks that young people expose themselves and others to when involved in criminal activity, these factors are regarded as integral to the understanding of "risk". Many of the international, national, provincial, and local initiatives described recognize and are beginning to address this reality.

Another key issue identified by this chapter is the development of an understanding of what places a young person "at risk." It was suggested that "risk" is not entirely determined by the situation that the youth may find themselves in, but also by their ability to effectively identify and deal with the situation. Therefore, those most "at risk" are those who not only find themselves in "risky situations", but those who also lack the repertoire to deal effectively with difficult situations such as very young children and Native and new immigrant youth.

The final issue addressed by this chapter is the understanding of a common "risk" population. Children and youth who are "at risk" of victimization are often the same young people who are "at risk" to becoming chronically involved with the criminal justice system. This link in the conceptualization of the use of the term youth "at risk" is important in that it points to the obvious link to made in responding comprehensively to the problem. Preventing the victimization of young people may prevent their becoming chronically involved with the criminal justice system.

### CHAPTER 3

#### OVERVIEW OF SOME OF THE MAJOR EXPLANATIONS OF DELINQUENCY

The search for the causes of delinquency has covered several centuries and numerous viewpoints. While we should not ever anticipate that we will find "the" answer, it is possible to point to promising theoretical positions and research endeavours that provide some valuable information on the understanding of delinquency. The following chapter provides an overview of some of the more popular and acceptable theoretical explanations of delinquency. In addition, this chapter will explore the findings of a variety of studies which sought to better understand "why" individuals become involved in criminal behaviour, in particular, chronic criminal behaviour.

#### Theoretical Positions

The explanations of delinquency vary widely in substance and empirical verification. Certainly, no one theory can be used to explain all delinquency or even certain types of delinquency. In addition, there is no unifying trait that can be used to connect the diverse and often competing theories. Each explanation has its strengths and weaknesses; and some theories are, overall, more persuasive than others.

i) Individualistic Explanations: Biological and Psychological

The biological and psychological approach to delinquency is probably most often applied to delinquents who have repeatedly committed offenses or those who are engaged in such violent offenses as murder and forcible rape. The kinds of delinquent behaviours that are often most difficult to comprehend. It is, therefore, not surprising that many look to individualistic explanations to try to understand these extreme forms of delinquent behaviour. If the focus is on individual differences, one can emphasize how some people differ markedly from the general population, and why such people are probably the ones who have committed unusual and sometimes bizarre acts.

ii) Social Disorganization and Anomie

Explanations of delinquency rooted in the concepts of social disorganization and anomie were proposed, in part, in opposition to the perceived inadequacies of the individualistic approaches which were so popular at the turn of the century. The basic premise of these theories is that delinquent behaviour is the result of socially induced pressures, and in particular, that it results from the 'strain' caused by the gap, or anomic disjuncture, between cultural goals and the means available for achievement of those goals (Merton, 1968).

A similar premise forms the basis for relative deprivation theory. According to this theory, lower class youth watch a great deal of television because they are unable to afford alternative forms of social activity. The classic middle class values portrayed on television become the means by which these young people see themselves as a success or a failure. They become frustrated by the lack of means by which they can attain these values; frustrations which may result in their participation in delinquent activities.

Both social disorganization and anomie offer explanations of delinquency that address the issue of large numbers of juveniles committing offenses, often in group contexts and in accordance with their positions in the community and in society. Both theories sought to explain delinquency with factors that attributed disorganization or "abnormality" not to the individual but, instead, to his/her environmental circumstances. These conceptualizations influenced the thinking of sociologists for several decades.

### iii) Subcultural Explanations

Partly as an attempt to explain delinquency in terms of social organization rather than disorganization and partly in response to impressions of ever increasing violence among juvenile gangs, several theories of lower-class were proposed in the 1950s and continued to appear in the discussions today. The subcultural approach has in common with the anomic

theories an assumption that delinquency is concentrated in lower working class groups, but it differs in that it postulates neither strains nor frustrations. Instead, it suggests that delinquency is simply "normal" behaviour for the particular subculture and hence that it is learned in the same way as any form of social behaviour (Rutter and Giller, 1983). For example, subcultural theories posit that gang delinquency is connected with cultural patterns of behaviour that are embodied in the class structure of society.

While these explanations focus on gang behaviour, the key issue identified is whether class values or conflicts influence behaviour to the extent suggested by adherents. According to many social scientists, class values do exist and they do influence behaviour.

#### iv) Interpersonal and Situational Explanations

With the development of Sutherland's concept of differential association and later, with Sykes and Matza's theory of neutralization, students of delinquency were expressing concern over conceptualizations of delinquency that were too deterministic, either from an individualistic point of view or from a societal perspective. These interpersonal and situational explanations placed the crux of the matter on individual perceptions of existing situations; perceptions which are heavily influenced by those around them, particularly peer group associations.

There are many observations which are consistent with the general notion that mixing with delinquents makes it more likely that you yourself will become delinquent. Studies testing the notion of differential association have confirmed that delinquency is often committed in groups or social settings. The evidence indicates that differential associations with criminal patterns do influence the development of delinquent activities, but that they interact with family variables and that family variables also have an independent direct influence of their own (Rutter and Giller, 1983).

#### v) Control Theories

Control theories of delinquency assume that juveniles will gravitate to non-conformist behaviour in the absence of barriers to those factors that made delinquency attractive. In social control theory there is the assumption that everyone has a predisposition to commit a delinquent act, there is no need for motivational postulates, and the issue is how people learn not to offend (Hirschi, 1969).

The control perspective has tended to evolve toward the social bond as an explanation of delinquency. In this form, the argument posits that the major impediments to juvenile misbehaviour rest with attachments and commitments to basic institutions of socialization in society, and thus the theory encompasses the relationship between delinquency and

family, school, religion and peer variables. Research into these factors has consistently indicated that there are relatively strong connections with delinquent behaviour.

vi) Societal Reaction: The Labelling Approach

For several decades in the twentieth century, criminologists have considered the effects of reactions to delinquency on the future behaviour of delinquents. The central issue from this perspective is not what causes delinquency in the first place, but how the identification of one as a delinquent might contribute further to nonconformist activity or secondary deviance

The approach to delinquency that has become known as labelling became most popular during the 1960s. According to the labelling theory, a presumed consequence of identifying someone as a delinquent, especially if the identification is public or formal, is an alteration of the individual's self-concept to correspond with the image of him/her projected by the label (Rutter and Giller, 1983). In other words, if a juvenile is thought to be a delinquent, he/she will think of him/herself in that way and act accordingly.

The position that self-concept can affect behaviour not only has a long tradition in social science, it is logical to assume that certain major events in a juveniles life alter his/her self-concept and subsequent behaviour. Anecdotal and observational data suggests that juveniles are influenced by

the reactions of others to their behaviour. The research, however, has not been able to demonstrate that one delinquent, through arrest, court appearance, or commitment to an institution, consistently affects self-concept in the direction of greater identification with delinquent attitudes. Neither has identification been significantly associated with an increase in delinquent behaviour.

An integral aspect of labelling is the contention that biased, discriminatory factors operate in the juvenile justice system, especially in terms of such variables as the race, sex and social class of juvenile suspects or defendants. While the available data provides some evidence of discriminatory practices in the juvenile justice system, the evidence is not one-sided.

#### vii) Conflict and Radical Theory

Conflict theory proposes that delinquency is, in part, a type of accommodation to the efforts of those in power (or who have access to power) to control others. Radical criminologists have modified this view to maintain that crime results from upper-class oppression of the lower class (Walker, 1977). While several theorists have posited class-oriented conflicts in the explanation of delinquency, those theories were not specifically based on the notion of ruling-class domination and oppression.

The major contribution to the field of delinquency

made by conflict and radical theory (and labelling theory) is in the awareness of prejudice and discrimination in the enforcement of laws and in some of the negative consequences felt by juveniles in this process. Certainly, these are major accomplishments, and they help to construct a more meaningful understanding of delinquency.

### Synthesizing Theories

The ideas discussed under each of the proposed theoretical positions are not necessarily mutually exclusive. There are points of convergence or complementarity among the various theoretical approaches to delinquency. The strong points of any perspective and the interconnections between theories should be noted if juvenile delinquency is to be fully understood.

Although it is possible, and often most useful, to single out interpretations as potentially more fruitful than others in the explanations of delinquency among males and females, such as social control theory, or types of delinquent activity, such as subcultural explanations of gang related activities, the most productive path to a comprehensive understanding of youthful offenses may well lie in the synthesis of theories. The synthesizing of theories requires drawing upon ideas and concepts from a variety of theories in order to more comprehensively understand the complex nature of delinquency. The complexity of delinquent behaviour which has

been attested to by a number of empirical studies.

### Empirical Research

Delinquent activities are too varied and too widespread in society for it to be sensible to even contemplate a single explanation. But theories are essential as a means of ordering ideas and of making sense out of factual information. It is only when we have an understanding of the mechanisms involved, and of how and why things happen in the way that they do, that we can be in a really strong position to plan effectively for the future and to improve our services.

We have come to rely on empirical findings to outline the specifics of the mechanisms involved in explaining delinquency which are only referred to generally in criminological, sociological and psychological theories. Some of the most striking empirical findings in recent years has been discovered by longitudinal studies. These are studies which follow a cohort over a specified period of time, usually from age nine to ten until well into their twenties or early thirties, to determine those factors which are most commonly associated with chronic criminal activity.

Delinquency per se has been of some, but limited concern to the field of criminology. Participation in some form of delinquent activity is regarded by most as an almost accepted part of adolescence. The central concern arises

around persistent and serious criminal activity which begins in early adolescence and then persists into adulthood. Individuals who participate in this kind of chronic criminal activity, although small in number, are believed to be responsible for the majority of all crime rates (Wolfgang, Sellin, and Figlio, 1977).

Until recently, our ability to deal effectively with crime has been greatly limited by our lack of knowledge about the history and development of criminal careers. Some of what has been learned in terms of the nature and extent of criminal activity among the general population has been gained through the development of victimization surveys and self-report studies.

Many researchers are uncomfortable with official accounts of delinquent behaviour fuelled by a number of technical flaws. One of the major concerns with police data is the "dark figure" of crime. This dark figure represents the gap between the amount of crime recorded by the police and the actual figure. A second problem deals with what has often been termed the "village watchman". The village watchman simply represents concerns about the fact that national statistics are collected on the local level, by people who may have a vested interest in seeing their reports turn out in a particular way.

Due to the obvious limitations of police or official data, many social scientists have gone to adolescents

themselves to discover how many law violations they have committed and what led to them. Through the administration of anonymous questionnaires, researchers have been able to find clearer answers to a series of crucial questions including: How widespread is law violation among juveniles? What kinds of offenses are reported most commonly? How large is the "dark figure" of crime? What proportion of all offenses reported by juveniles become a part of the official record? Do all young people report being equally delinquent or are some of them more delinquent than others? Answers to these and other important crime questions are being provided by self-report studies and victimizations surveys.

Self-report studies indicate a number of important issues that were not possible to ascertain using police data. One of the important findings indicated that the extent of juvenile lawbreaking is far greater than the extent of official delinquency. In addition, it was discovered that far more often than not, law violations go undetected and unacted upon. The traditional assumption that law violating behaviour is generated almost totally by conditions of poverty and races was discovered to be erroneous. Similarly, it was found that although most children are law violators, only a small percentage violate the law with great frequency and seriousness. In addition, self-report studies tend to question whether law violating behaviour is increasing at the rapid rate suggested by official measures (Empey, 1982).

Like self-report studies, victimization surveys, which determine what experiences people have had with crime, whether they had reported those experiences to the police, and how those experiences had affected their lives, indicated that there is far more crime than is ever reported officially. In addition, victim surveys provided new kinds of information that have simply been unavailable (Empey, 1982). For instance, better information on the number of crime victims as contrasted to the number of crimes reported by the police have been gathered. The risk of being victimized and more information on crime trends have been ascertained through victimization surveys.

Since police data is greatly thwarted by crime that goes undetected, unreported and unrecorded, victimization surveys and self-report studies preport to give a more accurate account of Canada's criminal activity. Although these types of surveys are important in understanding the nature and extent of crime in Canada, they provide us with little additional information about the mechanisms involved in explaining chronic criminal activity.

One of the best methods of investigation is the longitudinal study. Most of our knowledge about the course of criminal careers comes from studies of this kind. Classic American studies by Marvin Wolfgang, Joan McCord, and Lee Robins and the well known work of British criminologists David Farrington and David West have provided some insight into the

factors which are associated with chronic criminal activity.

The basic premise of longitudinal studies is that adult criminal careers do not emerge without some kind of prior warning (Farrington, 1986). Chronic criminal activity in adulthood is preceded by juvenile crime and by other kinds of childhood deviance. The aim of these longitudinal studies is to measure as many factors as possible that are alleged to cause or contribute to delinquency. One of the principle reasons for this is to not only examine the extent to which one variable is related to delinquency independently of others, but also to investigate the interrelationships between variables.

In a landmark study performed by Wolfgang, Figlio and Sellin (1977), all the males born in Philadelphia during 1945 were followed until their 18th birthday. Some of the key findings discovered by these researchers indicated that a significant number of all the crimes committed were concentrated in a small group of offenders and that the seriousness of the offenses generally increased with each successive arrest. Of particular interest, was the finding of significant correlations between problems in school and persistent offending.

Farrington and West (1986) studied over 400 males from the ages of eight or nine to their thirties. It was discovered that many of the chronic offenders could have been predicted on the basis of background factors by age ten. In

particular, variables such as economic deprivation, troublesome behaviour, poor school achievement, poor parenting techniques, parental criminality and delinquent peer influences are significantly predictive of persistent offendings.

Similarly, in a review of prediction and recidivism studies, Loeber and Dishion (1983) identified a number of consistent predictors of criminal behaviour. They concluded that such factors as parenting problems, child's problem behaviour, stealing or truancy, criminal history of other family members and the child's poor educational achievement, which can be measured at an early age, are related to youthful offending. Contrary to Farrington and West's results, this review indicated that one of the lowest ranking predictors was socioeconomic status.

The importance of schooling, parenting and low socioeconomic status as predictors of chronic criminal activity is also under investigation in Canada. A longitudinal study of kindergarten males from low socioeconomic areas of Montreal was begun in 1983. This study is being carried out by Richard Tremblay and his colleagues at the University of Montreal (1986). It is designed to examine the relationship between delinquency and social interactions during elementary school. Also of interest are the effects of parent-child relationships on behaviour in early childhood on later delinquency.

Interest in the relationship between early childhood experiences and antisocial behaviour has also been investigated by Lee Robins. Robins (1968) traced the adult social and psychiatric outcomes of 524 child guidance clinic patients and compared them with the adult social and psychiatric status of 100 normal school children of the same age, sex, neighbourhood, race and I.Q. Robins discovered that the antisocial children had high proportions of arrests, alcoholism, divorce, poor job histories, child neglect, dependency on social agencies, and psychiatric hospitalization.

Robins (1968) also examined the childhood factors that appear to predict which disturbed children grow into adults with widespread antisocial behaviour. The findings indicated that most sociopaths, in addition to a history of juvenile theft, had a history of incorrigibility, running away from home, truancy, associating with bad companions, sexual activities, and staying out late. Most of them were discipline problems in school and performed poorly in the school environment. In addition, these sociopaths were described as aggressive, reckless, impulsive, lacking guilt, and lying without cause. According to Robins, the best single childhood predictor of sociopathic personality was the degree of juvenile antisocial behaviour.

Retrospective studies, although not as comprehensive

as longitudinal research, lend some support for the linkages between a variety of risk factors and delinquency as reported by a number of longitudinal studies. Several key variables are consistently identified in this research as highly correlated with chronic or persistent involvement in criminal behaviour. Factors that have often been associated with chronic criminal activity include: dysfunctional families (Sandberg, 1989; Dembo et al, 1987; Burgess et al, 1987); poverty (Sampson, 1986; Farnworth, 1984); substance abuse (Dembo et al, 1988; Kraus, 1981; Thorne and Deblassie, 1985); delinquent peer associations (Elliot et al, 1985); being victims of abuse (Burgess et al, 1987; Doerner, 1987; McCord, 1983); and mental or physical health problems (Thompson, 1988; Lester, 1987).

#### Summary

Given the rather complex nature of the variety of factors which appear to be highly correlated with delinquency, and are associated the broad-based understanding of youth "at risk" attributed to in chapter two, it is evident that a synthesis of theories is required in order to better understand why young people become involved in chronic criminal activity. Each theory presented has its own strengths and weaknesses, but no one theory is capable of explaining the complex nature of chronic criminal activity that has been identified by empirical research.

Longitudinal and other "at risk" research have pointed to the fact that many chronic offenders could have been predicted or identified on the basis of a variety of background factors by the age of 10. The important background factors highlighted by empirical research include a number of issues related to the family, school and the community. With respect to the family, the following characteristics were identified: economic deprivation; troublesome behaviour; poor parenting skills; parental criminality; criminal history of other family members; and being victims of abuse. Other important factors noted included poor school achievement, delinquent peer associations, substance abuse, and physical and mental health problems.

In order to better understand how such factors are related to adolescent involvement in chronic criminal activity we can draw from a number of theories. Of particular interest are those theories which focus on explaining the primary causes of delinquency such as the social control theory and theories related to disorganization and anomie. These theories emphasize the impact of social and environmental factors on individual behaviour. These theories may assist us in understanding the relationship between such factors as being a victim of abuse and becoming involved in chronic criminal activity. These theories are key in developing appropriate areas for targeted prevention practices. Similarly, theories such as the labelling theory and the

subcultural theory are important in understanding the maintenance of chronic criminal activity. These theories help us to better understand why only certain young people continue to participate in criminal activity. These kinds of theories are important in defining and implementing early intervention programs.

The factors and theories highlighted by this chapter provided the basis for this research and its exploration of the risk factors associated with persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton region. It is hypothesized that many of the characteristics identified by longitudinal and retrospective studies addressing the issue of youth "at risk" will also be key to identification of persistent and serious adolescent offenders in the Ottawa-Carleton community.

CHAPTER 4METHODOLOGY

The following study focused on the Ottawa-Carleton region and was comprised of a two-part investigation. It attempted to gather information which could be useful in more effective programming for youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law. The following are the basic tools developed to assist area programmers and service providers in assessing the service needs of youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region: i) an inventory of services; and ii) profile of the young offender.

Inventory of Services

The first part of the investigation consisted of the development of a service inventory listing and describing services and programs for youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region.

The purpose of developing an inventory of services was two-fold. The first, was to enable local organizations and their staff to have access to information on relevant services for youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law through the preparation of a referral document. The second was to serve as the basis for a comparative analysis with the snapshot of the young offender with respect to identifying gaps in and duplication of services and more effective

programming in general.

The type of information collected for the service inventory was designed to provide the Ottawa-Carleton community with the most pertinent information required for appropriate placement and referral of their clients. The information gathered highlighted:

the purpose of the program(s);

the target group(s) to whom the program(s) was/were directed -- including the maximum number of young people who could be admitted to the program at one time and whether or not there was a waiting list;

how and when referrals are made to the program and once in the program, what other referrals are made by the agency; and

a description of the types of services offered in the program(s).

Those agencies and organizations in the region whose mandate includes the provision of services for young offenders and those young people identified as being "at risk" of coming into contact with the law, were forwarded a program/service survey (see Appendix B) and were offered the opportunity to be included in the inventory. A number of agencies felt that they did not provide services for a sufficient number of youth between the ages of 12 and 17 years to warrant inclusion in the inventory and were, therefore, omitted, while others simply did not want to participate. The remaining agencies and organizations completed and returned the surveys and are included in An Inventory of Some of Services Available For Youth At Risk and/or in Conflict in the Ottawa-Carleton Region

(1989).

#### Snapshot of the Young Offender

The second part of the study was designed to give a snapshot of "who" are the young offenders in the region and what are their respective needs. The purpose of identifying the needs of youth who have come into conflict with the law was to assist area agencies in developing a more comprehensive understanding of who it is that they are servicing. In addition, the needs identified are to be used in the early identification of 'youth at risk' of persistent or serious offending.

In an attempt to develop a "snapshot" of the young offender in the Ottawa-Carleton region, a series of steps were carried-out. The first was a preliminary search for those characteristics identified by agencies and organizations dealing with youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law as important in the identification of youth "at risk" and youth needs. A survey was designed which outlines a series of attributes identified through a review of the relevant research literature as characteristics indicative of delinquent behaviour. In order to check the relevancy of this list to the Ottawa-Carleton young offender and youth "at risk" population, a sample of area agencies and organizations who deal with youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law on a regular basis (total of 22) were asked to review the list.

and answer a series of questions including:

Is the characteristic considered important in identifying youth at risk and youth needs;

Does your agency collect information on these characteristics; and

How does your agency collect/retain the information regarding each characteristic?

In addition, the participants were asked to note any additional characteristics that they felt were important in the composition of a youth profile that were not identified in the survey of the research literature.

The results of the preliminary search for a youth profile are presented in Table 1. The characteristics outlined were found to be adequate since very few of the respondents noted anything under the section "other characteristics not noted that you feel are important". The few suggestions made were often characteristics that were already in some way identified by the survey (e.g. goals - motivation). Some additional behavioural variables, aggressive and quiet/withdrawn behaviour, that were not identified on the list were regarded by local agencies as important in trying to understand the region's young offenders and youth "at risk" and were therefore added to the list.

At least half of the respondents noted that each characteristic outlined was considered important in the identification of youth at risk and youth needs. There were, however, a few mixed reactions with respect to the perceived

Table One Identification of Youth at Risk  
and Youth Needs

Characteristics	Is it important?	Do you collect it?
Demographics		
Gender	91%	91%
Age	96%	91%
Ethnic or Racial Background	52%	45%
Language	68%	76%
Family Background		
Single Parent	91%	70%
Physical Abuse	91%	65%
Sexual Abuse	91%	65%
Alcoholism	91%	52%
Marital Conflict	86%	50%
Family Size	67%	47%
Criminal History of Other Family Member	76%	35%
Economic Status	80%	55%
Contact with Family	91%	70%
Family Relations/Parenting	85%	79%
Support	94%	95%
Living Arrangements	95%	95%
Place of Residence	55%	42%
Employment	91%	75%
Delinquent Peer Association	94%	44%
Education		
Level of Completed Education	91%	65%
School Performance	86%	57%
Learning Disability	86%	62%
Drop-out	86%	62%
Truancy	76%	57%
Substance Abuse	95%	80%
Health Problems		
Physical Health	81%	70%
Physical Disability	86%	76%
Mental Health	95%	82%
Previous Involvement with Criminal Justice System	100%	85%
Reason for Current Involvement with CJS	100%	80%
Other Social Services	95%	71%
Motivation/Response to Program	95%	78%
Youth's Attitude Toward Delinquency and CJS	84%	50%
Use of Leisure/Recreation Time	84%	50%
Behavioural History	95%	65%
History Of Rejection/Ejection from Previous Programs	83%	47%

importance of a number of the characteristics. These characteristics were largely demographic in nature, such as ethnic background and place of residence. Most of the characteristics had at least an 80% agreement rate as important in the identification of factors related to youth at risk and youth needs and were therefore deemed as important enough to be included in the "Youth Profile Data Collection Survey" (Appendix C).

The original methodological design was to have selected agencies and organizations dealing with young offenders at various levels of the system collect the necessary information through the screening of client case files. A problem was discovered, however, when an assessment was made regarding the availability of the required data in existing client files. As indicated in Table 1, it was often the case that approximately 50% of the agencies and organizations actually collected the information they had highlighted as important in identifying youth at risk and youth needs. Therefore, although a large number of agencies (over 80%) felt that it was necessary to collect information on certain characteristics in compiling a youth profile, a much smaller number of agencies and organizations (approximately 50%) actually collected this data. This resulted in a reconstruction of the original methodological design.

Youth Profile Data Collection Survey

The original research design was modified so that selected agencies were asked to interview youth coming into or presently in the agency or program during the study period (4 weeks between May and July of 1989). Using this method, relevant agencies and organizations could collect information with respect to the young person's familial, educational, criminal and behavioural background first hand, thereby ensuring that as much information as possible was collected.

The subject sample selected included youth in conflict with the law and found at various levels of the criminal justice system including: police; probation-Phase I and II; alternative measures-Phase I and II; open-custody-Phase I and II; secure custody-Phase I and II; and a diversion program for reasons of comparison and comprehensiveness. Potential participants were excluded if there was reason to believe that they were included in another part of the sample (e.g. a client at the open custody level may be excluded from the sampling process because the facility case worker believes he/she may have been picked up at the probation level).

The youth profile survey was designed to collect relevant information on various facets of the participants' lives. The survey was divided into subsections including: basic demographic information, criminal history profile, education profile, health profile, behaviour profile, and family background profile. Each of the areas were examined

through a series of questions relating to different areas of the youths' lives. Each of the questions was coded and the data entered into a computer for statistical analysis.

Each of the agencies and organizations collecting the necessary data selected a number of staff members within the organization to complete the profiles. These individuals were then asked to attend a training session. These sessions were designed to make the data collection as comprehensive and uniform as possible. Each session was about one half hour to forty-five minutes in length and consisted of a step-by-step analysis of the questions contained in the "Youth Profile Data Collection Survey" and outlined in the "Youth Profile Guide" contained in Appendix D. Each question in the survey was discussed and any questions or concerns raised were addressed accordingly. Specific reference was made to the distinction to be made between the questions which ask "have they ever" as opposed to "are they presently". This distinction refers to the kinds of characteristics that are presently relevant to the youth as opposed to those which attempt to identify the impact of early childhood experiences.

#### Data Analyses

A number of procedures were undertaken to facilitate the data analysis, to identify the risk factors associated with delinquency, and subsequently to aid in the development of a needs assessment of youth at risk and youth in conflict

with the law. Since it is difficult, for example, to draw a picture of the relative needs of the young offender based on an analysis of individual measures or key concepts such as family background, several related factors were grouped together. This led to the construction of "composite profiles" to aid in the development of a more comprehensive analysis. This strategy also permitted more efficient use of the information gathered. The results were also more easily interpreted in this form.

#### Composite Profiles

To assist in the interpretation of the youth profile, a series of composite profiles were developed. These composites combined several measures or key concepts into one single measure. Thus several questions measuring behaviour were combined into a single behavioural profile measure. The nature of these composites simply reflect the various aspects of the life of a young offender. After a series of analytical tests, used to measure the internal consistency or compatibility of these composites, were completed, five composite profiles were devised. These include: a) Family Composite; b) Education Composite; c) Behaviour Composite; d) Substance Abuse Composite; and e) Attitude Composite. The items included in each of these composites and the process used in their construction are described below.

The weighting of the variables within each composite was derived by a series of procedures. The first was a decision by the participating agencies to convert the responses to the questionnaire items into a binary coding scheme such that a negative response resulted in a score of 1 and a positive response resulted in score of 0. Since many of the variables had more than a two point (yes or no) response possibility, a series of cross-tabulations were conducted to determine if some of the responses could be coded into fewer categories. Using ten percent as a rule of thumb, if there was a difference equal to or less than ten percent between two or more of the responses, these responses could be combined into one. For example, the subject's school performance could be rated as "good", "adequate", or "poor". A cross-tabulation of the subjects' responses on this variable indicated that there was less than a ten percent difference between those with a "good" response and those with an "adequate" response on each of the dependent variables, these two categories were then grouped together into a single category and given a score of 0. Those students rated as poor were given a score of 1. Using this analysis, the variable "apparent economic status" could not be collapsed and was therefore maintained as a three category variable, with scores of 0, 1 and 2 for upper, middle, and lower class responses respectively. The remaining scores and breakdowns of each variable can be found in Appendix E. An alpha reliability

test was performed to determine whether there was statistical justification for constructing the composites. The results of this analysis can be found in Appendix F. This procedure resulted in the development of the composite profiles outlined below.

#### Composite Profiles - Regression Analysis

One of the concerns raised in response to the development of the composite profiles was the fact that they were devised largely on the basis of logic, both in terms of the make-up of the composites and the weights given to each variable. In order to substantiate the findings, a comparison was made between the original composites and composites based on a regression analysis. The composites created for comparative purposes were devised and weighted on the basis of a regression analysis. The newly constructed composites (found in Appendix G) were compared to the original composite profiles and it was found that the original profiles were statistically sound. Therefore, they were not altered and were used as the basis for the subsequent analysis of the data.

#### Family Composite:

The family composite was devised to examine the family situations of the young offenders. The family composite includes information on the following items:

- . Single Parent
- . Criminal History Of Other Family Member
- . Apparent Economic Status
- . Contact with Family
- . Physical Abuse
- . Sexual Abuse
- . Alcoholism
- . Apparent Marital Conflict
- . Family Relations

The family composite score for each young offender was derived by adding the scores obtained on each of the above factors. Each item was scored as positive '0' or '1' negative (0,1 or 2 in the case of apparent economic status) depending on the existence of certain characteristics. The total score for each subject was then recorded. These scores ranged from 0 to 10 on the family composite. The higher the score a subject received, the more negative or antisocial the profile.

Education Composite:

The education composite was devised to give a picture of the youth and their educational experience. The education composite score for each youth was derived by adding the scores they received on the following factors:

- . School/work status
- . School performance
- . General attitude in class
- . Relationship with peers/social skills
- . Learning disability
- . Truancy
- . Drop-out

The total education composite score for each subject ranged from 0 to 7 for their education profile. Once again, the higher the score the more negative or antisocial the profile.

Behaviour Composite:

The behaviour composite profile reflects the reports of behaviour problems made by the staff of the participating agencies. The higher the score the greater the extent of the behaviour problems recorded. The behaviour composite score was derived from responses to the following variables:

- . Use of leisure/recreation time
- . History of rejection from previous agency/program
- . History of expulsion from previous agency/program
- . Lying/stealing
- . Aggressive behaviour

Each subject received a behaviour composite score on a scale of 0 to 5.

Substance Abuse Composite:

The substance abuse composite reflects the extent to which young offenders included in the study, abuse alcohol and drugs. Each subject received a score of 0, 1, or 2 for this composite on the basis of the responses to the following factors:

- . Alcohol abuse
- . Drug abuse

A score of 2 reflects the abuse of both substances, a score of one the abuse of one or the other, and a score of zero was assigned to an individual who neither abuses alcohol nor drugs.

Attitude Composite:

This profile was devised to examine the extent to which the attitude of the subjects towards their delinquent behaviour and the criminal justice system were related to their criminal activity. Scores in response to the following variables were added together to give each of the subjects a score of 0, 1, or 2 for their attitude composite profiles.

- . Antisocial attitude toward delinquency
- . Antisocial attitude toward the criminal justice system

A score of two reflects a negative or poor attitude toward both their delinquency and the criminal justice system in general; a score of one for a negative or poor attitude toward either their delinquency or the criminal justice system; and a score of 0 for positive or prosocial attitudes toward both of these factors.

Limitations of the Use of the Collected Data

It is important to establish at the outset the relative limitations of this data. Firstly, the strategies adopted and the procedures followed in the development of both the youth profile and the inventory of services were not stringent. The reason for such an approach is the importance of maintaining a good rapport with those agencies and organizations that participated in the research on a voluntary basis. The principal investigator did not have complete control over the way in which the research was developed or

implemented. The inability to maintain full control over the research resulted in the following limitations:

Most people involved in the collection of the data were not qualified data collectors. A total of thirty individuals collected the data including police officers, probation officers, and case workers of the relevant agencies and organizations.

The sample was not equally representative of the entire criminal justice system. There was an over representation of youth who came into contact with the law at the police and probation levels.

Some questions regarding the reliability of the data exists. In some instances first offenders or those classified under "initial contact" may in fact be repeat offenders. This occurred since the information required to make such a judgement may not have been available to those collecting the data, but relied on the information provided by the youth.

The sample collected over a four week period may not be representative of the young offenders who come into the contact with the system throughout the year since this may be an over representation of young offenders in contact with the system during the summer months.

One of the most important restrictions in understanding the findings of this research project concerns the sampling process employed. The subjects included in this study were determined as a result of a "non-random" sampling process. This means that the young people included in this study were selected on the basis of criteria established by the participating agencies as outlined earlier.

Although numerous precautions were taken to ensure that a representative sample of young offenders in the Ottawa-Carleton region was drawn, it is conceivable that certain

individuals "slipped through the cracks" and were not included. However, given the size of our sample, 226 subjects, it is believed that the sample drawn in this research sensitizes us to the relative needs of the young offenders in the region.

One research procedure not carried out at this time but worthy of further consideration, is the inclusion of a "control" group. This would consist of a random sample of young people in the region. It would serve to determine whether the needs of the young offender included in this study differ substantially from the general needs of young people in the Ottawa-Carleton region. In addition, the use of a control group would have allowed for further interpretations to be made regarding youth "at risk". Without the use of a control group, certain cautions must be exercised in attempting to use the research results as "predictors" of delinquency. The "snapshot of the young offender" is an indicator of the relative needs of the young people presently being dealt with in the system and is not necessarily an effective tool in predicting who is more likely to be delinquent. Thus, the needs identified by this research are relative to the sample selected alone and cannot be generalized to all young people in the Ottawa-Carleton region. Moreover, they reflect the current operating definitions and procedures of the agencies included in the study, including policing, enforcement and processing of young people in conflict with the law. In a

very real sense, this study provides a one-month snap-shot of the operation of some of the agencies in the region that deal with young people in conflict with the law.

#### Summary

The limitations highlighted provide some guidelines for the interpretation of the data. For the purpose of this thesis, the development of both the inventory of services and the "snapshot" of the young offender will serve as the basis for a comparative analysis between the needs of young people presently found in the juvenile justice system and the extent to which existing regional services address the needs identified. In addition, a series of composite indices have been developed to assist in the identification of the factors and the combination of factors which are highly correlated with persistent and serious adolescent offending. The factors identified will indicate appropriate targets for early intervention and the need for the development of services which address these factors.

CHAPTER 5

SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE  
OTTAWA-CARLETON REGION

The programs and services available in the Ottawa-Carleton region for youth at risk and youth in conflict with the law vary according to the nature of the service (e.g. preventive to dispositional) and the target group for whom the service would best serve. The following chapter provides a synopsis of some of the services available for youth "at risk" and youth in conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region. It includes a brief discussion of some of the gaps and duplications witnessed around the kinds of services being provided for specific groups of young people.

For the purpose of presenting descriptions of the programs in the most feasible manner, the services will be described according to whether or not they are available within or outside of the criminal justice system and where specifically within the system they can be accessed.

Community Services

Many of the programs offered outside of the criminal justice system represent services geared toward youth 'at risk' of either coming into contact with the criminal justice system or becoming further involved with the system. Many of these services can be classified as prevention programs because they offer youth "at risk" and their families the help

they may require to successfully function in society. Many are aimed at reducing the chances that the young person will resort to crime or criminal behaviour to meet their needs.

**Table Two**                      **Community Services**

Area of Programming	12 to 15 Years	16 & 17 Years
Housing	Youville Centre (Teenage Mothers)	Housing & Social Services McPhail House Mishpocha Youville Centre (Teenage Mothers)
Employment Training (15 years and over)	Special Employment Work Adjustment Training Youth Employment Services Youth Employment Assistance	Job Generation Special Employment Work Adjustment Training Youth Employment Services Youth Employment Assistance
Crisis Intervention /Counselling	Children's Aid Society Programs Crisis Intervention /Supportive Counselling Crisis Intervention Youville Centre (Teenage Mothers) Community Programs	Children's Aid Society Programs Crisis Intervention /Supportive Counselling Crisis Intervention Youville Centre (Teenage Mothers) Community Programs
Treatment	Secure Treatment Mental Health Residential Program Mental Health Non- Residential Program Rideauwood Harvest House	Secure Treatment Mental Health Residential Program Mental Health Non- Residential Program Rideauwood Harvest House
Other		New Beginnings Operation Go Home
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>

The types of preventative services offered for youth in the Ottawa-Carleton region can be classified under the following five headings: housing/accommodation; employment training; crisis intervention/counselling; treatment; and other (see Table 2).

Housing

The housing services of Ottawa-Carleton are generally targeted to specific individuals or specific problems. For instance, one of the local facilities is a re-entry home for individuals 16 years of age and older who want to get back to normal living. It offers basic accommodation and support services. Another centre is a new project aimed at meeting the special needs of single young mothers and their babies. In addition to the various educational and support services made available through the program, the centre has a residence for five mothers/babies who lack the money for basic needs and adequate housing. Similarly, one other local facility provides a place of refuge for women who need the time and assistance to deal with some of their personal problems. There is, however, one area housing program which provides more general assistance to male and females 16 years of age and older and emergency, short-term basis accommodations for youth requiring assistance.

### Employment Training

Aside from housing, another area in preventative programming available within the region is the area of employment training and preparation programs. These programs are designed for youth of various ages to assist them in developing the employment skills necessary to be a functioning member of society. Many of these programs are geared to youth who may have a number of barriers to employment including low academic achievement and lack of experience. For instance, one area agency provides an employment readiness program preparing youth, who have not completed grade 12, for entry level positions in the hotel hospitality industry. Another agency offers a program which provides a wide variety of training and development opportunities for people seeking to develop their employment skills and are geared to the needs of students and unemployed youth.

A bilingual counselling service for youth exists within the region whose focus is to work through problems with the young people while simultaneously teaching them the skills of job search, resume writing, interview and employability. Another offers, as part of its service, construction trades training, life skills training, and Math/English upgrading to youth from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, the Ottawa-Carleton region offers a service to youth which primarily focuses on the issue of employment and is designed to assist disadvantaged youth to overcome the problems

associated with finding and keeping employment.

### Crisis Intervention

Services designed to intervene at a time of intense need have been established in the region either as a separate service or as an integral part of a larger program. One area agency is mandated to respond to requests from anyone who believes there is reason to consider that a child may be at risk of abuse or neglect. Other local agencies incorporate crisis intervention/counselling services as only one facet of their overall program provisions. Still others offer counselling services as a central focus of their programs.

One of the area's agencies provides community programs including counselling, information, referral and advocacy to youth and their families through a wide variety of modalities. Another maintains a crisis intervention program to respond to an adolescent in crisis through a twenty-four hour telephone line and a two-bed residential back-up. Similarly, other agencies simply offer services designed to assist individuals at a time of crises and great personal need.

### Treatment

A number of agencies offer treatment programs for youth in need of assistance. The type of treatment programs available in the region include residential and non-residential mental health programs, a secure treatment

program, and a non-residential youth addiction program for individuals 16 years of age and over. One regional institute is an out-client facility offering community based early intervention treatment and counselling to addicted and dependent individuals and their families. Another local program exists to provide care in both official languages for those adolescence whose difficulties are of such a nature as to require treatment on a twenty-four hour basis. A non-residential program exists within this same agency to provide psychotherapeutic (individual, family and group), consultative and advocacy services to clients. This agency also offers a secure treatment program providing treatment for adolescents who have demonstrated that they are a danger to themselves or others and that they require services in a highly secure facility. Finally, another local agency offers a multi-phased, Christ-centred drug and alcohol recovery program for males between the ages of 16 and 28.

#### Other

There are two programs which are also available to youth at risk between the ages of 16 to 18 or 20 years outside of the criminal justice system. One program seeks to assist young people to redirect their lives along more positive lines of increasing self-confidence and motivation, by teaching life skills and providing ongoing support and counselling. The other is directed by a mandate to reunite run away youth with

their families.

### Services Within the Juvenile Justice System

Area community based programs are designed to address specific problems often encountered by area young people. Each program or service offers youth the assistance they may need to prevent or divert them from initial or further contact with the juvenile justice system. For those young people who have not somehow had the opportunity to participate in or did not respond positively to such services and who proceed to become, or continue to be, involved with the criminal justice system, a number of agencies gear their programs toward these young people.

There are a variety of programs and services available for youth within the juvenile justice system. These programs are, however, more likely to be made available at certain levels within the system than others. At each level of the system, certain program options are made available to the agent within the system (e.g. police officer, judge, probation officer) who is attempting to deal with the youth that comes before them. There is a slight variation in the kinds and numbers of programs and services available to Phase I and Phase II youth (see Table 3).

Table Three

Services Within the  
Juvenile Justice System

Area of Programming	12 to 15 Years	16 & 17 Years
Police	Preventive Intervention Program Children's Aid Society Programs Crisis Intervention Juvenile Justice System	Children's Aid Society Programs Crisis Intervention New Beginnings Juvenile Justice System
Court	Community Alternative Program (C.A.P) Alternatives Measures Secure Treatment Bail Supervision Bail Verification Sentencing	Rideauwood Alternative Measures Community Service Order Secure Treatment Bail Supervision Bail Verification Sentencing
Sentencing - Probation	Crisis Intervention D.A.R.E. Community Support Team	Crisis Intervention Housing & Social Services Community Service Order Rideauwood New Beginnings
Sentencing - Custody	Probation Home/Foster Home Sherwood Observation & Detention Young Offender Services	Chaudiere House Fairbairn House MacPhail House Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre Young Offender Services
Total	16	22

### Police

Aside from processing youth through the formal court process or other criminal justice procedures, a number of services are available for youth through referrals made from police officers. At this level of the juvenile justice system, differences exist with respect to the types of services available for youth 12 to 15 years of age and 16 and 17 year olds.

One program, within the Ministry of Community and Social Services, is designed to intervene in a preventive way at the pre-court level and to provide the family with immediate intervention and ongoing support. The police may refer youth to this program if they are 16 years old or less and have no previous contact with the Provincial Court Family Division. Similarly, the police may refer youth between the ages of 16 and 18 to another local program if the young people indicate a willingness to participate in the program, and demonstrate enough enthusiasm and interest to suggest that it may be of benefit to them. This program assists young people in redirecting their lives along more positive lines by increasing their self-confidence and motivation through the teaching of life skills and providing ongoing support and counselling.

The police may refer youth of all ages up to the age of 16 years to another local agency if they are concerned with their welfare. They may also choose to refer youth to a

crisis intervention service. This program will not accept direct calls from parents or adolescents but will accept referrals from a number of agencies including the police. If the young person is processed into the formal procedures of the juvenile justice system, there are a variety of service/program options available at the various levels of the system.

### Court

There are only a few programs and services to which the court can make referrals. Depending on the needs of the youth and the nature and circumstances of the crime, a judge, upon recommendation by the Crown, may choose to refer youth that come before him/her to any or several of the following options.

The Alternative Measures Program is available for both Phase I and II youth. Alternative Measures is provided by both the Ministry of Correctional Services and the Ministry of Community and Social Services and provides a more informal avenue of redress to the community for some young offenders charged with relatively minor offenses, who acknowledge responsibility for their offenses and agree to voluntarily participate in a program of remediation. The Alternative Measures program offers a variety of options including, amongst others, a personal apology to the victim, restitution, and/or community service.

A number of agencies have set-up programs designed to provide supervision and guidance to those who are to perform community service work. A community alternative program, established by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, provides work placements with supervision for youth 12 to 15 years required to perform community service work as part of a court disposition or as part of the alternative measures program. A similar program is offered by the Ministry of Correctional Services. Through this program, youth 16 years of age and older are referred to a non-profit agency to carry out their community service work.

A number of treatment programs accept direct referrals from the court, although the court recognizes that the youth and his/her family must be willing and motivated to participate in such programs. Referrals made through court orders to area addiction programs for youth are not always accepted by the agency due to the lack of motivation and suitability of the young offender. Similarly, the court may order that a child be committed to a secure treatment program only if the court is satisfied that the child has a mental disorder and the child caused or attempted to cause serious bodily harm to himself, herself or another person.

Bail supervision and verification programs are introduced at the court level for youth from 12 to 17 years of age. Through the process of bail verification, courts are provided with relevant information to facilitate decision

making and to aid in determining dispositions. Bail supervision programs offer the court and the community a viable alternative to pretrial custody by making available certain program opportunities necessary to assist in making positive personal and social adjustment. The court may also choose to formally process the youth through such measures as probation or custodial dispositions. If this were the case, a number of service and program options are also made available at each of these levels.

#### Probation

It is at this particular level that there appears to be more discrepancy in terms of the number and types of programs and services available to youth and probation officers from the two different levels. One service which is available to youth of all ages at this level is crisis intervention. For those youth between the ages of 12 and 15 years, there are a number of other program options available. One such program is offered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Referrals are often accepted to this program from Probation Services. In this project's remote wilderness setting, the young people are presented with many challenges and experiences designed to develop strong personal and community values. The carefully structured, outdoor adventure programs are designed to assist youth in becoming more aware of their personal potential while developing a desire for

achievement. The Ministry of Community and Social Services' Probation Services may also choose to refer its clients to a local program whose mandate is to provide services to high risk young offenders with the ultimate goal being to eliminate or reduce their risk of re-offending. The nature of the services provided by this program include individual, group and family counselling as well as a variety of outreach and educational services.

The programs and services available to youth and probation officers within the Phase II level are somewhat more diverse. Aside from the availability of crisis intervention services, youth between the ages of 16 and 17 at the probation level may be referred to any one or a combination of the following programs: housing; addiction programs; community service programs; employment programs; and others. These kinds of services offer assistance to youth in areas where the need is often great, such as housing or drug and alcohol treatment. The remaining programs offer youth at the probation level, the opportunity to grow and improve themselves; an opportunity to reduce the possibility that they will reoffend.

**Custody**

The services available to youth at this level of the juvenile justice system may vary somewhat with the facility that the youth is sentenced to. Most of the services offered

in the region's open and secure custody facilities are geared towards identifying and dealing with the unique needs of each young offender. Each facility offers the young people the services they require for preparing them for successful reintegration into the society.

Within one of the region's detention centres, the facility's psychological services are made available to all motivated young offenders to assist them in abandoning long-standing patterns of anti-social behaviour. Another local detention centre serves as a place of detention and short-term open custody as specified by the Young Offenders Act, and also as a place of safety as defined within the Child and Family Services Act. The facility observes and evaluates the youth's behaviour through liaison with other agencies and by provision of a prime worker in an attempt to address the unique needs of the child/youth. Similarly, the Ministry of Community and Social Services provides a probation group home/foster home program for males and females between the ages of 12 and 15 years at the time of offence. Another young offender service offered by a local treatment centre also provides a residential program for youth between the ages of 12 and 17 receiving open custody dispositions under the Young Offenders Act.

A regional open custody facility for Phase II males places a great deal of importance in the area of program design, assessment/matching, implementation, review, and

evaluation in an attempt to instill elements of personal responsibility into virtually every facet of the residents' everyday experiences. Another local open custody facility for males between the ages of 16 and 18 years is devoted to: assisting these young people in personal development and discipline, in their respect for other persons and property; in improving their understanding of themselves, and in the acquisition of positive values. Similarly, there is a temporary residence in the area for young women who have come into contact with the law under the Young Offenders Act providing a supportive environment and offers the women an opportunity to make constructive changes in their lives.

Each of these facilities emphasizes in their programming the training and development of the skills that these young people require to function successfully in society. Programs such as life skills training, educational development and employment training, and counselling are only some of the services utilized to prepare these young people for their successful reintegration.

General Conclusions

An assessment of the kinds of services available for youth in conflict with the law and those young people identified as being "at risk" of coming into contact with law indicates a number of key preliminary findings. Probably one of the most significant findings indicates that there appears

to be some discrepancy in the amount and type of programs available for Phase I youth (12 to 15 year olds) and those available in the region for Phase II youth (16 and 17 year olds).

There is a significantly greater number of programs available for 16 and 17 year olds both within and outside of the juvenile justice system. Looking at the kinds of programs which exist for these young people outside of the juvenile justice system, which do not appear to be as readily available to 12 to 15 year olds, are programs which are geared toward developing independent living skills. Many of these programs are mandated to create a sense of self-sufficiency amongst its clients in hopes of preventing initial or further involvement with the justice system. One would assume that there is a perception somewhere that these kinds of skills are not as necessary for Phase I youth. However, if we are to successfully prevent or intervene in the cases of high risk youth, it would make sense that these types of skills are taught to all youth. It would appear that the earlier that young people acquire and make use of these skills, the less likely they would be to become involved in or increasingly involved in delinquent activity.

Once again in examining the types of programs available to Phase I and II youth within the juvenile justice system, there is a greater number and a wider variety of programs available at the sentencing level of the juvenile

justice system. The kinds of programs available at this level for Phase II youth reflect a greater selection of community-based programs and, once again, programs geared to helping these young people get back on their feet. These general findings may force area agencies to examine the relative needs of these age groups in order to justify the relative disparity in the number of types of programs available for each age group.

Do Phase II youth have substantially greater and different needs from the needs of Phase I youth to warrant the differences in service provision that have been witnessed? In terms of early intervention and prevention strategies, does it not make more sense, if these programs are regarded as important in preventing initial and further involvement with the juvenile justice system, that they not be introduced earlier in area programming for these young people? What kinds of implications can we anticipate with the respect to the apparent limited number of options available at the sentencing level for Phase I youth?

The relative duplication of services witnessed in the region is largely within two areas of programming: crisis intervention and employment training and preparation services. Crisis intervention services is offered to youth of all ages from a host of different agencies. Given some of the limitations which exist for some of these agencies in terms of how referrals are made and who can be referred, the number of

such programs available within the region is almost justifiable. Some of these agencies will only accept referrals from certain referral agents such as the police, but will not accept referrals from the community in general, such as from the young person him/herself or his/her parents. If a young person is in need of immediate crisis counselling and cannot refer him/herself to one agency, it is important that another such program exist elsewhere. Can the region make more effective use of its networking or its referral mechanisms to reduce the kinds of duplications in crisis intervention services that we are witnessing in the Ottawa-Carleton area? Is it imperative to some of these agencies that these strict restrictions on intake and referrals exist? Would they have the manpower and resources to open their doors to more young people from other community agencies?

These same kinds of questions are raised with respect to area employment training and preparation programs. These programs do not appear to differ substantially in the type of service provided. What is distinct about each program is where their clients are referred from. Each program appears to be geared to lower disadvantaged youth, but some agencies receive their referrals from within the juvenile justice system, others from outside the system, and still others from both areas. It is also important to understand that many of these programs have a limited enrollment because of the indepth nature of the program. It would appear, given the

number of such programs that exist, that the region's need for this type of service is a rather large one. To what extent do employment training and preparation programs have an impact in preventing and diverting young people from initial or further contact with the justice system? Does the relevant success of these services justify the number of such programs which exist in the region?

#### Summary

The questions raised and the concerns noted reflect some of the issues that can only be answered when there is a better understanding of the respective service needs of area young people. However, some immediate conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of existing services.

Area community-based services are largely composed of housing, employment training, crisis intervention/counselling, and treatment programs. Housing services are only available for youth 16 years of age and older and are very limited in their capacity. The most crucial housing issue appears to be the fact that there is no long-term housing services available for area young people. Existing services are primarily short-term in nature and are largely designed for crisis or emergency situations.

Problems witnessed in the employment training area are once again related to the age limit employed by these agencies, generally for youth 15 years of age and older.

However, most of the employment preparation programs are geared to high risk youth and are fairly comprehensive in their programming. Area employment services tend to go beyond the provision of employment training services to include educational upgrading, counselling and other services which reflect the more complex nature of the needs of youth "at risk."

Available crisis intervention services vary in their comprehensiveness. Some offer additional services beyond meeting the young persons immediate needs while others do not. What appears to be lacking with area crisis intervention services is the comprehensiveness of follow-up services. The final community-based service issue is related to area treatment programs for youth. The principle concern is the lack of adequate residential and non-residential treatment programs for young people with addictions.

Services found within the criminal justice system are varied, but many can only be accessed at certain levels within the system. The principle concern is the finding that the most comprehensive programs are provided at the custodial level of the criminal justice system. In essence, if an area young person is seeking services for a variety of needs, he/she may not be able to participate in required services until he/she has had repeated contact with the criminal justice system. Similarly, the availability of diverse and varied services is only available once a young person has

reached the probation level of the system.

The primary concern with the respect to area services for youth is the relative disparity witnessed between the services for Phase I and Phase II youth. This finding raises some real concerns about the reactive nature of area programming. Effective intervention and prevention of chronic involvement with the criminal justice system is dependent upon the provision of required services as early as possible in the young person's life. The fact that the Ottawa-Carleton region provides a greater variety of required services for its older youth suggests that we are perhaps identifying and responding to "at risk" youth when it is too late, essentially when they have had repeated contact with the system.

The broad-based definition of youth "at risk" and the complex nature of chronic criminal activity discovered by the empirical research suggests that a comprehensive and interagency response is required to prevent young people from becoming persistently and seriously involved with the criminal justice system. There appears to be a great deal of fragmentation in the delivery of services to area young people. In particular, there is little if any collaboration between the social service and criminal justice systems. Access to a variety of community services upon referral from the criminal justice system is limited. There must be greater cooperation between the two systems if the complex needs of area youth "at risk" is to be met adequately.

CHAPTER 6"SNAPSHOT" OF THE YOUNG OFFENDER

The variables identified in the research literature as most closely associated with persistent or chronic involvement in delinquent or criminal behaviour formed the basis for the present research. The study was designed to develop a profile of the young people who come into conflict with the criminal justice system in Ottawa-Carleton. This chapter provides the basic findings of the "snapshot" of the young offender. In particular, the chapter highlights those individual factors and composite indices which are significantly correlated with persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton community.

The study consisted of 226 adolescents, 164 males and 62 females, who came into contact with the law at various levels of the system within a one month period between May and July of 1989. Cases were not included in the final sample if 30 percent or more of the required information was missing. The total number of subjects included in the analysis was reduced to 199 since 27 cases were omitted. The demographic characteristics of the sample are outline in Table 4 below.

Table Four Demographic Characteristics

CHARACTERISTICS	PERCENTAGE
AGE	
< 12 Years	4%
12-15 Years	55%
16-17 Years	30%
> 17 Years	11%
GENDER	
Males	73%
Females	27%
ETHNIC/RACIAL GROUP	
White	91%
Black	2%
Native	2%
Other	6%
LANGUAGE	
English	80%
French	10%
Bilingual	10%

N=199

As can be seen in Table Four, 145 (73%) respondents included in the sample were males while 54 (27%) were females. A total of 85% were between the ages of 12 and 17 with the majority (55%) being 12 to 15 years of age. Most of the sample was caucasian (91%) and ninety percent were English speaking.

The nature of offenses committed by these young people is presented in Table Five. These ranged in seriousness from sexual assault to violation of federal/provincial statutes, e.g., the provincial liquor act. A total of 62% of the subjects were first offenders (initial contact with system). The remainder were repeat offenders. The types of offenses

**Table Five**                      **Nature of Offence**

Nature of Offence	Current Offence	1st Previous Offence	2nd Previous Offence
Against Persons	22%	20%	18%
Property	58%	45%	64%
Other Criminal Codes	20%	35%	8%

committed were fairly consistent when current and previous offenses were compared. The largest proportion of offenses were property related. The majority of the remaining offenses were either against persons or classified under "other criminal code offenses," e.g., disturbing the peace.

Place of residence was equally divided between those living in Ottawa and those living outside of Ottawa. Half of the subjects (50%) reported living outside the city, with the largest percentage residing in Nepean (23%). The rest of the young people were from localities scattered throughout the city, with 13% residing in the east end, 13% in the south, 12% located in the west end and 12% in the centre of the city.

**Table Six**                      **Place of Residence**

IN OTTAWA	PERCENTAGE	OUTSIDE OTTAWA	PERCENTAGE
East	12%	Nepean	25.0%
Central	12%	Gloucester	11.5%
South	13%	Orleans	3.5%
West	13%	Kanata	1.0%
		Quebec	2.5%
		Cornwall	.5%
		Pembroke	.5%
		Other	5.5%

The majority of the young people were living with their parent(s) at the time of the interview (69%), 3% of which were living with their parents in social housing developments. As can be seen in Table Seven, a total of 19% were living in supervised residences, while the remaining subjects were living on their own, with friends, or other relatives other than their parent(s).

**Table Seven Living Arrangements**

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS	PERCENTAGE
With Parents	66%
With Parents/Social Housing	3%
Self-Sufficient	1%
Self/Welfare	4%
Self/Parental Support	0%
Supervised Residence	19%
Other (Other family members, friends)	7%

These findings are not surprising considering the demographic context of the region. The key trends in the official plan for the city of Ottawa proposed by the Policy Planning and Research Division (City of Ottawa Planning Department, 1989) indicates that young people between the ages of 0 to 14 years live predominantly in the suburbs. The official plan also indicated that those between the ages of 15 and 24 years are more likely to be found in the south-east end of the city. The council proposes an even larger regional population growth to occur primarily in the suburban

municipalities within the next ten to fifteen years.

A total of 59% of the youth have lived with a single parent for an extended period of time at some point in their lives. The majority of cases were the result of a separation or divorce. Over half (53%) of the subjects were only children or have one other sibling. These results are not surprising. The official review plan shows that the number of lone parent and small households are increasing. The Policy Planning and Research Division expects that these trends will continue into the twenty-first century (City of Ottawa Planning Department, 1989).

Most of the youth (65%) were regarded as coming from upper or middle class families. Based on the research literature, it was expected that a much higher rate of lower class youth would be found in the sample. However, the above average socio-economic make-up of this city supports the finding of such a high proportion of middle and upper class youth in the sample. The household income rates in 1985 indicated that a large proportion of households in this region have a household income greater than \$50,000. The average family income in 1986 was set at \$45,883, and the city-wide average household income was \$38,154 (City of Ottawa Planning Department, 1989). It is also important to note that the region's unemployment rates had declined in the two years prior to the study with the 1989 rates hovering around the 9% mark.

Regardless of the class from which the youth come, the problems that exist within some of their families appear to transcend class boundaries. It was found that 20% of the youth reported alcoholism within the family, and 32% reported substantial marital conflict in the home. The profiles of the study population indicated that for 22% of the youth, they are not the only family member with a criminal history. A total of 50% of these young people have a brother with a criminal history, and in 32% of the cases it is the father who has a criminal background. The majority of the subjects (63%) have frequent contact with their family members, while only 5% never have contact with their families. A total of 29% of the youth classified their relationships with their families as relatively poor. While 7% have reported sexual abuse within the family, 16% reported that physical abuse has occurred involving either the youth him/herself or another family member (e.g., sibling, mother).

Most of the sample (72%) were in school at the time of the interview, with 10% of these young people also working part-time. While 10% of those who were not in school were working full-time, 18% were both unemployed and not in school. The relative performance of our study population indicated that 39% were regarded as doing poorly in school. The general attitude in class amongst these young people appears to reflect the results of their school performance with 40% regarded as having a negative attitude in class. A much lower

percentage were classified as having poor peer relationships in school (24%). A total of 15% of the subjects were regarded as having an "identified" learning disability. The nature of the disabilities ranged from behaviour problems to dyslexia, with the largest percentage (32%) classified as dyslexic. Many of the youth are or have been truant (62%), with 30% of these young people being truant every week. A smaller number of youth (27%) have dropped out of school at one time or another.

A total of 64% of the study population were classified as associating with delinquent peers. In addition, 38% of the youth were seen as making poor use of their leisure or recreation time, e.g., hanging out at arcades or malls. Many of the young people abuse or have abused alcohol (32%), drugs (28%), or both. Just over one third of this study population have an antisocial attitude toward the criminal justice system (e.g., unfair) and their delinquency (e.g., no remorse).

A very small proportion of the youth had a physical health (10%), or disability (1%) problem. The nature of the physical health problems included such difficulties as weight problems, and heart and lung problems. The largest health problem was related to problems with the lungs (18%), e.g., asthma. The rate of youth with mental health problems is somewhat more problematic. Nearly one quarter (21%) of the subjects were classified as having an "identified" mental

health problem, e.g., character disorders and depression.

A total of 29% of the subjects were classified as having a negative response or poor motivation to the present mode of intervention. In addition, 11% of the youth have a history of rejection from at least one other service or program. Many (45%) were rejected from a program or service offered by the Children's Aid Society largely as a result of a behaviour problem. A larger number (15%) of the subjects have a history of expulsion from at least one other service or program. The majority (59%) were expelled from a service or program within the schools as a result of behaviour problems. Over half (57%) of the subjects had a history of lying and stealing. While 39% of the subjects were classified as aggressive, nearly as many (30%) were regarded as quiet and withdrawn.

#### Data Analysis

Before proceeding to the analysis of the variables and composite profiles, a preliminary analysis was made to determine the extent to which these variables or composites varied with the age and gender of our study population.

Little variation was found between the various ages of the youth and the composite profiles. Age was a distinguishing factor on such education variables as school/work status, truancy, and drop-out rates ( $p < .05$ ). These findings are not surprising, however, since older youth

are more likely to be working or unemployed and not in school and, therefore, more likely to be drop-outs. In addition, the older subjects appeared more likely to be expelled from various services and programs ( $p < .05$ ). Again, this finding is not that surprising since the service or program that such youth were most commonly expelled from is school. Because of the variation witnessed above, the only significant difference between the ages of the youth and the composite profiles is the difference found in the education composite profiles. The older subjects were found to have more negative (antisocial) education profiles since they were more likely to be unemployed/not at school, truant, and drop-outs.

The only variations witnessed between the male and female subjects were that the females had a higher rate of sexual abuse and the males were more likely to be expelled from services and programs ( $p < .05$ ). There were no significant variations between the composite profiles of our male and female subjects.

#### Persistent and Serious Offenders

In an attempt to identify youth who come into contact with the law and to assist in determining the need for services and the identification of youth 'at risk', three dependent variables were identified. The dependent variables include: (1) previous contact with the criminal justice system; (2) where they are in the system now; and (3) severity

of offence history. A series of analytical tests were carried out using these dependent variables in an attempt to better understand the distinct needs and characteristics of persistent and serious adolescent offenders in the Ottawa-Carleton region.

#### Previous Contact with the Criminal Justice System

The following analysis examines the relationship between a subject's scores on the composite indices and the extent to which the subjects were involved with the criminal justice system. Caution must be used in interpreting this information because of the possibility that some of the young people presently classified under "initial contact" were in fact repeat offenders because of the nature of some offenses and reporting practices.<sup>1</sup>

All the subjects were classified into one of three categories to identify the extent to which they have been involved with the criminal justice system: i) initial contact; ii) one previous contact; iii) two or more previous contacts. Following this classification of the subjects, a series of analyses were executed to determine the extent to which one's composite profiles were related to the amount of involvement a respondent has with the criminal justice system.

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<sup>1</sup>This discrepancy is due to the reporting practices of a local police agency. In the case of a minor offence, the youth division deal with the offence using diversion strategies. Therefore, the previous offence history of a youth is not recorded.

The results of this analysis are presented in Table Eight below. Table Eight indicates that youth at the initial contact level of the system appear to differ significantly from the repeat offenders on all composite profiles. Those who rate highly (more negatively) on the scales for each of the composite indices were more likely to reoffend. This finding was statistically significant at at least the .05 level.

The differences witnessed when examining the family backgrounds of the young people in relation to the number of contacts they have had with the system, indicates that a much larger proportion of the repeat offenders have higher scores on the family composite profile ( $p < .01$ ). A high score indicates that these youth have more negative factors in their family backgrounds. Thus, the repeat offenders in the sample were more likely to: come from families with a single parent; have another member of the family with a criminal history; come from lower class backgrounds; have been physically abused; have alcoholism in the family; and have poor relationships with their families.

An analysis of the relationship between offence history and the educational composite indicates that repeat offenders were more likely to have a negative education profile. This variation was significant at the .01 level, indicating that the probability that such differences occurred by chance was less than 1%. A greater number of repeat

Table Eight Relationship Between Previous Contact  
With the Criminal Justice System  
and Composite Indices

COMPOSITE INDEX	SCORE LEVEL	FIRST CONTACT	ONE PREVIOUS CONTACT	TWO OR MORE PREVIOUS CONTACTS
Family	Low	4.8%	2.3%	0.0%
	Medium	56.5%	31.8%	35.5%
	High	38.7%	65.9%	64.5%
Education	Low	54.0%	27.3%	25.8%
	Medium	29.8%	36.4%	48.4%
	High	16.1%	36.4%	25.8%
Behaviour	Low	66.1%	34.1%	16.1%
	Medium	25.8%	47.7%	61.3%
	High	8.1%	18.2%	22.6%
Substance Abuse	Low	71.8%	54.5%	45.2%
	Medium	12.1%	15.9%	29.5%
	High	16.1%	29.5%	35.5%
Attitude	Low	66.1%	52.3%	19.4%
	Medium	15.3%	22.7%	25.8%
	High	18.5%	25.0%	54.8%

offenders had higher scores on their education composites. The repeat offenders in the sample were more likely than those classified under "initial contact" to: be unemployed/not at school; have poor general attitudes in class; be truant; and have dropped out of school.

Similar findings were discovered in relation to the variations in the behaviour profiles of first and repeat offenders. Once again, those with negative profiles were significantly more likely to be repeat offenders ( $p < .01$ ). Repeat offenders were much more likely to: have negative motivation/response to present intervention; have been

rejected or expelled from another program/service; be more aggressive than those who have only one contact with the system.

The relationship between offence history and the substance abuse composites was examined next. The results indicate that repeat offenders were much more likely to have a higher score on the substance abuse index. The differences between first and repeat offenders were significant at the .05 level. Repeat offenders were much more likely to abuse drugs, but not alcohol.

A statistically significant difference was found between the attitude profiles of the first and repeat offenders ( $p < .01$ ). Once again, repeat offenders were much more likely to have a higher score on the attitude composite than those classified under "initial contact." A look at the individual factors that comprise this composite profile indicate that the repeat offenders were substantially more likely to have negative attitudes towards both their delinquency and the criminal justice system in general.

A series of analyses were then conducted to identify the subset of the factors most efficient in indicating the extent of contact that the subjects had with the criminal justice system. The results of a step-wise regression analysis indicate that the following variables are most important ( $p < .05$ ) in the identification of persistent offenders: delinquent peer association; motivation to present

intervention; and criminal history of other family member. These three variables were the best indicators when all the independent variables (individual factors) were considered simultaneously.

Similar analyses were performed to determine the composite which best indicates the extent to which one comes into contact with the system. The results indicate that the "attitude composite", comprised of one's attitude toward the criminal justice system and toward delinquency, was the best indicator followed closely by the "behaviour composite." This suggests that the attitude that a youth has toward his/her delinquency and the criminal justice system, can be the best indicator of the extent to which he/she has had previous contact with the criminal justice system.

#### Where the Youth are in the System Now

The following analysis examines the relationship between the composite profiles and where the youth is now in the system. The judicial proceedings under the Young Offenders Act are somewhat complex. It is important that the way in which a young person is processed within the juvenile justice system is well understood in order that one may comprehend what it means when a youth is located at a specific part of the system and what it took to get there.

### The Juvenile Justice System

Following the commission or perceived commission of an offence, an investigation is conducted. Based upon the information collected, the material gathered is either forwarded to the courts for further processing, or at this point, deferred action may be taken whereby the young person will participate in a diversion program and/or sent home to parents or guardians with a warning. If the information is forwarded to the courts it will be used to provide a summons for the youth to appear in court or the young person will be placed in temporary detention or pre-trial custody. If placed in detention, the young person must then appear at a show cause or bail hearing where one of three things may happen. The first is that the youth may be placed in undertaking with or without conditions. In other instances, the young person may be placed on his/her own recognizance or a detention order may be filed.

Following an initial appearance in youth court, a number of alternatives exist for the young person. He/she may: if applicable, participate in alternative measures; be processed through youth court; or transferred to adult court depending upon the severity of the young persons offence(s) and previous offence history. If the young person is processed through youth court, he/she must enter a plea. If the youth enters a plea of "not guilty", a trial is conducted and based upon the outcome the young person will either be

acquitted if he/she is found innocent of the charges or he/she will be found guilty. If the youth enters a plea of "guilty", he/she is found guilty, which may or may not be appealed.

Once a young person is found guilty of an offence, and depending upon the severity of the offence and the youth's offence history, a predisposition report may be completed in order to determine sentence. In cases where the chances of issuing a custodial disposition is unlikely, the preparation and presentation of a disposition report is optional. In cases where it is likely that an individual will receive a custodial disposition, a disposition report is mandatory.

If a youth is not sentenced to custody he/she may be sentenced to any one of or a combination of the following dispositions: absolute discharge; fine (maximum of \$1000 or fine option); compensation (in kind/personal service); restitution; repayment to innocent purchaser; community service; prohibition, forfeiture, seizure; probation (maximum of three years); other conditions; or detention for purpose of treatment. After a certain period of time, as outlined in the sentencing report, the youth will appear once again in youth court for a youth court review. As a result of the review, a number of things can happen. Following the presentation of a review of the young person's progress to date, the judge may decide to vary the existing disposition, hand down a new disposition, confirm the present disposition, or terminate the present disposition and discharge the young person.

In instances where a young person is sentenced to custody, he/she will either be sentenced to open or secure custody for a predetermined period of time, up to three years. Once again, following a certain period of time, the young person will appear again in youth court for a youth court review where the youth's progress under the present disposition will be assessed. As a result of the review, a number of things may happen. For those in open custody, the present disposition may be confirmed or the young person will be released on probation. For those in secure custody, the present disposition may be confirmed, he/she may be transferred to open custody, or the young person will be released on probation.

#### The Analysis

This analysis attempts to address the following question: Are the youth who are presently found further in the juvenile justice system (e.g., custody) significantly different from those who are less seriously involved in the system (e.g., police, probation)? This question is important since we anticipate that youth have different profiles and, therefore, different service needs at different levels of the system.

Once again, the youth at various levels of the system differ substantially in their composite profiles. There are a higher number of more negative composite profiles as young

people penetrate further in the system. This finding holds for the variations found in each of the composites, such that more of those who are presently further into our system (eg. open and secure custody) appear to have more negative family, education, behaviour, substance abuse, and attitude composite profiles.

The family composites of the young people at various levels of the system differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ). The young people presently found deeper in our criminal justice system appear more likely to: have another family member with a criminal history; come from lower class families; have alcoholism in the family; be subjected to much more marital conflict in the home; and have poorer relationships with their family members.

The results of the following analysis indicate that there is also a significant difference between the education profiles of the youth presently at different levels of the system at the .01 level. The youth who are presently found further in the criminal justice system, were found more likely to: be unemployed and not at school; have been truant; have dropped out of school.

Once again, those subjects who are presently found deeper into our criminal justice system appear to have more negative or antisocial behaviour histories. The differences witnessed were significant at the .01 level. Those who are presently deeper into the system are more likely to: have a

more negative response or poor motivation to present mode of intervention; have been expelled and/or rejected from another service/program; lie and/or steal; exhibit aggressive behaviour.

**Table Nine Relationship Between Where The Youth Are in the System Now and the Composite Indices**

COMPOSITE INDEX	SCORE LEVEL	POLICE	ALTERNATIVE MEASURES	PROBATION	OPEN CUSTODY	SECURE CUSTODY
Family	Low	7.9%	8.3%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	Medium	61.9%	66.7%	40.7%	38.7%	36.4%
	High	30.2%	25.0%	57.6%	61.3%	63.6%
Education	Low	69.8%	66.7%	30.5%	32.3%	22.7%
	Medium	25.4%	0.0%	37.3%	45.2%	50.0%
	High	4.8%	33.3%	32.2%	22.6%	27.3%
Behaviour	Low	79.4%	58.3%	39.0%	29.0%	36.4%
	Medium	19.0%	33.3%	45.8%	45.2%	50.0%
	High	1.6%	8.3%	15.3%	25.8%	13.6%
Substance Abuse	Low	93.7%	75.0%	52.5%	32.3%	36.4%
	Medium	4.8%	8.3%	22.0%	12.9%	31.8%
	High	1.6%	16.7%	25.4%	54.8%	31.8%
Attitude	Low	76.2%	58.3%	52.5%	19.4%	54.5%
	Medium	17.5%	16.7%	16.9%	41.9%	4.5%
	High	6.3%	25.0%	30.5%	38.7%	40.9%

Variation was found between the substance abuse profiles of youth at various levels of the system and these differences were significant at the .01 level. Those found further into the system appear to abuse both alcohol and drugs much more than those just entering the system. The youth located further into the system were also found to have much more negative or antisocial attitudes toward delinquency and

the criminal justice system ( $p < .01$ ).

A step-wise multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine the importance of each of the variables in determining where a young person is now in the system. The following variables were most important when used along with all the other factors to indicate where one is in the system now: school/work status; and sexual abuse.

A similar analysis was performed using the composites themselves as the independent variables. The results indicate that the "family composite" is the most important index when used alone or with other composites to indicate where the subjects are now in the criminal justice system.

#### Severity of Offence History

This dependent variable was created to determine whether or not a youth's profile differed significantly depending on the extent and severity of his/her offence history. The "Severity of Offence Scale" (found in Appendix H) was devised on the basis of a combination of two existing scales. The first consisted of the American "Severity of Offence Scale - SOS" proposed by Buckner and Chesney-Lind (1983). The second involved the comparison of the "Uniform Crime Reporting Offenses Classification System" in Canada and the United States proposed by Ackman and Normandeau (1967). The computation of "Severity of Offence History" was executed by adding the subject's scores on the following variables:

current offence, first previous offence, second previous and third previous offence.

The results of an analysis using this scale indicated that the composite profiles of the subjects varied significantly with severity of offence history. The differences between those with less severe offence histories and those with more severe offence histories were statistically significant for each of the composite indices. Those with more negative family, education, behaviour, attitude, and substance abuse composite profiles also had more severe offence histories.

A higher percentage of those with higher scores on the "severity of offence history scale" were found to have more negative family backgrounds than those with lower scores on this scale (significant at the .05 level). Essentially, more of those with more serious offence histories came from families with the following characteristics: lived with a single parent for a prolonged period; another family member with a criminal history; and poorer relationships with their families.

A statistically significant difference was found between the education profiles of those with different offence histories ( $p < .01$ ). High offence history scores often corresponded with being unemployed and not at school, truant, and drop-outs.

**Table Ten The Relationship Between Severity of  
Offence History and the  
Composite Indices**

COMPOSITE INDEX	SCORE LEVEL	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Family	Low	71.4%	58.9%	38.1%
	Medium	28.6%	29.5%	41.2%
	High	0.0%	11.6%	20.6%
Education	Low	64.4%	39.7%	34.1%
	Medium	29.9%	39.7%	38.6%
	High	5.7%	20.6%	27.3%
Behaviour	Low	65.7%	33.3%	28.0%
	Medium	28.4%	45.8%	32.0%
	High	5.9%	20.8%	40.0%
Substance Abuse	Low	56.7%	42.9%	31.8%
	Medium	33.1%	39.3%	38.6%
	High	10.2%	17.9%	29.5%
Attitude	Low	59.5%	32.4%	39.2%
	Medium	34.2%	37.8%	35.3%
	High	6.3%	29.7%	25.5%

A statistically significant difference was found between the scores obtained on the behaviour profiles for youth with different offence histories ( $p < .01$ ). These findings suggest that young people having problems in the areas included in the behaviour composite index were more likely to have more serious offence histories.

There was a statistically significant difference between the substance abuse profiles of youth with different offence histories ( $p < .05$ ). The results of the crosstabulation of the attitude composite of youth with different offence histories indicated that those with a more negative attitude (higher score) were also more likely to have a more serious

offence history ( $p < .01$ ).

A series of analyses were carried out to determine which variables were most important when used to indicate the severity of the subjects' offence history when considered simultaneously with all the other factors. The following variables were found to be the most efficient indicators of the severity of one's offence history: delinquent peer association; aggressive behaviour; truancy; and sexual abuse. The results of a similar analysis examined the importance of all the composite indices indicating the severity of the subject's offence history. The "behaviour composite" was found to be most important in indicating the severity of the youth's offence history when considered simultaneously with the other composite profiles.

#### Quiet/Withdrawn Behaviour

One of the concerns raised by community agencies about the nature of their clientele was a need for a greater understanding of the young people classified as "quiet/withdrawn". In order to address these concerns, a comparison was made between those characterized as "quiet/withdrawn" and those who were not classified this way.

The results proved to be interesting in that the only significant difference between those who were classified as "quiet/withdrawn" and those who were not was the fact that the "quiet/withdrawn" youth were significantly more likely to have

or have had mental health problems. This finding was somewhat ironic given that this characteristic, "mental health problems", was the other concern raised by participating agencies with respect to the effectively responding to youth "at risk."

The specific concern raised with respect to youth with mental health problems was related to the release of information regarding this particular characteristic and whether or not having this information could assist community agencies and the juvenile justice system in dealing more effectively with these young people. A series of comparisons were made to determine the extent to which youth with mental health problems differed from those who were not classified this way.

#### Mental Health Problems

An additional series of analyses examined the relationship between mental health problems, offence histories and scores on the composite profiles. The results of this analysis indicate that youth with mental health problems were significantly more likely to reoffend. While only 34% of those who were not identified as having had a mental health problem reoffended, 57% of the youth with an identified mental health problem had more than one contact with the criminal justice system. In addition, there were substantial differences between these two groups on a number of the

composite indices including: family, behaviour, and attitude.

The youth classified as having had a mental health problem were more likely to come from families where there were higher rates of physical abuse, marital conflict and poor family relationships. Similar results were found for the behaviour index in which 48% of those with high scores on this index were classified as having mental health problems. The relationship between scores on the attitude index and mental health indicate that the youth with an identified mental health problem were more likely to have negative attitudes toward aspects of their delinquency and the criminal justice system.

#### Level of Intervention/Extent of Services:

It would have been desirable to perform the same kind of analysis described above with "present/past intervention" as the dependent variable. However, the frequency distribution of this variable revealed that not enough information was available to carry out such an analysis. As a result, analysis of the "level of intervention/extent of services" variable will largely be descriptive in nature using as much information as was available.

Frequency distributions were examined to determine whether or not those who had specific problems had had or were presently undergoing some mode of intervention or were receiving some services. What became evident when attempting

to analyze these results was that either certain deficiencies in the backgrounds of young offenders had never been addressed through intervention or the provision of services or that the information was simply not available to the individual agencies completing the data profiles. What was evident was that this information was only available when addressing the issue of intervention in the area of education. The information available indicated that a significant proportion (30%-40%) of those who were identified as having some difficulties within the educational environment (eg. school performance, truancy, drop-outs, etc.) had had or were undergoing some form of intervention for these problems.

#### General Conclusions

Many of the findings derived from the composition of a "snapshot" of the young offender in Ottawa-Carleton, raise some real concerns for the region's social service and criminal justice agents. The nature of the concerns that have been voiced to date reflect the nature and extent of services available for young women in conflict with the law.

The results of the analysis on the "snapshot" of the area young offender indicate that there are very few significant differences between the needs of the region's female and male adolescent offenders. These findings are not all that surprising for area agencies and agents that work with these young women on a daily basis. The service needs

identified for young women are virtually identical to the service needs of the young men in our study sample. The fact that the young women in the area are significantly more likely to be sexually abused makes them more difficult to place and in need of greater, not less, services than the young male offender.

The lack of disparity witnessed between the needs identified for Phase I and Phase II youth suggest that there should be very little variation in the nature and number of services provided to these young people. As already discussed, there are a number of gaps in services for Phase I youth in the Ottawa-Carleton region which may have been justifiable if indeed their needs were not as great as those of the region's Phase II youth. Local agencies and organizations must begin to examine the possibility of increasing the kinds of services presently available for the area's 12 to 15 year old young offenders. Perhaps if many of the programs we now see implemented at the Phase II level were implemented earlier for Phase I youth, we would see less of these young people within our juvenile justice system when they get older.

### Summary

The main findings of this research indicate that there are a number of specific issues which need to be addressed by area agencies with respect to regional programming for young

people and the identification of and response to youth "at risk". One particular issue that raises some concern is the finding that half of the subjects in the study live outside the city of Ottawa. This points to some concern about the extent to which appropriate services are available to these young people outside the city.

Other issues which need to be more closely examined by area programmers include: the fact that almost two-thirds of the young people in this study population come from single parent homes and that this trend of lone parent families is anticipated to continue into the twenty-first century; regardless of the fact that nearly two-thirds of the subjects come from middle or upper class families, problems within the family appears to transcend class-boundaries; most of the sample population was in school at the time of the interview; nearly two-thirds of the young people in the sample associated with delinquent peers; nearly one-quarter of these young people have mental health problems; and there was little variation found with respect to the age and gender of the subjects and there respective service needs.

One of the key reasons for conducting this study was to examine the factors or set of factors which appeared to contribute to persistent and serious adolescent offending. The main point of this chapter is the finding that persistent and serious adolescent offenders were more likely to have more negative composite profiles for each of the indices.

The findings of this chapter indicate that there a number of family related factors that appear to be significantly correlated with persistent and serious adolescent offenders. Persistent and serious adolescent offenders in Ottawa-Carleton were more likely to come from families with: a single parent; another member with a criminal history; a lower class backgrounds; alcoholism in the family; and poor relationships with their family.

Similarly, an analysis of the relationship between offence history and educational experiences indicates that persistent and serious adolescent offenders in the region were significantly more likely to: be unemployed and not in school; be truant; and have dropped out of school.

When examining the variation in the behaviour profiles, it was discovered that the persistent and serious adolescent offenders were more likely to: have negative motivation/response to present intervention; have been rejected or expelled from another program/service; and be more aggressive. In addition, these offenders were also more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs and to have negative attitudes towards both their delinquency and the criminal justice system.

The question that needs to be considered here is whether negative profiles are the result of continued contact with the system or whether they result in continued contact with the system. In addition, what about those young people

who are showing very negative profiles and are only presently at the beginning of the system (e.g. the police level)? These individuals may be key targets for early intervention.

Evidently, the complex service needs of these youth require a comprehensive and collaborative response between the criminal justice, social service and educational systems. There is a great deal that needs to be done. Where to begin is often the most difficult issue to address. Some guidance may be provided by looking at those factors highlighted in this chapter as the most efficient indicators of persistent and serious adolescent offenders. The host of factors identified in this chapter need to be considered in the early identification of youth "at risk" and examined holistically in developing effective responses.

CHAPTER 7PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH "AT RISK"  
IN OTTAWA-CARLETON

Local agencies and organizations dealing with young people in the Ottawa-Carleton region share an increasing concern about the service needs of area youth "at risk". They are particularly concerned about the growing number of young people who are coming into contact with the social service and criminal justice systems. The complexity of the host of needs that many of these young people possess when they come into contact with these systems leads many of the local service planners and deliverers to ask the question "where do we start?"

This thesis was designed to address the concerns facing many of the Ottawa-Carleton community's service providers. Through the development of a common knowledge base about the nature of the needs of their clientele, it is hoped that some progress can be made in beginning to more comprehensively address the needs identified. The nature of the services presently available in the Ottawa-Carleton region should reflect the programs required to address the needs of area young people "at risk" of initial or further involvement with the criminal justice system.

The following chapter provides a comparative analysis of the findings of this particular local research project with that of other "at risk" studies. In addition, this chapter

will explore some of the dynamics around the interrelationships between the factors identified and their relationship with chronic criminal activity. Finally, a detailed analysis of the relative gaps and duplications in area preventative services for youth "at risk" will be provided.

The results of this study have highlighted a number of key factors which appear to have a strong relationship with persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton community. These are the factors which should be targeted in the early identification of youth "at risk" and in the development of comprehensive responses. Effective identification of and appropriate responses to these young people could result in diverting or preventing the initial or further involvement of youth "at risk" in criminal activity.

Variables such as family background, peer associations, performance in school and attitudes toward their delinquency and the juvenile justice system were identified as strong indicators of which youth were more likely to be involved in serious and persistent criminal behaviour. This information has serious implications for programming and policy decisions in the criminal justice and social service areas. In many cases, the variables highlighted refer to a set of individual or social factors that require a comprehensive approach to be taken when addressing the needs of youth "at risk" and youth in conflict with the law.

Family

Research on the development of criminal careers has often focused on the family as an active contributor to the development of chronic criminal activity. Empirical findings have concluded that delinquency is more likely to occur in homes where there is: poor parent-child relations; inconsistent discipline; marital disharmony; and a lack of supervision over their children's behaviour (Hirschi, 1969; Farrington, 1986).

Among the young offender population in the Ottawa-Carleton community, there is a substantial amount of alcoholism, abuse, criminal histories and significant discord within the family of these young people. In fact, when examining the family backgrounds of the subjects in relation to the persistent nature or the severity of their offence histories, it was discovered that more of the repeat and serious offenders came from families with the most negative backgrounds. In particular, persistent and serious offenders in the Ottawa-Carleton community tended to: come from families with a single parent; have another member of the family with a criminal history; come from lower class backgrounds; be subjected to marital conflict in the home; have been physically abused; have alcoholism in the family; and have poor relationships with their parents.

Many people are not comfortable with discussing interventions in the family. Society to date has traditionally felt that the family is a private institution that should be protected from outside interventions. Others feel that there is little that can be done to improve the functioning of the "dysfunctional" family. Still others believe that to consider the role of the family in delinquency and crime involves making what often constitutes "middle class value judgements" about what constitutes good parenting, particularly when referring to young people from lower class or single parent families.

These issues are a real concern for service providers in the Ottawa-Carleton region. However, this research has indicated that certain types of families are, in fact, more likely to contribute to the development of serious and persistent adolescent offenders than others. The research tells us that the majority of the young people who came into conflict with the law during the summer of 1989, were from single parent families. The research also tells us that youth from lower class backgrounds, although a minority in this sample, were more likely to be repeat offenders and to be found further in the criminal justice system than the middle and upper class subjects.

Given what the data has revealed, the Ottawa-Carleton community cannot avoid pursuing policies and programs that will support parents in the difficult task of child-rearing.

Similarly support must be available to the children and youth of dysfunctional families if there is to be any chance of breaking the cycle. Pervasive family difficulties and discord can interfere with a child's sense of security and are associated with antisocial personality and delinquency. The main problem may be family stress which can be caused by a variety of issues including low income, being a single parent, unemployment or family violence, and can lead to abuse, neglect, or substance abuse.

Support services are critical for reducing the stress level that many of these families experience on a daily basis. Some families are able to obtain support from family or friends, others simply do not have access to appropriate support systems. These families become socially isolated and multi-stressed, leading to serious consequences such as very high levels of abuse and neglect, difficulties in school, and later delinquency.

Existing services for youth "at risk" and youth in conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton region emphasize the importance of the involvement of parents in the programs provided for area youth, but very few view of the existing services work directly with the parents themselves in identifying and resolving problems. The extent to which local youth services collaborate with area family services, services for parents alone, or additional services which address other risk factors is limited. Area youth services are largely

reactive in nature. It is often the case that only after a young person has had repeated contact with the social service or criminal justice systems that some effort is made to identify and address the needs of the family.

Ideally, family support services should be intensive, comprehensive, community based and targeted at identified "at risk" issues. Based upon the present research and longitudinal studies, appropriate targeted programs may include: assisting families to self-sufficiency; assuring school readiness and success for children; assisting children with special needs; strengthening young families; preventing child abuse and neglect; and promoting maternal and infant health.

The nature and extent of the impact that such supportive services may have for families and on the future delinquency of children and adolescence has not yet been determined by longitudinal studies. However, we do know, based upon the data gathered, that persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton region appears to be strongly associated with dysfunctional families. Therefore, the early strengthening of families might reasonably be expected to influence children's later offending patterns.

A local program for teenage mothers is one of the more proactive services available in the region for youth "at risk". The risk factors associated with unwanted, neglected

and abused children can be reduced through such intensive social and family services. Through the provision of educational and child care services, young mothers can equip themselves with the skills required to raise their children in a caring, financially stable and capable environment.

According to much of the research available on the issue of youth "at risk", poverty appears to be one of the greatest risk factors (Sampson, 1986; Farnworth, 1984; Farrington and West, 1984). Poverty is often correlated with school age child bearing, premature births, poor health, family stress, school failure and violent crime. In Farrington's (1985) prospective longitudinal study, he concluded that poverty was a major determining factor in the development of juvenile delinquency. It would stand to reason that given that poverty is so strongly correlated with a host of other risk factors which are associated with chronic criminal activity, local prevention and intervention efforts must also have some form of an anti poverty component.

The present research indicated that there was a much smaller percentage of lower class youth than middle or upper class youth in the study sample. Some of this discrepancy can be explained by the socio-economic make-up of this region. However, this cannot explain why lower class youth were significantly more likely to be repeat offenders and also more likely to be located further in the criminal justice system. These results can be interpreted in a number of ways. One

possible interpretation supports the notion that this region's criminal justice system operates under a set of class bias principles. This interpretation is an integral aspect of a variety of explanations of delinquency. In particular, the labelling theory abides by the contention that biased, discriminatory factors operate in the juvenile justice system, especially in terms of such variables as the race, sex and social class of juvenile suspects or defendants. While none of the data available in this research supports the contention that this bias exists based on race or sex, it is difficult to overlook the discrepancy which exists according to social class. It is an important factor which should be more closely examined by local agents of the criminal justice system.

Another possible interpretation is the importance of poverty as a major risk factor in the development of criminal careers as described earlier. Those who come from lower class families are subject to a variety of interrelated risk factors which many middle and upper class youth may not be exposed to. Aside from the notion that poverty is often closely associated with other risk factors, one of the principle contributing factors which should be examined is access to available services. According to the strain theory or the theory of relative deprivation, children and youth who come from lower class families, although often attempting to attain the same middle class values, are not exposed to the same opportunities as children of higher social classes. These are the kinds of

opportunities that may have some deterrent value in the prevention of perhaps not initial, but continued involvement with the criminal justice system.

Many of the services that we are talking about are community services. From after school and summer recreation programs to local individual, group or family counselling services, these are the kinds of programs that provide a venue for local service providers to identify a youth "at risk" and, for young people, to develop alternative forms of behaviour other than adolescent criminal activity.

The importance of the availability of adequate services for disadvantaged children and youth has been identified in the Ottawa-Carleton region. This need has been, to date, largely addressed through the provision of special employment training and job creation programs for lower class youth. One of the key problems identified by this research, however, is the fact that these programs are seldom made available to youth under the age of 15 years.

Local service providers are frustrated by the conflict which often arises with respect to existing policies that do not enable them to fully address the needs of area youth "at risk". Many recognize the fact that it is exceptionally difficult to prevent young people from continued involvement with the criminal justice system once they have reached their mid or late adolescent years. Regardless of the fact that there already exists sufficient grounds for believing that

high quality early prevention programs may be effective at reducing delinquent activity, existing social and criminal justice policies do not enable local service providers to make what would appear to be an essential referral. The split jurisdictions that exist within the province of Ontario for the treatment of Phase I and Phase II youth, often means that the rules that each group of young people are exposed to are different.

One of the key findings of this research was the lack of disparity between the service needs of Phase I (12 to 15 years old) and Phase II (16 and 17 years old) youth. For example, independent living skills programs, such as the employment training programs described above, are essential for any young person who is or was unable to attain these skills because of the lack of good examples or adequate instructions in the home or in school. Participation in these programs for a 12 or 13 year old may be essential if the young person drops out of school or is living on the street. However, regulations such as the age of employability and child welfare legislation limit the kinds of programs that youth under the age 16 can participate in.

Establishing age limits for the concept of youth "at risk" has important implications for who is included in the definition and what programs or services are provided. Both the literature and the results of this research indicate that a broader rather than a narrower definition of youth "at risk"

is required. A broad definition is consistent with the early identification of problems and the provision of appropriate services. This study indicates that for the Ottawa-Carleton community, the needs of "at risk" youth aged 12 to 15 years do not differ markedly from the "at risk" youth aged 16 and 17 years and, therefore, should be dealt with accordingly.

### School

The only significant difference witnessed between the needs of Phase I and Phase II youth, is relation to the risk factors associated with school. The association between problems in school and adolescent offending has been attested to by a number of researchers. Hirschi (1969) discovered that students with little academic success and students who performed poorly were more likely to commit delinquent acts than students who succeeded in school. The extent to which low levels of achievement in school contributes to adolescent criminal activity, although undisputed, is difficult to ascertain. In the present research, an analysis of the relationship between offence history and functioning within the school environment indicated that a greater number of those who were truant, drop-outs, or unemployed and not in school, were significantly more likely to be repeat and serious offenders.

Very few would deny the obvious links between performance or attitude in school and criminal activity.

Many, however, are unsure of the actual direction of the link. Does poor performance in school result in participation in criminal activity, or does participation in criminal activity contribute to poor performance in school? Regardless of the theory that one chooses to adhere to, many understand that poor performance in school alone may not lead to chronic criminal activity. It is the interrelationship between poor performances in school and other risk factors that appear to lead to chronic criminal activity.

In the present research, it was discovered that it was not poor performance in school per se which correlated strongly with persistent and serious adolescent offending. Other risk factors such dropping out of school, being unemployed and not in school, and truancy were more significantly associated with chronic adolescent offending. Once again, the Ottawa-Carleton region appears ill-equipped to act proactively to keep young people in school. Once these young people leave school, they often break ties with their only remaining support service agency. School staff are ideally situated for identifying and responding to youth "at risk" and their families. Early identification may lead to the discovery of a host of other risk factors, which may or may not have contributed to poor achievement in school, that can be addressed if responded to quickly and appropriately.

In the present research, the results of the analysis of the level of intervention received for problems identified

indicate that the school and the problems associated with poor functioning within the school environment are the factors in the Ottawa-Carleton community which are in fact most adequately addressed or at least identified. This finding supports the notion that problems are more easily identifiable in the school environment. The level of intervention received for other problems dealing the family, behaviour, or substance abuse either were unknown or did not exist. It is interesting to note, therefore, that although many of the young people had received some form of intervention for school related problems such as poor performance or truancy, other problems experienced by these young people did not appear to have been identified or addressed by the school or any one else. Caution must be exercised here in interpreting this data due to the fact that a great deal of this information was deemed unknown by the data collectors.

The interrelationship between problems in school and other risk factors has been explored by a number of researchers. For many, difficulties in school is a symptom of other more deep seated problems. This environment, however is deemed as one of the primary institutions that can divert or thrust young people into chronic criminal activity. Success in school can provide youth with an avenue for developing positive self-esteem even when things are not so good at home. Schools which are able to offer students a sense of achievement regardless of ability and are able to motivate and

integrate them are likely to reduce the incidence of negative outcomes. Failure in school, however, may be the final straw for young people who are looking for ways to feel good about themselves or are looking to fit into society.

The important role that this institution plays in the prevention of delinquency cannot be underestimated. There are a variety of initiatives available in the Ottawa-Carleton region for addressing the needs of "at risk" youth. Such programs as alternative schools or programs, retention officers and remedial programs are examples of services designed to address the special needs of youth who are finding it difficult to function within the regular school curriculum. Other more popular school-based approaches to reducing delinquency include school-police liaison programs, substance abuse prevention programs and counselling services. Unfortunately, there is very little evidence that these approaches are effective.

What is required for any of these programs to be effective, is that they, in themselves, not be seen as the answer to the host of problems often being experienced by these young people. The comprehensiveness of the programs offered and the extent to which the problems in school are exacerbated by other "at risk" issues must be considered by area schools. Granted, the schools and their staff cannot be all things to all people. They do, however, have a responsibility to try to identify the needs of the young

people and those who would be best equipped to address the problems identified.

According to the present research, the other "at risk" issues which appear to play an important role in the development of persistent and adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton region include delinquent peer associations, behaviour problems, substance abuse, and poor attitudes toward delinquency and the criminal justice system. Once again the response to date by the Ottawa-Carleton community has been largely reactive. It is not until youth have come into frequent contact with the criminal justice system that these issues are identified, but not necessarily dealt with.

#### Delinquent Peer Association

Association with delinquent peers is an issue that is not directly addressed by area programmers. Generally speaking, peer group relations are a central part of every child's life. The enormous influence that a peer group can have on young people is insurmountable when they lack other significant relationships. For young people with poor family relations or inadequate relationships with those in school, delinquent peers often replace the family and become the sole source of emotional and social support. These relationships represent very strong attachments which are difficult to change. In fact, any attempt to challenge these relationships could result in further alienation of these youth from those

who could provide them with the help they need to address their "at risk" issues.

The key to resolving the delinquent peer phenomenon is to prevent its initiation. Hirschi (1969) and the social control theory suggest that individuals who are bonded to social groups such as the family, the school, and non-delinquent peers would be less likely to commit delinquent acts. These prosocial bonds contribute to youth participation in conventional activities thereby reducing the likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviours. The need for early intervention here cannot be underestimated. Once a young person has become entrenched in a delinquent cohort, there is little chance of breaking the bond and, ultimately, diverting or preventing further contact with the criminal justice system. As the subcultural theory suggests, delinquency becomes regarded as "normal" behaviour amongst this youth subculture, such is often the explanation for gang activity and involvement.

#### Substance Abuse

One of the "normal" behaviours often exhibited by delinquent subcultures, is the frequent use and abuse of alcohol and drugs. According to the literature, adolescent substance abuse is considered to be strongly associated with delinquent involvement. Loeber and Dishion (1983) noted that a number of studies found that many of the serious adolescent

offenders were substance abusers. In the present research, subjects who abused either alcohol or drugs, or both, were more likely to be serious and persistent adolescent offenders.

Although a directional relationship between substance abuse and delinquency has yet to be established, many interpret the initial use of substances to be the result of a means of dealing with a number of "at risk" issues including problems in the home or difficulties in school. Continued involvement with the criminal justice system may be the result of delinquent activities which are carried-out in order to support a substance addiction. If the relationship established here is true, there is a profound need to begin addressing the problems being experienced by these young people in the home, and carried on into the schools, prior to their beginning to turn to alcohol or drugs for solace.


Area services for young substance abusers is far from ideal. The only residential treatment program for youth in the Ottawa-Carleton region is designed for youth 16 years of age and older. There are no treatment programs for Phase I youth which can be accessed through the community. A variety of programs are available for these young people once they have entered a open or secure custody facility. This supports the notion mentioned earlier, that unless local community services begin to more adequately address "at risk" issues through social, family or child welfare services, these young people will continue to be involved with the criminal justice

system until they get the assistance they need at the custodial level. It is often too late for these young people when they reach this level of the system.

### Antisocial Behaviour

The behaviour of young people in conflict with the law is another "at risk" issue which must be addressed early in order to prevent or divert further adolescent involvement in criminal activity. Once again, antisocial behaviour is simply a symptom of more deep-seated problems. Early intervention and comprehensive and collaborative services addressing not only the behaviour problems, but those issues that produce some of the antisocial behaviours witnessed may have the greatest chances for success.

The behaviour problems associated with youth in conflict with the law in the Ottawa-Carleton community are aggressive behaviour and quiet/withdrawn behaviour. Much of the literature on youth "at risk" talks to the aggressive behaviour often exhibited by delinquent youth. Less popular, is the notion that quiet and withdrawn youth are almost as likely to participate in criminal activity as aggressive youth. This finding comes as no surprise, however, because many of the quiet and withdrawn youth go unnoticed in areas of society where problems can be identified and, until the young person comes into conflict with the law, little is done to address their "at risk" needs.



For many of the service providers in the Ottawa-Carleton region, this finding raises many concerns. Early intervention and prevention is difficult if the problem is hard to identify. Aggressive youth tend to stand out in a crowd and, thus, are more likely to receive some form of intervention. Quiet and withdrawn youth are unlikely to draw attention to themselves and are, therefore, less likely to receive assistance. Given this finding, it is surprising to note that aggressive youth are more likely to be persistent and serious adolescent offenders than quiet and withdrawn youth. Much of this may have to do with the nature of the offence that aggressive youth become involved in or the detrimental effect of the intervention used or the services provided.

There are a variety of programs for aggressive youth in the Ottawa-Carleton community. Many of these programs are a component of other services. For instance, some of the area's open custody facilities provide programs for addressing aggressive behaviour as a component of the facilities in-house services. Other programs are offered through residential and non-residential treatment facilities. In contrast, there are no specific services for quiet and withdrawn youth in the area. However, quiet and withdrawn behaviour is often a symptom of a much larger problem and is often associated with mental health problems which, if identified and addressed early enough, may be resolved through mental health related

services.

### Antisocial Attitudes

The final issue which needs to be discussed here is the effect of attitudes on chronic criminal activity. Although there is not a great deal of evidence to support this notion, the research indicates that more of those with negative attitudes toward their delinquency and the criminal justice system are likely to be persistent and serious adolescent offenders in the Ottawa-Carleton community. Not unlike the relationship between substance abuse and delinquent activity, many believe that the relationship between these two behaviours is a circular one. As a young person continues to be involved with the criminal justice system, his or her attitude toward his or her delinquency and the criminal justice system becomes more antisocial which instigates further involvement with the system.

Once again, there are no services available in the region that target the attitudes of local youth as a measure of prevention or intervention. The attitudes are believed to arise from involvement with the social service and criminal justice system. Early intervention and prevention programs that prevent young people from involvement with a system that does not appear to meet their needs, may prevent the development of antisocial attitudes toward delinquency and the criminal justice system.

The prevention of antisocial attitudes through the prevention or diversion of youth from the juvenile justice system is of particular importance today. Changes in the young offender legislation have resulted in a more punitive juvenile justice system which places the needs of society above the needs of the individual youth. Such a system is apt to create poor attitudes among the young people who come into contact with the system which will, according to the results of this research, lead to continued involvement with the system. More cooperative strategies between the juvenile justice system and the community are needed to divert young people from a system that is not geared to meeting the needs that have brought them before the system in the first place.

#### Common Client Population

The present research has supported the notion that we are talking about a common client population. Youth "at risk" of victimization are often the same people that are "at risk" to becoming involved in chronic criminal activity. The young children who require supportive services and protection today, are the same people, who as adolescents, will be dealt with by law enforcement and criminal justice procedures. In order to prevent these young people from becoming involved in chronic criminal activity, the community of social service and juvenile justice agencies, must prevent victimization of the young and their initial involvement in delinquent activity.

Through the provision of broad-based, multidisciplinary, interagency, and community-based strategies, the Ottawa-Carleton community may begin to effectively address the complex needs of area youth "at risk" witnessed in this study.

Cautions Around the Possible Misuse and Misinterpretation  
Of the Data Presented

The information garnered can be useful in assisting local service providers and program planners to better understand and meet the needs of local youth "at risk." The information provided highlights a variety of factors that were found to be highly correlated with persistent and serious adolescent offenders. The results presented, however, are open to a number of interpretations. For instance, the police may examine the profile discussed in Chapter Six and then set about targeting young people with these characteristics as possible trouble makers. This type of targeted action, referred to as "weeding", may have damaging effects on these young people by lending to a labelling process and the creation of young people who participate in criminal activity as a result of a self-fulfilling processes. This particular form of weeding may also lead to public misinformation about young offenders.

Similarly, the identification of young people in schools with the characteristics highlighted may also lead to a labelling process whereby a number of young people are singled out as in need of additional assistance and they then

become recognized by other children and youth as individuals with problems.

We must also be careful in using the data to avoid creating a set of services which may not only be ineffective in addressing the needs of local youth "at risk", but may also do more damage than had the young people been left alone. Intervention may be important, but the nature, extent and timing of the intervention used must be given serious consideration prior to its implementation. In 1990, a meta-analysis was conducted by Dr. Don Andrews on the impact of variety of interventions on offenders' rates of recidivism. Dr. Andrews discovered that not only were certain services ineffective, some proved to very damaging in the attempt to rehabilitate offenders. It is obvious that program effectiveness must be explored in the development of a collaborative community based response to area youth "at risk."

It is important to note that not all young people with the problems identified in Chapter Six go on to become persistent and serious adolescent offenders or even youth who commit a single offence. Emperically, we do not know what happens to youth "at risk" who desist from criminal activity. Some young people find ways of dealing with the factors identified, but many go on to become involved in some form of antisocial behaviour. Although they may desist from participation in criminal activity, some may develop mental

health problems while others simply withdraw from participation in society in general. It is evident that in addition to the cautions exercised with respect to the interventions used, we must also not be careless in the identification of youth "at risk" of persistent and serious adolescent offending.

#### Summary

The findings of this empirical study parallel the results of longitudinal research and other related "at risk" studies discussed in chapter three. The complex needs identified by the research suggests that there is an intricate interrelationship between many of the factors identified. Individual factors alone do not appear to contribute to the persistent and serious adolescent offending witnessed in this study. It is the combination of a variety of family, school and community factors that thrusts a young person into chronic criminal activity.

Area services do not adequately reflect the complex nature of the needs identified. Existing services in the Ottawa-Carleton community often do not look beyond the immediate reason for a young person appearing before them. For example, area schools appear to be able to identify school related problems amongst their students, but overlook the identification and response to a number of risk issues that may have led a young person to have problems in school. The

relative gaps and duplications in available services also indicate that a holistic and unfragmented approach to responding to these young people is not yet in place.

Through the development of a more collaborative, less fragmented approach to the delivery of services amongst the schools, social services and the criminal justice system, we can begin to capitalize upon a more proactive means of identifying and responding to the needs of area youth "at risk". The following chapter will explore a variety of ways in which a more comprehensive approach to the complex needs identified by this research can be achieved in the Ottawa-Carleton community.

CHAPTER 8RECOMMENDATIONS

The problem of youth "at risk" must be defined as a community problem. The family, the school, the police, and other institutions in the community and agents of the juvenile justice system must be seen as playing a pivotal role in preventing and addressing the factors identified as associated with youth "at risk" in Ottawa-Carleton region. Part of this assertion stems from the finding that an interrelationship exists between a variety of risk factors associated with each of these institutions. Therefore, there should exist a vital interrelationship between these various groups in the community and the juvenile justice system.

The link between the development of an understanding of the concept of youth "at risk" as identified by the research and the implementation of comprehensive and effective responses to these young people has a number of important implications for the Ottawa-Carleton community. Two of the most salient implications will be discussed here. These include: (1) the need to understand the problem of youth "at risk" from a broad community-based perspective versus an individualistic and behaviour specific one; (2) the need for early identification, and the development and implementation of appropriate community-based responses which recognize that the young people "at risk" of and "at risk" to are often the

same people. Each of these implications will be discussed in turn.

#### Early Identification & Community-Based Responses

The results of this empirical study have highlighted a number of key factors which appear to have a strong relationship with persistent and serious adolescent offending in the Ottawa-Carleton community. These are the factors which should be targeted in the early identification of youth "at risk" and in the development of comprehensive responses. It is evident that the risk factors associated with chronic criminal activity are complex and, therefore, will require a collaborative approach to identify the key problems early enough to prevent initial or further contact with the criminal justice system.

The development of appropriate community-based responses must be based on the recognition of the shared responsibility that the community has for providing a safe, healthy, supportive environment for young people. Through cooperation and coordinated action, problems can be identified and responded to while in their early stages, making the likelihood of success more probable. Effective preventative measures and the allocation of resources to those areas in the community most in need are two further advantages of such an approach. This also holds the potential for significant savings of scarce resources if problems can be resolved in

their initial stages.

One of the principle assertions that must be recognized and adhered to is the finding that youth "at risk" of victimization are also "at risk" to themselves and others when they eventually become involved in criminal activity. If we are essentially dealing with the same young people as both victims and perpetrators, we should tailor our responses to this reality. It is clear that these young people need protection from the "risky" situations they are exposed to. It is also clear, however, that unless they are protected from these "risky" situations they are likely to be the subject of law enforcement and criminal justice activities in the future. Therefore, both the agents of the social service, educational, and criminal justice systems have a vested interest in identifying and addressing the issue of youth "at risk" as early as possible.

#### Community Perspective

This particular implication is one which places a premium on the effective mobilization of community resources. A broad view of the problem of youth "at risk" implicates the community as a whole as both the source and the solution of the problem. This pre-supposes the existence of a network of community agencies that can work in concert to provide a healthy climate in which young people can grow and develop. The factors identified by the research, such as a

dysfunctional family, dropping out of school and substance abuse, that evidently affect the community as a whole when these young people become involved in chronic criminal activity, are more likely to be addressed from this broad based approach rather than from one which emphasizes individual culpability. This type of analysis also requires that the community respond collectively to common problems it faces. Individual, family or school problems are defined within this conceptualization as symptoms of larger, structural problems that can only be dealt with at a structural level.

One of the critical elements of an effective response to youth "at risk" is the collaboration and participation of key organizations that plan, fund and deliver services in the social development of our young people. Identifying and involving the full range of relevant groups and individuals can be challenging. One could easily argue that most community organizations should participate since the process requires an appreciation of the organization's priorities, and of potential sources of leadership and support for a comprehensive strategy.

One approach is to start by identifying organizations that are concerned with the risk factors identified by this research. In the Ottawa-Carleton region, factors associated with schools play an important role in identifying and addressing the needs of "at risk" youth. Similarly, the

police play an important role in the early identification and appropriate referral of these young people. The actual role to be played by each organization and the nature of the relationship that exists or must be developed between organizations should be established through community based consultations and initiatives. Opportunities must be created to enable organizations to explore independently and collectively where they "fit" in the development of effective responses to the needs of local youth "at risk".

The Ottawa-Carleton community has a real advantage in establishing comprehensive and effective responses to the needs of area youth "at risk". These advantages stem largely from the fact that a local informal, but broad-based, interagency committee already exists in the community. This network has already begun to try to better understand the service needs of area youth "at risk" through their participation in this research endeavour. Through the identification of key contributing factors related to local serious and persistent adolescent offending, this network may begin to more effectively respond to the young people their community. A problem, however, remains in that the roles to be played by key organizations in the community have not yet been fully realized in the Ottawa-Carleton region.

The Role of Social Services

**Recommendation #1:** Area social service agencies must make more creative and efficient use of existing resources. They must recognize the need for more coordinated community-based responses involving a variety of agencies including the educational system and the police.

There is widespread recognition that the problems associated with youth "at risk" must be addressed with a coordinated, community based response. However, the shortage of available resources with which to mount such a response must also be recognized. The resources that do exist in the community must be capitalized upon and more appropriately directed at this problem.

Several specific issues must be addressed regarding the response of Ottawa-Carleton's social service system to youth "at risk". One of the most important of these is the fragmentation that exists in the way services are currently being delivered. This has already been discussed briefly in Chapter Seven. In the case of social services, some concern exists with respect to the disparities between services for males and females, and the services provided for 12 to 15 year olds and 16 and 17 year olds. Moreover, the social service landscape is dotted with agencies that arise to meet identified service gaps. Some concern exists, however, that this usually happens in an ad hoc way. Groups providing counselling or employment programs is just one example. The development and provision of these services is often not done

in a systematic way. It depends upon the existence of people in the community who are able to identify and respond to an existing need. It also depends upon the availability of sufficient resources to provide the services in question.

One of the central problems with this is that local agencies and specific programs are seen as susceptible to a changing environment. This often places agencies and programs in competition with each other. Competition can be minimized by an informal network that monitors developments in the social service delivery system. However, this can also be a very divisive element if such a network does not exist since agencies and programs are usually competing for the same limited pool of resources. This is particularly frustrating for the smaller social service agencies since it means constant financial insecurity and the need to spend valuable resources in ongoing efforts to secure future funding. The larger and more established agencies may also object to this piece-meal approach since it results in constant disruptions of services and the exploitation of those working in the social service field.

Another issue concerning the response of the social service system to the problem of youth "at risk" focuses on the frustration many experience in only being able to respond to the symptoms of the problem. The very real risks that young people are exposed to on an ongoing basis means that many agencies feel obligated to devote a large proportion of

their resources to assisting these young people. This, in turn, means that there are few additional resources available for addressing the deeper sources of the problem. The bottom line is that the resource required to do preventative work are limited. Similarly, the funds to establish ongoing interagency contacts to facilitate client tracking are not always available in this community. In some agencies, extensive case files are kept and used in case management but are not analyzed since the resources required to do this work are not available. This could be very beneficial information for evaluation existing programs and for long term planning.

The difficulties encountered by social service agencies can be offset by a general agreement about what the social service system should be doing. The recognition that additional resources are unlikely in the foreseeable future calls for the more efficient and creative use of existing resources. This refers specifically to the need for more coordinated, community-based responses involving a variety of community agencies including the education system, the social service system, and the police. This strategy is the most plausible response in the short term while more effective preventative programs is the only way of achieving longer term objectives.

The Role of the Educational System

**Recommendation #2:** The educational system is a vital institution in the community. It must recognize and capitalize upon its role in identifying youth "at risk" and in calling upon other partners in the community to assist in responding comprehensively to the problems identified.

The educational system has been identified as a primary agency in the community for dealing with the problem of youth "at risk". In particular, the role that teachers can play in the early identification of problems. Moreover, teachers and other professionals working within schools are seen as being ideally situated for providing services to both young people and their families. These workers represent an important link between young people and other institutions and organizations in the community.

The broad range of resources available in the educational system makes it a particularly attractive site for responding to young people with problems. The combination of educational, social, and athletic opportunities that schools provide is a primary way to reach this often difficult to serve population. It is important to realize and capitalize upon the fact that besides parents, school personnel are the adults in the community with whom young people have the most contact. As such, they are in an excellent position to establish relationships with young people, to get to know them as individuals, to be able to assess the nature of the

difficulties each is facing, and to help to design, administer, or simply make appropriate referrals to intervention strategies that are appropriate for individual youth.

There are a variety of positive and negative characteristics associated with the potential response of the educational system to the problem of youth "at risk". The overall assessment, however, is that the educational system is a vital institution in the community. It should be a major site for responding to the problems associated with youth "at risk". The response should not be the sole responsibility of the educational system but should be a coordinated one involving a number of agencies in the community. Other professionals in the community should be involved in conjunction with educational professionals perhaps with the schools as the selected site for program delivery.

#### The Role of the Police

**Recommendation #3:** Local police forces must begin to become more involved in community-based interagency initiatives which focus on the preventative or proactive role of their activities.

Evidently, the police have become more involved in community based initiatives through their active participation in interagency committees such as that noted above. Participation, however, does not necessarily imply action. Community police departments still appear to participate in

such endeavours from a law enforcement perspective. Once again, not to diminish the potential harm caused by area young offenders, but the extent to which local police forces participate in endeavours which focus on the preventative or proactive role of their activities has not yet been fully realized.

It is becoming more and more clear that the need for both protection and law enforcement services in the community is very real when addressing the problem of youth "at risk" in Ottawa-Carleton. What is less clear, however, is the need to maintain the existing fragmentation in the provision of these two different types of services.

Many people recognize the fact that the illegal activities of this group of young people represent a threat to the community. However, the results of this research indicate that these activities are perhaps secondary or derivative of the primary demands and impact of victimization whether it be in the home, school or the community. These findings suggest that while law enforcement activities are necessary, much more effort and greater community resources should be allocated toward responding effectively to primary problems including the victimization of children and youth. Furthermore, while not wishing to minimize the harm caused by the illegal acts of young people "at risk", some consideration should be given to their status as victims. This would result in a different response by the community and especially by the

representatives of the criminal justice system. Restorative practices and preventative programs should become increasingly emphasized in this approach, while punitive and reactive responses should be minimized.

The police should play an important role in the community in assisting in the effective socialization of our young people. It is suggested that this should consist of more than asking police officers to be good role models or to give young people in school lectures on public safety or the dangers of drugs. Local police forces are in an ideal situation to take more of a leadership role in mobilizing area youth serving agencies and organizations in the development of more collaborative and comprehensive strategies to addressing the needs of area youth "at risk."

Although, prior to the introduction of the Ontario Police Services Act, police were not mandated to do so, many of the local police forces provided referral services for the young people they may regard as "at risk" when on the streets or in schools. With the enactment of the Police Services Act in 1990, police forces in Ontario are now guided by a set of six principles which recognize the need for police officers to begin to work with communities in addressing mutual problems. In particular, principle 3 specifically states "the need for co-operation between the providers of police services and the communities they serve" (Ministry of the Solicitor General, 1990).

Since, there is very little dispute about the important role that local police play in the early identification of these young people, it would seem necessary to begin documenting some of these activities in order to get a better handle on how to maximize the potential for successful intervention with these young people based on the role played by the police.

One of the first steps towards realizing how to best provide policies for police around the issue of youth "at risk" is to maximize their participation in community based strategies directed at identifying and addressing the needs of area youth "at risk". Through the active participation of the police in the development and implementation of a variety of these initiatives, the police, in collaboration with the rest of the community agencies and the young people themselves, may begin to more fully realize their role as principle referral agents and key to the mobilization of area agencies in addressing the needs of youth "at risk."

#### Summary

The recommendations proposed in this chapter reflect an effort to try to understand who the key players are and what their respective roles can be in development of comprehensive and collaborative community-based responses to youth "at risk" in Ottawa-Carleton. In addition, policies need to be developed that will allow for and support the

development of research endeavours such as this one which enables each community to better understand the problems that they are dealing with. They must be given the freedom and support required to develop a comprehensive and unique approach to the problems identified. Within the community itself, each individual agency and institution should implement internal policies which encourage collaboration between agencies and institutions. This type of policy must be supported and enforced from personnel at the top of the organization to those at the front-line.

CHAPTER 9CONCLUSION

The problems experienced by children and youth have been the focus of widespread attention over the last decade. Much of the work conducted in this area in recent years has been directed at developing a better understanding of and, ultimately, a more effective response to the problems of youth "at risk". Many of the initiatives undertaken from the international to the local level represent a move towards a greater effort to respond more proactively to the problem of chronic criminal behaviour.

Understanding and addressing the underlying causes of persistent and serious offending is the key to reducing the problem. Although these strategies provide some reason for optimism about the future of crime and crime prevention, these strategies are only sustainable with the development of policies and protocols which reflect the important principles of understanding and responding effectively to youth "at risk".

The results of this study indicate the importance of recognizing both the complex needs of young people "at risk" and the need for early intervention to prevent continued and serious contact with the criminal justice system. Many of the needs discovered in this study could have been identified and addressed prior to or upon initial contact with the

criminal justice system. Agents of the educational and social service system must recognize that the young people found entrenched in the criminal justice system are often the same young people that raise some concerns in their own institutions and programs.

The understanding of a common client population should be reflected in policies that govern the actions of the social service, criminal justice, and educational systems. For instance, criminal justice policies must begin to understand and recognize that many of the young perpetrators have also been victims. As found in this study, chronic criminal behaviour is a symptom of larger more deep-seated problems. Problems at home, in school, and in the community are highly correlated with persistent and serious adolescent offending. The extent to which being a victim of others' crimes or negligence results in chronic criminal cannot be overlooked in the development of criminal justice and social service policies.

At a time of great fiscal crises, the notion of early identification and intervention may have a serious long-term impact on the funding required for dealing with area serious and persistent adolescent offenders. The development of more effective cooperation between agencies and systems and improved targeting and matching of youth "at risk" with required services, will reduce the costs for services in the long run; services required for chronic criminal offenders.

The recognition of the link between victimization and delinquency points to the need for an increased use in community-based responses; responses which focus on understanding "why" they become involved in chronic criminal activity, not simply "what are we going to do with them", and the development of policies which support and encourage the use of community-based initiatives. Similarly, policy development in this area must take into consideration the unique needs of each community. A standard response is not possible when dealing with the young people in the community. The needs identified and the responses employed must reflect the individual needs of that particular community.

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APPENDIX A

Committee Members

APPENDIX A

Youth in Conflict with the Law Committee

Dick Weiler  
Chairman  
Youth in Conflict with the Law  
Task Force  
61 Okanagan Drive  
Nepean, ONT  
K2H 7G3

Janet Whillans  
Director Community Program Development  
Ottawa YM-YWCA  
180 Argyle Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 1B7

Joan Sampson  
President, Ottawa YM-YWCA  
180 Argyle Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 1B7

Staff Sergeant Jeff Gordon  
Ottawa Police Department  
Youth Liaison  
474 Elgin Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 2J6

Sergeant Tim Armour  
Youth Liaison  
Nepean Police Department  
245 Greenbank Road  
Nepean, ONT  
K2H 8W9

Andrejs Berzins  
Senior Crown Attorney  
Court House  
161 Elgin Street  
Room 3045  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 2K1

Donna Eastwood  
Office of the Crown Attorney  
Court House  
161 Elgin Street  
Room 3045  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 2K1

Rev. Don Anderson  
Court Chaplain  
7 Galt Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1S 5G4

Mr. Laurent Couture  
Ministry of Community and Social Services  
7th Floor  
10 Rideau Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1N 9J1

Mr. Mac McPherson  
Probation Officer  
Ministry of Community and Social Services  
900 Lady Ellen Place Suite 11  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1Z 5L5

Mr. Ken Kealey  
Probation Officer Phase I  
Co-ordinator PIP Program  
Ministry of Community and Social Services  
900 Lady Ellen Place Suite 11  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1Z 5L5

Doug Roy/Nicole Barbeau  
Probation and Parole Officers/Youth Workers  
Ministry of Correctional Services  
161 Elgin Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 2K1

Mr. Bob Cecil  
Youth Court Worker  
Probation Services Phase II  
161 Elgin Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 2K1

Rev. Mishka Lysack, Chaplain  
Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre  
2244 Innes Road  
Orleans, ONT  
K1B 4C4

Mr. Tim Simbole  
Youth Services Bureau  
1400 Clyde Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2G 3J2

Mr. Cliff Yomansky  
Community Sport Team Manager  
William E. Hay Centre  
Suite #1  
880 Lady Ellen Place  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1Z 5L9

Mr. Stewart King  
Correctional Services  
The Salvation Army  
Suite 500  
880 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1R 6K7

Mr. Al Emond  
The Salvation Army Chaudiere House  
86 Elm Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1R 6N4

Kathy Al-Zand  
Supervisor, Clinical Services  
Roberts/Smart Centre  
1199 Carling Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1Z 8N3

Sheila Deeks  
Director, Macphail House  
24 Adelaide Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1S 3S1

Lyallen Hayes  
Co-ordinator Counselling Office  
Elizabeth Fry Society  
195A Bank Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 1W7

Joan Hawkins  
John Howard Society of Ottawa  
933 Sommerset West  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1R 6R8

Mr. Rob Tripp  
New Beginnings for Youth  
Suite 204  
1400 Highgate Road  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2C 2Y6

Rosemary Lewis  
New Beginnings for Youth  
Suite 204  
1400 Highgate Road  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2C 2Y6

Julie Connelly  
Co-ordinator  
Ottawa-Carleton Community Service Order Program  
294 Albert Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1P 5G8

Stewart Smith  
Fairbairn House  
254 Paulin Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 5T3

Jeff Walker  
Supervisor, Residential Services  
Children's Aid Society  
1370 Bank Street  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1H 7Y3

Mr. Dan Wiseman  
Chief Social Services  
Ottawa Board of Education  
330 Gilmour Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 0P9

Mr. Frank Martin  
Executive Director  
Social Planning Council of  
Ottawa-Carleton  
256 King Edward Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1N 7M1

Lorraine Touchette  
177 Teal Crescent  
Orleans, ONT  
K1E 2C3

June Bourgeau  
YM-YWCA Board Member  
78 Argue Drive  
Nepean, ONT  
K2E 6S1

Susan Wright  
YM-YWCA Board Member  
13-b Windsor Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1S 0W3

Jeannette St.Jacques  
Chairperson  
Mayor's Task Force on Youth Employment  
219 Argyle Avenue  
Ottawa, ONT  
K2P 2H4

Don Andrews  
Dept. of Psychology  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1S 5B6

Tullio Caputo  
Sociology and Anthropology Dept.  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, ONT  
K1S 5B6

APPENDIX B

Program/Service Survey

# YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

## PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Give a short description of your agency, its purpose and functions, and outline its various characteristics such as personnel, funding sources, etc.

For each program that you offer for youth at risk and/or in conflict with the law, give a short (one or two-page) description outlining the following:

1. Type of program. The committee has defined the following types of programs:

Prevention: Programs or services geared to "youth at risk" i.e. youth heading towards being in conflict with the law or have been previously involved.

Diversion: Programs or services to which police refer youth prior to laying charges (deferred action).

Alternative Measures: Programs/services which are post-charge and pre-court as defined by the Ontario Government (and Y.O.A.) and carried out by the Crown.

Dispositions: Programs or services that are at sentencing level of the Court e.g. probation orders, fines, open or closed custody.

Other: Specify.

2. Program objectives
3. Target group(s) served by your program: characteristics, who do you take? who don't you take? (and why?)
4. a) Maximum number of youths in your program.  
b) Do you have a waiting list?  
c) Maximum length of time youth will participate in your program?

5. Relationships with other agencies. Include a brief description of the relevant agencies/systems and the nature of the relationship as defined under the following categories:
  - a) Referrals from agencies/systems
  - b) Collaborate with them when working with youth
  - c) Referrals to agencies/systems
  
6. Types of services offered by your program. In your description, include the following information:
  - what the program actually does and how it is done;
  - type of contact with clients;
  - follow-up procedures; and,
  - any rules related to the services offered.

PART B (continued)

INFORMATION ON YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

1. Give an estimate of the annual number or percentage of referrals to your program (by age group)
  - a) deferred by police
  - b) post-charge/pre-court (crown)
  - c) pre-disposition (crown, probation)
  - d) disposition
2. What is the annual number or percentage of youth at intake that have an outstanding charge while in the program? Give an estimate for each relevant program.
3. What is the annual number or percentage of youth charged with a new offence while in the program? Give an estimate for each relevant program.
4. Do you find that the existence of outstanding charges while in the program has an effect on programming? If so, in what way?
5. Give a short description of cases you needed to refer to another service.

PART B (continued)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What preventative programs would you like to see available?
  
2. What diversion programs would you like to see available?
  
3. If you are familiar with the Alternative Measures Program Model, in your opinion, what are the positive and negative aspects of the program model?
  
4. What alternative measures programs would you like to see available?
  
5. What disposition programs would you like to see available?
  
6. What further services are required in the community for young people (specify by gender and age)?

7. Which program areas, of those noted above, do you feel are most needed in dealing with young people? List programs according to age and gender in order of perceived importance.
  
8. Could you see your agency offering additional services other than the one(s) you have already identified in your program description (Part B, pages 1-2)?
  
9. Could you see your agencies rendering services to another target group(s) other than the one you have already described in your program description (Part B, pages 1-2)?
  
10. What kind of clients do you find hard to place in a program (or within your program)?
  
11. Are there particular regions of the city which need services (i.e. Vanier, Sandyhill, etc.)?

APPENDIX C

Youth Profile Data Collection Survey

Program Name:

Subject #:

1. Age:	2. Gender: M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Ethnic Group:		
4. Language: English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____				
<b>A. CURRENT INVOLVEMENT WITH CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:</b>				
5. Nature of Offence(s) and Date of Offence(s):				
6. Nature/Outcome of Involvement with Agency:				
7. Identify previous 3 offences for which youth has been in contact with the Juvenile Justice System:				
	Agency Involved	Date of Involvement	Nature of Involvement	Outcome(s)
A.				
B.				
C.				
<b>B. PERSONAL HISTORY</b>				
8. Living Arrangement: With Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Social Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Self-sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Self/Welfare <input type="checkbox"/> Self/Parental Support <input type="checkbox"/> Supervised Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ Previous/Present Intervention: No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, specify agency and nature of service:				
9. Place of Residence (by city/area):				
10. School/Work Status: Attending School <input type="checkbox"/> School & Work <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time Work/Not at School <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed/Not at School <input type="checkbox"/> Previous/Present Employment/Training Program: No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, specify agency and nature of service:				
11. Delinquent Peer Association: No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Previous/Present Intervention: No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, specify agency and nature of service (e.g., court order to restrict association):				

12. Use of Leisure/Recreation Time (e.g., weekends, evenings, etc.):

**C. EDUCATION**

13. Level of Completed Education:

14. School Performance:

Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

15. General Attitude in Class:

Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

16. Relationship with Peers/Social Skills:

Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

17. Learning Disability: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Specify:

Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

18. Truancy: No \_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_ Occasionally \_\_\_ Frequently \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

19. Drop-out: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

**D. PERSONAL HEALTH  
Substance Abuse:**

20. Alcohol Use/Abuse: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

21. Drug Use/Abuse: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

**Health Problems:**

22. Physical Health Problem(s): No  Yes  Specify:  
Previous/Present Intervention: No  Yes  Don't Know   
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

23. Physical Disability(ies): No  Yes  Specify:  
Previous/Present Intervention: No  Yes  Don't Know   
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

24. Mental Health Problem(s): No  Yes  Specify:  
Previous/Present Intervention: No  Yes  Don't Know   
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

**E. YOUTH'S ATTITUDE(S):**

25. Toward Delinquency:

26. Toward the Criminal Justice System:

27. Motivation/Response to Present Intervention:

**F. BEHAVIOURAL HISTORY:**

28. History of Rejection from Previous Agency/Program: No   
Yes  Specify agency and reason:

29. History of Expulsion from Previous Agency/Program: No   
Yes  Specify agency and reason:

**Antisocial Behaviour**

30. Lying / Stealing: No  Yes   
Previous/Present Intervention: No  Yes  Don't Know   
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

31. Aggressive Behaviour: No  Yes   
Previous/Present Intervention: No  Yes  Don't Know   
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

32. Quiet/Withdrawn Behaviour: No  Yes   
Previous/Present Intervention: No  Yes  Don't Know   
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

**G. FAMILY BACKGROUND**

33. Single Parent: No  Separated  Divorced  Widowed   
Other (specify):

34. Family Size: Parent(s) #  Siblings #

35. Criminal History of Other Family Members: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
If yes, specify:

36. Apparent Economic Status: Upper Class \_\_\_ Middle Class \_\_\_  
Lower Class \_\_\_

37. Contact with Family: None \_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_  
Occasionally \_\_\_ Frequently \_\_\_

38. Physical Abuse: None \_\_\_ Youth \_\_\_ Siblings \_\_\_ Parents \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

39. Sexual Abuse: None \_\_\_ Youth \_\_\_ Siblings \_\_\_ Parents \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

40. Alcoholism: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

41. Apparent Marital Conflict: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

42. Family Relations/Parenting: Good \_\_\_ Adequate \_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_  
Previous/Present Intervention: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_  
If yes, specify agency and nature of service:

**H. ADDITIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES**

(i.e., G.A.S., Welfare, Unemployment Insurance, Mental Health, etc.)

43. Specify Other Social Services Currently Involved with the  
Youth/Family

- a) Agency:
- b) Nature of Involvement:
- c) Service(s) Provided:

- a) Agency:
- b) Nature of Involvement:
- c) Service(s) Provided:

APPENDIX D

Youth Profile Guide

YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

YOUTH PROFILE

GUIDE

### Instructions

This guide has been devised in order to ensure some consistency with regards to the definitions attributed to the characteristics outlined. The youth profile outlines all the relevant characteristics identified by the participating agencies as important in the identification of youth needs and youth at risk. The form asks you to identify three things:

- (1) Is the characteristic relevant to the youth;
- (2) Has the youth/family had any previous intervention for the characteristic in question;
- (3) What are/were the specific intervention(s), the agency(ies) involved, and the nature of the service(s) provided.

A large proportion of the following questions require a two-part response. The first requires a check mark (✓) in response to the initial question of whether or not the characteristic is relevant to the youth. If the response to the initial question is yes, further information is required:

- i) to indicate whether or not there is or has been some intervention for the characteristic in question. If the answer is 'yes', please circle whether the youth/family has had the intervention in the past or is presently involved in a program.  
e.g. Previous/Present Intervention: ( )No (✓)Yes ( )Don't know
- ii) to note the specifics of the intervention (e.g. agency, nature of service).

A smaller proportion of the questions will require a descriptive response. Please refer to the guide to examine the kinds of questions you may ask in order to provide an adequate response.

We understand that a full response to these questions depends, to a large extent, on the cooperation of the youth. We simply ask you to complete the forms to the best of your ability. Individual arrangements will be made with each agency as to how and when the completed forms will be collected by the researcher.

We thank you for your efforts in helping to make this important project a success.

## GUIDE

1. **AGE:** For the purpose of this project, we ask that you record the youth's age at time of intake/contact.

2. **GENDER**

3. **ETHNIC GROUP:** Note the ethnicity or race of the youth in the space provided (e.g. Italian, Hispanic, East Indian, etc.).

4. **LANGUAGE:** Place a check in the appropriate space and specify the language if 'other' is checked.

### CURRENT INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

5. **NATURE OF OFFENCE(S) AND DATE OF OFFENCE(S):** Specify the present offence(s) for which the youth is now involved with the system, and the date(s) of each offence (day/month/year).

6. **NATURE/OUTCOME OF INVOLVEMENT WITH AGENCY:** Specify the agency involved (e.g. police, court, probation, etc.), the nature of the involvement for the present offence (e.g. contact, arrest, charged, trial, remand, etc), and the outcome (e.g. warning, discussion with parent(s), diversion, sentencing, etc.).

7. **PREVIOUS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:** Record the previous 3 offences for which the youth was in contact with the system (if relevant). Be sure to specify each of the agencies involved for each offence, and the nature and outcome of each contact.

i) Agency Involved: Police, court, probation, dispositional agency, etc.

ii) Date of Involvement: Specify day/month/year

iii) Nature of Involvement: Specify in relation to the agency(ies) involved (ie. a) police: contact, arrest, charged, etc.; b) court: alternative measures, trial, sentencing, etc.; c) dispositional agency: open custody, CSO, secure custody, etc.).

iv) Outcome(s): Once again, specify in relation to the agency(ies) involved (ie. a) police: warning, discussion with parents/school, diversion, etc.; b) court: charge(s) dropped, disposition (specify agency and nature of service(s)), etc.; c) dispositional agency: length of custody term, services/programs, etc.).

### PERSONAL HISTORY

8. **LIVING ARRANGEMENT:** Check one of the following categories for the youth's present accommodations.

i) With parent(s): presently living with parent(s)

ii) Parent/Social Housing: presently living with parent(s), but in a social housing development.

iii) Self-sufficient: youth lives on his/her own and supports him/

herself.

- iv) Self/welfare: youth lives on his/her own, but is supported by welfare.
- v) Self/welfare: youth lives on his/her own, but is supported by his/her parent(s).
- vi) Supervised residence: e.g. group home.
- vii) Other (specify): e.g. friends, relatives, etc.

**9. PLACE OF RESIDENCE:** Specify the area of the city in which the youth presently resides (e.g. Sandyhill, Lowertown, Overbrook, Bayshore, Hunt Club, etc.).

**10. SCHOOL/WORK STATUS:** Check the appropriate space for the youth's present status.

**11. DELINQUENT PEER ASSOCIATION:** Check 'yes' if the youth has ever associated with groups of other young people whose activities are mischievous or delinquent.

**12. USE OF LEISURE/RECREATION TIME:** Give an indication of the kinds of things the youth does outside of school/work (e.g. on weekends, evenings, etc.). For example, does the youth participate in any organized prosocial activities? Does the youth spend too much leisure time in unconstructive pursuits (i.e. too frequent time in arcades or amusement facilities, hanging around shopping centres and street corners)? Does the youth have any constructive interests such as hobbies, sports, clubs, etc.?

## EDUCATION

**13. LEVEL OF COMPLETED EDUCATION:** Record the youth's last level of completed education.

**14. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE:** Give an indication of the youth's general level of achievement/performance. For example, good/poor student, has the youth ever failed/skipped a grade, etc.

**15. GENERAL ATTITUDE IN CLASS:** The idea here is to get some indication of the youth's level of interest in schooling (positive, negative, indifferent, etc.). For example, does the youth dislike school, teacher, etc.? Does he/she voice an inclination to quit? Is he/she bored and/or does not try to work? Is the youth disruptive in classroom (e.g. attention-seeking, defiant of teacher, major acting out)?

**16. RELATIONSHIP WITH PEERS/SOCIAL SKILLS:** Give some indication of whether the youth has good/positive peer skills/relationships (eg. alot of good friends, a leader, gets along well with others, etc.) or does he/she appear to have poor peer skills/relationships. Poor peer skills include fighting with others constantly, argues, has no best friends at school, and isolates him/herself from the others.

**17. LEARNING DISABILITY:** Check 'yes' if the youth has been identified as having impediments to school achievement (either psychologically or biologically based). Has the youth ever been involved in special education classes, or had individualized programming in the classroom?

**18. TRUANCY:** Has the youth missed school-days or skipped classes without legitimate excuses? Check the appropriate space noting the estimated frequency in which youth has been truant.

Rarely: A couple of times a year

Occasionally: Once or twice a month  
 Frequently: Several times a month

19. **DROP-OUT:** Check 'yes' if the youth has ever quit attending school.

#### PERSONAL HEALTH

20. **ALCOHOL ABUSE:** What we are looking for here is some indication of whether the youth has used/abused alcohol in such a way that it plays a role in his/her delinquent activity (e.g. committed the offence to support habit, committed the offence while intoxicated, etc.) and/or interferes with his/her life (comes to school intoxicated, cannot function to the best of his/her ability, exercises poor judgement as a result of use/abuse, etc.).

21. **DRUG ABUSE:** Once again, we are looking for the use/abuse of illicit drugs (i.e. smoked marijuana, sniffed glue, etc.) which are evidently harming the life of the youth as noted in the examples above.

22. **PHYSICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS:** Check 'yes' if the youth is frequently sick, has a history of chronic illness, or takes prescribed medications.

23. **PHYSICAL DISABILITY:** Check 'yes' if the youth has been identified as having any physical impediments.

24. **MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS:** Check 'yes' if the youth has been identified as having any mental impediments. One of the best indicators of such a problem is whether or not the youth has had any previous/present intervention with mental health facilities, psychologists, psychiatrists.

#### YOUTH'S ATTITUDE(S)

25. **TOWARD DELINQUENCY:** Give some indication of how the youth feels about his/her delinquent activity. For example, does the youth deny/accept responsibility for his/her delinquent actions? Does the youth believe that his/her delinquent actions are not wrong? Is the youth concerned about the negative sanctions of his/her behaviour? Does he/she fully realize the impact of their actions (re: victim(s))?

26. **TOWARD THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:** Give some indication of how the youth feels about the Criminal Justice System. For example, does the youth perceive the system to be fair/unfair, prejudice/ discriminatory? Does he/she blame others (e.g. system, family, school) for his/her involvement with the juvenile justice system? What is his/ her attitude toward the independent agents of the juvenile justice system (e.g. police, probation officers, judges, etc.).

27. **MOTIVATION/RESPONSE TO PRESENT INTERVENTION:** Give some indication of the youth's attitude toward the present intervention. For example, is the youth reluctant to or accepting of the intervention(s) Does he/she appear to want to better him/herself?

#### BEHAVIOURAL HISTORY

28. **HISTORY OF REJECTION:** Has the youth ever been turned away from an intervention agency(ies)? If yes, specify the agency and reason if known. For example, denied alternative measures because the youth was deemed unsuitable for the program (e.g. obviously unmotivated).

29. **HISTORY OF EXPULSION:** Has the youth ever been expelled from an intervention agency(ies)? If yes, specify the agency and reason if known. For example, taken off of the alternative measures program because of willful destruction (e.g. was not complying with program objectives). Other examples include clubs, school, employment program, etc.

#### ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

30. **LYING/STEALING:** Check 'yes' if the youth habitually lies at home/ school and/or steals property from home or school which did not exceed the value of \$20.00 (e.g. minor thefts such as small amounts of cash, cigarettes, etc.). This behaviour does not refer to shoplifting.

31. **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR:** Check 'yes' if the youth typically reacts to situations with physical defiance (e.g. hitting, getting into fights, etc.).

32. **QUIET/WITHDRAWN:** Check 'yes' if the youth is an introvert in programmed activities and/or situations (e.g. school, recreational activities, etc.), avoids people, or avoids situations where he/she will be noticed.

#### FAMILY BACKGROUND

33. **SINGLE PARENT:** Specify if the youth has ever lived in a situation for a prolonged period of time with a single parent. If yes, check one of the categories and specify if other is checked (e.g. separated due to long term hospitalization of one parent, long term travelling of one parent, etc.).

34. **FAMILY SIZE:** Specify present family size.

33. **CRIMINAL HISTORY OF OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS:** Check 'yes' if any member of the youth's family has ever had a criminal history and indicate who the individual(s) is/are.

36. **APPARENT ECONOMIC STATUS:** The answer to this question requires a certain amount of subjective interpretation on the part of the agency. Please ascertain to the best of your ability the apparent wealth/poverty or economic status of the youth's family and classify your response in one of the three categories provided (lower, middle or upper class). For example, do they live in a home or apartment? Do they own or rent the dwelling? What is the father's and/or mother's occupation? Do they have substantial financial difficulties? Do they receive financial assistance (i.e. welfare)?

37. **CONTACT WITH FAMILY:** This question will give us some indication of the nature of the relationship that the youth presently has with his/her family. Specify the youth's present contact with his/her family by noting the estimated frequency:

None: Have no contact with family

Rarely: A couple of times a year

Occasionally: Once or twice a month

Frequently: On a regular basis

38. **PHYSICAL ABUSE:** Has there ever been any evidence of physical abuse of the youth/family member(s)? If yes, identify all the abused.

39. **SEXUAL ABUSE:** Has there ever been any evidence of sexual abuse of the of the youth/family member(s)? If yes, identify all the abused.

40. **ALCOHOLISM:** Check 'yes' if the youth's father and/or mother has ever experienced

alcohol problems.

41. **APPARENT MARITAL CONFLICT:** Check 'yes' if the youth's parents ever had any difficulty in solving marital problems, fight constantly, do not communicate with each other, have poor attitudes toward each other, if the youth's parents are separated/divorced and have a strained relationship.

42. **FAMILY RELATIONS/PARENTING:** Specify the nature of the youth's present relationship with his/her parent(s) using the guidelines provided below.

**GOOD:** The youth and his/her parent(s) see each other on a regular basis, appear to communicate quite openly with each other, value each others opinions and feelings, have a much closer relationship than those defined ~~above~~ below

**ADEQUATE:** The youth and his/her parent(s) maintain contact with each other, appear to have a civil relationship, and seem to have some respect for one another.

**POOR:** The youth and his/her parent(s) constantly have arguments when they are together, avoid each other or have little contact, are indifferent to each other, do not care what the other thinks, feels, or expects, or the relationship appears to be hostile, punishing and uncaring.

#### **ADDITIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES**

43. **OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES:** Indicate whether the youth and/or his/her family has ever had any other social forms of intervention other than those already mentioned in any of the previous questions. If yes, indicate the agency(ies) involved, the nature of the involvement, and the type(s) of services(s) provided.

APPENDIX E

Weighting and Breakdown of Composites

Coding Scheme for  
Composite Profiles

Family Composite

<u>Single Parent:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Criminal History of Family:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Apparent Economic Status:</u>		
Upper	=	0
Middle	=	1
Lower	=	2
<u>Contact with Family:</u>		
Frequent to Occasional	=	0
Rarely to Never	=	1
<u>Physical Abuse:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Sexual Abuse:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Alcoholism:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Marital Conflict:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Family Relations:</u>		
Good	=	0
Adequate to Poor	=	1

Education Composite

<u>School/Work Status:</u>		
Attending School		
School/Work	=	0
Work		
Unemployed/Not at School	=	1

<u>School Performance:</u>		
Good	=	0
Adequate to Poor	=	1
<u>General Attitude in Class:</u>		
Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	1
<u>Relationship with Peers:</u>		
Good	=	0
Adequate to Poor	=	1
<u>Learning Disability:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Truancy:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Drop-out:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1

Behaviour Composite

<u>Use of Leisure/Recreation Time:</u>		
Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	1
<u>Motivation/Response to Intervention:</u>		
Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	1
<u>History of Rejection:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>History of Expulsion:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Lying/Stealing:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Aggressive Behaviour:</u>		
No	=	0
Yes	=	1

Substance Abuse Composite

Alcohol Abuse:

No	=	0
Yes	=	1

Drug Abuse:

No	=	0
Yes	=	1

Attitude Composite

Attitude Toward Delinquency:

Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	1

Attitude Toward CJS:

Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	1

APPENDIX F

Alpha Reliability of Composites

COMPOSITE	RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT
Family	.6386
Education	.6643
Substance Abuse	.7960
Attitude	.6790
Behaviour	.5859

APPENDIX G

Regression Analysis of Composites

The development of new profiles devised on the basis of a regressions analysis was essentially a three part process:

(1) The variables that had been selected to be included in each of the composites were assessed to determine if there were in fact a linear relationship between each dependent variable and the entire set of independent variables - then selected the order in which each of the variables should be entered into the regression equation.

(2) Once the order was determined, each of the variables was entered independently to determine their R-squared change - the relative importance of each of the independent variables when a variable is entered into an equation that already contains the other independent variables. A large change in R-squared indicates that a variable provides unique information about the dependent variable that is not available from the other independent variables in the equation. The R-squared change coefficient eventually served as the weight for the variable, but was used at this stage to determine if any variable should be dropped from the equation/composite. Any variable with a change in R-squared that is less than .0005 is dropped from the composite profiles because it is deemed to contribute very little unique information to the overall composite profile.

(3) Once each of the variables in each of the composites were assessed for a change in R-squared, those with a coefficient greater than .0005 were reassessed on the basis of their intercorrelation with the other remaining variables in the composite. One of the problems with running a multiple regression analysis is that the results may often be hindered by a high intercorrelation between the independent variables. In this case, a high intercorrelation between two of the variables may have resulted in the "double weighting" of these variables. Therefore, a general rule was set such that in order for the remaining variables to be included in the composite profile, these variables must have, on average, a correlation greater than .10 and less than .50 with the other variables to be included in the profile. The reason for this is that those variables with a correlation less than .10 should not really be included in the composite since they do not appear to have any relationship with the other variables in the composite. Dropping those variables with a correlation greater than .50 will assist in avoiding the "double weighting" of some of the variables.

Based upon the above procedures, a new set of composite profiles with different weights for each of the variables was devised and is presented below.

Composite	R-Squared Changed	Score
<u>Family Composite</u>		
<u>Family Relations:</u>	.145	
Good	=	0
Adequate to Poor	=	73
<u>Single Parent:</u>	.018	
No	=	0
Yes	=	9
<u>Contact with Family:</u>	.009	
Frequent to Occasional	=	0
Rarely to Never	=	5
<u>Criminal History of Family:</u>	.011	
No	=	0
Yes	=	6
<u>Economic Status:</u>	.002	
Upper	=	0
Middle	=	1
Lower	=	2
<u>Alcoholism:</u>	.006	
No	=	0
Yes	=	3
<u>Physical Abuse:</u>	.002	
No	=	0
Yes	=	1
<u>Sexual Abuse:</u>	.028	
No	=	0
Yes	=	14
<u>Education Composite</u>		
<u>School/Work Status:</u>	.080	
Attending School		
School/Work	=	0
Work		
Unemployed/Not at School	=	13

<u>Truancy:</u>	.157	
No	=	0
Yes	=	26
<u>General Attitude in Class:</u>	.006	
Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	1
<u>Drop-Out:</u>	.023	
No	=	0
Yes	=	4

Behaviour Composite

<u>Lying/Stealing:</u>	.060	
No	=	0
Yes	=	8
<u>History of Expulsion:</u>	.107	
No	=	0
Yes	=	13
<u>Use of Leisure:</u>	.019	
Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	2
<u>Aggressive Behaviour:</u>	.079	
No	=	0
Yes	=	10
<u>Motivation to Intervention:</u>	.012	
Good to Adequate	=	0
Poor	=	2
<u>History of Rejection:</u>	.008	
No	=	0
Yes	=	1

Substance Abuse Composite

<u>Drug Abuse:</u>	.095	
No	=	0
Yes	=	95

Attitude Composite

<u>Attitude Toward the CJS:</u>	.117	
No	=	0
Yes	=	117

An analysis of the variation between the newly defined composite profiles was carried out using three of the independent variables used previously. The results of this analysis are outline below.

### New Composite Profiles - Regression Analysis

#### i) Previous Contact with the Criminal Justice System:

The results of the crosstabulation between the new composite profiles devised on the basis of a regression analysis and the dependent variable "previous contact with the criminal justice system" indicates much support for the results of the composite profiles devised on the basis of logic (binary coding scheme). Once again there was a significant difference between the extent of one's involvement with the system and one's composite profiles.

#### ii) Severity of Offence History:

Once again, the results of the crosstabulation indicate that there was a significant difference between the severity of one's offence history and one's composite profiles. The only variation witnessed between the results of this analysis and that of the use of the other composite profiles devised on the basis of logic, was that the family composites did not differ significantly between the youth with various offence histories.

#### iii) Where the Youth is in the System Now:

The results of the crosstabulation between the new composite profiles and where one is in the system now, were similar to those found using the other composite profiles (binary).

The results of this analysis support the findings of the variations in composite profiles devised on the basis of logic.

APPENDIX H

Severity of Offence Scale

Severity of Offence Scale

OFFENCE	RECODE	SCORE
Murder, homicide	11	10
Sexual Assault	12	9
Assault (Agg.; with weapon)	13	8
Other Assault	14	7
Robbery	15	7
Against Person (nonspecific)	10	7
Against Person (other)	16	7
Break and Enter	21	6
Theft - Motor vehicle	22	6
Offensive Weapons	33	6
Theft Over	23	5
Frauds	26	5
Drugs - trafficking, import	42	5
Against Property (nonspecific)	20	4
Theft Under	24	4
Shoplifting	25	4
Against Property (other)	27	4
Bail Violation	34	4
Escape Custody	36	4
Trespassing, wilful damage	38	4
Other Criminal Code Offenses	30	3
Prostitution	31	3
Gaming & Betting	32	3
Disturbing the Peace (mischief)	35	3
Public morals, indecent act	37	3
Statutes (nonspecific)	40	2
Drugs - Possession	41	2
Drugs - Other	42	2
Federal, Provincial and Municipal Statutes	44-48	1
Missing	99	0