Treatment Strategies for Juvenile Delinquency: Alternative Solutions

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ABSTRACT: Social workers involved in the treatment of adjudicated youth commonly encounter youth sentenced to traditional incarceration or parole as a path to rehabilitation. This article examines alternative treatment strategies for adjudicated youth, namely Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs (often called mediation), Boot Camps, and Wrap-Around Community-Based Care, to help these youth avoid reoffending. While popular with the media, policymakers, or the general public, an evaluation of the literature makes it clear that these programs do not necessarily guarantee lower recidivism rates for program participants. It is evident that further research and evaluation must be done in order to more fully understand the drawbacks and benefits of alternative strategies, and to more appropriately help adjudicated youth and their communities.

KEY WORDS: Adjudicated Youth; Victim Offender Reconciliation; Mediation; Boot Camp; Community; Juvenile Delinquency.

Juvenile Crime—An On-Going Problem

Despite the recognition of juvenile crime as a national problem in 1974 by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) and the reauthorization of this act by Congress in 1984, juvenile delinquency has continued to be a concern to policymakers, the general public, social workers and other treatment specialists. As those involved grow more desperate in their search for a solution to this national problem, measures against juveniles have become more punitive, and courts often have opted for placing juveniles in detention centers or residential treatment (Krisberg, Schwartz, Litsky, & Austin, 1986). The JJDPA called for an increase in the provision of alternatives to institutionalization, but since passage of the act, Krisberg

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et al. noted that the time juveniles spent in detention centers increased rather than decreased. According to these authors, arrests of juvenile status offenders showed a decline of 46% between 1975 and 1982. However, in the same time period, the proportion of arrested youth who were referred to juvenile court increased from slightly less than half to 58% by 1991. In 1982 the number of juveniles held in detention centers was at the highest since 1971, despite the goal to reduce this form of treatment (Krisberg et al., 1986).

This article will examine three alternative forms of treatment for juveniles who have been ruled delinquent. Victim-Offender Reconciliation (or Mediation), Boot Camps, and Community-Based Wrap-Around Care each attempt to rehabilitate youth and prevent re-offense in a unique way, as alternatives to long-term incarceration. Social workers whose focus is the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders may often find themselves working in any of these arenas.

Despite the mandates of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and the existence of programs that divert youth from traditional correctional institutions, little research has been done into the effectiveness of treatment strategies that provide an alternative to institutionalization. However, public policy is often driven by public perception of a problem (Elrod & Kelley, 1995; Schwartz, Guo, & Kerbs, 1993). Today's public perceives juvenile crime as rampant, and juvenile offenders as malicious criminals. There is little patience for finding a treatment that works; rather, policymakers reflect the public's desire to "get tough" by creating solutions to delinquency that are punitive (Elord & Kelley).

According to Lab and Whitehead (1988), correctional treatment programs have often been evaluated on the basis of abstract concepts such as an increase in self-esteem or empathy for the youth involved, or attitude changes in offenders. Although the importance of these measures cannot be denied, and researchers have often found a link between such concepts and acts of delinquency by youth, Lab and Whitehead maintain that the most important point to consider is recidivism.

An examination of these three treatment strategies is important in order to determine what is most effective in treating juvenile delinquency, and in furthering an understanding of what best affects juvenile offenders. In addition, in the push toward more punitive measures of treatment and the resulting institutionalization of youth, it is easy to neglect doing any evaluations of programs that are not institutional. In order to best serve youth and their communities, it is es-

sential to examine many strategies, and to understand what actually works in treating youth who have been ruled delinquent.

This paper provides a review of the literature and an examination of the strengths, weaknesses, and success rates based on recidivism, of the three alternatives. It will be a descriptive analysis using social work and criminology literature from the last decade, including the journals: *Social Work*, *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, *Federal Probation*, and *Crime and Delinquency.*

MEDIATION

There is a growing body of literature which holds that Victim-Offender Reconciliation Programs (otherwise known as mediation between victims and offenders) will become an effective strategy for social work treatment of juvenile delinquency (Galaway, 1996; Nugent & Paddock, 1996; Umbreit, 1993). Mediation has been shown to be a way in which victims of any age can confront their offenders, the two can agree to retributive action on the part of the offender, and both parties can grow in understanding that crime and delinquency have to do with real human beings rather than faceless victims and offenders.

Umbreit (1991) describes mediation as a process facilitated by one or more persons not involved in the dispute, which helps feuding parties to work out an acceptable settlement. Although there are steps to the mediation process and it is preferable that mediators have been trained, it is essentially an informal gathering designed to make all parties feel comfortable. According to Umbreit, mediation in a court setting has focused primarily on youth who committed non-violent acts such as burglary, theft or vandalism. Although mediation can take place in settings such as schools or between arguing neighbors, Umbreit claims that it is commonly used within the juvenile justice system for youth offenders and their adult victims. According to Umbreit and Galaway (1989), the court system usually refers juveniles to mediation depending on the degree of their offense and whether they have had previous involvement in the system. Most of the juvenile offenders have committed non-violent crimes (Umbreit, 1991, 1994). Mediation is not seen as a viable solution for violent offenders or cases of domestic abuse (Bazemore & Umbreit, 1995).

According to Galaway (1988), the concept of Victim Offender Mediation dates to 1973 in Ontario. It is based on several principles, namely that peace can be achieved and maintained through mediation; that

victims have the right to be heard in the process of achieving justice; that those in conflict should have ownership over the solution; and that the use of mediation can decrease the frequency with which the court system interferes in the lives of people. Galaway (1988) suggests that the use of mediation should result in a decrease in prison use. Rather than serving time for non-violent crimes, youth who have been ruled delinquent for committing crimes against an adult could be referred to mediation. They would complete retribution based on consultation with their victim, and stay out of the institutional settings that traditionally serve delinquent youth.

These principles buttress the concept of "restorative justice," (Umbreit, 1989; Bazemore & Umbreit, 1995; Niemeyer & Shichor, 1996), or the "humanizing of the justice system" (Umbreit, 1994). The focus is on problem solving rather than vindictiveness, and an offense is seen as being against a person, not against the state. Rather than resulting in a court-mandated decision, this view allows the victim to play a part in the proceedings, ask questions of the offender, and be empowered rather than disempowered, by the justice process. In fact, victim involvement and satisfaction has been one of the positive points mentioned in mediation studies (Umbreit, 1989; Galaway, 1988).

In Hennepin County, Minnesota, Umbreit (1989) conducted personal interviews with 50 adults who had been burglarized in 1986 and 1987. In this case, the perpetrators were not necessarily juveniles. Sixty-two percent of these victims agreed to be part of mediation, and were asked to respond to the process by explaining how they perceived the concept of fairness in mediation. Fairness and the accompanying feeling that justice had been served was broken down into three categories which were not mutually exclusive: punishment of the offender, compensation for the victim, and rehabilitation for the offender. Umbreit's subjects were either "healers" (96%, expressed concern about rehabilitation of the offender); "fixers" (94%, looked for compensation from their offender), or "avengers" (24%, sought punishment for their offender).

Regardless of category into which the victim fell, the majority (97%) reported feeling that the mediation process was fair. In addition, 94% of the victims indicated that they felt they were treated fairly by the mediator (Umbreit, 1989). Above all, the victims of crime in Umbreit's study indicated that they appreciated being involved in the justice process (62%). This empowerment is crucial to the success of mediation, claimed Umbreit. Meeting with their offender, being able to ask

questions, and playing a part in planning the sentence was important for the victims, regardless of the age of the perpetrator.

In an age when public perception holds that youth violence and delinquency has reached an all-time high, mediation may prove to be a creative, empowering way to deal with the problem. Nugent and Paddock (1996) believe the juvenile justice system cannot adequately handle the recent influx of youth, and that effective treatment is non-existent in most systems. For these reasons, they advocate the use of mediation as a solution in working with non-violent juvenile delinquents.

Before further elaboration, it is worthwhile to examine the intricacies of mediation, and to understand how the process actually works. Mediation, described earlier, takes place between two parties in a disagreement. In the case of juvenile crime, this occurs between the juvenile offender and the person or persons whom they have victimized. Mediation takes place in a neutral space, such as a community center. The mediator meets first with the juvenile offender and then with the victim(s) to obtain voluntary participation. Once at the meeting, the mediator's job is to explain and enforce rules (for example, the disputants may not interrupt each other), and to facilitate the discussion between the two parties. According to Umbreit (1993), the mediator should talk only 15–20% of the time, allowing instead for conversation between participants, who take turns raising points and asking questions. By the end of the mediation, the victim and offender draw up a plan for retribution or treatment which both agree to. This plan can include monetary payment, community service, seeking counseling or other treatment, or any other creative form of justice agreed upon by both parties. The mediator meets with all parties several weeks or months later to ensure that the plan has been, or is being, fulfilled by the offender (Nugent & Paddock, 1996; Umbreit, 1993).

Many authors point to the benefits inherent in the mediation process (Umbreit, 1991; Galaway, 1989). According to these authors, the successes of the program can be many: the youth who have offended learn the benefits of negotiation; they see that their crime affected a person or a family, rather than a nameless individual; and they are hopefully able to grow more empathic toward crime victims. According to Umbreit (1994), 77% of the youth in a sample of 468 cases, successfully completed the restitution agreed upon with their victims. Other researchers (Galaway) indicate the success of negotiated restitution contracts as well. Other evidence about attitude changes in youth due

to mediation is mostly anecdotal (Umbreit, 1993). There are benefits for victims as well, namely that they get a sense of closure to the incident and they have a feeling of control and empowerment about the outcome. Rather than becoming further victimized by the court as they passively watch discussion of their case, they are able to confront the offender and help decide on retribution (Umbreit, 1989).

Although these components are undeniably important, the question remains about the effect of mediation on reoffense. Nugent and Paddock (1996) recognized the need for empirical evidence relating to recidivism. These authors (1996) completed an extensive analysis of a mediation program in Anderson County, Tennessee, looking solely at reoffense rates of youth participants of mediation compared to a matched sample of youth who went through the traditional juvenile court procedures. Nugent and Paddock's hypothesis (1996) was that Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs (VORP) would have a positive impact on reoffense rates of juveniles, controlling for factors that play a part in anti-social behavior, such as age, family structure, and education.

For this study, Nugent and Paddock (1996) used a random sample of 100 juvenile cases referred to VORP, and 100 juvenile cases matched by crime, which went through the traditional court process. The traditional procedures included probation and incarceration of youth. In addition, for cross-validation, the authors used a second random sample of 75 youth, 25 of whom went through VORP, and 50 of whom were not involved in VORP. The authors tested whether the youth in the study reoffended within one year of being involved in VORP or coming into contact with the court.

The mean age of the youth was 15 years, and most had completed eighth grade. Eighty-one percent were male, 18% were female, and 71% lived in a single-parent household. Of the children who went through the traditional court procedures, 35% reoffended within one year. Of those who were involved with mediation, 20% reoffended within one year.

Nugent and Paddock (1996) did note that offending rates could be related to family structure, and that those from single parent households might possibly offend more frequently. However, it is possible, they maintain, that mediation programs help to contain these problems, or negate the influence that family structure has on youth's offending patterns. The authors did not control for factors such as family income, peer group, or any psychopathology that could have been present in either the youth or their families. Nugent and Paddock rec-

ognize this as a drawback to their study, and note that their results should not be generalized.

In 1990/91, Umbreit (1994) conducted an examination of 903 cases brought into mediation in Minneapolis. The offenders were juveniles (85% male, 15% female) and their victims were adults. Pre- and post-mediation interviews were administered to the participants, and two comparison groups of juveniles who did not participate in mediation were established. According to Umbreit (1994), the juveniles who participated in mediation committed fewer post-mediation crimes within one year following mediation (22%). The juveniles who underwent a court-administered program (not mediation) reoffended at a rate of 34% within the following year. Although this difference is worth noting for possible replication, Umbreit (1994) notes that the percentage difference is not statistically significant.

In another study, Niemeyer and Shichor (1996) examined the results of a mediation program in Orange County, California. Their sample was 131 juvenile cases that went through mediation. A comparison group was established of youth who had been referred to VORP but who had not participated. The authors defined recidivism as an official contact with any law enforcement agency within Orange County. No significant difference was found between the groups' contact with the law. Niemeyer and Shichor note that their study failed to show that mediation programs had any greater impact on recidivism than traditional treatment in the juvenile court.

In addition to recognizing the necessity for duplication research on the success of mediation, Umbreit (1991) was careful to note that there are important issues to consider when discussing the program's effectiveness. First, all mediation programs use volunteers. This is an essential component of mediation, as the process cannot be successful with those who are unwilling to take an active part. However, because participants are volunteers there must be recognition that they may be predisposed to feeling open and communicative about juvenile justice. Perhaps the youth who participate are those who are more concerned about their community to begin with and would be less likely to reoffend. Perhaps victims who participate are simply more open to finding the good in situations that appear to be negative. Finally, in a system that strives to divert youth who have committed minor offenses, perhaps mediation only focuses more attention on the youth and their problems. Little has been done to investigate labeling theory in relationship to youth involved in the mediation process. All of these issues should be addressed in future research.

Boot Camps

In the search for appropriate treatments for juvenile offenders, the use of boot camps, otherwise known as shock incarceration, has developed into a possible tool for rehabilitation and punishment, according to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Peters, Thomas & Zamberlain, 1997). According to the authors of an overview report on boot camps (Peters et al., 1997), as well as other authors (Mackenzie, 1990; Morash & Rucker, 1990), this treatment method is perceived by the general public and the media as a favorable midlevel treatment option, especially since boot camps appear to be "tough on crime," while at the same time applying much-needed structure and education to the lives of adolescents. However, whether the desired affects are actually achieved, and whether boot camps actually affect recidivism any more than traditional incarceration, remains questionable.

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Peters et al., 1997), the first boot camp for adults was opened in 1983. However, authors such as Krisberg (1994) and Morash and Rucker (1990) contend that the military aspect of boot camps has existed since the 1800's. Although these early camps were eventually abandoned in favor of treatments seen as less cruel, the concept of incorporating a strict physical routine into incarceration is not a new one (Krisberg, 1994).

It was not until recent years, however, that the criminal justice system began using boot camps in the treatment of youth (Peters et al., 1997). Accordingly, most research on camps has been done on adults. Nonetheless, regardless of the age of the targeted individual, the components of boot camp remain the same, and are similar across state and county lines. According to the OJJDP (Peters et al., 1997), boot camp environments mimic that of the military. Most camps include some form of job-training or educational opportunities, health or mental health care, and community service requirements (MacKenzie, 1991). The residential programs last fewer than six months, and it is important that all residents perceive that their boot camp sentence is shorter than their sentence to traditional prison would have been (MacKenzie, 1991). Boot camps do differ in the amounts and importance of rehabilitation in their program. Some also have extensive aftercare programs, while others do not.

Some researchers point to the positives in the boot camp system (Burton, Marquart, Cuvelier, Alarid, & Hunter, 1993). First, the use

of boot camps tends to appease the public's desire for punishment while at the same time helping offenders in skills such as job training or education. Secondly, according to these authors, boot camps are a cost-effective way of dealing with a growing prison population. Participants tend to be those convicted of non-violent crimes, and boot camps divert these offenders from lengthier, and hence more costly, prison terms (MacKenzie, 1991).

Burton, Marquart, Cuvelier, Alarid, and Hunter (1993) examined the attitude change of 389 adults who participated in a 90-day boot camp experience. Services provided at the camp included health and vocational education and physical and social skills training. The authors used entrance and exist surveys to measure the participants' attitudes about the following areas: drug and alcohol counseling; AIDS education; perceptions of the program; perceptions about rehabilitation and punishment; relations with family and friends; and self-control and coping skills. The results of this analysis indicated that, to some extent, boot camps are successful in changing some basic attitudes about crime, delinquency, and life opportunities. Respect of the participants for the staff increased, participants indicated more hope in their future in terms of work and education, their relationships with family had improved, and they reportedly showed greater self-control and coping skills (Burton et al.). In addition, comparison of ingoing and outgoing measures indicated a change in attitude about behavior and rehabilitation. Asked both before entering the boot camp and at exit interviews if the program would change their behavior, a greater number of participants answered in the positive upon leaving than entering. Similarly, fewer participants said the program was unhelpful upon leaving than had indicated this belief upon entering.

Burton, Marquart, Cuvelier, Alarid, and Hunter (1993) acknowledge that their study did not focus on recidivism, but they remain hopeful that the attitudinal changes expressed by the participants in this study point to a possible reduction in recidivism. They suggest that with these attitude changes and an intensive and well-run aftercare program, many adults could be diverted from a life of crime.

Most other authors and researchers are not as positive about the rehabilitative effects of boot camps (Osler, 1991; MacKenzie, 1994). Burns and Vita (1995) completed an impact analysis of one of the first existing adult boot camps, in Alabama. Their study included an experimental group of 153 boot camp graduates and two comparison groups of offenders who were sentenced to traditional probation or traditional incarceration. Recidivism was measured by examining re-arrest rates,

reconviction, and reincarceration. The participants in the boot camp were first-time offenders who had committed nonviolent crimes.

The results of this study were disappointing. Burns and Vito (1995) found that recidivism was not affected by participation in the boot camp. Those who were put on traditional probation had a higher rate of technical violations (52.4%), but the boot camp participants had a higher rate of new offenses (54.5%). In addition, the reincarceration rate for the comparison groups and boot camp group was similar, with the slight difference noted as not statistically significant.

Similarly, MacKenzie (1994) also found that although "something in the boot camp atmosphere did have a positive impact on the offenders" (p. 62), the participants were not necessarily affected in terms of recidivism any differently than by traditional incarceration. MacKenzie (1994) conducted evaluations of eight boot camp programs in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas. All of the programs serviced adult offenders, and were evaluated for implementation and development, attitude changes, recidivism, and impact on prison crowding. Results differed from each state, but in general the impact on recidivism was not great. MacKenzie found that in Texas and Oklahoma there was no statistically significant difference between those who were sentenced to boot camp and those who were given parole. The likelihood of re-arrest for boot camp graduates in these states was between 23% and 63%.

In some states, such as Florida and South Carolina, there were positive differences in recidivism, but MacKenzie (1994) noted that these differences likely existed due to preexisting differences in the participants. In addition, MacKenzie noted that characteristics of certain programs, especially the intensity and time devoted to therapeutic care, could have influenced any results that compare the programs. In short, although MacKenzie (1994) did not necessarily find any negative components to the boot camp programs, there was not enough evidence to support the programs as a more successful treatment option than any other incarceration or probation program.

The literature reported thus far has focused on the use of boot camps for the adult population. Not surprisingly, however, the literature on boot camps for youth, which is sparse, does not hold any better news in the search for a way to affect recidivism. In fact, the study issued by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Peters et al., 1997) indicates that perhaps there are components of boot camps that would be singularly unhelpful to youth. For example, the authors (1997) note that youth respond to encouragement rather

than punishment, and that the nature of adolescence is to reject rules and structure imposed by adults. Punishment and rules are two facets which are essential to the functioning of boot camps.

For these reasons, and after the examination of recidivism rates of adults in boot camps, it comes as no surprise that Peters et al. (1997) found that boot camps for youth had no certain affect on recidivism. The OJJDP study (Peters et al., 1997) examined three programs, in Cleveland, Ohio, Denver, Colorado, and Mobile, Alabama. The youth admitted were as young as 14 (in Mobile) and no older than 17. The populations were from mainly urban areas. These experimental groups were randomly selected for participation in boot camp between April 1992 and December 1993. Matched groups were formed from youth sentenced to traditional incarceration and parole. The sample sizes for the experimental boot camp groups were as follows: Cleveland, 182; Denver, 124; and Mobile, 187. Most youth (63% in Cleveland; 42% in Denver; and 70% in Mobile) had a prior offense on their record. In addition, most (40% in Cleveland; 68% in Denver; and 50% in Mobile) had been convicted of a property offense. The number who had committed a violent crime was greatest in Cleveland, at 33%.

Peters et al. (1997) found that the youth in all three programs improved academically and took steps toward self-improvement. In Cleveland and Mobile, 68% and 88% respectively went up a grade level in language and reading skills. In Cleveland, two-thirds of the graduating youth returned to school or began work on a GED. Despite these encouraging signs, however, it was still found that recidivism rates were not affected. For this study, recidivism was defined as a new offense which resulted in court adjudication.

When comparing the experimental groups with the control groups, in two of the three programs, the youth participants of boot camp actually had higher levels of recidivism. In Cleveland, 72% of released youth were adjudicated for new offenses, compared to 50% of youth in the control group, those who had spent time in a county or state detention center. In Denver as well, the rate of boot camp reoffense was higher, although only by a small amount (39% compared to 36%). Only in Mobile did boot camp participants reoffend less, but in only a slight way. The rates between experimental and control groups for this city's program were comparable, at 28% and 31%. In addition, Peters et al. (1997) found that in all three programs, the youth who had been through boot camp actually reoffended more quickly than those in the control group. In Mobile, where this difference was the most drastic, it took 156 days for a reoffense to occur for youth who had been

through boot camp, whereas the comparative number of days for youth who had not been in boot camp was 232 days.

Results such as these, in addition to the analysis of the adults who participated in boot camps, no doubt led Krisberg (1994) to call the concept of boot camp a "quick fix" (p. 47). Although these camps may be cost-effective, further research is essential if juvenile courts and those who work with adolescent offenders insist on keeping boot camps as a viable treatment option. Krisberg recommends a closer examination of which offenders boot camps affect the most, and also advocates for other services such as drug and alcohol treatment and an educational component in all camps. The military regiment, he claims, is not enough to stop criminals from reoffending. Finally, Krisberg points to the necessity of a well-designed and intensive after-care program.

Community-Based Wrap-Around Care

One of the mandates of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 was that treatment strategies for youth processed through juvenile court would begin to utilize community-based models. Rather than detaining youth who had been adjudicated in detention centers or other institutions, community-based settings would be used. This deinstitutionalization called for the problem of juvenile crime to be addressed in a setting other than detention homes or residential facilities. Essentially, the trend moved toward care within and by the community to prevent youth from re-offending.

Northey, Primer, and Christensen (1997) provide one of the few written descriptions of a comprehensive model of community care for youth in the court system. In their writing, they call their program the Ecosystemic Natural Wrap-Around Model, and suggest that appropriate care for adjudicated youth should include the utilization of the many strengths and people already present in a family. Essentially, the authors maintain that natural wrap-around care focuses on "the strengths within the natural environment, building upon the values and beliefs of the family and the individual" (p. 14).

Natural Wrap-Around Care is based on the premise that the family of the delinquent youth does not need to adopt a new set of values or mores in order to prevent further delinquency. Instead, the family maintains their current value system, and the people already involved

in a youth's life work on issues of self-esteem, self-concept, and peer pressure with that youth (Northey et al., 1997). The most important aspect of Natural Wrap-Around Care is that it takes place within the context of a family and a community, and that it uses people already in the family's environment. This may include extended family, clergy, teachers, and other "elders," such as godparents or close friends of the family. By utilizing these people who already have a close relationship with a family, the family is affirmed in their strengths and problem-solving abilities (Northey et al., 1997). In addition, when the family is discharged from services, their support system remains intact, rather than departing with the professional social worker or therapist.

Northey, et al. (1997) are not the only researchers who point to the importance of the community in keeping adjudicated youth away from delinquent behavior, or in their treatment. Greene (1993) suggests essential components of youth programming. Of nine important elements, Greene points to several aspects that relate to the community as important in youth programming: neighborhood projects, personal relationships with adults, and family interventions as crucial. These elements stem from Greene's belief in the importance of youth interaction with community, and the support for youth by the adults within their communities.

Greene (1993) and his colleague Garbarino (1991) insist that any program that will positively impact youth must foster coping skills, self-efficacy, and relationships with family and other adults. Although these authors do not specifically address programs that target juvenile delinquency, they certainly advocate for comprehensive community programs for all youth.

Dore and Harnett (1995) described the role of volunteers in social service settings, and determined that volunteers appeared in many forms, from friend to minister, and from teacher to mentor. Although their work focused solely on families at risk for child maltreatment, the concept of using volunteers to influence and support a family can be extrapolated from child welfare issues to juvenile justice programs. Like families entering the child welfare system, families of adjudicated youth are often in crisis (Dore & Harnett). A community member, be that the family's religious leader or next-door neighbor, could fill a much needed role of caregiver and aide.

Northey et al. (1997) advocate for the use of a Wrap-Around Care Model that includes intensive work by the community. Given Dore and Harnett's belief (1995) in the success and importance for volun-

teer involvement with family preservation, there appear to be few reasons volunteers could not be used specifically for the support of adjudicated youth and their families.

The involvement of, and unconditional care by, community members (be they extended family or an authority figure such as a teacher) appear to influence youth's satisfaction with services and future acting-out behaviors as well. Rosen, Heckman, Carro, and Burchard (1994) studied 20 youth who received community-based wrap-around services for mental health treatment. Twelve of the sample were male, eight were female, and the mean age of the sample was 16. Bi-monthly telephone surveys were used for three months to study satisfaction and behavior. The researchers found that satisfaction with services correlated highly with the perceived level of involvement of the caregivers in the youth's life; the more involved the caregiver, the more satisfied the youth. In addition, those youth who perceived that their care was unconditional showed a correlating change in behavior, toward fewer acting-out episodes (Rosen et al.). Results such as these should cause social workers to examine seriously the potential treatment options that involve using the committed adults already present in a youth's life to affect changes in behavior. Although the study conducted by Rosen et al. (1995) primarily focused on youth seeking mental health counseling, it can be used to advocate for community involvement and the presence of caring, committed adults for adjudicated youth.

In further studies of wrap-around care, Clark, Schaefer, Burchard, and Welkowitz (1992) evaluated Project Wraparound, a community-based treatment program for youth with emotional and behavioral problems. Nineteen families were studied using the Child Behavior Checklist and the Teacher Report Form to measure behavior problems. All of the sample were male. Wrap-around care for this project was provided through the teaching of parenting skills, communication skills, and job skills. Although this study found little change in school behaviors, there was significance related to services provided and improved behavior of the youth at home. The authors (Clark et al.) expressed confidence that wrap-around care can make a difference in affecting the behaviors of troubled youth.

As can be seen by this analysis of literature and the evaluations mentioned in this section, there is considerable work to be done around the concept of Community-Based Wrap-Around Care. Despite the growth in family preservation services and the growing concern about treatment of youth who are delinquent, little literature exists

about community-based wrap around care that focuses solely on adjudicated youth. Any programs that have been evaluated have commonly been done so on the basis of placement, rather than recidivism, at the termination of services (Nelson, 1990; Smith, 1995). In addition, family preservation programs have not always taken into account the importance of the community interaction and personal involvement seen as a vital component by Northey et al. (1997). Thus, what is deemed community-based (traditional family preservation) may not be truly so in the perception of others, who would advocate for even greater community involvement. While treatment programs that are community based do exist, these have tended to focus on the child welfare system as a whole, rather than on adjudicated youth. In addition, there is scant literature on evaluations of these programs. Evaluations that *have* occurred have focused on placement, rather than recidivism.

Limitations of Literature Review

This article highlights the literature on three treatment strategies that are often used in social work and corrections work with adjudicated youth. Many of the articles sited provide descriptive analyses of programs; the field lacks evaluative literature of treatment programs. In addition, existing evaluations often examine similar programs from very different perspectives. For example, Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs can be evaluated from the perspective of victim satisfaction, or rate of re-offense of the youth involved.

Finally, this examination searched for any mention in the literature of a program's affect on recidivism. This measurement, however, was not broken down into the varying definitions of recidivism. For example, recidivism can include acts that may have been self-reported but never officially processed, as well as further contact with the court system. Program evaluations that examined recidivism often did so from these varying perspectives, whereas this paper simply looks at the overall measure.

Summary and Implications for Social Work

According to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, juvenile justice systems should be working to move the treatment of adjudicated youth away from institutionalization, or the long-

term incarceration of youth in detention centers or residential facilities. This article has examined three types of programs that provide alternatives to this traditional form of treatment. Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs (commonly known as mediation), Boot Camps, and Wrap-Around Community-Based Care, are treatment arenas in which social workers may likely find themselves in their work with adjudicated youth. While each of these three programs addresses the problem of juvenile crime differently, their commonality is the search for a way to rehabilitate youth and lower recidivism.

Mediation could provide a new avenue for social work practice. Galaway (1988) and Severson and Bankston (1995) support this supposition, adding that mediation between youth offenders and their victims is a viable social work practice for many reasons. Galaway points to four areas in which mediation fits the ethics and values of the social work profession. First, it allows the victim to participate in the justice process. Inherent in this is the idea that mediation promotes the involvement of all parties, a basic tenant of social work practice. Face-to-face mediation challenges stereotypes and prejudices, for when people are faced with another human being and are able to communicate successfully, these misconceptions begin to erode. The mediator role, in this case a social worker, is to facilitate the process so that all parties are able to communicate effectively. Finally, mediation takes on the strengths perspective in problem solving, by recognizing the validity of each person and holding forth the belief that, with some guidance from a trained mediator, they will be able to find the tools and words to reach a solution.

Although mediation reflects the values of social work, victim satisfaction has been rated high for these programs (Umbreit, 1989), and there is some indication that these programs might affect recidivism rates of juveniles positively (Nugent & Paddock, 1996), the literature is not yet substantial enough to claim that Victim Offender Reconciliation is a sure way of preventing adjudicated youth from offending again. This area of treatment for juveniles needs to be examined further before it can be ascertained that it is an effective strategy for the prevention of further delinquency.

Boot camps require that the youth be temporarily removed from their home, but the time away is short and intense. Based on the military model of strict routine and physical hardship, these camps claim to rehabilitate youth and provide structure and guidance (Peters, Thomas, & Zamberlan, 1997). However, the evidence is not compelling that these camps are actually successful in reducing the recidivism rates of youth offenders (Peters et al.).

Community-Based care provides the least intervention in a youth's life, demanding only that the strengths of a family environment be utilized in the treatment of delinquency (Northey, Primer, & Christensen, 1996). Although there is a significant amount of literature relating to family preservation or community care for emotionally disturbed youth (Smith, 1995; Nelson, Landsman & Deutelbaum, 1990), there is little discussing these concepts in relation to delinquency. What does exist indicates that Community-Based Wrap-Around Care could be effective, but evaluation and further research is essential (Northey et al.; Nelson, 1990).

This review of the literature points to the need for further research into whether these programs are truly effective in their treatment of juvenile crime. The mandate of the JJDPA may have been fulfilled—perhaps there is greater recognition of the potential for community involvement in treating youth. However, there must be follow-up evaluation of these efforts to ensure that both the public and today's youth receive the best care possible in our search for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency.

This is, indeed, a concern for social work. Without proper evaluations and the indications that programs do or do not work, social workers operate in a vacuum. Deinstitutionalization becomes no more than a catch phrase, if the strategies used in place of institutions are ineffective. In both clinical and community settings, the profession of social work exists partly to provide advocacy and justice for clients. Social workers are mandated to work towards the creation of a more just society. In the context of juvenile delinquency, this mandate includes advocating for systems that process youth in a fair, appropriate, and constructive manner.

In addition to examining the systems through which youth are processed, social workers are often called upon to work individually with adjudicated youth. This work could include any of the programs addressed in this article. It is essential that social workers, who work in a setting that addresses juvenile justice, understand the intricacies of the system and the benefits and problems inherent in every treatment strategy.

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