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Examining the effects of individual counseling and crime prevention programs on recidivism of juvenile offenders.

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ABSTRACT

SOCIAL WORK

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EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING AND CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS ON RECIDIVISM OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Advisor: Dr. Jerome H. Schiele

Thesis dated May, 1997

The research done for the following study revealed two gaps in the literature which were as follows: 1) crime prevention programs and individual counseling were not being observed simultaneously as interventions in the reduction of recidivism among juvenile offenders and 2) little attention had been given to the effects individual counseling had on the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders. Therefore, this study examined the effects of individual counseling and crime prevention programs on the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders. The unit of analysis consisted of 50 male juvenile offenders from Inner Harbour Hospital Outdoor Therapeutic Program in Rockmart, GA.

The study was based on the premise that the interventions—individual counseling and crime prevention programs would significantly reduce recidivism of juvenile offenders. A One-Group Pre-test/Post-test design was used to determine the degree to which the interventions were effective. Content analysis of the case records of 50 male juvenile offenders was the method of data collection. The results of the data analysis suggested that there was no significant difference between pre- and post-test recidivism rates. Implications of this finding for social work practice and future research are discussed.
EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING
AND CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS ON
RECIDIVISM OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

KARA F. B. WRIGHT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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Firstly, I would like to give thanks to the Almighty God for giving me the strength to persevere when at times I simply wanted to throw my hands into the air. Though now, I look back on my experience and I am thankful for all of the challenges I faced. He has shown me just how strong of a person I am.

I would like to thank my mother, father, and brother for all of their unconditional support and patience with me while pursuing this program. To my grandmother, aunts, and cousins; thanks for keeping me in your prayers and giving me motivational talks. They really helped. Those friends--Andre, Brian, Lauren, and Millette--I would like to thank you for keeping me motivated and being there whenever needed.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate my thesis to my mother, Fannie and her twin, Anne, whom I consider to be the two smartest women I know. Mama, you continued to push me to pursue this degree to better myself in order to be strong and independent like you; and Anne, I simply want to walk in your footsteps and next earn my Ph.D., too.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Childhood is a time of joy and innocence for most people, but for others, life may become violent and so do they. Criminal acts of young persons are referred to as juvenile delinquency and have expanded greatly over the past twenty years. In some countries delinquency includes conduct that is antisocial, dangerous, or harmful to the goals of society. Delinquency is a term generally characterized as activities that if carried out by an adult would be called crimes. The age at which juveniles legally become adults varies from country to country. But, the age generally ranges from age fifteen to eighteen.¹ The problem is juveniles are being adjudicated for offenses, sent to bootcamp, or placed on probation, and after being released from state’s custody are recidivating. Recidivism among juvenile offenders has become a colossal issue in the United States.

Juvenile offenders are more likely to recidivate when there are important risk factors involved that are not being addressed by the community--before incarceration as well as after being released. Some of the risk factors presented by researchers are as follows: availability of drugs and firearms, community norms, transition and mobility, and extreme economic and social deprivation. The more available drugs and firearms are in the community, the more juveniles will abuse them, which will in turn lead to juvenile delinquency. Community norms consist of the attitudes and policies a community has which are communicated in ways such as through laws and written policies, informal social practices, the media, and the expectations parents and community members have of youth. When a community has a high rate of transition and mobility, there is a great chance for an increased risk of violent crime among juveniles. Children who live in

deteriorating neighborhoods struck with extreme poverty, poor living conditions, and high unemployment are more likely to drop out of school, get pregnant, or engage in violence toward others during adolescence.²

Young persons who feel they are not apart of society or are not bound by rules, who do not believe in trying to be successful or responsible, or who take an actively rebellious stance toward society are at higher risk of drug abuse, delinquency, and dropping out. Those young persons who associate with peers who engage in a problem behavior are much more likely to engage in the same problem behavior. Even when young persons come from well-managed families and do not experience other risk factors, just spending time with their friends who engage in problem behaviors greatly increases the risk of that problem developing.³ Sociological research has established such bases for predicting delinquent behavior as the nature of a child’s home environment, the quality of the child’s neighborhood, and behavior in school. It has never been conclusively shown, however, that delinquency can be either predicted or prevented. It is more likely that delinquency is an integral part of society and probably part of the maturation process that some children go through.⁴

Due to juveniles deviating from the norm, the juvenile court system is attempting to combat the recidivism rate by establishing crime prevention programs and mandating individual counseling for adjudicated youth. While reviewing the literature, several gaps were found. These gaps included: 1) crime prevention programs and individual counseling were not being observed simultaneously as interventions in the reduction of the recidivism rate and 2) little attention had been devoted to the effects individual counseling had on the

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³ Ibid., 97.
and individual counseling have on the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders has not been significantly examined.

**Rationale Of The Study**

This study will examine the effects of individual counseling and crime prevention programs on recidivism of juvenile offenders—in the crime prevention program called Inner Harbour. This investigation will provide additional data to the body of literature of which practitioners will be able to tap and consult.

Empirical studies have shown that juvenile crime has grown a great deal over the past 20 years. There are several disadvantages of not conducting this study and they are as follows: 1) if effects of the two interventions on recidivism in juvenile offenders are not examined, then practitioners will not have any research materials to consult; 2) the youth’s educational abilities will continue to suffer; and 3) there will be an increase in the pre-existing statistics of high teen crime rates. The researcher needs to have statistically significant information that is both reliable and valid. If not, then the researcher has to assume. Those youth who are already educationally challenged tend to drop out of school finding idle time to do nothing more but get into trouble. This in turn leads to higher crime rates among teens today.

This study will highlight the social learning theory and its practical significance as it deals with the extent to which this study has implications for "real life" situations in relation to juvenile offenders. In addition, it could provide clinicians with another strategy of intervening with juvenile offenders.

**Purpose Of The Study**

Sociological research has shown that crimes committed by juveniles has become a colossal issue in the United States. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of individual counseling and crime prevention programs on the reduction of the recidivism
rate among 50 male juvenile offenders at Inner Harbour Hospital Outdoor Therapeutic Program.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

The proposed study is focusing on individual counseling and crime prevention programs and their effects on the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders. The research found has presented empirical studies as well as conceptual studies. The literature review section will discuss what other authors have said about the research topic. The following subheadings are directly related to the independent and dependent variables of the study—individual counseling, crime prevention programs and juvenile recidivism—respectively. The order in which the literature review will be presented is as follows: 

- boot camps and juvenile recidivism; 
- educational training and juvenile recidivism; 
- employment training/restitution and juvenile recidivism; 
- diversion programs and juvenile recidivism; 
- and empirical and conceptual studies done in hopes to reduce recidivism.

Boot Camps And Juvenile Recidivism

According to a study done by Tom Haynes, juvenile arrests for violent crimes rose 68% between 1984 and 1993.¹ There was a study done on the effectiveness of eight boot camp prisons and whether or not the military atmosphere had any impact on the recidivism rate of the juvenile offender. According to MacKenzie, boot camps did lead to some reduction in prison overcrowding and some positive attitudinal changes by prisoners. But, results did not show that boot camps helped to reduce the recidivism rate.² Burns and Vito conducted a study on Alabama Department of Corrections’ boot camp program and discovered basically the same findings as MacKenzie. The boot camp graduates do not

have a lower recidivism rate than probationers and the program also generated a cost savings and has the potential to reduce the size of the prison population.\(^3\)

There was a conceptual study of adult and juvenile boot camps done throughout the U.S. in general and in Washington State in particular. Several states do not have boot camp programs that are large enough to affect prison crowding. Cost savings can be achieved only when boot camps keep offenders a shorter time than they would have spent in prison—the actual daily operating cost in boot camps exceeds that of prisons. Washington State's co-ed Work Ethic Camp for adults opened in 1993 and is highly rated for its emphasis on work and social skills and education and substance abuse rehabilitation. Because the program started in late 1995, an evaluation of this program will not be done until January 1998. Current findings fail to support claims that boot camps reduce recidivism rates.\(^4\) Cronin conducted a study describing adult and juvenile boot camp operations, research, and development activities in the U.S. The sources include: recent published and unpublished documents; a 1993 mail survey of state correctional departments; and a 1992 telephone survey of state juvenile corrections agencies. The boot camps maintained with at least 69 state and local programs for adults, at least 9 juvenile camps, and 1 federal inmate camp operating as of spring 1993. Results showed that boot camps can potentially reduce prison crowding and costs if they are large enough, target prison-bound offenders, and prevent recidivism. However, there is no clear evidence that boot camp intervention lowers participants' recidivism, although they


\(^4\)Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Boot Camps: A Washington State Update and Overview of National Findings, by Carol Poole and Peggy Slavick, 13 (Olympia, WA 1995).
probably do not commit more crimes than comparison groups. Finally, all of the above studies did have in common that boot camps can be cost effective.

**Educational Training And Juvenile Recidivism**

Buford and Grant conducted a study in Nashville, Tennessee on a behavior modification program which was geared toward African American male youths ages 9 to 17. This crime prevention program focused on helping the youth enhance their self-esteem and provide positive educational and recreational training programs for the youth. The program was called Men of Distinction (MOD), received funding in 1989, and planned to perform the above mentioned tasks by providing mentoring and conflict resolution sessions and by working directly with the kids and their parents. The program demanded discipline and high standards. It also provided peer counseling services as well as professional counseling services to help build youth's self-esteem. In order to measure how well the program was working for the youth, there were pre- and post-tests given to 102 youths. The results revealed that most behaviors changed significantly from one test to the other among MOD participants and behavior among non-MOD participants worsened.

The Youth Service Program Office of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS) received Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) funds to operate a pilot project of job training and placement services and counseling for students at the Florida School for Boys at Okeechobee (FSBO). There was a study conducted August 01, 1977 through June 30, 1978, on whether these programs would help in keeping youthful offenders employed and not become repeat offenders. The study showed that those youthful offenders that participated in the program did not repeat.

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but those who did not participate, did repeat. Therefore, the counseling, job training and placement; and education did help in reducing the recidivism rate.\(^7\)

Petry and Kennedy conducted a study on a program called Project About Face which is a joint effort on the part of the Memphis-Shelby County Juvenile Court, Youth Services, Inc., the Naval Air Station at Millington, Correctional Counseling, Inc., and the Bureau of Educational Research Services at Memphis State University. The goals of the project were to implement a program of education and training that is correctional in nature and reduces juvenile recidivism rates. 233 male juvenile offenders will enter an 8 week residential program involved in structured daily living, counseling, academics, and participants attend counseling groups during the six months of aftercare. All participants are given the Stanford Achievement Test at the beginning and the end of the program. Physical conditioning was assessed at the same intervals. The Life Purpose Questionnaire, the Short Sensation-Seeking Scale, the MacAndrew Test, and the Defining Issues Test are administered three times. All educational and physical variables have increased significantly. About 72% of all participants satisfactorily completed the program. About 50% of all participants either committed subsequent offenses or violated program conditions.\(^8\)

There was a study of the General Education Development (GED) high school diploma program in prisons to determine the effects recidivism had on the exam. This was done by obtaining agency files of inmates released from male facilities of the Georgia Correctional System between 1972 and 1978. The study revealed that the participants


tended to be white, and not as poor as non-GED controls; participants were younger; and had higher intellectual abilities; and the types of crimes were evenly distributed between the two groups. GED successes had the lowest recidivism rate and GED nonsuccesses recidivated at a lower rate than nonparticipants.⁹

Juvenile delinquency rose more than 26% between 1981 and 1983 in Prince George's County, MD. The Maryland Department of Corrections designed a program called See Our Side (SOS), a juvenile aversion program, to curb the rising crime rate. SOS does not use scare tactics; instead, the program attempts to educate juveniles about prison life through discussion and hands-on experience. The program also shows the juveniles types of behavior that can lead to incarceration. SOS requires good planning, realistic expectations, and good staff participation and support. The 4-phase program consists of counseling, site visits, discussions with prisoners, and a self- and recidivism evaluation.¹⁰

Troia evaluated the study of the SPRITE(Support, Pride, Respect, Initiative, Teamwork, Education) program, which is a specialized, adventure-based project designed by the Wisconsin Division of Youth Services to teach prosocial behavior, independent living skills, and responsibility to delinquent youths. The program lasts for 3 to 4 weeks and includes community service, counseling and training. Follow-up data was obtained on 171 youths who completed the SPRITE program since 1987. These youths were compared with adolescents released from the state's 2 juvenile institutions in the same period. 35% of the SPRITE graduates recidivated, compared to 37.7% of controls.¹¹

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Finally, there was not that much of a difference made in recidivism rates with education being the intervention used for reducing the recidivism rate.

**Employment Training/Restitution And Juvenile Recidivism**

Marshall conducted research on recidivism—a critical problem which continues to elude U.S. policy makers and researchers. Recidivism is a major problem not only because of its significant contribution to prison overcrowding but also because it inflicts considerable costs on society both in terms of the actual physical damage to people and property as well as the loss of human potential from incarceration. The main focus of this research is to test the assumption that recidivism can be substantially reduced by employment alone. The methods used to test this assumption consisted of an analysis of a sample of inmates released from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice all of whom had participated in Project Rio, a Texas employment focused reintegration strategy. The findings of this research are that employment in only one of many factors affects recidivism. Other factors are: age, family relationships, education and drug and alcohol abuse. Since recidivism is caused by a complex set of factors, no single-factor intervention strategy would be successful. Therefore, employment services alone would not be sufficient to significantly reduce recidivism.¹²

Leiber and Mawhorr did research on a program called the Second Chance Program of which uses social skills training, pre-employment training, and job placement opportunities to reduce recidivism. Upon completion of the research, evidence of a reduction in official delinquent and criminal offending was not found.¹³ There was another

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study done in a Superior Court in Lake County, Indiana. The findings showed--of 113 subjects in the restitution group--only 36 juveniles were reconvicted for recidivist offenses during the follow-up period.\textsuperscript{14} Schneider and Schneider did a study on the effects restitution had on the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders. Data were obtained from 258 juvenile offenders participating in a Clayton County, GA program offering four distinct treatment strategies: restitution; counseling; restitution and counseling combined; and a control condition of normal probation or incarceration. Those youth required to make restitution to their victims, either through community service or monetary payments, generally had lower recidivism rates than those given more traditional juvenile court dispositions.\textsuperscript{15} In conclusion, this section of studies showed consistent findings among the intervention and the dependent variable.

**Diversion Training and Juvenile Recidivism**

An essay done by James M. Byrne in the 1980’s suggests that Intensive Probation supervision (IPS) has been marketed in the U.S. as both a solution to prison crowding and the central component of a new get-tough probation. Unfortunately, the review of the development and impact of IPS programs indicates they are at risk of being quickly discarded as the latest failed remedy. Based on a review of the purpose, design, implementation and impact of IPS, several persons who will follow have their own views of a framework which they have presented for the continued development of IPS.\textsuperscript{16}

Todd R. Clear and Patricia L. Hardyman contrasted present programs with the earliest intensive supervision efforts of the 1960’s. They also discussed the 4 major

\textsuperscript{14} Roy Sudipto, "Juvenile Restitution and Recidivism in a Midwestern County," Federal Probation (March 1995): 60.

\textsuperscript{15} Anne L. Schneider and Peter R. Schneider, "The Impact of Restitution on Recidivism of Juvenile Offenders: An Experiment in Clayton County, Georgia," Criminal Justice-Review (January 1985): 8-9.

challenges to the new IPS programs which are: goals, target groups, methods of supervision and operational context. Billie S. Erwin reviewed the Georgia evaluation of IPS which is viewed by many to be a model alternative to prison. He also described the preliminary findings of a pilot project that incorporates electronic monitoring as a special enhancement for drug offenders.\(^{17}\)

Frank S. Pearson and Alice Glasel Harper reported encouraging results of an extensive comparative cost analysis of the program, offered some lessons on implementing IPS programs, and discussed the future of the New Jersey effort.\(^{18}\) Joan Petersilia and Susan Turner discussed the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance-funded Intensive Supervision Demonstration Project. This project was a multijurisdictional experiment which encompassed small caseloads, employment training, community service work, routine and unannounced substance abuse testing, and curfews. Early results from 3 jurisdictions in California indicated that officers were able to intensify monitoring but were less successful at increasing counseling and employment services to clients. In 2 of the areas, intensive supervision offenders were more likely to receive technical violations but not more likely to receive new arrests. There were no differences found in any outcome measure in the third area as well.\(^{19}\)

Lastly, Michael Tonry’s review suggested that, despite the failure to reduce prison crowding and save money or reduce recidivism, IPS programs continued to thrive because they were successful in achieving their specific institutional, professional and political aims. However, there is a place for ISP and other intermediate punishments in a balanced sentencing system.\(^{20}\)

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 10.
\(^{18}\) Ibid., 10.
\(^{19}\) Ibid., 11.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., 191.
Williams conducted a study of the juvenile offender diversion program run by the Youth Section of the Dallas Police Department. The program was set up with a federal grant in 1974 in response to a 50% recidivism rate among juveniles. Both short-term and long-term programs were formed for first offenders and their families. The long-term program included the use of a counselor during intake, direct and follow-up phases of the program. In the last 9 years, the program has serviced 19,745 youths: 14,239 were in short-term and 6,505 were in the long-term section. In 1982, 57% of the referred youth were felons and 54% were misdemeanants. The recidivism rate for first offender youths in the short-term counseling program was 42.5% compared to the control group rate of 62%. The recidivism rate for the long-term counseling program was 20.7%, but this figure consisted of those youth who dropped out before counseling was administered.\(^{21}\)

In 1983, a 4-year study was done to evaluate 3 intensive supervision programs. The programs were begun by the Wayne County, MI Juvenile Court to serve as alternatives to state commitment for adjudicated youths. The Intensive Probation Unit was operated by the juvenile court. The Comprehensive Youth Training and Community Involvement Program as well as the home-based services program of Michigan Human Services, Inc. were both private agencies under contract to the court. All 3 programs used a mix of individual, group and family counseling; educational and vocational support; recreation; and behavioral supervision. Juveniles referred to intensive supervision had their commitment recommendations suspended but remained on probationary status—the controls were committed to the state. There were no major recidivism differences between the in-home program youths and the control group, either in official charges or self-reported offenses. During the first 2 years, the programs enabled the court to reduce the number of commitments, but later years, however, saw a gradual decline in the

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programs' impact. Finally, the programs gradually began to supplement, rather than substitute for commitment.  

Hagan and King conducted a study which analyzed 55 youth who had been placed at Ethan Allen School in Wales, Wisconsin. This is a state juvenile correctional facility for male juvenile offenders who had been committed by the courts. Due to the subjects not progressing, they were placed on the Intensive Treatment Unit where the juveniles were judged as having the most severe psychological and behavioral problems. The crimes the youth had been convicted of were crimes that would be punishable by six months of incarceration if they were adults. Thirty of these youth were Black, two were Latino, one was a Native American, and twenty-two were White. The program was defined as intensive due to the extensive level of psychological services provided. After completing the study, a two-year follow-up of the youths who had been in the Intensive Treatment Unit at Ethan Allen School over a four-year period found that 19 (35%) were reincarcerated in a state correctional facility, 1 (2%) was involuntarily placed in a state mental health institute after being found not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect, 17 (31%) had no further convictions, and 18 (33%) were convicted of another crime but were not placed in a state correctional facility. The total results for youth who recidivated in jail or prison was 27 (49%). As revealed, one youth was placed in a mental health facility, and, of the total, 27 youth (49%) did not recidivate.  

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Other Empirical And Conceptual Studies Done In Hopes To Reduce Recidivism

There have been several empirical and conceptual studies given throughout the literature review. But, now I get to the section where the definitions for each will be provided. Empirical studies are characterized by the testing of theoretical hypotheses through the application of formal research methods. Conceptual studies are otherwise characterized by the presentation of new ideas, paradigms or theories that attempt to explain the relationships between and among a set of phenomena or a particular phenomenon.²⁴

Howitt and Moore conducted an empirical study of the Oakland County Probate Court Youth Assistance Program. The program was developed in 1953 in Hazel Park, MI. It has since expanded into 26 service locations in 27 school districts. This is secondary prevention services which follow a casework model in which the Youth Assistance Welfare Worker meets with the family to assess home, school and community problems and to develop an intervention plan. There is much emphasis placed on short-term supportive counseling, augmented by intensive individual/group therapy, summer camp, parent education, youth restitution/volunteer work and other program options. Data were gathered from: 1) unobtrusive measures—program case files of 1,206 juveniles referred to the program between 1987 and 1989; 2) Oakland County Circuit Court records; 3) psychological tests and structured rating scales administered to all parents and children involved with Youth Assistance in 1990-91; 4) interviews with families involved in the program from 1987 to 1989; and 5) surveys of casework and administrative staff, and of school and police department personnel involved in making referrals to Youth Assistance. More than half of all youths and families referred to Youth Assistance completed a recommended casework plan; 92% remained free of subsequent juvenile

court contact; and 98.5% of those now aged 17 or older have not had a subsequent circuit court contact to date. Recidivists were significantly more likely to be younger, to have had a history of emotional problems and documented substance use, and to have had siblings with court involvement. Many of the clients rated the program positively, as did police and school personnel. Snodgrass collected data on all individuals arrested from January 01, 1982 through December 31, 1983 in a single Michigan district court jurisdiction. The empirical study examined a counseling-based criminal diversion program designed to aid first-offender misdemeanants aged 17-21. The program was based on the assumption that participants would benefit from the counseling. The results showed individualized counseling significantly reduced the recidivism of youthful offenders.

The Aftercare/Pre-Probation program of the Metropolitan Social Services Department (MSSD) of Jefferson County began a program designed to provide supportive services to two groups of youthful offenders. The study was done in 1971 through 1972. One of the goals of the program was to reduce recidivism. The treatment consisted of two phases. During the first phase, the juvenile resided in a group home and lived with a peer group and houseparents in a homelike setting. Phase I typically lasted two months and when the social worker felt a child was ready to handle situations in his own home or foster home, the child would be released from phase I and sent to phase II. During phase II, the social worker continued to counsel the youth and his family and supervise the adjustment in the community. This phase normally lasted four months. The outcome of this conceptual study showed a reduction in the recidivism rate of male social offenders.

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26Gerald D. Snodgrass, "Recidivism of 17-21 Year Old Misdemeanants Participating in a Prosecution Diversion Program," (Ph.D. diss, Western Michigan University, 1987), 141.
27Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Social Services Department, Aftercare/Pre-Probation: Final Evaluation (Louisville, KY, 1974), 90.
Higgins conducted a study of a youth advocate program which emphasized counseling and advocacy for returnees from correctional institutions. Grades, attendance, offenses, and institutionalizations were compared for 66 returnees to advocate-served school-attendance areas--experimental group--and 40 returnees to nonadvocate areas--control group. In this conceptual study, both groups showed similar community adjustment gains and school adjustment declines. Upon completion of the study, significantly more experimental group members than control group members were school enrolled.\textsuperscript{28} Empirical research done by Moore focused on a counseling program that used citizens volunteers in individual relationships with young male offenders placed on probation for 12 months. 100 high risk offenders were assigned either citizen counseling with regular probation or to regular probation only. 50 low risk offenders were assigned to regular probation and served as the comparison group. Low risk experimentalists were superior to high risk groups on measures of behavior, personality functioning, and social competence. Citizen-counseled high risk offenders committed fewer and less serious criminal offenses, were employed more regularly, made better educational progress, were less rebellious and impulsive, and were more responsible--as measured on the California Psychological Inventory at the end of the probation--than regular probationers.\textsuperscript{29}

Vreeland conducted a study which evaluated the effectiveness of the Face to Face Program in reducing recidivism of juvenile delinquents. The Face to Face Program was an innovative juvenile aversion program located at the Dallas County Juvenile Department, Texas. In the first phase of the program, the participants were transported to the Huntsville State Penitentiary for a one-day prison orientation. The orientation


\textsuperscript{29}Richard H. Moore, "Effectiveness of Citizen Volunteers Functioning as Counselors for High-Risk Young Male Offenders," \textit{Psychological Reports} 61 (Dec 1987): 825.
included wearing prison-issued coveralls, getting a regulation haircut, and working in the fields of the prison farm. The second phase of the program began one week after the prison orientation. The participants attended group counseling, and their parents attended concurrent parenting education, for nine sessions of two hours a session. Subjects for the evaluation were 160 male juveniles between the ages of 15 and 17 who had been adjudicated delinquent by the court and given a probated sentence. Subjects were selected consecutively by the court and assigned randomly to four treatment conditions in a 2x2 factorial design. The factors were prison orientation (P) and counseling (C). Pre-treatment measures were administered which included a brief IQ test and six personality and attitude questionnaires. Previous crime and recidivism were measured by self-report and from official records—unobtrusive measures. Twenty-four weeks after the date of the prison orientation, post-treatment measures were administered and recidivism was assessed. Overall, there were no effects on recidivism rate due to the treatments, P and C, or their interaction, PxC. Also, there were no effects on scores of the attitude measures due to the treatments. The results of this study were: subjects above the median age of 16 had a relatively lower rate of recidivism if they received P, while the recidivism rate of younger subjects was higher if they received P. It was recommended that younger juveniles not be assigned to the type of prison orientation provided by the Face to Face Program.\textsuperscript{30}

Finckenauer and Kochis conducted an empirical study which examined recidivism outcomes of the Weaversville, PA residential treatment program for violent offenders. The treatment facility houses boys aged 15-18 who have failed in or escaped from other juvenile correctional programs. The program consisted of a highly structured and intensive combination of reality therapy, behavior modification, and the correction of

\textsuperscript{30}University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas, \textit{Evaluation of Face to Face: A Juvenile Aversion Program}, by Allen D. Vreeland, (Dallas, TX 1981).
thinking errors. Responsible living is the main point of the program. All of the juveniles are required to participate in the educational/vocational program, arts and crafts, and all individual and group counseling. Of the 31 juveniles who left the facility in 1981, only 4 did not complete the program. Of the 27 who completed their stay, 66% had no rearrests within a minimum six-month postrelease period.\textsuperscript{31}

There was a conceptual study done by Balkan which focused on one particular aspect of the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the probation camp programs for juvenile offenders. The basic purposes for the study were: 1) to compare the effects of incarceration on separate juvenile camp populations; 2) to devise an accurate method of assessing these effects; and 3) to provide useful preliminary data for future studies.\textsuperscript{32}

Due to the rise of juvenile crime in California combined with major cuts in funding for probation work, the Los Angeles County Probation Department was forced to close several of their facilities and modify existing programs. This dissertation is an outcome study of 200 juvenile offenders using multivariate analysis to compare the recidivism rates. The juvenile offenders were incarcerated at four senior first-entry probation camps--Camp Karl Holton, Camp C.B. Afflerbaugh, Camp William Mendenhall, and Camp Joseph Paige. Though all 4 camps were apart of the Residential Treatment Services Bureau, each camp had its own director and staff, and its own policies and procedures. Each camp had distinct philosophies and goals. Camp Holton used social workers to provide systematic corrective individual and family counseling. The other three camps were more traditional in their approach but maintained independent orientations with regard to work, school, and behavioral changes. During the study, there was an examination of the populations at the 4 camps which was based on key background characteristics, showed that camp

\textsuperscript{31}James O. Finckenauer and Donna S. Kochis, \textit{Advances in Forensic Psychology and Psychiatry} (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1984), 62.

\textsuperscript{32}Sheila Lynn Balkan, "Juvenile Probation Camps After Fifty Years: An Evaluation" (Ph.D. diss., Ann Arbor, MI, University Microfilms International, 1983), 167.
populations differ with regard to gang membership, suitable placement history, and drug and alcohol history.\textsuperscript{33}

After using 3 different weighted measures of recidivism--arrests, convictions, and dispositions--the findings show no differences in camp outcome. Background factors, gang membership, and suitable placement history--and to a smaller degree--ethnicity and family income presented a significant relationship to recidivism. Although it was expected that some differences would appear between camp membership and recidivism, this did not prove to be true. Analyses revealed that several independent background variables did have a relationship to recidivism and that camp programs did not take these factors into consideration.\textsuperscript{34}

Borowski provided information from his literature review on a conceptual study which described effective U.S. programs for violent youths that might be applicable in Australia. The U.S. developed effective programs for violent juvenile offenders with recidivism rates ranging from 9 to 33%. The heterogeneous theory was not used in reference to cause of violent crime, but eclectic theoretical bases were. Many programs offered individualized services which included family counseling and job training. The study showed that successful features of a program included: client participation in decisions; high staff-client ratios; highly qualified staff; intensive staffing and careful programming; and highly structured daily activity, rather than traditional security measures such as handcuffs. But, programs of this magnitude require a large investment of time and money.\textsuperscript{35} The purpose of his study was to show what types of programs work for violent juvenile offenders.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., 168.
\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., 169.
\textsuperscript{35}Allan Borowski, "Programmes for Violent Juvenile Offenders: What Works?," \textit{Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology} (March 1986): 162.
The following empirical study examined the effectiveness of treatments for adjudicated juvenile offenders in 37 studies published from 1980 to 1987. Twenty-nine of 37 studies had at least 1 positive treatment effect. However, that total decreased when long-term follow-up and measures of recidivism were required. Of 37 studies, only 16 (43%) received positive results on recidivism measures. The counseling and therapy techniques showed positive results. But, results for diversion projects were mixed. Studies with well controlled designs and good treatment implementation and integrity revealed better results. But, deterrence-oriented and wilderness experience interventions had poor results, especially on recidivism outcomes. The findings of the study showed improvement was needed in sample sizes, use of appropriate and multiple measures of recidivism, random assignment and use of proper control groups, and long-term follow-up assessment.36

Cernkovich, Giordano, and Pugh conducted an extensive study on chronic offenders being left out during self-report delinquency (SRD) research. Although criminologists had developed more extensive self-report scales and had implemented sophisticated sampling designs, the reliance on general youth samples resulted in a serious under representation of what one defines serious chronic offenders to be. Serious chronic offenders are youth involved in serious and repeated violations of the law. They are also those youth who are most visible to the police and courts and who are feared most by their own community.37

Researchers stated any comparisons between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized offenders were inappropriate because they involved comparing apples and oranges. Yet, previous self-report research based upon samples of apples--the general

youth population--had been used to generalize to the population of oranges--chronic offenders. The validity of such generalizations is questionable because of the misrepresentation of chronic offenders in general youth samples. As a result, there was a serious gap between delinquency as it was defined for research purposes and delinquency as it was officially encountered. A major criticism of SRD instruments considered the representativeness of the items that comprise the measures. Most self-report inventories over-represent nonserious and trivial offenses, while under-representing truly serious offenses.\textsuperscript{38}

The self-report method was created to study delinquency in populations where lack of variation in serious delinquency renders official measures inadequate. Therefore, in order to produce meaningful variation in delinquency in such samples, researchers had to use scales that measured frequently committed, relatively nonserious, and usually officially ignored behaviors. Item representativity was only one of several important criteria for evaluating SRD measures. The items that made up the scales should have been non-overlapping, actionable, and specifiable. Overlapping items result in inaccurate estimates of offense frequencies due to duplicate counts of certain events. Overlapping of items may also lead to inflated delinquency scores which may cause false identification of some youth as chronic offenders.\textsuperscript{39}

A final characteristic of SRD scales which caused measurement difficulties was the response formats that were used. Some of them were: often, sometimes, occasionally, and never. These responses presented a wide range of interpretation by subjects and were not precise. There were also other popular responses such as: never, once or twice, and three times or more. After placing all high frequency offenders in the three times or more

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., 708.
\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., 708.
category, researchers could not make meaningful distinctions between chronic offenders and other norm violating youth, or among chronic offenders themselves.\textsuperscript{40}

The two data sources for this study were: 1) a sample of all youth 12 to 19 years of age living in private households in a large North Central Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area; and 2) a sample of the populations of three male juvenile institutions within the same state and the entire population of the only female juvenile institution in the state. The researchers completed 942 neighborhood interviews. Of these, 51% were with adolescent females, 49% with males; 45% of the respondents were White with the remaining being predominantly Black--50% of the total neighborhood sample. The respondents ranged from 12 to 19: 21% were either 12 or 13, 32% 14 or 15, 32% 16 or 17, and 15% 18 or 19 years of age.\textsuperscript{41}

The institutional sample was received from 254 personal interviews--65% of the respondents were White; the remaining were predominantly Black which made up 32% of the total institutional sample. Only 2% of the incarcerated youth were 12 or 13 years of age, 24% 14 or 15, 51% 16 or 17, and 23% 18 or 19 years of age. The findings also showed 81 juveniles who reported no major offenses and no minor offenses which labeled them to be nonoffenders. Those 333 juveniles who reported no major offenses and a low rate of minor offenses were labeled as low frequency minor offenders. The next level of more serious delinquent acts included the 222 juveniles who reported no major offenses and a high rate of minor offenses which labeled them as high frequency minor offenders. These findings have shown a significant number of youth reporting virtually no delinquency involvement. This was consistent with other surveys, and contradicted the common assumption of sociologists and criminologists that delinquency is universal.

Secondly, there were a number of youth with high rates of minor offenses who were able

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Ibid.}, 709.

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, 710.
to refrain from participating in serious delinquent acts. This suggested that there was an important empirical difference between youth who commit major offenses and those youth who commit only minor offenses. Thirdly, the majority of high frequency major offenders reported high rates of participation in minor offenses. While there were only 128 youth who represented less than 14% of the neighborhood sample, they accounted for almost 95% of all the major offenses reported by the noninstitutionalized respondents.42

Low frequency minor offenders were the largest offender group in the neighborhood sample--35%-- but made up less than 3% of the institutional sample. While high frequency minor offenders made up almost 24% of the neighborhood sample, they made up less than 7% of the institutionalized sample. Furthermore, while only 13.6% of the neighborhood youth were high frequency major offenders, 80% of the institutionalized youth were. Finally, less than 11% of the institutional sample was made up of low frequency major offenders. Researchers found that the surest way to institutionalization was to achieve a high frequency of committing major offenses. It was stated minor offenses may be troublesome and may lead to official contacts, but apparently were not sufficient provocation for institutionalization. Finally, as researchers presented in the beginning, there were major differences between the youth in the neighborhood sample and those who were institutionalized.43

Giacobbe and Yurek conducted a study which investigated the impact of the factors age and length of stay on recidivism for 228 male juvenile offenders. The boys were between the ages of 12 and 18 and were residents at Elk Hill Farm in Goochland, VA. Elk Hill Farm was a private, non-profit, institution for troubled youth which utilized a quality, multi-faceted treatment program that included the following components: a peer group model, an aftercare program, a special education school, wilderness therapy and

42Ibid., 713.
43Ibid., 715.
parent groups. From 1976 to 1988, the boys were followed from the time of their release. There was a Success Rate Index done which divided the number of months that the boys were reincarcerated after leaving the program into the total number of months since leaving the program. This index helped to analyze the follow-up information.44

The findings of this study indicated the two factors investigated--age at time of leaving the institution and longevity of the stay--influenced the success rate index in a positive way. The success rate for all 228 boys was 87.4%. It also showed the number of boys reincarcerated, not reincarcerated and the reincarceration success rate. The percent of boys that had been reincarcerated since leaving Elk Hill Farm was 37.7%. The success rate index also revealed that 49 residents at Elk Hill Farm for less than 6 months had a success rate index of 80.5%. Boys that were at Elk Hill Farm for over 12 months had a success rate index of 98.4% and those residents that stayed an additional seven to eleven months, the success rate index was 18% higher.45

**Conceptual Framework**

The researcher found that the social learning theory of Albert Bandura is one that clearly relates to the proposed study. The study of the effects individual counseling and crime prevention programs have on recidivism of juvenile offenders directly relates to the social learning theory. Bandura feels that behavior can be learned through modeling which is observing the behavior of a model and repeating the behavior learned. This can also be referred to as observational learning.46 Juveniles who interact with persons who engage in problem behavior tend to engage in the same problem behavior. Therefore, when

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juveniles are given a model exhibiting positive behavior, they tend to engage in the same positive behavior.

The independent variables of this study are individual counseling and crime prevention programs. The dependent variable is recidivism among juvenile offenders. The conceptual definitions of both variables are as follows: Individual counseling is a therapy utilized by social workers and other professionals to make a difference in a person's life; Crime prevention programs are programs used to help keep juveniles out of trouble; and Recidivism rate of juvenile offenders is the repeated act of a juvenile who has been adjudicated of some crime.

Individual counseling is made up of several different components which are as follows: 1) learning conflict resolution skills; 2) mentoring and modeling; 3) intervention development; and 4) one on one interaction counseling. The first component consists of learning the 3 steps for conflict resolution skills which are: 1) identify the problem; 2) tell the other person how you are feeling (i.e. angry); and 3) solve the problem. It is assumed that once these steps are put into practice by the juvenile offender and mastered, the offender’s rate of recidivism will be decreased. Thus, he should have no problem mainstreaming himself back into the environment from which he came.

The second component of individual counseling is mentoring and modeling. These two components are used simultaneously because they present positive behavior and present authority figures as "real people". Bandura states in his social learning theory that if a youth observes negative behavior, then he will eventually learn this behavior and begin to emulate it. Therefore, if a youth observes positive behavior, he can eventually learn that behavior and begin to emulate it. This too can help to reduce recidivism.

Intervention development is a very important component of individual counseling because it is representative of a lifeline for some of the juveniles. This component is used to help the juvenile when he is having a difficult time coping with matters such as being
away from family for such a long period of time or finding ways to deal with his anger. For example, a juvenile may have an anger management problem and the counselor may ask what are some of the things he enjoys doing. Based on what the juvenile's response is, the counselor could use one of his hobbies as an intervention for dealing with his anger. If the child practices this technique of dealing with his anger and eventually masters it, this could be influential in the reduction of recidivism.

Finally, one on one interaction counseling promotes trustworthy relationships with authority as well as trustworthy relationships with peers. It also allows juveniles to develop respect for authority as well as for self and peers. This is so because one on one counseling is not only geared toward counselor and juvenile, but it is also geared toward juvenile and juvenile listening to one another as well. This too can be a reducer of recidivism among juveniles.

Crime prevention programs consist of many components such as: 1) wilderness experiences; 2) experiential therapy; 3) group processing; and 4) educational and job training. The wilderness experiences consist of "roughing it" in the woods for 17 weeks or more without electricity--but lanterns and without the luxury of a bathroom--but a privy (which is a deep whole dug into the ground which resembles an outhouse). The juveniles are required to cut wood year round to keep their wood stocked for the Winter months. This component shows juveniles how easy it is to take having a home and a family who really cares for granted, and thus, can influence the reduction of recidivism.

Experiential therapy is a very important component of crime prevention programs because youth are exposed to team building exercises such as the ropes course. On the ropes course, the juveniles get to know each other really well and quickly. This is so because it tests the juveniles level of trust for his peers. There is an exercise called the trust fall which consists of one peer at a time standing on a raised platform with his back to the rest of his peers and having to fall backward. This exercise can be frightening for
several of the juveniles because they really don’t believe their peers care enough to catch them. The experiential exercises are built to build character as well as trust in self and peers. If one develops trust in self, there can be a reduction in recidivism.

The third component--group processing--is a large determining factor of whether or not a juvenile graduates the program in 17 weeks. This component is usually hard for juvenile offenders when first entering the program because they aren’t accustomed to having to process their feelings or deal with one of their peers having a bad day and having to try to help that peer get through the day. They also don’t understand that if a problem occurs within their group, then their group of peers is responsible for solving it before the group can move on as a whole. But after learning the method of group processing, the juveniles usually can finish the program successfully. If juveniles would simply take this method back to their communities, it would help in the reduction of recidivism.

Finally, the educational and job training component helps juveniles decide what it is they want to do after leaving the program. They have the option of obtaining their GED while at Inner Harbour, continuing their studies to mainstream back into their regular school system, applying to different four-year and technical colleges, or receiving job training. This component of the crime prevention program gives the juveniles choices. If they choose one of the above options, there is a definite chance this component can be an influence in the reduction of recidivism.

Therefore, after combining all of the components of both individual counseling and crime prevention programs, there will be a reduction in recidivism of juvenile offenders.
Research Questions And Hypotheses

Based on the review of literature, theoretical framework, and the general purposes of this study, listed below is the research question and hypothesis of the study:

Q1. Will the interventions, individual counseling and crime prevention programs, reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders?

H1. Individual counseling and crime prevention programs will significantly reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Design and Sample

The Pre Test-Post Test Design was used to execute the data collection. The design is as follows: \( O1XO2 \). The researcher observed the records and collected the data from the records over a 3-day period in the medical records office of the facility. The researcher obtained the number of times the youth were arrested before entering the program and the number of times they were arrested 6 months following completion of the program.

The sample population was obtained from a local crime prevention program which administers individual counseling. The population consisted of 50 male adjudicated youth who had already completed the program. The sampling strategy that was used was systematic sampling (every 3rd file).

Measurements or Instrumentation

The operational definition of the independent variable, individual counseling, was the extent to which a juvenile offender had been court mandated to attend and complete a crime prevention program where individual counseling was provided to attempt to assist in solving the problem. Some of the components of individual counseling were: learning conflict resolution skills; mentoring and modeling, intervention development, and one on one interaction counseling.

Crime prevention programs was the second independent variable. This variable was operationally defined as the extent to which a juvenile offender was court mandated to attend and complete a program that taught conflict resolution skills, life survival skills, and self-esteem builder strategies. Wilderness experiences, experiential therapy, group
processing, and educational and job training were all components of crime prevention programs.

The dependent variable, recidivism of juvenile offenders, the target problem, was identified as the number of times an adjudicated youth repeated an offensive act which placed him back into the juvenile court system (i.e. simple battery, battery, violation of probation, burglary, unruly, etc.).

The findings of this evaluative study of the 50 residents were coded and placed on SPSS for windows to show the reliability of the records observed. The information coded into the computer focused directly on the 50 cases, the pre and post-test, and the number of times the juveniles were arrested before entering the program and the number of times they were arrested 6 months after completing the program. This method of measurement tapped every aspect of recidivism and offered reliable results that other clinicians could use in later research.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

In this research study, a T-test of group differences, with an alpha level of .05, was used to determine whether to reject or accept the study hypothesis— which stated individual counseling and crime prevention programs would have a statistically significant effect on reducing recidivism of juvenile offenders.

Table one presents the descriptive statistics that were used to calculate the frequencies of the number of times the juveniles were arrested before and after the application of the interventions. The unit of analysis was composed of 50 male juvenile offenders. For presentation purposes, the researcher placed the scores from the computer software on recidivism into pre- and post-test scores.

The pre-test scores had a mean score of 1.5, which revealed the juveniles arrest rates were less of a problem before entering the program. The post-test scores had a mean score of 4.47 which indicated the juveniles had a higher rate of recidivism than hypothesized after the application of the interventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency Distribution of Recidivism</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>0.344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>0.502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows the results of a T-test analysis of difference between the pre-test and post-test results on recidivism. The means for the findings of the study are: pre-test--4.46 and post-test--4.48. The results revealed that post-test scores had a slightly higher mean than pre-test scores. This difference in the means between pre-test and post-test scores on recidivism did not yield statistically significant results. This indicates that the interventions--individual counseling and crime prevention programs--did not have a significant effect on reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that individual counseling and crime prevention programs would have a statistically significant effect on the recidivism of juvenile offenders was rejected and the null was accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>2.435</td>
<td>t=.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>3.553</td>
<td>df=86.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p=.974
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

This study examined the effects individual counseling and crime prevention programs had on the recidivism of juvenile offenders. The major finding of this study was that individual counseling and crime prevention programs were ineffective in reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders.

There were several possible explanations for this finding of which three will be discussed. One possible explanation was there were shortcomings on how the interventions were delivered to the clients. Those counselors responsible for delivery of individual counseling were ineffective in the delivery of services. There were inconsistencies with how often services were delivered. A second possible explanation was the lack of access to a direct practitioner on site. Without the attention of a trained social worker, a counselor as well as treatment coordinator can find themselves making hasty decisions which would not be in the best interest of the child. The social worker would be that liaison needed to help make the appropriate decisions needed. A third possible explanation was the use of a small sample size. If a larger sample size had been used the results of this study could have been totally different. Therefore, a larger sample size would have provided more reliable results.

It was hypothesized that individual counseling and crime prevention programs would contribute to helping to decrease recidivism among juvenile offenders. There were several different studies presented during the literature review which were both consistent as well as inconsistent with the findings of this study. Some of the articles showed statistical significance and some of them did not.

The findings of this study were both consistent and inconsistent with those studies of other researchers presented in the literature review. The study’s findings were
consistent with some researchers because they concluded the same findings. The findings were inconsistent with some researchers because the researcher only focused on one of the interventions as it related to recidivism.

On the micro level, the findings' implications for social work practice with juvenile offenders may not give social workers hope for individual counseling or crime prevention programs as an appropriate intervention to use with juvenile offenders or their families. The findings also indicate that the interventions may simply be a waste of time and will not help to rehabilitate or resocialize juveniles. Some suggestions for practitioners on the micro level are to be more in tune to the client and really get an understanding of what the family or individual needs. Then, attempt to provide the proper assessment of needs and referral for needs.

As for the macro level, the findings imply that social workers may not have any other options—if individual counseling was not successful as an intervention on the micro level, then group counseling may not be successful as an intervention on the macro level. Therefore, negative implications for social work practice are presented. The interventions are perceived as tools to keep juveniles away from their homes and not do anything to help change their inappropriate behaviors or attitudes toward society. The programs are simply continuing to release "little criminals" who are desensitized from society. Therefore, the idea is left in people's minds in those neighborhoods, communities, and organizations, that they may need to be more careful once the "little neighborhood criminal" returns home.

There are also several recommendations for future research. Firstly, researchers may want to study other variables such as: how conflict resolution skills may impact the juvenile; whether the mentoring or modeling has helped the juvenile; whether the intervention/interventions used really made a difference in the juvenile's actions after
leaving the program; or whether working one on one with staff as well as peers helped to reduce their acts of recidivism. Secondly, researchers may want to consider examining other variables such as: whether the juveniles feel the wilderness experience helped to reduce their acts of recidivism, whether what he learned from experiential therapy techniques helped to reduce their acts of recidivism; how and whether group processing helped in aiding him to say no to performing deviant acts; or whether they felt the educational and vocational parts of the program were sufficient enough to encourage him to go on to do positive things.

This study was an evaluation study using the one group pre-test/post-test design. Therefore, there was not a high level of internal validity. Thus, future researchers should use experimental designs along with experimental and control groups.
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