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A SUMMARY OF JUVENILE COURT WORK LOAD IN 1958

The work load of the Juvenile Court includes the investigation, detention, adjudication, commitment and follow-up care for children under 18 referred to the Court for reasons of delinquency, dependency, and traffic violation.

Delinquent Referrals - Total 3178; Boys 2399 Girls 729.

The principal delinquent acts committed by boys were offenses against property, including auto theft, stealing, burglary, mischief, etc. The largest number of offenses by girls were runaway, liquor, stealing and sex offense.

Dependent Referrals - Total 2194; Boys 1175 Girls 1019.

The principal reasons for Court action in these cases were injurious home condition, temporary shelter, custody and placement with relatives, temporary custody with social agencies for adoption of child, and unable to adjust or incorrigible in the home.

Traffic Referrals - Total 4163; Boys 3862 Girls 330.

The principal moving violations for which youngsters were referred were: speeding 1065; negligent driving 702; defective equipment 539; no operator's license 462; through stop sign 374; right-of-way 289.

The principal dispositions of traffic offenders were: licenses held 32%; drive only with parent for specific period of time 19%; declined jurisdiction to adult traffic court 17%; counseled with offender and parents and dismissed 10%; referred to High School Student Court 8%; ordered car sold 6%; case referred to probation office for full investigation and planning 5%. Twelve percent of all offenses involved accidents and of these, 4% were not insured. There were 902 traffic offenses by youth not attending school.

Disposition of Cases of Dependency and Delinquency by the Court:

Probation completed and case dismissed	624
Cases dismissed by Court action	201
Cases adjusted and settled by Probation Department	826
Petitions dismissed or withdrawn	176
Incidental service provided	417
Care and custody placed with relatives and individuals	229
Declined jurisdiction to Adult Court	199
Moved from jurisdiction, not located, or transferred to other Ct.	199
Committed to Dept. of Institutions, State Hospitals and Custodial Schools (Boys 339; Girls 139)	478
Placed with Social Agencies providing foster homes	261
Placed with S.D.P.A.* including foster homes	332
Placed with Social Agencies, including adoption cases	295
Placed in other child care institutions	105
Miscellaneous dispositions	92

* State Dept. of Public Assistance.

Total: 4434

During 1958, there were 2765 admissions to the Youth Center for shelter or detention care. Of these, 2199 were admissions of children alleged delinquent; thus, 59% of the delinquent referrals to the Court were detained. (This excludes traffic referrals.) There were 566 dependency admissions to the Youth Center out of 2194 dependency referrals. Thus, 26% of the dependency caseload required shelter care at the time of referral to the Court. Fifty-one percent of all delinquency and dependency cases were detained.

The average daily population for the year was 121 children, and the average length of stay was 16 days. During 1957, the average daily detention population was 123 children, and the average length of stay was 13.5 days. The heaviest detention load and worst overcrowding occurred during 1958, when in May there were 49 youngsters sleeping on the floor, 182 in the building on one day, and 47 children waiting for a bed in a state institution. There were also 11 children waiting for a bed in a child care institution or for a foster home.

Two major developments in controlling admissions to detention and authorizing releases were not reflected materially in the 1958 figures. In March 1958, a screening procedure was instituted at the Board of Managers' direction, requiring that each child presented to the Youth Center be carefully screened prior to admission, to guarantee that he needed to be detained. In October, the Superior Court Judges offered assistance to Judge Long by initiating a preliminary judicial hearing each morning on the question of detention of each child admitted during the preceding 24 hours. Now, Robert Utter, Court Commissioner, holds daily preliminary hearings to determine the necessity and propriety of each detention. Thus, each child detained beyond initial screening and beyond the judicial hearing, has good reason to be detained, pending full investigation and a particular plan of care or treatment to be presented to the Judge.

The casework staff, who serve as Probation Officers, perform an average of 10 new investigations of delinquency or dependency each month, and have an average caseload of 57 children each. On May 15, 1958, there were 353 active cases under investigation and 763 active cases under probationary supervision, totalling 1116 current cases in the field units. In addition, the Intake Unit of the Probation Department screened for detention and investigated 3316 cases of dependency and delinquency. The average instantaneous field load was 1528, and the average intake working load was 362. There were 36 budgeted positions for Probation Officers; however, one is assigned as Traffic Officer. Seven Officers were assigned to the Intake Department and 28 allocated to the field units. We were short of Probation Officers all year, and averaged 32 Officers out of the 36 allocated. This has meant concentration on the more murgent investigation, detention and pre-Court matters. Counselling with children on probation, and their families, was greatly reduced. We hope to provide a better level of probation supervision in the future.

The total budget for the Juvenile Court for 1958, was \$936,870, of which \$814,000 was for salaries, \$111,700 for operating expenses and \$11,170 for capital expenditure. However, we refunded \$51,000 of unexpended funds, so that our net operating costs were \$885,870. The Collection Department, comprising three people, following up on Orders of the Court for payment by parents, collected \$164,689 for cost of children's care in other homes or agencies; and they collected \$21,183 for cost of detention care, at \$9.00 per day, and this latter amount was paid into the County Treasury.

Since this operation is entirely a public service for children and families, the important element is personnel. The staff elements not already mentioned are: The Group Supervisors caring for children in all the detention units; the clerical staff who perform the variety of stenographic and clerical services necessary; the half-time physician, and nurses who provide the medical services; the maintenance staff of eight men, who do all of the plant and grounds upkeep; the kitchen staff, who prepared and served over 140,000 meals last year; the Business Department which supervises kitchen and maintenance, and direct purchasing, accounting, payroll, etc.; the teaching staff of six assigned to us by the Seattle School System; and several other individuals with special assignments. The special services and projects of the volunteer groups and individuals offering various services, supplement the work of the paid staff, to provide a vital service to children before the Court.

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