WASHINGTON'S YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM: 1997 EVALUATIONS

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Washington State Institute for Public Policy

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Executive Summary | 1 |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1997 Funding and Evaluation | 2 |
| Table 1: Program Descriptions | |
| Atlantic Street Center ACCESS Program | 4 |
| Auburn/Enumclaw Family Center Project | 5 |
| Chief Leschi Schools – Safe Futures | 6 |
| Child Abuse Prevention Resources – McChord Front Gate Community | 7 |
| Children's Home Society of Washington | 8 |
| Healthy Families of Clallam County | 9 |
| Indochinese Cultural and Service Center | 10 |
| Olympia Child Care Center | 11 |
| Safe Streets - North Star Project | 12 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) administers the **Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program**. Through a competitive process, the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy within CTED provides federal and state funding to community-based projects focused on preventing youth violence. In Fiscal Year 1997, a total of 20 projects received over \$854,000 for services—18 projects received federal funds, and two projects received state funds.

This report summarizes findings from the 1997 evaluation of these projects. Conducted by a Seattle-based consulting firm, Toucan Research and Computer Solutions, the evaluation concentrated on ten projects—those in their first and second year of funding.

Three projects relied on *Second Step*, a school-based curriculum developed by a Seattle-based group, the Committee for Children. ¹ This curriculum is designed for preschool through junior high and concentrates on changing attitudes and behaviors that contribute to violence.

INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy is charged by the Legislature to monitor various at-risk behaviors including the reduction of youth violence. One particular program directed at preventing youth violence: the Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program, is a state program administered through the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED). The program has been operating since 1990 and has been evaluated annually since 1993. The Institute summarized earlier program evaluations in a 1997 report. This publication updates that report with a summary of FY 1997 results.

The Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program funds community-based youth violence projects across the state. Since 1995, CTED's Office of Crime Victims Advocacy has been administering contracts and awarding funds for the program on a competitive basis. Federally-funded projects may receive funds for a maximum of four years and state-funded projects for a maximum of two years.

Projects funded through this program are expected "to increase protective factors known to augment a young person's opportunities for success and to decrease risk factors associated with violence." As part of the application process for funding, projects must demonstrate that they are "locally driven and have broad-based support." ⁵

Projects are responsible for describing strategies and goals, identifying risk factors, and designating outcome measures. A single firm was selected to evaluate all the programs (Toucan Research and Computer Solutions). This individual provides planning and

¹ Committee for Children Web site: http://www.cfchildren.org/violence.htm.

² The original direction came from the 1994 Legislature (E2SHB 2319) and reauthorized in state budgets.

³ Sharon Silas and Roxanne Lieb, *Washington State Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program: Summary of Evaluations* (Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 1997).

⁴ Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program Evaluation 1992-93, 2.

⁵ Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program Evaluation 1992-93, 1.

technical assistance during program implementation. Near the end of the funding period, the evaluator and state program manager meet with project staff to review program results.⁶

1997 FUNDING AND EVALUATION

In Fiscal Year 1997, over \$1 million in federal and state grants were appropriated to the Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program. Demonstration projects received approximately \$850,000 in federal and state funding (Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program⁷ and Gang Risk Prevention and Intervention Pilot Programs)⁸ to provide services for youth. A total of 20 projects were funded—18 were federally funded through the Byrne Grant and 2 programs were funded by the state.⁹ Nine projects were in their first year of funding; ¹⁰ one project was in its second year of funding; ¹¹ and ten projects were in their fourth year of funding (including the two state funded projects).

Evaluations were conducted on 10 of the 20 projects from the program. Data were not collected for those projects in their final year of funding.

This report summarizes findings from the 1997 evaluation in a matrix format, including descriptions of the projects, grant amounts, targeted populations, strategies, and outcomes. Three of the projects relied on the Second Steps anti-violence curriculum, developed by the Seattle-based Committee for Children.

For more information, contact Tom Stilz, Youth Violence Program Manager, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Office of Crime Victims Advocacy, (360) 753-4948.

2

The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy and Toucan Research have also developed a tool to aid in outcome measurement—the Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Youth Survey. This survey will be implemented in 1998 and will help projects measure data regarding participant attitudes, anti-social behavior, and violence.

⁷ The Bureau of Justice Assistance federally administers the Byrne Grant. This fund was created by Anti-drug Abuse Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-690). The purpose of the grant is to help states improve criminal justice records, curb motor vehicle thefts and the related violence, and improve the functioning of the criminal justice system with an emphasis on violent crime and serious offenders. The formula grant program is focused on creating community safety and improving the justice system through the collaborative efforts of federal, state and local governments. *Bureau of Justice Assistance Fact Sheet*, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

⁸ RCW 43.310.030. Gang Risk Prevention and Intervention Pilot Programs.

⁹ Echo Glen Children's Center and the Yakima Gang Prevention and Intervention Program.

¹⁰ One of these projects, City of Spokane - Native Project, did not continue in the program after June 30, 1997, and did not provide sufficient data for analysis; it is not included in the FY 1997 evaluation report. *Communication with Youth Violence Prevention Intervention Program Manager, May 15, 1998.*

¹¹ The Safe Streets Campaign is in its second year of funding.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

- Atlantic Street Center ACCESS Program
- Auburn/Enumclaw Family Center Project
- Chief Leschi Schools Safe Futures
- Child Abuse Prevention Resources McChord Front Gate Community
- Children's Home Society of Washington
- Healthy Families of Clallam County
- Indochinese Cultural and Service Center
- Olympia Child Care Center
- Safe Streets North Star Project

Washington State Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program: Summary of Project Outcomes 12

As Reported by Claus D.Tjaden, Ph.D. Toucan Research and Computer Solutions, Inc.

Table 1

| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
|--|--|---|--|
| Atlantic Street Center works with children, parents, and the community to increase parenting skills and enhance and nurture positive social and academic skills in an effort to prevent violent behavior. FY 1997 Funding Federal \$55,000 Match \$20,320 Total \$75,320 | 23 children at Thurgood Marshall Elementary School in Seattle. Provide Second Step ¹³ and social skill training to children, school personnel, and parents. Provide individual intensive counseling to students with higher levels of inappropriate behavior. Parent support groups and education to improve parenting and discipline skills. Provide after-school activities including: homework assistance, drama, science, and incentives for youth. 1997 Summer Academy Program: 26 students enrolled to participate in academic, social, and recreational activities. | Familiarize parents, children, and families with the ACCESS program. Teacher and parent training in Second Step. Implement Second Step curriculum. Develop relationships with parents. | Reported by 11 Participating Teachers Reasons teachers referred students to the ACCESS program: 14 Academic problems (35%) Behavioral problems (65%) Emotional problems (45%) How often did teachers use Second Step curriculum? Most of the time (8) Some of the time (3) None of the time (0) Greater parental involvement? More likely (7) Don't Know (4) Academic, behavioral, and emotional status of 23 students at the end of the program: Academic: improved (5), same (18), decreased (0) Behavioral: improved (12), same (8), decreased (3) Emotional: improved (5), same (15), decreased (3) |

4

All funding amounts have been rounded. For exact totals see Table 2.

13 Second Step is a violence prevention curriculum designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in children and increase their level of social skills and competence in three main areas: empathy, anger management, and impulse control. ¹⁴ More than one reason could be given for each student referral.

| Auburn/Enumclaw Family Center Project | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
| A community collaborative effort to provide educational programs that focus on crime prevention and family management skills along with activities that build neighborhood attachment and organizational capacity. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$17,000 Match \$11,999 Total \$28,999 | Middle school-aged children and their parents in the Mt. Baker Middle School and Enumclaw School District. Deliver existing public programs and activities at the neighborhood level. Provide two programs or events per month along with approximately 100 hours of family support programs. Provide events focused on crime prevention, access to public services and activities, citizen participation in the formation of public policy and neighborhood development. Provide family support programs. | Outcomes will be measured by the number of parents and children who attend the events, classes, and workshops. Organize a schedule of programs and events using existing resources from local service providers. Encourage residents to attend the center's programs and activities. Organize a group of local residents to organize next year's schedule of activities. | The project reported the following outcomes: Organized a schedule of programs and events using existing resources from local service providers. Encouraged residents to attend the center's programs and activities. |

| Chief Leschi Schools - Safe Futures | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes ⁵ | First Year Outcomes: Results |
| In cooperation with other community organizations, provide skill building in the areas of anger management, conflict resolution, and impulse control; increase opportunities for bonding with pro-social peers; encourage pride in culture and attachment to the local Indian community. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$40,000 Match \$4,118 Total \$44,118 | Native American youth age 14 and over within the Puyallup Reservation, Chief Leschi Schools, and the Tacoma-Pierce County Native American community. One full-time case manager will coordinate support services including: Individual and group counseling Participation in school and community-based activities Home visits Follow-up to increase access and use of community resources Advocacy within juvenile justice system Job skills development | Achieve goals as indicated in negotiated service contracts and receive recognition for achievements. Have increased access and opportunities to participate in events with pro-social peers and role models from the Indian community, helping to build and reinforce cultural identity. Learn anger management techniques, conflict resolution, and how to improve impulse control, self-esteem, and self-confidence. | Reported by Project Staff for 34 Youth Achievement of negotiated goals: Accomplished goals (15) 44% Achieved much progress (1) 3% Achieved some progress (14) 41% Achieved little progress (2) 6% Demonstrated no change (2) 6% Other: Acquired anger management skills (7) 21% Received their GED (8) 24% Behavior Data: Greater Chief Leschi School (Grades 7-12) Between the 1995-96 school year and the 1996-97 school year, the per capita rate of student suspensions increased in all three categories: In-school suspensions increased from 1.13 to 1.69 per student. Suspensions from school increased from .25 to .40 per student. Suspensions from the bus increased from .21 to .44 per student. Other: Incidents of gang-related behaviors decreased from 27 to 21 students. Substance abuse behaviors decreased from an average of .05 to .03 incidents per student. |

¹⁵ Two additional anticipated outcome measures, re-offense and completion of probation, were not available for the past year.

| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
|---|---|--|---|
| Implement a conflict resolution curriculum in Carter Lake Elementary School along with instruction to the parents in the neighborhood. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$49,000 Match \$20,838 Total \$69,838 | Third grade children, their families, and families of infants living in the McChord Front Gate Community in Pierce County. Provide classroom instruction to third grade children in Second Step. Develop mentoring relationship between the project Community Organizer and the third grade children living in the target area. Conduct home visiting for families of infants in the target community. Offer after school and summer recreation opportunities to the children living in the target community. Offer parenting classes and Family Guide to Second Step to the parents of the third graders. Work collaboratively with key organizations in the neighborhood to promote community safety; establish a neighborhood community center. Support and enhance the availability of family and child support services at a neighborhood community center. | Data to be collected on pre- and post- tests in two areas: Second Step Student Skill Assessment and the Chandler Stress Response Scale. | The Second Step Student Skill Assessment 75 Students: pre-test (29), post-test (15), both pre- and post-test (31). 18 children improved their score with an average increase of 1.5 correct answers. 10 children reduced their scores with an average decrease of 1.9 correct answers. For those students who completed both the pre- and post-tests, the skill levels increased by an average of 0.5 point. The Chandler Stress Response Scale 16 27 Students: pre-test (10), post-test (4), both pre- and post-test (13). 6 children improved their scores on the scale 6 children decreased their scores 1 child's score did not change Students who completed both tests increased their average percentile by 3.8 The average score for youth involved in impulsive behavior 17 increased 0.84 points for those students who completed both pre- and post-tests. Behavior Referrals for Third Grade Students for 1995-96 and 1996-97 1995-96: 22 referrals 1996-97: 47 referrals |

¹⁶ Students were administered the pre-test in autumn 1996 and the post-test in summer 1997.

17 The project evaluated individual "syndromes." Impulsive behavior (acting out) was considered most related to youth violence.

| Children's Home Society of Washington | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
| Reduce the incidence of aggressive behavior by providing the New Educational Ways (NEW) Classroom ¹⁸ at Garrison Middle School in Southwest Washington. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$55,000 Match \$22,374 Total \$77,374 | Students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades who are having difficulties in a traditional school setting due to their verbal and physical aggression. Provide specialized learning activities (Individualized Education Program); track behaviors, attendance, and academic performance Educate youth in problem-solving and social skills; clear norms and standards; provide mentoring; opportunities for community service; during and after-school recreational activities. Provide intensive outreach services to families. | Outcomes are measured on a daily basis using a "level" system. 19 Track the number of students who are "mainstreamed": returned to regular classes. | Reported on NEW students (N=12) by Project Staff Youth were referred by the school counselor in consultation with Children's Home Society staff. 8 students were successfully mainstreamed; 3 students will attend other schools; 1 student will return to the program. 1995-96: NEW students had 115 suspension days and 5 emergency expulsions. 1996-97: NEW students had 76 suspension days and zero emergency expulsions. |

¹⁸ A specialized alternative learning program that offers individual, family, and group counseling, as well as family support and outreach, mentoring and recreational activities, to high-risk children and their families who have limited access to other community resources.

¹⁹ Program staff consistently maintained point sheets (on at least an hourly basis) and monitored student behavior in five categories: ready to begin, following directions, ontask and effort, safe behavior, and respectful attitude. Points are tallied at the end of the day and the percentage is used to indicate if the student is eligible to move to the next "level."

| Healthy Familie | es of Clallam County | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
| The Family and Other Violence Offense Reduction (FAVOR) program provides youth offenders with necessary life skills and beliefs to avoid violent behavior within families, schools, and community. 20 Funding FY 1997 Federal \$19,540 Match \$11,885 Total \$31,425 | High-risk male and female middle and high school youths in Clallam County, ages 12-17, who are involved in the juvenile justice system and/or have perpetrated physical violence, emotional abuse, or other assaults upon family members or others. Individual and group sessions segregated by gender over a 10- to 12-week period. Implement domestic violence curriculum including definitions and forms of violence; impact on victims and perpetrators, Washington State law and practice regarding family violence, power differentials within society, accepting responsibility and accountability, etc. Emphasis on building skills in communication, victim awareness, conflict resolution, anger management and impulse control, and healthy decision-making. Group members have an opportunity to discuss and demonstrate new or improved skills and receive recognition of accomplishments. | Satisfactory completion of the ten-week FAVOR program. Participant cessation or reduction of violent or abusive behavior toward other family members or others. ²¹ Changed and improved attitudes and behavior with respect to violent, assaultive, or abusive incidents with family members or with others. • Youth diversion: avoid new assault violations against family members during supervision. • Youth-At-Risk Program: compliance with family court orders regarding violence. • Youth probation and parole: compliance with probation. • Youth referred by DCFS or schools: avoidance of assaults or acts of violence. | 35 Youth Completed the FAVOR Program: Male (26), Female (9)²² The project obtained data on 24 of the 35 youths (69%): 19 (79%) had no subsequent offenses or probation violations from the date of their completion through June 30, 1997. 4 of the 19 (21%) did receive referrals during participation in the group. ²³ 5 (21%) received a juvenile justice referral after completing the program. ²⁴ 1 (4%) was referred for physical or emotional violence against family members or others after starting the program (with no subsequent offenses). Survey Responses from Parents (9) All parents reported positive changes in youth's attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors since participating in the program. Most parents reported a decrease in the intensity and or destructiveness of intra-family conflicts. In rating the youth on a scale from 1 (no changes) to 5 (positive changes), parental ratings averaged from 3.3 to 4.1. Survey Responses from Probation Officers (6) 5 of the 6 probation officers reported positive changes in youth. 4 probation officers reported decreases in the intensity and destructiveness of conflicts and incidents. In rating the youth on a scale from 1 (no changes) to 5 (positive changes), probation officer ratings averaged from 3.0 to 4.2. |

Modeled upon Healthy Families Adult Perpetrators' treatment program with adjustments to produce positive outcomes for youth offenders.

Participants will be tracked for three years after graduation from the FAVOR program.

Participants are referred by (1) Youth Diversion Program: "Accountability Board," (2) Youth At Risk Program: Family Court Commissioner, (3) County Division of Juvenile and Family Services: parole or probation officer, (4) Port Angeles High School: Teachers or Counselors, (5) DSHS Children and Family Services.

A total of 848 youths were referred to the Department of Juvenile Family Services during 1996-97 and committed an average of 2.3 offenses or probation violations during

the year.

²⁴ None of the referrals involved physical or emotional violence against family members.

| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
|---|--|---|--|
| Provide intensive case management services to Southeast Asian youth and their families. Services are designed to address the unique issues of Southeast Asian refugee families during their acculturation process. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$60,000 Match \$24,469 Total \$84,469 | Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Laotian youth, ages 10 to 17, who are under the jurisdiction of the Pierce County Juvenile Court and in presentencing or pre-determination status. Address family management problems, lack of commitment to school, friends who engage in violent/illegal behavior. Develop skills, information, resources, opportunities, and culturally relevant role models to help divert youth. Help parents to understand and work with the juvenile court and assist youth in complying with court orders. | Three service areas were identified for outcome measures: family/youth case management and advocacy, prevention services, and information services. Juvenile Justice records (Form 5) were used to identify the number of participating youth in compliance with the conditions and requirements of probation. ²⁶ | Workshops (24 Conducted), Attendance (257 Participants Total) Workshop directors believed the parents found the workshops helpful and would attend similar workshops. Parent Survey of Family Management and Functioning 27 The parent groups were helpful to them and to their families (84.6%). Felt the speakers gave them information that they needed (63.6%). All of the parents indicated that they had learned of new places to get help and expressed interest in attending similar groups in the future. Juvenile Justice System Records Court action dates and disposition codes were used to determine the rate of Discharge by Completion of Requirements (DRQ) and the court action date it took place. 22 youth received a DRQ from February 1995 to May 1997. 5 youth were in compliance during 1995, 6 during 1996 and 11 in 1997. 28 For the duration of the project, more youths were discharged with requirements completed. |

Youth who are diverted from sentencing/incarceration and their families are provided with information on culturally-appropriate resources.

26 A comparison group of non-participating youth was also identified; however, the project was unable to obtain juvenile justice records for them.

27 Number of surveys completed was not indicated.

28 The numbers are duplicated and represent all youth with a DRQ, even if the youth was discharged more than once during a given year. Data represented are for 11 months in 1995, 12 months in 1996, and less than 7 months in 1997.

| Olympia Child | Care Center | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
| Implementation of the Second Step youth violence prevention program. The curriculum includes teaching children empathy skills, impulse control, problem-solving, and anger management. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$26,000 Match \$10,294 Total \$36,294 | Approximately 60 pre-school students at Olympia Child Care Center and their families. Intrough the implementation of Second Step, reduce family management problems, early and persistent antisocial behavior, and early academic failure. Provide 12 meetings for project families that include parent and child bonding time, child skill building, and playtime. | Assessment of weekly and monthly evaluation completed by teachers and parents. Teacher recorded incidents of conflict and resolution; attendance records for Second Step lessons. Parent survey of the frequency of child behavioral problems. Number of families participating on regular basis; family and child interviews. | Parent Participation An average of 10 parents attended downtown meetings. Westside parent meeting had increased attendance from 3 parents to 6 parents at the last meeting. Evaluation of Children's Behavior Monthly evaluations completed by 8 parents over a 5-month period. Scale of 1 (anti-social behavior was never displayed) to 5 (anti-social behavior is frequently displayed): 5 clients showed a reduction in anti-social behavior, and 3 remained the same. The average anti-social behavior score decreased from 3.25 to 2.50. Staff conducted interviews with 9 parents: 9 parents indicated their child's communication skills improved. 6 parents indicated their child's empathy skills improved. 5 parents indicated their child's impulse control and anger management skills improved. 9 parents observed their children using Second Step empathy skills. 5 parents observed their children using Second Step problem solving skills. 5 parents observed their children using Second Step impulse control and anger management skills. |

| Safe Streets - N | lorth Star Project | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Project Description | Strategy and Target Population | Anticipated Outcomes | First Year Outcomes: Results |
| African American cultural and historical lessons, as well as contemporary figures, to role model successful behavior, ideas, and attitudes for participating youth. Youth will learn new social and academic skills, enhance cultural identity, and build resiliency against violence and related problem behaviors. Funding FY 1997 Federal \$63,000 Match \$26,998 Total \$89,998 | Middle school-aged African American youth (including bi-racial heritage) in the Lakewood community in Pierce County. Analyze environmental influence for youth perspective. Events and activities that address peer choices, history/culture, goals, ethnicity, abilities, academic and social achievement, racial and social challenges, etc. Emphasize peer evaluation and peer assessment skills, observation and analysis of gang culture, personal experience, role modeling, and workshops. | Outcomes are to be measured through counselor feedback, behavior reports, attitude, goal attainment, project advisors, effort/perseverance, and level of North Star involvement with activities. | Outcomes were described exclusively in a case narrative form. |