Juvenile Delinquents: Typical Characteristics

Giuseppe Michael Fazari
Seton Hall University

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Juvenile Delinquents:  
Typical Characteristics

Submitted to the  
Center for Public Service  
Master of Public Administration  
Seton Hall University  
Spring, 1998

by

Giuseppe Michael Fazari

An Analysis of the Typical Characteristics  
of Juvenile Delinquents Applied Specifically  
to Essex County, New Jersey
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- I have thus far faced a few critical points in my life. Two individuals, Sister Mary Rose and Mr. Richards, are largely responsible for making me realize, when others doubted, that I possess academic potential. Their belief came at a most crucial time.
- My friends, Angelo Salerno, Joseph Mattiello, Erik Downs, Paul Fisher, Okpon Inokon and Maria Zarella, have all contributed to my past and present achievements. I thank them for the many memories.
- I am eternally indebted to the sacrifices of my parents, Michael and Antonietta. Thank you so very much for each minute of hard work in the hopes of giving me a better life.
- When I think of these next two people, I admit to being quite privileged. I especially thank my sister, Maria, and my brother-in-law, Stephen, for their unconditional love and ability to listen.
- I want to thank God for the many blessings that I may sometimes take for granted. I ask for His continued guidance.
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to research the characteristics of the typical juvenile delinquent, as outlined in the scholarly literature and compare it to the typical juvenile delinquent in Essex County, New Jersey. The profile will be compared, contrasted, and utilized to recommend remedies to avert recidivism among juvenile delinquents within Essex County.

This Capstone Project is divided into five sections (the introduction, literature review, methodology, results, and conclusion). The introduction will focus on juvenile delinquent facts at the national level and compare them to Essex County. The literature review compiles recently written journal articles that discuss the characteristics of delinquency in a more in depth manner. The methodology segment of the paper explains the process by which the Essex County characteristics of juvenile delinquents data were collected. The results will elaborate upon the differences in delinquency between Essex County and the United States. The conclusion will predict, based upon the collected data, which diversion programs are most appropriate for Essex County. The appendices provide the reader with supplemental graphs and charts.

For the purposes of this project, readers should familiarize themselves with the following definitions (Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, 1996):

- **Adjudicated** - Judicially determined (judged) to be delinquent or a status offender.
- **Delinquent Act/Offense** - An act committed by a juvenile for which an adult could be prosecuted in a criminal court, but when committed by a juvenile is within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court.
- **Juvenile** - Youth at or below the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction.
- **Upper Age of Jurisdiction** - The oldest age at which a juvenile court has original jurisdiction over an individual for law-violating behavior. Currently, the upper age of jurisdiction in Connecticut, New York and North Carolina is 15. Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, South Carolina and Texas have an upper age of jurisdiction of 16. Wyoming’s upper age of
jurisdiction is 18. In the remaining 38 states, including the District of Columbia, the upper age of jurisdiction is 17. In all states the upper age of jurisdiction is defined by statute. In most states, individuals are considered adults when they reach their 18th birthday.

The 1996 Uniform Crime Report provides the most recent data, regarding the rate of delinquency for Essex County. In 1996, Essex County recorded 10,366 juvenile arrests. The typical individual arrested was non-Hispanic (9,557), male (8,350), and black (7,900). Larceny theft (807) and drug abuse violations (2,312) were the most common index and non-index offenses. Essex County recorded 996 cases of runaways. Of the juveniles taken into custody, 73 percent were referred to a juvenile court of the probation department.

The 1996 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics has the most current data and includes the 1995 national rate of juvenile delinquency. According to these statistics, the typical delinquent is a white male. Larceny theft and other offenses (except traffic) were the most common index and non-index crimes. Over 65 percent of the juveniles taken into custody were referred to a juvenile court jurisdiction.

There are differences in the national and Essex County statistics as noted by the typical offense and race of the delinquent. In addition, Essex County appears to have a greater drug abuse problem regarding their youth. The county also recorded a greater number of runaways per under 18 population. The 1996 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics documented a total of 189,696 runaway juveniles in the United States.
LITERATURE REVIEW

The following journal entries and the classic study by Wolfgang et al. (1972) were used as references to determine the common characteristics among juvenile delinquents. This section provided the title of the article, author, journal, examined characteristics, most notable characteristics, sample size, results, and conclusions and recommendations of each reference.
Title:
Delinquency in a Birth Cohort
(1972) Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

Authors:
Wolfgang, M. E., Figilio, R., Sellin, T.

Characteristics Examined:
Socioeconomic Status
Age
Educational Grade Level
Race
Arrest Frequency
Type of Offense Committed

Most Notable Characteristics:
Socioeconomic Status
Race
Criminal Background

Sample Size:
The sample consisted of 9,945 boys born in 1945. The longitudinal study was conducted in Philadelphia and examined the volume, frequency, and character of delinquent youths up to the age of 18.

Results:
The authors found that the variables of race and socioeconomic status were most strongly related to the offender and nonoffender classification. Low achievers, in regards to academics, are more likely to be classified as offenders than are high achievers. Boys who commit many delinquent acts were more likely to be nonwhite offenders of the low socioeconomic population. White and nonwhite offenders commit a greater number of violent crimes as they age; however, the rate of increase is greater for the nonwhite juveniles.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
The three groups of adolescents (recidivists, one-time offenders, and nonoffenders) lie on a continuum. On one end, the recidivists experience the greatest amount of academic failure; one-time offenders fall between recidivists and nonoffenders. Several detrimental conditions indirectly accompany delinquency including membership in the lower socioeconomic groups and poor performance on I.Q. tests. These circumstances appear to be more prevalent among the nonwhite population, which in turn increases the likelihood that these individuals will become delinquent.

Almost half of the delinquent sample did not commit another delinquent act after their first offense. Furthermore, an additional 35 percent of the second-time offenders desist from further delinquent activity. The scholars believed that any costly treatment program should be deferred until the commission of the third offense. In regards to their birth cohort study, the authors found that a deficient academic background, a low socioeconomic class and a nonwhite racial status are the typical characteristics of the chronic delinquent. In addition, the authors found that these recidivists account for a small percentage of the delinquent population however, commit a disproportionate amount of the crime. Most delinquents are diverted from further criminal activity after the first two offenses. The authors suggested that intervention programs should target the individual child rather than the at large community.
Title:
Predicting Rearrest for Violence among Youthful Offenders
(1995)

Authors:
Lattimore, P. K., Visher, C. A., Linster, R. L.

Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency
32 (1), 54-83

Characteristics Examined:
Educational Grade Level
Family Criminality (Parental and Sibling)
Substance Abuse History
Age of First Arrest
Number of Arrests
Number of Adjudications
Number of Parole Violations
Number of Violent Crime Arrests
Nature of Current Offense

Most Notable Characteristics:
Family Background
Criminal Background

Sample Size:
The sample consisted of 1,949 youths paroled by the California Youth Authority between July 1, 1981 and June 30, 1982.

Results:
The authors found that rearrest for violence is substantially influenced by prior arrests for violence and family background variables. These variables included evidence of family criminality and parental violence.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
The use of alcohol and illicit drugs, and prior gang involvement, among the juvenile sample, did not serve as a predictive measurement in determining recidivism. The scholars suggested that in order to predict rearrest among serious offenders, one should examine the criminal history, institutional behavior and personal background characteristics of the adolescent.
Title:
Youth Gangs and Incarcerated Delinquents: Exploring the Ties between Gang Membership, Delinquency and Social Learning Theory
(1994)

Authors:
Winfree, T. L., Mays, G. L., Vigil-Backstrom, T.

Justice Quarterly
11 (2), 229-256

Characteristics Examined:
Gender
Ethnicity
Age
Peer Relations
Gang Membership
Type of Offense

Most Notable Characteristics:
Personal Attitude
Peer Relations

Sample Size:
The sample included adjudicated and incarcerated delinquents. The data was collected from the New Mexico Youth Authority in January 1991. An estimated 85 percent of all youths (258 young men and women) participated in the study.

Results:
Two forms of behavior, vandalism and drug-related crimes, have a strong correlation to gang-based social learning variables. Membership in itself was not the most significant variable in delinquent activity. The level of offending, on the other hand, exhibited a connection to the social learning variables.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
Differential associations and pro-gang attitudes are related positively to offending. Crimes of vandalism, drug-related crimes, and group-context offenses were most closely linked to the social learning variables. A youth who is not a member of a gang, however is exposed to these groups in school and is influenced by their views may be subject to delinquency. Gang members do not commit as much theft crime as is often perceived. These individuals are more likely to be involved in intergroup confrontations and group-context crimes. In dealing with gangs, the authors emphasized prevention and intervention rather than suppression and enforcement. Also, the long-term strategy in eliminating gangs is to dry up the sources of recruitment. The scholars believed that the primary goal should be in developing typologies of gang involvement, accompanied by the application of theories to the evolution and devolution of gangs.
Title:
A Longitudinal Study of the Predictors of the Adverse Effects of Alcohol and Marijuana/Hashish Use among a Cohort of High Risk Youth
(1993)

Authors:
Dembo, R., Williams, L., Schmeidler, J., Mothke, W.

The International Journal of Addictions
28 (110), 1045-1083

Characteristics Examined:
Substance Abuse
Age
Gender
Ethnicity
Family Background
History of Abuse (Mental, Physical and Sexual)
History of Criminality
Emotional/Psychological Functioning

Most Notable Characteristics:
Drug/Alcohol Abuse
History of Abuse

Sample Size:
The initial interviews with the youths were completed between December 1986 and April 1987 among 399 detainees in the Tampa Bay, Florida area. The follow-up interview allowed each youth interviewed a four-month window period prior to being re-interviewed. The completion rate was 76.4 percent. Most of the youths were male (77%) and averaged 15 years of age during the initial interview.

Results:
The authors found that youths abusing cocaine are considerably different from adolescents who experiment with alcohol and marijuana. Emotional/psychological functioning and self-derogation are important predictors in the youths reported use of alcohol and marijuana.

Conclusion and Recommendations:
In regards to understanding the problems linked to drug abuse among juveniles, the scholars concluded that recent issues (rather than a historical analysis) ought to be examined. They found that the usage of alcohol and more so marijuana tends to be a vehicle of expression relating to personal difficulties. Substance abuse is a problem derived from other underlying issues; therefore, alcohol and drug abuse need to be seen in holistic terms. An intervention program will need to be recognizant of the many interrelated issues regarding drug and alcohol abuse. It would be prudent for the juvenile justice system to intervene during the early stages of delinquency.
Title:
Concentration of Delinquent Offending: Serious Drug Involvement and High Delinquency Rates (1991)

Authors:
Johnson, B. D., Wish, E. D., Schmeidler, J., Huizinga, D.

The Journal of Drug Issues
21 (2), 205-229

Characteristics Examined:
Substance Abuse
Nature of Offense

Most Notable Characteristics:
Criminal Background
Drug/Alcohol Abuse

Sample Size:
The study is based on a National Youth Survey (NYS) of 1,725 youths, aged eleven to seventeen, living in the United States. They were interviewed between January and March of 1977. The individuals were re-interviewed in 1978, 1979, 1980, and 1981. The final analysis included 89 percent (1,539) of the selected sample.

Results:
According to this national sample of juveniles, less than five percent of the youths committed three-fifths of the index offenses, two-fifths of the minor delinquencies, and three-quarters of the drug sales. In contrast to the Lattimore et al. (1995) study, these authors found that the arrest record of a juvenile is not an accurate measure in predicting his or her pattern of delinquency.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
Intervention strategies should be developed for the small percentage of American youths (5%) with the highest rate of offending. Juvenile justice agencies should pay close attention to the drug-use patterns of the adolescent, in addition to their delinquent behavior. In regards to future policy efforts, the authors listed three central issues which should be addressed: (1) how to detect or measure the severity of drug/alcohol use and delinquent behavior among youths, (2) how and when to employ information about serious drug use and delinquency and (3) how and when to establish specific sanctions, monitoring, or intervention activities to interrupt patterns of drug use and delinquency.
Title:
Academic and Intellectual Characteristics of Adolescent Juvenile Offenders
(1990)

Authors:
Rincker, J. L., Reilly, T. F., Braaten, S.

Journal of Correctional Education
41 (3), 124-131

Characteristics Examined:
Educational Status
Ethnicity
Sex
Socioeconomic Status
Family Background
Intelligence Quotient
Reading Comprehension and Arithmetic Computation
Nature of Offense
Age

Most Notable Characteristics:
Socioeconomic Status
Ethnicity
Gender
Family Background
Criminal Background
Educational Background

Sample Size:
The sample consisted of 104 individual delinquents. These juveniles were charged with offenses between January 1984 and August 1984. The sample population was taken from the Midwest region of the United States.

Results:
The authors found that the intelligence quotients of delinquents are in the low average range. The overall academic skill of the delinquent group is deficient. The two most significant factors in regards to youthful offenders included the educational environment of the adolescent and the academic demands that are made on the adolescent within this environment.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
According to the authors, the causes of delinquency are multidimensional. Individuals who do not succeed academically are more susceptible to dominance and may be easily led into criminal activity. The educational institution must adopt methods in addressing the problems of the youth’s multiple needs. The scholars suggested providing special education programs for students exhibiting academic failure. Public, as well as, private agencies should work together for the appropriate programming in addressing the needs of these youths.
Title:
Self-Reported Delinquency and Natural Parents - Stepparent Youth Relations (1990)

Author:
Tygart, C. E.

Journal of Divorce
13 (4), 89-99

Characteristics Examined:
Family Background
Substance Abuse
Gender
Socioeconomic Status
Nature of Offense

Most Notable Characteristics:
Family Background
Gender

Sample Size:
The sample consisted of 1,741 selected students. The study, conducted during January of 1987, required the students to complete a questionnaire. The students were located in an urban southern California public school district and ranged between the grades of 7th and 12th.

Results:
The increased amount of time youth and parents spend together resulted in decreased delinquency. The results are similar whether the child has divorced or natural parents.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
The youth-parent relationship is very complex; delinquency may originate from more than the insufficient amount of time spent with parents. The quantity and quality of the relationship is more important than the organization of the family (stepparent or natural). The authors suggested that family members, besides parents, should provide the youth with beneficial interactions. The extended family (not nuclear) is important in reducing delinquency.
Title:
Are There Multiple Paths to Delinquency?
(1991)

Authors:
Huzinga, D., Esbensen, E., Weiher, A. W.

Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology
82 (1), 83-105

Characteristics Examined:
Educational Background
Family Background
Socioeconomic Status
Race
Ethnicity
Nature of Offense
Peer Relations

Most Notable Characteristics:
Gender
Family Background
Peer Relations

Sample Size:
The sample consisted of five different birth cohorts and their parents from Denver, Colorado. The study is based upon a longitudinal survey of interviews. The subjects included 802 boys and 728 girls (a large number of the subjects were black and Hispanic). The first annual survey was conducted during the year of 1987.

Results:
The authors found that individuals with a positive home and conventional orientation are more likely to be less delinquent. Juveniles, not yet classified as delinquents, who were exposed to a pro-delinquent environment, had an increased probability of entering the juvenile justice system. The already classified delinquent with a negative home and pro-delinquent environment was more likely to maintain their delinquent classification.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
Multiple paths of delinquency do appear to exist in this study. The scholars suggested that it is important to pay greater attention to the typological diversity. It would also prove to be fruitful to examine the developmental stages in the personal environments of the delinquents who sustain their offender classification.
Title:
Mediating Effect of Good School Performance on the Maltreatment - Delinquency Relationship
(1994)

Authors:
Zingraff, M. T., Leiter, J., Johnson, M. C., Myers, K. A.

Journal of Research in crime and Delinquency
31 (1), 62-91

Characteristics Examined:
Age
Race
Gender
Family Background
Educational Background
History of Abuse (Physical, Sexual, and Neglect)

Most Notable Characteristics:
History of Abuse
Educational Background

Sample Size:
The study included a random sample of maltreated youths (2,219) from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina and compared them to a sample of students. The study was completed during the 1983-84 and 1988-89 academic years.

Results:
The overall rate of criminal activity regarding maltreated children is considerably lower than that which is reported in earlier research. School performance is improved by reducing the delinquency among maltreated children. Neglect and physical abuse were associated with greater risk of delinquent involvement than sexual abuse.

Conclusion and Recommendations:
Intervention provided by educational institutions may not be sufficient in dealing with youths with problems originating from home. Researchers need to examine the developmental stages of the individual in order to identify the events, which led to the delinquent behavior. This type of analysis requires longitudinal data.
Title:
Heavy Metal Music Preference, Delinquent Friends, Social Control, and Delinquency (1993)

Authors:
Singer, S. I., Levine, M., Joo, S.

Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency
30 (3), 317-329

Characteristics Examined:
Peer Relations
Nature of Offense
Family Background
Educational Background
Music Preference

Most Notable Characteristics:
Educational Background
Peer Relations
Family Background
Personal Attitude

Sample Size:
The sample (705) consisted of a surveyed suburban high school population in an affluent township (not disclosed). The study was conducted during the spring of 1987.

Results:
Youths who preferred heavy metal music and were low in parental supervision had higher rates of delinquency. Youths who favored heavy metal music did not necessarily do poorly in regards to academics. Youths who preferred classical music had the lowest mean delinquency score. The effect of having delinquent friends was significant in connection to the youth’s behavior.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
The scholars concluded that heavy metal music might attract intelligent youth that rebel by listening to this particular form of music and commit delinquent acts. Future research may want to examine the effects of popular forms of youth culture as it relates to delinquency. The culture and subculture groups should be analyzed in an effort to understand the influential aspects of youths and their criminal behavior.
Title:
Origins of Delinquent Events: An Examination of Offender Accounts.
(1990)

Author:
Agnew, R.

Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency
27 (3), 267-294

Characteristics Examined:
Nature of Offense
Gender
Age
Socioeconomic Status
Substance Abuse
Peer Relations
Family Background

Most Notable Characteristics:
Criminal Background
Drug/Alcohol Abuse

Sample Size:
The data for this particular study was collected from the 1972 National Survey of Youth (NYS). The Institute for Social Research (ISR) conducted the study at the University of Michigan. The investigators utilized a multistage sampling procedure to select a sample of 1,960 housing units. 1,395 adolescents were interviewed from the ages of 11 through 18.

Results:
The rational-choice theory is related to property (except vandalism) and drug offenses. The theory suggested that criminal actors weigh the costs and benefits of their actions. Individuals will more likely choose an option, which will maximize their pleasure. Strain theory is relevant to violent crime, vandalism, and the escapist offense of running away. This theory focused on the adolescent’s inability to achieve valued goals, which leads him or her to accomplish their objectives by delinquent methods. In addition, the theory suggested that a child may runaway or be truant in an attempt to escape from an aversive situation. Subcultural deviance theory is applicable to the explanation of drug offenses. The theory claimed that a juvenile who associates with a delinquent peer group will adopt pro-delinquent values which will in turn lead to criminal behavior.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
The findings of these theories aid in the explanations to criminal events. Moreover, it provides detail in the situational determinants of delinquents. This may explain the extent to which delinquents commit criminal acts. Future research should augment upon this research in illustrating the relationship between predisposition and situational factors.
Title:
Social Area Influences on Delinquency: A Multilevel Analysis
(1991)

Authors:
Gottfredson, D. C., McNeil, R. J., Gottfredson, G. D.

Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency
28 (2), 197-226

Characteristics Examined:
Gender
Age
Socioeconomic Status
Race
Educational Background
Peer Relations
Nature of Offense
Substance Abuse
Family Background

Most Notable Characteristics:
Race
Socioeconomic Status
Gender

Sample Size:
The study focused on the social area influence of 3,729 youths living in diverse environments. The sample was taken from 10 schools in 4 cities (Charleston, Kalamazoo, Christiansted, and Baltimore). The analysis was completed during the spring of 1982 and 1984.

Results:
The authors found that socioeconomic status and social disorganization are slightly related to delinquency. The area’s affluence is not strongly associated with crimes involving aggression. The theft and vandalism rates among males are higher in more affluent areas.

Conclusions and Recommendations:
The theft rate may be higher in affluent areas because there are more attractive targets in these areas. The community’s characteristics do not explain the differences among delinquents. The individual’s delinquency pattern originated from issues other than the ones found in the community. The scholars suggested that a study analyzing many areas would be more credible than a study, which focuses on one city or town.
### Notable Characteristics among Juvenile Delinquents as determined by the Researched Literature

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<th>Juvenile Characteristics/Selected Studies</th>
<th>SES</th>
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<th>History of Abuse</th>
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### Notable Characteristics among Juvenile Delinquents as determined by the Researched Literature

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<th>Juvenile Characteristics/Selected Studies</th>
<th>Criminal Background</th>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Drug and Alcohol Abuse</th>
<th>Personal Attitude</th>
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The preceding charts outline the pattern of characteristics among juvenile delinquents, including a list of the scholars and selected studies. The characteristics stipulated above provide all of the delinquent factors considered most important by the authors. The reader must bear in mind that some of the characteristics may not be itemized in the same fashion as the studies conducted by the various scholars. For instance, rather than separate particular abuses, all forms of abuse are categorized into a single index (history of abuse). The scholars, on the other hand, may not have grouped all abuses into a single category.
The following is a description of each juvenile characteristic listed on the chart.

- The socioeconomic status of the juvenile included the area of residence (urban, rural, or suburban) and the social class (low, middle, or upper) of the sampled juvenile.
- The race factor described the racial makeup of the juvenile. Race can be categorized as White, Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native. According to the Uniform Crime Report Glossary of Terms, the Black race included persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa, characterized by dark skin pigmentation. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and maintains identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition characterized an American Indian or Alaskan Native. An Asian or Pacific Islander is a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands (e.g. China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa). An individual characterized as part of the White race included any person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe or the Middle East.
- Ethnicity described a juvenile as being either Hispanic or Non-Hispanic. According to the Uniform Crime Report Glossary of Terms, Hispanic is a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- The Gender factor referred to the sex (male or female) of the sampled youth.
- The history of abuse index consisted of all types of abuse inflicted upon the juvenile during the course of his or her life. The abuse category included all forms of psychological, physical and sexual abuse and neglect.
- The family background profile included the history of the family’s criminality (parent, sibling, or guardian), drug and alcohol abuse, and marital status of the youth’s parents.
- The criminal background referred to the juvenile’s personal interaction with either the juvenile or criminal justice system. The index also incorporated the type and frequency of the juvenile’s offense.
• The educational background described the adolescent’s educational status. The category included whether the juvenile is currently attending school or is considered a dropout. Also included in this section are the juvenile’s disciplinary problems and level of academic potential, measured by academic achievement and intelligence tests.

• The drug and alcohol abuse index referred to the juvenile’s personal history of substance abuse. The category included several types of drugs, which the sampled juveniles responded to as having experimented or abused.

• The personal attitude characteristic referred to the juvenile’s personal beliefs, morals, values, preferences, reasoning, and judgment.

• The peer relations’ index included the relationships the juveniles held outside of their immediate families.

In reviewing and analyzing the literature, the authors most frequently mentioned the family and criminal background characteristics. As is illustrated by the chart, other characteristics, such as socioeconomic status, peer relations, drug and alcohol abuse and educational background were cited as having somewhat of a pattern among delinquents. Each of these characteristics was found to be notable by at least 3 of selected 12 studies. The scholars did not as often mention race, ethnicity, and personal attitude.

**Family Background**

In a self-reported delinquency survey, there were six family differences that can be associated with delinquent acts including, amount of time spent with family, family influence, family importance, personal importance of conventional goals, for example, family aspirations, acceptability of deviant means of obtaining family goals (family norm/normlessness), and feelings of being part of the family (family integration/isolation) (Tygart, 1990).

The literature consistently mentioned the absence of family interaction as a characteristic common to the surveyed delinquents. Interestingly, the influence (good and bad) derived from family does not have
to be that of a traditional background. The results collected by Tygart (1990) illustrated that family attachment (amount of time spent with parents) was a variable, which decreased delinquency. These results also stipulated similar findings for both divorced and natural parent households. Therefore, the typical delinquent does not necessarily come from a divorced and stepparent home as is commonly perceived, but rather has a family background where parental guidance and supervision is lacking.

The acts of a juvenile delinquent may also be subject to the number of adults in the home. Rincker et al. (1990) found that, as the number of adults in the home increased, delinquency would decrease. The authors separated delinquent acts into three categories: violent acts against persons, acts against property, and other charges. The data revealed that 59 (n = 100) delinquent acts were committed when there was only one adult present in the household, 38 acts when there are two, and only 3 acts when there are 3 adults present. The study showed that an increase in parenting diverted delinquent acts. Thus, a child who simply comes from a two-parent home is not diverted from delinquency. A juvenile delinquent is more likely to come from a home where supervision is not present, regardless if it happens to be a stepparent household. In Tygart’s (1990) multivariate analysis, he found the increased amount of time a youth and parents spend together is associated with decreased delinquency. However, youths simply spending more time with parents may not reduce high rates of delinquency and an increase in delinquency may not originate from youth-parent relations. Tygart (1990) stated that it is difficult to estimate the statistical relationship of cause or effect between a youth and their parents.

Singer et al. (1993) found a connection between delinquency and parental supervision. Supervision was a significant finding in their study and concluded, in reference to their sample, that youths preferring heavy metal music and were low in parental supervision had higher rates of delinquency. Lattimore et al. (1995) found that a juvenile delinquent is more likely to be rearrested for a violent offense when there exists evidence of family violence and criminality in their background. In their study of non-delinquents, low level delinquents, and high level delinquents, Huzinga et al. (1991) stated: “Among non-
delinquents, being in a pro-delinquent personal environment appears to increase the probability of moving to a higher involvement of delinquency in the following year. Among higher level delinquents, those with a positive home and conventional orientation were more likely to decrease their delinquent involvement than were other types, while those with a negative home and pro-delinquent orientation were more likely to maintain their classification as higher-level delinquents.”

Tygart (1990) explained that divorce itself cannot be correlated with delinquency and to do so would be to oversimplify the issue. Further, the author elaborated that divorce is the end result of a period of stress and disharmony. Therefore, it is not so much the final separation that may influence a child’s behavior, but the occurrences preceding and following the divorce that may help in defining a juvenile’s delinquency.

These studies shed light on a typical delinquent characteristic, but more importantly, cast doubt on the inaccurate assumption that delinquents are bred from stepparent and divorced homes. The questions, therefore, which remain are, what kinds of activities are happening within a particular household? What type of abuses, if any, is the child exposed to? Is he or she being adequately supervised? Does the child have an appropriate family background to grow and mature into a responsible and moral adult? The question, which seems to be irrelevant, is whether the child is raised in a traditional family setting.

**Criminal Background**

The review of the literature revealed the importance of the criminal background factor as a characteristic of the typical juvenile delinquent. The criminal background of the delinquent categorized the juvenile according to the pattern and nature of their crime. This segment of the literature focused on the different typologies and criminal activities of the typical juvenile delinquent.

The reasoning underlying a delinquent’s motive to commit a criminal act varied from one person to another. Agnew (1990) described three theories including, the strain theory, subculture deviance theory, and social control/rational choice theory in explaining the adolescent’s criminality. One version of the
strain theory centered on the juvenile’s inability to achieve goals through legitimate means. The goals accessible to others may not be attainable to the delinquent; therefore, he or she is inclined to achieve these goals by delinquent acts. Another version of the theory included the juvenile’s inability to escape from a painful or abusive situation. For example, an adolescent who comes from an abusive home or classifies school as a painful environment may run away or be truant as a means of escaping. According to the strain theory, delinquents are angry or distressed from goal-blockage or the experience of being subjected to a painful environment.

In their study of delinquent youth, Rincker et al. (1990) found academic skills to be deficient among their sample. The authors speculated that the juvenile’s teacher bears somewhat of the responsibility for the low academic scores. The authors suggested that some teachers continue to base their perceptions of the student’s potential on race, gender, socioeconomic status, linguistic and cultural differences. As the juvenile becomes a failure in regards to academics, he will look to accomplish his goals through the channels of delinquency. The authors cited two specific factors, which were significant. First, the educational environment of the adolescent delinquent. Second, the academic demands that are made on the adolescent within this environment.

The subcultural deviance theory involved the juvenile delinquent’s peer relationships as a precursor to their criminality. The delinquent may engage in delinquency because of the direct or indirect influences of their friends. A direct affect involves an actual demand made by one’s peer to participate in a delinquent act. An indirect influence is the juvenile’s attempt to gain the group’s recognition by involving himself in criminal activity (Agnew, 1990).

The social control/rational choice theory attempted to explain a juvenile’s delinquency pattern as a measure of the derived costs and benefits of the act. The delinquent, therefore, prior to committing a criminal offense measures the profit to be gained versus the possible punishment in being apprehended. The benefits from a criminal act may not necessarily have an attached monetary value, rather may be
determined from the sheer fun and excitement the act draws. For instance, a delinquent might steal a motor vehicle for the purpose of “joyriding.” In accordance with this theory, juvenile delinquents are involved in crime because “…during the course of their routine activities they encounter situations in which delinquent behavior appears advantageous or they deliberately seek out or create situations in which delinquent behavior appears advantageous” (Agnew, 1990).

Based on this literature, there are many possible causes for the onset of criminal behavior among juveniles. The process may involve academics, problems at home, peer relations, etc. Lattimore et al. (1995) concluded that the mean number of arrests for the sampled parolee was 7.58, while the mean number of violent crime arrests was 1.22. The mean number of adjudications was 1.16. The data revealed that the juvenile delinquent rarely begins his criminality by committing violent crimes. They are instead the result of a gradual series of criminal events, with each step in the process increasing in severity.

Wolfgang et al. (1972) found chronic offenders (those having 5 or more juvenile arrests) made up 6 percent of his cohort, yet accounted for 52 percent of all juvenile arrests. In their national sample, Johnson et al. (1991) found that less than five percent of the delinquents committed three fifths of the index offenses, two fifths of the minor offenses and three quarters of the drug sales. Their findings suggested that a small number of adolescents are committing most of the juvenile crime. The “intensives” (3 or more index offenses and three or more occasions of cocaine use in the previous year) and the “highs” (pill users and index offenders in the past year) constituted 4.3 percent of their sample, yet committed a disproportionate share of the delinquency. Interestingly, only 20 percent of the sampled intensives and 9 percent of the highs reported committing non-drug crimes as a means of obtaining drugs or alcohol. The scholars purported that these youths may not be dependent on their habit or may have adequate income to obtain the drugs.

Agnew (1990) summarized by offering different explanations as to why delinquents committed certain acts. He found that violent crimes are committed for reasons of retaliation or revenge. Property
crimes, with the exception of vandalism and illegal entry, are perpetrated primarily for self-gratification and utilitarian need. Drug offenses were mentioned as crimes being committed due to social pressures and self-gratification. Marijuana and hard drug use are frequently abused for reasons of curiosity or thrills. The major reason for a juvenile running away is to escape from pain or punishment, as well as, for the purposes of retaliation and revenge.
METHODOLOGY

Two sources, government documents and scholarly literature, were used to gather the information regarding the typical juvenile delinquent. In an attempt to compile the most accurate data on delinquents, recent publications on juvenile crime were obtained. These publications included the 1996 Uniform Crime Report and the 1996 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics. With the exception of the Wolfgang, Sellin, and Figlio (1972) literature (a classic study regarding juvenile delinquency), the remaining 11 journal articles were recent scholarly-written literature (dated from 1990 to the present). The data for this Capstone Project were collected from the Seton Hall University Walsh Library. The following computer databases were utilized: Government Periodicals on Disc (GPOD), Seton Hall Computer Card Catalog (SetonCAT), and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service Document Database (1995).

The government documents were somewhat limited in describing the typical characteristics among juveniles. For the most part, these documents provided information on the juvenile's gender, race, ethnicity, and nature of offense. Scholarly literature was referenced to provide the reader with the other characteristics, mentioned in the project, that are not listed in government publications. This study is presented and discussed based upon the findings of the cited literature; therefore, my conclusions and recommendations are grounded solely on the analysis of the stated information.
RESULTS

The literature revealed that the typical juvenile delinquent would most likely be a male with a dysfunctional family background. The adjudicated delinquent would most likely already have a criminal history within the juvenile justice system. The other characteristics, mentioned in the literature, included a low level of academic achievement, negative influences by delinquent peers, involvement in drugs and alcohol, and a possible history of psychological, sexual, physical or neglect abuse. The socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity of the delinquent varied. For instance, an urban delinquent who is adjudicated would most likely be a black male with a low socioeconomic status. Other delinquents, who resided in a rural or suburban setting, would most likely be a white male and may or may not come from a financially stable home.

Essex County is a diverse region, which includes both suburban and urban type environments. The residents of Essex County come from an assortment of backgrounds with wide variance in their socioeconomic status. The majority of the crime, however, takes place in Newark, Irvington, and Orange. According to the 1990 New Jersey Census, the total Essex County population consisted of 778,206 persons of which 316,262 were black. Black children under 18 years of age make up 28.7 percent (90,767) of this figure. The 1990 New Jersey census estimated the Newark City population as 275,221 of which 160,885 were black. Black children under 18 years of age make up 30 percent (48,266) of this figure. The typical Essex County delinquent is black, male, involved in drugs and alcohol, and who has run away from home for the possible reasons included in the family background characteristic. However, one may glean that the Essex County delinquency problem may not be as much a race issue, as an urban problem.

The study by Gottfredson et al. (1991) presented reasons as to why individuals residing in high crime areas committed more crimes. Newark, Irvington, and Orange may be particular districts of Essex County, which lack community organization. The lack of social norms creates apathy among its inhabitants. These areas attract criminality and maintain a community conducive to crime. The Broken
Windows Theory (1982) suggested that the crime rate of a city or town is correlated with the community’s high tolerance toward criminal actions. As minor crimes such as vandalism become acceptable, other more serious crimes become widespread. The three urban areas of Essex County may be victims to the indifference of its residents, which has an indirect and detrimental effect on their youth population.

In considering the race of the delinquent as a typical characteristic, researchers must consider police officer discretion. An officer has the authority to either release or process the delinquent. The juvenile loitering on a corner of Newark may not draw the attention of a police officer as it would in a town with less crime, such as Livingston Township; therefore, the lack of resources can sometimes contribute to the high rate of delinquency. Moreover, an officer may be less inclined to process individuals of high socioeconomic status. Wilson et al. (1972) concluded that the characteristics of race and socioeconomic status were strongly related to the offender and non-offender classification. In many instances, the juvenile offender is informally handled; therefore, the use of police records in illustrating delinquent trends should be exercised with caution.

Each of the studies reviewed disclosed the gender characteristic of a typical delinquent to be male. The findings, according to the 1996 Uniform Crime Report, were similar for Essex County. Tygart (1990) suggested that females spend more time with their families and that in doing so has a direct impact on their decreased delinquency. Although this may hold true, one should also view the significant gender difference of delinquency from a sociological perspective. Males are typically raised to be more aggressive than females. From the time they are infants, males are taught to respond and cope with their anger and pain through different methods than females. The unintentional habits of how males are raised, as well as, the learning disabilities that are prevalent among boys may provide reason for their increased delinquency. Finally, the differences may simply be hereditary. Genes prone to criminality may be more frequently passed from an adult male to his male children.

The large number of runaway offenders in Essex County may be attributed to the family
background characteristic and, in some cases, the educational background factor. As mentioned previously, an adolescent who runs away may be attempting to escape some form of pain or punishment. The literature also broached upon revenge and retaliation as motives for child runaways (Agnew, 1990). Based on Agnew’s study, one can assume that the Essex County runaway problem stems from the unstable family structure. The juvenile may be seeking to avoid his or her home because of the exposure to the various forms of abuse. These abuses may either be real or perceived. For instance, the parents of a child may require him or her to complete homework prior to watching television. The child may perceive the regimented schedule as abuse whereby he chooses to run away. In an effort to put an end to a painful environment, the youth will rationalize the option of leaving his or her home.

The relationship between the torturing home and running away is similar to the connection found between academic inabilities and truancy. A child who cannot achieve academically will identify school as a painful environment. The juvenile will thus seek to avoid the educational institution (truancy) to cope with the pain he or she is experiencing.

Running away for reasons of revenge and retaliation would explain the mentality of a youth who feels that he or she is in some way returning the pain to their parents or guardian. For instance, “I’ll show them”, is a common cliché among juveniles who are rebelling against their families. The perception of abuse may sometimes be as critical as the genuine physical or psychological abuse. The child’s reality is based on his or her perception of what is real. The child can, therefore, be influenced to leave home on the basis of an erroneous conclusion.

The most frequently committed non-index crimes in Essex County are drug abuse violations. Evidently, the county has a substance abuse problem among their youth. Interestingly, however, other underlying problems may precede delinquent acts involving drugs. The question therefore is, Why is the child involved drugs? What may lead one youth to the usage and distribution of drugs may not affect another. For instance, a juvenile may involve himself in drugs for a variety of reasons including, peer
relations and pressures, lack of a suitable role model, replicating behaviors exposed to the juvenile, poor academic performance, or experimentation that may or may not precede addiction.

In order to reduce the drug problem among juveniles, the county must delineate the violations into specific categories. The type of drug abused by the delinquent can shed light on other crimes, which occur as a result of the abuse. The Johnson et al. (1991) study illustrated that among multiple index offenders, cocaine and pill users had extremely high rates of delinquency, while alcohol and marijuana users were not as significant in comparison. The infrequent index revealed 6 annual acts of delinquency by non-drug users, 47 acts for pill users and 162 offenses committed by cocaine users. The type of drug may increase the amount of delinquency by as much as three times. Newark, Irvington, and Orange may be averting a cocaine problem, while other towns of the county are seeking to remedy a delinquent problem associated with drugs of a less serious nature. The areas of the county with the most serious drug problem will have the highest rates of delinquency. Furthermore, the three cities of the county are victim to the domino effect of delinquency. Delinquents become involved in substance abuse for any of the previously mentioned reasons. Once the adolescent becomes involved in cocaine or other hard-core drug, the addiction exacerbates the number of delinquent acts. Generally, juveniles do not have a wide span of mobility; therefore, the crimes carried out by delinquents are committed and contained within the region of the drug problem (Newark, Irvington, and Orange).

The typical delinquent of Essex County is somewhat similar, as well as, different from the delinquent population of the nation. The characteristics of delinquents are multidimensional. The backgrounds of juvenile delinquents may vary from one individual to another. One youngster may exhibit all 11 of the listed characteristics and never commit a delinquent act. Another adolescent may be a female demonstrating an ideal background and, for reasons not mentioned in this text, commits a violent crime. The probability of either occurrence is rare, yet it is important for the reader not to stereotype delinquent backgrounds, merely based on sample populations. Each delinquent case is different, with its own set of
variables and experiences, which perpetuates crime.

In analyzing the juvenile delinquent, one should examine three areas of characteristics including, the general makeup and physical attributes of the youth (gender, race, ethnicity, history of drug and alcohol abuse and age), the external factors influencing the adolescent toward increased criminality (the family, criminal and educational background, peer relations, and the area’s effect on juvenile delinquency), and the personal attitude of the adolescent (a measurement of the individual’s moral, value, and belief system). If possible, an assessment tool should be created which evaluates the delinquent’s feelings of attachment with regard to the community. Additionally, the instrument would determine the level and amount of remorse he or she holds in relation to the victims of their crimes. An evaluation of the juvenile can be done by asking a series of specific questions relevant to their delinquency. The responses to the questions would illustrate a connection, if any, between the particular child being interviewed and the typical characteristics of other delinquents. An outline of a final assessment for the delinquent may appear as such (Gottfredson et al., 1991):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being male and adolescent</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association with delinquent peers</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to harsh or erratic discipline in the family</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Competency</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsive or daring behavior exhibited</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in conventional rules</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to conventional goals</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment to institutions and adults</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above-mentioned assessment illustrates the juvenile’s deficient family background, lack of commitment to conventional goals, lack of attachment to institutions and adults, association with delinquent peers, and their tendency to engage in dangerous behavior. The assessment of physical attributes, external factors, and the personal attitude of the delinquent can facilitate the system in developing a specific diversion program for the county’s adjudicated delinquent, but more importantly, can
serve to cultivate preventive services for the at-risk population.
CONCLUSION

Based on the statistical information provided by the government documents and the cited literature, there exists several options, which Essex County may consider in abating the delinquency problem. The recommendations include, mentoring programs, Multisystematic Therapy (MST) Approach, and community service alternatives as outlined in the Reclaim Ohio Project. Given the characteristics of the typical Essex County delinquent, the above-mentioned strategies can successfully divert the juvenile from the criminal justice system.

This capstone project has shown that all delinquents do not have a set path prior to becoming adjudicated. The two common links delinquents predominantly have are gender, most delinquents being male, and a criminal history preceding the youth’s adjudication. Apparently, the adjudicated child was not deterred from committing delinquent acts and has continued to climb the “criminal ladder” to crimes of a more serious nature. In this circumstance, one may equate the delinquent to a drug addict. A drug addict rarely begins their habit with cocaine or heroin rather, may initially abuse marijuana. Much like the addict, the delinquent does not begin their criminality with the commission of violent crimes. They are instead the result of a gradual series of criminal events, with each step in the process increasing in severity. Consequently, the aim should be in withdrawing the delinquent from this crime continuum prior to him becoming a violent and hardened criminal.

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring programs involve a one on one relationship between a juvenile and a volunteer adult. Due to the multidimensional facets of delinquency, mentors can help the juvenile on an individual and personal basis. The mentor can assess the individual problems of the juvenile and can gradually assist the child in overcoming their obstacles. The research illustrated a pattern among juveniles in regards to the family background characteristic. Mentors may aid the county’s efforts for diversion by instituting the role model image, which is evidently lacking.
The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provides support and funding for mentoring efforts in individual states through their Formula Grants Program. Some of the mentoring programs include, Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), SafeFutures Initiative, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BB/BS). OJJDP researchers conducted a study (Garry et al. 1997) on the BB/BS program and found the following:

- Mentored youth were 46 percent less likely than youth in the control group to initiate drug use during the study period. An even stronger effect was found for minority Little Brothers and Sisters, who were 70 percent less likely to initiate drug use than similar minority youth.
- Mentored youth were 27 percent less likely than those in the control group to initiate alcohol use during the study period, and minority Little Sisters were only about one-half as likely to initiate alcohol use.
- Mentored youth were almost one-third less likely than were controls to hit someone.
- Mentored youth skipped half as many days as control youth, felt more competent about doing schoolwork, skipped fewer classes, and exhibited modest gains in their grade point averages. These gains were strongest among Little Sisters, particularly minority Little Sisters.
- The quality of their relationship with their parents was better for mentored youth than for controls at the end of the study period, primarily due to a higher level of trust between the parent and child. The effect was strongest for Caucasian Little Brothers.
- Mentored youth, especially minority Little Brothers, had improved relationships with their peers.

   The OJJDP study documented the following type of relationships between the Big Brothers and Big Sisters with their Little Brothers and Little Sisters:

   - They had a high level of contact, typically meeting three times per month for four hours per meeting. Many had additional contact by telephone.
   - The relationships were built using an approach that defines the mentor as a friend, not a teacher or
preacher. The mentor’s role was to support the young person in his or her various endeavors, not explicitly to change the youth’s behavior or character.

Essex County officials should research the following elements, which the OJJDP recorded as prerequisites for an effective mentoring program:

- Thorough volunteer screening that weeds out adults who are unlikely to keep their time commitment or who might pose a safety risk to the youth.
- Mentor training that includes communication and limit-setting skills, tips on relationship building, and recommendations on the best way to interact with a young person.
- Procedures that take into account the preferences of the youth, the child's family, and volunteers. Additionally, a professional case manager determines which volunteer would work best with each youth.
- Intensive supervision and support of each match by a case manager who has frequent contact with the parent or guardian, volunteer, and youth and who provides assistance as difficulties arise.

The two obstacles that Essex County may face in attempting to replicate a mentoring program are the limited number of adults willing to act as mentors and the lack of resources that are needed in carrying out an effective program.

**Multisystematic Therapy Approach** (Henggeler, 1997)

The Multisystematic Therapy (MST) Approach utilizes community-based treatment as an alternative to reprimand anti-social behavior among adolescents. As opposed to expensive and ineffective treatment programs, MST has been scientifically proven to work, as well as being most comprehensive. MST seeks to remedy the child’s behavior by improving the psychological functioning of the youth and their family. If successful, MST eliminates the need for out-of-home child placement. The MST Approach focuses on the individual causes of delinquency. The process of MST intervention includes the assessment of the individual youth, his or her family, peer context, school or vocational performance, and
neighborhood or community supports. MST is essentially an attempt to promote pro-social behavior by changing the negative exposure of their natural settings (home, school, and neighborhood). MST defines success by the improvement of family and peer relations, decreased behavioral problems, a decreased rate of out-of-home placement, and a reduction in the recidivism rate among the program’s participants. According to the OJJDP, the MST Approach is more effective than traditional programs for inner-city juvenile delinquents. Moreover, research indicated that MST may specifically help inner-city delinquency by decreasing youth behavioral difficulties and improving the youth’s relations with his or her family.

**Ohio RECLAIM Project** (Applegate et al., 1995)

Essex County authorities can also consider the initiative taken by the state of Ohio as a possible alternative. The state instituted a pilot program called RECLAIM Ohio (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors). The program was set to assist counties in providing community services to adjudicated delinquents. The objectives of the program were to give local judges a variety of alternatives in handling youthful offenders and to improve the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) ability to treat offenders. In an effort to accomplish these tasks, the DYS has, since then, increased the involvement of the juvenile’s family in community-based programs, as well as, providing more services to adjudicated youth.

A preliminary assessment of the pilot program has found that the nine selected counties supported RECLAIM Ohio. The project has served a wide variety of youths and has met its goals during the pilot phase. Moreover, the selected counties have been able to reduce the number of juvenile commitments to DYS facilities by over 42 percent. A similar type strategy may help Essex County in gauging and selecting services appropriate to their specific needs (Runaways, Larceny-Theft, and Drug Abuse Violations).

This research found that juvenile delinquency becomes a serious problem when the youth begins to perceive limitations in his or her person. As discussed in this text, the limitations may include, influential behavior by family and peers, poor academic skills, and community disorganization. The
barriers (goal-blockages) prevent the youth from accomplishing particular aspirations. They nevertheless seek to obtain a goal through illegitimate means. For instance, an adolescent who is successful in regards to academics and comes from a supportive family will be able to obtain assets through an education and subsequent career. A so-called delinquent may not have the resources or the family background to acquire the same wealth; therefore, will look to obtain an automobile, residence, and other goods through illicit means, such as drug dealing.

Given the findings and recommendations by the various scholars, the three programs referred to seem most appropriate for Essex County in dealing with the juvenile delinquency problem. As previously stated, juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional issue and what affects one adolescent may not influence another. Research has noted mentoring programs and the MST Approach as effective because they investigate the individual problems associated with delinquency. For instance, if there exists a difficulty in regards to the juvenile’s family background, the mentor or therapy approach can primarily address and concentrate on these issues related to criminal activity. The cited programs mold themselves according to the needs of the child, rather than squandering resources on tactics that do not adequately divert the youth from crime.

The RECLAIM Ohio Project has, thus far, met with success. Essex County should seek to incorporate the project in that it allows the region’s judges more discretion in handling youthful offenders. While avoiding the restrictions imposed by the state, the court will have the autonomy to choose from a variety of alternatives. These options, in accordance with the factors surrounding the origin of the youth’s behavior, will permit authorities in selecting that which is most appropriately suited for the particular child gone astray. The recommendations provided for Essex County should aid their efforts in diverting juvenile delinquents from becoming recidivists. Information pertaining to the referenced programs may be obtained through the following agencies:

- Mentoring Programming and MST Approach
  United States Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Washington, D.C. 20531

- RECLAIM Ohio Pilot Project
  Division of Criminal Justice
  University of Cincinnati
  PO Box 210389
  Cincinnati, OH 45221-0389
### Juvenile Arrests for Essex County, New Jersey by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender/Year</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>1994</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9,714</td>
<td>8,699</td>
<td>9,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2,352</td>
<td>2,216</td>
<td>2,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>12,066</td>
<td>10,915</td>
<td>11,410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New Jersey State Police, Uniform Crime Reports, 1992-94

### Juvenile Arrests for Union County, New Jersey by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender/Year</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>1994</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5,167</td>
<td>4,853</td>
<td>4,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1,463</td>
<td>1,441</td>
<td>1,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6,630</td>
<td>6,294</td>
<td>6,322</td>
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</table>

Source: New Jersey State Police, Uniform Crime Reports, 1992-94
# The National Change in Percentage for Arrested Juveniles Ages 12 or Younger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>102%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcible Rape</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>209%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>190%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>139%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Property Crime Index                   | 97,800                 | - 1%                     |
| Burglary                               | 16,600                 | - 35%                    |
| Larceny-Theft                          | 74,600                 | 9%                       |
| Motor Vehicle Theft                    | 2,900                  | 31%                      |
| Arson                                  | 3,600                  | 29%                      |

| Crime Index Total                      | 109,300                | 5%                       |

| Non-Index Crimes*                     |                        |                          |
| Simple Assault                        | 28,700                 | 170%                     |
| Stolen Property (buying, receiving, possessing) | 2,500 | 7%                     |
| Vandalism                              | 26,000                 | - 7%                     |
| Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)   | 4,500                  | 206%                     |
| Sex Offenses (except forcible rape and prostitution) | 2,900 | 125%                   |
| Drug Abuse Violations                  | 4,100                  | 129%                     |
| Liquor Law Violations                  | 1,200                  | 31%                      |
| Disorderly Conduct                     | 16,000                 | 63%                      |
| Curfew and Loitering                   | 7,100                  | 136%                     |
| Running Away                           | 21,100                 | 47%                      |

| Total*                                 | 256,300 (9%)           | 24%                      |

Notes: Not all offenses included in the non-index category are included. These youths accounted for 9 percent of juvenile arrests.

### The National Change in Percentage for Arrested Juveniles Ages 13 and 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Violent Crime Index</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcible Rape</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>12,400</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>19,100</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property Crime Index</strong></td>
<td>209,800</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>36,500</td>
<td>- 32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny-Theft</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>19,900</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crime Index Total</strong></td>
<td>243,000</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Index Crimes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Assault</td>
<td>60,600</td>
<td>196%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stolen Property (buying, receiving, possessing)</td>
<td>9,300</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>39,900</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)</td>
<td>12,600</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Offenses (except forcible rape and prostitution)</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Abuse Violations</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquor Law Violations</td>
<td>11,300</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorderly Conduct</td>
<td>45,600</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curfew and Loitering</td>
<td>35,900</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Away</td>
<td>88,100</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>680,400 (25%)</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Not all offenses included in the non-index category are included. These youths accounted for 25 percent of juvenile arrests.

### The National Change in Percentage for Arrested Juveniles Ages 15 or Older

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter</td>
<td>103,000</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcible Rape</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assault</td>
<td>39,900</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56,800</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>429,800</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny-Theft</td>
<td>82,700</td>
<td>-46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>286,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>57,700</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Crime Index Total | 532,800 | -2% |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple Assault</td>
<td>126,500</td>
<td>115%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stolen Property (buying, receiving, possessing)</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>73,700</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)</td>
<td>39,200</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Offenses (except forcible rape and prostitution)</td>
<td>7,800</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Abuse Violations</td>
<td>157,700</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquor Law Violations</td>
<td>107,500</td>
<td>-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorderly Conduct</td>
<td>112,300</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curfew and Loitering</td>
<td>106,700</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Away</td>
<td>140,300</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total* | 1,808,300 (66%) | 18% |

Note: Not all offenses included in the non-index category are included. These youths accounted for 66 percent of juvenile arrests.

### Caseflow for Juvenile Delinquents Aged 12 or Younger in 1994


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Petitioned 64,000 (38%)</th>
<th>Adjudicated 32,300 (50%)</th>
<th>Non-Adjudicated 31,700 (49%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>168,700 Cases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed</td>
<td>6,600 (21%)</td>
<td>800 (2%)</td>
<td>360 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>20,100 (62%)</td>
<td>9,100 (29%)</td>
<td>18,300 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>900 (3%)</td>
<td>18,300 (58%)</td>
<td>18,300 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4,700 (14%)</td>
<td>3,600 (11%)</td>
<td>3,600 (11%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Petitioned 104,700 (62%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placed</td>
<td>100 (less than 1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>32,200 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>51,100 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21,400 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Caseflow for Juvenile Delinquents Aged 13 and 14 in 1994


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caseflow Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Petitioned</strong></td>
<td>228,500</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjudicated</strong></td>
<td>137,900</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Adjudicated</strong></td>
<td>90,200</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Petitioned</strong></td>
<td>209,900</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Petitioned 228,500 (52%)**
- Transferred 400 (less than 1%)
- Adjudicated 137,900 (60%)
  - Placed 39,300 (29%)
  - Probation 77,300 (56%)
  - Dismissed 3,800 (3%)
  - Other 17,500 (13%)

**Non-Adjudicated 90,200 (39%)**
- Placed 1,800 (2%)
- Probation 22,900 (25%)
- Dismissed 53,800 (60%)
- Other 11,800 (13%)

**Non-Petitioned 209,900 (48%)**
- Placed 1,100 (1%)
- Probation 61,900 (29%)
- Dismissed 102,900 (49%)
- Other 43,900 (21%)
**Caseflow for Juvenile Delinquents Aged 15 and Older in 1994**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Petitioned 562,800 (59%)</th>
<th>Transferred 11,900 (2%)</th>
<th>Adjudicated 324,800 (58%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Placed 95,400 (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Probation 167,200 (51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissed 12,500 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other 49,700 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Adjudicated 226,100 (40%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Placed 5,200 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Probation 45,800 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissed 138,800 (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other 36,200 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Petitioned 385,400 (41%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Placed 3,000 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Probation 102,100 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissed 193,700 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other 86,600 (22%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

948,200 Cases
WORKS CITED


