

Engaged Research in a University Setting: Results and Reflections on Three Decades of a Partnership to Improve Juvenile Justice

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This article provides an overview of Michigan State University's Adolescent Project, a partnership with the community to improve juvenile justice in Ingham County. The project was recognized with the 2009 Outreach Scholarship W. K. Kellogg Foundation Engagement Award for the North Central Region.

Introduction

Historically, the most prominent pedagogical models used in universities have served to separate instructional styles and settings from communities (*Greenwood & Levin, 2000*). Within the United States, there has been a call for a shift in this relationship (*Edwards & Marullo, 1999*). In addition, there have been many presses for higher education in the United States to develop student abilities in ways that produce more active learning, and a more diverse set of skills. Relatedly, there has been a press for engaged scholarship (*Kenny, Simon, Kiley-Braback, & Lerner, 2002*). In engaged scholarship, the scientific and intellectual resources of the university are partnered with the community to address significant problems.

The engaged scholarship model creates a unique opportunity for universities to accomplish their tripartite mission of education, research, and community engagement. For students, service-learning opportunities cultivate student knowledge and skills in interactive and applied venues, which will serve them well later in life as they participate in a free and democratic society. Active-learning, experiential instructional models facilitate more productive, culturally sensitive, and responsible citizens as students are taught to work in partnership *with* their communities (*Freire, 1970; Rhodes, 1997*). Today, colleges and universities are better able to employ educational methods that promote critical thinking, interpersonal interaction skills, problem solving, and conflict resolution abilities because more universities are connecting with communities, particularly through university-engagement centers that promote university-community collaborations (*Lerner & Simon, 1998; Kenny, Simon, Kiley-Braback, & Lerner, 2002*).

University-community collaborations aim to provide better educational, science, and community outcomes and to leverage resources for all members of the partnership through the scholarship of discovery and systemic change (*Morton, 1995*).

The Michigan State University–Ingham County Partnership: Setting the Context

Michigan State University Context

Michigan State University (MSU) is a large midwestern land-grant university with commitments to advancing knowledge, transforming lives, and collaborating with the world community. As an organizational context, MSU provided a unique setting given its diversity of mission, size, and strength as an institution. The seeds for the current engaged scholarship were being sown at the time the Michigan State University Adolescent Project (MSUAP) was originally established. Particularly important in the development of MSUAP was community psychology, which was rapidly becoming an active subdiscipline of psychology. With this new perspective on community health and well-being came demands for increased relevance. Specific models of involving the academy, its science and its students, in community issues were developing. Seidman and Rappaport (*1974*) had articulated an “educational pyramid” as one particular model. It is within this context that a group of researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in collaboration with the local community, designed the original MSUAP model (*Davidson, Seidman, Rappaport, Berck, Rapp, Rhodes, & Herring, 1977*). Based on that original model, MSU’s partnership with Ingham County was forged.

Why MSU and Ingham County Partnered to Address Juvenile Crime

The Michigan State University Adolescent Project (MSUAP) started in the 1970s to address an increase in juvenile crime and an increase in public awareness of the problem (*e.g., Davidson, Redner, Amdur, & Mitchell, 1990*) Ingham County is a medium-sized midwestern community with a broad economic base in manufacturing, government, and higher education. Michigan State University (MSU) and Ingham County, Michigan, partnered to address juvenile crime for three reasons. First, juvenile crime represented a threat to community safety. The early 1970s saw an unprecedented increase in crime rates, particularly juvenile crime

rates (Davidson, *et al.*, 1990). Second, in response to the crime rate, the community was expending increasingly scarce resources. At that time, as today, the cost of the juvenile justice system was outpacing inflation (Davidson *et. al.*, 1990). Third, the county's attempts to reduce juvenile crime by traditional means had been found ineffective. In fact, there had been strong suggestions that traditional approaches to juvenile crime correction were ineffective (*e.g.*, Gold, 1970).

What the MSUAP Hoped to Accomplish

As stated above, the program had three goals. For the community, the program sought to provide an alternative method of handling juvenile offenders that would reduce crime and costs. For the MSU students, the program sought to provide a service-learning experience that would enhance their education generally and allow them to focus their career goals. For the faculty, the program provided a vehicle for knowledge generation, education, and community engagement.

What MSU and the Community Brought to the Partnership

The community provided a setting, organizational support, referrals of juvenile offenders from the local juvenile court as an alternative to court processing (diversion), experiential expertise, and access to records. The key community partners were the chief juvenile court judge, the court administrator, the chief of police, commissioners from the county board, and probation officers from the Intake Division of the juvenile court. The judiciary, administrators, and commissioners served in an advisory capacity for project and intervention design. The probation officers provided referrals to the MSUAP as an alternative to court processing and assisted with training students.

In developing MSUAP, the university contributed faculty and student time, theoretical and intervention information, and research and methodological acumen. University partners included faculty and graduate students from the Psychology Department as well as the administrators. They worked with the advisory group to design the program, which would be implemented by undergraduate students. They also designed a manual to train the students to participate in a new, two-semester course in which they received three hours of weekly training and supervision for their community work. They were trained and supervised in

delivering a hybrid of child advocacy and behavioral interventions (Davidson & Rapp, 1976; Davidson, et al., 1990; Davidson & Sturza, 2006).

Four federal research grants were received to support the initial phase of project development. The grants supported the training and supervision of the students who worked one-on-one with juveniles referred by the court. The grants also supported research on the effects on the community (reduced crime), the students (learning and future careers), and the justice system.

How the Michigan State University Adolescent Project Program Works

The Michigan State University Adolescent Project (MSUAP) partners sought to design and validate an intervention model that would jointly engage the university and the community, provide an effective alternative intervention for juvenile delinquency, and provide a platform for long-term sustainability of the partnership.

MSUAP: Program Description

MSUAP is a community-based and university-run project to identify cost-effective alternatives to primary service delivery systems for juvenile offenders. Juvenile offenders are referred to the program, which employs undergraduate students as advocates for the youth.

The program provides an alternative to sending youth to a formal hearing before the judge and placement in residential correctional settings. Rather, it provides activities to keep local youth out of the formal court system and away from out-of-home placement. Other goals of the program include developing the self-advocacy skills of the youth, providing families alternative models of conflict resolution, establishing or reestablishing their positive identity and relationships with their community, and increasing their access to resources in their community. Basic values of the program include building on the participants' strengths, providing needed resources for the youth, maintaining open communication and confidentiality, working in their natural environment, and avoiding victim blaming. All of the activities of the project are based on this value system. In order for the MSU students to be effective as change agents, it is critical that they adhere to these values.

A large number of people are involved in the operation of the project: the college undergraduate student change agents, the trainers/supervisors, the project director, and the sponsoring

faculty member. The undergraduate student change agents furnish the critical ingredients of providing quality service to the youth in the local community. The student change agents are trained and work within a two-semester, 30-week service-learning course experience, and receive four credits per semester. The students participate in training and supervision in weekly, two-and-a-half-hour class sessions in small groups of six to eight students.

Faculty Expertise

The community-university MSUAP has three theoretical underpinnings, which helped to shape the program and the subsequent research projects. The project founders first turned to social learning theory. If juvenile criminal behavior operated according to the principles of social learning theory, then rehabilitation was not only possible, but plausible. Specific interventions within the natural environment, rather than distant institutional interventions, would be necessary. If all behavior was a function of its context, through the processes of social learning, rehabilitation or retraining in artificial environments was not likely to have lasting effects. If the specific role models and environmental contingencies present in the real-life situations of delinquent youth produced crime, then intervention in the natural environment of youth was indicated.

Second, social conflict models argued for the importance of differential distribution of social and economic resources in producing crime (e.g., Davidson & Rapp, 1976). The Chicago School of Sociology (e.g., Merton, 1957) provided a basis for the observation that many social problems, including delinquency, were most prevalent in the presence of differential access to pro and antisocial resources. For example, youth in the United States are given equal access to awareness of desirable life outcomes, yet the means to attain those outcomes are unevenly distributed.

Third, symbolic interactionism, as detailed specifically in social labeling theory, was employed to explain the role of traditional justice system interventions in increasing crime. Seminal work done by Martin Gold (1970) had raised the ironic possibility that the juvenile justice system increased, rather than decreased, future crime. It was suggested that labeling mechanisms, both those labels attached by the system and those accepted by the apprehended youth, increased the probability of future criminal activity. The theoretical mechanism employed to explain these effects was not

only differential self and other views, but differential expectations and surveillance.

Student Involvement

MSUAP is an intensive program involving constant peer support, discussion, and reflection for students. Trainers/supervisors (graduate students) teach from two to four courses per semester. Within each class there is a lead trainer/supervisor and a teaching assistant (TA). The TA is usually a student who has recently completed the course and is viewed as a resource to the students. Trainers/supervisors conduct the class meetings where the undergraduate students learn the curriculum and discuss practical issues. The project director supervises the trainers/supervisors throughout the project, oversees the project implementation and fidelity, and maintains the collaborative relationship with the courts. The sponsoring faculty advisor acts as an advocate for the project in the context of the university department in which it is housed, oversees the project's research and evaluation, and maintains the collaborative relationship with the local community.

Intervention activities are carried out entirely by the efforts of undergraduate college students who are trained as change agents and supervised by MSUAP staff. A new two-course sequence is started each semester throughout the year so that the project is available for referrals from the court year-round. Training is rigorous and consists of assigned readings, weekly written and oral quizzes, in-class assignments, role-play exercises, and homework. The first component of the curriculum of the training/supervisory sessions occurs in the first nine weeks of the two-semester course. This component provides students with structured activities to train them in effective methods of intervention with adolescents who come into contact with the justice system. These weeks are focused on training students to think within a paradigm of advocacy and conflict resolution (behavioral contracting) (*Davidson & Rapp, 1976; Davidson et. al., 1990*). Attendance is mandatory at all of these training/supervision sessions because it is expected that the mutual discussion and input that occurs within these sessions will have an important impact on the work of the volunteers with individual youth.

Student change agents are trained to understand human behavior and delinquency through two models, behavioral and environmental. The environmental model emphasizes the importance of the youth participants' situations in determining

their actions and asserts that the change that needs to occur in their lives is within their environment. The behavioral model promotes conflict resolution techniques, effective communication, and negotiation skills among the advocate, the youth, and significant others in the their lives.

In addition to learning these two intervention approaches, students are trained in skills and techniques to assist them throughout the intervention. The skills gained are associated with the four major stages that each case moves through over 18 weeks. These skills include (1) administering a strength-based needs assessment, (2) implementing specific intervention strategies, (3) developing monitoring charts for goal completion and troubleshooting, and (4) implementing case termination strategies aimed specifically at shifting the major responsibilities of the change agent to the youth and his or her family in order to carry out further positive changes once the intervention has ended. Students are trained in several techniques used to foster trust and confidence with the youth. These techniques include empathy training, conflict resolution, crisis management, emotional expression (i.e., anger management, constructive verbal communication through feelings), cultural competency, confidentiality, positive reinforcement, and creative thinking.

During the student training, MSUAP also provides students with experiences that will help them prepare for graduate school. During the first semester, students are required to research and present information about a specific adolescent problem (e.g., teenage depression, drugs, sexual assault). For each presentation, the student provides a slideshow presentation, a guest speaker, and a brochure offering information on the presentation topic. The homework assignments during the training period require students to reflect on course reading material and to become familiar with American Psychological Association (APA) writing requirements by writing a short thought paper after each class session. By the end of the first semester students are also required to complete an additional ten hours of community service in a youth-serving organization.

Toward the end of the formal training segment of the course sequence, students are assigned a specific youth case. The class sessions switch from training sessions to small-group discussions. Groups meet weekly for two to three hours, during which time students report on their intervention activities over the past week, receive feedback from their classmates and supervisors, and establish goals for the upcoming week's

intervention activities. These supervised groups provide a forum for students to share and to learn from each other's experiences. In addition, this format allows staff to maintain continuous, detailed information about each student's intervention activities. Past research has indicated that this intensive small-group supervision format is an essential factor in the success of the MSUAP (*Davidson et al., 1990*).

Once assigned to a particular youth, the student is required to spend six to eight hours a week, for 18 weeks, working directly with, or on behalf of, his or her youth. Students are instructed to apply the material and skills learned during training to their specific case. The student's role becomes that of change agent and advocate for his or her youth. The student works closely with the youth and the youth's family in identifying goal areas for intervention and assists in accomplishing those goals. The intervention plan for each case is individually tailored. The student's primary objective is not to solve specific problems for the youth, but rather to teach the youth and his or her family effective skills that they can use on their own once their involvement with the MSUAP has ended.

In order for meaningful and significant changes to occur and be maintained, it is essential that the student become deeply involved with the youth's natural environment. The programmatic result is that all intervention activities are carried out entirely in the youth's natural environment. Each student spends a great deal of time with the youth in his or her neighborhood. Often, the student meets and engages in recreational activities with the youth's friends as well. Further, the student may involve school counselors or teachers, prospective employers, or anyone else who would help fulfill the specific needs of the youth and accomplish intervention goals.

Each student is required to turn in a weekly progress report of their case. They also keep a log of the intervention, and they write and turn in a midintervention report and a termination report. Intervention liaisons check each case three times throughout the intervention, unknown to the student change agent. For these visits, liaisons go directly to the youth's home to get his or her view and account of the intervention.

Michigan State University Adolescent Project: Evaluation

The next sections describe how the impact of the MSUAP has been assessed over time.

Methodology

Formal evaluation of the MSUAP focused on four research agendas

1. Examination of the processes and efficacy of the intervention model compared to other dispositional options within the justice system,
2. Examination of the impact of the educational experience on the MSU students involved,
3. Examination of the impact of the new alternative to the justice system on that system itself, and
4. Examination of the impact of the engaged scholarship by MSU faculty members on the university.

For each of the studies described here, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was sought and granted. A brief description of methodology is provided here. Much more detail is provided in Davidson et al. (1990) and Davidson and Sturza (2006). In order to examine the processes and efficacy of the intervention model on the adolescents, a series of longitudinal experiments was conducted. Youth were randomly assigned to the program, to usual court processing, or were simply released and followed for two-and-a-half-years. Before, after, and follow-up measures were used to assess delinquency, school performance, family involvement, and community involvement.

In order to examine the impact of the educational experience on the MSU students, after screening, they were randomly admitted to the course. Those not admitted constituted the control group. Both groups were measured using interview, self-report, and staff report measures before, during, and after program involvement. In order to examine the systemic impact of the project, juvenile justice system decision-making was statistically modeled before and after the program's inception. Models developed prior to project initiation were then statistically compared to models used afterward. Finally, self-report case study methodology was used to examine the impact on MSU faculty members.

Findings

Congruent with the three-pronged mission of MSU, the MSUAP generated scientifically credible information about intervention efficacy, provided unique and expanded educational experiences for graduate and undergraduate students, and expanded

MSU's outreach and engagement to an underserved area (juvenile justice).

Impact on the community: reduced recidivism rates.

There have been two significant impacts on the community partners. The first impact is a safer community. During the first phase of the MSUAP, four sequential longitudinal experimental examinations of the project were conducted. The first study examined how MSUAP performed in comparison to no further intervention. In this study, 73 youth were randomly assigned to either the MSUAP or a treatment-as-usual control group (outright release with no further intervention). The youth were followed for 30 months subsequent to random assignment. Table 1 shows the 30-month recidivism rate of both groups. Results indicate that the MSUAP had a statistically significant effect on subsequent crime.

Table 1. Study I: Comparing MSUAP to No Intervention

Disposition	Recidivists (One or More Arrests)	Nonrecidivists (No Further Arrests)
MSUAP (N = 49)	44%	56%
Outright Release (N = 24)	96%	4%

(Responses based on a 30-Month Follow-up)

The second study examined how the MSUAP would perform when compared to normal court processing and nonspecific attention from a college student. In this study, 213 youth were randomly assigned to MSUAP, assigned to an attention only group, or referred back to court for placement on probation. The attention only group involved three hours of general orientation for MSU students (as compared to the systematic training provided to the MSUAP students) and monthly (rather than weekly) supervision. Process results indicated that the youth-student pairs spent equal amounts of time together in both the MSUAP and the attention only groups. Table 2 shows the 30-month recidivism rates for the three groups. The results indicate that MSUAP was superior to both the usual court process and the attention only group in reducing subsequent crime.

Table 2. Study 2: Comparing MSUAP to Attention and Court Processing

Disposition	Recidivists (One or More Arrests)	Nonrecidivists (No Further Arrests)
MSUAP (N = 124)	39%	61%
Attention Only (N = 29)	52%	48%
Court Probation (N = 60)	62%	38%

(Responses based on a 30-Month Follow-up)

The third study examined the transferability of the model to a community college setting. In this study, 124 youth were randomly assigned to four groups: (1) the MSUAP group using university students, (2) the MSUAP group using community college students, (3) the MSUAP group using community volunteers, or (4) the normal court referral group. Both the community college students and community volunteers were recruited, trained, and supervised using the same regimen that was used for the MSUAP MSU student group. Table 3 shows the 30-month recidivism rates for youths participating in each of the four groups. The results indicate that the three groups using the MSUAP model produced results superior to normal court processing in reducing subsequent crime.

Table 3. Study 3: Varying MSUAP Change Agents

Disposition	Recidivists (One or More Arrests)	Nonrecidivists (No Further Arrests)
MSUAP - Large University (N = 47)	36%	64%
MSUAP - Community College (N = 35)	26%	74%
MSUAP - Community Volunteers (N = 17)	24%	76%
Court Probation (N = 25)	68%	32%

(Responses based on a 30-Month Follow-up)

The fourth study compared the MSUAP model to outright release and usual court processing. In this study, 395 youth were randomly assigned to three groups: (1) the MSUAP group, (2) the outright release with no further intervention group, or (3) the usual court processing group. The results are presented in Table 4. Again, the MSUAP program demonstrated superiority to both outright release and court probation.

Table 4. Study 4: Comparing MSUAP to Outright Release and Court Probation

Disposition	Recidivists (One or More Arrests)	Nonrecidivists (No Further Arrests)
Outright Release (N = 135)	31%	69%
MSUAP (N = 136)	21%	79%
Court Probation (N = 124)	34%	66%

(Responses based on a 30-Month Follow-up)

Overall, these four studies demonstrated that youth who participated in MSUAP had recidivism rates significantly lower than those of control groups assigned to usual treatment or outright release. Further, the MSUAP yielded results superior to those of an attention only program.

Impact on community: Cost savings for Ingham County.

The fiscal impact of the MSUAP was also examined. For each youth referred to the MSUAP, there were direct savings (in 2009 dollars) of approximately \$5,000, representing the cost of placing a youth on probation in the local county less the cost of the youth's participation in MSUAP. Since its founding in 1976, MSUAP has saved the local community over \$20,000,000.

Impact on community: Improvements in the justice system.

It was also important to examine the impact of this new dispositional alternative on the justice system itself. In order to examine this impact, a random sample of cases, stratified by month, was drawn for the years before and after the inception of MSUAP. Demographic, criminal history, school performance, and extant crime variables were coded for each case, and statistical decision models were developed for each time period. This research produced two key findings. First, the vast majority of youth referred to MSUAP were from the group who would have been predicted to receive probation based on the pre-MSUAP decision model. Recognizing this likelihood was important to check that the alternative disposition was, in fact, an alternative to court processing. This was one of the intended systemic effects of the new model. However, a minority of cases would have been predicted to come from the released group. This indicated that in a small number of cases, court decision-makers

“expanded the net” to include youth they would have otherwise released.

Second, the result of extracting “probation cases” from the court’s caseload meant that the court’s resources could be more efficiently focused. Again, one of the goals of the MSUAP was to relieve the pressure on the juvenile court through the use of an alternative model that was less expensive and more effective than the status quo. This research demonstrated that the introduction of the MSUAP allowed more efficient targeting of court resources. In short, the preliminary examination of the systemic effects indicated that inserting the MSUAP model into an ongoing community court had the intended systemic impact.

Impact on MSU students.

Pedagogically, MSUAP provides a two-semester engaged-learning experience for undergraduate students. This course supports knowledge of the individual and social causes of delinquency, the importance of community resources, and the importance of specific skill development; it also provides the opportunity to apply formal educational knowledge. The structure of the MSUAP provides intense small-group training in community intervention and advocacy.

Several studies, both qualitative and quantitative, have been conducted within the MSUAP model. The first of these compared a group of students who participated in MSUAP with randomly assigned control groups. Kantrowitz, Mitchell, and Davidson (1982) found that immediately following the MSUAP experience, MSUAP students had more positive attitudes toward youth and families, and more negative attitudes toward the school, court, and educational systems compared to the control groups. Further, their grades in courses other than MSUAP were significantly higher.

Second, McVeigh, Davidson, and Redner (1984) conducted a follow-up study two years after undergraduate degree completion. Student attitudes, future educational attainment, and future career accomplishments were compared to those of control students. The results indicated that students maintained their favorable attitudes toward youth and families, and were more likely to have a job in a human service field. In a later study using the same design, Angelique, Reischl, and Davidson (2002) found that MSUAP students felt more empowered in terms of their social change capacity, their career goals, and their chances for further education.

More recently, a qualitative study of students who completed the MSUAP program was conducted. Students were interviewed about how their educational and personal development was affected by their experiences in the MSUAP. All of the MSU students confirmed that the project was a positive and beneficial experience. Students were also asked to discuss which of the learning modes was most helpful to them. Students reported learning most effectively through hands-on community involvement and small-group-discussion classes.

Although all students that participate in MSUAP are undergraduates and close in age, they are at different life stages, and come from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. These differing backgrounds and perspectives are reflected in the students' responses to what they feel they learned about themselves. In the qualitative study interviews, a common comment was that "[this experience] changed me." Many students described how they gained a greater awareness of the world in which they live through learning firsthand that there are multiple, diverse perspectives that must be considered; by becoming increasingly conscious of the problems within the social system; and through gaining a more realistic view of potential career paths. This in-depth awareness required students to think more critically about their roles as change agents. Many students described becoming more conscious of the problems with social systems. Students are trained in MSUAP to think from a systems perspective. They are also taught how to develop strategies for working within various systems in which the juveniles may become involved (e.g., schools, courts, community mental health) in order to meet the needs of the juveniles. It is not completely unexpected, therefore, that students would become more aware of service systems and how they function as well as become dissatisfied with how U.S. social service systems operate.

Many students also reported developing a more realistic view of their potential career paths. By coming into contact with the various service systems they had to work with as change agents, they were exposed to a number of people who helped them to see what various careers might be like.

Impact on Michigan State University.

There were four areas of impact on the university: curricular enhancements, faculty scholarship, institutional recognition, and institutionalization of university outreach and engagement. First, the educational experiences of students were

expanded. Through the project, a new series of courses (Psychology 371 and 372, Community Projects) was developed and made a part of the curriculum. Further, this course sequence has been used by two other faculty members to address related topics: children in mental health treatment and violence against women. When students who participated in MSUAP were compared to a randomly assigned group of students in a two-year follow-up, the experience was found to have had a favorable impact on student educational achievement, professional development, and attitudes. Additionally, 117 graduate students have received research/intervention training. The project initiated and routinized outreach and engagement experiences as part of MSU's undergraduate and graduate curriculum.

Second, there were substantial scholarly outputs: a book devoted solely to MSUAP development, 41 articles in refereed scientific publications, and 27 presentations at professional meetings. Third, the project has brought national attention to MSU. The project has received awards from the Department of Justice (Law Enforcement Assistance Administration Exemplary Project Status), the American Psychological Association (APA), the Child Welfare Information Exchange of the Department of Health and Human Services, APA's Task Force on Prevention, the National Association of County Governments, the Carnegie Foundation, and the United Nations Directory of Effective Parenting and Family Skills Programs.

Fourth, the project helped institutionalize the university's role in outreach and engagement by providing a model of community collaboration for a key social issue, which engaged the educational and scientific missions of the university. The project has demonstrated the university's unique capacity to accomplish its three-pronged mission.

“When students who participated in MSUAP were compared to a randomly assigned group of students in a two-year follow-up, the experience was found to have had a favorable impact on student educational achievement, professional development, and attitudes.”

Sustaining the Michigan State University–Ingham County Partnership

An agreement between MSU and Ingham County was initiated at the time of the original federal research grant support in the mid-1970s. This agreement specified the terms under which MSUAP would continue once the federal grant funds expired. If the MSUAP demonstrated a recidivism rate significantly lower than that associated with traditional court processing, and was done at less cost, the agreement specified that the university and the county would collaborate (in operations and funding) into the future to ensure that the program was sustained. The agreement commenced once programmatic federal funds ended. Today, MSU provides a faculty supervisor during the academic year and one graduate student devoted to year-round undergraduate student supervision and training. MSU also provides year-round space and clerical and technical support. Ingham County provides the university funds for a full-time project director, and for three additional graduate students to supervise and train the undergraduates. Additionally, partial support for faculty supervision during the summer months is provided for by county funds. In short, the county pays the excess costs of training and supervising undergraduate students in a class of eight students during the 12-month project operation. The county also agrees to devote both intake worker and supervisor time to the project's operation. The agreement ensures that each partner benefits from the continued collaboration through the sharing of resources, staff, scientific knowledge, educational experiences, and effective intervention models.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned and Best Practices

At the level of the partnership, all parties had to learn new roles. The university faculty members and students had to expand their roles to include actual involvement and presence in the community—participating in a peer-to-peer relationship rather than an “expert-client” relationship. The community partners had to engage in new role behaviors, including making decisions based on scientifically sound best practice rather than experiential judgment, sharing resources with a previously “untrusted” academic institution, and allowing students to share in professional roles.

At the program level, the research outcomes clearly demonstrate the principles of best practice for intervention with juvenile offenders, including the use of intense, time-limited, one-on-one, specific interventions that significantly reduce recidivism. The

training and supervision of the university students is critical, and the interventions that target important life domains of youth (i.e., family, school, peers, and employment) are important.

At the level of sustainability several lessons have been learned. First, it is vital to include methods that will produce scientifically sound information about program outcomes and cost. In today's fiscally constrained world, unequivocal data is a major asset in the struggle for continued funding. Second, it is important to plan sustainability and dissemination as part of the project from the outset. Had this been lacking in the initial plan, continuation after the end of the federal funding would have been much more difficult. Finally, it is critical to involve key stakeholders in the program from its inception. Because the project engaged key community stakeholders (judiciary, staff, community members, county commissioners) from the beginning, commitment to sustainability was facilitated.

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