This annotated bibliography covers the following aspects of juvenile delinquency: (1) theories about delinquent behavior, (2) identification of potential delinquents, (3) delinquent gangs, (4) various programs for the control and prevention of juvenile delinquents, and (5) an analysis of such programs. Sources included represent a selection of materials published since 1960. (LS)
The Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

A Selected, Annotated Bibliography
As the incidence of juvenile delinquency continues the upward climb which began after World War II, public interest in finding ways that may prevent delinquency has sharply increased. Concurrently, programs and services of public and voluntary agencies and organizations designed for prevention have multiplied.

The Federal Government is aware of its responsibility to provide leadership and assistance to States and communities to accelerate their efforts to prevent delinquency. Passage of the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961 marked the beginning of substantial Federal financial aid for programs and projects with a delinquency prevention thrust.

The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act of 1968 emphasizes the importance of preventive approaches. The purpose of preventive services in this legislation is "to promote the use of community based services for the prevention of delinquency of youths; and to assist States and communities to establish special services for youths in danger of becoming delinquent."

The literature on delinquency prevention is not extensive. This annotated bibliography represents a selection of some material published since 1960 which can serve to introduce concerned citizens, students, and others to recent thinking and developments in the field.
the prevention of juvenile delinquency

A SELECTED, ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

compiled by

LINCOLN DANIELS
Chief, Community Services Branch
Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service


The Israel Council for the Prevention of Delinquency issued a message on delinquency prevention in 1963 which envisioned an organized program planned, directed, coordinated, and partially financed by the government. The local community would implement the national program, and professional research institutions would be called upon to help formulate guidelines and evaluate the program.

This book is a critical analysis of programs with a community focus. Historical and analytical perspectives are related to target communities and populations which are part of the Israeli scene. This document differs from others in the bibliography in that its focus is a young nation undergoing rapid social change caused in part by extensive immigration from underdeveloped countries. Juvenile delinquency causation and relevant needs and problems peculiar to Israel are analyzed. Prevention theory, planning, and programing are discussed. An extensive bibliography, pp. 137-152, is included.

Describes 14 specific local action programs designed to help prevent delinquency. The programs are scattered geographically and are diverse in content, method, and administration.


Includes 13 original papers by authorities in various disciplines which should be involved in delinquency prevention. Past developments in prevention are surveyed, and guidelines for a comprehensive program are set forth. Chapters on religious, judicial, and economic institutions in the community point up the need for basic institutional changes to modify conditions which foster the growth of deviant attitudes and behavior. The roles of the family, school, and community are explored in relation to relevant theories and concepts.

The main thrust of prevention is seen by the editors to be through the mobilization and organization of forces inherent in the social system. Community organization for institutional mobilization is not proposed as the solution, but rather as the problem of delinquency prevention. The chapters may be less conclusive than the reader might desire. This reflects some of the confusion in the field as well as the difficulty of coming to grips with the problem of measuring the productivity of various programs and projects designed to prevent delinquency.

The emphasis of this Appendix to the report of the President's Commission is that we must look beyond the individual delinquent and his illegal act in planning juvenile delinquency prevention. A network of factors relating to personality, family, and community usually contribute to delinquency. Logically, prevention attempts should address each of these factors.

The paper pulls together the thinking of experts in such key areas as the family, the school, the world of work, and the community. Promising points of intervention and some basic principles to infuse into each area are indicated. Involvement of youth is advocated as a central strategy in the national effort to develop the potentials of youth and to prevent their antisocial behavior. High rates of recidivism attest to the general ineffectiveness of current correctional programs. Alternatives to judicial handling of youth are discussed.


This book explores why delinquent "norms" or rules of conduct develop and what conditions account for the distinctive content of various systems of delinquent norms such as those prescribing violence, theft, or drug use.

In addressing these questions, the authors draw principally on two theoretical perspectives. The first, initiated by Émile Durkheim and extended by Robert K. Merton, focuses upon the sources of pressure that can lead to deviance. The second, developed by Clifford R. Shaw, Henry D. McKay, and Edwin H. Sutherland, contains basic ideas about how features of the social structure regulate the selection and evolution of deviant solutions. The book is an attempt to integrate the two perspectives as they apply to the problem of delinquency. The outcome is called the theory of "differential opportunity systems." This theory holds that delinquency is a response to frustration in a society which expects adherence to middle-class values and ideals. Realization of these ideas is denied to millions of youngsters by inadequate educational and employment opportunities.
This book is included in the bibliography because of its considerable impact on current theory and practice regarding juvenile delinquency. In addition, its focus is on delinquent gangs, a prime target of prevention programs in some of our largest cities.


A nontechnical booklet addressed to the general public which spells out briefly what does and does not help to prevent delinquency. It questions single solutions and defines key roles for the police, schools, and churches in delinquency prevention. The potential preventive power of citizens working to overcome root causes in homes and communities which predispose some youngsters to delinquency is stressed.


Prevention is defined as promoting human conservation and lowering the risk of juvenile delinquency through intervention directed at the pathogenic factors in children's biological, psychological, social, and cultural environments before appearance of identifiable legal violations. The public school is recommended as the most feasible point of intervention.

The school focused delinquency prevention program, funded by the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County (St. Petersburg) Florida, is described. The author is Executive Director of the Board established in 1950. He outlines the unique financial arrangement through which revenue from the general property tax is legally earmarked for the Juvenile Welfare Board. This device has assured uninterrupted and increasing financial support for its program. Funds controlled by the Juvenile Welfare Board have increased each year as yield from the property tax has increased with population and business growth in the county.
This pamphlet begins with a historical perspective on the youth gang phenomenon in the United States and other countries. Significant writings on the subject are reviewed and compared. Some of the issues involved in direct intervention work with gangs as a delinquency prevention measure are stated and discussed.

Several basic questions addressed are: What kinds of individuals make the best workers with what kind of gangs? What appear to be suitable intervention strategies in particular situations? What is it that intervention work wants to accomplish, and what price is it willing to pay for this outcome? What have been the results of different kinds of intervention procedures?

"Prevention Action" (Chapter 33) begins with several pages on preventive philosophy. A variety of practical program suggestions related to antecedent research findings is then presented in a series of articles by different contributors.

The eminent researcher who edits this far ranging volume on the causes, treatment, and prevention of juvenile delinquency, and legal problems inherent in the problem opens the section on prevention with: "It is a familiar fact, that researchers in delinquency who feel themselves on quite solid ground in spinning out a theory or testing a hypothesis regarding the cause of antisocial behavior, find it most difficult when they are asked to be practical," and to recommend measures designed to prevent or "cure" delinquency. The editor meets the challenge to be practical with 13 articles contributed mostly by administrators and/or practitioners directly involved in the prevention programs covered.
The first article, "Paths to Prevention," by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck is a sound analysis of the status of prevention in which types of programs and specific targets of delinquency prevention are reviewed. The Gluecks believe that approaching the delinquency problem with the right kind of attitude and insight is crucial to developing productive preventive programs. They conclude: "Such an attitude and such an insight can be summed up simply in the recognition that in the eyes of science there are no 'good boys' or 'bad boys,' but only children who need less help in growing up and those who need more."


Reviews 20 community-based delinquency prevention programs, most of them in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Two descriptive dimensions of action programs are seen as especially important clues to their underlying hypotheses. The first dimension is concerned with whether the strategy for prevention involves individuals one at a time, groups of youngsters, or community organizations. The second sorts out programs according to (a) emphasis on preventing delinquency by strengthening behavior controls, or (b) whether they seek to reduce delinquency by mitigating adverse environmental factors.


A study of six projects funded by the Federal Government to develop comprehensive community action programs to deal with basic causes of juvenile delinquency. All were based on the assumption that social, structural, and environmental pathology are major causes of youthful deviance. Inherent in program concepts is the belief that neighborhood residents need to become involved in
planning and implementing social services, and that service recipients should participate in shaping the structure of services.


Types of evaluation which can be used and problems inherent in each are examined. Changes in official rates, subjective opinion, changes as predicted by the theoretical framework and program integrity are covered. A discussion of the incompatible goals of research (social scientist) and community action (community worker) follows. Attention is called to the threat of evaluation to institutions and agencies that come to have a vested interest in the continuity and success of particular programs.


A number of attempts have been made to devise predictive measures to identify in early childhood those children who might well become juvenile delinquents some years later. A reliable early identification technique could make it possible to offer preventive services before delinquent behavior patterns are fully developed.

Several of the better known predictive measures are assessed. After careful scrutiny of the evidence, the pamphlet concludes: (1) Certain measures can identify groups of children from whom the majority of future delinquents are likely to come. (2) In doing so, these measures highlight conditions that are damaging to all children. (3) These measures are not capable of identifying individual "predelinquents" within the more vulnerable groups.

The author has attempted to pull together what is currently known concerning the prevention of delinquency. Social, environmental, and psychological conditions which characterize areas of high and low delinquency are reviewed, and limitations of some current theories of causation are analysed.

The book has three major sections. "The Associated Conditions" discusses the statistical increase in delinquency and notes that middle-class neighborhoods are producers of delinquent behavior as well as low-income neighborhoods. It concludes with discussion of theories of delinquency, particularly the psychological and sociological.

The second section consists of six short chapters on factors in causation relevant to social class theories of delinquency.

Section three discusses community agencies having some responsibility for delinquency prevention, such as the police, courts, community programs, schools, and custodial institutions. The final chapter points out some of the problems involved in the planning of delinquency prevention programs and strategy considerations for delinquency prevention.


Three basic definitions of delinquency prevention are stated and commented upon: (1) promoting healthy personalities in all children; (2) dealing with environmental factors contributing to delinquency; and (3) providing specific preventive services to individuals or groups of children. Community centered prevention programs which emerge from community organization and planning involving parents and juveniles themselves is submitted as the most efficacious approach to modify the environment of delinquency prone youngsters.

A case and neighborhood assessment methodology is outlined which focuses on the social and cultural setting as the most fundamental causal factor of delinquency. This shift from concern with changing the individual to how various social institutions relate to him has implications for agencies seeking to increase their delinquency prevention and control productivity.


To those aware of comprehensive programs to prevent juvenile delinquency developed in 16 major cities, spurred by financial assistance from the Federal Government with funds appropriated under the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961, the name Mobilization for Youth is a familiar one. It identifies the comprehensive project developed on the lower east-side of New York City after two years of research and planning. It was the first big city comprehensive prevention action program to be mounted under the Federal grant program to stimulate and assist in the development of such projects.

This summary is a distillation of the original proposal, covering the theoretical rationale and prevention programs in detail. Mobilization for Youth was a pioneer proposal and program which served other cities as a kind of prototype from which they borrowed ideas in developing their plans and programs.

The proposal is based primarily upon the belief that no effort to prevent juvenile delinquency can succeed which does not provide young people in a deprived inner city area with genuine opportunities to behave differently—especially through creative educational and work programs. Also, local residents must be directly involved in the effort to improve social and economic opportunities for youth. The various experimental programs described are grouped under the World of Work, the World of Education, and Citizen Participation in Community Affairs. Basic and evaluative research programs are outlined.
In viewing programs, the author sees practitioners using three major approaches to delinquency prevention: (1) Preventive -- those who believe that punishment of young offenders will deter them from repeating deviant acts. (2) A small group which believes that delinquency, like approved behavior, is an expression of the individual's psychological needs. To stem serious misbehavior requires reaching out and understanding the individual; it means attempting to uncover psychological mechanisms underlying deviant acts. (3) A third group believes shortcomings in the environment to which the youth responds are the main precipitating causes of delinquency. They offer two basic prescriptions -- (a) an increase in individual services and (b) more and better group services.

Examples are given of expanding recreation opportunities, specialized services in schools, and reaching out services to hard core families and antisocial youth gangs.

The author concludes that any claimed effectiveness for these ostensibly delinquency prevention programs cannot be substantiated. She says: "The reasons are simple to state. Even when the sponsors define precisely the nature of the services they intend to offer, designate the individuals or group they plan to serve, they are usually stymied in spelling out their criteria of success. The sophisticated know full well that to rely on such indices as no further court appearances is deceptive. We need to design projects which, as far as possible, will--like true experiments in the physical sciences--build on the experience of others to test alternatives in intake and in services against the results."


Twenty billion dollars was the estimated cost to U.S. taxpayers of delinquency and crime in 1960 when this book was written. It is directed primarily to citizens who
want to do something to help prevent delinquency. Its dual purpose is to suggest how the citizen can act effectively and to stir him to action.

The basic premise developed is that only the combined efforts of all citizens and community agencies can have a visible impact on the delinquency problem. Material on what citizens can do includes examples of communities which helped themselves by organizing to help prevent juvenile delinquency.

During their professional careers, the authors contributed to the development of local citizen coordinating councils in California. They are strong advocates of such councils which seek to draw all interested groups together in communities and urban neighborhoods to coordinate their forces in behalf of youth.


A comprehensive and significant collection of writings on delinquency prevention. The general introduction discusses the current status of delinquency prevention studies and points up the relationship between theories of delinquency causation and preventive programs. An introduction precedes each of the volume's six major units which emphasize the theoretical, empirical, evaluative aspects of delinquency prevention.


The Henry Street Settlement Pre-Delinquent Gang Project (lower eastside New York City) described in this article sought to counteract the contagion of gang activity by detecting and working with groups of susceptible youngsters, 8 to 13 years of age, before they become a part of hostile youth gangs.

Parents of children exposed to antisocial group activity in the neighborhood were brought together to facilitate informal supportive relationships to help them assert.
more effective parental control. The project seems to indicate that one of the keys for checking delinquency in a neighborhood lies in revitalizing parent-child relationships at an age when children are still somewhat malleable. The project represents the attempt of one neighborhood agency to help prevent delinquency using this key combined with specially designed group work programs for the five groups involved.


Includes materials published primarily since World War II on juvenile gangs, prime targets at which major preventive efforts have been directed in our largest cities. Starting with page 30, references to studies and reports are grouped by location under the following States: California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin.


Most books on juvenile delinquency are written by professionals primarily for other professionals. This non-technical book was written by an able journalist who acknowledges that he is no expert regarding juvenile delinquency. It is directed to concerned citizens, many of whom may be confused as to what causes delinquency and some ways of dealing with it. Through his keen observation of selected programs, the author seeks to allay some of the public confusion as to how actual and potential delinquents should be handled.

Since the author is not wedded to any single theory or approach to delinquency so his discerning look at where we are in relation to the problem is fresh and objective. The book's international dimension, based on the author's visits to other countries to learn how they come to grips with juvenile delinquency, enhances its interest and value.
This booklet was prepared for the Third United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders at Stockholm, Sweden, in 1965. It traces growing public concern and expanding preventive efforts during the period 1955-60. The Federal delinquency prevention program, guided by the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime established in May 1961 and passage of the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses and Control Act the same year are described.

Pertinent developments under the Manpower Development and Training Act (1962), the Economic Opportunity Act (1964), and the Full Educational Opportunity Act (1965) are reviewed in terms of the delinquency prevention implications of programs under this legislation which involve children and youth.

Because material on juvenile delinquency written primarily with the role of churches in mind is so scarce this booklet, considered the most definitive on the subject, is included. As a guide to church responsibilities and contributions, it suggests directions in which churches that want to help reduce juvenile delinquency can move. The emphasis is on prevention, and the final chapter, "How Can the Churches Best Offer Services to Prevent Delinquency," is specific and concrete.

This report provides in one booklet an overview of major problems, issues, and developments regarding juvenile
delinquency in the United States. It was written at the request of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare for a review of the field which might be useful to the Department in its planning. A variety of specialists, from practitioners to academicians, were consulted in its preparation.

NOTE: This report appears as Appendix T, Chapter II, of TASK FORCE REPORT: JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND YOUTH CRIME to the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice.


This article presents the case for use of the scientific method in assessing the effectiveness of measures for preventing or reducing juvenile delinquency or treating juvenile delinquents. It indicates major considerations underlying such an assessment and offers a few guidelines for administrators who want to initiate evaluative studies.


This issue is devoted exclusively to delinquency prevention. Its reports, written by practitioners and researchers, cover older classical programs, like the Chicago Area Project and experimental projects of more recent vintage. All
are designed to prevent delinquency by treating the individual or improving his environment.

The final article, "A Research-Based Proposal for a Community Program of Delinquency Prevention," in summing up, states: "To be effective, such a program must provide all the vital opportunities and special services delinquency-prone youngsters need, make these easily accessible in a coordinated fashion, and conduct ongoing evaluation designed to improve the manner of providing each service, and to measure the total impact of the program." (p. 136.)