

An Evaluation of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development
Program

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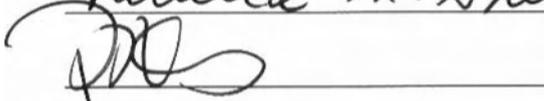
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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to explore the effectiveness of the Community Youth Development (CYD) program to reduce juvenile crime and have a positive impact on targeted communities. The CYD Program is the responsibility of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS). In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislature created the Community Youth Development (CYD) Program to address juvenile crime. The goal of the program is to decrease the incidence of juvenile crime in Texas.

Research methodologies to explore the working hypotheses consisted of comparative case study and field research. First, the comparative case study allowed the comparison of the two zip code areas (CYD local area and comparison local area), to determine the effect of the Community Youth Development (CYD) Program in the targeted community. Second, the field research tested the impact of CYD in the targeted community through open-ended interviews, direct observations, and a focus group.

Although the evidence reviewed does not clearly indicate the impact of the program on juvenile crime, the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has community support. The program is definitely meeting the needs of the youth for extracurricular activities. Children and families are afforded opportunities and resources within the 78744 community that were not present prior to the implementation of the program. Although many of the individuals interviewed for this study admitted they do not know the impact the CYD Program has had on juvenile crime in the community, they believe the program has had a positive impact in the community. Although preliminary evidence did not show the clear impact of the program in meeting the goal of reducing juvenile crime, the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program is certainly meeting many of the needs of the targeted community.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Juvenile crime has been a significant problem over the years for our society. As a result, numerous juvenile crime prevention efforts have been initiated. The goal of these juvenile crime prevention initiatives is to address issues that lead to juvenile crime; thereby, decreasing juvenile crime.

Juvenile Crime Statistics

Juvenile crime is a nationwide problem. In 1999, law enforcement agencies made an estimated 2.5 million arrests of persons under the age of eighteen, 28,000 arrests were for robbery, and youth under the age of fifteen accounted for 67% of all juvenile arrests for arson.¹ According to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), nationally, 5.5% of all persons arrested in 2000 were under the age of fifteen, and 17.1% were under eighteen years of age.² In Texas, according to the FBI, a total of 202,504 youths (under the age of eighteen) committed crimes in 2000. Most of the youths committed property-related crimes and larceny; however, 5,385 youths committed violent crimes (murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault). These statistics are alarming and signify the need for effective juvenile crime prevention initiatives.

Impact of Juvenile Crime

The impact of juvenile crime is tremendous. Society, as a whole, pays for juvenile crime. For example, if youths commit a serious offense and are institutionalized, states incur costs associated with the institutionalization. In 2000, it cost Texas \$129.36 per day per youth, for

¹ Source: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Statistical Briefing Book*, at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org.

² Source: Federal Bureau of Investigations, *Uniform Crime Reports*, at www.fbi.gov.

each youth placed in a Texas Youth Commission (TYC) institutional facility.³ The average cost per month (based on 30 days) is \$3,880.80 per youth. This can be a tremendous expense for Texas, if the number of youths in correctional facilities is not minimized, especially since the Criminal Justice Policy Council is projecting that the Texas juvenile population (ages 10 to 16) is going to increase by 10.2% between the years 2000 and 2005.⁴ With an increase in the juvenile population, there could be an increase in the number of juveniles involved in criminal offenses.

By deterring youth from a life of crime, there could be a reduction in the costs associated with the adult correctional system, since a juvenile offender is more likely to continue a life of crime as an adult. There are costs associated with the services provided through the adult criminal justice system (i.e., jails, prisons, parole, probation, etc.). If a state has a large prison population, the costs associated with the state's prison system can be tremendous.

There are some juveniles who are simply following the path of their older sibling(s) into a life of crime. For example, if a young child has an older sibling in a gang, there is a strong possibility that the young child may become involved in a gang or commit a delinquent/criminal offense. There have been reports of siblings entering the criminal justice system (juvenile and adult). Also, children with parents in the criminal justice system may become juvenile offenders, since a person's environment can influence his/her behavior.

Prevention of Juvenile Crime

States and the federal government have been trying to determine the most effective way to reduce juvenile crime. As a result, numerous juvenile crime prevention initiatives have been launched. If juvenile crime prevention initiatives are successful in

³ Source: Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council, Operational Cost Per Day Reports

⁴ Source: Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council, Juvenile Justice Population Projections/Trends Reports at <http://www.cjpc.state.tx.us>.

accomplishing their goal, there are numerous benefits. Some of the benefits are a safer society, youth become productive and responsible adults, and a reduction in the costs associated with the criminal justice system (juvenile and adult). Therefore, it is important to determine the effectiveness and the impact of the current juvenile crime prevention initiatives, so that appropriate decisions can be made regarding modifications, expansions, and implementation of new initiatives. Effective juvenile crime prevention initiatives could help to reduce the likelihood of the following:

In Michigan, a judge must decide how Nathaniel Abraham should be sentenced for a killing he committed when he was only eleven years old. A jury found Nathaniel guilty of second-degree murder in the 1997 killing of 18-year old Ronnie Green. Prior to the shooting of Ronnie Green, Nathaniel had repeated run-ins with police. At the time of his arrest, he had been suspected in 22 different crimes, ranging from burglary to assault. However, he was never formally charged in any of the crimes.⁵

In Texas, 17-year-old Michael Lopez is found guilty of killing a deputy constable in 1998. Michael had a juvenile crime record prior to the shooting. The evidence showed the juvenile grabbed the police officer by the throat and purposely shot him. Friends of Michael reported he had been in frequent trouble and either belonged to a gang or had friends who belonged to gangs. Michael had been in trouble with the law since the age of twelve, repeatedly arrested for marijuana possession, theft and shoplifting.⁶

The goal of juvenile crime prevention initiatives is to intervene early so that the incidents described above are prevented.

One strategy of juvenile crime prevention initiatives is the involvement of local communities. This approach facilitates communities becoming involved in program development, community improvement, and ensuring programs/services are meeting the specific needs of the local community. Community residents know the strengths and weaknesses of their

⁵ Source: *Michigan Judge to Sentence 13-Year Old Convicted of Murder* (January 2000) at <http://www.courtstv.com>.

⁶ Source: *Penalty Phase for Convicted Teen Police Killer Begins* (May 1999) at <http://www.courtstv.com>.

individual communities. Therefore, community involvement in decision-making processes could benefit the government and the community. This collaborative approach could assist the government (federal, state, and local) in developing effective juvenile crime prevention programs.

Research Purpose

In Texas, the Community Youth Development (CYD) Program has been implemented in fifteen communities as a collaborative approach to addressing juvenile crime. The purpose of this applied research project is to assess the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program's ability to reduce juvenile crime and have a positive impact on the community. The research uses a classification of conceptual framework called the working hypotheses. Working hypotheses are successful in directing inquiry in formal empirical research when the connection between the research question, the working hypothesis, and the types of evidence used to test the hypothesis is established (Shields, p. 215). According to Shields (1998, p. 215), working hypotheses are useful because they are taken as a provisional, working means of advancing investigation. Their purpose is the discovery of other critical facts.

Prior to conducting formal impact assessment, it is often useful to collect preliminary data that spans a short time period and has limited scope. This preliminary analysis aids in later, more formal, expensive and sophisticated analysis. This research project is an initial exploratory attempt to assess the program's ability to reduce juvenile crime and the impact of the program in the communities. In an attempt to conduct a comprehensive review of the Community Youth Development Program, an in-depth analysis of a single Community Youth Development Program, Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, was conducted. The in-depth analysis provides needed insight into the impact of the program on the targeted

community. It is important to note that the Community Youth Development Program is a unique initiative, because it specifically engages the community in the decision-making process. However, what impact is the Community Youth Development Program having on juvenile crime and communities?

Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two, the review of the literature, discusses juvenile crime prevention and community empowerment. In addition, a discussion of program evaluations is provided.

The third chapter discusses the research setting, including a detailed description of the Community Youth Development Program and the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. A description of the Southeast Austin community is provided, and a description of the comparable community used for comparative analysis is also provided. A discussion of the conceptual framework and the working hypotheses that provide the foundation for this research project is provided.

Chapter Four provides a description of the research methodology used to explore the working hypotheses. The chapter provides a description of the various data collection methods used for this research. Also, a detailed discussion of the comparative case study conducted for this research project is provided.

Chapter Five presents the findings from the research. Each working hypothesis is discussed separately. The final chapter, Chapter Six, summarizes the applied research project, discusses how the findings relate to the research questions, and makes recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature associated with juvenile crime and community empowerment. This review includes factors that lead to juvenile crime, juvenile crime prevention initiatives, and the research methodology (program evaluation) that can serve as a tool to assess a program's effectiveness.

Societal Factors Which Lead to Juvenile Delinquency

There are numerous societal factors which lead to juvenile delinquency. The societal factors include, but are not limited to, environment, socioeconomic status, gangs, availability of weapons, drugs and alcohol, media, and family conditions.

The Environment

Criminologists have identified several factors that create an environment that breeds violence. The factors are as follows:

- Inadequate prenatal and pediatric health care.
- Poor-quality schools that fail to teach fundamental skills.
- Family disruption, which may result in the absence of positive male role models.
- Rampant use of alcohol and drugs.
- Widespread joblessness and lack of economic opportunities.
- Community disorganization and high rates of resident transience.
- An ideology common in some subcultures that encourages violence (DeJong, 1994, pp. 13-14).

Socioeconomic Status

There is a link between socioeconomic status and juvenile delinquency. Socioeconomic status is the product of many variables: unemployment rate, level of education, family structure, income level, and housing availability. Poverty alone does not cause crime, but the individuals living in poverty-stricken neighborhoods are more likely to be exposed to criminal behavior. To change criminal behavior, those variables that produce one's socioeconomic status should be addressed. To prevent crime, society must address the social and economic conditions that lead to violence.

Those who are greatest risk of violent death and injury are the poor. Ultimately, then, we must not only impose fair, swift, and sure punishment for criminal behavior; we must not only teach young people how to manage their anger and channel it into constructive problem solving; we must also work toward improving educational opportunities, better housing, and economic development (DeJong, 1994, p. 62).

Gangs

A significant level of juvenile crime involves gangs. According to a study conducted by C.R. Huff, as cited in Howell and Decker (1999, p. 6), youths involved in gangs were significantly more involved in drug sales and in more serious and violent crimes than nongang youths. Also, youths involved in gangs are more likely to turn to violence to resolve disputes. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigations, there were 579 juvenile gang killings in 1999 in the United States.⁷

Availability of Weapons

Today, more gangs carry guns and are more apt to use them to resolve conflicts. Because firearms are readily accessible, non-violent juveniles are arming themselves out of fear, which

⁷ Information obtained from 1999 Uniform Crime Report at <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/99cius.htm>.

increases the likelihood of confrontations and accidents. The availability of firearms makes it convenient for gangs to use them in criminal activities. Although knives and other weapons are still available, a trend towards the increased use of firearms is surfacing (Zimring, 1998, p. 37).

Drugs and Alcohol

Drugs and alcohol also contribute to the incidence of juvenile crime. “For more than two decades, researchers, clinicians, and juvenile justice program administrators have known the link between drug use (including alcohol) and juvenile crime. In many communities, the majority of juveniles currently entering the justice system are drug users” (VanderWaal et al, 2001, p. 1). It is important to note that the drug-crime link does not mean that drug use automatically leads to criminal activity, but research indicates there is a correlation between serious drug users and serious crimes (VanderWaal et al, 2001, p. 1).

Media

The media also plays a role in influencing juvenile delinquency. The portrayal of violence by the entertainment industry has an adverse effect on juvenile crime. According to DeJong,

Hundreds of laboratory studies have also been done to explore the impact of television violence. In general, this research demonstrates that the observation of violence can (1) promote learning of new aggressive responses through observational learning and imitation, (2) provide information concerning whether or not aggression is a permissible or desirable response, and (3) lead to increased tolerance of aggression (p. 14).

Today, youth may be exposed to violence via television, movies, and computers. The casual manner in which violent acts are presented by the media is desensitizing our children and adolescents to violence. As a result, we have an increase in juvenile crime incidents (DeJong, 1994, p. 14).

Family Conditions

Another societal factor that contributes to juvenile delinquency is the home environment of juveniles. Family conditions that lead to juvenile crime are broken homes, lack of discipline and supervision, child abuse, parental criminality, and poor family relationships. Research sponsored by the National Institute of Justice showed that neglect and abuse in childhood sets in motion a cycle of violence linked to criminal behavior later in life. Individuals who are abused or neglected as children are more likely to be arrested as juveniles and as adults, and more likely to be arrested for violent crimes (NIJ, 1995, p. 19).

Study of Cycle of Violence⁸

A study conducted by Cathy Widom and Michael Maxfield revealed that childhood abuse and neglect increased the odds of future delinquency. The study examined 1,575 cases from childhood through adulthood, comparing the arrest records of two groups:

- A study group of 908 substantiated cases of childhood abuse or neglect processed by the courts from 1967 through 1971 and tracked through criminal records over a 25-year period.
- A comparison group of 667 children, not officially recorded as abused or neglected, matched to the study group according to sex, age, race, and approximate family socioeconomic status.

“Although many individuals in both groups had no juvenile or adult criminal record, being abused or neglected as a child increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59 percent, as an adult by 28 percent, and for a violent crime by 30 percent” (Widom and Maxfield, 2001, p. 1).

⁸ Information in this section is based on a study conducted by Cathy S. Widom and Michael G. Maxfield. The study was sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and documented in the *National Institute of Justice Research Brief*, February 2001.

The “cycle of violence” hypothesis suggests that a childhood history of physical abuse predisposes the survivor to delinquent and violent behavior. Victims of neglect are also likely to develop later violent criminal behavior. Childhood victimization represents a widespread, serious social problem. “If violence is begotten by not only violence, but also by neglect, far more attention needs to be devoted to the families of children who are abandoned and severely malnourished” (Widom and Maxfield, 2001, p. 1). A prior study, exploring the influence of early malnutrition on future behavior, found that previously malnourished children had attention deficits, reduced social skills, and lacked emotional stability.

Study Design

Widom and Maxfield examined the long-term consequences of abuse and neglect. The sample, drawn from a metropolitan area in the Midwest, was restricted to children who were eleven years of age or younger at the time of the abuse or neglect. Another important feature of the research design was the matching of members whose official records showed no history of childhood abuse or neglect. Both study groups were approximately two-thirds Anglo-American and one-third African-American and were equally divided between males and females. Most were between the ages of six and eleven at the time the abuse was recorded or matches were made.

The study design also featured clear operational definitions of abuse and neglect.

- Physical Abuse – included injuries such as bruises, welts, burns, abrasions, lacerations, wounds, cuts, bone and skull fractures, and other evidence of physical injury.

- Sexual Abuse – varied from relatively vague charges of assault and battery with intent to gratify sexual desires to more specific ones, such as touching in an obscene manner, sodomy, and rape.
- Neglect – the parents’ deficiencies in child care were beyond those found acceptable by community and professional standards at the time. These cases represented inadequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical attention to children.

“Juvenile court and probation records were the source of information on abuse or neglect and family characteristics. Arrest data were obtained from Federal, State, and local law enforcement records” (Widom and Maxfield, 2001, p. 3). In addition to review of official records described above, interviews were conducted as supplementary evidence.

Study Findings

The study found that children who were abused or neglected were more likely to be arrested as juveniles (27 percent versus 17 percent for the comparison group). The abused and neglected cases were also younger at first arrest (16.5 years versus 17.3 years for comparison group).

The experience of early childhood abuse or neglect had a substantial impact on individuals with little likelihood of engaging in adult criminal behavior. Females abused or neglected in childhood were 73 percent more likely than comparison group females to be arrested for property, alcohol, drug, and such misdemeanor offenses as disorderly conduct, curfew violations, or loitering. The results also indicated that abused and neglected females were at an increased risk of arrest for violence as juveniles and adults. Abused and neglected males were found to have a significantly larger number of arrests for violence than comparison males.

Thus, Widom and Maxfield found a gender difference in the effect of childhood victimization on risk for arrest for violence. For females, there is an increased risk for participation. For males, there is an increased risk in the frequency of participation. In conclusion, childhood abuse or neglect increases arrests for females and males, but in different ways.

Abused and neglected individuals are at higher risk of arrest, at a younger age, with more significant and repeated criminal involvement. "Notably, however, among those arrested as juveniles, abused or neglected persons were no more likely to continue being arrested than control subjects" (Widom and Maxfield, 2001, p. 4). Approximately, the same proportion of abused and neglected children and children in comparison group with juvenile arrests had arrests as adults (71 percent versus 66 percent for comparison group). Similarly, the same proportion of those with violent juvenile arrests also had violent arrests as adults (63 percent for abused/neglected children versus 61 percent for comparison group). The authors of the study suggest additional research that explores the factors that influence the continuation of juvenile offending into adulthood.

Does Violence Beget Violence?

To test the notion that childhood victims of violence resort to violence, Widom and Maxfield conducted a comparative analysis. Violent criminal behavior was examined as a function of the type of maltreatment experienced as a child. The study found that physically abused (as opposed to neglected or sexually abused) children were the most likely to be arrested later for a violent crime. The neglected children were only slightly less likely to be arrested for a violent crime. "Victims of sexual abuse were least likely to have an arrest for violence, although this is somewhat misleading because victims of sexual abuse were overwhelmingly female (84 percent), and females less often had a record of violent offenses. Different types of abuse and

neglect are not distributed evenly by age, sex, and race” (Widom and Maxfield, 2001, p. 5).

Nevertheless, the evidence shows that there is a relationship between childhood violence and subsequent violent behavior of the victim. These findings suggest a need for concerted preventive action.

It should be noted that not all abused and neglected children become juvenile delinquents or adult criminals. There are mediating variables that may impact the child’s future behavior. One mediating variable is the child being removed from the abusive home environment and placed with other caregivers. Additional research is needed to explore the mediating variables that really impact the likelihood of children exposed to abuse or neglect not becoming juvenile delinquents.

Juvenile Crime Prevention Initiatives

New programs have been implemented during the 1990s to prevent juvenile crime. These programs attempt to alleviate family and community conditions that lead to juvenile crime. Many of the prevention programs focus on teaching anger management and conflict resolution skills to youths, some beginning as early as elementary school. Several prevention programs seek to increase contact between youths and appropriate role models through sports and recreation, remedial education, and mentoring programs. The overall goal of the programs is to guide the behavior of youths into a positive direction. There is a correlation between childhood conduct problems, delinquency, and later criminal behavior. Several modes of early intervention to prevent crimes are available:

- Early childhood interventions for youths at risk of antisocial behavior.
- Interventions for families with children with behavioral problems.

- School-based incentives (e.g., encouragement to graduate).
- Interventions for troublesome youths displaying delinquent behavior (Greenwood et al, 1996, p. 5).

One recommended strategy is to prevent youths from joining gangs. Preventing youths from joining gangs should be a goal of juvenile crime prevention programs. According to Howell and Decker, to effectively address the problem of youths joining gangs, the following actions should be taken by communities:

- Discourage youth from dropping out of school.
- Provide access and opportunities for success.
- Increase a community's social control of pre-gang and gang groups.
- Increase social control of youth by strengthening social institutions and emphasizing the roles that residents, parents, youth workers, and community leaders play in supervising adolescents.
- Request local community businesses to provide legitimate work opportunities.
- Ensure prevention efforts are focused; thereby, ensuring appropriate resource allocation and effective impact (1999, p. 9).

National Institute of Justice

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is a component of the Office of Justice Programs. NIJ is the research and development agency of the United States Department of Justice. The National Institute of Justice was established to prevent and reduce crime and to improve the criminal justice system in the United States. One major task of the NIJ is to develop new methods of crime prevention and reduction of delinquent behavior. The NIJ has conducted and supported studies in the area of crime prevention, which are discussed later in this chapter.

Federal Government Initiatives

The federal government recognizes that the family and community are vitally important to juvenile crime prevention. The federal government has implemented community-based programs which attempt to enrich family and community conditions. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) has worked to build partnerships with States and local communities to reduce and prevent crime. The OJP has developed and funded a wide range of new initiatives to help local communities strategically approach crime control and prevention (Robinson, 1996, p. 5). Federal funds are supporting a number of community-based comprehensive initiatives.

“For example, more than 76 communities across the country are implementing Weed and Seed programs with financial and technical assistance from OJP and several other Federal agencies” (Robinson, 1996, p. 5). Weed and Seed is a community-based, multiagency approach to law enforcement and community revitalization in high-crime areas. The goal of the program is to weed out crime and prevent it from reoccurring (Robinson, 1996, p. 5).

Another example of a federally-funded community-based juvenile crime prevention initiative is Project PACT (Pulling America’s Communities Together). The goal of the program is to empower local communities to address youth violence by developing anti-violence services. The program incorporates the resources of federal, state, and local government agencies, local law enforcement, schools, and community organizations and businesses. (Robinson, 1996, p. 5).

The SafeFutures program of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is another example of a federally-funded juvenile crime prevention initiative. The SafeFutures program provides a continuum of services and graduated sanctions for at-risk and delinquent youths. The services consist of afterschool activities, mentoring, family strengthening

programs, mental health services, gang prevention, and intervention services (Robinson, 1996, p. 5).

Another federal program that has gained notoriety is Operation Weed and Seed. Operation Weed and Seed is considered a strategy for enhancing community conditions and deterring crime. The goal is to “weed” out crime and “seed” neighborhood revitalization. Seeding initiatives focus on prevention and intervention programs for youths. The prevention and intervention programs consist of the following services:

- Afterschool programs
- Safe havens – youths protected from drugs and crime
- Recreation and sports
- Employment training
- Drug abuse prevention programs (Dunworth et al, 1999, p. 25).

These are just a few of the programs funded by the federal government to address crime. The different programs funded by the federal government are clear indicators that the federal government recognizes the need to address juvenile crime. The resources provided by the federal government allow communities to strategically plan to address juvenile crime within their communities.

Community Empowerment

A person’s local community provides the physical environment which shapes one’s sense of well-being. The community provides the formal and informal networks for socializing with others (Earls and Reiss, 1994, p. 9). Therefore, the community has a significant role to play in juvenile crime prevention initiatives.

Community and Juvenile Crime

Communities exist on various levels. A community can range from small (a few neighboring families) to large (a square mile or more). A local community can include several neighborhoods (Earls and Reiss, 1994, pp. 10-11). Basically, the community is the geographical area in which a person resides.

“Social disorganization theory explains that crime results from the disorganization of community life. The high mobility and heterogeneous population found in some urban settings can lead to a breakdown in both formal and informal controls over delinquent and criminal conduct” (Earls and Reiss, 1994, p. 51). Disorganization of community life hinders the development of norms, values, and ideal beliefs among youth. Poor community structure can result in juvenile crime because juveniles may not have the norms, values, and beliefs which deter juveniles from criminal or delinquent behavior.

There is a positive correlation between juvenile crime rate and a disorganized community. A long-term study, conducted by social scientists from a range of fields, explored the antecedents of antisocial and criminal behavior among a group of people in a number of Chicago neighborhoods. The study was conducted by Sampson and Raudenbush, and was part of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods. The authors hypothesized that crime and disorder originate from structural characteristics specific to certain neighborhoods, mostly disadvantaged areas. Disadvantaged areas refers to low incomes, high unemployment, and lack of investment potential. Unexpectedly, Sampson and Raudenbush found poverty to be the single most important factor to influence the level of disorder in the Chicago neighborhoods studied (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2001, p. 4).

The research produced an alternative interpretation of the link between disorder and crime, one that sees many elements of disorder as part and parcel of crime itself. Typical

activities categorized as social disorder are evidence of either crime or ordinance violations. The forces producing these minor crimes may be the same as those that produce more serious crimes, with the difference only in the degree of seriousness. Viewed this way, disorder and crime are manifestations of the same phenomenon (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2001, p. 2).

Collective efficacy, which is the cohesion and trust among neighbors, does impact crime and disorder. According to Sampson and Raudenbush, collective efficacy may actually help to decrease crime in a community. "In neighborhoods where collective efficacy was strong, the levels of physical and social disorder observed were correspondingly low. This finding is consistent with the idea that collective efficacy acts to inhibit disorder" (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2001, p. 4). To explore the extent of neighborhood collective efficacy, some 3,800 residents of the neighborhoods were interviewed. The interviewees were asked questions about the cohesiveness of their neighborhoods. The responses were used to establish a measure of collective efficacy.

Community and Government Collaboration

Communities are an important element of juvenile crime prevention. For effective prevention efforts, communities must support and be involved in juvenile crime prevention initiatives. Governmental entities recognize communities as an important element of juvenile crime prevention, and are empowering communities to address juvenile crime. Today, communities are striving to develop effective juvenile crime prevention strategies.

Due to decreasing public resources and increasing citizen demand for effective programs, there is a need for productive partnerships between citizens and governmental entities. The need for effectual services can only be addressed through the development of creative, efficient, and well-coordinated service delivery and infrastructure-development strategies (Gray and Chapin, 1998, pp. 190-191). According to King and Stivers (1998, p. 203), citizens should be considered

the experts in determining the needs of the community. For effective community collaboration, the following steps must be taken by government officials:

- Actively create opportunities for people to come together and deliberate.
- Employ skills and techniques not typically associated with administration: facilitation, active listening, and conflict resolution.
- Ensure all interests are discussed and considered.
- Relinquish some control, take some risks, learn from situations, move toward collaborative rather than chain-of-command type relations.
- Identify the gap between citizen knowledge and technical knowledge and work to bridge or close the gap; assist citizens with understanding technical information; allow citizens to share their experiences with administrators.
- Make organizational changes which will ensure the continuation of community collaboration after project or program implementation.

Community residents (citizens) want to live in a safe community; therefore, they are going to be committed to finding an effective solution to juvenile crime. For example, community groups in cities throughout the United States have accepted the challenge of addressing drug-related crimes and are working diligently to regain control of their communities (NIJ, 1992, p. 96).

Lawrence Sherman maintains that community mobilization is “the most visible community-based crime prevention strategy in the latter 20th century” (1997, p. 3-9).

Community mobilization basically consists of creation of formal community development organizations and/or the mobilization of resources from various organizations within the community to address problems such as juvenile crime. Varieties of community-based initiatives has increased over the years.

Some citizens view the government as an adversarial element.

Perhaps the most fundamental of Americans' negative feelings about government is that government has nothing to do with them. Not only does government exercise too much power and in the wrong ways, not only is it inefficient and wasteful, but it appears to care little about ordinary citizens, their lives, and their problems. Citizens feel that they have little if any impact on what government does (King and Stivers, 1998, p.11).

For most citizens, the public participation process rarely meets the promise of a democratic process. In many cases, citizen participation in administrative decisions is solicited only after government officials and paid consultants have defined the problem and developed proposed solutions. According to Timney (1998, p. 95), citizen participation is little more than a formality in these cases, designed to allow the community limited participation while protecting the interests of the governmental entity. Timney (1998, p. 95) also maintains that the suggestions of citizens rarely change the policies of the government agencies, since the most critical decisions are usually made by government administrators. This is really unfortunate, because it is the citizens who must live with the consequences of policy decisions, not administrators (Timney, 1998, p. 101).

Dilemmas of Community Empowerment

Dolores Foley argues that government agencies should develop and reform systems which support community empowerment. "A self-governing democracy with citizens as active participants and public officials as facilitators will require structural and attitudinal changes" (Foley, 1998, p. 141). For community empowerment to be effective, government administrators should strive to become more flexible, and willing to accept criticism for past mistakes. Administrators should be willing "to relinquish control, seek expertise among the public, and allow citizens to make significant policy decisions" (Timney, 1998, p. 89). Government agencies must be willing to provide the level of support and guidance needed by communities to manage resources. In the past, there have been problems and scandals of financial

mismanagement associated with communities managing federal funds; however, these pitfalls can be avoided with appropriate technical assistance from government agencies.

According to Dolores Foley,

We are moving away from depending on government to solve our problems. There are many calls for decentralizing and empowering communities. Yet at the same time, for the most part, we haven't developed the structures and processes to support community governance or any kind of collective problem solving. The challenge is to develop structures and processes that will value technical and professional knowledge and integrate citizens into the governance process. This will involve more collaborative relationships and partnerships between citizens and public administrators. This partnership role emphasizes civic problem solving and civic capacity building with government increasingly acting as the facilitator of problem-solving processes rather than the problem solver (1998, p. 157).

Evaluations of Community-Based Initiatives

Community-based juvenile crime prevention initiatives often lack sufficient impact evaluations that measure their effectiveness. "Community based programs are among the most difficult to evaluate. They may also be the most important" (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-38). The effectiveness of community-based programs may be proven by "substantial investment in more controlled testing of program effects on serious crime" (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-38). The current lack of controlled testing of program effects has hindered the production of sound evidence supporting crime prevention initiatives. There is definitely a need for impact evaluations of juvenile crime prevention efforts, since juvenile crime is a serious societal concern.

Impact Evaluation

There are different types of evaluations. The evaluator must determine the appropriate type of evaluation to respond to the research question addressed. Impact evaluations allow the evaluator to focus on the end results of programs. There are two types of impact evaluations.

The first type, enumerating outcomes, explores whether the goals of a program have been met. “When people think of program evaluation, impact evaluations are what they usually have in mind. Impact evaluations are easy to conceptualize because they revolve around directly assessing outputs” (Bingham and Felbinger, 1989, p. 5).

The second type of impact evaluation consists of measuring effectiveness. The evaluator explores whether and to what extent the goals of the program or policy are being met. “Impact evaluations tend to be more objective because it is not necessary to rely solely on clients or staff to gather data (although their assistance is often helpful). The data can be extracted from records or from observing or testing or measuring effects” (Bingham and Felbinger, 1989, pp. 5-6). It is important to note that impact evaluations lend themselves quite easily to empirical study (Bingham and Felbinger, 1989, p. 6).

Formal impact evaluations generally require significant data over several years. Prior to conducting formal impact assessment, it is often useful to collect preliminary data that spans a short time period and has limited scope. This preliminary analysis aids in later more formal, expensive and sophisticated analysis.

Evaluation Methodology

Lawrence Sherman describes the evaluation methodology as a concise, comprehensive process. The process is a fast-track strategy for obtaining knowledge about community crime prevention through a multilevel randomized trial, with experiments imbedded in experiments (1997, p. 3-38). For example, services can be randomly assigned to half the communities. Then within the individual communities, the services can be provided to half of the eligible participants. “If ‘communities’ are defined at the level of census tract, there could be several

hundred units of analysis available for this kind of multilevel research design” (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-38). Lawrence Sherman further explains:

A broader experiment in community-based mentoring could draw separate samples from systematically different communities, chosen on theoretical grounds. A contemporaneous trial in two segregated inner-city communities of concentrated poverty, two predominately white but high single-parent family suburban areas and two racially and economically mixed areas, would answer a key question: whether the effects of the mentoring program vary by community context. An added comparison of Hispanic and African-American poverty areas would also illuminate the role of ethnicity, if any, in conditioning the effects of community-based mentoring. The importance of testing mentoring in different communities is clear (1997, pp. 3-38 - 3-39).

When evaluating community-based programs, diverse effects of programs should be included as part of the analysis. It is clear that there is still a lot for government agencies to learn regarding the effectiveness of community-based juvenile crime prevention strategies.

Evaluation Dilemmas

A problem with illustrating the effectiveness of a specific program is the possibility that more than one program is implemented simultaneously in the same community. Combinations of programs are usually premised on the rationale that the more programs, the better: comprehensively attacking many risk factors that lead to juvenile crime simultaneously should increase the overall chances of successful crime prevention (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-8).

How can the researcher relate the changes to a specific program? This is a significant problem for new programs and/or services, especially when there is a need to justify continuation of their existence during times of budget constraints. “The problem is that even with successful results, a combination of programs makes it impossible as a matter of scientific method to isolate the active ingredients causing the success. It may be all of them in combination. Or it may be only one or two” (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-8).

Another dilemma for evaluators is the choice of program elements. Program content may vary from community to community, since many community-based strategies are based on specific community risk factors and local decisions about program content. This is a problem for evaluators because “the variability in these combinations across communities allows an evaluation to test the effects of the general strategy, and not the specific program elements” (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-9). There is no simple solution to this dilemma; however, with ample planning and resources maybe some evaluation shortcomings could be resolved.

Conclusion

“Since the early 1990s, youth violence has become a policy priority at every level of American government. Data about violent juvenile crime and statistics about the size and characteristics of the youth population are playing an important role in concerns about youth violence in the 1990s and in the first decade of the next century” (Zimring, 1998, p. 1). Since 1994, there have been more prevention programs funded by the federal government to keep potentially troublesome youth out of harm’s way.

The ends or goals of a system must be behaviorally defined, not logically or ethically defined. The crucial variable is the impact of the program on human behavior in the future. To modify criminal behavior, we must deal directly with criminal behavior by removing the environmental conditions which maintain the behavior.

The steady increase in juvenile crime over the years is an issue that must be strategically addressed. “Communities are the central institution for crime prevention, the stage on which all other institutions perform. Families, schools, labor markets, retail establishments, police, and

corrections must confront the consequences of community life” (Sherman, 1997, p. 3-1).

Community life can have an influence on an individual’s sense of well-being.

Many factors which affect or impact juvenile crime relate to community conditions.

Community risk factors which may lead to high violence rates are:

- Community Composition. The kinds of people who live in a community.
- Community Social Structure. The manner in which community residents interact with one another.
- Oppositional Culture. Community residents develop an oppositional culture, in that good becomes bad, and bad becomes good.
- Criminogenic Commodities. High concentration of vices such as alcohol, guns, and drugs.
- Social and Physical Disorder. Communities out of control may attract more crime (Sherman, 1997, pp. 3-4 – 3-7).

Therefore, it is important for governmental entities and communities to work together to reduce and prevent juvenile crime.

The next chapter describes the conceptual framework (working hypotheses) used to organize this research. Chapter Three also provides a detailed description of the Community Youth Development Program and the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH SETTING

This chapter describes the setting in which this project was conducted. It begins with a detailed description of the Texas Community Youth Development Program. A detailed overview of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program follows. The discussion includes a description of the Southeast Austin community where the Community Youth Development (CYD) Program was implemented. In order to assess the influence of the Community Youth Development Program on Southeast Austin, it was necessary to compare it (crime rate, etc.) with a similar non-CYD community. Hence, this chapter also describes the “comparison” community used in the study. In addition, the “Conceptual Framework” section of this chapter provides a detailed discussion of the working hypotheses used to organize the empirical investigation.

Community Youth Development Program⁹

In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislature created the Community Youth Development (CYD) Program to address juvenile crime. The goal of the program is to decrease the incidence of juvenile crime in targeted Texas communities.

The Legislature appropriated \$10.5 million to Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) for the first biennium to fund grants for juvenile delinquency prevention approaches in communities with a high incidence of juvenile crime. The communities selected for funding were chosen after a three-step process. The first step was to

⁹ Unless otherwise noted, all descriptive information regarding the Community Youth Development Program was provided by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Also, the researcher served on the Community Youth Development Program implementation team; therefore, information is provided based on researcher’s work experience.

determine the twelve counties in Texas with the highest number of juvenile violent arrests. For the purpose of CYD, a juvenile violent arrest is defined as the arrest of a person age 10-17 for a violent offense (murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault). The second step is to determine, for each county selected, zip code areas with 300 or more juvenile referrals. For the purpose of CYD, juvenile referral was defined as “the referral of a person age 10-17 to a juvenile probation department for delinquent or CINS conduct” (Arrigona and Davis, p.5). CINS refers to conduct indicating a need for supervision (e.g., truancy, running away from home). One of the twelve counties was eliminated for not having a zip code with over 300 referrals.

The third and final step was to select the zip code within each of the remaining eleven counties with the highest number of juvenile referrals. These were the eleven zip codes selected for funding. However, the program has been expanded to include a total of fifteen communities. The CYD communities are located in the following cities (targeted zip code provided in parentheses): Amarillo (79107); Austin (78744); Brownsville (78520); Corpus Christi (78415); Dallas (75216, 75217); El Paso (79924); Fort Worth (76106); Galveston (77550); Houston (77081); Lubbock (79415); McAllen (78501); Pasadena (77506); San Antonio (78207), and Waco (76707). The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) is the state agency responsible for allocating funds to the targeted zip codes for the prevention and/or reduction of juvenile crime. Currently, each zip code receives \$500,000.00 from PRS for the CYD Program.

Collaborative Interagency Effort

The CYD Program was implemented as a collaborative interagency effort. The collaboration consisted of the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor’s Office, Texas Youth

Commission, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, Texas Education Agency, Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Department of Health, Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, the University of Texas at Arlington Graduate School of Social Work, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Each of these state agencies designated a representative to serve on what became known as the CYD Interagency Workgroup. The workgroup was responsible for selecting the targeted communities, developing the guidelines for the CYD Program, and establishing the application process. This workgroup reports to a Steering Committee, which is comprised of board members from the participating agencies. The assumption was that by having various state agencies involved, the duplication of efforts or services would be minimized. Also, legislators intended that the program be a coordinated effort to address juvenile crime. Since all of these agencies provide services that directly or indirectly affect juvenile crime, their coordinated cooperation was critical to the success of this new initiative.

Community Collaboration

The Community Youth Development Program “is based upon the principle assumptions that: communities know best what they need; we can define meaningful and measurable outcomes; can put a structure in place to collect data to measure the outcomes” (Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, 1995 Request for Community Action Plan, p.2). Communities were given the responsibility of developing a CYD Program that would meet their individual needs. This was a new approach for the State, because the State normally prescribes programs for communities. “In December 1995, communities were given the *Request for Community Action Plan (RFP)*, in which they were asked to create a ‘vision’ for their

community, and to outline a detailed plan of operation for implementing that vision” (Arrigona and Davis, p.7). To assist communities, PRS contracted with Schools of Social Work in each city for technical assistance. The Schools of Social Work were responsible for: contacting key community representatives, coordinating and facilitating community meetings, assisting with preparation of the Community Action Plan, assisting with local implementation of CYD Programs and services, and insuring community awareness of the CYD Program. “Communities were allowed to determine what conditions in their community led to juvenile crime and how to address those conditions through their programs. The goal of project development was to create programs that dealt with needs that were not being met in the community” (Arrigona and Davis, p.7). The RFP only provided communities with suggestions for the kinds of programs that could be designed, since communities were encouraged to develop and fund services that would meet their individual needs.

Each community is required to form a local CYD Steering Committee. Ideally, the Steering Committee represents and reflects the community. The RFP suggested that committee members be selected from:

local youth who represent the diversity of the geographic area served; local businesses; schools and/or school districts; community youth development groups (e.g., YMCA/YWCA, Boy/Girl Scouts); private child, youth, and family service providers; private fundraising agencies such as United Way and foundations; advocacy organizations; communities of faith; neighborhood associations; and community groups such as grassroots organizations and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)” (PRS, 1995 Request for Community Action Plan, p.3).

In addition, at least fifty-one percent of the Steering Committee members are supposed to be individuals who reside in the targeted zip code. The manner in which Steering Committee

members are selected varies from community to community. In the past, some Steering Committee members were elected through public elections, others were appointed.

The Steering Committee is responsible for developing the Community Action Plan, the corresponding budget, and selecting a fiscal agent to contract with Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services for disbursement of funds. The fiscal agent is either a public or private entity that assumes the responsibility of overseeing the local financial aspects of CYD. The fiscal agent insures the local implementation of the CYD Program complies with applicable state and federal regulations, and contracts with various organizations (subcontractors) for the delivery of CYD services. In other words, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is responsible for reimbursing the fiscal agent for allowable CYD costs, and the fiscal agent is responsible for reimbursing the subcontractors.

Implementation Challenges

As with any new initiative, there are implementation challenges and issues. Initially, PRS staffed the CYD Program with only two staff members. “The required support and technical assistance for the communities left staff with little time to deal with the individual programs or their goal statements” (Arrigona and Davis, p.23). Communities often failed to take into account state and federal regulations, and as a result their proposed services were ineligible for funding.¹⁰

Another challenge was the fact that some of the budgets submitted by subcontractors and fiscal agents had to be revised numerous times due to the inclusion of unallowable costs. The Texas Legislature wanted CYD implemented as soon as possible, so there was not ample time to assist communities in developing Community Action Plans, to insure programs/services funded

¹⁰ Due to the fact that PRS was using a percentage of federal funds for CYD, the CYD Program had to comply with applicable state and federal regulations.

reflect the needs of the entire community, or to properly train communities on allowable programs and costs, as prescribed in the state and federal regulations.

CYD Programs and Services in Communities

Communities were challenged to design comprehensive approaches to support families and improve conditions that lead to juvenile crime. “New services were expected to ‘fill gaps’ in neighborhood programming, rather than supplant or overlap existing services” (Arrigona and Davis, p.3). The communities developed Community Action Plans that specified the vision and goal of the individual communities, the programs and services to be funded, and a budget. Potential subcontractors submitted proposals to the local Steering Committee for funding of programs/services. If the Steering Committee selected the programs/services for funding, those programs/services were incorporated into the Community Action Plan submitted to PRS. The Community Action Plans submitted to PRS were reviewed and evaluated by the CYD Interagency Workgroup. The workgroup reviewed the Plans for: accessibility of services, impact of services on juvenile crime, integration with existing or current services, inclusion of mentoring/advocate approach, appropriateness of programs/services, collaborative effort, experience and capacity of the fiscal agent, and explanation and justification of the costs. Based on the recommendations of the workgroup, the communities were asked to revise or correct their Plans, which was appropriate since the sites had already been selected for funding and were not in competition with one another for funds.

The CYD programs developed or funded can be categorized into the following core areas: 1) support, 2) recreation, 3) education, 4) employment, and 5) community service. Examples of support programs are mentoring, counseling, leadership, and intervention programs. Recreation includes sports and fine arts programs. Education consists of tutoring, GED

preparation, and truancy reduction programs. Employment programs include work experience projects and entrepreneur programs. The community service component includes volunteer, community restoration, and neighborhood safety programs. Statewide, the funding was distributed as follows: Education – 18%; Support – 26%; Recreation – 18%; Employment – 8%; Community Service – 6%; Combination (programs which address two or more of the five focus areas) – 24% (Arrigona and Davis, p.12). The distribution of funds varied between sites, as each site had different needs for its community. All communities, however, attempted to fund programs designed to help youth and parents.

Is the Community Youth Development Program Effective?

Although the communities accomplished their goal of establishing CYD programs and services, they failed to develop measurable outcomes that would clearly illustrate the effectiveness of the programs/services on juvenile crime. “Communities have outlined global outcomes for their programs rather than goals that are specific and measurable” (Arrigona and Davis, p.18). Also, due to the lack of effective mechanisms to gather comprehensive information on all individuals (youths and parents) participating in CYD, it is difficult to do a true and complete assessment of the effectiveness of CYD programs (Arrigona and Davis, p. 23). Again, had there been more time for the implementation of CYD, PRS staff could have assisted communities in developing specific and measurable goals for programs, insured mechanisms were in place for collecting data on all CYD participants, and insured more case management programs were funded, since “individual case management programs provide comprehensive services to juveniles and their families over a period of time and produce measurable outcomes” (Arrigona and Davis, p.20).

Legislators strive to insure programs and services are available that address (for youths and parents): socioeconomic conditions (such as unemployment, poor housing, affordable daycare), family conditions, gangs, drugs and alcohol, and availability of weapons. As for the media, the federal government is going to have to take the initiative to regulate the entertainment industry. The Community Youth Development Program is a legislative attempt to address some of these societal factors.

The support programs (mentoring, counseling, leadership, and intervention programs) are an attempt to provide resources for youths in a poor family environment. The mentoring services are instrumental in gearing youths away from gangs. It is an opportunity for them to bond with a positive role model, instead of gang members. The counseling services and intervention programs are mechanisms for helping parents and youths with family problems and problems with alcohol and/or drugs. The recreational programs (sports and fine arts programs) are designed to keep youths busy while parents are working. The educational programs (tutoring, GED preparation, and truancy reduction) help the youths and parents obtain an education, so that they are able to obtain employment. Ideally, these programs help families improve their socioeconomic conditions to some degree, because they are able to obtain suitable employment. The goal of employment programs is to help CYD participants learn marketable job skills. The goal of community service programs is to keep youth participants pre-occupied, reducing (to zero) the free time for them to get into trouble. The Community Youth Development Program is a good starting point for addressing juvenile crime, and many CYD communities have implemented programs and services to meet the needs of their individual community.

Development of Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services contracted with the University of Texas at Austin for assistance with community collaboration. The University of Texas School of Social Work was the Department responsible for Community Youth Development (CYD) technical assistance in the 78744 community. The School of Social Work coordinated community meetings, assisted the community with formation of the Steering Committee, and assisted the community with development of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Plan. The development of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Plan began in December 1995. The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Plan specifies the vision of the community, the unmet needs of the community, and the programs and/or services that would meet the unmet needs of the community.

Southeast Austin CYD Steering Committee

With the assistance of the School of Social Work, the Steering Committee was responsible for finalizing the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Plan for the 78744 community. The Southeast Austin CYD Steering Committee serves as the voice of the community. The Steering Committee serves as the liaison between the community and the fiscal agent (City of Austin). The Fiscal Agent consults with the Steering Committee regarding the service needs of the community and program-related issues. The Committee is also responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of programs in meeting identified needs and gaps in services.

Process for Selecting Services and Programs for the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program¹¹

The Southeast Austin CYD Steering Committee established a formal procurement process for the selection of services/programs for the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The Steering Committee divided into four subcommittees: Crime Prevention; Education; Recreation; and Employment. Each subcommittee was responsible for developing Requests for Proposals, evaluating proposals via scoring criteria, and submitting recommendations for funding to the Southeast Austin CYD Steering Committee. Then, all of the Southeast Austin CYD Steering Committee would vote on whether to fund a program or service and the funding level. It is important to note that the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Steering Committee developed a Conflict of Interest statement, to ensure that there were no perceptions of preferential treatment in the selection process. The Steering Committee incorporated the programs and services selected for funding into the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Plan that was forwarded to the Fiscal Agent. The Fiscal Agent forwarded the Plan to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services for approval for the Plan to be finalized as the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program¹²

Effective April 1, 1996, the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services contracted with the City of Austin for the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program provides services to families and youths of the 78744 zip code area in Austin, Texas. Services are available for youths 17 years of age and under, and/or family members of eligible youths, who reside or attend

¹¹ Information provided by the Southeast Austin Steering Committee Chairperson

¹² Information obtained from PRS, CYD Detailed Service Description, 2002

school in the targeted zip code of 78744. In Fiscal Year 2000 (September 1, 1999 – August 31, 2000), the program served 1,598 youths (13.67% of youth population in the area). The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program provides an array of services: educational, recreational, and prevention. The fiscal agent is the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department of the City of Austin. The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) contracts with the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (A/TCHHSD) for the local management of the 78744 CYD Program. Although A/TCHHSD is a department within the City of Austin organization, the department has contracting authority. Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services develops and manages subcontracts with organizations for services. Currently, services are provided by the following groups:

- Austin Independent School District
- City of Austin - Parks and Recreation Department
- City of Austin – Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department
- Travis County Health and Human Services Department
- River City Youth Foundation

Austin Independent School District

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) offers after-school programs, summer camps, and Parents as Teachers program under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The after-school program offers children enrichment classes. Classes include a minimum of 50% academic activities and a maximum of 50% enrichment activities. Experienced teachers and/or parents provide instruction. The classes are held at participating schools immediately after school. Examples of classes are: science fun, math magic, computer

technology/clubs, sewing, arts and crafts, and performance arts. The after-school programs are offered at five schools located in the 78744 zip code: Houston Elementary; Langford Elementary; Rodriguez Elementary; Widen Elementary; and Mendez Middle School.

AISD also coordinates three summer camps under the CYD Program. There is a summer camp for elementary age youth that provides a full day of various activities. The activities consist of arts and crafts, team sports, computer fun, swimming, and field trips. A one-week transition camp is offered at Mendez Middle School for incoming sixth grade students. The students are offered the opportunity to meet their sixth grade teachers and students from different elementary schools who will be attending Mendez Middle School. The goal of this camp is to help students transition from elementary to middle school. The third camp offered by AISD is the Junior Summer Math Camp. This camp is conducted by Southwest Texas State University, and focuses on the concepts of algebra. The program takes students from basic introduction to more advanced problem solving and discrete math. The camp is for students in grades fourth through eighth, who live or attend school in the 78744 zip code.

The Parents as Teachers Program offered by AISD encourages parents to become active participants in their child's life. The overall goal of the program is to engage parents in their children's education, which can facilitate increased school attendance and enhanced academic performance. The program offers support for teen parents, so that they are equipped to meet the needs of their children. The School Readiness component of the Parents as Teachers Program seeks to prepare young children (ages 3 and 4) and parents for the children's classroom environment.

City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department offers recreational activities under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The activities are baseball, basketball, flag football, gymnastics, karate class, swimming, and volleyball. The goal of the recreational program is to provide structured activities during non-school hours; thereby, promoting positive youth development and reducing/preventing delinquent behavior.

City of Austin – Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department

The Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department provides the Work-Based Learning Program under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The Work-Based Learning Program is a summer youth employment program. Youth receive job readiness training, and an opportunity to tour local colleges, universities and private employers. As part of the program, youth are trained and placed in summer jobs. Youth participating in the program work 20 hours per week, during the summer, in public, non-profit or private sector organizations. The Work-Based Learning Program's goal is to teach youth skills that will help them make positive lifestyle choices.

Travis County Health and Human Services Department

Travis County Health and Human Services Department manages the county-wide Neighborhood Conference Committee (NCC) Program. Under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, NCC works with first time juvenile misdemeanor offenders of zip code 78744 and their families to provide a resolution to the offense, to support the juvenile offender and the offender's family, and to prevent the juvenile from reoffending. The program allows community volunteers to hold first time offenders accountable for their actions.

River City Youth Foundation

The River City Youth Foundation offers the Life Skills Academy under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The goal of the Life Skills Academy is to teach youth skills that will help them to become productive and responsible adults. For example, youth are taught communication skills, conflict resolution, and decision-making skills. The Academy also provides career seminars, to increase the youths' knowledge of different careers.

The River City Youth Foundation also facilitates the Southeast Austin CYD Youth Advisory Committee. The Youth Advisory Committee serves as the voice of the youth of the community. Since youths serve on this committee, they provide invaluable input regarding the youths' needs in the 78744 community.

The Life Skills Academy and Youth Advisory Committee target youths ages twelve to seventeen. The Life Skills Academy is offered on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the River City Youth Foundation Success Center. The Youth Advisory Committee meets every two weeks for one to two hours at the Green Slopes Apartments.

This applied research project intends to evaluate the effectiveness of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program in reducing juvenile crime and the impact of the program in the targeted community.

Conceptual Framework

This research uses a category of conceptual frameworks called the working hypotheses. Ideas from the literature review are used to develop the working hypotheses. The working hypotheses are as follows:

WH1: The Community Youth Development (CYD) Program in 78744 zip code lowers juvenile crime when compared to a comparable community not receiving CYD services.

WH2: The Community Youth Development Program results in a reduction in the number of juveniles committed to a Texas Youth Commission juvenile correctional facility.

WH3: The Community Youth Development Program has a positive impact in the targeted community.

Table 3.1, Conceptual Framework, details the working hypotheses and associated literature.

Table 3.1 Conceptual Framework

Working Hypotheses	Conceptualization of Hypotheses	Literature
WH1: Reduction in Juvenile Crime Rate	In communities receiving CYD services, the juvenile crime rate is lower than in comparable communities not receiving CYD services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrigona & Davis, 1997 • Dupont-Morales, 1995 • Office of the Texas Attorney General, 1991 • PRS, <i>Request For Community Action Plan</i>, 1995 • Zimring, 1998
WH2: Reduction in Number of Commitments to Juvenile Correctional Facility	CYD communities will experience a reduction in the number of juveniles committed to a Texas Youth Commission juvenile correctional facility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice Policy Council, 1999 • Greenwood, 1996 • King & Stivers, 1998 • National Institute of Justice • PRS, <i>Request For Community Action Plan</i>, 1995
WH3: Positive Impact in the Community	The CYD Program has a positive impact in targeted communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrigona & Davis, 1997 • PRS, <i>Request For Community Action Plan</i>, 1995

Since the Community Youth Development Program is a community-based juvenile crime prevention initiative, the literature presented in Chapter Two helped form the working hypotheses explored through this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology used to explore the working hypotheses. The research design selected for examining working hypotheses one and two is the comparative case study. The comparative case study allows the comparison of the two zip code areas, to determine the effect of the Community Youth Development (CYD) Program in the targeted community. The case study method is a comprehensive research method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1994, p. 13).

The third hypothesis required the use of field research. This methodology tested the impact of CYD in the targeted community. The field research methods used consisted of open-ended interviews, direct observations, and a focus group.

The research involves the collecting of multiple sources of evidence, pattern matching and case study protocol (Yin, 1994, p.33). The two main sources of evidence for this research are analysis of aggregated data and existing statistics, and field research. The multiple sources of evidence allow a broader range of issues to be addressed. Analysis of aggregated data and existing statistics is used for the purposes of pattern-matching and correlation analysis. The analysis focuses on juvenile crime data for zip code areas 78744 and 78752.

Comparative Case Study

According to Yin,

the case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a

triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (1994, p. 13).

This study aligns with the case study in that multiple sources of data are used and theoretical propositions were used to guide the data collection and analysis. This technique is a scaled down version of formal impact evaluation. A comparison of juvenile crime-related data for two zip codes in the Austin area is done to explore the impact of the Community Youth Development Program in a targeted community.

Zip Code 78744

The zip code area of 78744 is the area targeted by the Community Youth Development Program, based on 1994 juvenile crime statistics. The zip code area is located in southeast Austin, and is a relatively large area. The area encompasses 13,373.46 acres, for a total of 20.8 square miles.¹³ Some of the demographics for the area are: median age (26.48); percentage of households with children (65.91%); average household size (2.90 people); and percentage white-collar workers (55.99%).¹⁴ The 78744 zip code area is comprised of multiple neighborhoods. An example of a neighborhood served in 78744 by the program is the Dove Springs community. (See Appendix A for map of zip codes 78744 and 78752.)

Zip Code 78752

The zip code area used for comparative analysis is 78752. The 78752 zip code area is located in northeast Austin, and, compared to 78744, is relatively small. The area encompasses 1,979.94 acres, for a total of 3.09 square miles.¹⁵ Some of the demographics for the area are: median age (27.40); percentage of households with children (46.85%); average household size

¹³ Information provided by the City of Austin, City Demographer.

¹⁴ Information obtained from Yahoo! Real Estate at [www.http://list.realestate.yahoo.com](http://list.realestate.yahoo.com).

¹⁵ Information provided by the City of Austin, City Demographer.

(2.20 people); and percentage white-collar workers (56.59%).¹⁶ The 78752 zip code area is also comprised of multiple neighborhoods. An example of a neighborhood in the 78752 area is the St. Johns community.

The federally-funded program called “Weed and Seed” is addressing crime issues in the 78752 zip code. The primary goal of the Weed and Seed program is to “weed out” violent crime, gang activity and drugs in the community. Weed and Seed seeks to create viable, safe, and livable communities.¹⁷ The primary difference between Weed and Seed and the Community Youth Development Program is that Weed and Seed is not only focused on juvenile crime, but crimes committed by juveniles and adults.

Selection of 78752 for Comparative Analysis

The Austin, Texas zip code area of 78752 was selected based on demographical information that is comparable to the CYD zip code in Austin of 78744. Table 4.1 provides the demographical information used to determine the comparative zip code. The data is based on 1990 United States Census Bureau data, since the 2000 data has not been released.

Several zip codes within the Austin city limits were reviewed for possible comparison with the CYD zip code. The following information was reviewed for all of the prospective zip codes: total population, ethnic composition, population under the age of 17, average household income, and median family income. These demographics were chosen because they seemed the most important when comparing communities for this type of study. For example, the ethnic composition of the two zip code areas is very similar. Also, there are only minor differences between the two communities in average household income or median family income. The

¹⁶ Information obtained from Yahoo! Real Estate at [www.http://list.realestate.yahoo.com](http://list.realestate.yahoo.com).

¹⁷ Weed and Seed information obtained from City of Austin Website.

78744 area has a larger population, but due to the similar ethnic composition of the total population, it was determined that 78752 was the most comparable community.

Table 4.1 Community Demographics

Community Status	Zip Code	Total Population	Race	Population Under the age of 17	Average Household Income	Median Family Income
CYD Community	Austin 78744	23,184	White 43% Black 16% Hispanic 39%	34%	\$26,429	\$27,500
Non-CYD Community	Austin 78752	13,266	White 45% Black 21% Hispanic 30%	22%	\$17,336	\$21,363

Analysis of Aggregated Data and Existing Statistics

The data and statistics are used to determine if there is a pattern or correlation between CYD funding and juvenile crime rates. Data and statistics were obtained for zip codes 78744 and 78752 from Travis County Juvenile Probation Department and Texas Youth Commission. Data was requested for calendar years 1994 and 2000. Calendar year 1994 data was used by PRS to select targeted communities; therefore, 1994 was chosen as the “before” CYD period. Calendar year 2000 was determined to be the most current period for which complete data is available, and that year also offers an accurate reflection of changes in communities after the implementation of the Community Youth Development program. The data was used to assess

juvenile crime incidents before and after the implementation of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program in 78744.

Travis County Juvenile Probation Department is the organization responsible for addressing the needs of juvenile offenders in Travis County. Some of the Department's many tasks include supervising juvenile offenders who have been tried in court, found guilty, and placed on probation; processing juveniles for misdemeanor offenses, and mediation and community service restitution services are used to hold the juvenile accountable for his or her offense; and providing juvenile court services.¹⁸

For the purpose of this research, Travis County Juvenile Probation Department provided referral information for calendar years 1994 and 2000 for both zip codes. A referral is an occasion when a child is brought to a juvenile probation department's attention for alleged delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision and some contact by visit or interview occurs between the department and the juvenile or parents (Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, 1998). The calendar years used represent the periods before and after the implementation of the Community Youth Development Program.

The Texas Youth Commission (TYC) is the state agency responsible for the care, rehabilitation, and control of juveniles adjudicated delinquent and committed to state custody. The services provided by TYC include: parole supervision, contract services (contract care for youth), and institutional facility (secured facility). The Texas Youth Commission provided the number of commitments for the zip codes for the years being reviewed. A commitment is defined as a child being committed to the care, control and custody of TYC. "All commitments to TYC, except under the determinate sentencing act, are for an indeterminate term not to extend beyond the child's 21st birthday" (Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, 1998). A determinate

¹⁸ Travis County Juvenile Probation Department Website

sentence is a sentence that is imposed on a youth offender for up to 40 years; however, it is only for certain felony offenses. The youth will first serve time in a TYC facility, but may later be transferred to an adult facility (Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, 1998).

Field Research

Field research was used to examine evidence for the third working hypothesis. Since this study is exploratory research, field research is an appropriate methodology (Shields, 1998, p. 207). According to Babbie (1999, pp. 258-259), field research is used for qualitative inquiry. The process involves more than just data collection, it involves generating a theory based on observations. The field research consisted of open-ended interviews, direct observations, and a focus group.

*Interviews*¹⁹

Interviews are an important source of information when conducting qualitative analysis. Open-ended interviews allow respondents the opportunity to provide facts as well as their opinions based on their perceptions. Interviews are effective when conducting a case study about human affairs, because human affairs should be interpreted and reported through the eyes of respondents, and informed respondents can provide useful information. Nevertheless, interviews are subject to the common problems of bias, poor recall, and poor or inaccurate articulation.

For the purpose of this research, interviews were conducted to determine the impact of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program in the community. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions so that the respondents could provide their

¹⁹ The information used in this section is from Yin, Robert, *Case Study Research*, 1994, pp. 84-85.

perceptions of the program and the community. In an effort to gain accurate perceptions of the respondents, the respondents were assured anonymity and that their responses would not be attributed to them in any identifiable way. Respondents were selected from the following groups:

- Youth
- Parents
- Teachers
- Principals
- Law Enforcement
- City of Austin Community Youth Development Staff
- Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Subcontractors (Service Providers)
- Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Steering Committee

To insure questions were specific to the different groups interviewed, eight different questionnaires were developed; however, some questions were asked of all or some of the different groups.

The interview conducted with youths consisted of twenty open-ended questions. All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face. The interviews were conducted between October 4 and 13, 2001. The average length of time for the interviews was nine minutes. A total of five youths were individually interviewed, ranging in ages seven to eleven. Since all of the youths were participants in the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, the questions focused on the impact of the program on them personally and within the community. (See Appendix B for interview questions and responses.)

The interview conducted with parents consisted of ten open-ended questions. All of these interviews were also conducted face-to-face. The interviews were conducted between October 5 and 13, 2001. A total of eight parents were individually interviewed. The interviews averaged ten minutes. All of the parents interviewed had children participating in the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program; therefore, the questions focused on the changes in their children's behavior and in the community due to the program. (See Appendix C for interview questions and responses.)

Interviews were also conducted with Austin Independent School District elementary school teachers who work with children from the 78744 zip code. The interviews consisted of twelve open-ended questions related to the school environment, community conditions, and the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. A total of four teachers were interviewed; however, two of the teachers were interviewed together. All of the interviews were face-to-face, and each interview was completed in fifteen minutes. The interviews were conducted on October 10 and 11, 2001. (See Appendix D for interview questions and responses.)

Principals of Austin Independent School District schools serving the 78744 community were also interviewed. A total of four principals representing various school levels were interviewed: one elementary school, one middle school, and two high schools. All of the interviews were conducted via telephone, with the exception of one face-to-face interview with one of the high school principals. Each interview lasted approximately ten minutes. The interviews were conducted on October 12 and October 19, 2001. Each principal answered nine open-ended questions that focused on the impact of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program and juvenile delinquency. (See Appendix E for interview questions and responses.)

Austin Independent School District (AISD) Police Officers were also interviewed, to determine the impact of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program on juvenile crime. Two AISD police officers who work in the 78744 community were interviewed via telephone. The telephone interviews were approximately fifteen minutes in length. One interview was conducted on October 12, 2001, and the other interview was conducted on October 15, 2001. The interviews consisted of five open-ended questions that focused on juvenile crime in the 78744 community, and the impact of the CYD Program. Attempts were made to contact City of Austin police officers who work in the 78744 area, but to no avail; therefore, they were not included in this study. (See Appendix F for interview questions and responses.)

The City of Austin Southeast Austin Community Youth Development staff were also interviewed. The City of Austin staff work in the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department. The Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department is responsible for oversight and management of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. Two staff members were interviewed, one via telephone, the other face-to-face. The telephone interview lasted twenty minutes on October 3, 2001. The face-to-face interview was conducted on October 1, 2001, and was a one-hour interview. The interviews consisted of ten open-ended questions that asked the staff members for their perception of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. (See Appendix G for interview questions and responses.)

There are a total of five organizations providing a variety of services under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. Three of the five organizations were selected through purposive sampling. Babbie defines purposive sampling as “a type of nonprobability

sampling in which the researcher uses his or her own judgment in the selection of sample members. It's sometimes called a judgmental sample" (p. 205). For this study, three programs that were deemed to yield the most comprehensive information related to the target population and the 78744 community were selected. The three organizations (service providers) interviewed were: Austin Independent School District (Community Education Program), City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, and the River City Youth Foundation. The interviews were conducted on October 4, 2001 and October 11, 2001. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with individuals responsible for coordinating the services provided under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The interviews ranged from fifteen minutes to one hour. There were fifteen open-ended questions that focused on the impact of the Community Youth Development Program on the targeted community, changes they would like to see in targeted community, and the services they are providing to Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program participants. (See Appendix H for interview questions and responses.)

Some members of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program Steering Committee were also interviewed. A total of four steering committee members were interviewed via telephone. The interviews were conducted between October 4, 2001 and October 17, 2001, and averaged 24 minutes in length. The seven open-ended questions focused on the impact of the program on juvenile crime in the community and their general perception of the effectiveness of the Community Youth Development Program. (See Appendix I for interview questions and responses.)

Direct Observations

Direct observations were also used as a source of evidence for this study. “Observational evidence is often useful in providing additional information about the topic being studied” (Yin, 1994, p. 87). Yin (1994, p. 87) also suggests that there be more than one observer, to increase the reliability of the evidence. Due to the fact that there was only one observer for this study, the conclusions drawn from the observations are based on the perception of one individual.

Ten activities were observed between the period of October 4, 2001 and October 13, 2001. The activities were observed for a period ranging from five to fifteen minutes. The researcher observed the following activities provided through the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program:

- Gymnastics Class
- Youth Advisory Committee Meeting
- After-School Computer Class (Elementary Students)
- After-School Hip-Hop Dance Class (Elementary Students)
- After-School Recreation Program (Elementary Students)
- After-School Board Games (Elementary Students)
- After-School Photo Album Class (Elementary Students)
- After-School Sign Language Class (Elementary Students)
- After-School Sewing Class (Elementary Students)
- Karate Class

Direct observations were used as a method to determine the benefit(s) of the activities to participants and the extent to which the activities contribute to the accomplishment of the goal of the Community Youth Development Program. (See Appendix J for details of observations.)

Focus Group

Another methodology used for the field research was a focus group. A focus group allows the researcher to observe group interaction on a specific topic. “Group discussions provide direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants’ opinions and

experiences as opposed to reaching such conclusions from post hoc analyses of separate statements from each interviewee” (Morgan, 1997, p. 10). A significant concern regarding the use of focus groups is the researcher’s ability to influence the data. “In particular, there is a very real concern that the moderator, in the name of maintaining the interview’s focus, will influence the group’s interactions” (Morgan, 1997, p. 14). This study involved the use of a structured focus group. According to Morgan (1997, p. 39), a structured focus group involves the use of a standardized interview and a high level of researcher involvement. Morgan (1997, p. 40) also notes that structured approaches produce limited data, due to a narrow set of questions.

The researcher asked the focus group the same questions asked of the youths interviewed individually. The focus group consisted of seven youths (two males and five females), ranging from twelve to fifteen years of age. The focus group used for this study also serves as the Youth Advisory Committee for the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The focus group was convened for approximately forty-five minutes. The purpose of the focus group was to obtain the youths’ perception of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, including the effectiveness of the program in reducing juvenile crime. (See Appendix K for interview questions and responses.)

The data collected through the methodologies described above was used to test the working hypotheses developed for the purpose of this study. Table 4.2 on the next page specifies the operationalization of the working hypotheses and data collection.

Table 4.2 Operationalizing the Working Hypotheses and Summary Data Collection Techniques

Working Hypothesis	Research Methods	Evidence	Source of Data
WH1: Reduction in Juvenile Crime Rate	Comparative Case Study Existing Aggregated Data	Juvenile Crime Data for Zip Codes 78744 and 78752 Crime Rate: Felony (Drug, Property, Violent, Other); Misdemeanor (Drug/Alcohol, Property, Violent, Other); Probation Violations; Status Offenses; Curfew Violations	Travis County Juvenile Probation Department
WH2: Reduction in Number of Juveniles from CYD Communities in Juvenile Correctional Facility	Comparative Case Study Existing Aggregated Data	Number of juveniles from zip codes 78744 and 78752 committed to Texas Youth Commission juvenile correctional facility	Texas Youth Commission (TYC)
WH3: Positive Impact of CYD on Community	Field Research Interviews Direct Observations Focus Group	Perception of Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended interviews (Youths, Parents, Teachers, Principals, Law Enforcement, City of Austin CYD Staff, Service Providers, Steering Committee) • Direct observations of CYD youths and parents in CYD activities (Locations: Houston Elementary School, Widen Elementary School, River City Youth Foundation Success Center, Dove Springs Recreation Center) • Youth Focus Group Location: River City Youth Foundation Success Center

The next chapter describes and presents the findings from the research.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS

This chapter presents the research findings. This chapter assesses the Community Youth Development Program in the 78744 zip code.

Working Hypothesis 1: The Community Youth Development (CYD) Program in 78744 zip code lowers juvenile crime when compared to a comparable community not receiving CYD services.

Review of the statistics provided by the Travis County Juvenile Probation Department found that the juvenile crime trend (increase or decrease in specific types of crime) between the two zip codes is consistent; however, there is a variation in the rate at which the crimes increase or decrease in the zip codes. Evidence displayed in Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 indicate that the overall juvenile crime rate is not necessarily lower in communities receiving Community Youth Development services. Since 1994, the non-CYD community (zip code 78752) has experienced a greater reduction in juvenile crime than the CYD community (zip code 78744). The crime rate was calculated based on the youth population (under the age of eighteen) for the corresponding zip codes.

Table 5.1 Juvenile Probation Referrals (1994)*

Type of Crime	CYD Community 78744 1994 (Referrals)	1994 Crime Rate Based on Youth Population**	Non-CYD Community 78752 1994 (Referrals)	1994 Crime Rate Based on Youth Population***
Felony Drug	19	.23%	6	.20%
Felony Property	129	1.6%	45	1.5%
Felony Violent	37	.45%	23	.75%
Felony Other	15	.18%	4	.13%
Misdemeanor Drug/Alcohol	47	.57%	18	.59%
Misdemeanor Property	126	1.5%	52	1.7%
Misdemeanor Violent	75	.91%	24	.78%
Misdemeanor Other	149	1.8%	60	2.0%
Probation Violations	31	.38%	16	.52%
Status Offenses	70	.85%	21	.69%
Curfew Violation	30	.36%	14	.46%
Total	728	8.8%	283	9.2%

*Information provided by Travis County Juvenile Probation Department

**Crime rate calculated based on the population under the age of eighteen recorded by the United States Census Bureau. Population data for 1990 was used for 1994 calculations, since this data is collected and recorded every ten years. The youth population for 78744 for 1990 was 8,254.

***Crime rate calculated based on the population under the age of eighteen recorded by the United States Census Bureau. Population data for 1990 was used for 1994 calculations, since this data is collected and recorded every ten years. The youth population for 78752 for 1990 was 3,065.

Table 5.2 Juvenile Probation Referrals (2000)*

Type of Crime	CYD Community 78744 2000 (Referrals)	2000 Crime Rate Based on Youth Population**	Non-CYD Community 78752 2000 (Referrals)	2000 Crime Rate Based on Youth Population***
Felony Drug	24	.21%	1	.02%
Felony Property	28	.24%	15	.35%
Felony Violent	16	.14%	11	.26%
Felony Other	16	.14%	5	.12%
Misdemeanor Drug/Alcohol	59	.50%	20	.46%
Misdemeanor Property	94	.80%	34	.79%
Misdemeanor Violent	49	.42%	12	.28%
Misdemeanor Other	72	.62%	13	.30%
Probation Violations	177	1.5%	54	1.3%
Status Offenses	44	.38%	5	.12%
Curfew Violation	219	1.9%	51	1.2%
Total	798	6.8%	221	5.1%

*Information provided by Travis County Juvenile Probation Department

**Crime rate calculated based on the population under the age of eighteen recorded by the United States Census Bureau. The youth population for 78744 for 2000 is 11,690.

*** Crime rate calculated based on the population under the age of eighteen recorded by the United States Census Bureau. The youth population for 78752 for 2000 is 4,308.

Table 5.3 Juvenile Probation Referrals Comparison

Type of Crime	Change in Crime Rate from 1994 to 2000 for CYD Community (78744)	Change in Crime Rate from 1994 to 2000 for Non-CYD Community (78752)
Felony Drug	-.02%	-.18%
Felony Property	-1.36%	-1.15%
Felony Violent	-.31%	-.49%
Felony Other	-.04%	-.01%
Misdemeanor Drug/Alcohol	-.07%	-.13%
Misdemeanor Property	-.70%	-.91%
Misdemeanor Violent	-.49%	-.50%
Misdemeanor Other	-1.18%	-1.70%
Probation Violations	+1.12%	+7.8%
Status Offenses	-.47%	-.57%
Curfew Violation	+1.54%	+7.4%
Total	-2.0%	-4.1%

(-) Decrease in Crime Rate

(+) Increase in Crime Rate

Working Hypothesis 2: CYD communities will experience a reduction in the number of juveniles committed to a Texas Youth Commission juvenile correctional facility.

Review of the data provided by the Texas Youth Commission for Calendar Years 1994 through 2000 revealed increases and decreases in the Community Youth Development (CYD) community's juvenile correctional facility commitment rate. Data displayed in Tables 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 indicate that 78744 has increased the number of commitments to a juvenile correctional facility, since 1994. When comparing Calendar Years 1994 and 2000, the CYD community (78744) increased number of commitments at a rate of .08%; however, the non-CYD zip code (78752) increased number of commitments at a rate of .09%. In addition, when comparing the zip codes over the seven-year period (1994 – 2000), the commitment rates for the CYD

community only exceed the rates for the non-CYD community for two of the seven years. The commitment rates were calculated based on the youth population (under the age of eighteen) for the corresponding zip codes.

Table 5.4 New Commitments to Texas Youth Commission (TYC) (1994 – 2000)*

Zip Code	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
78744	3	15	7	21	15	15	14	90
78752	2	5	4	8	8	4	7	38

*Information provided by Texas Youth Commission

Table 5.5 TYC Commitment Rate Based on Table 5.4 and Youth Population (1994 – 2000)*

Zip Code	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Commitment Rate Difference Based on 1994 and 2000
78744 (CYD Community)	.04%	.18%	.08%	.25%	.18%	.18%	.12%	+0.08%
78752 (Non-CYD Community)	.07%	.16%	.13%	.26%	.26%	.13%	.16%	+0.09%

*Commitment rate for the years 1994-1999, calculated based on population data for 1990. Rate for 2000 calculated based on Year 2000 population data.

Table 5.6 TYC Commitment Rate Difference (1994 – 2000)*

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
-.03%	+.02%	-.05%	-.01%	-.08%	+.05%	-.04%

*TYC Commitment rate difference calculated by comparing 78744 to 78752.

(-) 78744 rate is less than the rate for 78752.

(+) 78744 rate is greater than the rate for 78752.

Working Hypothesis 3: Positive Impact of Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program on Targeted Community

The responses to the open-ended questions relevant to WH3 are listed below. Also, the responses of the focus group and the results of the direct observations are stated below.

Youths

- Program participants believe the program has helped them to become better people.
- The program has made a good difference in the community.
- The program is teaching children to work in teams.

Parents

- Children communicate better.
- Behavior of child participating in program has improved.
- Because of the low-income area, this program offers services that have not been available.
- Children enjoy the activities.
- Kids are not skipping school or fighting as much.
- The program is making a difference in the community.
- The program needs to increase services for adolescent males.

Teachers

- Children more involved in positive activities.
- More of a community atmosphere in 78744 community.
- In the long run, the program will reduce juvenile crime, because it gets kids involved at an earlier age. Also, the program builds on interests and talents.
- More parent involvement. Parents checking on children more.

Principals

- Not all reduction in juvenile crime in community due to Community Youth Development Program, since the school is doing a lot to deter juvenile crime.
- Does not know if the program has had a negative or positive impact on juvenile crime.
- Has not noticed any changes in community, but community residents believe the program has made an improvement in the community.

Law Enforcement

- Do not know if the program has been effective in reducing juvenile crime.

City of Austin CYD Staff

- There is still a problem with juvenile crime in the community; however, it has been reduced. Example: Graffiti has been reduced.
- The program has been effective in reducing juvenile crime because it provides more educational activities for the kids, and services are offered during non-school hours.

Service Providers

- Parents believe their kids are better behaved.
- Teachers have stated some youths performing better in the classroom.
- The program has definitely had a positive impact in the community.
- The community has resources and opportunities that were not there before the implementation of the program.

Steering Committee

- Keeps children in organized activities.
- Does not know if the program has reduced juvenile crime in the area, because there are a lot of kids in the area, and the CYD funds are not able to meet all of the needs. Also, there are a lot of factors that affect crime rate.
- The program needs to address the emotional and health needs of community residents.

Direct Observations

The participants were very interested in the activities observed. Activities allow the community residents an opportunity to expand their interests. Also, the activities facilitate the youths participating in an organized activity; thereby, negating the use of that time in delinquent behavior.

Youth Focus Group

Sometimes they do not feel safe at school. Sometimes students feel unsafe in the classroom. The participants have been receiving services through the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program an average of nine months. The focus group members stated that if they were not participating in this program they would be doing the following with their time: working, babysitting, watching television and eating, talking on the telephone, trying to find something to do. As a result of the program, the focus group members noted the following changes in themselves:

- More involved with community
- More patience and understanding

- Listens more to others
- Not rude
- Decreased use of profanity
- Increased computer knowledge

The group stated that the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has really helped the elementary school-age children, and the River City Youth Foundation serves as a safe haven for the youth of the community. The program has also helped increase community services. Their academic performance has remained the same.

The Community Youth Development Program does not stop fighting, but it may prevent younger children from getting involved in crime. The group acknowledged that they would like to see changes within their community: better houses; respect by police; less violence; more job opportunities for youth; and reduction in number of homeless people. It is believed that the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program can help with some of these changes with a little effort, especially teaching children how to be safe from drug dealers and sexual predators. The focus group suggested that the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program develop a strong teen outreach program and offer children something in return for their participation in CYD activities (especially middle school and high school students).

Recommended Changes to the Community Youth Development Program

Parents

- More community outreach informing community residents of the program.
- Basketball and football programs for middle school boys – to keep them from hanging out.
- More volunteers, especially to help programs with paperwork.
- Would like to see a golf and tennis program.
- More activities for children under the age of five.

Teachers

- More support for parents (i.e., glasses, dental, health issues)
- Community support type services (i.e., immigration)
- Continue kids attending activities.
- Teachers involved in after-school program should be compensated more, receive assistance with clerical duties, and principals should provide assistance with coordination of after-school program. This would facilitate proper planning of activities.

Principals

- Help or support for the teachers, due to the multiple CYD-related tasks.
- Offer after-school services at a central location.

City of Austin CYD Staff

- More activities for teenagers, especially high school students.
- More funds.

Service Providers

- Paperwork reduced.
- Better reporting system implemented by Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS).
- PRS should implement a better registration process.
- Current reporting system required of service providers is too time-consuming.
- PRS cannot provide accurate number of program participants. The reporting system and registration process for the different programs must be improved.

Steering Committee

- Not have governmental entity serve as the fiscal agent. They do not have the means at hand to meet the needs of the community.
- Conflict of interest standard established by PRS, it is more stringent than State Ethics Commission.
- PRS should obtain input from Steering Committee when proposing new rules and/or policies.
- More diversity in Steering Committee membership.
- Stronger youth leadership component.
- PRS to develop better system for tracking number of participants served by program.
- Steering Committee to have more authority.

Changes Needed in Targeted Community

Youths

- Nicer neighbors.
- Kids to be nicer to one another.

Law Enforcement

- Community given same attention by City of Austin as other parts of the city.
- More people taking care of their property.
- Parents more involved and interested in details regarding their children's behavior.

Service Providers

- More emphasis on literacy projects.
- Multi-generational projects for Hispanics and African-Americans.
- Ensure services are based on the needs of the community.
- Computer classes for single adults.
- More family-oriented activities.

Summary of Field Research Evidence

The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has made a positive difference in the community. Residents of the community believe the program has improved the community atmosphere. The program is providing resources and opportunities that help promote positive youth development. The impact of the program on juvenile crime in the community is unknown; however, the program is positively affecting those individuals participating in the programs and services offered through the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. Table 5.7 summarizes the field research evidence.

Table 5.7 Summary of Field Research Evidence

Working Hypothesis 3: Positive Impact of Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program on Targeted Community

Data Source	Evidence
Interviews Youths Parents Teachers Principals Law Enforcement City of Austin CYD Staff Service Providers Steering Committee Members	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Impact</p> The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has improved community and provided needed services.
Direct Observations Gymnastics Class Youth Advisory Committee Meeting After-School Computer Class (Elementary Students) After-School Hip-Hop Dance Class (Elementary) After-School Recreation Program (Elementary Students) After-School Board Games (Elementary Students) After-School Photo Album Class (Elementary Students) After-School Sign Language Class (Elementary Students) After-School Sewing Class (Elementary Students) Karate Class	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Impact</p> Youths participating in organized activities.
Youth Focus Group	<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Impact</p> Program has increased community services and made a positive difference in the community.

The next chapter will present conclusions and recommendations for this study. The chapter also discusses the conclusion of the evidence in relation to the working hypotheses.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the applied research project, discusses how the findings relate to the working hypotheses, and makes recommendations based on the findings. This chapter is divided into the following sections: summary, concluding results, and recommendations.

Summary

The purpose of this applied research project is to explore the impact of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program. The study explores the effectiveness of the program in reducing juvenile crime and having a positive impact in the targeted community through the use of working hypotheses.

Concluding Results

This section provides the concluding results of the research. Table 6.1 summarizes the results. Review of the statistics provided by the Travis County Juvenile Probation Department for Calendar Years 1994 and 2000 found that overall the juvenile crime rate in the community receiving Community Youth Development (CYD) services had not decreased at a rate greater than that of a non-CYD community. The evidence indicates that the juvenile crime rate is not necessarily lower in communities receiving Community Youth Development services. The CYD community and non-CYD community showed increases and decreases in the same crimes, with no noted exceptions in the rate at which the increases or decreases occurred. It is important to note that the CYD community (zip code 78744) had a decrease of 2.0% in overall juvenile crime

referrals, whereas the non-CYD community (zip code 78752) had a decrease of 4.1% in juvenile crime referrals.

Table 6.1 Summary of Results

Hypotheses	Assessment of Evidence
WH1: The Community Youth Development (CYD) Program in 78744 zip code lowers juvenile crime when compared to a comparable community not receiving CYD services.	Evidence did not support
WH2: The Community Youth Development Program results in a reduction in the number of juveniles committed to a Texas Youth Commission juvenile correctional facility.	Evidence is mixed
WH3: The Community Youth Development Program has a positive impact in the targeted community.	Evidence did support

Review of the data provided by the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) revealed the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has not reduced the number of new commitments to a Texas Youth Commission juvenile correctional facility. Although the evidence indicates that 78744 has increased the number of commitments to a (TYC) juvenile correctional facility at a rate slightly lower than the comparable community (78752), it was hypothesized that the CYD community would have a reduction in the number of TYC commitments.

The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has had a positive impact in the community; however, its effectiveness in reducing juvenile crime is debatable. The program clearly engages the youth of the community in activities that occupy their time. An argument could be made that if a child's time is occupied in structured activities, then he/she is less likely to be involved in delinquent or criminal acts. However, the long-term effect of the

activities is the unanswered question. Nevertheless, there were reports of improvements in program participants' behavior, which could result in the participants not becoming involved in juvenile crime.

Program Recommendations

Since families play a significant role in the development of youth, it is vital that family-oriented activities serve as an integral part of this juvenile crime prevention initiative. Currently, most of the activities provided under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program target the youth population, but a concerted effort should be made to involve eligible family members through more family-oriented activities.

Recommendations for Future Research

A more thorough study of the effectiveness of the Community Youth Development Program is warranted. There is no clear evidence that the program is effectively reducing juvenile crime. However, this study does not explore the different factors that could impact the changes in juvenile probation referrals and commitments to juvenile correctional facilities. For example, it is common knowledge that law enforcement personnel has increased since the implementation of the Community Youth Development Program; therefore, the number of commitments to juvenile correctional facilities would increase because of the additional law enforcement personnel to address criminal activities. A recommendation is that a control group of children in elementary school, receiving Community Youth Development services, be monitored for juvenile criminal activity until their eighteenth birthday, to accurately assess the effectiveness of the Community Youth Development Program. To determine the impact of the

Community Youth Development Program in the State of Texas, a study involving the fifteen CYD communities in Texas could yield significant information.

Research Conclusion

The Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has community support. The program is definitely meeting the needs of the youth for extracurricular activities. Children and families are afforded opportunities and resources within the 78744 community that were not present prior to the implementation of the program. Although many of the individuals interviewed for this study admitted they do not know the impact the CYD Program has had on juvenile crime in the community, they believe there is definitely a need for the program to continue. The program should be continued, although the clear impact of the program in meeting the goal of reducing juvenile crime is unfounded, the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program is certainly fostering some of the needs of the targeted community.

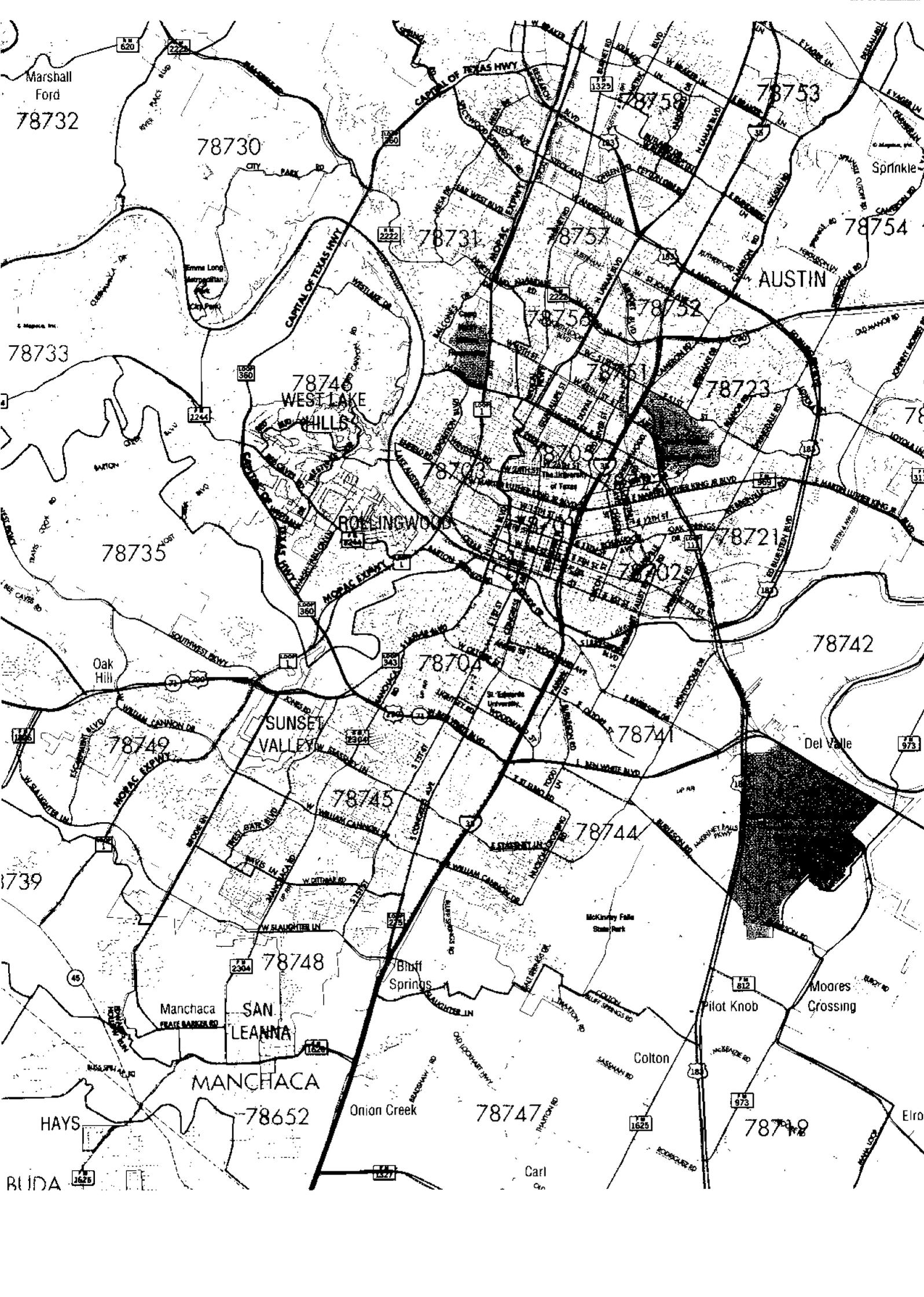
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Appendix A
Map of Zip Codes 78744 and 78752



Marshall Ford
78732

78730

78731

78757

78753

78754

AUSTIN

78733

78746
WEST LAKE
HILLS

78723

78735

ROLLINGWOOD

78721

78742

78704

78741

78749

SUNSET
VALLEY

78745

78744

Del Valle

78739

78748

SAN
LEANNA

Bluff Springs

Moore's Crossing

Manchaca

MANCHACA

78652

Onion Creek

78747

Colton

Pilot Knob

78749

HAYS

BLIDA

Carl

Elro

Appendix B
Interview Responses of Youths

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Youth Questionnaire

Provider Composite
Program _____

Date of Meeting _____

1. How old are you?

7
9
10
10
11

2. What school do you attend?

Elementary
Palm Elementary
Mendez Middle School – 6th Grade
Houston Elementary
Houston Elementary

3. Do you live in a house or an apartment?

House
House
House
House
House

4. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?

Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

5. Do you feel safe at school?

Yes
Yes
Yes
Sometimes
Sometimes

6. How long have you been receiving services through the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

Less than a year
2 years
Don't know – played football and basketball through program
2 years
This is first year

7. What would you be doing with your time if you were not attending this program?

Practice school at home

Don't know

Swimming at home

Taking care of brothers

8. As a result of this program, do you see any changes in yourself?

Good gymnast

Better person; can handle himself

Yes, good changes

Better person

9. What difference has the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program made in your community?

Better place

Good difference

Don't know

Teaching kids to work in teams

10. In your community, has the Community Youth Development Program had a positive impact on the following?

Gangs (Explain) -

Don't know

Yes

Yes

Don't know

Drugs (Explain) -

Don't know

Yes

Yes

Don't know

Juvenile Delinquency (Explain) -

Don't know

Don't know

Yes

Don't know

11. Do you have any siblings participating in the Community Youth Development Program?

No

No

Yes - 1

Yes – 1 sister

12. Are any of your close neighbors attending this program with you?

No

No

Don't know

Don't know

13. Before your participation in CYD, were you ever in trouble with law enforcement?

N/A – Too young

N/A – Too young

No

N/A – Too young

14. Since your participation in CYD, have you had any problems with law enforcement?

N/A

N/A

No

N/A

15. Since your participation in CYD, have you noticed a difference in your school grades?

Don't know

Don't know

Don't know

Yes

Just started CYD – Don't know

16. What do you enjoy most about the program you are attending?

The flips

Exercise; learning a lot

Fun

Learning to play together

17. The goal of the Community Youth Development Program is to reduce juvenile crime in communities; has the program accomplished its goal in this community?

Don't know

Yes

Don't know

There is still fighting during and after school

18. What changes would you like to see in your community?

Don't know

Happiness

Neighbors to be nice to everyone. People more helpful around the neighborhood.

Kids to be friends

Kids to be nice

19. Do you believe the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program can help with these changes?

N/A

Yes

Don't know

Yes

20. What changes would you like to see made to the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

Don't know

Don't know

Don't know

Don't know

Appendix C
Interview Responses of Parents

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Parent Questionnaire

Date of Meeting Composite
Program -----

1. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?

- 4 years
- 13 years
- Since May 1998
- 7 years
- 3 years
- 5 years
- 22 years
- 6 years

2. In general, in the past two years, would you say this neighborhood has become a better place to live, a worse place to live, or stayed about the same?

- About the same
- The same
- Some things are better; some things are the same.
- About the same
- Better
- The same
- Better
- Same

3. How many of your children are participating in activities offered through the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

- 2
- 2 – ages 7 and 11
- 1 – age 6
- 1 – age 9
- 2 – ages 7 and 5
- 1
- 2
- 1

4. Do you believe the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has made a positive difference in your community?

- Yes, because of the parenting classes and the education offered.
- Yes, the kids have something to do.
- Yes
- Yes, because it has helped kids.
- Yes, it gives the kids something to do and the kids enjoy the activities.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, children are learning more.

5. In your community, has the Community Youth Development Program had a positive impact on the following?

Gangs (Explain) -

- Don't know
- No
- Not necessarily
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Yes
- No gang activity; city working on it.
- Not really

Drugs (Explain) -

- The same presently as in the past (No change)
- No
- Yes; because it gives kids something to do.
- Don't know
- Don't see changes
- No
- Yes
- Not aware

Juvenile Delinquency (Explain) -

- Graffiti and vandalism decreased
- No
- My child's age group is not involved in crime, they are too young.
- Don't know
- Don't know
- N/A
- No graffiti
- Same

6. The goal of the Community Youth Development Program is to reduce juvenile crime in communities; has the program accomplished its goal in this community?

- Yes, but will see the impact more in the future.
- Not in this area.
- Not gymnastics program, but other programs.
- Yes, but it depends on the parents.
- Yes, but it could be due to more cops in the area.
- Yes
- Yes; do not see kids skipping school or fighting as much. There has been an improvement in the community.
- Yes; problem has not worsened.

7. Why do you think the Community Youth Development Program has been effective or ineffective in your community?

Because of the low-income area, this program offers services that have not been available.

Ineffective, because more activities needed for boys.

No comment

Because of parents

Kids would be at home watching television.

I see changes in my child. My 5-year old child communicates better.

Effective – the program is making a difference.

Effective – children enjoy the activities.

8. What changes have you noticed in your children, since their participation in the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

More outgoing; better communication and problem-solving skills. Can now label their feelings – not as physical when angry.

Children only participating for 5 weeks

Keeps her motivated in school, because if she doesn't do well in school, she does not get to participate in gymnastics.

No changes

More involved and active. Excited to participate in different activities.

Child communicates better.

My children did not like the karate program, so I do not know.

Behavior has improved.

9. Do you believe the program should be continued?

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

10. What changes would you like to see made to the Community Youth Development Program?

More training for staff. More structured activities for children under the age of two. Some activities do not start until the child is age five, would like to see more activities for younger children.

More community outreach informing community residents of the program.

No changes in CYD. City of Austin doing their part to keep up the community. Example: cutting the grass.

Kids should be home at 10:00 at night. Basketball and football programs for middle school boys, to keep them from hanging out.

None

More help and volunteers. More time for activities. Staff to have help with the paperwork.

None

Would like to see a golf and tennis program.

More activities for young children. Children under age 5 want activities.

Appendix D
Interview Responses of Teachers

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Teacher Questionnaire

Date of Meeting Composite

School Houston and Widen Elementary Schools

1. How long have you been teaching at this school?

11 years (Curriculum Specialist)

4 years

1 year

8 years

5 years

2. Is there a problem with gang activity or drugs in the school?

No, but in the neighborhood. Has decreased over the years.

Graffiti has decreased.

No; some family members in gangs.

No

3. Do you believe the students feel safe at school?

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

4. Have any of your students talked to you about feeling unsafe in their community?

Yes – family violence (small percentage)

Not in particular. Kids in general do not feel unsafe. Better this year.

No, but they have talked about hearing gunshots.

5. What do you know about the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

Teaching activities

Grant

Reduce violence in neighborhood or latch-key kids

6. What service are you providing under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

After-school activities

Teaching photo album

Teaching board games

After-school program for one hour (Monday through Thursday)

7. Since the inception of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, have you noticed any changes in the students' behavior?

Kids want to be in classes. Interest of parents and children have increased. Before after-school program, kids got into trouble (better now).

Parents are really involved and gaining confidence. The after-school program is an employment opportunity for parents who help with the program.

Not in student behavior, but in community behavior. Parents more involved.

Not here long enough to know.

The students are excited about the program. Morale has increased.

8. **Since the inception of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, have you noticed any changes in the students' grades?**

Don't know

Don't know

Don't know, school is offering different programs.

Some aspect of the program has helped their grades. Indirectly affects them on the TAAS Test (improved TAAS performance).

9. **The goal of the Community Youth Development Program is to reduce juvenile crime in communities; do you believe the program has been effective in achieving the stated goal?**

Yes, no violence. Since 78744, see kids more involved in positive activities. More of a community atmosphere.

Yes

Working towards it

In the long run, yes. Gets kids involved at an earlier age. Building on interests and talents.

10. **Due to the Community Youth Development Program, have you noticed any changes in the community?**

More stable community.

Yes

More parent involvement. Parents are checking on children.

11. **Do you believe the program should be continued?**

Yes

Yes

Yes

12. **If you could make two changes to the Community Youth Development Program, what would they be?**

More support for parents (i.e., glasses, dental, health issues). Community support type services (i.e., immigration).

CYD staff (teachers) compensated more, either by time or money.

Continue kids attending.

Lessening responsibilities of direct staff on administrative duties. Assistant to help with clerical duties.

Principals to use assistant to help with coordination of program. More of a school-wide approach.

Teachers provided with assistance with after-school program.

Appendix E
Interview Responses of Principals

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Principal Questionnaire

Date of Meeting _____

School Composite

1. How long have you been working at this school?

5 years

5 years

1 year

1 year

2. Is there a problem with gang activity, violence, or drugs in the school?

In the past had problems. Presently, number of fights decreased.

Mild

Gang membership, but no gang activity at the school. Drugs a problem.

True of every single high school in the state.

3. Do you believe the students feel safe at school?

Yes. Did a survey with students two years ago -- they felt unsafe in hallway and cafeteria. Last year, survey revealed more students now feel safe in entire school.

Yes

Yes

Largely

4. Have any of your students talked to you about feeling unsafe in their community?

With counselor, they have discussed domestic problems. No one afraid to live in neighborhood.

Probably to counselors -- small percentage

Not unsafe. This is our way of life and do not understand why.

No; this principal does not handle discipline. Areas of concern in neighborhoods.

5. What do you know about the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

78744 grant

Money for after-school program

Nothing. Heard a little about it.

Very little. Had a presentation last week on the project presented by City of Austin CYD staff.

6. Since the inception of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, have you noticed any changes in the students' behavior?

Can't attribute all to 78744 grant. Kids and adults more polite. School using resources from other foundations for various programs.

Not CYD-related

Not sure. Know some children participate. Heard positive feedback.

7. The goal of the Community Youth Development Program is to reduce juvenile crime in communities; do you believe the program has been effective in achieving the stated goal?
Some, not all changes due to CYD. School doing a lot to deter juvenile crime.
Hard to answer. Not a positive or negative impact.
Community residents believe an improvement.

8. Due to the Community Youth Development Program, have you noticed any changes in the community?
No comment
No comment
About the same. No changes.

9. If you could make two changes to the Community Youth Development Program, what would they be?
Get parents involved in the schools. Parent component needed.
Parent education – example: Literacy groups during the day.
More recognition for the teachers working with after-school program.

Help or support for the teachers, due to the multiple CYD-related tasks.
Maybe offer after-school services at central location.

No comment

Appendix F
Interview Responses of Law Enforcement

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Law Enforcement Questionnaire

Date of Meeting Composite

Department Austin Independent School District

1. Are you aware of any problems in the schools in the Dove Springs area?

Not really. Dove Springs' bad reputation is old.

There is a steady flow of disputes in the streets – away from the schools.

2. Since the inception of the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program, have you noticed any changes in the community?

Since 92-93, things have improved.

Gang membership for middle school students has decreased, due to aggressive enforcement of school policies.

3. Which juvenile criminal activities are you encountering in the targeted community on a regular basis?

Narcotics, fights, assaults. No major problem. Same as any other community.

Class C misdemeanors – fighting, profanity towards adults, assaults.

4. Do you believe the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program has been effective?

Don't know

Not aware of the services. Have not heard of kids participating in the program.

5. What changes would you like to see in the targeted community?

City of Austin provide same attention as other parts of the city.

More people taking care of property.

More action on junk cars sitting around.

Parents must be more involved and interested in the details regarding their child's behavior.

Appendix G
Interview Responses of City of Austin CYD Staff

Southwest Austin Community Youth Development Program

City of Austin CYD Staff Questionnaire

Date Composite

1. How long have you worked with the Southwest Austin Community Youth Development Program?

Three years

Since the beginning of the program

2. What is your role within the Southwest Austin Community Youth Development Program?

Administrative Assistant

Work with service providers

3. Does the Southwest Austin Community Youth Development Program offer services for all neighborhoods located within the 78744 zip code?

Yes

Yes; the programs are available to all youth who reside or attend school in 78744.

4. What activities/services are offered under the Southwest Community Youth Development Program?

Mentoring; Recreational; Crime Prevention – first time offenders required to do restitution. Afterschool tutoring program; Computer training program for parents and youths. Summer employment programs for youth. Parenting classes.

Various services

5. In the past year, do you think the number of CYD participants increased, decreased, or remained the same when compared to the prior year?

Increased

Remained the same, because of the new reporting system implemented by PRS.

6. Is there still a problem with juvenile crime in the community?

Yes. Still need to expand services in the community.

Yes. It has been reduced. Graffiti has been reduced.

7. On a scale of 1 to 10, how involved is the local Steering Committee in programmatic decisions?

Steering Committee helps with RFP. They decide on which programs to fund. They are an advisory committee. Aware of all programmatic decisions.

8 – They understand the community.

8. Do you believe the Southwest Austin Community Youth Development Program has made a positive difference in the community?

Yes

Opportunities are now available that were not there.

9. Why do you think the Community Youth Development Program has been effective or ineffective in the community?

Providing more educational activities for the kids.

Services offered during non-school hours.

Effective – provides alternative to juvenile delinquency. Example: Summer program, previously funds were limited, now CYD funds have expanded services.

10. What changes would you like to see made to the Community Youth Development Program?

More funds.

More activities for teenagers, especially high school students.

Appendix H
Interview Responses of Service Providers

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Service Provider Questionnaire

Provider Composite
Program -----

Date of Meeting -----

1. What services do you provide to Community Youth Development participants?

Life Skills Academy – Develop skills in children for them to be successful. Career seminars and a career fair are provided.

Youth Advisory Committee – serves as the voice of the youth of the community.

After-school program at Widen, Houston, Langford, and Rodriguez (elementary schools). Family Computing at Mendez Middle School, and summer camps for elementary students.

Recreation

2. When are services provided?

Life Skills – Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 to 5:30.

Youth Advisory Committee – every two weeks for 1-2 hours.

After school (2-4 days per week).

Different days

3. Where are services provided?

River City Youth Foundation Success Center

Youth Advisory Committee – Green Slopes Apartments

Schools in targeted area

Dove Springs Recreation Center

4. What age group(s) do you target?

12-17

Under age of 17

6-18

5. What is the overall goal of your individual program?

Support the youth of the community.

School used to meet community needs. School serves as Center for neighborhood activity.

Provide something for the kids to do.

6. How has the community been notified of your services?

Career fair. Canvassing the community. Collaboration meetings with service providers in the community. Outreach to the schools – Akins High School and Mendez Middle School. Flyers distributed around neighborhood.

Through flyers given to elementary school children. Brochures in Southeast Austin Public Library. Neighborhood meetings and events.

Flyers sent to schools, and advertised in newspaper.

- 7. Since the implementation of your CYD services, have you seen the number of participants increase, decrease, or remain the same?**

Increase

After-school program – increased

Summer program – decreased, community awareness was done late.

Increased. Word is out. Siblings now participating.

- 8. Are parents involved in any of your CYD services?**

Yes. Parents involved. Parents are required to spend 2 hours per month at the Center.

Yes. Eligible parents served under Family Computing. Hiring parents to serve as teachers. Also, some parents serve as volunteers in the schools.

Parents stay with children while they participate in services.

- 9. Have you experienced any problems with gang activity in the last two years?**

No

No

No; gang problems have been reduced.

- 10. Do you know if any of your CYD participants (youths) have continued to have problems with delinquent behavior?**

Yes, some have been arrested.

Parents believe their kids' behavior improved. Teachers have stated some youths performing better in the classroom.

No; behavior has improved and communication skills improved.

- 11. The goal of the Community Youth Development program is to reduce juvenile crime in communities; has the program accomplished its goal in this community?**

Yes, crime has decreased. But, more needed to attract at-risk youth. It is prevention in nature.

It has had a definite impact; opened up a lot of opportunities that were not there before. The community has more resources. This program was the first step.

Yes; juvenile crime rate has decreased.

- 12. What impact has the Community Youth Development Program had on the targeted community?**

Exposed community to opportunities that were not there before. Given opportunities to people that were not there before. Some kids, who were not involved in services before, now have opportunities.

Positive impact in the community.

Participation of youth in activities. Families have limited resources – CYD allows for more families to attend activities.

13. Do you believe the program should be continued?

Yes

Definitely. Safe place for kids to be after school. The program enriches their lives. Allows kids to participate in constructive activities.

Yes

14. What changes would you like to see made to the Community Youth Development Program?

Reporting mechanism. PRS can do a better job of the registration process. Cannot get accurate number of program participants. Discrepancy in reporting and registration process for the different programs. Data collection is inaccurate and inefficient. Reporting process very time consuming.

Paperwork (reporting requirements). Better reporting system needed.

Reporting requirements

15. What changes would you like to see in the targeted community?

More emphasis on literacy projects: Multi-generational projects for Hispanics and African-Americans. Improve the people of the community. Ensure services are based on needs of the community.

More family-oriented activities. Expanding services to single adults in targeted community – Example: computer classes.

Expand our base. Add soccer programs. Target more of the youth in the area.

Appendix I
Interview Responses of Steering Committee

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Steering Committee Questionnaire

Date of Meeting Composite

1. How long have you lived in the 78744 community?

Since 1980

Since 1992

15 years

21 years

2. How long have you been on the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Steering Committee?

2 years

Since the beginning

Little under a year

2-3 years

3. Do you believe the services offered under the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program are meeting the needs of the community?

Yes – services are needed. Throughout the city of Austin there is juvenile crime. Juvenile crime is picking up in the area.

Not all of the needs. We have done a lot. Need more volunteers. Still more work to be done. Need to address emotional and health needs of community residents.

Yes

Some of the needs. More demands than money.

4. What difference has the program made in your community?

It has helped. Not been able to get good numbers from programs. Looking to get better information next year.

The money has allowed the community to do some things. The community would have done some of the things anyway.

Lack of graffiti. Lack of crime I have seen.

It uses up kids' time. Keeps them in organized activities. For example, Neighborhood Conference Committee provides an alternative for kids to get on the right track.

5. Has the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program reduced juvenile crime in the targeted community?

Don't know. Helped the kids, but can't say we saved kids from going into crime. Keeping the kids busy to prevent them from getting into trouble.

Do not know. Graffiti has been reduced. Vandalism not as evident. Bureaucracy slows down the process. We have asked for comparative data. The environment has changed. The community is cleaner and more activities for children.

Yes

Don't know. Would like to know the answer to this question. A lot of kids in the area, and CYD funds not able to meet all the needs. There are a lot of factors that affect crime rate.

6. Why do you think the Community Youth Development Program has been effective or ineffective in the community?

Effective - Doing something that has never been done before. Keeping kids out of trouble.

Effective - The Steering Committee members are involved in community issues. Educational programs are a component. The varied background of Steering Committee members. Steering Committee meets at least once a month, if needed, more often.

Effective – More to offer the kids through the different programs (i.e., recreation center, after-school programs, summer program).

Effective – Diversion of activities.

7. If you could change two things about the Community Youth Development Program, what would they be?

Not sure. Better track of numbers. Steering Committee to have more authority.

More diversity in Steering Committee membership. Stronger youth leadership component.

Increase the recreational program. Expand after-school program to include higher education component.

Not have a governmental entity serve as fiscal agent. Governmental entity does not have the means at hand to meet the needs of the community.

Conflict of interest standard established by PRS, it is more stringent than State Ethics Commission. PRS should obtain input from Steering Committee when proposing new rules and/or policies.

Appendix J
Direct Observations

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/10/01
Time 3:50 p.m. – 3:55 p.m.

Location: Houston Elementary School

Activity Observed: Sign Language Class

Number of Participants:

Females - 7

Males – 6

General Attitude of Participants:

Participating in the class

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

Yes; one teacher

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Teacher and students interacting

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

After-school activity for children.

Children really seem to be interested in the class.

Class is from 3-4 p.m.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/10/01
Time 3:40 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Location: Houston Elementary School

Activity Observed: Photo Album Class

Number of Participants:

Females - 11

Males – 2

General Attitude of Participants:

Happy – enjoying the class

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

Yes; one teacher

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Teacher helping students

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

After-school activity for children.

Children seem to enjoy the class.

Class is from 3-4 p.m.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/10/01
Time 3:45 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.

Location: Houston Elementary School

Activity Observed: Board Games

Number of Participants:

Females - 4
Males – 8

General Attitude of Participants:
Playing board games

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:
Yes; one teacher

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:
Teacher playing board game with some of the students

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:
None
Children well-behaved

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?
After-school activity for children.
Playing together with no problems noted.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/10/01
Time 3:30 p.m. – 3:35 p.m.

Location: Houston Elementary School

Activity Observed: Recreation

Number of Participants:

Females - 6
Males – 17

General Attitude of Participants:
Having fun

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:
Yes; one teacher

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:
Good

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:
None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?
After-school activity for children.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/11/01
Time 3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Location: Widen Elementary School

Activity Observed: Hip-Hop Class

Number of Participants:

Females - 11

Males – 6

General Attitude of Participants:

Interested in class

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

Yes; one parent volunteer

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Good

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

After-school activity for children.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/11/01
Time 3:45 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.

Location: Widen Elementary School

Activity Observed: Computer class. Kids learning Studio Deluxe

Number of Participants:

Females - 7

Males – 14

Program for children in grades third through fifth.

General Attitude of Participants:

Interested

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

Yes; one teacher

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Good

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

Learning computer skills

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider River City Youth Foundation
Program Youth Advisory Committee

Date 10/11/01
Time 7:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

Location: River City Youth Foundation Success Center

Activity Observed: Youth Advisory Committee meeting for Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Number of Participants:

Females - 5
Males - 4
Total of nine participants

General Attitude of Participants:
Involved in planning meeting

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:
Yes; one facilitator (staff)

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:
Good. Staff person appears to have a good relationship with youth.

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:
None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?
Planning activities for CYD program.
Planning youth leadership training.
Teaching youth how to lead.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Program Recreation

Date 10/13/01

Time 10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Dove Springs Recreation Center

Activity Observed: Gymnastics; class is from 10-11 on Saturdays

Number of Participants:

Females - 6

Males - 1

All under the age of 12

General Attitude of Participants:

Excited about gymnastics.

Seemed to be very interested in the activity

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

Yes; one instructor

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Good

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

Something for the kids to do.

Learning gymnastics.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department
Program Karate

Date 10/4/01
Time 6:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Location: Dove Springs Recreation Center (very nice facility)

Activity Observed: Karate Class; 2-hour class

Number of Participants:

Females - 9

Males – 21

Parents and children attend class together.

General Attitude of Participants:

Very interested in the class

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

2 karate instructors; adequate

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Good

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

Activity for the kids to participate in after school.

Kids seem to be very interested in the class.

11 parents present for children participating in class.

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Direct Observations

Provider Austin Independent School District
Program After-School Program

Date 10/10/01
Time 4:15 p.m. – 4:20 p.m.

Location: Houston Elementary School

Activity Observed: Sewing Class

Number of Participants:

Females - 14

Males – 3

General Attitude of Participants:

Good

Adequate Staff for Number of Participants:

2 parents

Interaction Between Staff and Participants:

Helping students with sewing

Any Disciplinary Problems Observed:

None

How does the activity seem to benefit participants and accomplish goal of CYD Program?

After-school activity for children.

Appendix K
Focus Group

Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program

Youth Questionnaire

Provider Focus Group
Program -----

Date of Meeting 10/11/2001

7 youths present: 2 males and 5 females

1. How old are you?

15
14
14
15
13
12
15

2. What school do you attend?

Travis High School – 3
Akins High School – 2
Mendez Middle School - 2

3. Do you live in a house or an apartment?

This question was not asked of the group.

4. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?

Drugs are a problem.

5. Do you feel safe at school?

Not in classroom. Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't. There is fighting in the school. Administrators keep things from students.

6. How long have you been receiving services through the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

1 year; 7 months; 1 ½ years; 1 year; 4-5 months; 4-5 months; 5 months

7. What would you be doing with your time if you were not attending this program?

Working; babysitting; watching television and eating; talking on the telephone; trying to find something to do.

8. As a result of this program, do you see any changes in yourself?

More involved with community
Better working in groups
More patient and understanding
Patient and calm
Listen more to others
Not rude
Learned computers
Talk more with kids

Decreased use of profanity

9. What difference has the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program made in your community?

Gives kids something to do. Place to come as safe haven. Has helped young kids, and helped with community services.

10. In your community, has the Community Youth Development Program had a positive impact on the following?

Gangs (Explain) -

Kids in the program not in gangs. This is a safe haven.

Drugs (Explain) -

Program offers session on drug use. Mostly elementary school kids in program. Not a lot of high school students attending services offered through the CYD Program.

Juvenile Delinquency (Explain) -

Mostly kids 6-12 years of age participating.

11. Do you have any siblings participating in the Community Youth Development Program?

This question was not asked of the group.

12. Are any of your close neighbors attending this program with you?

This question was not asked of the group.

13. Before your participation in CYD, were you ever in trouble with law enforcement?

This question was not asked of the group.

14. Since your participation in CYD, have you had any problems with law enforcement?

This question was not asked of the group.

15. Since your participation in CYD, have you noticed a difference in your school grades?

Grades the same – 6 youths

Better – 1 youth

Homework being done

16. What do you enjoy most about the program you are attending?

Fun; knowing you can help little kids; interaction; learning computer skills; learning new language; computers; and food.

17. The goal of the Community Youth Development Program is to reduce juvenile crime in communities; has the program accomplished its goal in this community?

Program does not stop fighting. Younger children will be prevented from getting involved in crime.

18. What changes would you like to see in your community?

Better houses; respect by police; homeless people rate changed; less kidnapping and sexual assault; less violence; stop being approached to buy drugs; and more job opportunities.

19. Do you believe the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program can help with these changes?

Yes, with a little effort. Inform children so that they are safe from drug dealers and sexual predators.

20. What changes would you like to see made to the Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Program?

Teen outreach program. More computers. More people in the youth advisory group and recognition. Offer the children something in return for their participation in the program.