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**AN ACCOUNTING PLAN FOR JUVENILE PROBATION**

**W. K. Giesecke and Irvin Ramseier**

The authors are members of the staff of the California Bureau of Criminal Statistics. Mr. Giesecke is a Research Technician and directly in charge of the juvenile probation project which is discussed in the following article. Mr. Ramseier is the Statistician in charge of the Youth Authority section of the Bureau, and the juvenile probation project was developed in this section under the auspices of the California Youth Authority.

This article has been received from Mr. Ronald H. Beattie, Chief of the California Bureau of Criminal Statistics.—EDITOR.

The almost complete lack of uniform, accurate information relating to the work of juvenile courts and juvenile probation departments has been a matter of general concern for many years. To a large extent, this situation results from the fact that the main objective in establishing juvenile courts and in developing related juvenile services was to provide for the handling of child-behavior problems in an informal and confidential manner. Youths accused of delinquencies are usually not charged with specific criminal offenses as are adults, and their alleged atypical behavior is often cloaked in such general and indefinite terms as "incorrigible," "beyond control," or "wayward," etc. Furthermore, there has been an extension of the jurisdiction and service originally attached to the juvenile courts so that many children having only welfare or dependency problems are now handled by courts and probation departments. Instead of an attempt being made to identify and segregate those particular cases coming before the departments for delinquent acts, there has been a tendency otherwise to refrain from originally citing children for specific offenses or from rendering explicit adjudications of delinquency. The merging of delinquency and dependency jurisdiction and a reluctance to establish official court histories have given rise to a certain amount of preliminary or "informal" probation—the investigation and treatment of some children by probation departments without appearances in court. It is sometimes difficult to determine with what degree of authority certain dispositions are made.

The need for accurate knowledge relating to juvenile delinquency and to the responsible administrative work carried on by courts and probation departments is evident. Any person or agency engaged in attempts to collect statistical information is constantly asked for facts which might indicate a trend of growth or decline in juvenile delin-

quency. Proposals for modifying or extending juvenile court jurisdiction or for establishing new procedures or additional probation services should always be considered in the light of existing operations. All too frequently, little reliable information is available to provide a comprehensive accounting for cases handled and variously disposed of by courts and probation departments.

The development of statistical accounting procedures in the field of crime or adult delinquency has made much greater progress than in the field of juvenile delinquency. This is to be expected from the very fact that criminal offenses are specifically defined by statute, that prosecution and court procedure is prescribed within each state in detail, and that the court records readily can supply the needed information to show what offenses adult defendants were charged with and exactly what final dispositions were made of such charges. Uniform offense classifications are available and uniform methods have been devised for classifying dispositions of criminal cases. As a result, various states and jurisdictions account rather accurately for the criminal prosecutions and dispositions of more serious or felony cases. It must be said that, on the whole, relatively few states have supported a state-wide accounting for adult-criminal cases; but the methods and procedures for making such an accounting have been fairly well established and tested in a good many surveys and projects over the past twenty years.

#### PILOT JUVENILE PROBATION STUDY IN CALIFORNIA

In California, the responsibility for collecting criminal statistics has been centralized since 1945 in a bureau within the Department of Justice. In addition to the services performed for the parent department, the Bureau of Criminal Statistics also serves the Department of Corrections and the California Youth Authority. As a necessary aid to proper administrative control, separate and progressive statistical systems are maintained by the Bureau to reflect in considerable detail the operations of the above two agencies. These systems, with common basic objectives, provide each agency with accurate and current information concerning offenders who are residents of any correctional institution or who are on parole. Also, information is readily available concerning those offenders who have been either admitted to an institution, released on parole, returned from parole, or who have been discharged during any given period of time.

In 1947, a pilot study was inaugurated by the Bureau in an attempt to collect data relating to the operation of juvenile divisions of certain

probation departments and of juvenile courts, and to record some of the basic characteristics and background information concerning the children involved. It was realized that this was an ambitious project, particularly because of its encroachment into the juvenile field where conflicting and fluctuating philosophies gave forewarning that specific definitions and rigid outlines of procedure would be difficult to formulate. However, a particular interest in developing uniform probation statistics was expressed by the newly created California Youth Authority and by officers in several of the more highly developed probation departments throughout the State. In response to this interest, a pilot program was initiated with the voluntary cooperation of the locally administered probation departments of six counties. Within a year-and-a-half following the inauguration of the program, the number of participating departments was increased to nineteen. Further extension of the program was for a time delayed until a major revision of reporting method was adapted to the operation of each participating department. Recently, a few additional counties have been included in the project. It now appears that, by the end of 1953, about thirty-five of the fifty-eight county probation departments will be cooperating in the statistical program.

The original reporting system which was tried provided for the submission of an initial report sheet for each juvenile referred to a probation department. In the original planning, the probation departments were selected as the best probable sources of more comprehensive information, for it was considered desirable to procure data for those cases which are screened out by these agencies without receiving official juvenile court consideration. From the initial case reports, two separate and distinguishable series of records were prepared by the Bureau on cards adapted for machine handling. Cards in one series were accumulated and retained unchanged to supply data pertaining to new cases referred during each quarterly period. From the other, a "processing" or "active" file of cards, listings of each officer's cases were prepared and submitted quarterly to the departments participating in the reporting project. To these listings, the probation officers posted changes that might have occurred in the status or placement of their respective cases. The listings were then returned to the Bureau to be used as a guide in further revising the active card file so as to approximately reflect a quarter's-end situation.

For a number of reasons, certain changes in the initial reporting method were desirable. One major handicap was that the method of case-accounting through correction of separate officer listings proved to

be laborious and inefficient. Also, infrequent revision of the files left many status changes entirely unaccounted for. From data obtained, it was not possible to trace systematically the internal movement of cases variously processed by the several departments. Similarly, cases receiving a specific type of procedural handling could not be identified nor described. In seeking more complete procedural data, a necessary first step was to establish fundamental status groups into which all cases active with probation departments might be uniformly classified. After these somewhat arbitrary groupings were established, a method was devised for currently reporting and systematically recording each status change as it occurred.

#### REVISED ACCOUNTING PLAN FOR JUVENILE PROBATION

The principal features of the juvenile probation reporting program now in operation are briefly described below.

1. *Classification of Active Cases by Status Groupings.* Four status groupings were established to include all cases active with a juvenile probation department. The groupings are outlined to describe separately (a) those cases awaiting an initial intake determination, (b) cases under informal (unofficial or voluntary) supervision, (c) cases pending an initial juvenile court adjudication, and (d) cases in which wardship is declared. The "intake" status includes cases in which an initial investigation is in process, and this status prevails from the time of referral until a dismissal is granted, a petition seeking juvenile court action is filed, or informal supervision is assumed.

The informal status group includes those children who are supervised by the probation officer without official court directive. Such procedure is not uncommon throughout the United States and may account for a substantial portion of a total case load, although little or no data generally are available on these cases. In California, informal supervision may be legally assumed by a probation officer with the consent of parents. The informal status group excludes by definition those cases which have received official court attention and those in which petitions have been filed. The informal status is terminated by the filing of a petition, or by dismissal.

The "pending court" category includes those cases in which initial petitions or certifications have been filed, but which have not received specific adjudications. Adjudications result usually in the dismissal of a petition, in the transfer of a case to another county, in the remanding of a case to superior court, or in the declaration of wardship. When

wardship is declared, the fourth and final active status is attained. This status includes those cases in which the allegations set forth in petitions have been sustained and which are thereby continued under the official jurisdiction of the juvenile court. The wardship status exists until eventual dismissal of the sustained petition by the juvenile court, or until a case is remanded to the superior court. Although juveniles committed to the California Youth Authority are technically continued as wards of the committing juvenile courts, each ward's active probation status is considered to be terminated upon arrival at a State institution. In practice, these commitments are then accounted for within the framework of a separate statistical system previously mentioned in this article.

2. *Case Reporting.* Two principal report forms are provided by the central agency for the submission of information relating to juvenile cases. The first of these forms, which may be termed an initial unit report, is usually submitted to the Bureau within a few days after the referral of a juvenile. A separate initial report is required for each child referred to a probation department. Included in the initial report are the name, sex, birthplace, birthdate, race, and area of residence of a child. Also, the date of referral, the reason for referral, and the source of referral are entered in the initial report. Specific instructions were issued requesting the inclusion of a statement of the immediate reason or reasons given by the referring agency for bringing a child to the attention of the probation department. For administrative purposes, it seems preferable that this more definite data be collected rather than information based on necessarily subjective appraisals of varying causative factors which might collectively have a bearing on a particular juvenile referral.

Two features of the initial report form are noteworthy. The first pertains to the size and substance of the report document itself. The letter-sized sheet originally utilized as a schedule has been replaced by a heavier, 8 x 5-inch report card. This document can be used by the Bureau both as a file card, to which chronological postings can be made, and as a basic schedule. The cards are of such composition that carbon duplicates, if desired for local use, can be prepared with a minimum of additional effort.

The other singular feature of the initial report form is that it provides for the reporting of only an intake disposition. Ordinarily, such dispositions are determined within a few days after cases are referred. However, provision is made for the prompt submission of reports for those cases in which it appears that definite intake dispositions will not

be immediately forthcoming. This provision makes possible the timely recording of all new cases in their actual process period regardless of whether or not the eventual courses of action are summarily determined.

The second basic report form is employed to advise the Bureau of any change in the probation status of a juvenile case. The form is flexible to the extent that either a single change or a multiple progression can be indicated in one report. Reports of status changes are completed by the simple expedient of checking one applicable item in each of several complementary series of disposition enumerations. Any disagreement between checked items is readily apparent, and reports having discrepancies can be expeditiously returned so that officers originating the reports can properly clarify them.

Reproductions of the report forms are on the two following pages.

### 3. *Preparation by the Bureau of Summaries, Listings, and Reports.*

At the end of each quarterly period, summaries of case activities are prepared by the Bureau and submitted to the respective county probation departments. These summaries are merely condensed statements showing the number of new cases received in a department, the number of releases occurring at each procedural phase of the operation, and the number of cases changing active status during the three-month period. In addition to the summaries, listings are prepared of all cases active at the end of a report period, and included in the listings are certain basic data relating to each case. These listings, in alphabetical order according to name, may be used by the local department for reconciling the case count maintained by the Bureau with that recorded by the county agency. Duplicate copies of the alphabetical listings are retained by the Bureau in the event that recourse to them becomes necessary to discover the nature of a possible accounting error which cannot be more directly ascertained.

For the purpose of facilitating periodic case-load review, listings are now prepared for the majority of participating departments which provide separate rosters of cases assigned to different deputy probation officers. In order that these listings may be prepared so as to reflect current case assignments, reports of individual case transfers between deputies are systematically reported to the Bureau.

Periodically, reports of an analytical nature have been prepared by the Bureau. In the presentation of data, emphasis has been placed on four major groups as differentiated according to the reasons for referral of juvenile cases. These groups include (a) those children who were referred for committing delinquent acts which constitute specific law

PROBATION OFFICER'S STATISTICAL REPORT—JUVENILE

A. COUNTY		AREA No.		CASE No.		DATE REFERRED	
NAME		N.C.		RACE		1. White 2. Mexican 3. Negro 4. Other (specify)	
ADDRESS		PHONE		BIRTHDAY		Mo. Day Yr.	
SEX		BIRTHPLACE (State)		M.I.		First	
1. Male 2. Female							
B. REASON FOR REFERRAL: (Brief Statement)							

C. OFFICER No.		H. LENGTH of RESIDENCE		I. INTAKE DISPOSITION		J. ACTION DATE	
D. REFERRED BY		IN COUNTY		CASE CLOSED		K. STATUS	
1. Law Enforc. Agcy.		months		1. Dism. Alt. Investigation			
2. School		years		2. Closed-Ref. Other Co. Agcy.			
3. Par. or Relatives		IN STATE		3. Closed-Ref. Out-of-Co. Agcy.			
4. Priv. Agcy.		months		4. Closed-Ref. Y.A.			
5. Co. Wall, Dept.		years		CASE ACTIVE			
E. PREV. PROB. DEPT. REFERRAL				0. Await P.O. Action			
0. None				5. Informal Sup.			
1. One				6. Petition filed			
2. Two							
3. Three							
4. Four							
5. Five or More							
F. LIVING WITH							
1. Both Parents							
2. Mother Only							
3. Father Only							
4. Mo. & Stepfa.							
5. Fo & Stepmo.							
6. Other Rel.							
7. Bd. or Fost Home							
8. Ch. Care Inst.							
9. Indep. Liv. Arr.							
10. Elsewhere—specify							
REMARKS							

YA 116A

CHANGE OF STATUS IN JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

<b>I IDENTIFICATION</b>		NAME (Last Name First)	COUNTY
CASE NO.	REPORT DATE	OFFICER NO.	
<b>II PRIOR STATUS (Status last reported to Sacramento)</b>			
1	Awaiting Probation Dept. (Intake) Determination		
2	Under informal supervision		
3	Pending Juvenile Court action (Petition filed)		
4	Under formal supervision		
<b>III STATUS AFTER CHANGE</b>			
1	Case inactive; discharged; transferred; com. Y.A.; . . . .		
2	Under informal supervision		
3	Pending Juvenile Court action (Petition filed)		
4	Under formal supervision		
<b>IV TYPE OF REMOVAL FROM EACH STATUS DEPARTED</b>			
A	Removed from intake as of . . . . . 19 . . . . .	Removed from court status as of . . . . . 19 . . . . .	
1	Closed after initial investigation	Jurisdiction taken under 700 . . . . . 701 . . . . .	
2	Closed—referred to other agency in county	1 Case discharged	
3	Closed—referred to out-of-county agency	2 Petition withdrawn—case dismissed	
4	Closed—return of ward or parolee to Y.A.	3 Closed—transferred to other county	
5	Placed under informal supervision	4 Closed—child freed from parental control	
6	Petition filed	5 Closed—unfit for Juvenile Court	
		6 Committed to Youth Authority	
B	Removed from informal status as of . . . . . 19 . . . . .	7 Placed under formal supervision 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 0	
1	Supervision terminated		
2	Removed from county or deceased	D Removed from formal status as of . . . . . 19 . . . . .	
3	Petition filed (State Reason Under "Remarks")	1 Discharged	
<b>Remarks:</b>			
		2 Removed from county or deceased	
		3 Committed to Youth Authority	
		4 Remanded to Superior Court or adult jurisdiction	

violations, (b) those referred because of disapproved conduct of a non-specific nature, (c) those referred because of parental abuse, neglect, or non-support, and (d) those referred for routine traffic violations.

Thus far, analytical reports have been issued annually, and have contained similar information which is pertinent principally to the intake stage of the probation operation. However, the present statistical system entails the maintenance of six separate activity or "research" files for each county participating in the reporting project, and more varied source material is now available. Currently, an effort is being made to evolve a practical plan whereby the most significant of these more abundant data may be regularly and systematically reported.

Two statistical tables, with distributions for boys only, are presented to illustrate types of data which have been accumulated. These illustrative tables were prepared from information submitted during 1951 by the Alameda County Probation Department. Similar tables are available describing juvenile cases referred to participating departments in other California counties.

In Table I, a median (average) age of 15.3 years is shown both for the group of boys who were referred for specific offenses (law violations) and for the group reported for socially unacceptable acts gen-

TABLE I  
AGE OF BOYS AT TIME OF ORIGINAL REFERRAL TO ALAMEDA  
COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT DURING 1951,  
BY REASON FOR REFERRAL

Age in Years	Total	Specific Offenses	Delinquent Tendencies	Non- Delinquent	Traffic
Total .....	4,377	1,194	532	850	1,801
1 or less .....	97	—	—	97	—
2. ....	84	—	—	84	—
3. ....	62	—	—	62	—
4. ....	66	—	—	66	—
5. ....	66	—	—	66	—
6. ....	68	—	—	68	—
7. ....	43	—	—	43	—
8. ....	70	9	10	51	—
9. ....	89	24	14	51	—
10. ....	87	32	14	41	—
11. ....	97	33	15	49	—
12. ....	133	71	34	28	—
13. ....	200	131	40	26	3
14. ....	216	132	46	25	13
15. ....	359	188	100	24	47
16. ....	637	208	100	16	313
17. ....	1,103	194	95	21	793
18. ....	762	113	34	9	606
19. ....	61	28	9	3	21
20. ....	20	9	4	6	1
No information .....	57	22	17	14	4
Median Age .....	—	15.3	15.3	6.1	17.2

erally described in Table II as "delinquent tendencies." In contrast, a decidedly different probation problem is indicated by the much lower median age (slightly over 6 years) shown for the non-delinquent group of boys. Corresponding data have revealed a similar age variation between the delinquent and the non-delinquent groups of girls.

In Table II are distributions of the particular delinquencies for which boys were referred, according to the sources of reference. It may be seen that the preponderance of all delinquency referrals were originated by the various law enforcement agencies operating within the county. Further, of the 1,535 boys referred by law enforcement agencies for delinquent acts, about three-fourths (74.7 percent) were reported for specific law violations. Generally, smaller proportions of girls than of boys referred for delinquencies are cited for specific illegal acts.

TABLE II  
REASON FOR REFERRAL OF BOYS REPORTED TO THE ALMEDA  
COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT DURING 1951 FOR  
DELINQUENT ACTS, BY SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Reason for Referral	Total		Law Enforcement Agencies (Including Courts)		Schools		Parents or Relatives		Other		Unknown	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total .....	1,726	100.0	1,535	100.0	86	100.0	60	100.0	27	100.0	18	—
Specific Offenses..	1,194	69.2	1,147	74.7	10	11.6	4	6.7	21	77.8	12	—
Homicide ....	4	0.2	4	0.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Robbery .....	32	1.9	32	2.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Assault .....	57	3.3	57	3.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Burglary .....	257	14.9	252	16.4	3	3.5	—	—	—	—	2	—
Theft (except auto)	505	29.3	493	32.1	2	2.3	2	3.3	5	18.5	3	—
Theft (auto)..	207	12.0	197	12.8	3	3.5	—	—	4	14.8	3	—
Forgery .....	5	0.3	5	0.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rape .....	14	0.8	12	0.8	2	2.3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other sex ....	46	2.7	32	2.1	—	—	2	3.4	12	44.5	—	—
Narcotics and drugs .....	10	0.6	10	0.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Possession of weapons ....	11	0.6	11	0.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Drunk driving (traffic) ....	5	0.3	5	0.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hit-and-run (traffic) ....	11	0.6	8	0.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—
Other offenses.	30	1.7	29	1.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Delinquent Tendencies .....	532	30.8	388	25.3	76	88.4	56	93.3	6	22.2	6	—
Disorderly conduct ....	31	1.8	31	2.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Liquor .....	72	4.1	72	4.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vagrancy ....	31	1.8	29	1.9	—	—	1	1.7	—	—	1	—
Incorrigible, runaway, etc.	324	18.8	249	16.2	11	12.8	53	88.3	6	22.2	5	—
Truancy .....	74	4.3	7	0.5	65	75.6	2	3.3	—	—	—	—

## SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPMENT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY STATISTICS

Many of the difficulties encountered in establishing the reporting program outlined above have proved to be transient ones. This is particularly true of some of the problems relating to the mechanics of processing and submitting reports. In contrast to these technical reporting problems which are being resolved, however, are a number of involved problems of definition and classification for which no entirely adequate solutions appear imminent. A few of the complexities of two basic and persistent problems are briefly reviewed below.

In the establishment of the reporting program, a primary question requiring consideration was, "What is a case?". As in any statistical problem, it was essential that a uniform unit of count be initially established. For rather obvious reasons, it was assumed that "a case" should represent an individual child, and that family or group situations could not be considered as an acceptable unit of count. But this rather trite conclusion was not within itself sufficiently definitive. There are several plausible methods of counting individual children who might be officially confronted by a probation officer. First, a count of each contact with any child may be sought. An alternative method of counting would be to record once additionally each new face that appeared officially before any officer of a department during a given period of time—a year, for example. Although information based on counts as above would be pertinent to certain questions relating to work load or delinquency, the above concepts were not suitable for inclusion in a comprehensive accounting method for which there was an administrative need.

An exclusion feature in the arbitrary definition of a new case is particularly significant in the accounting scheme which was adopted. A new case was generally defined as representing any child who becomes the subject of an official interview or investigation as the result of an allegation of a particular delinquent act or dependency need, and who is not at the time of reference already a part of a department's active case roster. If the practice is followed of excluding from an intake count those children already under the official scrutiny of a department, then a related system of accounting can be applied to new cases received and to residual case load. For this count to be a completely consistent one, it is of course necessary that any child presented to a department for consideration be identifiable as representing a "new case" or a currently active problem. Large case volumes and case mobility in some of the larger probation departments make this identification difficult un-

less an efficient clerical-reception process is an integral part of the departmental operation.

A problem related to method of count is that pertaining to the type of juvenile matters which should properly be included. This determination is not a simple one. The juvenile probation function includes not only the customary supervisory duties and the responsibility for making investigations that are specifically requested by the courts, but the operation is also extended to embrace many unofficial and sometimes unrelated welfare activities and courtesy services. If eventual data are to be worthwhile, it is necessary to arbitrarily exclude from a basic count those reports which cover definitely extra-official consultant and advisory services.

Besides the questions of how to count cases and what to accept in this count, there is the further related task of classifying those cases which fall within a meaningful definition of a new referral. No attempts have been made by the Bureau to categorically describe certain children who appear in probation offices as "delinquents." Classification is made solely on the basis of the immediate delinquent act for which a child is referred to a probation department; and, if no delinquent act is cited, determination is made according to the stated nature of the abuse by parent or guardian. It was at first necessary to initiate a considerable amount of correspondence to elicit such information as would allow uniform and consistent determinations regarding the "original charge" as stated by the referring agency or individual. Currently, adequate information is routinely submitted in all but a few isolated instances.

A second major problem is that of classifying uniformly certain dispositions made by the juvenile courts. Since the proceedings in juvenile court matters are informal in nature, adjudications which result may be lacking in emphasis and subject to various interpretations. Dispositions which appear to be aimed at a common treatment device may be variously expressed in orders issued by the different courts.

Presumably, the framers of the Juvenile Court Law in California envisioned three general courses of positive action open to the juvenile courts in delinquency cases. One such course is that of finding a youth to be an unfit subject for consideration under the Juvenile Court Law, and the remanding of the juvenile for prosecution under the criminal law. Second, the allegations set forth in a petition upon which a hearing is based might be either sustained or denied, and the petition thereupon dismissed. Third, the allegations of a petition might be sustained by the court for the purpose of continuing its jurisdiction over a minor. Juven-

iles declared to be under the continuing jurisdiction of the court are referred to in the Juvenile Court Law as "wards" of the court. It would seem that the use of this term should facilitate the identification of cases attaining actual official probationary status. In practice, however, varying postponement devices employed by different courts seem to imply that some type of probation is also extended to certain juveniles who are explicitly not made wards of the court.

Some courts have evidenced a reluctance to definitely declare juveniles to be wards of the court even in instances where it is considered unwise to dismiss petitions drawn in their behalf. The reason commonly given for the issuance of somewhat indecisive orders reveals an existing situation which is at variance with one of the basic concepts embodied in the juvenile court idea. Theoretically, children brought before the juvenile court are neither charged with nor convicted of a crime, and ostensibly no stigma should be attached to a positive juvenile court finding. Actually, however, the proceedings are a matter of public record. Reference to these records is known to have resulted in discrimination against wards. So, for the purpose of protecting the record of a minor, the courts in some jurisdictions refrain from openly declaring an apparently fit subject to be a ward of the court.

The practice of indefinitely continuing certain matters is quite common among juvenile courts. The official record may show such cases as "continued without date," "continued generally," or "adjourned sine die." Variations in interpreting the degree of finality of such orders have given rise to basic differences in the statistical approaches which different governmental agencies have adopted.

It appears that one of the difficulties in the juvenile field is that there has been no wide spread experimentation with accounting procedures that might lead to uniform classifications and methods of recording statistically the work of the official agencies engaged in controlling juvenile delinquency. The experience gained in establishing the reporting project in California has given emphasis to the belief that experimentation and continuing inquiry are essential. Although the several courts and related agencies within a state are presumably operating under a common set of laws pertaining to juveniles, those laws are either flexible or uncontested to the extent that the particular interests and philosophies of individual administrators can be definitely woven into the pattern of a given operation. It is necessary, then, to attempt to recognize and reconcile the several facets of common but variously termed procedures before a meaningful, comprehensive program can be established and operated.

In the few years that the experimental work has been carried on in California, there seems to have been sufficient progress made to suggest that the method used can provide uniform comparable information relating to the cases or children that are handled by probation departments and juvenile courts. The earnest hope of those engaged in this project is that this experiment, together with others that may be tried in various other localities and states, will help to bring into being an acceptable uniform standard of accounting statistically for cases of juvenile delinquency.