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- ▶ Letter of Health Services Agency Administrator, Chief Probation Officer, and Human Resources Agency Administrator of January 18, 1999, regarding Residential Drug Treatment Needs of Adolescents
- ▶ Special Charge Report of January 22, 1999 from 1998/99 Grand Jury regarding “Drugs and Our Youth”



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY  
ADMINISTRATION

# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061  
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January 18, 1999

**AGENDA:** February 23, 1999

Board of Supervisors  
Santa Cruz County  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: **Report Back and Task Force Recommendations Regarding  
Residential Treatment Needs of Adolescents with Drug Problems**

Dear Board Members:

### **Background:**

In June of 1998, your Board heard testimony from community representatives regarding a drug crisis among local youth and the need to address the increasing use of hard drugs by young people. In response, the Board created a County High Risk Drug Task Force to develop recommendations regarding treatment needs of this population.

The Task Force sent a preliminary report to your Board in August of 1998. That report identified gaps in the local treatment continuum for youth and reviewed local and state data to better understand the local problem. From August through December, the Task Force worked with community groups and collected additional data to produce prioritized recommendations for your Board's consideration. The first phase of recommendations for service expansion and funding was sent to your Board on December 8, 1998.

On that date, your Board approved recommendations regarding an array of treatment services to be added or sustained during the current fiscal year. These services included 12 local Probation residential treatment beds, three beds at Si Se Puede for 16 and 17 year olds and maintaining the Youth Services Day Treatment program classrooms which had been scheduled to close due to Medi-Cal funding cuts. The Task Force is currently coordinating efforts to implement these recommendations. All three programs should be fully operational by May 30, 1999.

### Funding Options for New Services

The Task Force has also continued efforts to identify potential new funding sources for services. Possible funding sources include a Juvenile Challenge Grant from the Department of Corrections for which the Probation Department is applying: private foundation funding; and

potential Proposition 10 funds. These efforts will continue so that programs approved by your Board can be implemented with the smallest demand on County General Fund dollars. Attachment 1 of this letter lists and defines the various funding options being explored.

#### Program Recommendations

The planning activity and program recommendations which this Board letter addresses are primarily directed at youth not involved with the Criminal Justice System. Past policy and practice have attempted to move these young people who, for the most part, have not committed a crime, into treatment programs as soon as possible. However treatment choices have not included residential options accessible to this group. Currently available services include strong outpatient and day treatment programs linked to school sites, but no residential care for youth who are not in the criminal justice system.

In response to this service deficit, the Task Force recommends the development of ten voluntary residential treatment beds with a structured 7 day-per-week day treatment program, with an income-based share of cost to be paid by families. Funding for this combined residential day treatment program will be included in HSA's proposed FY 1999-2000 budget.

This recommendation is relatively modest in relation to the County's current needs. Many community members believe that more than ten voluntary beds are needed. However, with the availability of existing aftercare treatment services, the Task Force concluded that ten beds is an adequate level for initiating service in the coming year.

The Task Force recognizes that program "size" will be influenced by factors other than community needs.' The exact number of beds ultimately developed will be dependent to some extent on the nature of proposals received. Licensing rules favor facilities in the **six-to-eight-bed** range, so it is possible the final program configuration will be smaller or greater than the ten-bed planning estimate. It is also possible that the County could commit to using a portion of a larger facility (e.g., ten out of twelve beds, with the remaining two beds available to other counties or service funders).

Waiting lists and utilization will be closely monitored and assessed to determine if ten beds are sufficient for the longer term. In order to implement this recommendation, the Task Force recommends development of a Request For Proposals (RFP) process with selection of a provider occurring in the Spring of 1999. Final award of a service contract will be contingent on your Board's approval of the proposed 1999-2000 HSA budget which will include both proposed funding and expenditures. Program services could begin as early as Summer, 1999, but mid-Fall, 1999, is a more realistic start date.

The proposed 1999-2000 budget for this ten bed residential treatment program will include four different funding streams: AFDC-Foster Care, Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Medi-Cal, parent fees, and County General Funds. Each of these types of funding is defined in Attachment 1.

The chart below provides preliminary budget figures for the recommended treatment program. This budget is based upon a ten-bed facility, and will require adjustments if the number of beds varies from this planning estimate. It is anticipated that most of the funding for the day program will be provided by the County Office of Education. The Clinical Supervisor will work for HSA and will coordinate and direct activities associated with this program, as well as similar existing

services currently supported through the Mental Health and/or Drug and Alcohol Services budgets. If additional funding sources are developed, County financial contributions can be reduced.

<b>Residential Treatment Program</b>			
	<b>Net County Cost</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>
Residential Treatment Program	\$132,000	\$ 438,333	\$570,333
Day Program with School	35,000	275,000	310,000
Clinical Supervisor	10,000	65,000	75,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$177,000</b>	<b>\$ 778,333</b>	<b>\$955,333</b>

#### Continued Activities

Staff continues to work on a number of important tasks within the scope of work approved by your Board in the December 8<sup>th</sup> letter. These include the following activities:

1. Ongoing pursuit of funding options for the services recommended to your Board, as well as seeking additional funds needed to address other services gaps in the treatment continuum for youth abusing alcohol or drugs;
2. Overseeing implementation of the three programs recommended in the December 8<sup>th</sup> letter including creating 12 local residential treatment beds for Probation Youth; obtaining a State waiver at Si Se Puede allowing 16 and 17 year olds to enter that residential treatment program; and continuation of funding for the Youth Services Day Programs.
3. Continuing coordination with the Criminal Justice Council and the Together for Youth Collaborative in the areas of prevention and enforcement efforts.
4. Continuing to gather input from the community regarding the effectiveness of existing treatment programs as well as unmet needs.
5. Reviewing and analyzing current year school survey on youth drug use,

Your Board charged the County High Risk Drug Task Force to develop proposals to meet the most critical needs of youth with serious drug problems. Recommendations adopted on December 8, 1998, and those before your Board today fulfill the charge of the Task Force. While there will continue to be gaps in the care system, these recommendations address the need for residential treatment beds and will substantially improve access to residential care for this identified population of young people.

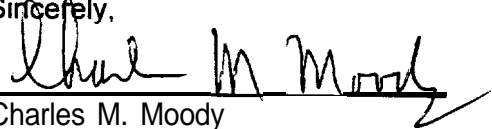
County staff will continue to work with the County Administrative Office, community members, and the State to identify funding which might be used to leverage outside dollars instead of County General Funds.


It is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that your Board:

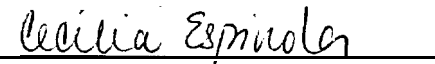
1. Accept and file this final report from the County High Risk Drug Task Force;
2. Approve the development of an RFP for a proposed ten-bed residential treatment facility; and

3. Direct HSA, HRA and the Probation Department to return on April 13, 1999 with the RFP, and plan for contractor selection as well as an update regarding implementation of services and funding strategies.

Sincerely,

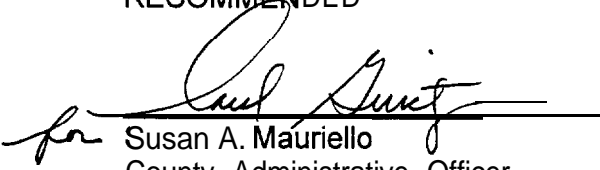
  
 Charles M. Moody  
 Health Services Administrator

  
 John Rhoads  
 Chief Probation Officer

  
 Cecelia Espinola  
 Human Resource Agency  
 Administrator

CM/RK/PS/ep  
 Attachment I Funding Definitions

RECOMMENDED

  
 Susan A. Mauriello  
 County Administrative Officer

cc: County Administrative Office  
 Auditor-Controller  
 County Counsel  
 Health Services Administration  
 Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services  
 Probation  
 Human Resource Agency

HIGH RISK DRUG TASK FORCE ATTACHMENT I

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**FUNDING OPTIONS & ANALYSIS**

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The Task Force reviewed every possible funding option available to the various County Departments serving children to identify possible funding sources for new services. Below is a description of each source of funding that could provide needed resources for any of the treatment options needed in the community.

Proposition 10: This funding source is expected to bring approximately 3 million dollars per year of matchable funding to the county. This funding source could be used with Medical and other federal and state programs to leverage additional money for local needs. The emphasis of the proposition was on young children, but the language appears to allow for flexibility by the local Council, which will allocate the funding. The Board will be making appointments to this Council in the next year. For a large capacity treatment center, some funding from this source may be critical. It will be very important for the prevention needs.

AFDC-FC: This funding source is for group home placements. There are 14 levels of group homes which different rates. Homes at level 10 and above can be structured to provide a substance abuse program. Group homes often are augmented with a Medical day treatment component for youth with intensive treatment needs including a special school settings. Both of these components enrich and encourage good 24 structure and treatment.

AFDC-FC has a county share of cost based on the level of income of the parents and whether they meet federal criteria for match. If the minor meets federal criteria, then the County share of the monthly cost is 30%. If the family does not meet federal poverty criteria, the County share is 60%. Any budget for new beds would need to add county funds for this share of cost. The AFDC-FC budget had problems in over expenditure several years ago and alternative programs were implemented which brought it into budget.

This funding source brings with it Medical for all youth in the residential programs. The Medical provides access to treatment and medical care. Parents with significant income do have a share of cost for this care. Also AFDC-FC allows placement of Probation wards, CPS dependents, and voluntary youth. The voluntary placement option is the only means for a child not involved with Probation and CPS to access AFDC-FC and Medical. There is a time limit to this residential treatment under voluntary status. It allows a maximum of 12 months during the life of the child based on a number of criteria defined by Welfare and Institutions Code 16507.3, section a-d.

To understand the cost of new beds at a level 10 group home rate to the county, the various shares of cost for families are calculated. For example, based on our analysis of the youth requiring residential treatment, it would cost \$11,702 per month for a new 10 bed facility for the county share of the AFDC-FC costs.

EPSDT MEDICAL: This funding source is available through County Mental Health and includes approximately 15% local funds and 85% federal funds for all drug and mental

health treatment services provided to Medical eligible youth. These services include intensive day treatment, rehabilitative day treatment, case management, outpatient services, and medication services and nursing supports. This is a rich range of services for a small percentage of match, but only about 45% of the youth in need qualify for Medical outside of a group home setting.

New Facility/ Building Funds: This new state money has two funding streams, Twenty Five Million Dollars will be administered via grants through the California Youth Authority. These funds can be used for community non-profit programs serving youth. There is also 179 million dollars for renovation and expansion of Juvenile detention facilities.

AB 1784 Funds: This past legislative session 5 million dollars was approved for expanded adolescent drug treatment. These funds will be administered by the State Department of Alcohol and Drugs. It is also not decided whether these funds will be allocated to all counties based on an allocation formula or competitive grants. Certainly these funds could help with meeting some of the unmet needs for the county.

Youth Challenge Grant: The Board of Corrections is sponsoring competitive grants for demonstration projects with a research component which impact juvenile crime. Santa Cruz County Probation is eligible to apply and will be proposing a north and south county youth center where school, treatment, family supports, probation supervision, jobs, and recreation can be provided to high risk Probation youth. These centers, if funded, would meet one of the critical gaps for Probation youth who do not need a 24 hour setting.

Insurance/Share of Cost Billing Systems: Where possible, systems will be set up to allow the new treatment services to bill insurance. When this is not possible, families who do not qualify for MediCal will pay a share of cost over time based on annual income. While this not a major source of income, it can help somewhat with treatment costs. Billings systems existing in mental health which can be modified to meet this need.

Healthy Families Insurance: Low income youth who do not qualify for Medical may qualify for Healthy Families Insurance. This insurance does include drug and alcohol treatment, but the application process is complex and benefit assistance is needed. When services are provided through mental health, state funds are available at a 65% state, 35% local match rate. This insurance program is still being modified due to problems with implementation, but it could increase funding and access for families needed drug and alcohol treatment.

Private Foundations and Endowments: In coordination with non-profit agencies, many different private foundation sources are being explored. This is an area of potential resources which could reduce the need for county funds to start these new programs. Foundations tend to fund projects on a one-time rather than ongoing basis. Part of the Task Force work is to continue to try to develop these other funding sources for the proposed programs.

Prucol Resources For Undocumented Youth: This revenue source is available to San Diego county, and the County is exploring ways to also obtain these funds for services to wards and dependents who are undocumented youth placed in residential treatment.

Obtaining Prucol funding would reduce pressure on the care of court ward budget which is county general fund dollars.

Special Ed Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for School Links: Whenever school is part of the overall program, it is possible to get ADA to help with funding of the educational component. This is part of the residential setting and most day treatment centers.

Other Funds: In addition to all the other funding sources listed, the Alcohol and Drug program with Mental Health is seeking to identify funds in the proposed state budget and as part of the re-organization which could be directed to new services.



GRAND JURY



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

P.O. BOX 542 701 OCEAN STREET  
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95061  
(408) 454-2099

December 31, 1998

The Honorable Robert Yonts  
Judge of the Supreme Court  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Judge Yonts,

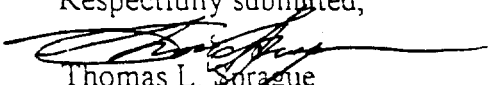
On behalf of the 1998-99 Grand Jury I present our Special Charge Report regarding the problem of 'Drugs and our Youth'. Because of the urgent nature of the matter, we have chosen to report at this time rather than include this topic in our final report at the end of the fiscal year.

Since we accepted the special charge in July, members of the Grand Jury have met with and interviewed directors, managers and professional representatives of the many County and City Agencies and Departments involved in this matter. We have also met with several non-government professionals who provide related services and/or programs to direct our troubled youth away from substance abuse. In these meetings we have recorded or noted the opinions of all that we have interviewed along with collecting factual data and relevant documentation.

The report is solely based on our findings and is organized in four sections. The introduction outlines the subject matter and briefly describes the report. The content sections are entitled; Prevention, Enforcement, Treatment and Coordination. Each section includes a summary of the issues and Grand Jury recommendations.

We want to sincerely thank all of the people who cooperated with us and contributed to our efforts. Many of the conscientious participants not only answered our questions but also went out of their way to retrieve and provide the information we requested.

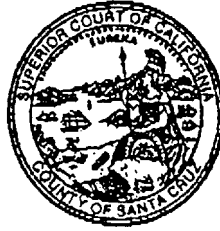
Respectfully submitted,

  
Thomas L. Sprague  
Foreperson

# Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

608



ROBERT B. YONTS, JR.  
Judge of the Superior Court

701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 454-2380

January 22, 1999

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ:

Enclosed is a Special Charge Grand Jury Report. The subject of the Special Charge is the problem of "Drugs and our Youth." On behalf of the Judges of Santa Cruz County, I salute the members of our Grand Jury, individually and as a team, for their work in gathering the data and compiling this report.

In addition to this report, the Grand Jury of 1998-99 will continue to work on several other Santa Cruz County issues which will be covered in the Grand Jury Final Report at the end of the fiscal year.

Again, we thank the Grand Jury for their efforts on behalf of the citizens of Santa Cruz county.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert B. Yonts, Jr.", written over the printed name.

ROBERT B. YONTS, JR.  
Judge of the Superior Court

RBV:mks  
Encl.

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY**

**1999**

**SPECIAL REPORT**

**YOUTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

## INTRODUCTION

The 1998-99 Civil Grand Jury was sworn in with a special charge from Judge Robert Yonts to *"consult with and inquire with members of law enforcement, our criminal justice system, our **health officials**, our mental health officials, our educators, and interested persons at large in the community or otherwise, to assess any problem of **drugs** and our youth and to recommend solutions for the intervention, prevention and treatment of this heinous problem within our community"*.

To this end, the Grand Jury has conducted many interviews with professionals and community members, conducted site visits, reviewed project reports, attended project planning meetings, and examined statistical data. During the period of July through December, 1998, the Grand Jury has made this project its primary focus, as it became readily apparent that the matter of drugs and youth has a profound effect on virtually every aspect of our community, and upon the services provided by many government and private agencies.

This Special Report is divided into four topical sections: **Prevention. Enforcement, Treatment, and Coordination.** It presents the results of Grand Jury observations and analysis of youth substance abuse issues. The Report includes a summary of each topic based on these observations, followed by the recommendations, which reflect the comments of the service professionals and community members, and which, if implemented, might have an immediate and hopefully a long-term effect on the local substance abuse problem. It is important to note that these recommendations are not prioritized, funding sources are not identified, nor is a time-line for implementation proposed. The practicality of implementation, from many aspects, is not considered in depth. These recommendations are presented to highlight some of the creative **solutions** which are available. It should also be noted that no category stands alone, neither more or less important, nor separate from the others. Each category is closely related in its effect upon the others; they must function in harmony rather than in conflict. Likewise, public policy and programs should be developed with the concept that all components must be considered together.

It must be acknowledged that the abuse problem is a long-standing one, literally on a world-wide basis. However, like any other problem, often the best solutions are very close to home. The Grand Jury believes many of the issues facing our community can be solved, albeit over a period of time, if the community commits itself to seeking and implementing creative solutions.

The Grand Jury finds that many individuals and programs are making efforts, often above and beyond their budgetary and physical limits, in an attempt to provide whatever services they can. Many agencies must vie for funding, often in direct competition with the very agencies that

provide critical portions of the continuum of services, with the result of everyone gaining only a small portion of what is actually needed to make a pro-active effort.

Drug abuse issues are complex and will only be solved if county and city agencies and support groups work together toward the common goal. The Grand Jury acknowledges the studies and proposals of the *Togetherfor Youth/Unidos Para Nuestros Jovenes Collaborative* in substance abuse prevention and the *County High-Risk Drug Task Force on High-Risk Adolescent Drug Treatment*. We fully support the proposed recommendations as submitted to the Board of Supervisors November 24, 1998 and December 8, 1998.

Finally, coordination is highly important to all effective solutions. Consistent with the aforementioned proposals, we support the activities of the following coordinating bodies:

- **Prevention** - *Together for Youth/Unidos Para Nuestros Jovenes Collaborative*
- **Enforcement** - *Criminal Justice Council*
- **Treatment** - *County High-Risk Drug Task Force*

## PREVENTION

Effective youth drug use prevention must begin in the home with early parental teaching. Drug prevention education must continue in elementary school, with programs through middle and high school. Prevention programs must be ongoing and require the efforts and cooperation of everyone in a position to influence youth, ie., parents, teachers, counselors, coaches, mentors, peer and role models, government and community leaders.

The *Together for Youth/Unidos Para Nuestros Jovenes Collaborative* (TFY), organized by local *United Way* leaders, has developed a comprehensive drug abuse prevention program for Santa Cruz County. It is clear that there is a need to increase knowledge and raise awareness of the extent of juvenile substance abuse and the importance of a comprehensive prevention education program in Santa Cruz County. There needs to be a variety of drug prevention education approaches applied to assure that all segments of the county population are reached.

Currently, there are a variety of drug prevention education programs offered in each of the school districts. The most widely implemented of these, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), is **provided by** law enforcement agencies in the elementary and middle school levels. *Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Inc.* (PVPSA) provides parent education training and K-12 alcohol and drug education in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD). The Santa Cruz City School District also has an active program of drug abuse **prevention education** through its Health and Student Assistance Program.

Beyond drug prevention education there are many troubled youth already in recovery from drug addiction who need a drug-free school environment. Alternative drug-free schools in the county are too few. For example, the County Office of Education (COE), in partnership with *Youth Services, Inc.*, operates Escuela Quetzal and Youth Experiencing Success (YES) as schools providing a drug-free alternative education for those students in substance abuse recovery. The need is much greater than these two schools can accommodate.

Persistent truancy is often the first sign of youth at risk for substance abuse. A review of program information and contacts with program directors indicated that truancy programs operated through the school districts and COE tend to vary in scope and effectiveness. Truancy programs are operated in PVUSD, Santa Cruz City Schools and by COE for other school districts. The PVUSD program also includes truancy mediation and truancy abatement. PVUSD, the Santa Cruz City School District and COE have Student Attendance Review Boards (SARB). SARB actions, combined with truancy mediation, seem to have a positive impact on the truant students and their parents.

Two other important programs requiring greater support are middle school and high school guidance counselors and nurses. These are vital resources in guiding students' career choices and in detecting and assisting at-risk youth. These programs were seriously reduced during the hard budget times of the last decade.

The *Together For Youth/Unidos Para Nuestros Jovenes Collaborative (TFY)* has determined that, to be effective, youth drug-use prevention programs must offer positive alternatives, e.g., part-time employment and places to go with social and recreational activities to keep our young people involved and interested, and out of harm's way - away from drug traffickers. They must be kept busy - especially after school (and evening hours for teens). Youth tend to get into trouble if idle after school - most youth crimes occur between 3 and 6 P.M.

In addition to drug-use prevention education, drug-free schools, effective truancy reduction and counseling, every young person should be able to choose from a continuum of vocational and academic options to encourage and enable the pursuit of positive, drug-free life choices. Vocational education programs at the high school level are varied in terms of opportunities and options for students, depending on the individual high school.

Regional Occupational Program (ROP) in Santa Cruz County offers introductory courses for some trades, e.g., construction, auto shop, and agriculture. The Monterey Bay Regional Partnership in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, a school-to-career system designed to meet the skilled workforce needs of local employers in the 21st century is another example. This consortium has been funded with 2.4 million dollars to establish a Career Pathways program integrating academic and vocational education at each high school in the county.

Cisco Systems has teamed with Cabrillo College to teach computer networking and develop high-tech skills that industry and Cisco will need in the future. Many trades offer well

paying jobs for non-college educated youth, but apprenticeships and training opportunities are limited. Most trade unions do not offer youth training programs.

Many of our teens will not attend college or pursue vocational training after high school. Approximately half of Santa Cruz County youth have not attended college. We must anticipate that this trend will continue. Some will drop out of high school before graduation - they are, perhaps, most at-risk.

Teens have unique needs. An after-school job can be very important to many teens. For some, an after school job can be key to their own financial support, even to enable them to stay in school. Regardless of reason, an after-school job helps a teenager become more confident and responsible and sets him/her on a path to a more successful future. There are employment programs that work for some, e.g., the Summer Youth Employment Program, the Garden Project in Watsonville for juvenile probationers sponsored by the *Community Action Board*, and S.T.E.P in Santa Cruz. These programs do not reach an adequate number of students seeking employment.

The Boys and Girls Club provides activities for some young people, especially pre-teens, but most high school students do not want to be associated with younger children and their activities. There are efforts under way and programs in a few communities, e.g., San Lorenzo Valley Teen Center (The Barn), the Watsonville Youth Center, Family Center, and sports programs - indoor soccer and boxing (Police Activities League -PAL). Funds have been appropriated for a teen center in the City of Santa Cruz, but an appropriate location is still being researched by the City Parks and Recreation Department.

**The Grand Jury recommends:**

- 1) The TFY drug use prevention plan, as proposed to and accepted by the Board of Supervisors, serve as the model for all County drug prevention programs.
- 2) The Board of Supervisors, and the city councils of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville direct the appropriate department heads to work with Youth Services and the County Office of Education to secure funds to continue and to expand the alternative drug free schools in the county.
- 3) The County Office of Education and School District Boards of Santa Cruz County establish policies that require Safe School plans to include a comprehensive drug education prevention program for all schools and parent seminars with consideration given to the Parent Education Series designed by Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Inc. (PVPSA) as a model.
- 4) The County Office of Education and Santa Cruz city school(s) board(s) establish, in conjunction with the county District Attorney, truancy mediation to consider cases where there has been failure to comply with conditions of the School Attendance and Review Board directives

and mandates.

5) The Board of Supervisors and city councils of Capitola, Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley direct their law enforcement chiefs to establish comprehensive, coordinated and consistent truancy abatement programs within their departments in support of the school districts' efforts to alleviate truancy. Any truancy abatement program should emphasize the responsibility of the parent/guardian and require reimbursement to the school district for financial losses due to unauthorized absences, similar to the Monterey County model. The Watsonville City Council and police chief should continue, and expand if necessary, their truancy abatement program, in conjunction with the Pajaro Valley Unified School District.

6) Vocational education programs be expanded or developed to provide a continuum of courses, both vocational and academic, to allow high school students to pursue their career interests.

- County and city school officials provide more comprehensive trades training and work experience in cooperation with local trade unions to develop apprenticeship programs for youth.
- County and city officials work to initiate more corporate-sponsored programs aimed at satisfying the future skills needs of local industries and companies.
- Expand county and city-sponsored employment programs to provide jobs for youth.
- Increase city employment training programs.
- Every high school maintain a job referral office.

7) The County Office of Education and school district boards of Santa Cruz County make the expansion of the counseling and nursing functions in middle and high schools a high priority.

8) The county agencies involved with youth and family issues develop and distribute and annually update a Community Resource Guide for parents and service providers regarding substance abuse prevention resources.

9) The county Human Resources Agency/Career Works continue to offer and secure funding to expand their Independent Living Skills program for youth from foster care, group homes and Juvenile Hall.

10) The TFY planning group continue to conduct frequent surveys and assess the needs 'county-wide'.

- Include those who are currently working the teen recreation facility problem, e.g., Parks and Recreation youth program professionals.
- Develop a program to fully utilize existing facilities.
- Seek out and review existing recreation programs and consider them as possible models.

11) Program directors, agency heads and policymakers look to neighboring counties and



nationally for new ideas and programs. *Youth Power* (formerly *Just Say No*) is a national program gaining acceptance in major cities around the country, including San Francisco, San Jose and Salinas.

12) The anti-drug abuse programs for students, parents and school district staff, as offered by PVPSA, be reviewed as a model for programs throughout the county.

## ENFORCEMENT

Youth substance abuse is an intense personal and family tragedy, with dimensions which impact the entire community, particularly through associated criminal activity and health problems. The criminal justice system has an important role in bringing juveniles and adults to a point where they are compelled to make a decision to become clean and sober. Juveniles have a special need for strong enforcement as they lack the maturity to make responsible decisions to avoid the dangers of substance abuse.

Dealers of illicit drugs are drawn to areas that are frequented by potential customers, such as entertainment and retail areas. Enforcement activities should aim to aggressively suppress, disrupt and discourage drug activity, thus making it more difficult for dealers to contact those youth who are their prime clients.

Drug dealers who prey on the community, and all serious drug law violators, should be dealt with to the maximum extent of the law. There is a general perception that drug offenders in Santa Cruz county do not receive prosecution and sentencing equivalent to that in surrounding counties. The belief of many law enforcement officers and others is that this has made the county well-known as a low-risk, "preferred," place to engage in drug-related activity. They have evidence that persons that have no other connection to the County have been coming into the County to engage in drug activity.

Our community is missing opportunities to intervene early in the course of youth addiction. Too often, youths are not arrested for being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, or they are released (unless they have committed serious crimes) with few or no consequences. With limited counseling and supervision resources, there is little attempt to change their behavior. Only when the problem manifests itself as criminal behavior does the youth receive a minimal level of needed attention, and, by then, the serious damage has been done. Even habitual offenders often slip through the gaps of the system. The overcrowding at Juvenile Hall and the excessive case load of the probation officers are important contributors to this problem.

Lack of funding for treatment programs is forcing the Probation Department and the

courts to assign juvenile offenders to “home supervision” with inadequate structure or supervision by the agencies. The preference would be to see that the offender gets into a treatment and/or counseling program.

Unstructured home supervision is not a proper response to substance abuse problems. Even the best-intentioned parents/guardians usually have little or no knowledge of how to deal with substance abuse. In addition, youth may be one of several generations of addicts within the family and trapped in a no-win situation. Parents/guardians must be made aware of the types of behaviors that lead to youth substance abuse, and assume responsibility for dealing with these behaviors.

### **The Grand Jury Recommends:**

- 1) The community and its elected officials must express their support for aggressive law enforcement.
  - Community involvement might also include rallies and vigils in the affected areas to make them more unfriendly to dealers and aggressive reporting of drug activities to the police.
  - Police enforcement actions focus on identified problem locations.
- 2) Parents/guardians be required to make restitution for the crimes committed by juveniles. The juveniles themselves must face the consequences of their actions, in particular by participating in the restitution.
- 3) All county law enforcement agencies and all those involved in the criminal justice system conduct a thorough analysis of local arrest, prosecution, and sentencing statistics, and the relevant policies and practices. The focus of this analysis be to determine factually if our county is demonstrating the appropriate prosecution and sentencing that will deter illicit drug dealers.
- 4) All juveniles arrested while intoxicated be tested for the presence of illegal substances and identified, including fingerprinting and photos, prior to release. Refusal to be tested lead to consequences **similar** to those which apply to suspected drunk drivers.
- 5) A central registry of youths who have been involved in drug-related law enforcement actions, through fingerprints and photos, be maintained to enhance the ability of the relevant authorities to recognize serious and repeat offenders. The registry should include information not only on arrests, but also on diversion efforts. This will enable more effective response to the problems of the individuals involved, who sometimes fall through the gaps of the current system.
- 6) Each local law enforcement agency participate in a collaborative youthful offender diversion program. By placing the ability to divert first-time offenders of non-violent crimes with local police agencies, a large burden of supervision can be lifted from the Probation Department and allow that agency to focus on the critical cases. This basic concept is already being utilized in several local police agencies, but lacks a coordinated county-wide plan.

- 7) The Probation Department and Juvenile Hall review their procedures to find a way to radically reduce unstructured "home supervision" for youth substance abusers. The time lapse between arrest and the intake interview by the Probation Department be reduced. Since overcrowding is an issue at Juvenile Hall, the county consider expanding Juvenile Hall or the use of an alternate facility to house youth substance abusers until adequate supervision can be assured. A juvenile facility in South County is urgently needed.
- 8) A juvenile drug court be implemented so that youth substance abusers throughout the county can benefit from the structure and engagement which it provides.
- 9) Expand the current teen peer court program operated by the COE.
- 10) The county make a higher priority of budget provisions to ensure that recommendations for probation placements and sentencing decisions of the courts are not unduly influenced by budgetary constraints.

## TREATMENT

An unacceptable percentage of juveniles in Santa Cruz County are involved in substance abuse. There is a need for a full continuum of services including intensive supervision, site-based treatment (e.g., schools), residential treatment and counseling for the entire family. Treatment services are also needed for at-risk youth not yet under the Juvenile Court system. There is also a need for coordination and collaboration of efforts for securing funding and providing services.

The *County High-Risk Drug Task Force* has drafted plans for collaborative effort to obtain funding for a the required continuum of treatment services, which can serve as a model for future planning.

Juvenile treatment programs, under the authority of public agencies, rely solely on public and/or grant funds for financing. The amounts of such public and grant funds are limited, thus, the capacity of those treatment programs is inadequate. Agencies that provide similar services with the county may find themselves in competition for funding sources during annual budget preparation or when applying for state, federal or private grants. Grants, which are generally very limited in life-cycle, often fall short in providing the long-term care and treatment needed to battle addictive behavior.

Publicly funded substance abuse treatment programs are currently not available to the youth in this community. Private sector health care is rarely an alternative for treatment of

juveniles, because the expense places it beyond the reach of most families. Health insurance plans generally provide only a very small portion, if any, of these costs. If treatment services were available, there is a segment of the community which could afford to pay some or all of the costs.

**The Grand Jury Recommends:**

- 1) The Board of Supervisors and city councils of Santa Cruz County direct the appropriate department heads to work with the *County High-Risk Drug Task Force* to secure funds from all sources (including appropriations from the General Fund) for a comprehensive continuum of juvenile drug treatment services including early intervention and a secure residential long-term treatment center.
- 2) The Board of Supervisors fund treatment services, including a detox facility for drug- involved juveniles being held at Juvenile Hall.
- 3) The county Health Services Agency, Alcohol and Drug Program Administration, research and, if indicated, establish a rapid detox program for drug and alcohol-addicted juveniles.
- 4) Treatment programs for juveniles be made available, under the management of the public agencies, supported by fees paid by the juveniles receiving treatment or by their parents/guardians. Flexible treatment options be made available so that families can obtain effective treatment within their ability to pay.
- 5) The Board of Supervisors maintain funding beyond the current budget year to implement the recommendations of the *County High-Risk Drug Task Force*.

## COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

The Grand Jury is greatly impressed with the dedication and commitment shown by the people addressing youth substance abuse. There appears to be a consensus among these people regarding the strategies needed to deal with this problem. That consensus revolves around a continuum of approaches involving prevention, enforcement and treatment, all of which must be coordinated and linked to achieve the desired end, the reduction in the tragic damage done to young lives by substance abuse.

An encouraging start has been made in coordinating county-wide *efforts*. The *Together for Youth/Unidos Para Nuestros Jovenes Collaborative* (TFY) has prepared a comprehensive plan to reduce alcohol and other drug use among youth in Santa Cruz County. It was started less than two years ago, hosted by *United Way* leaders. Planning group members include representatives of county agencies, school and city officials, community leaders and volunteers all

working together in efforts to define the major issues and solutions to the problems of drugs and youth in Santa Cruz County. The efforts of TFY are complemented by those of the *Criminal Justice Council* in the area of enforcement and the *County High-Risk Drug Task Force* in the area of treatment.

**The Grand Jury Recommends:**

- 1) County-wide standards be established in the fight against youth substance abuse. These standards must reflect one attitude and one message. That message must be a clear recognition of the dangers of youth substance abuse and clear support for the young victims, and rejection and punishment for the victimizers. All government agencies and community leaders must join this fight. The Board of Supervisors must take a visible leadership role in the stimulation and coordination of this effort.
- 2) The Board of Supervisors and the city councils of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville appropriate funds to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Substance Abuse Prevention Plan proposed in April 1997 by TFY.
- 3) The TFY plan be used to demonstrate and publicize county unity. It be presented to the media and to state and federal government agencies responsible for allocating funds as well as to private foundations who award financial grants. Grant writers from all involved city and county departments and agencies work together to present the most effective cases possible. Funding from taxes and all government sources be coordinated.

## CONCLUSION

The Grand Jury acknowledges that there will be budgetary, political and legal issues that must be considered when developing any program or public policy strategy.

All of these matters, and many more, will take time, effort and commitment on the part of the entire community.

The most critical part of the equation is that the citizens of Santa Cruz County must consciously decide that they will no longer tolerate the sale and use of illicit drugs.

The community must proclaim that it values, above all else, the health and welfare of its youth.

A-4 — Friday, January 29, 1999 — Sentinel

## Grand jury tackles youth drug problem

By JOHN SANFORD  
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — Standing in front of a crowd of press and county officials Thursday, Jacqueline McClellan recalled how heroin addiction killed her 15-year-old son Tyler in just four months.

"We can prevent other Tylers," she said at the County Courthouse in Santa Cruz, where the county grand jury presented its report on youth substance abuse.

For about five months, the jurors conducted extensive research to come up with recommendations for addressing the youth drug problem, which Thomas L. Sprague, grand

jury foreman, described as "very serious."

He also said that the notion that drug use seems to be politically accepted in Santa Cruz is "a big concern."

The youth drug problem was not concentrated in any particular area, but was countywide, he said.

The 19 jurors interviewed 80 to 100 people to develop their report, which recommends, among other things, substance-abuse prevention models based on the Together For Youth/Undos Para Nuestros Jovenes Collaborative; aggressive drug-law enforcement; residential drug-treatment programs; and countywide standards in fighting youth

substance abuse.

Thomas McClellan, the young victim's father who also attended the Thursday press conference, suggested the importance of seeing the recommendations through to reality.

"Let's just not leave it on the paper," he said.