

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF OPEN VERSUS SECURE  
CUSTODY ON THE SELF-CONCEPT AND BEHAVIOUR OF YOUNG OFFENDERS

by

Silvia R. Vajushi

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

CALGARY, ALBERTA

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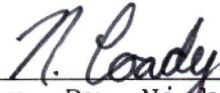
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "An Exploratory Study of the Impact of Open Versus Secure Custody on the Self-Concept and Behaviour of Young Offenders" in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work.




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Supervisor, Dr. Nick Coady,  
Faculty of Social Work



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Dr. Richard M. Grinell Jr.  
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Dr. Schnell  
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September 11, 1992

## ABSTRACT

An exploratory study of the impact of open versus secure custody on young offenders.

Silvia R. Vajushi

This study explores the differential impact of secure and open custody placement on the self-concept and behaviour of young offenders.

A quasi-experimental separate sample pretest/posttest design was used for the study. Young offenders serving secure custody dispositions in an institution and those serving open custody dispositions in group homes served as the sample groups.

Participants were assessed through the use of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Achenbach Child Behaviour Checklist at admission to the programs and at 30 days post-admission. Significant group differences pre-treatment were found for both self-concept and behaviour, suggesting that the institutional sample may have been more disturbed than the group home sample.

Results indicated that when pre-treatment group differences were controlled for, between group differences

post-treatment were not significant for either the self-concept or behaviour variables. No significant differences pre-post treatment were found for the self-concept variable for either group, although there was a trend towards deterioration in self-concept for the institutionalized group. It was found, however, that the institution sample had a significantly higher level of behavioural disturbance post-treatment compared to pre-treatment.

Although the findings showed no differential impact between open or secure custody on a young offender's self-concept and behaviour during the first thirty days of placement, within group deterioration for the institutional sample raises concern about the potential detrimental effect of this type of placement. Limitations of the study are noted and implications for the treatment of young offenders and for future research are presented.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people deserve acknowledgment and thanks for their support and contribution to this study. First, thank you to Enviros Wilderness School Association, in particular Peter Claghorn and Jim King for their approval and encouragement to pursue this study. Thank you also to the staff at both Montgomery and North Haven group homes for their professional support, as well as for their time and effort in completing the instruments.

Recognition goes out to the "Enviros youth" who agreed to yet another challenge and took the time to help others.

Thanks are extended to Geoff Powter as well, for his advice and support.

Appreciation is also extended to the Alberta Solicitor General Department - Young Offender Branch for their approval to conduct the study.

Special thanks to Marla Calderwood and Heather McVicar who generously shared their own work and advice and permitted me to adopt part of their work for my own.



A sincere thank you in particular to Nick Coady, as my thesis supervisor, for his knowledge, guidance and assistance throughout this project.

## DEDICATION

To Doug Darwish for encouraging me throughout this journey  
with his love, strength and ongoing kindness,

and

To my parents, Anita & Ahmet Vajushi for believing in me.

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

The question of appropriate custodial placement for young offenders has been subject to ongoing debate. Treatment versus punishment, and confinement versus release as intervention strategies are often at the centre of the controversy. Two schools of thought have clearly emerged. These differing views have been called the justice model and the welfare model (Corrado, Leblanc, & Trepanier, 1983) and represent two extremes in the spectrum of arguments surrounding approaches to interventions with young offenders. The focus of the justice model is punishment, deterrence, and confinement of young offenders for the protection of society (Simone, 1985). Young people are held accountable for their behaviour and are expected to take full responsibility for their actions. The welfare model, on the other hand, holds rehabilitation and treatment as the primary goals of intervention with young offenders and speaks more to the responsibility of society to help young people.

The recent trends in juvenile corrections in Canada has been a move to a justice model approach, with an increase in the severity (length and incarceration) of sentences being

assigned to young offenders (Basso & Fusco, 1990). Deterrence through punishment has become a popular concept (Griffiths, 1989). This trend certainly holds true in Alberta, where recently published statistics (Alberta Solicitor General Annual Reports, 1990-1991) disclose that the largest proportion of incarcerated young offenders (sentenced and remanded) are in closed custody facilities. Moreover, Alberta Solicitor General annual reports indicate there has been a 9% increase in the young offender, secure custody population, in 1991.

Closely related to the justice versus welfare model debate is the debate regarding the effectiveness of institutional versus community (group home) custodial programs to enhance the positive behaviour or constrain the negative behaviour of young offenders. There are a range of arguments that have been offered to oppose closed custody placements. Some contend that secure custody serves as a hardening process (Martinson, cited in Vinter, 1984). This point of view implies that through association with "hardened delinquents" the institutional subculture may negatively change youths' behaviour and attitude. Others suggest that there is a direct relationship between antisocial values and a negative behaviour orientation and the number of times one has been placed in secure detention (Dembo, Lavoie, Schmeidler, & Washburn, 1987). Still others



assert that there is a direct relationship between institutionalization and the low self- concept of delinquents (Bliss, 1977).

Arguments opposing open custody or group home placements for young offenders also exist, but are less plentiful. The main arguments against group home (open custody) placements are that they do not function as a strong enough deterrent to the young offender and, by allowing the young person access to the community, that open custody facilities do not protect the public from the young offender.

As will become clear in a review of the literature, more and better studies regarding the differential effect of open versus secure custodial settings on young offenders are necessary in order to begin to explore the important question of what is the most appropriate type of placement for the young offender population. It is recognized that in some cases incarceration may be necessary to protect the public; however, there seems to be a general trend towards increased use of closed custody placements coupled with a lack of knowledge about the possible implications of this approach.

### Purpose of Study

This study investigates the differential impact of open versus secure custody on young offenders' self-concept and behaviour. More specifically, a group of young offenders placed in a secure custody institutional setting are compared to a group of young offenders placed in open custody, community-based group homes in terms of changes in self-concept and behaviour over the first thirty days of their placement.

The behaviour of young offenders was chosen as a dependent variable for obvious reasons. Behavioral change is the bottom line measure of effectiveness for young offender treatment programs. Also, it has been argued that the sub-culture that prevails in institutions reinforces delinquent values and behaviour (Polsky, 1969). Thus, it seems important to also investigate whether open and secure custody placements have a differential impact on the behaviour of young offenders.

Self-concept was chosen as a dependent variable for a couple of reasons. First, data suggests that non-recidivists have better self-concepts than recidivists (Nettler, 1978). Second, this finding is consistent with studies that demonstrate a difference in self-concept between delinquent

and non-delinquent youth, with delinquent youth presenting a less balanced self-concept (Markus & Oyserman, 1990). In consideration of these findings, it seems important to explore the impact of open versus secure custody on young offenders' self-concept.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into six sections. First, some history and explanation of the Young Offenders Act and the dispositions it affords are provided. Second, relevant theory and research regarding the differential impact of custodial and community placements as interventions in dealing with young offenders are reviewed. Third, self-concept as one of the variables of the study is defined and theory and research that link self-concept with delinquency are explored. Fourth, delinquent behaviour, as a second variable of this study, is also defined and discussed. As well, the relationship between behaviour and self-concept is examined as part of this review. Fifth, a brief summary of the literature review is presented. Sixth, and finally, the research questions that are explored in this study are presented.

#### Young Offenders and the Young Offender Act

In 1985, with the enactment of the Young Offender Act (YOA) in Canada, it became possible to legally charge any young person between the ages of twelve and seventeen with violations of the Criminal Code of Canada. If a young person is now found guilty of an offense, they are dealt with in

provincially designated youth courts as young offenders. This approach differs from the Juvenile Delinquency Act (JDA) that preceded the YOA. The focus of the JDA was on treatment, with emphasis placed on the rehabilitation rather than the punishment of the juvenile delinquent. The JDA viewed troubled young people, whether neglected or delinquent, as being in need of care and treatment. This lack of differentiation between a delinquent child and neglected child provided the court with many options in dealing with delinquent adolescents. Only minor attention was paid to the legal and moral responsibility of the young person.

The YOA, on the other hand, considers legal accountability for criminal actions, public protection, and the rights of the young people experiencing difficulty within the law (Silverman & Teevan Jr., 1986). This approach attempts to balance between the "justice model" approach of punishment and deterrence and the "welfare model" method of rehabilitation and treatment. Decisions regarding effective correctional treatment with young offenders must now take legislative and judicial consequences into account as well as the "welfare needs" of the young person (Basso & Fusco, 1990).

Once young people are tried and convicted under the

current criminal justice system in Canada, they are labelled as young offenders. The manner in which the system then chooses to work with adolescents has some far reaching implications that are the foci of this study. The stigma of the young offender label and the experience of incarceration that a young person in trouble may face could become a hindrance throughout their life. It becomes a serious social responsibility to decide how to intervene in the most beneficial way for the young person and society.

Custodial dispositions in the Young Offender Act.

Custodial disposition options available to the youth court in sentencing young offenders under the YOA consist of open custody, secure custody, or consecutive secure and open custody sentences. As governed by the YOA, secure custody is the last phase of intervention used by the court and is implemented only after repeated or serious offenses have occurred. One exception to that guideline is for the remanded young offender population who are placed in secure detention if they have been remanded into custody.

Secure custody facilities are built to physically contain a young person in a secure environment. Some secure custody facilities have dual designation and serve as both a detention facility for remanded offenders and a custodial placement for sentenced offenders.

Open custody facilities, on the other hand, are generally less restrictive. They provide an alternative to institutions and are meant to be community focused. These facilities are defined in the YOA as a community residential centre, group home, foster home, child care institution or a forest or wilderness camp (Greenberg, 1991).

Although the principles of the YOA reflect an attempt to balance protection of the community and to recognize that adolescents may require special guidance due to their stage of development, Jaffe & Leschied (1989) maintain that this balance has not been achieved. In fact, they claim that the YOA has meant an increasing demand for custody beds. This trend suggests not only an increase in custody dispositions but also an increase in provincial spending such that most of their federal funding for young offenders goes to custody beds.

#### The Differential Impact of Open and Closed Custodial Placements on Young Offenders

Arguments and Studies Supporting Closed Custodial Placements. Not all would agree that institutions are harmful to young offenders. Simone (1985) argues that institutions are too often scorned without giving thought to the service they provide to a certain population. This is

where group homes can send those young people whose behaviour is too difficult to manage so that the group homes can operate successfully. Those who need to be removed from the community are also in need of the structure and limits the institution can provide. While incarcerated, the young person can also build relationships with adults who will respect and like them despite their past behaviour (Rettig, 1980).

A further advantage of detention, as pointed out by Rettig (1980), is safety for the community. Family members are sometimes relieved as someone is "fixing" their child and the justice system can take on some of the role of the child welfare system. As well, the young person who is incarcerated may find the structure appealing as the safety of limits is experienced. Detention also provides a beginning for the young person to develop skills and prepares the young person for their court disposition. Finally, Rettig (1980) claims that incarceration provides opportunities for research on the youth and their patterns of behaviour, which in turn helps professionals deal more effectively with the delinquent population.

Another common argument is that first time offenders, respond better in a secure custody setting. The argument is that with higher anxiety on the part of the young offender,



intervention is more likely to have impact. The extension of the argument, however, is that as the young person becomes familiar with the system and less intimidated, anxiety decreases and the effectiveness of the custodial setting itself as a deterrent decreases (Greilach, et al. 1982; McGurk, McEwan, & Graham, 1981).

Some studies have also suggested the effectiveness of institutional placements. A study of several different community and institutional programs conducted by Murray and Cox (1979) found that all programs experienced decreased recidivism rates, with institutional programs leading in effectiveness and community programs appearing to be the least effective.

A study by Matza (cited in West, 1984) could further support the argument that custodial placements do not have any long term negative effects. He found that 60-85% of delinquents do not go on to become adult violators irrespective of intervention modality used (from non-interference to the most intrusive custodial programs).

Arguments and Studies Supporting Open Custodial Placements. Basso and Fusco (1990) argue that the purpose of incarceration, despite changes in the settings, has not changed in the last century. The main objectives are to

deter, and incapacitate the offender.

"The purpose of incapacitation is to remove young offenders from society, and to protect society from law violating behaviour and its effects. Deterrence refers to the activities intended to discourage actual and potential young offenders from breaking the law. The current practice within the juvenile justice system seems to favour incapacitation and deterrence as the main interventions " (Basso & Fusco, 1990, p. 59).

Bartollas (cited in Basso & Fusco, 1990) further claims that institutions become training schools for crime and produce violent, inhuman behaviour in young offenders.

Rettig (1980) in reviewing some of the disadvantages of incarceration, argues that punished youth have the tendency to strike back with further deviance. Other disadvantages of secure custody include the arguments that detention can be seen as an escape from problems; it imposes conformity, therefore blocking real growth; it elicits dependency; and it does not take individuality into account. For example, some young offenders will feel secure in custody while others will feel anxious and not be able to function properly at an emotional or behavioral level. Institutions create more separation and boundaries between family,

community and the young person; cause feelings of rejection leading to future misbehaviour, hopelessness and more misbehaviour; and generate the false hope that the institution will fix the problem, thereby creating a cyclical process.

Other arguments that institutional settings lead to more violent and aggressive behaviour have been postulated by Brendtro and Ness (1983). They assert that negative subcultures are formed within institutions and reinforce or encourage negative behaviour.

Sutherland (cited in Fabricant, 1980) has argued that learned criminal behaviour occurs in the prison community and is likely to increase recidivism. He states there is an association between the size of the institution and the intensity of certain problems. For example, due to the sizeable population, institutions tend to the needs of the group versus the individual and are forced to focus on disciplinary control, security and behaviour versus treatment interventions.

The concept of prisonization or learned criminal behaviour; the more expensive costs of managing institutions; the fact that institutions do not teach young offenders how to cope within the community; and the fact

that institutions are typically less humane than other environments are all raised as arguments for using institutions sparingly (Fabricant, 1980).

Criticisms of traditional training school models and approaches to delinquency led to the reforms of the late 1960's and 1970's in the United States (Ohlin, Miller, & Coates, 1974). In Massachusetts, a leader of reform in the 1970's, all training schools were shut down and replaced by community programs, including group homes for young offenders. The impact of those community based experiments for juveniles across the United States has been mixed. It was found that closing training schools neither increased nor decreased recidivism; however, short term outcomes did suggest improved self- image, improved perception of others, and enhanced expectations and increased aspirations for those young offenders placed in more "normalized" settings (Coates, 1981).

The National Assessment of Juvenile Corrections (NAJC) study, conducted in 1976, examined fifty young offender community and institution programs and found that young offenders who had been in institutions as adolescents reported having been in adult jails an average of 2.3 times compared to 2.0 times for those young offenders who were in community residential programs and 1.5 times for those in

day treatment. Results of the study suggest that incarceration does not lead to reduced recidivism and thus should be used sparingly (Sarri, 1981).

The NAJC study also found that community-based residential programs had fewer security problems; fewer rule violations; less formal and more friendly relationships between staff and youth; and a greater sense of satisfaction with the program on the part of the participants. Although their resources were often less, the community-based programs were more successful in providing a range of educational opportunities and experiences that were more relevant to the young person upon their release. No single type of community residential program fared better in the study; instead it seemed that a variety of community programs best met individual needs of the young offenders.

A 12 - 18 month follow-up in the NAJC study revealed that 84% of the young offenders were attending school, in job training or working while 38% were "unoccupied." A disproportionate number of the unoccupied youth were from closed institutions. The youth who were termed "unoccupied" were also more heavily involved with property crime and substance abuse and were arrested and incarcerated more often than the occupied group. Although inconclusive, these findings do point to some benefits of community programs

(Sarri, 1981).

The National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals (1976) also stated that institutions should only be a last resort for those who are a danger to themselves or society, as there were clear indications that community-based programs can be used as effectively as institutions (Ohlin, 1974; Sarri, 1981).

Another comparison of group home versus closed custody placement that was undertaken in the United States was the Silverlake experiment of 1965 (cited in Bartollas, 1985). This study demonstrated little difference in impact between the group home and the institutional placements, but group home costs were one third of institutionalization.

Coates (1981) reviewed the results of the Provo experiment (1972) that compared the effectiveness of community and institutional placement. Results indicated that recidivism rates decreased for participants in community groups and not incarcerated groups. Coates (1978) also reviewed a study that compared recidivism in an institution and a community based program. It was found that community based program participants repeated offenses less often than institutional cohorts (Coates, 1978).

There is also evidence that any short term benefits that institutions may offer, such as more structure and more favourable adjustments in educational settings, do not have lasting benefits for youth. A study conducted by Webb & Scanlon (1981) indicated that a significantly higher percentage of youth in the institutional sample of the study entered state prisons compared with those young people dealt with in the community, regardless of the skills that they may have developed while in custody.

Based on evidence supporting short term programs such as the Highfields Project in the 1960's that led to the closing of training schools in the United States, Bartollas and Miller (1978) also argue for community based corrections. They contend that residents tend to be released from institutions with lower self-esteem, schooled in crime and committed to crime as a career.

Greilach (1982) contends that less restrictive settings are more effective in reducing delinquency, and repeat offenders are more responsive to the effects of less restrictive settings. Community contact is also viewed as important, as we must work with the youth's networks (school, family, peers) to produce positive results (Coates, 1981). Studies reported by Webb & Scanlon (1981), also indicated that most delinquents could be handled in non-

institutional settings or in smaller secure facilities versus larger training schools.

Thomas, Hyman, & Winfree (1983) in their analysis of 267 young offenders found that those confined to custody displayed institutional attitudes such as increased levels of delinquent self-identification, negative attitudes towards the legal system, and further delinquent behaviour upon release.

In another look at delinquent behaviour in a study of 515 residents in five training schools in the United States, Sieverdes & Bartollas (1986) found that young offenders in institutions formed subcultures and allegiance to peer relationships, with the greatest level of allegiance to peers occurring in the most secure facilities. Security levels of the placement influenced residents' behaviour. The more secure the facility, the more the residents conformed to a delinquent subculture that included aggression towards peers and staff, distrust of staff and allegiance to the inmate code. The inmate code includes informal rules such as "never rat on a con", "don't buy into staff", and "don't get involved in the affairs of others" (Sieverdes & Bartollas, 1986).

Dembo, (1987) in a study of detained young offenders



that was focusing on behavioral difficulties, found "that there was a positive relationship between antisocial value/behaviour orientation and the number of times one had been placed in secure detention." This remained statistically significant even when gender, age, and ethnicity were controlled for.

Krueger's (cited in Krueger & Hansen, 1987) study of self-esteem of boys and girls (status offenders and young offenders) placed in a group home setting found that the group home had a rehabilitative effect. The study demonstrated that the group home experience was successful in improving self-esteem and behaviour for some residents.

A study conducted by McVicar (1991) also established that young offenders facilities often result in youth forming negative subcultures. She concluded that unless institutions use treatment interventions with youth while they are in custody the level of negative behaviour will increase.

Summary . In spite of the fact that the bulk of the evidence favours community based interventions for young offenders, Bartollas (1985) admits that empirical studies have not clearly demonstrated that community residential

programs result in lower recidivism rates than institutional placements. However, he concludes that studies demonstrate that group homes are at least as effective as institutional placements, are far less traumatic to the youth, and are less costly to the government.

This last point coincides with the argument of Martinson (cited in Vinter, 1974, p. 48) who states that "If we can't do more for (and to) offenders, at least we can safely do less . . . " . Fabricant (1980), follows this same line of thinking in stressing that if deinstitutionalization has not led to increased recidivism then why not do less?

These results have often activated the age old argument that all programs appear to be equally effective or ineffective. In fact, some researchers have concluded that "nothing works" (Martinson, cited in Vinter, 1974). However, as pointed out in a host of more recent studies (Gendreau & Ross, 1987; Wasmund, 1988), it does seem that certain specific types of programs (custodial and non-custodial) are more effective than others. Positive results have been garnered from specific open and closed correctional programs when results did not focus on recidivism but looked instead at the outcomes of program interventions such as problem-solving and interpersonal skills training (Calderwood, 1991). These results suggest that programs which focus on

specific skill development such as interpersonal skills can in fact be effective (Gendreau & Ross, 1987).

It needs to be stressed that most findings on the impact of custodial placements tend to focus on recidivism as a measure of success. Coates (1981, p.91) notes the overreliance on the recidivism variable: "we spend more time looking for ways to compare overall programs particularly in terms of recidivism than we do trying to find out why certain outcomes are obtained. . ." (p.91). Analysis of outcome based solely on recidivism without paying attention to variables associated with delinquency generates little useful information.

### Self-Concept

Definition. Self-concept refers to the perception of oneself by oneself and is defined by Coopersmith (1967) as:

"the abstractions of an individual about the self, where the bases for the abstractions are the individual's observations of their own behaviour and the way other individuals respond to their attributes, appearance, and performances" . . . (p. 67).

Anson and Eason (1986) describe self-concept as "that organization of qualities that the individual attributes to himself" (p. 40). The meaning of self is created, maintained or altered through symbolic interaction with others.

Many use the terms self-concept and self-esteem interchangeably, which may lead to confusion. Power (1983) uses Blyth and Traeger's (1983) interpretation to clarify the concept. He states that the self-concept is the cognitive, non-judgmental aspect of the "self", while self-esteem is the affective, evaluative aspect of the "self", which reflects the proportion of satisfaction with the self-image. Power states that the self-concept seems to remain a more stable, constant phenomenon, while self-esteem may fluctuate more quickly over time.

Fitts (1978), also asserts that self-concept is more resistant to change. He points out that self-esteem is but one variable of self-concept and that a desirable self-concept is one that is positive and realistic. Fitts claims that in order for one to adopt a positive self-concept one has to make their own changes, with professionals intervening when necessary and providing the medium for change.

Self-concept and delinquency. Walter Reckless was among the first to claim that self-concept influenced a young person's inclination toward delinquent behaviour. The underlying assumption of that theory is that those who acquire a socially acceptable self-image in the formative years are less likely to experience difficulty with the law later in life. In other words, those who are not socially accepted in their younger years and are perceived by others as having the potential to become delinquent are more likely to either become involved in delinquent behaviour or perceive themselves as delinquent. Reckless came to this conclusion after conducting a series of studies comparing boys that were labelled as "good" or "bad" by their teachers. The labelled "bad boys" scored significantly higher in delinquency proneness testing and significantly lower in social responsibility scores. This group also reported being punished more severely, had more family conflict, and participated less in family outings than their counterparts. Four years later the two groups were retested and a significantly higher number of predicted "bad boys" had serious and frequent contact with the court system (Dinitz, Pfau-Vincent, 1982).

Sullivan (cited in Cohen, 1975) has suggested further rationale for the association between poor self-concept and delinquency. He states that attitude towards self is also

closely related to attitude towards others and explains that if a young offender feels disrespectful or hostile towards self, those feelings will be applied towards others as well.

More recent studies corroborate earlier works that suggest that overall self-concept of young offenders is lower than that of non-delinquent adolescents. In a study reviewed by Lund and Salary (1980), the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was administered to forty three non institutionalized young offenders and forty non-offenders. Notable differences were found in the group's self-concept with young offenders being more negative.

Studies by Himes - Chapmen and Hansen (1983) suggested that there was a significant difference in self-concept between those youth labelled as "normal" and those placed in either group homes or mental health centres. Those placed in residential facilities had lower self-concepts.

Fitts and Hammer (cited in Quay, 1987) reviewed eight studies of the self-concept of delinquent or behaviour disordered male youth. Delinquent youth scored significantly lower than non delinquent youth on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale. These studies found that delinquent youth had negative self-concepts (with little respect of or liking for self) and confusing and contradictory self-concepts

(Quay, 1987).

Labelling theory is one explanation of the relationship between low self-concept and delinquency. This theory holds that individuals internalize traits and self-concepts that others impose on them. The underlying premise is that if youth are labelled as delinquent then they will undertake that role. The delinquent label can thereby produce negative effects on self-concept (Quay, 1987).

Vogel (1982) asserts that individuals who are classified as deviant will be placed in situations where the label will be reinforced through association with other delinquents and will provoke a self-fulfilling prophecy. Polk and Schafer (cited in Rettig, 1972) submit that youth's self-concepts are systematically altered by consequent labelling and artificially imposed restrictions.

Basso & Fusco (1990), in reviewing labelling theory, assert that involvement in the juvenile justice system establishes a delinquency label. This label creates an antisocial identity that the child comes to accept and may create or perpetuate delinquent behaviour. Some argue that the correctional system actually creates chronic young offenders through the labelling process, although evidence is inconclusive.

Whether or not the justice system actually "creates" delinquents, as suggested by labelling theory, there are strong arguments that a young person's self-concept can be negatively altered through incarceration, which in turn may increase a young person's inclination towards delinquency.

Bliss (1977) conducted a study to determine if there was a significant difference in self-concept between institutionalized young offenders, those on probation, and non-offenders using the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, the Twenty Statements Test and interviews. As predicted, those young offenders in institutions had the most negative self-concept followed by those on probation and then the control group. Bliss states that if a young offender is not apprehended and labelled as delinquent they may grow out of it, but if the young person begins to define himself as "bad" based on the impact of their surrounding they will begin to behave in a deviant manner. The young offender seems to judge himself the same way as society and the court do. Negative behaviour may then be due to the young offender's negative view of himself.

Bartollas & Miller, (1978) in reviewing some of the NAJC data, also professed that residents are released from training schools with lower self-esteem.



Rettig (1980) in reviewing the impact of detention on a young person also attested to the fact that youths' self-concept is systematically altered by consequent labelling and artificially imposed restrictions.

Quay, (1987) reported studies by Culbert that indicated a clear decrease in positive self-concept as a function of duration of incarceration without treatment.

It is important to acknowledge that there is evidence which suggests that delinquency may not be associated with poor self-concept, that institutions are not harmful to self-concept and even that institutional treatment may lead to an increase in self-esteem (Goldsmith, 1987).

One study (Minor et al., 1985) of seventy-one institutionalized delinquents and two hundred and ten high school students revealed no differences in self-perceptions with both groups being quite positive.

Vogel's (1982) report on an evaluation of six residential young offender programs (secure and open custody) suggested that the level of security of the institution did not appear to be a significant variable in the enhancement of self-esteem. Arguments were made that positive relationships built in any setting enhance self-

esteem. However, this raises questions regarding the likelihood of young offenders building relationships with adults in large institutions where the demand for staff attention is so great.

Anson's (1975) three month longitudinal study of fifty institutionalized male offenders found no gravitation towards negative self-images for incarcerated youth. This study supports the view that involvement with the young offender system does not necessarily have a negative impact on the participant, although Anson does not go as far as to suggest that the experience may in fact be positive.

Power and Beveridge (1990) found in their study of the effects of detention on the self-esteem of 32 young offenders (aged 16-20) that the self-esteem of inmates became more positive over the period of their sentence regardless of background variables. These findings suggest that the arguments about negative effects of detention on a young person may not be wholly justified. It also raises the possibility that something positive and advantageous may actually be taking place over a period of detention. Power and Beveridge speculate that perhaps those entering the institution experience a decrease in self-esteem due to stress and as they get closer to release self-esteem begins to improve representing a return to the norm. Even if this

is the case Power and Beveridge suggest that would mean that the detention centres are not having adverse effects on the young offenders as negative effects may not be long lasting.

This raises an interesting argument regarding whether true changes occur in any setting. One presumption is that incarcerated youth, as they become accustomed to the expectations of their respective environments, learn the appropriate responses and sentiments for correctional or group home staff. What may be perceived by others as self-concept changes may in fact be learned responses rather than changes in self-evaluation. These "learned responses" are then repeated to convince others that changes have occurred. This argument holds that changes in any setting are not of any significance if they are short term and do not continue beyond custody. This raises the "nothing works" (Martinson, cited in Vinter, 1976) argument once again. However, even if such changes represent rote learned responses, as changes occur the young offender may be perceived differently by self and others which may in turn have a positive effect on self-concept.

#### Behaviour Adaptation and Delinquency

Maladaptive behaviours such as acting out in school, antisocial behaviour, aggressiveness towards others,

disobedience, showing off, and violence are often reported as being associated with delinquency (Stott, 1982).

In fact, numerous interpretations are used in the literature when discussing delinquent behaviour. Legal descriptors of delinquent behaviour are used when describing young people who have committed either status offenses (e.g., truancy, missed curfews) or offenses against either the Criminal Code of Canada (e.g., assault), or the Motor Vehicles Act (e.g., impaired driving).

Delinquent behaviour is also identified according to social norms. This "social" definition is explained as "behaviour considered by an adult to be improper for a minor" (LeBlanc, 1983 p 32). This behaviour is regarded as a violation of societal norms even when it is not linked to illegal activities (e.g., gang association and promiscuity).

LeBlanc (1983) conducted a series of research studies with 470 delinquent boys between the ages of 15 and 17 in an attempt to identify behaviour patterns of delinquents. He found that delinquent behaviour is often transitory, with material, non-violent, low-risk thefts representing the "mainstream illegal activities" of the delinquent group. LeBlanc also found when comparing groups of delinquents that the more identifiably delinquent the group, the more

negative the psychological characteristics. Some of the characteristics that emerged in the delinquent group included antagonism towards societal values, lack of concern for rules, and a strong identification with antisocial figures.

In a study conducted by Brannon, Brannon, Craig, & Martray (1990) to learn about the personality characteristics of delinquents, sixty young offenders (aged 13 to 17) who had been labelled as having either low self-image or as inconsiderate to self or others were analyzed. It was found that the personality dimension of extroversion was associated with the delinquent typology. This label is compatible with subtypes used by Achenbach & Edelbrock (1983), in their classification models that link personality traits to problem behaviour such as aggressiveness and delinquency.

Behaviour and Self-Concept. Self-concept and behaviour are also closely associated in the literature. A review of the literature carried out by Hansen and Maynard (1973) also indicated that poor self-concept is related to anxiety, poor school performance, drug use and acting out behaviour. Self-concept is seen as driving behaviour and behaviour as impacting on self-concept. It seems that there is a constant interaction between the two. Cohen (1975) has advanced the

idea that as behaviour improves, school attendance and self-concept, for example, may also improve. Cohen (1975) also contends that if delinquents see themselves as undesirable they may become anxious or depressed which may determine their behaviour. A downward cycle ensues, whereby negative self-concept reinforces negative behaviour, causing conflict with society's norms.

A further illustration of the likely relationship between self-concept and behaviour is the idea that acceptance or rejection of any new ideas, patterns, actions or attitudes is dependent on the consistency of the idea with the individual's concept of self. For example, if a young person views themselves as a delinquent, then learning to use an intricate gun or other tool associated with the delinquent persona appears easy, as it fits with their perception of self. That same young person may not be able to complete mathematical problems at an age appropriate level as they do not view themselves as scholastically capable. Behaviour and learning can be directed by traits which one assumes makes up the self.

### Conclusion

The preceding review leads to some interesting observations worth summarizing. Opinions on the effects of

custodial placement on young offenders remain divided. Findings, as described in this review, are conflicting. From Martinson's (cited in Vinter, 1976) stand that "nothing works" to Ross's (1987) rebuttal that specific types of treatment programs are effective, especially when recidivism is not used as a measure of effectiveness, the arguments regarding effectiveness of different custodial dispositions for young offenders continue.

Rationales for "tougher" dealings with young offenders are becoming more prevalent at the same time that strong arguments are being made for the use of treatment-oriented community programs. There is also concern that there are increasing numbers of institutionally placed young offenders, at a great cost to the public, without evidence of the impact of such interventions on the young offenders. The consensus is that more investigations are necessary to obtain conclusions regarding the effect that the juvenile justice system is having on young offenders. This study examines the differential impact of open and closed custody placements on two important variables that are linked to delinquency: behaviour and self-concept.

### Research Questions

The specific research questions this study will attempt

to explore are:

1. Are there significant changes in the self-concept of young offenders from admission to 30 days post-admission in either open or secure facilities?
2. Are there significant changes in the behaviour of young offenders from admission to 30 days post-admission in either open or secure facilities?
3. Is there a significant difference between the impact of secure or open custody placements on the self-concept of young offenders?
4. Is there a significant difference between the impact of secure or open custody placements on the behaviour of young offenders?
5. Is there an association between young offenders' self-concept and behaviour in either open or secure facilities?



## CHAPTER 3

### PROGRAMS

The purpose of this chapter is to delineate the independent variables in this study: namely, the Calgary Young Offender Centre that represents secure custody placement for young offenders, and the Enviros group homes that represent community placements for young offenders. Each program will be described organizationally and program wise in order for the reader to gain a full understanding of the settings that were studied.

#### Calgary Young Offender Centre

The Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) is a division of the Alberta Solicitor General, Correctional Services Department. It is a secure custody facility situated in Calgary, Alberta and houses young offenders, who are between the ages of twelve and seventeen, when remanded or sentenced to custody by the Provincial Youth Court. CYOC has the capacity to accommodate approximately one hundred thirty-six young offenders (male and female) and offers a variety of programs developed to enhance academic, employment and life skills.

The goals of the Calgary Young Offender Centre are:

1. "To fulfil the requirements of the decision of the Youth Court by containing these young people.

2. To provide an educational program which emphasizes the concept of responsibility, while influencing attitudes, insights, and self-esteem of young offenders in such a way that the probability of re-offence is reduced " (Calderwood, 1991, p. 45).

CYOC is comprised of seven units, five of which are assigned to meet specific functions. Robson is an intake and assessment unit. Rundle and Castle are two units that hold "special needs populations"; namely emotionally disturbed youth requiring treatment (Rundle) and female and younger male populations (Castle). Those youth exhibiting behaviour problems in the institution are placed in Blackrock, the special disciplinary unit; while those attending pre-release programs reside in Assiniboine Unit. Two other residential units, Sparrowhawk and Yamnuska, are the Centre's basic living units for sentenced and/or remanded young offenders.

Sparrowhawk unit was selected for this study as it compared most closely to the Enviros group homes. The residents most closely resembled the group home residents and no special intervention was administered to Sparrowhawk as it served as a control group in previous studies

completed by Calderwood (1991) and McVicar (1991).

Sparrowhawk Unit - Program Description. Sparrowhawk unit holds approximately twenty-six sentenced and/or remanded, male young offenders. Staffing consists of one unit supervisor responsible for the overall functioning of the unit including programming, staff supervision and case management of the residents. There are also six unit youth workers, who work in pairs for eight hour, day and afternoon shifts. Youth workers are responsible for behaviour management, implementation of case plans, and programming for the residents. The night shifts are covered by correctional officers who are strictly responsible for the custodial supervision of the residents.

Rules and routines on Sparrowhawk unit follow the Centre's standard operating procedures. For example, the unit operates under a four level privilege system with daily points awarded or denied to residents based on their behaviour. The points are reassessed every seven days and a level with conditions and privileges is assigned based on the points earned. The levels are:

no status:           No privileges are allowed and residents are placed on this level while awaiting a disciplinary hearing for misbehaviour. Based

on the outcome of the disciplinary hearing the old level is reinstated or a new level is assigned.

- level 1: Lowest level, privileges are limited.
- Level 2: Entry level upon admission to the institution as an incentive for improvement. Some privileges are granted with staff permission.
- Level 3: Residents are meeting all Centre requirements at this level and are therefore entitled to most privileges.
- Level 4: Highest level. Exceeds behavioural expectations. Has bonus privileges such as later bedtime and extra television.

Rewards and acknowledgment are also provided to the residents through regular Centre assemblies initiated by the staff. The residents are expected to adhere to Centre rules or directions given by staff at all times. A progressive discipline approach that ranges from verbal cues, to short time outs, to disciplinary board intervention and consequencing is administered depending on the severity of

the misbehaviour.

A daily schedule is maintained with little variance in order to maintain a consistent approach amongst staff. The weekend routine allows for a later wake up, activity programming instead of school or work program, and afternoon family visits. Otherwise the same routine as the daily program is followed:

07:00	Wake up. Shower, dress. Clean room.
07:30	Breakfast.
08:00	Unit chores.
09:00	School, work, day program.
11:30	lunch.
12:30	Free time.
13:00	School, work, day program.
14:30	Quiet time.
15:30	Free time. Recreation programming.
16:30	Dinner.
17:30	Unit programming.
20:30	
21:00	Bedtime NS & level 1. Free time levels 2 - 4.
22:45	Bedtime.

The clear structure of rules and routines add

consistency and stability to the centre. The unit staff basically expect residents to comply with program expectations and serve their dispositions without causing problems. Some authors criticize the structure as it does not allow for any spontaneous behaviour, positive or negative: " There are no expectations for residents to help each other, nor are any avenues provided for them to express their concerns"... (Calderwood, p.50, 1991). The average length of stay on Sparrowhawk unit is approximately three months.

Upon release from secure custody, young offenders are either transferred to open custody settings, such as the Strathmore Youth Development Centre, to serve any open custody dispositions or are released to the community. They may be released to the community with probation orders, bail orders or full release without any further obligations to the criminal justice system. Releases into the community may include a Child Welfare placement with Alberta Family and Social Services for those youth under sixteen who do not have any parental involvement; release to parents or guardian; release to community sponsor; or independent release for those over sixteen years of age.

Enviros Wilderness School Association

The Enviros Wilderness School Association (Enviros) is a private non profit organization consisting of residential and community programs for children, youth and families. The mission statement of Enviros is:

" Enviros is a community of people committed to enhancing the quality of family life in Alberta by satisfying society's need for alternative therapeutic environments. Our mission is to engage youth and their families in experientially based empowering opportunities so that they might learn to grow into an even greater potential" (Enviros, 1992).

Enviros administers programs for family and youth that are funded by diverse funding groups. Alberta Family and Social Services fund a 4 bed residential treatment centre for 14 - 17 year old males and females; a 4 person independent living program; a 6 bed receiving and assessment centre; a 10 bed treatment foster care unit for children aged 7 - 17; and an in home support unit with a capacity for 7 families.

The Calgary School Board funds two classroom settings and two teachers for Enviros' students as well as other

Child Welfare clients. The classrooms are situated in the residential treatment program and serve approximately 16 teenage students at various academic levels.

The federal government, through its Canadian Job Strategy Unit, funds a carpentry apprenticeship community program for 6 young people between the ages of 16 and 25.

Enviros continues to maintain a base camp operation for wilderness activities that is partially funded through fundraising activities as well as donations from service clubs, and foundations.

Enviros also manages two open custody group homes for male young offenders, which were the non-institutional custodial programs examined in this study. The Montgomery Group home began in April, 1986 and is a six bed, open custody home, which provides a community re-entry program for young people sentenced with a disposition of open custody under the Young Offenders Act. A second open custody home, North Haven, opened in April, 1990, and provides the same services as the original Montgomery Group Home. These group homes are contracted to Enviros by the Alberta Solicitor General Department.



Young Offender Group Homes - Program Description.

"The primary goal of the group homes is to assist the young offender in developing skills which will increase the likelihood of successful transition from custody to the community. The concept of the group homes, or their real reason for being, is to provide for the young people in the homes a positive and successful experience in the community that they can use to build on for further success for release. A basic tenet then is the assumption that most young offenders wish to be successful and given adequate support, guidance and consistency will be able to learn to be successful in the community " (Enviros, 1992).

Staffing at each group home consists of one director and three youth workers who cover the household twenty four hours per day. The staff work either eight hour or twenty four hour shifts including a seven hour sleep over. There is no awake supervision between the hours of midnight and seven o'clock in the morning. Staff work approximately two hundred and thirty hours per month, and are responsible for maintaining the home together with the residents, supervising the residents and assisting in case planning and program planning. A group home coordinator is responsible for the overall management of the homes.

Residents at the group homes are held responsible for their behaviour, life choices and decisions at all times. They are taught basic life skills with the expectation being that they will take care of all the housekeeping needs of the group home such as cooking, cleaning, lawn and vehicle maintenance, and laundry. The young people are further involved in assessing their own needs and developing a plan that will best provide the opportunities to meet those needs. Programs are therefore individualized and geared towards independence. Programs may include school, employment training, employment, a treatment program or any combination of those areas totalling a forty hour week. Residents are encouraged to take control of their own lives.

Although the group home staff encourage independence and community involvement, some group activities such as group counselling or recreation activities are required to help develop communication and cooperative living skills.

Rules at the group homes are enforced through a logical consequence approach directed at correcting specific misbehaviour. Repercussions of misbehaviour can involve the loss of a privilege, service work for others in the group home or community, return to custody, or a new charge being laid for illegal or violent misbehaviour directed at hurting self or others.

Although a routine is described in the residents' manual, this is used only as a point of departure for individual case planning. Routines are flexible and structured to fit the young persons needs as much as possible.

The daily routine at both group homes is as follows:

07:30	Dressed, showered, breakfast.
08:30	Day program (school, work, job search, treatment program) begins.
16:30	Day program ends.
18:00	Supper.
22:00	Curfew (Mon. - Thurs.).
23:00	Curfew (Fri. - Sat.).

(Bedtimes are independently negotiated with workers based on needs and level of responsibility and maturity assumed).

Weekend routines consist of day or overnight home visits to family or guardian whenever possible. A group home wilderness trip is planned for every third weekend. These trips are compulsory and are used to provide challenges and risks to young people in a safe environment. The trips are viewed as opportunities for the residents to experience success in new and exciting environments.

The average length of stay is approximately ninety

days, although residents have stayed as long as one year and as short a time as two weeks. Upon discharge, the same release options apply as for the residents at CYOC who do not have open custody dispositions to follow.

Residents cannot continue to reside at the group home once their custody dispositions are completed, and if they are clients of the Child Welfare system an alternative placement is found for them by their social workers with input from the group home staff.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

#### Design

The research design for this quantitative study was a quasi-experimental separate sample pretest/posttest design. The dependent variables were self-concept and behaviour. The independent variables were secure custody and group home placements for young offenders. Data for the secure custody sample were available from previous studies (Calderwood, 1991; McVicar, 1991).

#### Sample

This study focused on male young offenders who served their dispositions in open or secure facilities in Calgary, Alberta. The total sample consisted of 52 subjects; with 26 subjects drawn from the Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) and 26 subjects drawn from the Enviros group homes. The institutional young offender sample was drawn from a larger cohort of subjects from the Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) that were included in two previous studies completed by McVicar (1991) and Calderwood (1991). In order to effectively compare the institutionalized and group home populations, only data collected from one of the seven units

at CYOC was used (i.e., Sparrowhawk unit). The 26 residents of the Sparrowhawk unit most closely resembled the group home residents as they were all males, mostly sentenced, and did not take part in any "special" treatment or program offered in the Centre, as they served as the control group in both the Mcvicar and Calderwood studies.

The open custody young offender sample was drawn from the Enviros Wilderness School Association - Solicitor General Group Homes (Enviros). Young Offenders residing at Enviros group homes, and serving a sentence of at least thirty seven days open custody, served as participants for the group home sample. This was consistent with the CYOC sample as those serving less than thirty seven days were ineligible to participate in the Calderwood or McVicar studies. Twenty-six participants from Enviros group homes took part in the study.

None of the participating residents had Child Welfare status as Alberta Family Social Services was not approached for consent for this study. Child welfare status was determined by review of residents' Solicitor General YOMMIS file upon admission to the group home. Only those residents without Child Welfare status were included in the study group. Residents from both groups were involved in a day program.

As depicted in Table 1, the sample in both groups consisted of male young offenders, whose ages ranged from 13 to 19 with the mean age being 16 for the Sparrowhawk sample and 17 for the group home sample. Some minor differences in age were noted. Sixty five percent of the group home residents were 17 years of age or older compared to forty six percent at CYOC. The CYOC sample also appeared to have a more even distribution of residents between fifteen and eighteen years of age whereas more of the group home residents were 17 or 18.

The majority of young offenders in both settings were caucasian although the percentage of visible minority youth was higher for the group home sample (31% versus 15% for the institutional sample).

All the subjects were remanded or sentenced into custody under the Young Offenders Act, with the majority of the sample having a sentenced disposition. Four of the residents in the Sparrowhawk unit were remanded to custody while awaiting trial, therefore sentence disposition and length for those 4 participants was unknown. The main difference between the two samples in this regard was that none of the group home participants had a custodial remand sentence. The group home population were all aware of their sentence length and expiry date.

The number of prior dispositions was similar for both groups, with a frequency of 3 - 4 prior dispositions being most common for each group followed by 1 - 2 prior dispositions. This indicates that most of the sample had appeared in youth court more than three times (and perhaps numerous times) before their most recent youth court appearance. It is important to note that there may be a difference in numbers between actual offenses and youth court appearances. This occurs because of a policy in Alberta of employing diversion and alternative measures for first and second offenses whenever possible. Therefore, in most cases, a young person would have been in conflict with the law and involved with the judicial system on at least one occasion prior to appearing before youth court. This would be true for both sample groups.

The participants' crimes varied from low severity to medium severity and high severity offenses. Severity of offense for both groups was classified as high, medium, or low according to a Severity of Offenses Scale used by the Young Offender Branch of the Solicitor General, correctional Services (Alberta Solicitor General, 1990), which is presented below:

#### HIGH SEVERITY

1. Armed robbery or attempted armed robbery.
2. Robbery with violence or threat of violence.



3. Violent sex offenses (i.e., sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, child molestation, etc.)
4. Arson.
5. Sabotage.
6. Conspiracy to traffic or import a dangerous drug (i.e., narcotics).
7. Trafficking and possession for the purpose of trafficking (dangerous drugs).
8. Manslaughter.
9. Extortion.
10. Prison breach.
11. Escape custody with violence.

#### MODERATE SEVERITY

1. Possession of dangerous drugs.
2. Trafficking, conspiracy, possession for the purpose of trafficking soft drugs (i.e., marijuana, hash).
3. Forgery, fraud, false pretences, uttering, unlawful use of credit card.
4. Bribery.
5. Forcible entry.
6. Break and enter.
7. Criminal negligence causing death or resulting in bodily harm.
8. Non-violent sex offenses (i.e., gross indecency, indecent assault, incest).
9. Escape (non-violent).
10. Theft over 1000 dollars.
11. Take motor vehicle without consent.
12. Obstruction of justice and perjury.
13. Possession of stolen property over 1000 dollars.
14. Possession of a weapon for a purpose dangerous to the public peace.
15. Aggravated assault.

#### LOW SEVERITY

1. Possession of stolen property under 1000 dollars.
2. Common assault.
3. Possession of soft drugs.
4. Theft under 1000 dollars.
5. Public mischief.
6. Unlawfully in a dwelling house.
7. Criminal negligence not resulting in bodily harm.
8. Possession of a restricted or prohibited weapon.
9. Possession of forged currency, passports, cheques.
10. Soliciting.
11. Fail to appear.
12. Cause a disturbance.
13. Alcohol over.
14. Impaired driving.

15. Drive disqualified.
16. Dangerous driving.
17. UAL (Unsupervised Area, TA, Walk-Away).
18. Federal statutes (Canada Evidence Act).
19. Provincial statutes.
20. Municipal By-Law.

Descriptive statistics of the severity of offenses indicated that, when the 3 categories of severity were assigned weightings of 1-3, the mean ratings for the 2 groups were similar (2.1 for the institution group and 2.0 for the group home group) with regard to overall severity of offenses. It is interesting to note, however, that 94% of the offenses committed by the group home population were categorized as moderate severity crimes compared to 43% in the CYOC population, where there was a more equal distribution among the three categories of offenses. CYOC had more high and low severity cases, which may speak to inconsistency in secure custody sentencing. Offense categories at both placements included theft under \$1000.00; break and enter; theft over \$1000.00; robbery; breach of probation; robbery with violence; assault; sexual assault; and manslaughter. Frequency data for offenses was not available. It appeared that the range of criminal behaviour was similar for both groups, but that more high severity crimes were reported in the institutional sample.

A higher percentage of dispositions over 280 days was indicated in the institutional sample of dispositions (58%

versus 23%) The group home sample had a much higher percentage of dispositions under 120 days (50% versus 3%). That there were longer sentences for the CYOC population is in keeping with the larger number of high severity crimes the young people were serving dispositions for at CYOC compared to the group home population. However, the fact that for the CYOC group there were more young people serving dispositions for low severity offenses does not fit with the fact that there was only one disposition under 121 days noted. Again, this may speak to possible sentencing discrepancies or it may be due to the institutional sample with low severity offenses having a high frequency of offenses.

Behavioral tendencies towards suicide and aggression, as well as drug use, were higher for the institutional sample. Descriptive information was obtained from admission documents completed by youth workers upon the residents' admission to the institution. It should be noted that this data was gathered from self-reports that participants shared with the intake counsellor upon admission. It may be that group home residents under reported any emotional or drug problems in order to be accepted for group home admission.

The comparability of the two groups is in question. Ages, ethnic origin and the number of prior dispositions are

similar for the two groups. Larger differences appear, however, for offense severity, length of sentence and reported drug use, aggression and suicidal tendencies. This information may depict the CYOC sample as more disturbed. However, as noted earlier, the CYOC sample had less to lose by reporting drug use, aggression, and suicidal tendencies than the residents attempting to enter a group home. Therefore information from group home candidates regarding behavioral tendencies and drug use may not be accurate.

As group home residents were not a "captive" audience, some of the participants ran away prior to completing post tests. Although those residents were eliminated from the study it is important to also describe them to see if they were a distinct group. This information is presented in Table 2. As indicated, the 9 group home residents who did not complete the study were very similar to other group home participants in terms of age, ethnic origin, legal status, offense category, and behavioral tendencies. Differences did appear in their longer length of disposition and more frequent drug usage. It is noteworthy that differences between the group home and institutional samples were also noted for these variables. It may be that the runaways more closely resembled the institutional sample in terms of being more disturbed than the group home sample that did not run away.

Detailed socio-demographic information on the staff at each setting was not gathered. Staff at either setting were similar in terms of their level of education. The staff at both programs had either a two year child care college diploma or a university bachelor's degree.

Table 1  
Socio-demographic Variables of Participants  
By Group

	Institutional Sample	Group Home Sample
	(N = 26)	(N = 26)
Age (mean)	16	17
13-14	4	1
15-16	10	8
17-18	12	17
19	0	0
Ethnic Origin		
Caucasian	22	18
Indian	2	2
Oriental	1	1
Hispanic	1	2
Mulatto	0	1
Metis	0	2
Legal Status		
Sentenced	17	26
Remand	4	0
Sentence/Remand	5	0
Prior Case		
Dispositions		
1-2	7	8
3-4	12	10
5-6	2	4
7+	5	4
Offense Category		
Low severity	6	0
Moderate	11	25
High	9	1

Table 1 (continued)  
 Socio-demographic Variables of Participants  
 By Group

	Institutional Sample	Group Home Sample
	( <u>N</u> = 26)	( <u>N</u> = 26)
Length of Current Disposition (days)		
1 - 120	1	13
121 - 280	10	7
281 - 365	5	4
366 - 720	5	2
721 +	1	0
Remand	4	0
Tendencies		
Suicidal	9	5
Aggressive	1	0
Assaultive	0	0
Violent	0	0
Drug Use		
Frequent / Intense	10	3
Sometimes	13	9
Never	3	14

Table 2  
Socio-demographic Variables of Group Home Runaways

	(N = 9)
Age (mean)	17
13-14	0
15-16	3
17-18	6
19	0
Ethnic Origin	
Caucasian	7
Indian	1
Oriental	0
Hispanic	0
Mulatto	0
Metis	1
Legal Status	
Sentenced	9
Remand	0
Sentence/Remand	0
Prior Case	
Dispositions	
1-2	0
3-4	3
5-6	4
7+	2
Offense Category	
Low severity	0
Moderate	8
High	1



Table 2 (continued)  
 Socio-demographic Variables of Group Home Runaways

	Group Home Sample
	(N = 9)
Length of Current Disposition (days)	
1 - 120	1
121 - 280	2
281 - 365	2
366 - 720	2
721 +	2
Remand	0
Tendencies	
Suicidal	3
Aggressive	0
Assaultive	0
Violent	1
Drug Use	
Frequent /	
Intense	3
Sometimes	4
Never	2

### Data Available.

Data on institutionalized young offenders' level of self-concept and behaviour was available from two previous studies that were completed at the Calgary Young Offender Centre (Calderwood 1991, McVicar, 1991, respectively). The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) and the Achenbach Child Behaviour Checklist (ACBC) were administered to the institutional sample in these studies, while the same measures were administered to the group home sample in the present study.

### Measures

Tennessee Self-Concept Measure (TSCS; Fitts, 1965). The TSCS is a self-administered scale that determines how individuals perceive themselves. The scale consists of 100 self-descriptive statements that produce scores on eight subscales. In keeping with the Calderwood study, for purposes of comparison, eight subscale scores relating specifically to positive self-concept and the total positive scale score were used as the dependent variables. A brief description of the meaning of the total positive scale and each of the subscales is presented below:

1. Total Positive Score. Overall level of self-esteem. High scores reflect feelings of value, worth and confidence. Reactions and actions of an individual are based on those feelings. Low scores indicate self doubt regarding self-worth, anxiety, depression and unhappiness.

2. Identity. Individual's self-perception of who they are.

3. Self-Satisfaction. Feelings regarding individual's self-perception reflecting level of self-acceptance.

4. Behaviour. Individual's self-perception of their own actions.

5. Physical Self. Individual's body image including health and sexuality.

6. Moral - Ethical Self. Individual's feelings of moral worth and satisfaction with their sense of religion.

7. Personal Self. Evaluation of personal self-worth based on psychological traits and characteristics.

8. Family Self. Individual's feelings of self-worth as a family member or close social group.

9. Social Self. Perception of self related to "secondary others". Sense of self-worth with regard to social interactions with others.

Reliability for the TSCS has been demonstrated through several studies. Congdon (1958) obtained significant test-retest reliability ( $r = .88, p < .01$ ) over a one week period a shortened version of the scale. Significant test-retest reliability ( $r = .85-.91, p < .01$ ) for the various profile segments used in computing the total positive scores was also documented by Fitts (1965).

Validity for the TSCS was determined by correlations with measures such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). Fitts (1965) found that difference scores (between psychiatric patients and normal people) on the TSCS and the MMPI significantly similar ( $r = .72, p < .01$ ). Other validation procedures that have been used for the TSCS are discrimination between groups, correlation with other personality measures, and personality changes under certain conditions. All of these procedures have produced further evidence of the validity of the scale (Fitts, 1965). A copy of this scale can be found in Appendix A.

The Achenbach Child Behaviour Checklist (ACBC, Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983). The ACBC is designed to record the behavioral competencies and problems of children, as reported by a knowledgeable observer. This scale requires the rating of 118 behaviours on a three point response scale. It produces scores on ten subscales, summarized on two scales: internalizing (including subscales for somatic complaints, schizoid, uncommunicative, immature, obsessive compulsive, and hostile withdrawal) and externalizing (including subscales for hostile withdrawal, delinquent, aggressive, and hyperactive). The internal and external scale scores were used as the dependent variables in this study. Higher scores represent more behavioral disturbances.

Reliability for the ACBC has been demonstrated for scale scores and total problem and competence scores. In tests conducted by Achenbach and Edelbrock (1983) the median Pearson correlation for 1 week test-retest reliability was .89 for mothers' ratings of the scales. Test-retest correlations for scores over a three month period averaged .73 for child care workers' ratings of behaviour problems. Test-retest correlations for scores over a six month period was in the .70 range for both behaviour problems and competence scores. For individual items, intraclass correlations between item scores were in the .90 range (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983).

The content validity of the ACBC is viewed in terms of whether its items are related with the clinical concerns of parents and child care workers. Achenbach (1983) found that 116 of the 118 behaviour problem items and all of the social competence items were significantly associated with clinical status as established independently of the ACBC (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983).

Significant correlations with other behaviour rating scales and empirically derived syndromes provide evidence of construct validity (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983). Evidence for criterion validity is also presented in terms of significant difference between demographically matched

referred and non-referred children on all scores (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983). A copy of the ACBC can be found in Appendix B.

### Ethical Considerations

Consent to undertake this study was obtained from the participating agencies, namely the Alberta Solicitor General Department and the Enviros Wilderness School Association as well as from the Faculty of Social Work Ethics Committee at the University of Calgary (see Appendix C).

For the CYOC sample, individual anonymity of the subjects was ensured because only coded data from previous studies (with no identifying information) was used. For the Enviros sample, participation of the residents in the proposed study was voluntary. The residents were informed of their right to choose to participate or not without any negative consequences. The purpose and potential benefits of the study, and any inconveniences, were also explained verbally and in writing to all participants. Subjects were given a consent form to sign that acknowledged their agreement to participate in the study (see Appendix D). The consent form also explained the participants' rights to inquire about the research and the recourse they had to a resource person outside the research group. As the residents

were under the custody of the Solicitor General of Alberta, parental permission was not required. However, because it is important to work collaboratively with parents, a letter explaining the study and the extent of their children's participation was sent out to the parents or guardians. This letter also addressed parents rights to intervene on behalf of their children (see Appendix D).

All information collected on the group home residents for the purpose of the study was kept confidential. Subjects remained anonymous and all materials retained by the researcher were assigned case numbers for matching of pretest and posttest scores. Files containing confidential information were kept in a locked filing cabinet that was not accessible to others. Data will be maintained for six months following the completion of the thesis and will then be destroyed.

### Procedures

All group home data was collected between August 1991 and May, 1992. Prior to completing the ACBC or giving the residents the TSCS to complete, youth workers at the group homes were trained on how to administer the tests. This training compared to that which CYOC workers were given in the earlier studies.

Youth workers in both settings rated the behaviour inventory. These workers were the residents' primary workers. As primary or key worker, youth workers were responsible for overall assessment and case planning of their residents. Therefore they became knowledgeable about their subjects throughout the process and were able to complete the ACBC quite well.

The ACBC was completed by the youth workers at the group home within seven days after a young person's admission and again thirty days later. This was the same procedure that was used to collect data at the young offender centre (McVicar, 1991). Some of the questions on the ACBC are very specific and somewhat sensitive in nature; however, the youth workers were expected to respond according to their own perceptions and knowledge of the young person and did not discuss the questions with the young person.

The TSCS was filled out by the group home residents themselves. These scales were completed on the same day as the youth worker completed the ACBC (within 7 days of admission and again 30 days later). Again, testing procedures followed the methods used at CYOC, in the Calderwood study (1991).



Due to the personal items on the TSCS, all young people participating in the study were offered a comfortable, isolated location to complete the questionnaire. This was also in keeping with the procedures used in the Calderwood (1991) CYOC study.

## CHAPTER 5

## RESULTS

Statistical Analysis.

First, t-tests were done to examine change over time (pre - post) on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) and the Achenbach Child Behaviour Checklist (ACBC) for each sample group (Questions 1 & 2). Next, in order to determine whether there was a significant difference between the two groups at the onset of the study, pretest scores on the TSCS and the ACBC for the two groups were compared via t-tests. These analysis indicated significant differences between the groups (pre-treatment) on both measures. The institutional sample had significantly lower pre-treatment self-concept scores ( $\bar{M} = 41.81$ ) than the group home sample ( $\bar{M} = 47.08$ ),  $p < .05$ . The institutional sample also had significantly higher pre-treatment behaviour scores for both the internalizing behaviour score ( $\bar{M} = 55.69$ ) and the externalizing behaviour score ( $\bar{M} = 60.35$ ), compared to the group home's sample for internalizing behaviour scores ( $\bar{M} = 50.15$ ),  $p < .05$  and externalizing behaviour scores ( $\bar{M} = 54.85$ ),  $p < .05$ . Because significant differences on the two dependent measures existed between the groups pre-treatment, a one way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), which controls for pre-treatment scores, was used to examine whether post-

test scores on the two dependent measures were different for the two groups (Questions 3 & 4). Finally, a Pearson's product-moment correlation test was performed to examine the question of relationship between the two dependent variables: self-concept and behaviour (Question 5). All statistical procedures were accomplished by using the SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Science (Nie et al., 1977, 1981). Statistical analysis are presented in the order of the study's questions.

Question 1. Are there significant changes in the self-concept of young offenders from admission to thirty days post-admission in either group home or institutional facilities?

A. Group Home. Analysis of the total positive score on the TSCS indicated no significant differences between the pre ( $M = 47.08$ ) and post ( $M = 47.35$ ) self-concept scores of young offenders,  $t(25) = -.16$ ,  $p = .87$ . Neither were there significant differences for any of the self-concept subscales. Table 3 presents the results of the group home sample pre and post test scores on the TSCS scale. Both total score and subscales scores are presented.

Table 3

Comparison of Pre-Post Self-Concept Scores : Group Home

Variables	PRE n = 26			POST n = 26		
	Range	X	SD	Range	X	SD
Total Positive Score	30-62	47.08	8.50	23-67	47.35	10.37
Identity	30-58	47.23	8.65	25-62	45.92	10.40
Self- Satis- faction	32-65	49.69	9.38	33-70	49.88	10.59
Behaviour	33-61	45.77	9.38	15-62	43.98	11.08
Physical Self	39-68	52.00	8.26	34-73	54.27	10.48
Moral- Ethical	20-54	41.46	9.01	23-59	40.85	9.29
Personal Self	32-70	47.96	9.76	23-66	49.08	10.40
Family Self	20-62	48.73	10.39	26-70	48.88	10.89
Social Self	34-67	48.38	8.73	31-61	47.16	8.10

B.Institution. Analysis of the total positive score on the TSCS indicated no significant differences between the pre ( $\bar{M} = 41.81$ ) and post ( $\bar{M} = 39.92$ ) self-concept scores of young offenders,  $t(25) = 1.76$ ,  $p = .09$ . However, the result may be construed as approaching significance, with participants having lower self-concept at post-test. There were no significant differences for any of the self-concept subscales, although results for two of the subscales (physical self and family self) approached significance  $p < .09$ . Table 4 presents the results of the institutional sample pre and post test results for the TSCS scale. Both total score and subscale scores are presented.

Table 4

Comparison of Pre-Post Self-Concept Scores : Institution

Variables	PRE n = 26			POST n = 26		
	Range	X	SD	Range	X	SD
Total Positive Score	24-67	41.81	10.10	22-67	39.92	9.74
Identity	26-57	40.69	10.22	26-58	38.58	10.37
Self-Satisfaction	28-71	49.31	11.30	24-77	48.27	11.45
Behaviour	14-64	35.96	10.96	16-54	34.38	8.76
Physical Self	23-90	47.38	14.50	22-66	43.96	11.53
Moral-Ethical	18-49	34.08	8.00	17-53	33.54	8.16
Personal Self	19-68	47.46	12.57	20-71	47.88	12.38
Family Self	22-58	43.00	10.35	24-59	40.19	10.37
Social Self	31-68	43.42	8.72	29-73	42.65	10.39

Question 2. Are there significant changes in the behaviour of young offenders from admission to thirty days post-admission in either group home or institutional facilities?

A. Group Home. Analysis of the internalizing score on the ACBC indicated no significant differences between the pre ( $M = 50.15$ ) and post ( $M = 52.88$ ) behaviour scores of young offenders  $t(25) = 1.68, p = .11$ . Analysis of the externalizing score on the ACBC also indicated no significant differences between the pre ( $M = 54.85$ ) and post ( $M = 57.46$ ) behaviour scores of young offenders  $t(25) = -1.34, p = .19$ . (See Table 5).

Table 5

Comparison of Pre-Post Behaviour Scores : Group Home

Variables	PRE n = 26			POST n = 26		
	Range	X	SD	Range	X	SD
Internalizing	36-63	50.15	7.99	36-74	52.88	10.01
Externalizing	45-65	54.85	6.95	36-82	57.46	11.02

B. Institution. Analysis of the internalizing score on the ACBC indicated a significant difference between the pre ( $\bar{M} = 55.69$ ) and post ( $\bar{M} = 60.00$ ) behaviour scores of young offenders  $t(25) = -3.44$   $p < .01$ . Analysis of the externalizing score on the ACBC also indicated a significant difference between the pre ( $\bar{M} = 60.35$ ) and post ( $\bar{M} = 66.58$ ) behaviour scores of young offenders  $t(25) = -5.78$ ,  $p < .001$ . These results suggest that the staff at CYOC perceived deterioration in the young offenders' behaviour within thirty days of admission to the institution. Table 6 presents the behaviour scores for the institution sample.

Table 6

Comparison of Pre-Post Behaviour Scores : Institution

Variables	PRE n = 26			POST n = 26		
	Range	X	SD	Range	X	SD
Internalizing	36-71	55.69	8.79	40-71	60.00	8.18*
Externalizing	46-80	60.35	8.55	48-81	66.58	9.06**

\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*  $p < .001$



Question 3. Is there a significant difference between the impact of group home or institutional custody placements on the self-concept of young offenders?

Controlling for pretest group differences, the ANCOVA statistical procedure yielded no significant difference ( $F(1, 48) = .08, p = .78$ ) between the posttest self-concept scores of the group home ( $M = 47.35$ ) and institution ( $M = 39.92$ ) samples. Table 7 presents self-concept scores for both sample groups.

Table 7

Examination of Between Group Differences in Self-Concept

Group	Pretest		Posttest	
	X	SD	X	SD
Institution	41.81	10.10	39.92	9.74
Group Home	47.08	8.50	47.35	10.37

Question 4. Is there a significant difference between the impact of group home or institutional custody placements on the behaviour of young offenders?

Controlling for pretest group differences, the

ANCOVA statistical procedure yielded no significant difference ( $F(1, 48) = .11, p = .74$ ) between the posttest internalizing behaviour scores of the group home ( $M = 52.88$ ) and institution ( $M = 60.00$ ) samples. As well, no significant difference ( $F(1, 48) = .17, p = .69$ ) between the posttest externalizing behaviour scores of the group home ( $M = 57.46$ ) and institution ( $M = 66.58$ ) samples was found. Table 8 presents behaviour scores for both sample groups.

Table 8

Examination of Between Group Differences in Behaviour

Variables	Group Home n = 26		Institution n = 26	
	X	SD	X	SD
<u>Pretest</u>				
Internalizing Behaviour	50.15	7.99	55.69	8.79
Externalizing Behaviour	54.85	6.95	60.35	8.55
<u>Posttest</u>				
Internalizing Behaviour	52.88	10.01	60.00	8.18
Externalizing Behaviour	57.46	11.02	66.58	9.06

Question 5. Is there an association between young offenders' self-concept and behaviour for either of the sample groups ?

Correlations between scores on the two dependent variables were calculated both pre and post for each group. Three of the eight correlations were significant (See Table 9).

There was a significant negative correlation between the total self-concept pre-scores and the externalizing behaviour pre-scores for group home residents  $r(24) = -.47$ ,  $p < .01$ . This indicates a negative relationship between positive self-concept and externalizing behaviour problems pre-treatment.

As well, there was a significant negative correlation between the total self-concept pre-scores and the internalizing behaviour pre-score for institutional residents  $r(24) = -.56$ ,  $p < .01$ . This indicates a negative relationship between positive self-concept and internalizing behaviour problems pre-treatment.

Finally, there was a significant negative correlation between the total self-concept post-scores and the internalizing behaviour post-scores for institutional residents  $r(24) = -.46$ ,  $p < .05$ . This indicates a negative

relationship between positive self-concept and internalizing behaviour problems post treatment.

Table 9

Correlations Between Self-Concept & Behaviour Scores

Variables	Group Home n = 26	Institution n = 26
<u>Pretest</u>		
Self-Concept & Internalizing Behaviour	.08	-.56*
Self-Concept & Externalizing Behaviour	-.47*	-.35
<u>Posttest</u>		
Self-Concept & Internalizing Behaviour	.23	-.43*
Self-Concept & Externalizing Behaviour	.09	-.24

Note. A negative correlation denotes an association between positive self-concept and less perceived behavioral disturbance.

\*  $p < .05$

## CHAPTER 6

## DISCUSSION

In this chapter the results for each of the study's questions are discussed. This is followed by an assessment of the limitations of the study, with particular attention focused on the fact that there were some clear group differences pre-treatment. A final summary includes implications for practice and suggestions for future research.

Discussion by Question

Question 1. No significant differences were noted in the self-concept of either group at thirty days post-admission. One possible explanation for this is that the thirty day period is too short a time span for any real effects to be incurred. This is a time of orientation for the young person, and it is more likely that the residents are "looking out" rather than internalizing their experience. The tendency for the institutional sample to have lower self-concept scores post-treatment compared to pre-treatment raises some questions regarding the immediate impact of incarceration. This lends some support to the research that secure custody may have a negative impact on self-concept (Bartollas & Miller, 1978; Rettig, 1980; Quay,

1987). It may be that as the reality and repercussions of confinement are felt by residents who are placed in institutions they begin to develop a more negative self-concept. It is not hard to understand how institutional placement may be more stigmatizing than community placement.

Question 2. In reviewing the question of behaviour changes within a thirty day period, the group home residents demonstrated no significant differences pre-post. Again, the thirty day time frame may be too short to influence behaviour. On the other hand, the lack of negative change over the first month counters the commonly held belief that youth placed in care usually experience a very short honeymoon period followed by progressively more acting out behaviour.

Conversely, the institutional sample scored significantly more negative with regard to both internalizing and externalizing behaviour after thirty days of incarceration. These results offer little surprise. The institutional sample of residents were placed in a very controlled setting where rules and routines were imposed and structured. One may expect that this group would initially comply out of fear, but would begin to rebel as they grew more accustomed to the setting. Rettig (1983) would support the claim that punishing youth through incarceration fosters

further deviance or acting out behaviour. The disempowerment of institutional custody could account for increased negative behaviour as the youth rebel and form negative subcultures, conforming to the delinquent norms of the group as pointed out by Sieverdes and Bartollas (1986).

The group home sample, on the other hand, had a much less restrictive environment. The residents had exposure to varied social and environmental influences such as school, families, employment, friends and recreation. As each resident had experiences that were independent of the rest of the group, there may have been less likelihood of negative groups forming and impacting on individual behaviour.

It should also be noted that a possible difference between the expectations of institutional and group home staff could have resulted in discrepancies between staff in scoring the residents' behaviour at the two settings. The institutional staff may have expected and demanded more compliance than the group home staff. Alternatively, it may have been that the group home staff saw less of the residents on a daily basis and could not monitor behaviour as closely as the institutional staff.

Question 3. The lack of significant differences

between the impact of the two residential programs on the self-concept of young offenders may again speak either to the difficulty in assessing self-concept changes on such a short term basis or to the "nothing works" argument. The group home sample did have much higher self-concept scores than the institutional sample post-treatment, but much of this difference was due to pre-treatment group differences. Given the trend for the self-concept of the institutional sample to be lower over the 30 day period and the fact that the self-concept of the group home sample did not decline over this same period, one wonders whether a longer testing period might uncover a more positive impact for the group home placement, as much of the literature would suggest (Sarri, 1981; Greilach, 1982)

Question 4. A lack of significant difference was also noted between the impact of the two programs on the behaviour of young offenders. The institution sample did have more negative behaviour scores than the group home sample after thirty days; however, much of the difference was due to pre-treatment group differences. Again, this may point to the difficulty in comparing behaviour changes on a short term basis.

The institutional sample's behaviour did become more negative over time while the group home sample's behaviour



remained stable. This leads to questions regarding whether the negative behaviour would continue to increase over time for the institutional sample while the behaviour of the group home sample might at least remain stable, as suggested in the studies of Sieverdes and Bartollas (1986).

Question 5. Correlations between internalizing behaviour and self-concept were found to exist both upon admission and after thirty days of placement for the institution sample, but this did not hold for externalizing behaviour. Internalizing behaviours include non-communication, somatic complaints and hostile withdrawal; in other words, behaviours that may not be demonstrated yet are present in the emotional make up of the young person. It makes sense that internalized emotions and behaviours might have a stronger association with self-concept than externalizing behaviour for adolescents who are placed in an institutional setting that controls for outward displays of behaviour and emotion.

The only significant correlation for the group home sample was between externalizing behaviour and self-concept pre-treatment. This result is more difficult to explain. The lack of association between internal behaviour and self-concept could be due to the possibility that the group home sample were less disturbed than the institutional sample and

that their internalized sense of self was not as damaged. It may also be that, given the greater freedom in the group home, the adolescents were more able to "act out" their feelings. The lack of association between self-concept and externalizing behaviour post thirty days also proves difficult to explain. It could indicate that the young persons learned to conform to the behavioral limits of the group home in order to get desired privileges.

#### Limitations of the Study

Pre-treatment Group Differences. The biggest limitation of this study is the fact that there seems to have been significant group differences pre-treatment that call into question the comparability of the groups. It was not possible to randomly assign subjects to the residential programs for obvious reasons. The socio-demographic differences that were noted between the groups were reinforced by the significant group differences pre-treatment on self-concept and behaviour scores. This suggests that the institutional sample may have been significantly more disturbed than the group home sample and that therefore the effectiveness of the custodial programs cannot be compared. This does not negate, however, the validity of examining pre-post differences for each separate sample (question 1 & 2).

Further Limitations. One limitation of the overall design of the study was the use of existing data. This was done because of the difficulty procuring permission to do research in closed custody institutions. The result, however was that the choice of measures for the group home sample was dictated by previous studies of institutions. Another problem in this regard was that a short 30 day pre-treatment time frame was used in the previous studies and this had to be matched for the group home sample. Clearly, a longer follow-up period seems desirable.

As discussed in the methodology chapter of the study, the researcher could not control for incidences of participants not completing the study due to their acquiring new charges, being released earlier than expected, or running away while in the group homes. Further, in order to match the institution population as closely as possible certain group home residents had to be excluded from the study (e.g., those who were serving less than thirty days in custody or those who had Child Welfare status).

Staffing abilities and attitudes could also have affected the outcome of the study. Not only did staff choose to be employed at one facility or the other, but the quality of the working environment could be very different. There may be some question as to how possible differences in the

attitudes of the staff in each setting could affect their opinions of and interactions with the residents. For instance, one wonders if institutional staff might have less benign attitudes towards youth than group home staff.

#### Summary and Implications for Practice

Due to the aforementioned limitations, the results of the study should be considered with care. Two variables, self-concept and behaviour, were examined in relation to the impact of different custodial placements (open and secure). Although no significant differences were found with regard to the relative impact of the differential custodial programs on self-concept and behaviour, the institutional sample showed significant deterioration in both internalized and externalized behaviour and a trend for deterioration in self-concept.

Although the lack of significant improvement pre-post for either group supports Martinson's (cited in Vinter, 1974) claim that "nothing works", the within group deterioration for the institutional sample raises some question about the deleterious effects of this type of placement. One is left to wonder what differences a longer-term follow-up period may have had on the results. Also, given the non-comparability of the groups, one is left to

wonder how the institutional sample may have responded to group home treatment. Another issue is raised by the fact that the group home dropouts (runaways) seemed to resemble the institutional sample in terms of disturbance (i.e., institutional and group home runaway samples demonstrated a higher level of disturbance than the group home sample). This raises the possibility that group home placement may not be appropriate for the most disturbed young offenders.

The use of the most intrusive and expensive custodial placements to deal with the young offender population must continue to be questioned. As pointed out by Ross (1987), for those young people who pose no serious risk to the public, an array of community alternatives would be more appropriate to address the individual rehabilitative needs of the young offender. As young offenders are not a homogeneous group, more diverse programs are needed to address the differential impact of programs on various types of offenders. Again, the argument of "let's do less more effectively" (Fabricant, 1980) bears repeating.

It seems that although the justice model currently prevails, and young offenders are being incarcerated in secure facilities more frequently, there are no solid indicators that the approach is more effective. There appears to be a need to take a more balanced approach when

interpreting the custodial dispositions under the YOA and to ensure that child welfare as well as judicial issues are addressed.

Most importantly, the long-term impact of custody needs to be investigated further. Better controlled studies with longer follow up periods are needed if we are to make informed, rational policy decisions for the future. It is hoped that this study will help to spur such research.

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Appendix A

Tennessee Self-Concept Scale

## TENNESSEE SELF-CONCEPT SCALE

- 1 = Completely False  
 2 = Mostly False  
 3 = Partly False and Partly True  
 4 = Mostly True  
 5 = Completely True

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. I have a health body  | 2. I like to look nice and neat all the time       |
| 3. I am an attractive person                                     | 4. I am full of aches and pains                    |
| 5. I consider myself a sloppy person                             | 6. I am a sick person                              |
| 7. I am neither too fat nor too thin                             | 8. I am neither too tall nor too short             |
| 9. I like my looks just the way they are                         | 10. I don't feel as well as I should               |
| 11. I would like to change some parts of my body                 | 12. I should have more sex appeal                  |
| 13. I take good care of my self physically                       | 14. I feel good most of the time                   |
| 15. I try to be careful about my appearance                      | 16. I do poorly in sports and games                |
| 17. I often act like I am "all thumbs"                           | 18. I am a poor sleeper                            |
| 19. I am a decent sort of person                                 | 20. I am a religious person                        |
| 21. I am an honest person  | 22. I am a moral failure                           |
| 23. I am a bad person  | 24. I am a morally weak person                     |
| 25. I am satisfied with my moral behaviour                       | 26. I am as religious as I want to be              |
| 27. I am satisfied with my relationship to God                   | 28. I wish I could be more trustworthy             |
| 29. I ought to go to church more                                 | 30. I shouldn't tell so many lies                  |
| 31. I am true to my religion in my everyday life                 | 32. I do what is right most of the time            |
| 33. I try tom change when I know I'm doing things that are wrong | 34. I sometimes use unfair means to get ahead      |
| 35. I sometimes do very bad things                               | 36. I have trouble doing the things that are right |
| 37. I am a cheerful person                                       | 38. I have a lot of self control                   |
| 39. I am a calm and easy going                                   | 40. I am a hateful person                          |
| 41. I am a nobody  | 42. I am losing my mind.                           |
| 43. I am satisfied to be just what I am                          | 44. I am as smart as I want to be                  |
| 45. I am just as nice as I should be                             | 46. I am not the person I would like to be         |
|  | 48. I wish I didn't give up                        |

47. I despise myself
49. I can always take care of myself in any situation
51. I take the blame for things without getting mad
53. I do things without thinking about them first
55. I have a family that would always help me in any kind of trouble.
57. I am a member of a happy family
59. My friends have no confidence in me
61. I am satisfied with my family relationships
63. I understand my family as well as I should
65. I should trust my family more
67. I try to play fair with family and friends
69. I take a real interest in my family
71. I give in to my parents
73. I am a friendly person
75. I am popular with men
77. I am not interested in what other people do
79. I am as sociable as I want to be
81. I try to please others, but don't over do it
83. I am no good at all from a social standpoint
85. I try to understand the other fellows point of view
87. I get along well with other people
89. I do not forgive others easily
91. I do not always tell the truth
93. I get angry sometimes
95. I do not like everyone I know
97. Once in a while I laugh at a dirty joke
99. At times I feel like swearing
- as easily as I do
50. I solve my problems quite easily
52. I change my mind a lot
54. I try to run away from my problems
56. I am an important person to my friends and family
58. I am not loved by my family
60. I feel that my family doesn't trust me
62. I treat my parents as well as I should
64. I am too sensitive to things my family says
66. I should love my family more
68. I do my share of work at home
70. I quarrel with my family
72. I do not act like my family thinks I should
74. I am popular with women
76. I am mad at the whole world
78. I am hard to be friendly with
80. I am satisfied with the way I treat other people
82. I should be more polite to others
84. I ought to get along better with other people
86. I see good points in all the people I meet
88. I do not feel at ease with other people
90. I find it hard to talk with strangers
92. Once in awhile I think of things too bad to talk about
94. Sometimes, when I am not feeling well, I am cross
96. I gossip a little at times
98. At times I feel like 94. swearing
100. Once in a while I put off until tomorrow what I ought to do today

Appendix B

Achenbach Child Behaviour Checklist



### ACHENBACH CHILD BEHAVIOUR CHECKLIST

0 = Not True (as far as you know)  
 1 = Somewhat or sometimes true  
 2 = Very True or Often True

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Acts too young for his /her age</p> <p>2. Allergy (describe):</p> <p>3. Argues a lot</p> <p>4. Asthma</p> <p>5. Behaves like opposite sex</p> <p>6. Bowel movements outside toilet</p> <p>7. Bragging, boasting</p> <p>8. Can't concentrate, can't pay attention for long (describe):</p> <p>9. Can't get his/her mind</p> <p>10. Can't sit still, restless, or hyperactive</p> <p>11. Clings to adults or too dependent</p> <p>12. Complains of loneliness</p> <p>13. Confused or seems to be in a fog</p> <p>14. Cries a lot</p> <p>15. Cruel to animals</p> <p>16. Cruelty, bullying, or meanness to others</p> <p>17. Day-dreams or gets lost in his/her thoughts</p> <p>18. Deliberately harms self</p> <p>19. Demands a lot of attention</p> <p>20. Destroys his/her own things</p> <p>21. Destroys things belonging to his/her family or other children</p> <p>22. Disobedient at home</p> | <p>23. Disobedient at school</p> <p>24. Doesn't eat well</p> <p>25. Doesn't get along with other children</p> <p>26. Doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving</p> <p>27. Easily jealous</p> <p>28. Eats or drinks things that are not food - don't include sweets</p> <p>29. Fears certain animals, situations or places, other than school (describe):</p> <p>30. Fears going to school</p> <p>31. Fears he/she might think something bad</p> <p>32. Fears he/she has to be perfect</p> <p>33. Feels or complains that no one loves him/her</p> <p>34. Feels others are out to get him/her</p> <p>35. Feels worthless or inferior</p> <p>36. Gets hurt a lot, accident-prone</p> <p>37. Gets in many fights</p> <p>38. Gets teased a lot</p> <p>39. Hangs around with children who get in trouble</p> <p>40. Hears sounds or voices that aren't there (describe):</p> |
|---|---|

41. Impulsive or acts without thinking
42. Likes to be alone
43. Lying or cheating
44. Bites fingernails
45. Nervous, high strung, or tense
46. Nervous movements or twitching (describe):
47. Nightmares
48. Not liked by other children
49. Constipated, doesn't move bowels
50. Too fearful or anxious
51. Feels dizzy
52. Feels too guilty
53. Overeating
54. Overtired
55. Overweight
56. Physical problems without known medical cause:
  - a. Aches or pains
  - b. Headaches
  - c. Nausea, feels sick
  - d. Problems with eyes (describe):
  - e. Aches or other skin problems
  - f. Stomach aches or cramp
  - g. Vomiting, throwing up
  - h. Other (describe):
57. Physically attacks people
58. Picks nose, skin, or other parts of body (describe):
59. Plays with own sex parts in public
60. Plays with own sex parts too much
61. Poor school work
62. Poorly coordinated or clumsy
63. Prefers playing with older children
65. Refuses to talk
66. Repeats certain acts over and over; compulsions (describe):
67. Runs away from home
68. Screams a lot
69. Secretive, keeps things to self
70. Sees things that aren't there (describe):
71. Self - conscious or easily embarrassed
72. Sets fires
73. Sexual problems (describe):
74. Showing off or clowning
75. Shy or timid
76. Sleeps less than most children
77. Sleeps more than most children during day and /or night (describe):
78. Smears or plays with bowel movements
79. Speech problem (describe):
80. Stare blankly
81. Steals at home
82. Steals outside the home
83. Stores up things he/she doesn't need (describe):
84. Strange behaviour
85. Strange ideas (describe):
86. Stubborn, sullen, or irritable
87. Sudden changes in mood or irritable
88. Sulks a lot
89. Suspicious or obscene language
90. Swearing
91. Talks about killing self
92. Talks or walks in sleep (describe):
93. Talks too much
94. Teases a lot

95. Temper tantrums or hot temper
96. Thinks about sex too much
97. Threatens people
98. Thumb - sucking
99. Too concerned with neatness or cleanliness
100. Trouble sleeping (describe):
101. Truancy, skips school
102. Under active, slow moving, or lacks energy
103. Unhappy, sad, or depressed
104. Unusually loud
105. Uses alcohol or drugs for nonmedical purposes (describe):
106. Vandalism
107. Wets self during the day
108. Wets the bed
109. whining
110. Wishes to be of opposite sex
111. Withdrawn, doesn't get involved with others
112. worrying
113. Please write in any problems your child has that were not listed above:

Appendix C  
Ethics Approvals



2500 University Drive N.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4

Faculty of SOCIAL WORK

Telephone (403) 220-5942  
FAX (403) 282-7269

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

by

THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

The PROJECT entitled:

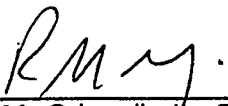
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF OPEN VERSUS SECURE CUSTODY

ON THE SELF CONCEPT AND BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG OFFENDERS

of Silvia Vajushi (student)

in the judgement of this Committee, has met The University of Calgary ethical requirements for research with human subjects.

July 15, 1991  
Date

  
Richard M. Grinnell, Jr., Ph.D.  
Research Services, Faculty of Social Work





SOLICITOR GENERAL  
Correctional Services Division  
Young Offender Branch



10th Floor, John E. Brownlee Building, 10365 - 97 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 3W7 403/422-5019

April 29, 1992

Ms. Sylvia Vajushi  
Coordinator  
Enviros Group Home  
5121 - 17 Avenue N.W.  
Calgary, Alberta  
T3B OP8


Dear Ms. Vajushi:

Re: Request for Approval

Further to your letter of October 14, 1991 outlining changes to your research proposal, on behalf of Patricia Meade, Acting Executive Director, Young Offender Branch, I can advise that approval is granted for you to proceed with this project.

Please advise if the Young Offender Branch can be of further assistance.

Yours truly,

  
W. Brent Doney  
Assistant Director  
Young Offender Branch

WBD/kc

# enviros

5121-17th Avenue N.W.  
Calgary, AB T3B 0P8

February 22, 1991

Ms. Silvia Vajushi  
218 4th Avenue N.E.  
Calgary, AB T2E 0J1

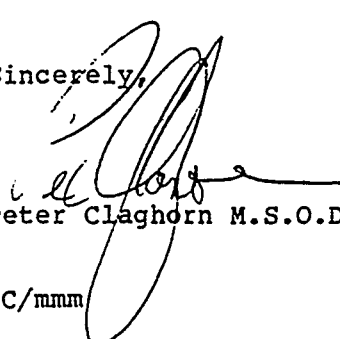
Dear Silvia,

I am pleased to inform you that Enviros is consenting to your request to conduct a research study at our two young offender group homes, (North Haven & Montgomery group homes). I am satisfied that any possible ethical concerns have been addressed with care and attention and I do not foresee any difficulty with the proposed study.

I extend my encouragement and support to you in completing your studies and offer the co-operation of Enviros in meeting the thesis project.

If there is any way the organization can further assist you, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



Peter Claghorn M.S.O.D.

PC/mmam

Appendix D  
Consent Forms



## PARENTAL CONSENT

Dear

Your child has agreed to participate in a research study that I am undertaking. I have enclosed a copy of that agreement for your information. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, or if you prefer that your child not participate, I would like to hear from you as soon as possible. Please feel free to contact me at Enviros (288 - 5104) between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m..

Sincerely,

Silvia Vajushi  
Master of Social Work Student  
Faculty of Social Work  
University of Calgary

## RESIDENT CONSENT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to take part in a study regarding young offenders and give my consent to Silvia Vajushi to include me in the study. I understand that I will complete one questionnaire on how I feel about myself. I will complete this questionnaire twice: once upon admission and again 30 days later. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire each time. I also understand that one of the group home staff will complete a questionnaire about my behaviour at the time of my admission and then 30 days later. I will not be directly involved with that part of the study.

I understand that the purpose of the study is to investigate any changes that happen to young offenders in the first month of their group home placement in terms of how they feel about themselves and how they behave. Also, this study will compare any changes that happen to young offenders who have group home placements to any changes that happen to young offenders who have secure custody placements.

If I have any concerns about the study I know I can speak to the group home director, who is not part of this study. I am also aware that the study may not have any direct benefits to me, but that it may help other people understand more about the effect of placements on young offenders.

Answering this questionnaire and having the group home staff complete a questionnaire about my behaviour will not pose any risk to me either while I complete my custody disposition or upon my release. My name will not be used in this study and questionnaires will be identified with a number rather than my name. There will not be any information at the end of this study that identifies me as an individual. Anything I answer for this study will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of this study in a way that identifies me. To further ensure confidentiality the questionnaires I fill out will be destroyed six months after the study is completed. I understand any participation is voluntary and that I can choose to not take part or to quit at any time without any repercussions to myself. I also acknowledge that my participation in the study will not affect my release date nor any treatment plans that I choose to undertake.

signed \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

witnessed \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_