

"apprenticeship" period should be created so they can be educated in the "field" by subsidizing their employment and allowing them to earn credits toward their High School Diploma. After graduation, this job opportunity should be available on a full time basis.

*Response:* OJJDP is entering into a collaborative effort with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Endowment for the Arts to promote business vocational skills, entrepreneurship, recreation, and arts programs for afterschool, weekend hours, and summer. Apprenticeships and other job skills programs would be developed with the involvement of the business sector. The Pathways to Success Program will be implemented as part of the SafeFutures Program to provide vocational, job, and other skills training as part of a comprehensive service delivery system. Five additional Pathways to Success grants will be competed and awarded independent of the SafeFutures Program.

It is also possible that various components of the SafeFutures Program can be effectively linked with school-to-work opportunities in the applicant's State, if available. Created through the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, this collaborative initiative between the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor prepares youth for first jobs in high-skill, high-wage careers, to achieve high academic and occupational standards, and for further postsecondary education and training. The initiative has three core elements, including: (1) School-based learning consisting of classroom instruction based on high academic and occupational skill standards that integrates work-based learning and school-based learning; (2) work-based learning which includes work experience, structured training and mentoring at job sites; and (3) connecting activities, which include a variety of activities that build and maintain bridges between school and work. Examples of connecting activities include courses that integrate classroom and on-the-job instruction, matching students with participating employers and training job-site members.

For more information on School-to-Work Opportunities, contact the School-to-Work Opportunities Information Center at (202) 260-7278.

*Comment:* A respondent recommended that the prevention component of the Program Plan include youth suicide and teenage grief as well as provide a holistic approach to preventing delinquent behavior.

*Response:* Teenage grief and suicidal patterns are common signs of psychological disturbances in juveniles

at high risk of getting involved in delinquent behavior or social acting out. To address psychological needs, OJJDP is looking to mental health services to provide evaluation (diagnosis), prevention, and treatment of mental disorders for high-risk juveniles and juveniles in the juvenile justice system. Under the SafeFutures program, funds will be available to establish or enhance mental health services in the juvenile justice system and to promote, develop, and implement mental health services for at-risk children, including victims of child abuse.

*Comment:* After studying OJJDP's proposed Comprehensive Program Plan for fiscal year 1995, one respondent commented that the Plan is still addressing symptoms rather than the core problem of family dysfunction.

*Response:* OJJDP recognizes the critical importance of strong families and their essential role in nurturing strong, healthy children. The Office also recognizes the link between dysfunctional families and juvenile delinquency. OJJDP has long supported family-related studies and programs designed to strengthen families and family strengthening remains a program priority. In 1988, OJJDP launched a major parenting initiative entitled Effective Parenting Strategies for Families of High-Risk Youth. An interdisciplinary team comprised of family researchers at the University of Utah and policy scientists at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation conducted an extensive literature review focused on the causes and correlates of delinquency, and the effectiveness of prevention, intervention, and treatment strategies for high-risk families. The results of the study are summarized in a publication entitled Strengthening America's Families: Promising Parenting Strategies for Delinquency Prevention, User's Guide. The fiscal year 1995 OJJDP Comprehensive Program Plan provides funding support for family strengthening activities that build on the findings and recommendations of this study.

*Comment:* A respondent noted that various segments of OJJDP's Proposed Comprehensive Program Plan touched on the lack of employment skills as a major contributor to juvenile crime, but did not thoroughly address this problem area and the need for early career and/or employment preparation. The suggested strategy for addressing this area is to teach employment skills and career preparation to all school children by incorporating instruction into the curriculum of every grade level, beginning in kindergarten.

*Response:* OJJDP has long recognized the importance of providing juveniles with the skills they need to increase their employment potential and pursue the career of their choice. For this reason, many of the OJJDP supported programs have components that address this area. For example, the national Cities in Schools (CIS) dropout prevention program teaches job skills at the elementary, middle and high school levels. CIS has also established a number of alternative schools. A key component of their program is not only to provide young people with job skills, but to provide them with career exploration through job shadowing. Youth are also encouraged to pursue entrepreneurial activities. Several other fiscal year 1995 programs have components that address this issue. OJJDP also partners with other agencies such as the Departments of Commerce, Health and Human Services, Education, Labor and others and hopes to expand those partnerships in the future.

*Comment:* One respondent was concerned that the Family Strengthening Program did not place greater emphasis to prevention or acknowledge a role for community-based organizations.

*Response:* OJJDP remains committed to addressing the wide range of family strengthening needs that encompass prevention, intervention and treatment. The OJJDP publication, Strengthening America's Families: Promising Parenting and Family Strategies for Delinquency Prevention, User's Guide, stresses that there is no "one-size-fits-all" family strategy for preventing delinquency. Several types of parenting programs are needed. There are programs designed for parents of infants, children and adolescents. Some programs are best suited for well-functioning families, while others address the needs of dysfunctional families. OJJDP also remains committed to encouraging the involvement of community-based organizations. The Family Strengthening Program calls for the creation or expansion of programs "that enlist schools and other local entities in family programming." "Other local entities" includes community-based organizations. Many of the representative 25 programs that the researchers identified as particularly promising classified themselves as "prevention" programs and most included relevant community-based organizations in aspects of their program strategy. OJJDP will continue to emphasize family strengthening through prevention, intervention and treatment utilizing a range of available resources that are community-based.