

“CHARTING CHANGE”

PROGRESS IN THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

IYC MURPHYSBORO

MODELS FOR CHANGE INITIATIVE  
JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION  
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**The John Howard Association of Illinois** provides critical public oversight of the state's prisons, jails, and juvenile correctional facilities. As it has for more than a century, the Association promotes fair, humane, and effective sentencing and correctional policies, addresses inmate concerns, and provides Illinois citizens and decision-makers with information needed to improve criminal and juvenile justice.

**As a partner in the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change juvenile justice initiative**, the John Howard Association of Illinois has been tasked with observing first hand each of Illinois' eight Youth Centers, the secure correctional facilities operated by Illinois' new Department of Juvenile Justice, and to report on the Department's progress toward reforms consistent with Models for Change goals. Progress will be measured according to "performance measures" proposed for each Youth Center and for the Department overall.

**This report** describes one Youth Center and the performance measures proposed for it in 2007. The report also describes first steps that have been taken by the new Department of Juvenile Justice to improve conditions and operations, as well as particular obstacles associated with the Youth Center. Collectively, the reports on all eight of Illinois' Youth Centers are intended as a resource for policymakers, advocates, Models for Change partners, the media and the public who seek to understand secure confinement as it exists for youth in Illinois and the challenge of bringing about change in the ways that Illinois now incarcerates troubled youth. Individually and collectively these reports provide a base-line reference for annual updates on the Department's progress at each Youth Center and on periodic reports on issues such as education, staffing, disciplinary practices, reentry or "aftercare" for youth, and the Department's budgetary needs.

**This report draws upon the observations of volunteer citizen visitors** who through the John Howard Association provide public oversight of prisons, jails, and juvenile corrections facilities. These visits bring people from many walks of life into closed institutions where they can observe activities and conditions and speak with residents and employees.

This report was written by and under the direction of Malcolm C. Young with Patricia Connell and with contributions from John Howard Association of Illinois staff members Charles A. Fasano and Jannifer Nevilles.

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CHAPTER THREE: “CHARTING CHANGE”  
PROGRESS IN THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE  
IYC MURPHYSBORO

**IYC Murphysboro**

**IYC Murphysboro** is almost unique among Youth Centers. It was designed and constructed recently, in 1997, and for the purpose for which it is being used: as a boy’s “boot camp.”

IYC Murphysboro is about 300 miles south of Chicago and about 25 miles west of Interstate 57, literally at the end of a country road a few miles north of east-west Illinois Route 13 in slightly rolling and wooded land loaded with deer. From the approach, the Youth Center appears a compact, single-level facility. It is larger than it looks, one structure houses nearly all of the indoor activities, living areas, and class rooms for about 150 boys.

Inside, the facility has sufficient space to contain a large gym which doubles as a multipurpose room, school class rooms, a library, clean wide corridors, a cafeteria dining room with long tables much like those in many high schools, and offices. The paint on the cinderblock walls is fresh with bright spots added. Beige linoleum floors are broken with green and purple tiles in geometric patterns. The building is well lit artificially and naturally, comparable to a contemporary suburban public school. Boys live dormitory style in four open, bunk-bedded units styled as military barracks, but with locked doors to the unit as a whole and glassed-in security unit overlooking each unit. There are tables, bathrooms and laundry facilities on each unit. There is a wood shop in a semi-detached portion of the building and, almost the only detached structure, a horticultural building and greenhouse. Outside but close along the building itself are two recreation areas including basketball hoops, parallel bars, and a running track around the circumference. The entire site is ringed by a wire link security fence topped with razor ribbon.

IYC Murphysboro has a rated capacity of 156 boys; each barracks-styled unit can house up to 60 boys. It is classified as a medium security facility. As part of the overall “boot camp” program, boys participate in rigorous physical training, regular education and substance abuse treatment. As youth progress, they earn greater privileges, including the right to participate in public service projects in the local communities under staff supervision.

## Performance Measures for IYC Murphysboro

### A. Physical Setting

IYC Murphysboro presents a conundrum. Its interior hallway walls and common areas are basically bare and the dormitories sparsely decorated. But it is a newer facility that is open, well lighted from inside and out, and with some color designed into it and some walls brightly painted. It would be far less of a challenge to redesign Murphysboro into a more “child friendly” and welcoming facility that it would be at most of the other Youth Centers. Yet there is a reason that at Murphysboro, the emphasis is on order, not color or expression. Murphysboro is intended to have a military atmosphere.<sup>1</sup> These Performance Measures recognize that Murphysboro’s mission might auger against making otherwise desirable and easily-added decoration and modifications which would turn the Youth Center into a warmer, brighter, and stimulating place for youth. This is one of the many details that should be addressed as the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice considers the overall parameters of its boot camp program.

1. IYC Murphysboro will consider increasing the amount of displayed art work, inspirational posters, notices of achievement and bulletin boards in the barracks rooms, confinement, treatment and dining areas, and increased displays in the school area.

*Between our visits in 2006 and 2007, there was a modest increase in decoration or postings in both the facility and the school. The walls in the living units carry some postings of group or individual achievements. The amount of color and materials on the walls in class rooms varies. Our recommendations are tempered only because at IYC Murphysboro, administrators will have to balance the visual order they feel to be required by the quasi-military nature of the program against the value of opportunities for artistic and literary expression and recognition for a boy’s accomplishments.*

2. Repainting walls in common areas in lighter, brighter and varied colors.

*The facility is already lighter, brighter and more colorful than most Illinois Youth Centers will ever be. There are still opportunities to add variety and more color. Satisfaction of this performance measure lies in consideration given by Administrators to the extent to which they can depart from a fairly military color scheme.*

3. Taking steps to reduce noise or soften the appearance of the facility.

*IYC Murphysboro is constructed of cement block and hard linoleum or cement floors which would be difficult to alter, and lower as a priority than doing so at other Youth Centers. Ceilings in the barracks-styled living units are high. The building does not strike us as acoustically noisy. This may be explained in part by the sharp limits, almost prohibitions, on conversation in common areas such as the dining room. The facility could nevertheless review what it can do to reduce noise and soften appearances.*

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<sup>1</sup> The John Howard Association of Illinois team was struck by the pink wall color in the confinement section, which seemed neither masculine nor military nor out of place.

#### 4. Meals and food service

*Boys at IYC eat with their living units in a single dining room organized around long tables with fixed chairs on either side. Boys enter in line formation, are not permitted to talk, and pass through a cafeteria-style line before taking their place at a table and then sitting in unison and on command.*

*The food has been well above average in quality, variety and quantity on each of our visits. Dishes are well-seasoned and prepared with some degree of imagination. Staff members usually eat the food that is served youth. During both visits, vegetables were fresh and there was a choice of dishes. The Superintendent and staff are proud of the quality of the food and the cooks take care even with the presentation of food. Some boys did complain about the quantity of food served. Staff denied strict limits on quantity of food served, which seemed adequate even for young men engaged in physical activity as are the “cadets,” was described to us as “typical.”*

*As is almost uniformly the case, boys who work in the kitchen seem to enjoy the work, take pride in it, and demonstrate capability and responsibility. Kitchen jobs are not thought of as teaching opportunities, but they do obviously contribute to real work experience for boys.*

*One performance measure will be in IYC Murphysboro’s evaluation of the rather rigid “no talking” rule against a slightly more social experience during meals.*

#### 5. Increasing and maintaining landscaping efforts and the development of recreational fields.

*Unlike most other Youth Centers, IYC Murphysboro does not have a lot of empty property within the security fence line. It does however have an active horticultural program and a greenhouse, described below. For program reasons, IYC Murphysboro should consider making use of the horticultural program and its faculty to replant the grounds within and without the security perimeter. Shrubs, flower beds, and occasional trees could ease the hard lines of the structure and increase the feel of a campus for learning and growth, and would provide an outlet for the horticultural program.*

### **B. Youth at Facility; Classification**

#### 1. Can the facility document the demographic profile and delinquency history of youth at the facility, and is documentation consistent with that provided by other Youth Centers?

*The staff at IYC Murphysboro was able to produce an “Offense list of youth” from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice’s Juvenile Tracking System. This document shows the name and identifying information for youth at IYC Murphysboro, the county of commitment, and the offenses for which he was committed, the class of offense, the minimum sentence and the projected release date. Not shown on the form in use (in September 2006) are: race or ethnicity of youth; prior history within the juvenile justice system, educational attainment, or flags for mental health or drug abuse histories. Race and ethnicity, educational attainment and mental health levels are available in other formats but cannot be easily disaggregated.*

2. Criteria, and consistency of use thereof, by which the suitability of youth for the boot camp program at Murphysboro is determined.

*Criteria for selection for the boot camp program are, in part: A delinquency adjudication or court evaluation order in which the underlying offense does not include a gun charge or sex offense; clearance by a mental health professional for boys having a history of suicide attempts within the past two years and boys who have been hospitalized for psychiatric treatment other than substance abuse excluded; 13-14 year old boys and with certain charges can be admitted after administrative review; admission restricted to minimum and medium security classifications.<sup>2</sup> There is not very specific selection criteria and does not provide much guidance to the type of youth who should be admitted to the Boot Camp program.*

*We did not have information to evaluate the consistency by which these criteria were applied to youth assigned to Murphysboro in 2006. We did note that while youth appeared to have been committed for a range of felonies, the class I felonies included residential burglaries and other offenses that are elevated in class for reasons other than the violent nature of the offense itself. Class 3 felonies appear to include theft offenses in which the value of property taken exceeded \$300. Perhaps most interesting, 19 of the 92 youth at IYC Murphysboro on 29 September 2006 were admitted for Class 4 felony offenses, most of which were drug-related and five for Class A or less misdemeanors. Together youth in these categories comprised 26% of Murphysboro's population at the time of our visit. Thus significant portions of youth at Murphysboro were committed for low level non-violent property or drug offenses. Whether these youth are appropriate for the boot camp program may depend upon their offense histories, their social histories, and the intransigence of any drug problems. There remain at least two fair questions: is a program of the Boot Camp's intensity and level of investment worthwhile and necessary for youth with less serious offenses or should it be used for youth with more serious histories in the juvenile justice system? Is there any tendency to assign youth to Murphysboro who are thought to be "easier" to work with or more likely to succeed as opposed to youth who are in need but at greater risk of failure in the program or upon release from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice?*

*Satisfaction of this Performance Measure requires a revisit of the assignment criteria and a reconsideration of the level or seriousness of the offense as one screening device.*

3. Monitoring classification and assignment of youth by race and ethnicity.

*In assigning youth to Murphysboro, the Department directly confronts a conflict between assigning youth to less secure, favored facilities on a race-neutral basis and institutionalizing a policy of "regionalization." IYC Murphysboro should be a preferred placement, for it offers a program that is intense, quite fully occupies each resident's time with educational classes, drills, physical exercise and vocational training, and is intended to improve performance, motivation, and organization. But Murphysboro is a great distance from Chicago, and, conversely, closer to the rural and largely white southern portion of the state. There are probably several ways to fairly, equitably, and appropriately assign Illinois youth to this facility, perhaps none of them perfect. The Department will satisfy an important performance measure when it makes a good choice from among the ways in which it might select youth for assignment*

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<sup>2</sup> "Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro - Program Overview" photocopied publication provided to visitors at IYC Murphysboro, September 2006, at p. 5.

*to Murphysboro, balancing the desire to “regionalize” assignments with the goal of making the boot camp program available to those boys who will benefit the most from it without regard to race or ethnicity. The Department should be able to document that assignment to Murphysboro is based on objective information about the background, deficits and strengths of each youth committed to it.*

*Documentation of the number of youth who are objectively determined to be appropriate for the boot camp program at Murphysboro --- that is, of the results of screening for this program --- could be used to evaluate the need, or lack thereof, for similar programs.*

### **C. Behavior Management and Discipline**

#### **1. Modifying behavior management and institutionalizing balance and restorative justice**

*It might have been anticipated that in keeping with a para-military program IYC Murphysboro would follow a relatively rigid or strict model in behavior modification and discipline. It is true that in common areas, during movement in the hallways, or when corrections staff or visitors enter residential areas, “cadets” who are not standing jump to their feet and loudly shout: “Attention!” As “cadets,” boys are marched in strict order into the gym for assemblies, stand at attention, wait for permission to sit, must ask for permission to speak, and respond to each command with a shout.*

*But once the observer gets past the loud shouted replies to orders, it becomes remarkably evident that at IYC Murphysboro behavior management and discipline are less rigid, less punitive, and more purposeful than at most other boy’s Youth Centers. John Howard Association of Illinois visitors observed considerable individual interaction between staff and youth, and positive and constructive rewards and activities for boys at IYC Murphysboro. Instances observed included a security officer having loaned a boy a book and then asking the boy for his opinion about the book; vocational teachers seem respected by boys, seem interested in their learning, and appear to play a mentoring or “favored teacher” role.*

*One factor in the apparent quality of interaction between staff and youth is the relatively small size of the youth center, the length of the program, and the program design which emphasizes constructive relationships between all staff and youth.*

*From the start, confinement has been imposed less frequently and for shorter lengths of time than at other facilities. For the period from July through December of 2006 (the first six months of the operation of the new Department of Juvenile Justice) the rate of confinement of youth for major offenses at Murphysboro was one quarter that at Harrisburg and Joliet, and less than one half of that at St. Charles and Kewanee. When we visited in October 2007, no boys were in confinement. There are alternative means of discipline built into the boot camp program.*

*Minor misbehavior results in youth being “counseled” by staff and may include a requirement of exercise. Additional misbehavior can result in a loss of points which can affect the cadet’s attaining rank and privileges. Occasionally an entire squad will be required to perform additional physical training as a consequence.*

*Boys at IYC Murphysboro have in the past been given a “Duty Book” with a list of tasks which included memorizing multiplication tables, making a presentation, or completing the obstacle course, or more recently an “EOD” card (Exercise of the Day) upon which positive and negative notes may be entered, the negative ones for failure to follow rules. In either case, progress and notes, particularly those critical of a boy, will be discussed in counseling. Good behavior and progress is rewarded with privileges; loss of points means that a boy cannot watch movies, play sports or call home as often as others. With the accumulation of good scores, a boy advances in rank.*

*According to the manual, “this mechanism places the staff leader in a mentoring and teaching capacity as opposed to a control capacity.”<sup>3</sup> We observed this: in the hallway a boy and officer conversed about the boy’s progress, in a book that the Youth Supervisor had recommended to him (on Martin Luther King, Jr.); within the class rooms we saw teachers engage with boys; and, particularly in the vocational programs where, as will be noted below, the instructors were very much mentors.*

*Boys can work their way toward increased privileges. IYC Murphysboro had established a “step down” program which was in its second year in October 2007. Boys earn their way into a special living unit in the months before they are scheduled to leave. The unit has its own recreation area (fenced in within the compound) for the boys to use at will, electronic head phones so that boys can listen to the radio and music privately in the living unit; board and ball games in which security staff are encouraged to participate, and more T. V. and movies. The atmosphere is clearly more relaxed. The administration states about the step down unit: “...we do not consider ourselves a prison. This is the direction we are moving,” and, “We think it works.”*

*Murphysboro, with frequent positive and constructive interaction between staff and boys, a system of noting positive behavior and individual accomplishments built into its version of the “boot camp” program model, and a focus on achievements in several spheres, had already in 2007 quite consciously institutionalized an approach to behavior modification that relies on positive reinforcement, counseling and mentoring relationship.*

## 2. Increases in awards and recognition for good behavior.

*The use of rewards and recognitions, built into the IYC Murphysboro system, was modified slightly between our visit in September 2006 and our visit in October, 2007 with the addition of some positive recognition in the form of a “Best Behavior of the Week” Award. The measure of performance for coming years would include Murphysboro’s expansion of its use of positive rewards, for which this report contains suggestions, and an introduction of Balanced and Restorative Justice practices in order to expand upon the innovations staff has already introduced. More on this follows.*

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<sup>3</sup> “Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro - Program Overview” op. cit., at page.10.

3. Modifications to Murphysboro's disciplinary system and policies to protect staff from violence or assaults by youth.

*IYC Murphysboro had a unique and well thought out approach to discipline which relies considerably on constructive staff interventions with boys, both those who perform well and those who do not. The number of boys in confinement and their length of stay in confinement were low in comparison to most other Youth Centers as noted above. In October of 2006 there were two instances of confinement for major violations and in 2007 there were none thus evidencing a further drop in confinement. On the surface, satisfaction of this performance measure would be to maintain the low level of confinement now at Murphysboro.*

*But the situation may be more complex. During our October 2007 we heard from both staff and, more surprisingly, youth who declared that a perceived relaxation of discipline and decrease in use of confinement had resulted in boys acting out and in more fights and disturbances in the living units. One account was of a youth who refused to take the bunk bed assigned him. Some visitors thought the situation described a boy trying to get attention; some at the Youth Center thought the situation was a consequence of not using confinement to discipline the boy. This and other observations are that, at IYC Murphysboro, as at other youth facilities, the performance measure to be obtained is not simply a reduction in the use of confinement, but the development of a broader range of responses to incidents or misbehavior that are at once more constructive and instructive than confinement, and at the same time exercise a level of control sufficient to assure boys and staff that infractions are noticed and that they will receive attention that is both timely and appropriate.*

4. Conditions on the Confinement Unit

*The confinement unit at Murphysboro lies off to the side of one of the passageways between units on the first floor. It has its own security station at the entrance point. Cells face outward across a passageway and toward windows. It is not possible for a corrections officer in the security station to see inside many of the cells. The unit is well-lit, but the cells are behind bars and the place is harsh. The walls of the unit are light pink; the space overall is clean and appears in very good repair, as does most of the Murphysboro Youth Center. But it remains stark, harsh and isolated never the less.*

5. Chemical and waist-belt restraints and shackles

*At IYC Murphysboro chemical restraints (pepper spray) and body restraints are on hand for use. In October 2007, staff members reported that records showed the last use of chemical restraints on May 13, 2006, and on November 8, 2006. One of the incidents involved a boy or boys held in confinement. We did not see waist-belt restraints or shackles in use; boys are allowed to move with permission on their own within the facility, although boys taken to confinement would likely be restrained and are certainly individually accompanied by a Youth Supervisor.*

*There appears to have been a decline in any use of chemical restraints. There was not, at the time of the October 2007 visit, a new written policy on use and availability of chemical and physical restraints. For some security staff, these policies are contentious issues.*

*Performance in this area will be measured by development of a reasoned, standards- and “best practices” driven policy and successful implementation of that policy.*

6. Adoption and distribution of new policies for staff and youth.

*Both in 2006 and 2007 IYC Murphysboro had written policies in place for boys to read (which they were required to do in the days or weeks they will be awaiting assignment to a living unit.) These appear not to have been updated within the last two years.*

*As at other Youth Centers, the written information provided youth for orientation and then on an ongoing basis are photocopies of printed pages.<sup>4</sup> The language in program overviews and materials prepared for youth which the visiting teams have seen appear to be on language levels suitable for a well-read high school student or an adult. Unfortunately, boys at Murphysboro are characterized by below-grade reading levels; in 2003 a John Howard Association of Illinois noted that about half the population was special education students with IEP's (Individual Educational Plans).*

*Performance in this area will be measured not only by preparation and publication of updated policies and manuals or instructions for youth, but by effective dissemination including appropriate language, and, if merited by numbers of non-English speaking youth, written materials in other languages.*

*As at other Youth Centers, at the time of our visits the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice was revising policies on almost all topics. Performance in the area of revised staff policies will be measured by preparation, approval and effective distribution. No new formal written policies have been promulgated by the Department. The Director has made it clear that he expects to see a decline in the use of secure confinement at all institutions and has communicated to Superintendents that it is their responsibility to see that it happens. It appears that other staff members have not been given clear directives in this area.*

7. Policies to protect staff from violence or assaults by youth.

*In discussions and in public statements made by their union, line staff has expressly opposed new Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice policies limiting the use of confinement. Less than at other Youth Centers where this issue was discussed, we still heard about this concern during our October 2007 visit to Murphysboro along with concerns about increased fights between boys.*

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<sup>4</sup> “Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro Cadet Orientation Manual: Building our Future” dated 8/07/06, provided in photocopy form to John Howard Association of Illinois visitors, is a 36 page document, most of it single spaced. Clearly written and quite complete, it is very much an adult-level publication. We understand that new “cadets” are counseled on the publication’s content, and to some extent counseling ought to make the more important provisions understandable to most boys. But the publication reflects a serious deficiency with practical, behavioral, and legal implications. The portion which sets forth “Rules and Regulations” (pp. 15-18) contains the numbered violations which, if broken, result in loss of privileges, punishment and at IYC Murphysboro, loss of rank in the quasi-military structure. These rules, written exactly as they are throughout the Department, were inherited from the Illinois Department of Corrections and are more or less identical to the rules governing adult inmates. They should be reviewed for adequacy of notices to youth, many of whom are not literate and many of whom are literate but below their own grade level and/or learning disabled. The same is true for additional sections of the manual setting out punishments and hearing procedures (pp. 19-22).

*To our knowledge, no new written policies addressing staff safety have been issued by the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. Although new draft policies have been written, they have not been reviewed by the Department of Correction's legal staff and have not been formally issued. But our perception is that the lack of new published policies is less a problem than the lack of a developed, Department-wide explanation, or even discussion, or the Department's new mandates for decreased use of confinement combined with a thorough discussion and explanation of the rationale for the change, and of strategies and means of assuring, to the fullest extent possible, staff safety and the preservation of discipline. We propose that changing the way in which confinement and in which chemical and physical restraints are to be used is as much a function of training and education as it is of drafting and introducing revised policies. We also regard training and education as a two-way activity involving discussion, dialogue and consideration of differing viewpoints. Implementation of this level of training and education is critical if staff members are to feel comfortable with the new direction of the Department.*

*Performance in the area of developing policies to protect staff from violence or assaults is entwined with performance in training and education for staff at all levels. Performance measures will be satisfied by development and implantation of new policies and by formal and informal training and education designed to shift attitudes, increase staff understanding of new departmental goals, and provide answers to staff concerns about their own safety and the security of Youth Centers.*

#### **D. Restorative Justice**

*As at all Youth Centers, there was virtually no familiarity with the term "Restorative Justice" among staff at almost any level, and certainly not at the line level when we visited in 2006. There has been no formal introduction or training on Restorative Justice Principles as of our visit in 2007. There is almost no understanding of the potential for application of Restorative Justice Principles at any of the Youth Centers. There are vague notions that Restorative Justice Principles somehow apply only to the youth who is incarcerated and his or her "crime victim." Consequently, there has been very little movement to satisfy performance measures related to implementing restorative justice as a guiding principle at the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.*

*But as noted in the John Howard Association of Illinois' reports, aspects of restorative justice principles are practiced to some degree in several Youth Centers, albeit without having been consciously labeled as or identified with "Restorative Justice." IYC Murphysboro is one of these Centers.*

*The Murphysboro boot camp program incorporates elements that are similar to elements of restorative justice programming. For example, the Program Mission describes a "disciplined and structured program resulting in behavior and attitudinal changes," within which "cadets will have a chance to change, confront mistakes and accept responsibility for their future."<sup>5</sup> Core skills which Cadets are required to complete include "Identify[ing] ways to 'speak so others can listen' and 'listen so others can speak.'"<sup>6</sup> Staff is supposed to counsel boys after they have committed infractions. There is a formal method of handling minor rule violations called*

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<sup>5</sup> "Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro Program Overview, *op. cit.*, at p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> "Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro Cadet Duty Book" provided John Howard Association of Illinois visitors in September 2006; see Duty/Task 8, at p. 4.

*the “Leatherneck Card System,” which involves staff recording minor violations on a card carried by each boy and, if a sufficient number accumulate, counseling is to occur in advance or in lieu of discipline including confinement.*

*But other elements of the Murphysboro boot camp program are more difficult to reconcile with restorative justice principles. A boy who commits a minor offense may be asked to do the “Exercise of the Day,” or “EOD” to resolve the matter. Something akin to movie boot camp “drop down and give me 30” level of discipline, and taken before invocation of the “Leatherneck Card System,” this action as described in the Manual is taken without any preliminary counseling or discussion.<sup>7</sup> And, the procedures for instituting disciplinary action place responsibility on staff members who “observe or discover a chargeable offense” for preparation of a Disciplinary Report without specified provisions for intermediate resolution.<sup>8</sup> There appears to be more flexibility in discipline, more counseling and informal dispute resolution than the written policy describes.*

*Accordingly, at IYC Murphysboro performance will be measured by the extent to which there is a considered effort to incorporate restorative justice principles into discipline and behavior management, recognizing that the program already includes positive elements as well as elements of restorative justice programming. This effort might begin with consultation between restorative justice practitioners and Youth Center administrators and staff.*

*The following performance measures apply to IYC Murphysboro as they do to all Youth Centers at this time:*

1. Establishment of a program to train staff and design and incorporate a program to orient boys into a restorative justice approach to resolving disputes and correcting past wrongs.
2. Review methods now in place to resolve disputes and impose sanctions on boys at IYC Murphysboro with Restorative Justice Practitioners, giving consideration to adding “courts,” “circles” or “peer panels” and to otherwise incorporating restorative justice principles.
3. Change disciplinary procedures and facility rules to provide for restorative justice-based responses to rule violations and disputes among boys.
4. Monitor and review incident reports with a restorative justice practitioner; consider restorative justice responses to typical incidents, confer and discuss with staff, and change policies to encourage a range of graduated responses.
5. With restorative justice professionals, develop a program to encourage and facilitate interactions between boys and crime victims guided by restorative justice principles in cases where there is an identifiable victim and where interaction is likely to be constructive for the boy.

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<sup>7</sup> Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro Cadet Orientation Manual,” op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Illinois Youth Center Murphysboro Cadet Orientation Manual,” op. cit., p. 21.

## E. Community and Family Contact

*At the time of our visit in September 2006, about 30 or 1/3rd of the boys at IYC Murphysboro were from Cook or Lake Counties. Most others were from southern or western counties closer to Murphysboro. Not surprisingly, we were told that the distances required to travel hinder visits by many of the boys' parents, families or friends.*

### 1. Steps to increase parent contact

*Counselors notify parents by telephone and mail when boys first arrive at the program. They telephone and write to encourage parent participation. The boot camp program limits phone calls to one five minute collect call a month. Cadets can "earn" the right to increase the calls to once per week through good behavior. In October 2007 the administration spoke of their desire to increase telephone contact. Parents are invited to graduation, but not to sporting or recreational events. We witnessed a graduation for about 20 graduating boys with parents or relatives present for about half of the boys graduating.*

*The effort is clearly being made. A measure of performance would include a review of the form and nature of information sent parents to assure openness, cultural fit, and that communications are as effective as possible. Additionally, consideration could be given to identifying boys during orientation for which family involvement, communications, or support might be most helpful to his success in the program. For these boys, special or targeted and continuing outreach to parents might have significant benefits.*

*A second measure of performance would include careful and creative consideration given to effective communications with parents, guardians or responsible family members at the outset of the program as an important part of developing aftercare (see below).*

### 2. Seek parent's ideas on increasing visiting

*As of our visit on October 2007, the administration had not formally surveyed or inquired of parents about ways to increase their participation in their son's program.*

### 3. Flexibility in admitting boy's visitors

*This performance measure is being met. The administration does not impose strict hour requirements on visitors and seem to genuinely encourage parent involvement with their child.*

### 4. Increasing the availability of transportation for family visitors

*As of our visit on October 2007, neither the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice nor Youth Center administrations had taken steps to increase the availability of transportation for family visitors to any Youth Center.*

### 5. Activities for boys and visitors.

*While as of October 2007 few activities are available apart from time spent in the visiting area, Murphysboro has the potential to offer more activities for visitors. Since boys do leave the perimeter under escort, trips outside could be considered. Athletics and athletic competitions*

*and academics and academic performance could be considered for visitor participation. The boot camp model implies some period of initial indoctrination during which outside contact is limited, but even in adult military boot camps this period is a month or two at most. IYC Murphysboro offers boys a real chance to improve physically and in academic performance, and to acquire vocational skills. It would be valuable to be able to share these positive experiences with those parents or relatives who can and are willing to try to make that effort. Efforts to design and put in place joint activities for boys and visitors are an important measure of performance.*

6. Surrogate or volunteer visiting program for boys who do not receive visits.

*As of October 2007, there was no program involving 'surrogate' or volunteer visitors. Such programs have been utilized with great success in past years at St. Charles and other IDJJ facilities and should be developed here.*

7. Increased telephone access to parents, family or guardians.

*In October 2007 administrators reported that they were telling staff that boys needed to make more than the one call per month to parents or family allowed under current rules, and were proposing an increase. While call restrictions might be thought in line with the boot camp model, one solid performance indicator would be a policy allowing more calls, made at lower cost, and integrated into reentry and aftercare strategies.*

## **F. Education**

1. Teaching and school staff

*During our 2007 visit, there were six teachers available in the classrooms, or three short of the nine required. Two of the three had retired or left Murphysboro and one was on an extended leave. Previously, teachers had chosen to stay at this Youth Center so vacancies do not open up and the attrition problem that has affected other Youth Center was not as severe here. Boys are in school for the required number of hours. In fact, the school program at IYC Murphysboro is fairly complete and well-integrated into the institutional program. No boys remain in their living units, are at work, or are otherwise assigned to an activity to fill time simply because of a lack of classroom teachers or space. Instead, school at this Youth Center is a regular scheduled part of a highly organized, structured day.*

*Boys are fairly well grouped into classes according to their level or ability.*

*At the time of our visit the principal had recently been hospitalized and it was not clear when or if he would be able to return. The facility is without the services of two of their special education teachers, one gone, one on extended leave, and there is no support staff or secretary for the school.*

Our visit in October 2007 fell during a school break for a regional teachers' conference. Boys were in their living units instead of class rooms, and those we spoke to were bored by the inactivity. We had no opportunity to observe classrooms.

Filling teacher positions with qualified, motivated teachers remains a challenge and a performance measure statewide and for the administration and the Governor's office, as the John Howard Association of Illinois has reported in several communications.

2. Library and related educational facilities

*IYC Murphysboro has a well equipped library with a sufficient number and range of books for the boys in residence. There is also a computer lab which boys are permitted to use.*

**G. Vocational, Social Skills Training and Group Programming**

1. Job training and vocational programs

*The two vocational programs at IYC Murphysboro have consistently impressed John Howard Association visitors.*

*The first of these is a wood shop, located at the rear of the Youth Center. It is fully and professionally equipped with lathes, planers, table and band saws and hand tools in sufficient number to equip each boy in any class. Boys are issued a carpenter's apron and a storage bin. Tools, of course, are inventoried and required to be accounted for at the end of every class. Boys work on projects small and large. Small projects include frames and decorated boxes with hinged lids. The largest projects are framed sheds which are constructed for Habitat for Humanity. These sheds are used to accompany houses which the organization builds in the area. Habitat for Humanity provides the lumber and materials; the shop constructs the shed from the ground up. Boys talk about the use to which the sheds are put and seem pleased to be involved in the work.*

*The second vocational program is in horticulture. The class room for about 12 boys and a small greenhouse which is attached to it are across the yard from the wood shop. There are many trees and plantings on Youth Center grounds which were planted by students in this program.*

*The programs are remarkable for their instructors and the interactions between the instructors and boys as we observed them in September 2006 and in October 2007. In both programs boys were engaged, responsive, and eager or proud to discuss what they were doing or what they were learning. The instructors impressed with their experience and their eagerness to teach, and the communications between instructors and boys was less constrained or more open than the communications we observed elsewhere. One of the instructors spoke to visitors outside the classroom in detail about the backgrounds of boys in his classes, their academic abilities and family histories. The amount of information he had about his students would have had to come both from records and the boys themselves, indicating his interest in his students and their trust of him. Boys seemed at ease in both vocational classes. The instructors are not put off by the "tough" acts that boys display at times; they told us they understand that many come from difficult homes and suffer from learning disabilities at times.*

*During the October 2007 visit, when school was closed, three boys were in the shop with the instructor voluntarily working to complete a Habitat for Humanity shed. One of the boys spoke to a John Howard Association visitor about a complaint. The instructor later informed the visitor that the boy had worriedly asked the instructor whether the boy should have made what he*

*thought were critical comments to the visitor. The visitor was impressed that the boy had chosen to share his apprehensions with the instructor and sought the instructor's advice.*

*We have to be aware that boys who engage with one of the vocational programs at IYC Murphysboro may be somewhat self-selecting: the boys who seemed to draw a lot from the two programs were there very much by choice, on both visits. It may be that these particular programs do not reach or serve all boys equally well. To us this suggests increasing the variety of such programs, for unless we are mistaken, the two vocational programs at IYC Murphysboro are reaching boys who sorely need affirmation as well as job skills. Additional programs which are suited to other skills than carpentry or horticulture might do the same for even more.*

*The performance measure for vocational training at IYC Murphysboro is likely to be satisfied as long as both programs are continued and adequate for the cadet population. A further performance measure would be for the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice to evaluate the contributions of vocational programs and instructors to the confidence, self-esteem, and behavior of boys involved in them. Assuming that the programs have as positive an influence as they seemed to the John Howard Association visitors, an additional performance measure for the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice would be the expansion of vocational programs of the quality and value for youth that are found in the vocational programs at Murphysboro.*

## 2. Job Placement Programs

*There are no job placement services, links or programs at IYC Murphysboro.*

## 3. Other group programming

*The facility has the services of a Clinical Services Supervisor who is a mental health professional and one psychologist. They appear to deal with youth individually and do not provide much, if any, group counseling or similar activities. In light of the rigor of the rest of the programming being offered, particularly the drug treatment program in which all youth participate, there may not be a need or time for additional services. More attention should be given to this question on our next visit.*

## 4. Community Work Projects and other activities outside the security perimeter

*In 2006 the staff showed John Howard Association of Illinois visitors' local news reports describing a work detail of IYC Murphysboro cadets who helped clean up after severe storms damaged trees and property throughout the area. During our visit in 2007, we learned that the Youth Center continued to engage in "Community Work Projects" at Kincaid Lake Campsite and at a local park planting flowers. Boys from IYC Murphysboro also plant flowers around the Director's office in Springfield. Staff reports that boys enjoy the work, the time out of the security perimeter, and the positive responses that they are given by community members. Staff members said that they would like to take more work details outside the Youth Center, but their ability to find time to do so is limited by staff shortages.*

*The Youth Center's experiences in having boys leave the secure facility tests levels of acceptance by some staff. When going to work details, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice managers want to transport boys without shackles, feeling that there is a combination of risk in having a youth bound to a vehicle and some lack of purpose when, upon arrival at a location, the boys are*

*unshackled and may freely move about to do their work. In this and other respects, we understand that work details, and other trips, outside the Youth Center are not favored by all staff.*

*The impact of participation in work details on boys in custody is definitely positive. As reported to us, they participate enthusiastically. Illinois has many parks, monuments and historical locations which could be cleaned up or rebuilt by supervised work details, to repair damage from seasonal storms.*

*As a performance measure for both IYC Murphysboro and the Department, activities outside the secure perimeter of IYC facilities should be designed, introduced system-wide, expanded, and publicized. These activities should serve vocational training goals when possible, can reflect restorative justice principles, and can be considered a part of reentry or aftercare programming.*

## **H. Health Services**

*As for other Youth Centers, it appears that there have been no professional health services staffing review for IYC Murphysboro. Medical services seem to have been scaled according to past experience minus some reductions, which appears the case at most Youth Facilities. The Center has an adequate infirmary. It sends youth who become severely ill or injured to a local hospital.*

1. Full time nursing coverage and number of hours a physician, psychiatrist or mental health supervisor are on the grounds.

*A medical doctor who serves several Youth Centers is at the Center six hours each week. We did not ask for his credentials in either pediatrics or corrections medicine. A psychiatrist visits the facility twice per month for a total of 6 to 8 hours. There are four full time nurses allowing for coverage 7 days per week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. The Youth Center lacks a director of nursing or a Health Care Administrator.*

2. Number of hours a dentist and dental technician are on the grounds and the applied policy for prophylactic cleaning and dental care for youth at this Center.

*Most dental care is provided to the cadets before they are assigned to Murphysboro during Reception and Classification. A dentist and hygienist visit the facility one day each month to perform routine cleanings which are typically offered once per year. Dental emergencies are seen by a local dentist in his own office.*

3. Family participation in mental health, counseling or treatment sessions with boys.

*As at other Youth Centers, there has been no formal effort to consistently involve families in counseling or treatment that is provided boys at IYC Murphysboro. Distance from Chicago remains an issue for 1/3 of the youth, and distance remains an issue for others as well. A performance measure would be satisfied if there were a plan to systematically engage families in therapy, counseling or the youth's drug treatment, including efforts to accommodate schedules and the demands of travel that participation entails for many families. It needs to be said that for*

*some boys at this and other Youth Centers, families or at least responsible adults are not available.*

4. Continuation of counseling and treatment for youth once they have left the Youth Center.

*As at other Youth Centers, there has been no formal effort to consistently follow through with the counseling or treatment that is provided boys at IYC Murphysboro once they are released from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. This exemplifies the need to develop a meaningful system of aftercare for youth on parole.*

## **I. Recreation**

*The Boot Camp program is built around exercise if not recreation.*

1. Leisure Time Activity Specialists

*At our last visit the staff included a supervising "LTA-4" and two staff "LTA-2" Leisure Time Activity Specialists. This represents a higher level of recreational staffing than at any other Youth Center. Physical activities and programs take up at least two hours each day for each boy.*

2. Competitive athletics and activities

*Our impression during our visits is that individual athletic achievement is valued, with boys expected to improve their own performance over time. Youth have an opportunity to compete on a challenge course twice a month and complete their time at Murphysboro in part with the fulfillment of a final physical challenge of either rock climbing or caving. Athletic achievement is intended to build confidence and social skills. It seems that many staff members make an effort to encourage and comment upon athletic improvement in a positive way.*

*Youth also participate in some team sports including waffle ball, flag football, volleyball and dodge ball.*

3. Outdoor and indoor recreational areas

*IYC Murphysboro has a running track in good condition, well-constructed obstacle course, some outdoor gymnastic equipment, indoor and outdoor basketball, a climbing wall and two ping-pong tables. There are some board games and recreational resources on the living units. Facilities and space seem well-designed and in scale with the number of boys at the Center. If there is no softball or baseball diamond, one could be laid out, although it would have to be either outside the security fence or the fence extended as there is currently insufficient space within the existing security perimeter.*

**J. Substance Abuse Treatment**

## 1. Number of youth in need of treatment

*Boys placed at IYC Murphysboro are not supposed to need drug treatment. We did not determine if there are any boys at IYC Murphysboro who were evaluated to need drug treatment or dependency treatment beyond the counseling that is provided here.*

*Each week day all boys at the Youth Center are required to participate in two hours of drug counseling and educational programs administered under contract by the Wells Center. The two-hour a day session is one part of the structured, filled daily schedule for each boy.*

*At the time of our visit there were eight counselors on staff but only one of three desired administrators. The Wells Program seemed to be able to handle the number of youth at the Center and since it provides counseling to all youth, reaches all who need counseling services.*

## 2. Continuation of drug counseling for youth once they have left the Youth Center.

*As at other Youth Centers, there has been no formal effort to consistently follow through with the drug counseling that is provided boys at IYC Murphysboro once they are released from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. There is no tracking of success or relapse.*

**K. Reentry and Aftercare**

*It may be that the absence of reentry and aftercare programming capabilities are felt more at IYC Murphysboro than at other Youth Centers. Here, more is said and more is done to reorient boys, to help them assume responsibility, to instill work habits, give them some basic skills or at least, and perhaps more important, allow them to experience academic accomplishment and achievement in well-directed vocational programs, and improve their physical well being, than at any other Youth Center. Youth do not just leave, they “graduate.” And then they are gone, back to a community where the way has not been prepared for them and where what they may have achieved is unlikely to be appreciated or sustained.*

*Research shows that a “boot camp” program that is not followed by aftercare and support services has limited lasting impact on the participant. Boys leaving Murphysboro are at risk, as are boys leaving other Youth Facilities. But their risk includes the waste of investment and loss of a productive future which a positive program experience hints might be open to them.*

**Table 1: Staffing Levels IYC Murphysboro**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Superintendents	0	0
Assistant Superintendents	1	2
Security Staff	67	65
Security Staff Supervisors	8	7
Educators	6	5
Leisure Time Activity Specialists	3	3
Counselors	4	4
Case Work Supervisors	1	1
Psychologists	1	1
Social Workers	0	0
Medical	0	0
Chaplain	0	0
Other Administrative*	26	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>**</b>

\*This category includes maintenance, secretarial, business management, and food service.

\*\*The total number of staff at IYC Murphysboro cannot be accurately calculated from these figures because the facility has medical, mental health, and substance abuse education staff who are employed contractually and are not included in these figures.