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Studying Runaways and Street Youth in Canada:

Conceptual and Research Design Issues

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Responding to Violence and Abuse

Police Policy and Research Division

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The views expressed in this working paper are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, or of Health Services and Promotion Branch, Health and Welfare Canada who provided the funding for this project.

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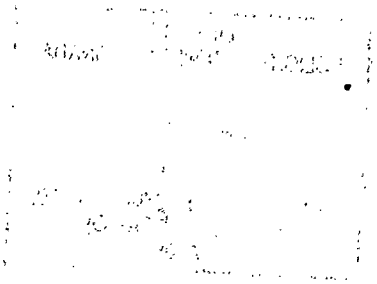

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T.C.
January, 1993

1.0 Introduction and Overview

The growing awareness of runaways and street youth has generated considerable discussion in Canadian society during the past several years. Both public and private sectors have attempted to respond to this troubling problem. The Government of Canada, in particular, has invested considerable resources in assessing the vulnerability of young Canadians, not only in this area but with regard to children and youth more generally. The current project has grown out of the work of an interdepartmental committee of the federal government who have an interest in the issue of runaways and street youth. The Interdepartmental Working Group on Youth at Risk consists of representatives from the departments of Health and Welfare, Justice, Solicitor General, Youth Affairs, Employment and Immigration and the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. The concerns expressed in the interdepartmental committee range from the question of social service and health care delivery to runaways and street youth, to the education and integration of these young people into Canadian society, to questions focusing on criminal justice matters and the difficulties runaways and street youth pose for the police, the courts, and other members of the justice community.

While the members of the interdepartmental committee identified specific data needs related to the interests of their particular departments, a number of key questions of mutual interest emerged during the course of ongoing discussions. These include the following:

1. How many runaways and street youth are there? What is the size of the runaway and street youth population in various locations in Canada?
2. Who are the runaways and street youth? That is, what are the demographic characteristics of the young people who make up the runaway and street youth population?

3. What are the antecedents to running and becoming a street kid?

4. What are the consequences of running and participating in street life? And, how does a young person get off the streets?

5. What is the nature of the services directed at runaways and street youth including educational, health, criminal justice and social services? What gaps or overlaps exist in the services being delivered?

These five general questions provided the primary focus for this report. They capture the committee's interest in developing a body of information about the process of becoming a runaway or street youth, the challenges young people face once on the street, and the factors that may be related to successfully leaving street life. They also direct attention to the responses of various institutions that deal with runaways and street youth, the range of services provided and the effectiveness of various responses.

With these questions in mind, an extensive review of existing educational, health, social services and criminal justice literature was undertaken. The broad scope of this review required that we continuously direct our efforts towards the central issue of interest - runaways and street youth - while examining such related topics as family violence, child abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, gangs and juvenile delinquency. The literature review served to highlight the various problems addressed by research in this area as well as the difficulties that are encountered in carrying out research of this type. Essentially, two major types of issues were identified: (i) conceptual issues, and (ii) methodological issues.

1.1 Conceptual Issues

Conceptual issues revolved around various questions about who and what should be included under the rubric of runaways and street youth. For example, a number of articles raised questions about what or who an appropriate definition of runaways and street youth should include. Various classification schemes were discovered that focused either on the young people involved or the type of behaviour they exhibited. We found that the population of runaways and street youth has been variously defined to include "curbsiders", "inners" and "outers", throwaways, runaways, juvenile prostitutes, drug and alcohol abusers, juvenile delinquents, youth gang members as well as entrenched street kids. Each category captures, in its own way, a particular aspect of the phenomenon under investigation. However, each of the categorizations poses a number of conceptual as well as methodological problems for those conducting research in this area.

To begin with, most classification schemes fail to provide a clear conceptualization of the phenomenon they address. A primary rule in the development of conceptual categories is that they be mutually exclusive and exhaustive. These requirements are difficult to achieve in the case of runaways and street youth since the target population is quite varied and highly mobile. It includes young people of different ages who may be involved in very different types of behaviour. In many classification schemes, it was possible for a single young person to be classified under several categories. This problem arises when the specific categories in a conceptual scheme are not mutually exclusive. Thus, for example, the same young person could be a runaway and living on the street, involved in drug or alcohol abuse, and have

engaged in prostitution and other delinquent activities. In fact, many of these activities are consistent with participation in street culture. Therefore, while each of these categories describes important aspects of the runaway and street youth experience, combining them in a single classificatory system is problematic. The phenomena they refer to are neither uni-dimensional nor conceptually distinct.

The problem of conceptual clarity is further seen in the fact that young people can be defined as both victims and victimizers. For example, in some conceptual schemes runaways and street youth are presented as victims of mistreatment or abuse as in the case of those running from abusive homes or those thrown out of their homes and forced to fend for themselves. In other cases, young people are pictured as active and willing participants in undesirable, risky or illegal activities. Drug and alcohol abuse, delinquency and participation in high risk sexual behaviour are included here. In still other cases, the categories include young people who could be defined as both victims and willing participants as is the case with adolescent prostitutes, or those young people who use drugs or alcohol or get involved in other risky activities typically associated with street life. To complicate matters further, participation in street culture is not restricted exclusively to "street kids" but may include young people who regularly participate in the street scene while still living at home.

The need for conceptual clarity is also included in the requirement that the categories be exhaustive. In many cases, the categories reflect only the most visible or pressing problems of young people seen on the street. Many of the less visible or less problematic forms of behaviour are not included. Thus, while most classifications include a category

for runaways, the Solicitor General's study of missing children and runaways was able to differentiate over 20 distinct running patterns (Fisher, 1989). Much of the subtlety in the behaviour under investigation is typically lost because it is ignored or lumped together into a catch all category that tells us very little about the phenomena in which we are interested.

An additional but related set of issues concerning the conceptualization and definition of the problem of runaways and street youth centres on the question of age. The literature indicates that under certain circumstances, young people from their pre-teens to those in their late twenties and even early thirties can be considered youth (Caputo and Ryan, 1991). How then should a determination be made of which age range to include in a viable definition of runaways and street youth? A number of studies suggest that a cue be taken from the institutions that provide services or otherwise respond to this population. Some researchers have argued that only those young people between the ages of 12 and 17 years (inclusive) be included in a definition of youth since this corresponds to the ages identified under the federal Young Offenders Act. Others have argued that those 16 years of age and younger fall under provincial child welfare jurisdiction and should properly be excluded from a study of runaways and street youth since young people under 16 years are routinely and quickly taken off the streets by police or child welfare authorities. Obviously, this position assumes that the age of young people on the street can be accurately known or ascertained by the authorities, an assumption of dubious merit. It also overlooks the fact that many runners are already absent without leave (AWOL) from social service care and reluctant to return to it.

The issue of age raises a number of other important conceptual questions about the phenomenon under study. In what way, for example, can the actions of a ten year old be compared to those of someone in their late teens or early twenties. How can questions of responsibility, choice or intent be decided for individuals in such very different stages of their lives and with such different amounts of power and resources at their disposal? Such classification problems cannot be disposed of by fiat. Research must be sensitive to capturing the full range of ages and the specific social correlates (antecedents and consequences) that are associated with various age ranges.

1.2 Methodological Issues

The second set of problems identified in the literature deal with methodological issues. In general, these consist of the difficulties in specifying who is in the target population and the problems that inhere in selecting a sample from this population. In most social science research, the target population is usually known in advance. Ideally, exhaustive or complete lists of those who belong can be prepared. Appropriate samples can then be drawn to reflect various population parameters and to minimize sampling error. The application of standard research practices such as drawing a random sample are typically not possible when studying such elusive and transient populations as runaways, street youth and homeless youth. Young persons' suspicion of authority and their desire to maintain the anonymity characteristic of street life make it especially difficult to estimate the size of the population under consideration. In addition, the fluid and mobile nature of the street population makes estimates of its size and composition virtually impossible.

Researchers have adopted a variety of strategies in responding to these problems of measurement. For example, some researchers have cited the lack of existing information on street youth and runaways in order to justify an exploratory research design. In essence, these researchers have argued that the information that can be derived through descriptive case studies represents and important, initial body of knowledge about the problem. Questions about the size of the population or sampling techniques are neutralized through this approach and are put off until a more scientifically rigorous study using random sampling techniques can be carried out. The quality of the information gathered in these exploratory studies is usually outstanding but its generalizability is problematic. Little can be determined from such methods about the size or characteristics of the runaway and street youth population.

Other researchers have employed a variety of techniques in attempting to deal with the inability to draw a random sample and to make estimates about population size. One approach is based on drawing a deliberately large sample to minimize sampling bias - the supposition being that the closer the sample comes to match the actual population, the more likely all its variability will be captured. Another relies on experienced informants for identifying known street youth or locations where street youth congregate to draw an "expert" sample.

1.3 Outline of the Following Sections

In the following sections, we provide an extensive review of the contemporary literature on street youth and runaways. This is followed by a detailed overview of the most recent Canadian research on runaways - and similar - populations

which focuses specifically on the design decisions adopted in these studies. Next, the lessons learned in the review of the literature and examination of Canadian research are employed in the development of a conceptual model and methodological strategies. Finally, the results of a pilot study are presented that incorporate many of the information garnered in the previous sections. A brief overview of each of these sections is presented below.

In Section 2.0, a literature review was undertaken for this project that was based on a close examination of refereed publications mainly in the fields of sociology, psychology, criminology, health, and social work. These publications were accessed through several contemporary database facilities in both the United States and Canada. The review also incorporates other references suggested by members of the intergovernmental committee and furnishes what we expect will be a useful guide to the area.

Our work in this section indicates that the population suggested by the imagery of "street kids", street youth or runaways is extremely heterogeneous. It encompasses persons who prematurely leave home prior to completion of educational or vocational preparation. Some young persons leave homes in which the emotional relations in the family are intolerable. Some leave since the material support for the children and adolescents is inadequate. Some experience pressure to leave since their own conduct is incompatible with parental discipline. Some are abandoned by parents whose lives are marked by troubles of their own - substance abuse, incompatibility, hostility and premature parenting during their own adolescence. For many early home leavers, several such situations apply.

However, the imagery of street kids also incorporates quite different elements. These include members of gangs who act territorially vis-a-vis other gangs, members of rebellious adolescent subcultures - "metal heads", "head bangers", "skin heads" and the like. Many who present in street congregating areas are still living at home, frequently in what we might describe as functionally intact families. They participate in the street scenes associated with the adolescent subcultures in the same way that many adolescents in the 1960s attended "Love-Ins" without becoming hippies. In these cases, the "running" is with parental knowledge and in some cases with parental approval. However, this hardly constitutes serious "running away". In a few cases, those who do leave home early do not see themselves as "running" at all since they have no intention of returning, nor of "disappearing" - they simply leave home, get work or continue with their education participating neither in delinquency nor in the adolescent subcultures. In many cases, careers of running behaviour follow earlier experiences of victimization and abuse as well as subsequent exposure to various hazards associated with street life - drugs, street prostitution, theft, etcetera. However, the transitional routes from adolescence to early adulthood that are associated with early home departure and rebellious peer affiliations are quite varied. Some fit the journalistic stereotypes. Others do not. The review tries to capture the range of variations by focusing on the level of involvement in running behaviour coupled with the level of involvement in hazardous and delinquent behaviour, and tries to tease out the antecedents, consequences and longer term sequels of such situations. Although far from exhaustive, this approach allows us to keep the complexity of the issues in the foreground.

In Section 3.0, the design challenge was addressed through an examination of recent Canadian research. It is clear that problems of conceptualization and measurement unavoidably influence research on street youth and runaways. The way that we define a problem, how we identify a population and the classification schemes we use to describe it, all have a direct bearing on the way we determine what information we need and how we go about gathering it. Those conducting research on runaways and street youth face particular problems related to both conceptual questions as well as issues surrounding measurement. The elusive nature of the runaway and street youth population makes research design decisions crucial for determining the quality and usefulness of any study in this area. Fortunately, there have been a number of recent studies of runaways and street youth in Canada which can be examined to assist us in addressing conceptual and research design issues.

In this section, we review the design features of a number of recent Canadian attempts to study runaways and street youth, and related populations. Our review suggests that a variety of approaches to conceptual and methodological problems have been adopted by Canadian research. In practical terms, the research design decisions we encountered reflect the fact that it is not always necessary to spell out the sampling frame in advance. Exploratory research such as field studies and ethnographies can provide descriptive insights into the organization of social life in elusive populations. However, these idiographic approaches cannot do much in the way of <u>explaining</u> patterns of conduct. Nor can they systematically explore control groups to test inferences empirically. Without the latter, they are ill equipped to recommend public policies to alter social problems. Consequently, for our purposes a more systematic knowledge base is required. The design review describes how others have

tackled the sampling problem and the lessons that can be derived from the experience of other researchers in this area.

In Section 4.0, a conceptual model is developed. While conceptual and methodological problems are common to most of the studies examined, some approaches were found to be more satisfactory than others. In this section, the lessons learned as a result of our investigation are utilized in the development of a conceptual model for studying runaways and street youth. Essentially, this model consists of the intersection of two continua: one measuring amount of time spent "on the street"; and the other measuring extent of participation in street life. Four quadrants are identified on the basis of the intersection of these continua, each of which describes a distinct sub-section of the youth population. These range from conventional youth who live at home and have little involvement in street life to entrenched street youth who spend most of their time on the street and who are extensively involved in the risky activities associated with street culture.

Section 5.0 deals with methodological strategies. The design of a study that can yield reliable information about a population of interest presupposes that the population parameters are known in advance. For example, all persons who attend school in Calgary or all persons who immigrated to Canada in any one year constitute discrete populations. It is possible to describe their numbers and characteristics with some confidence since careful lists are compiled for this purpose. As a result it is possible to design a sampling approach which will accurately represent the characteristics of the entire population based on analysis of only a small portion of the whole. The heterogeneous nature of the population of interest here and the lack of prior knowledge of the population parameters creates special problems which make

it difficult to determine how to sample in a representative way.

Designing a study which is sensitive to the sampling problems outlined above is a challenging task. The methodology adopted should enhance the validity, reliability and generalizability of the information gathered. In this section, we outline various strategies that when combined, comprise a comprehensive methodological approach for addressing the problems encountered when studying an elusive population such as runaways and street youth. In addition, the problems associated with mounting a national study in this area are also considered.

Section 6.0 of this report describes in detail a pilot study of runaways and street youth undertaken in Calgary using instruments and interview schedules based on the literature reviewed above. Key questions derived from the literature review attempted to differentiate the antecedents of running behaviour from the hazards of life experienced in the aftermath of running. Questions were also raised in the pilot study about the nature of the social services employed by young persons. To investigate these relationships, we designed questionnaires which allowed us to classify the runner (where he or she fit in our schema), the role of antecedents as well as the consequences of running including involvement in delinquent or hazardous behaviour.

The main questionnaire was modified for use in a control setting to establish whether the suggested antecedents of running were peculiar to the running population, or whether they were found more generally in the adolescent, young adult population at large. In this section of the report, some preliminary differences in the target and the control populations are discussed and some questions pertinent to

further research in this area are raised.

2.0 A Review of the Literature

2.1 Federal Initiatives for Youth at Risk

The problems of young people have received particular attention by the Canadian federal government during the past fifteen years. This attention is evident in the numerous initiatives for children and youth undertaken by the federal government during this period. For example, the 1979 Commission on the International Year of the Child championed the rights and well-being of children. In January of 1985, the Minister of State for Youth launched the International Year of Youth (IYY), a United Nation's fostered international programme designed to encourage the integration of the interests and concerns of young people into society and to mark their contributions to society. In addition, the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly in 1989, was proclaimed in Canada in December of 1991.

The federal government also promoted a number of specific initiatives directed at children and youth during this time. For example, in 1982 the federal government established the Child Abuse Information Programme (later to be known as the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence). In 1984 Robin Badgley presented the two volumed study of sexual victimization of young people - The Report of the Select Committee on Sexual Offences Against Children and Youth. This national study produced 52 recommendations with respect to child abuse and juvenile prostitution, many of which were incorporated into Bill C-15, an Act designed to curb sexual victimization of young people. That Bill included changes to the Canada Evidence Act which outlined procedures under which evidence could be taken from children in cases of sexual

abuse. In addition, it created an indictable offence for acquiring the sexual services of an adolescent prostitute.

Paul Fraser's Select Committee on Pornography and Prostitution (1985) made many similar recommendations regarding the need to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation. The report reiterated many of the views initially developed by Badgley and kept the subject of child exploitation at the forefront of public debate and government policy. In 1987 Rix Rogers was appointed Special Advisor to the Minister of Health and Welfare to report on the long term implementation of federal child sexual abuse initiatives in the aftermath of the Badgley Report. Rogers' Reaching for Solutions appeared in 1990.

The responsiveness of the federal government was evident in many other areas. There has been significant policy development, for example, in the areas of violence against women and children, cycles of family violence, the availability of affordable shelter, child poverty, and the plight of Native and immigrant children, to name only a few. A great deal of effort has also been directed in developing national strategies to control the spread of HIV infection and to educate the public about the risks of this and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) (cf. Radford et al., 1989). These types of initiatives are especially important for young people who are sexually active and who may engage in risky sexual practices. In 1991 the Minister of State for Youth, alarmed by the issue of early school leavers, launched a national Stay In School Initiative and earmarked some $296.4 million dollars over a five year period to reverse a national average dropout rate of about 30% (Minister of State for Youth, 1991). In addition, in February 1991, following a recommendation from the Rogers' report, the federal government created the Children's Bureau under the auspices of Health and

Welfare Canada to create, among other things, a leadership centre for federal policies impacting on children.

Within the context of responding to the problems of children and youth, the federal government directed specific attention at the problem of missing children and runaways. In 1986, the Missing Children's Registry was established under the auspices of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to provide operational support to police agencies in their search for missing children. A review of the Registry indicates that Canada has a rate of 25 missing children per 100,000 children. In 1990, about 61,248 reports were filed as missing children. Some 44,800 cases were runaways, the majority of whom were children who ran away multiple times over the course of the year (Fisher, 1992). At any given time, there are about 1,500 to 2,000 cases of missing children reports. How many of these children fall through the cracks and become "street kids" is an open question.

What explains such atypical running behaviour? The police data suggests that the children identified under the Missing Persons mandate are involved in families with serious social problems. As Fisher puts it, "they have experienced sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and witnessed substance abuse and spousal violence" (1989:5). However, once on their own, they are exposed to "further manipulation, control, violence, sexual assaults and substance abuse." The premature autonomy of many young people, their lack of educational attainment and marketable employment skills, their emotional immaturity, their inexperience in managing their own affairs, and their lack of institutional support, make them vulnerable to problems associated with mental health, physical health, delinquency, educational under-attainment, community isolation etc. While in the past the problems of homelessness have been associated with skid row derelicts, the evidence

suggests that this phenomenon is increasingly a hazard confronting young people. This conclusion about the hazards facing unstable young people is also reflected in the links between "risk of" victimization and "risk to" increased involvement in delinquent activities - where the expression of the second kind of vulnerability occurs due to exposure to the first (Caputo and Ryan, 1991).

2.2 Definitional Problems

Interest in the issue of street youth and runaways has increased dramatically over the past decade judging from the extensive body of research literature which has emerged on the subject. This material touches on numerous aspects of the problem of runaways and street youth including the definition of runaways and street youth, antecedents to running, the characteristics of runners, patterns of running behaviour, consequences of running and participation in street culture, and responses to the problem. Conceptually, the target group of runaways and street youth is a crucial one since it is repeatedly implicated in the causes and consequences of delinquency, premature school leaving, the emergence of youth gangs, the transmission of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, drug and alcohol abuse, as well as child abuse. Given the enormous scope of the topic, it is not difficult to anticipate problems of a definitional nature arising in studies of runaways and street youth. Who is to be included and how these decisions are made are of crucial importance.

Initial entrance into the literature on runaways and street youth can be achieved through the a focus on a specific sub-set of the larger population under investigation, namely runaways and missing children. This approach appears at first glance to offer a relatively straight forward answer to the

definitional question raised above. However, a focus on runaways and missing children reveals that the area is far more complicated than this simple categorization initially suggests. While the media and the public attach tremendous importance to cases of child abduction and stranger abductions in particular, the plurality of young people who came to the attention of authorities are not abductees. According to the Missing Children's Research Project (Fisher, 1989), most of these cases are simply runaways and most abductions involve parental interference - particularly in cases involving custody conflicts. Furthermore, the runaway files examined in the Missing Children Research Project revealed that many children were attempting to escape traumatic family situations. Abuse and conflicts of various sorts appeared to precipitate the premature departures of many adolescents from their parental homes.

An important definitional problem emerges at this point that involves the distinction between episodic runners who return home after a few hours or a few days and those runaways that spend longer periods of time on the streets. The research indicates that the running behaviour is predominantly episodic with most running repeatedly and returning repeatedly. The police data from Toronto, Montreal, Surrey and Edmonton suggests that 52% stayed away for a day or less, and 72% were away for less than three days. However, as runaways confront the hazards of street life and attempt to establish themselves in independent households, in shelters, or simply try to cope on their own, many enter a different sub-set of the runaway population. As they spend more and more of time on the street and become increasingly involved in street life, they move from being episodic runners to entrenched street youth.

Deciding which populations of runaways and street youth should be included and what criteria should be employed to appropriately distinguish them is one of the more difficult problems that appears when studying runaways and street youth. Some of the terms used in the literature to describe various elements of this population include "runaways," "curbsiders," "throwaways," "societal rejects," "missing children," "homeless youth," "street youth" and "youth at risk" (Finkelhor et al., 1990; Burgess, 1986; Adams et al., 1985). In some cases the terms refer to overlapping groups - thus "throwaways" could also be "homeless youth" and "street youth." In other instances, however, the categories are discrete.

A young person who runs away from home on one occasion and returns in a short period of time cannot be considered a street youth or a homeless youth. However, if a report were to be filed with the police, this same young person would be included under the missing children statistics. If the youth is picked up for vagrancy or petty trespass, this would appear as a delinquency matter. And if the youth appeared at a shelter for the homeless, this would figure as a social welfare matter. In fact, it is possible for the same person to appear in all three tallies.

The problem of definition arises because the population at risk is in fact quite heterogeneous. Few of those who are called homeless runaways are actually homeless and many in fact may only be AWOL temporarily. Many run from home to the home of a friend or relative. Some find their way to emergency shelters and soup kitchens. Some of the shelters provide temporary residency, some are longer term. Some operate under child welfare legislation which puts strict age limits on the age groups which qualify for assistance. Some offer services to those under 17 years, some are open to youth

up to 24 years of age. Obviously, it is unhelpful to view all of these persons and the services they need in the same fashion. The common term "street youth" implies a homogeneity that is misleading.

McCullagh and Greco (1990: 9-18) distinguish five kinds of "street youth". These include (1) "runners from intolerable homes," (2) "runners to adventure," (3) "throwaways" who are pushed out of the home by parents either because they are ungovernable or because their parents want the relinquish responsibility, (4) "absconders from care" who are on the run from Children's Aid Society or young offender facilities, and (5) "curb-kids" who are still at home but who identify with the street scene and may be tempted to leave home prematurely. Obviously, the persons in each category have different reasons for finding themselves on the street and probably have need of different services.

The age of youth at risk is also an important dimension. Young people 12 to 17 years of age fall under the jurisdiction of the federal Young Offenders Act. Older youth who are arrested are tried in the adult courts. Those under 16 years of age fall under the secure custody provisions of most provincial child welfare acts. However, in some studies, adolescence has been defined to include young adults. For example, Badgley's sample of 229 "adolescent prostitutes" included those up to 21 years of age; indeed, the majority of those interviewed were 18 and older. Many of the services available for "street youth" extend to young persons up to the age of 24. This includes services which have a residency component such as Toronto's Covenant House as well as non-residency resource services like Calgary's "Back Door" project. Obviously, "the size of the homeless population has serious implication for policy formation, the cost of housing and health and social services and the requisite manpower to

deal with the problem" - so wrote McDonald and Peressini (1992:11) in the context of a study of homelessness in Calgary's East Village. For our purposes, an age range of from 12 to 24 years would appear to cover the heterogeneity of those described as street youth (Caputo and Ryan, 1991: 8-10).

Another aspect of the problem of definition has to do with the way the issue has been communicated to the public. The issue of missing children and child abductions, in particular, has garnered considerable attention in the media (Bergman, 1990). The way this issue is dealt with helps to shape public opinion on the issue. According to Campion-Vincent (1990), the media portrays the problem of missing children in horrific terms, picturing missing children as unwilling, helpless victims. This is particularly true in some cases of the media's coverage of missing children who are portrayed as victims of stranger abduction. Certainly, stranger abduction strikes very real fear when it occurs but such incidents account for only a very small proportion of missing children cases (Fisher, 1989; Viadero, 1990).

The problems of definition and identification of the target group - missing children, runaways, street kids, homeless youth - obviously makes any estimation of the size of this population at risk extremely contentious. For example, in the United States these estimates range from two hundred thousand to several million cases of "missing children" each year (Society, 1988). In the city of Chicago, sociologist Peter Rossi (1989:65) reported an average daily incidence of about 3,000 "homeless" people - and an annual prevalence of about 7,000 people, based on his own systematic counts. In contrast, community groups put the daily figure at between 15,000 to 25,000 cases, based on their impressions. In Canada, Radford et al. (1989: 9) cite Covenant House's estimate of 150,000 Canadian runners - as well as the

conclusion of the Select Committee on Youth which suggested that the national figure is unknown. In Toronto the Coalition of Youth Work Professionals puts the upper limit of street youth under the age of 24 years at about 5,000 persons while the Evergreen Drop-in Centre cites a figure of 12,000 youth living on Toronto streets (McCullagh and Greco, 1990:24).

Spitzer (1986) notes that neither the nature nor the scope of the problem is well defined. There is little consensus about which categories need counting and which priorities should prevail. In addition, agencies have an interest in the way the problem is defined. As McDonald and Peressini note "the pressure 'to do something about the problem' has promoted the outpouring of articles that exaggerate the problem and its characteristics in order to gain attention and attract dollars to ameliorate the situation"..."different constituencies use different definitions to manipulate the size of the problem according to their own vested interests" (1992:3,11).

The demographic characteristics of street youth and runaways are examined in numerous studies. In addition to the issue of age discussed above, various studies report on the gender ratio of runaways and street youth. For example, of the 127 youth interviewed in the study by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (1991:13), 60% (76) were females while 40% (51) were males. It is important to note that these results were obtained from a purposive sample. Similar results are reported by Kufeldt et al. (1988), whose exploratory study of homeless youth in Calgary included 52% females and 48% males. Different findings are presented by Smart et al. (1990) in a study of drug use among street youth in Toronto. In this study, one-quarter of the interviews were conducted with young people on the street while 75% of the interviews were conducted with young people contacted through social service

agencies. Smart et al. (1990) indicate that 64% (93) of the respondents in their study were male while 36% (52) were female. These results are consistent with those reported by Janus et al. (1987) whose sample of street youth consisted of 63% males and 37% females.

The findings of a two year study of admissions to a "safe house" for runaways in London, England indicate that 53% (282) of the 532 young people admitted were females while 47% (250) were males (Newman, 1898:2). American data on the demographic characteristics of runaways and street youth is reported in a national survey of 178 agencies providing both residential and non-residential services to some 404,279 young persons (National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, 1991:4). This survey revealed that the agencies provided services to slightly more females (53%) than males (47%). Such variations in gender ratios may be explained by the variable definitions of who is at risk and the different methods of identifying and accessing them.

Other characteristics of runaways and street youth have also received considerable attention in the recent literature (Kufeldt and Phillips, 1989; Csapo, 1987; Brennan, 1980; Nye and Edelbrock, 1980). For example, these studies include measures of individual characteristics such as low general intelligence, low self-sufficiency, hostility, isolation, and the risk of becoming psychotic (Speck et al., 1988; Hier et al., 1990). The role of the family in contributing to running is seen as especially important as family instability and youthful conflict with parents is closely associated with running away from home (Price, 1989; Stiffman, 1989a,b; Comer, 1988). A related dimension involves the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of young people and the resulting impact on running behaviour and subsequent involvement in delinquent acts such as prostitution and drug dealing (McCarthy, 1990;

Powers et al., 1990; Whitbeck and Simons, 1990; Janus et al., 1986, 1987a,b). Apropos of the "at risk of/at risk to" scenario, McCormack and Wobert-Burgess (1986a) discovered that females who reported having been sexually abused at home were significantly more likely to engage in delinquent activities than female runners who had not been abused. Whitbeck and Simons (1990) and Seng (1989) suggest that early sexual abuse increases the likelihood of further victimization as well as involvement in prostitution.

2.3 Runaways, Street Youth and Delinquency

For young adults prematurely leaving home, the prospects of criminal activity are increased as they become at greater risk of involvement with the alternative underground economies of prostitution, narcotics and theft (McCarthy, 1990; McCullagh and Greco, 1990). Among the various responses developed by the federal government to deal with the problems of youth, few are as intrusive as the criminal law and its implementation through the Young Offenders Act (YOA). The YOA was passed by Parliament in 1982 and implemented in 1984. While designed to extend protection to young offenders via its adherence to the rights of accused young persons, the Act appears to have introduced a graver emphasis on the rule of law as opposed to the sort of social welfare provisions that marked the more paternalistic Juvenile Delinquencies Act (JDA) (1908). Whether runaways and street youth who participate in street life come to the attention of child welfare authorities or the police is often a matter of chance. However, for young people today, contact with the criminal justice system may result in more serious consequences than was previously the case. By putting more emphasis on the protection of society than on the needs of the young person, the revised Young Offenders Act increases the liability of the homeless young

offender to arrest and conviction, and the stigmas that follow from these.

The relationship between street life and delinquent or criminal behaviour is a major focus in the street youth literature. Whitbeck and Simons (1990), for example, examined the consequences of running away and deviant peer group affiliations for 84 respondents from various agencies servicing runaways and street youth in a mid-sized, midwestern city. They discovered that running was positively associated with heightened deviant behaviour on the street for both males and females. However, females were more vulnerable to sexual exploitation than males while males were more likely to be involved in offenses involving weapons.

Delinquency is not the only hazard of running. Molnar et al., (1990) points out that homeless children suffer specific physical, psychological and emotional damage as a result of their experiences. Relin (1989) notes that the "hotel teens" he studied - young people living in flop houses in New York City - face a daily struggle to survive which makes them vulnerable to a range of delinquent behaviours. Little has been written about the subjective stress of homelessness and unemployment among young people. One exception is Luna's 1987 study of the content of the graffiti of homeless youth. Luna contends that young people in these circumstances lead emotionally damaging, unstable and hazardous lives. Luna notes that many resort to illegal activities such as prostitution to support themselves.

McCullagh and Greco (1990: 39-45) outlined the involvement of Toronto street youth in prostitution, theft, robbery and shoplifting, drug dealing and panhandling. More systematic information was gathered in Winnipeg in a recent study by the Social Planning Council. They found that two

thirds of the Winnipeg street youth they interviewed had had contact with the police while on the run. "Almost all of the runaways in the sample had participated in illegal activities" (1990:40). Over one-half had engaged in four of more of the following: "prostitution, drug dealing, theft, robbery, joyriding, shoplifting, forgery and fraud."

Among a recent sample of homeless persons in Calgary - predominantly adults - 76% had been arrested, 64% had been convicted at least once of a criminal offence and 35% had served time in jail. The most common offences were break and enter (21%), misdemeanours (16%), impaired driving (11%), and narcotics offences (10%) (McDonald and Peressini, 1992:92). Obviously, this group would not be directly comparable to a sample of younger street youth. However, the research is interesting inasmuch as it *suggests* that the hazards of street life increase the longer persons are disaffiliated from home and the older they get.

The question of the involvement of runaways, street youth, and homeless youth in illegal or delinquent activities was explored in some depth by William McCarthy (1990) in a year long study of homeless young people in Toronto. This is the most systematic study in the Canadian literature. It was based on 390 interviews conducted through various agencies offering emergency shelter to adolescents and young adults (Covenant House as well as other outreach services). McCarthy was interested in the participation of homeless youth in various forms of criminal activities - serious theft, narcotics trafficking and prostitution. The study was an attempt to compare competing theories of delinquency by examining their abilities to predict the incidence and prevalence of criminal activities. Consequently, the study did <u>not</u> originally entail a control group of non-homeless respondents. The respondents were asked about involvement in

delinquent acts prior to becoming homeless as well as after having left home. In this way it was possible to estimate the degree to which homeless youth were involved in crime before and after becoming homeless. Of even greater interest was McCarthy's attempt to link some of the situational elements of homelessness - subjective feelings of desperation as well as hunger - to increased propensity to engage in delinquent acts such as theft of food.

In a follow-up report, McCarthy and Hagan (1991) differentiated patterns among a sample of 563 "at home" respondents with his homeless sample. The homeless youth were more likely to come from families in which the head of the household was unemployed, more likely to be from non-intact families, to have experienced less parental control and attachment and to have experienced more abuse and hostility. In addition, the homeless subjects experienced more conflict with teachers, less interest in homework and a greater likelihood that their friends had been arrested by the police. Finally, they were more likely to have engaged in both serious and petty theft while still at home. These latter findings suggest that persons who become homeless or runaways find themselves in such straits because they already tend to be dysfunctional. In other words, the delinquent activity frequently pre-dated the decision to run.

2.4 Youthful Homelessness

The problem of homelessness has garnered increasing attention in both Canada and the United States over the past decade. During this period, young people comprised the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, with runaways and street youth accounting for a significant proportion of this group (Children Today, 1989; Price, 1989; Ward, 1989). As was suggested above, the target populations called "runaways" and "street youth" may well be the same individuals as those described under the rubric of "homeless youth" - i.e. the same population captured under a different profile. Predictably, any attempt to differentiate the characteristics of runaways, street youth, and homeless youth raises the definitional issue of which particular young people can be identified in the various sub-groups that make up this population. Again, methodological problems follow which make it difficult to reliably estimate the number of persons involved at any given time and location. Even if that issue can be settled, there remains the conceptual issue of tracking the antecedents and sequels of youthful homelessness in a longitudinal perspective which would allow causes and consequences of dislocation to be distinguished.

One thing appears to be clear. The literature suggests that the composition of the homeless population has changed substantially during the past decade with young people constituting an increasingly important part of this group. For example, in a study of clients of service agencies in New Jersey, Paul Shane (1989) found that "homeless youth predominated" in the groups receiving various outreach services. Similarly, Rossi reported in his landmark study, Down and Out in America (1989), that the traditional populations of skid row alcoholics and the mentally ill have

been replaced by new populations of transient youth. In the past, the aged had generally comprised the bulk of the homeless in America. In contrast, some 44% of the General Assistance (employable single welfare) population in Rossi's study were under age 25 (1989:121).

In addition to being more prominent in the homeless population, Shane (1989) argues that the reasons young people are leaving home prematurely have changed. He indicates that young people are running from abuse, neglect and unhealthy family situations rather than for economic reasons or for excitement. This view is echoed by Price (1989) whose study of the needs of Boston street youth revealed that most were from families suffering serious emotional or substance abuse problems.

Among the various studies of homelessness, Rossi's 1989 study of Chicago is the single most important contribution to the recent literature. Rossi's work differs from McCarthy's inasmuch as delinquency is given little attention. Rossi's work builds on the design of some 42 earlier municipal surveys conducted largely by social service departments in various American cities throughout the 1980s. As such, it warrants detailed consideration. Assisted by the staff of the National Opinion Research Centre, Rossi and his colleagues conducted over 700 interviews in shelters created for the Chicago homeless and in the "dead of night" among people sleeping in doorways, bus shelters, vacant buildings and the like.

Rossi reports that the literally homeless and the extremely poor sectors of American society share a number of characteristics: they are composed, disproportionate to the population, of minority groups (Blacks, Natives, and Hispanics); they tend to be systematically isolated from other family members, spouses, and - except in the case of single

female parents - from their children. They work irregularly at or below the minimum wage; usually for only a few hours per week, and/or panhandle or hawk newspapers. Many people with marginal shelter (single room hotels) resort to charitable food kitchens and emergency shelters when their own meagre resources run out - usually between welfare payments or regular pay cheques. Consequently, the picture Rossi presents is one of people operating in cycles between limited employment, welfare dependency, precarious housing, and literal homelessness.

On the personal side, Rossi reports that the homeless experience higher levels of a range of problems, although he is careful to point out that these never characterized the plurality of the sample he contacted. Levels of previous incarceration for crime and institutionalization for mental illness were inflated in comparison to the population at large. So too was previous contact with alcohol and drug detoxification facilities. In addition, the homeless were more prone to psychotic symptoms of depression, dissociation and suicidal imagery than the general population. The homeless also tended to have fared poorly at school. Some who had graduated from high school appeared to be dyslexic or functionally illiterate - a condition which made the completion of applications in job searches extremely difficult. In fact, Rossi suggests that only a fraction of the employable single men who qualified for welfare benefits actually sought them since the expectations of keeping appointments and filling out forms was beyond the abilities of persons who have neither a watch, bus fare, nor a fixed address.

In his analysis of the changing composition of the homeless, Rossi emphasized the increasing prevalence of young people among the homeless. "Today's homeless are concentrated

in their twenties and thirties, the early years of adulthood" (1989:40). In addition, youthful populations contribute - in the younger age cohorts - to transient elements in the homeless population. These include "one-time momentary (or very short-term) homeless, who are homeless for less than a week and only once or twice over a few years. Examples include runaway or "throwaway" young people, who usually rejoin their families within a few days" (1989:50). However, some portion of that population fails to become economically autonomous, or fails to rejoin the family successfully, and their youthful homelessness contributes to adult homelessness. According to Rossi:

> There can be little doubt that the current crop of young homeless men is the harvest of two decades of catastrophically high unemployment for young minority males. Most of the homeless young men have not held steady jobs for five years or more, and some have never been employed. (1989:200)

In a final dimension touching on the homelessness of adolescents and young adults, Rossi highlights the increasing dependency of young people on their families beyond the usual periods of kinship obligation, a situation that appears to arise from the inability of the economy to expand to meet changing demographic pressures.

We can see national trends in young people living with their parents, especially among the poor. Indeed, Black young men are especially likely to live in their parents' households. According to the Census, in 1970, 39% of both Black and White young men aged 18 to 29 years lived with their parents. By 1984, 54% of Black young men lived with their parents while only 41% of White men of comparable age did so. (1989:190).

However, the resources of families to provide shelter and support under such circumstances are limited. In the Chicago sample, young persons had lived in the parental home an average of four years without steady work before joining the ranks of the homeless (1989:89). So the limited patterns of employment which retarded the normal patterns of family leaving by minority youth also exerted an aggregate impact on their family's ability to host and house them, contributing both directly and indirectly to the patterns of homelessness. Although Rossi's work was based in Chicago, it raises obvious questions about the economic hazards that are associated with homelessness throughout North America.

A related macro-economic perspective is raised by Fuchs and Reklis in a recent article in Science (1992). Fuchs and Reklis analyzed the trends in income in families with children in America over the past 30 years and concluded that many of the problems of adjustment, educational deficiencies and related dysfunctions among youthful populations can be attributed to the declining material resources available to parents, particularly single parents. These longitudinal trends are consistent with Rossi's cross sectional data from Chicago.

2.5 School Leavers

Our review of the literature on runaways and street youth reveals a considerable interest in the relationship between educational experience, running away from home, and involvement in delinquent or criminal activities (Trusty and Dooley, 1991; Weis, 1989; Kalinke, 1989; Rumberger, 1987). Problems at school and poor educational experiences are associated with both decisions to leave school early and a host of consequences that follow from such a decision (Finn et

al., 1988). Three major aspects of the problem of early school leaving or "dropping-out" were identified: (i) an examination of the antecedents of the decisions to leave school prematurely including individual characteristics, family situations and peer relations; (ii) considerations of the consequences of premature school leaving including involvement in delinquent or criminal activities; and (iii) a search for solutions to the problem of school leaving including descriptions of various demonstration projects that have been instituted to address this problem.

We take some comfort in the observation that antecedents to the decision to leave school early parallel, in many important respects, the antecedents to running away and involvement in delinquent or criminal activities. At stake here are individual characteristics, the impact of the educational system and personal educational experience in particular, and the students' relationships with their families and peers.

Individual characteristics identified as important in the decision to leave school early include the students' IQ, their ability to achieve at school, and indications of the existence of various problems such as Attention Deficit Disorder (Moffitt, 1990; White et al., 1989). Particular attention is paid to young people identified as learning disabled and the consequences of this for premature educational departure (Brier, 1989; Grande, 1988). Other factors associated with dropping out include the demographic characteristics of age, gender, race, and social class (Karp, 1989; Fernandez and Shu, 1988; Tidwell, 1988). In general, the findings of this research indicate that those students who experience difficulties at school or who have negative school experiences are more likely to leave school early and suffer the attendant consequences of such a decision. In addition, they tend to be

from backgrounds already disadvantaged in terms of class and minority status.

A great deal of research has been directed at the impact of various school based factors and the decision to leave school early. Consideration has been directed at school curriculum, teaching practices, teacher-student relationships, the availability and effectiveness of specialized programmes for those at risk of leaving early, and the impact of national achievement standards (McLaughlin, 1990; Bearden et al., 1989; Gottfredson, 1985). Various strategies are discussed for schools to respond more effectively to the problem of high rates of early school leaving (Bauer, 1989; Mizell, 1987). This includes a considerable literature that describes pilot projects and other programmes that have been developed and implemented at various sites across North America (Bloch, 1989; Fennimore, 1989). These programmes emphasize the need for career information and counselling.

The third major area of concern addressed in the literature on early school leavers focuses on the impact that family and peer relations have on an individual's decision to leave school early. Once again, research in this area parallels that which examines the relationship between family and peer interactions and the involvement of young people in criminal or delinquent activities (Fagan and Pabon, 1990; Kupersmidt and Cole, 1990; Tolone and Tieman, 1990). Early school leavers are more likely to come from stressful home situations, be in conflict with parents, or have experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Moreover, early school leavers are more likely to be involved with delinquent peers than young persons who remain in school.

The decision to leave school early involves consequences that impact on the individuals themselves as well as those

that affect society as a whole (Kalinke, 1989; Bearden et al., 1989). The individual consequences range from loss of self-esteem and a lowered sense of self-worth (ERIC, 1988) to disadvantages in economic attainment and participation in the labour force (Hartnagel and Krahn, 1989). Early school leavers are seen as particularly susceptible to challenges to their identities and experience lowered self-esteem and self-worth (Finn et al., 1988). Similarly, early school leavers fail to acquire the types of skills required for economic self-sufficiency (Kalinke, 1989). All these factors contribute to the potential for chronic unemployment and involvement in marginal and illegal occupations.

According to Kalinke (1989), early school leaving entails two types of consequences. The first consists of the cost to society of the lost contribution and unmet potential of a portion of its members. These losses come about as a result of the restricted opportunities associated with the decision to leave school early. In the context of economic re-structuring for world competition, school leaving means a loss of social capital in increasingly competitive markets. The second consequence for society is more direct and includes increased expenditures on social, health, welfare and criminal justice programmes. Ironically, the national capacity to fund the latter requires the access to increasing public resources that arise from robust national economic performance.

Responses directed at individuals build on the findings of the research that examines the relationship between the decision to leave school early and individual characteristics such as IQ, communication skills, or the existence of a learning disability. These efforts are designed to ameliorate individual inadequacies through specialized programmes and services aimed primarily at the target groups. Strategies directed at family and peer relations range from intensive

counselling involving entire family units to programmes designed to build a positive atmosphere within a school. Remedies directed at the educational system itself involve changes to curriculum, special training for teachers, and programmes designed specifically for those young people most at risk of leaving school early (Cuellar and Cuellar, 1990; Wolman et al., 1989; Natriello, 1986).

It is clear from a review of the literature on early school leavers that the educational system plays a pivotal role in the lives of young people. Perhaps what is most notable is the relationship between problems at home - by now a common predictor of individual dysfunctioning - and problems in school: leaving school early, involvement in delinquent or criminal activities, and decisions to run away from home. However, the exact nature of the home linkage remains something of a mystery. The complexity of the problem of runaways and street youth is repeatedly highlighted in this literature as is the essential interrelationship between individual, familial and societal well-being.

2.6 Youth Gangs

The literature on gang formation stresses that the problem is less one of street youth than immigrant youth and suggests that gangs arise in response to friction between ethnic immigrant communities, particularly in circumstances of ecological segregation. This was reported by James Diego Vigil (1983) in a study of Chicano gangs in Los Angeles, although Short (1990) stresses that gangs based on ethnic and ecological segregation reflect a general trend in American urban areas, not just Los Angeles. Joe and Robertson (1980) make similar observations about Asian gangs in Vancouver. However, the Asian gangs in Vancouver appear to be associated

with weakening of traditional patterns of parental supervision and guidance combined with a perceived resistance to material advancement through legitimate channels. The Canadian Asian gang problem appears in more recent years to reflect the re-settlement of Vietnamese refugees whose peer ties are established in the Hong Kong refugee camps. While the prospect of Asian gangs seems to attract special public consternation and worry, there is a larger history of ethnic gang succession, particularly in the American literature which suggests (1) that gangs, i.e. delinquent peer groups, have been common throughout the century in the urban areas, (2) that their ethnic composition mirrors the dominant patterns of immigration at the time and (3) that their criminal activities have typically been associated with the exploitation of vice (Katz, 1988:ch.4). Very few members of the ethnic community join such organizations although they tend to figure most of their victims within the ethnic groups.

As in other target groups, one of the initial issues that emerges is the manner in which youth gangs are defined. This influences discussions concerning the nature and extent of youth gang activity. Various strategies for defining youth gangs are offered. Marsh and Campbell (1978) argue that a clearly identifiable structure must be present for a youth gang to be said to exist. However, in their study of the perceptions of adults and high school students in Racine, Wisconsin, Takata and Zevitz (1990) argued for a competing view. The adults included in the study were more likely to perceive youth gangs as formalized, structured and highly organized while young people saw them as informal, loosely structured and amorphous groups. Lowney's (1984) longitudinal study of a beach gang in California had similar findings supporting the view that gang membership is fluid and without a fixed membership, hierarchy or structure. The difficulty consists in deciding when a peer group can accurately be

defined as a gang. This may have serious consequences, for as Takata and Zevitz (1990) point out, gang membership is a social status that defines the way society responds to certain young people.

The media also plays an important role in the mythology of youth gangs and their identification as a social problem. Zatz (1987) points out that the media handling of stories involving youth can create a moral panic by exaggerating the organization of these groups, conveying the sense of a tight network to what may be only a loose peer group affiliation. Zatz argues that heightened public concern can be used by agencies such as social services or the police to secure additional - and scarce - resources for dealing with the apparent problem.

A number of trends in youth gang activity are reported in the literature. Evidence suggests that over the past two decades, youth gangs are no longer exclusively a big city phenomenon but have moved into smaller centres and suburban areas (Takata et al., 1987; Stover, 1986; Johnstone, 1981). Secondly, youth gangs have demonstrated increasing involvement in organized illegal activities directed at economic gain. While youth gangs continue to provide both social and emotional returns to their members, the staggering sums that can be derived from the drug trade have lured increasing numbers of youth gangs (Davis, 1990; Moore, 1985). One offshoot of the drug trade, however, is an escalation in incidents of violence (Davis, 1990, 1988).

Discussions regarding the causes of youth gangs range from a focus on the characteristics of individual gang members, to the role of family and peer groups, to explanations located in the political and economic structure of the society. For example, Vigil (1988) notes that youth

gangs provide a significant source of self-identification and ego formation. Schwartz (1989) points out that gangs provide their members with acceptance and social rewards. Young people who do not fit in, especially recent immigrants and minority youth, find protection and acceptance in youth gangs as well as an opportunity to make a successful transition from childhood to adulthood (Katz, 1988).

At the societal level, two competing explanations are offered for the existence of youth gang activity. The first, the culture of poverty argument, looks at the characteristics of the individuals and their families and the sustenance of an underclass culture by the welfare state (Moore, 1985). The second, and much more accepted explanation in the literature locates the source of youth gangs in the economic structure of society (Davis, 1988, 1990; Short, 1990; Huff, 1989) and in institutionalized racism in the educational system, job market, housing market and criminal justice system (Moore, 1985).

Responses to the problem of youth gangs are equally varied. Social work practice that is sensitive to the composition and needs of the community has been identified as effective in dealing with gang problems (Fox, 1985). Other strategies include attempts to disrupt gang recruitment activities as well as more traditional law enforcement approaches (Davis, 1988). Spergel describes crisis intervention and mediation techniques that have been employed in the context of a community development programme (1984, 1986). Shaw (1989) recounts the efforts of a suburban California school to come to grips with a youth gang problem. In the latter case, the community approach involved the school administration working swiftly with staff, students, parents, the police, and outside experts to bring the problem under control. Communication between the different groups was

essential in the recognition of the changing demographics of the community and the impact that this had on the school's composition. Open communication between the interested parties was also crucial for maintaining a safe environment within the school.

Other strategies involved the community in various crime prevention initiatives. These ranged from providing recreational and other resources to a police based employment programme for former gang members (Willman and Snortum, 1982). Community service orders were also discussed as a non-custodial option for gang members involved in property offences (Agopian, 1989).

2.7 Runaways, Street Youth and Health Issues

The consequences of running away and participating in street life can be quite severe (Yates et al., 1988; Young et al., 1983). In addition to securing adequate food and shelter, participation in street life exposes these young people to the threat of violence, drug abuse, AIDS and STD's. A great deal of concern has also focused on the negative impact that running may have on physical health and mental well being (JAMA, 1989; Yates et al., 1988). These young people have been found to be especially vulnerable to mental health problems, with many experiencing depression or attempting suicide (Yates et al., 1988; Denoff, 1987). Stiffman (1989a), for example, discovered that runners reported more suicide attempts than the non-runners in her sample. Runners were also more likely to have behavioural problems. Similarly, Windle (1989) reports that runners are more likely to drop out of school, engage in drug use and suffer more interpersonal coping problems.

The literature that focuses on the health care needs of runaways and street youth addresses several other issues. For example, there are some global concerns that the target group is not receiving adequate medical care (Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), 1989). A study of incarcerated youth in the United States, for example, found this population to be medically under-served and at risk of a variety of medical and emotional disorders (JAMA, 1990).

The threat that AIDS poses for runaways and street youth has received considerable attention in recent work (Kaliski et al., 1990; Radford et al., 1989; Woodruff et al., 1989). Efforts have been made to determine the extent of knowledge that runaways and street youth have about AIDS and to provide educational programmes directed specifically to them (Rotherman-Borus and Koopman, 1991a, 1991b; Stricof et al., 1991; Luna, 1989; Radford et al., 1989; Hermann, 1988). As Kaliski et al., (1990) note, while young people have some knowledge about the risk of AIDS, many runners feel invulnerable or fatalistic and fail to take adequate precautions to protect themselves. Furthermore, the high seroprevalence rate discovered in Rotheram-Borus and Koopman's 1991 study of runaways suggests that information about their knowledge of the risk of AIDS and their involvement in casual sex may be insufficient. The situation is exacerbated by casual intravenous drug use and involvement in prostitution - hazards that sometimes occur together.

Another major area of concern in the health field is drug abuse and detoxification. This field has generated a vast literature which is beyond the scope of the current review. For present purposes, the issue of drug abuse is examined specifically as it relates to runaways and street youth (Smart et al., 1990; Windle, 1989).

In Canada several studies have shed some light on the issue of substance abuse among the street youth population. The Children's Aid Society study of street youth in Toronto reported that "substance abuse amongst street youth is almost universal, and usually takes the form of dual drug and alcohol use" (McCullagh and Greco, 1990: 34). The Social Planning Council's study of homeless children and youth in Winnipeg interviewed approximately 100 street kids and discovered some 22% had engaged in intravenous drug use with about one-third reporting that they shared needles with other users (1990: 38). Fifty-six percent also reported they engaged in drug dealing (1990: 34). In addition, 69% gave "alcohol or drug abuse by subject" as one of the "family problems" which accompanied their most recent episode of running from home (1990: 26). In the national Street Youth and Aids study, Radford et al. interviewed 712 "street youth between 15 and 20 years of age." They reported that "twelve percent of the street adolescents, slightly more males, admitted that they had used intravenous drugs although not necessarily on a regular basis" (1989:120). "Two-thirds of all street youth were using drugs and/or alcohol weekly or daily" (1989: 124). "One-quarter of the young people were classified as light alcohol users, 36 percent as moderate and 27 percent as heavy" (1989:126). Whatever importance substance abuse poses from the point of view of the law, the high levels of dual dependencies suggest that drugs and alcohol are a major health issue for street youth.

A similar concern in the health literature is the issue of child abuse. Health care professionals have been at the forefront of researching and responding to this problem. Abuse is both an antecedent to running and, in the context of juvenile prostitution, a consequence of it. Once again, an enormous literature exists in this area that goes far beyond the scope of the present review. There is some concern here,

however, with the relationship between child abuse and running away from home (Whitbeck and Simons, 1990; Hotaling and Finkelhor, 1988). As well, some of the research in this area suggests that young people who have experienced abuse in the past, are much more vulnerable to further abuse once on the street (Stiffman, 1989b; McCormack et al., 1986b).

An important area of research in the health field addresses the issue of child and youth development. This research takes its orientation from epidemiology and focuses on factors that have negative influences on the healthy development of children and youth. Much of this work involves psychiatric and psychological studies of young people in order to identify risk indicators. The goal of this work is early identification and intervention. Various epidemiological models are used in conducting research on children to assess the likelihood of their demonstrating maladaptive or anti-social behaviour patterns, poor school performance, or involvement in delinquent behaviour including running away from home (Flax, 1990; Jusness, 1987; Tremblay et al., 1986).

Research on child development employs psychological variables such as cognitive development, problem solving ability and communication skills to construct predictive models (Denoff, 1987). The impact of social factors such as family circumstances, poverty, and homelessness are also considered (Farnworth, 1984). The primary concern here is that appropriate development occur in order to minimize physical and mental health problems. Research has sought to identify the protective factors that assist young people in coping adequately with life stress so that these might be introduced among at risk youth (Garmezy, 1987). This work has focused on the characteristics of resilient and invulnerable children (Werner, 1984; Werner and Smith, 1982; Felsman and Vailiant, 1987; Rutter, 1985).

Responses to the medical needs of runaways and street youth range from educational programmes designed to inform young people about the threat of AIDS (Caswell and Green, 1988; Hermann, 1988), to outreach services and community mental health clinics (Adams, 1980). Some effort has also been directed at developing training regimens for service providers that deal with street youth and runaways (Jennings, 1990). The responses of professional care-givers to the problem of runaways and street youth encompass a variety of discrete intervention strategies (Miller et al., 1990; National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, 1985; Resources for Runaway and Missing Children, 1984). Some seek to identify antecedents to running in order to be able to intervene effectively with high risk individuals. Others advocate family therapy to tackle dysfunctions in family interaction (Ostensen, 1981). Several studies report on the success of various street outreach programmes or shelters in providing education and counselling aimed at the specific needs of the client population (Price, 1989; Hermann, 1988). There are also resources available to law enforcement personnel charged with investigating cases of missing and runaway children (Maxson et al., 1988; Patterson, 1987).

2.8 Specific Vulnerable Sectors

In any review of the problems associated with runaways and street youth in contemporary Canada, we would not appreciate the full picture if we failed to identify the specific situations confronting two particular sectors of Canadian society: Native Canadian and immigrant youth. Each group is confronted by a double barrier. The usual tribulations that are associated with growing up are compounded by the pressures to assimilate a new, and sometimes hostile culture, and possibly a new language. Natives also

appear to face greater disadvantages at the outset. There is widespread alcoholism, family violence, abuse, early school leaving, high levels of suicide, poverty, and health problems such as tuberculosis and high levels of infant mortality on many Canadian reservations. Many young people running from the reservations find themselves among the urban homeless, and are vulnerable to all the hazards which are found on the street.

Immigrant youth do not appear to figure prominently among the youthful homeless or the disadvantaged street kids. In some cities, Natives do. In the Social Planning Council's study of Winnipeg 35% of the runners were Caucasian, 32% were Metis, 19% were treaty Indian, 7% non-status Indian, 3% Black, 1% Asian and 3% from other ethnic backgrounds (1990:14). However, some concern has been expressed in the Canadian media that some members of the Asian immigrant community, particularly among Vietnamese immigrants (Shilliday, 1991), are involved in gang activities as we outlined earlier. These figures suggest that Native and immigrant youth merit special attention in future research. Especially important is the need to insure that a reliable sampling of these groups is undertaken.

2.9 Institutional and Community Responses

Throughout our review we have mentioned, in passing, a variety of specific initiatives which have been undertaken to intervene with particular populations. If we were to presuppose that one particular kind of intervention "worked", this would be highly misleading, and for a variety of reasons. As the reader will have gathered by now, the concept of "runaways and street youth" refers to several rather discrete, if partially overlapping, populations of adolescents and young

adults. Runaways, curbsiders, homeless young people, delinquents, juvenile prostitutes, dropouts, gang members and missing children are persons with rather different social profiles. If we tend to lump them together, this may be because some of the important agencies that have been created to deal with runaways and street youth are responsive to the range of stresses and hazards which afflict these young people. Thus, institutional and community responses are often directed at the entire population of young people who for one reason or another prematurely leave home or contemplate leaving home, either temporarily or permanently, and who may be beyond normal parental influence and direction. Here, we are thinking of the various adolescent and young adult emergency shelters, drop-in centres, outreach services and counselling facilities which offer a range of service to a diverse clientele. In the face of such a plurality, it is unrealistic to think that any particular model *either-works-or-does-not*.

Different services are offered to different types of youth, often within the same agency. The problems young people have may be many and varied, short term or long term, traumatic or otherwise. In this regard, the National League of Cities provides a useful overview of a range of youthful employment schemes, adolescent pregnancy prevention programmes, child homelessness projects, child care initiatives and various attempts at service coordination associated with grassroots planning throughout the United States (Kyle, 1987). Michaud (1988) offers a similar guide to a "multi-service" approach in Canada.

Unless we respect this sort of diversity in the needs of young people, we are liable to subscribe to panaceas. The fact is that "certain programmes work at certain times, for certain individuals". While not immediately helpful, this

advice avoids investment in magical cures. In addition, it is clear that the most vulnerable segments of this population have multiple problems, intransigent personal stresses and uncertain futures. Evaluation research premised on a "quick take" is insensitive to the complexity of human behaviour and naive about the ease of intervention. On the other hand, we find little merit in the journalistic excesses which paint the situation in such bleak terms as to defy intelligent intervention and which are as exploitative of the street kids as "the system" they knock (Webber, 1991).

Several distinctions should be made when we consider the societal resources which have been developed to deal with the range of sub-populations covered by the runaways and street youth umbrella. At the more formal end of the continuum, we find at least four separate government systems which are involved - the legal, the social welfare, the educational and the medical systems. Frequently, these subsystems are closely interrelated. Consider, for example, a typical profile of a young prostitute - abused at home, an early runner, promiscuous, narcotics dependent, educational drop out, socially stigmatized and interpersonally dysfunctional (Webber, 1991). Soliciting arrests expose her to the police, courts, probation and correctional authorities. Substance abuse, unplanned pregnancies and STDs require medical treatment, family counselling and/or drug detoxification. Longer term readjustment may require remedial education and training, as well as welfare support. In such a case, it is not surprising that premature home departure can expose the unwary to a vortex of unanticipated hazards, and elicit the involvement of each of the major institutions.

Aside from the formal institutions, the social welfare field is characterized by a range of services that vary dramatically: large and small, professional and voluntary,

religious and secular, residential and walk-in, emergency and longer term. Sorting out "what works" and "what does not" presupposes that we could test which persons respond to which kinds of services and why - yet no one would presuppose that clients are ever randomly assigned to one or another resource to assess what works.

In terms of services, it is customary to distinguish between primary, secondary and tertiary programmes. Primary programmes provide the basic necessities - food, safe shelter, and clothing. Secondary programmes deal with the stresses and traumas such as substance dependencies, therapeutic needs, psychiatric disturbances, exploitative relationships and the like. The tertiary programmes deal with the person's longer term ability to cope independently - education and/or job training, economic independence, residential autonomy, successful interpersonal relations and the like. Viewed from this perspective an emergency soup kitchen "works" simply by delivering nutritious meals to a needy population. However, when the public thinks about things that "work", there is a temptation to conjure up images of people who have fallen through all the social safety nets, who have, say, left home, panhandled, prostituted, developed drug and/or alcohol dependency problems, criminal records - and who have climbed back up through the primary, secondary and tertiary care systems to become upstanding members of the community. Stated in this fashion, expectations about "what works" are on the same level as the miraculous. Clearly such steep expectations set up clients, agencies and care givers for failure.

One of the difficult things for the public to grasp is that a very sizeable number of those young persons who are part of the street culture are already runaways from child welfare institutions. For example, some 60% of those interviewed in the Winnipeg study by the Social Planning

Council had been living in some form of foster or non-parental custodial care at the time of their last run (1990:21). Similarly, a majority of those contacted in Toronto in the Addiction Research Foundation study had been in non-parental custodial care (Smart et al., 1990:13). And about a third of the young runaways in the major London study were from "local authority care" (Newman, 1989:2). In other words, from the perspectives of many street people, social agencies are part of their problem, and not always part of their solutions. In this context, Kufeldt (1991:47) notes that social welfare organizations tend to discount the needs for autonomy expressed by runaways and street kids. Indeed, she stresses that "interventions with and for youth should respond to their needs for support and security, rather than the needs of service providers for containment and control." Following this advice, there can never be "One Big Agency" in any city which caters to the needy in a monolithic fashion. Kufeldt recommends a "continuum of services ranging from outreach, store front, treatment, to a range of residential, transitional and supportive housing" (1991:46) - reflecting the primary, secondary and tertiary levels enumerated earlier, and sympathetic to the autonomy of the care consumer.

However, the continuum of services sets up another sort of dynamic. If we accept the wisdom of providing a diversity of services, this tends to result in competition between agencies for "ownership" of the problem. Police officers see delinquents - social workers see victims of abuse - health care workers see people at risk to disease - educators see dropouts - and the devout see souls in moral peril. All compete for financial and social support from the public through taxes and/or charitable donations. At this point, we do not see any resolution to this competition. Certainly, the diversity provokes interest in the potential for collaboration to streamline service delivery, especially in an era of

shrinking budgets and economic recession (Guthrie and Guthrie, 1991). An important task, therefore, is to examine how each of the sectors is equipped to intercede and to identify the commonalities and discontinuities in their various activities. In this way, we may be able to better inform the debate over policy and resource allocation.

2.10 Summary: A Schematic Overview

Conceptually, it is difficult to provide a reasonable summary of the literature we have attempted to highlight in this short review without over-simplifying who is involved, why, and with what consequences. Obviously, it would be a mistake to paint the population at risk in homogeneous terms. The streets may be fraught with victims and villains but these are very mixed groups and the hazards to which they are exposed and vulnerable both prior to appearing on the street and following removal from their families are quite complex. In addition, the ability of society to organize policies to effectively reach out and intervene successfully in the lives of adolescents and young adults is another question entirely, as we have indicated.

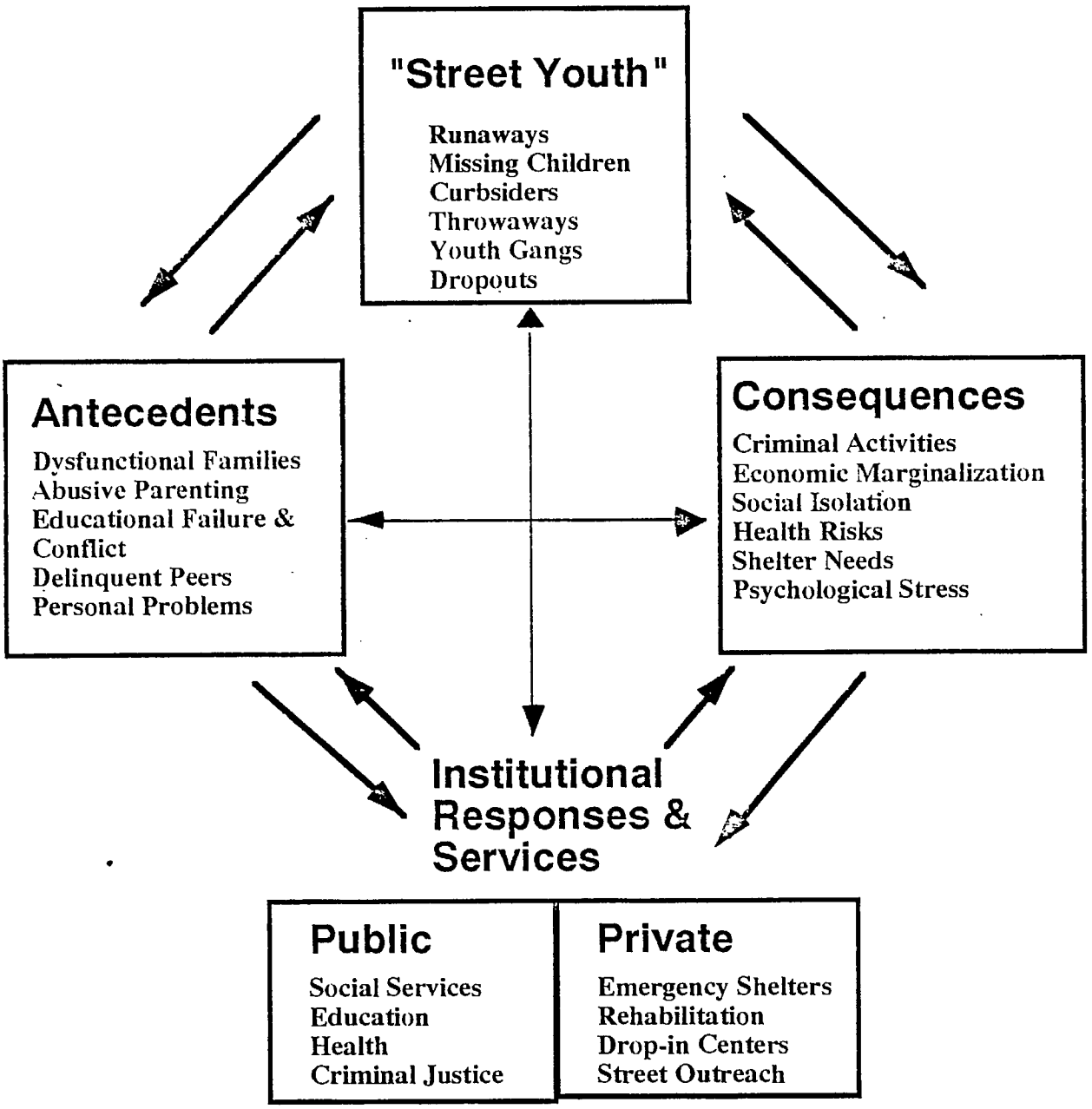
An attempt at summarizing the process we are trying to understand is depicted in the following schematic overview. It outlines a four part articulation of the links between the various elements which are tapped by this literature. The first phase is characterized by predictors of runaway and adolescent homelessness, i.e. antecedents. The second involves the variety of adaptations which are manifested in runaway, street and gang activities , i.e. the different patterns which characterize "street youth." The third part concerns the hazards or consequences that confront those who find themselves in these populations. And the final part covers the institutional responses to these populations and their vulnerabilities.

Figure One illustrates the directions of effect going back and forth between the four major components to suggest a dynamic interplay between them. In other words, various antecedents may expedite early home leaving, and running may

itself impact on family roles and relationships.

This schematic overview presents only an initial characterization of the situation which is open to question on a number of counts, some of which can be raised here. First of all, how are the antecedents related to the different kinds of youth at risk? Family disharmony does not contribute equally to runaway and gang behaviour. Obviously, we need to parse out the antecedents which are most closely associated with distinctive types of problematic behaviour. Secondly, when we try to visualize the target populations as overlapping youthful groups, many of the people viewed under our collective umbrella have little in common. Street gangs typically arise from problems of adjustment in immigrant or minority populations - sometimes their conduct is delinquent, but rarely is it associated with homelessness. A third issue concerns the hazards experienced by our target groups. Some of the factors represented as sequels may in fact be antecedents, and some may be both, as suggested by the multidirectional relationships depicted in the diagram. Persons who are, for example, at risk of narcotics abuse *after* running may already have exhibited such a tendency *prior* to leaving home.

Figure One : Schematic Overview



In other words, drug abuse at home can make a child "ungovernable" and can lead the family to reject the child - resulting both in premature home leaving and subsequent drug dependency. By way of further illustration, being economically stressed can both lead to homelessness and reinforce economic marginalization. Obviously, an understanding of the time ordering and linkage of the antecedents and consequences for each of the hazards is paramount. A final observation - an assessment of the institutional responses raises questions about how closely our institutions recognize all the hazards of street life, how the various populations utilize those services, and how effective the latter are in delivering a successful intervention to the problems they confront. Clearly, services may have a direct impact on young people, their families and communities, but the nature of the services provided are themselves responsive to the types of clients they serve, their needs and characteristics.

This schematic overview can do little more than highlight the complexity of the problem under consideration. It is clear, however, that the question of how we define the problem of runaways and street youth is of immense importance, not only for clarity of research but for our basic understanding of these elements of society. Moreover, if we accept these subtleties in the populations at risk, we cannot help but be equally sensitive in the design of our present and future interventions.

3.0 The Design Challenge: Examining Recent Canadian Research

In all, eleven studies were examined in detail. A brief overview of each study is presented. This is followed by a consideration of the research design strategies employed in each study. Research design decisions are then assessed in light of the problems encountered when studying as elusive a population as runaways and street youth.

3.1 Kufeldt and Nimmo and the Calgary Study

In 1987, Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) reported the results of a year long study of runaways and street youth in Calgary. They sought to determine the size and needs of the city's youth population, 12 to 17 years of age who were runaways or homeless. They were also interested in the services this group of young people used in meeting their needs, the extent to which their needs were not being met by existing services and the manner in which they went about meeting these needs.

Kufeldt and Nimmo worked with a committee consisting of representatives of thirteen agencies in the area that dealt with the target population. An interview schedule was constructed and administered by staff members of the Boys and Girls Club who were experienced in working with youth and trained to administer the survey. The interviewers were accompanied on the street by social work students. Given the lack of available information about the target population and the difficulty in constructing an appropriate sampling frame, the committee decided that the survey should be conducted in the downtown core, an area of about seventy square blocks.

Sampling was based on "expert choice", that is, on the judgement of the Boys and Girls Club staff members who were conducting the interviews.

The researchers in this study faced initial difficulties in making contact with members of the target population. However, after gaining the confidence of several street youth, other interviews became much easier to obtain. To avoid the limitations of a single cross-sectional study, Kufeldt and Nimmo employed a longitudinal approach. The survey was conducted over a one year period. Interviewers were on the street during the last week of every month from late afternoon to about 2 a.m., regardless of the weather.

A number of ethical issues were discussed in relation to this study. The first addressed the matter of informed consent and questions surrounding the legality of people in the target population giving their consent. It was decided in this study that the benefits of the research outweighed the harm that it might cause. A second ethical question had to do with the disclosure of incriminating information and the subsequent responsibility of the researchers to provide this information to the appropriate authorities. This was resolved by focusing on whether the respondents had ever been approached regarding a certain activity such as prostitution or drug use versus whether they had ever engaged in the activity in question. The fact that some of the respondents may have been victims of various forms of abuse was also of concern to the research committee. In response, interviewers were trained to offer assistance when it was indicated.

The study discovered that there were an average of 61 youth, seventeen years of age or younger, on the street in Calgary at any given time. This ranged from a high of 135 in August to a low of 34 in December. In addition to the season,

the study was sensitive to the timing and the geographical location of the data collection. Interviews were deliberately conducted at the end of each month since this is the hardest time for poor families. A similar strategy is found in other research on the homeless. Also, researchers were careful to avoid competition with concerts or sports events that might have affected the appearance on the street of members of the target population.

While the longitudinal design and the other strategies adopted in this study are laudable, the study has several shortcomings. To begin with, we have no way of judging the representativeness of the sample drawn for this study. A lack of representativeness means that the results of the study are not generalizable and the data obtained must be treated in the same manner as that gathered through the case study method. This study is largely descriptive and raises as many questions as it answers. Little is known, for example, about the parameters of the target population as a result of this research. More importantly, we have no way of knowing how the sample of runaways and street youth compares to other members of the runaway and street youth population or the general population of young people seventeen years of age or younger.

Secondly, beyond relying on "expert choice", no criteria were delineated with respect to deciding who should be included in the study. The age of the respondents was restricted to include those 17 years and under only after the data had been gathered. The categories that were identified - inners and outers, true runaways or homeless youth - while suggestive of the diverse nature of this population are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive. In addition, our own attempts to replicate the numbers of runaways "on view" have been unsuccessful. Deciding who is a runaway by visual

inspection alone proved to be quite problematic.

3.2 The Toronto Adolescent Runaway Study

In 1987, the results of a study of adolescents utilizing the services of Toronto's Covenant House were published by Mark-David Janus and his colleagues. This study was part of a larger research project initiated by the United States Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) that sought to examine the relationship between childhood sexual abuse, juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. Three separate populations were examined in the larger study including a sample of child abuse victims, convicted sex offenders and juvenile runaways. The Toronto study represents research on the third population - juvenile runaways. It was undertaken in cooperation with Covenant House, a crisis intervention centre in Toronto providing a range of services to young people between the ages of 16 and 21 years. Covenant House offers 24 hour shelter, food, clothing, tokens or bus fare, as well as medical and legal services.

Between June and August of 1984, staff counsellors recruited a sample of 149 participants from a total summer population at Covenant House of 818. Potential subjects could be excluded for a variety of reasons including: (i) they could not read or understand English; (ii) they were noticeably on drugs or intoxicated; (iii) they did not keep scheduled appointments. After the sample had been drawn, a comparison was made by project and agency staff of the sample and the overall client population on such variables as age, race, education, gender, and religion. The sample was representative of the broader population receiving services at Covenant House.

After a consent form was obtained, a structured interview was administered including a "draw-a-person" graphic task. The interview schedule included items that canvassed family structure and environment, reasons for running, prior physical and sexual abuse, physical and emotional symptomology and prior involvement in delinquent activities. In addition, the instrument contained self-concept and life events scales as well as a measure of presumptive stress and coping behaviour. In all, 149 interviews were completed. Of these, 63% were males and 37% females. The mean age of the sample was 17.9. Running behaviour was common among the respondents. The mean number of runs was 8.9 and 49% had left home more than three times.

The authors outline several limitations of their study. To begin with, they note that the sample size was small and that it consisted entirely of officially recognized and self-reported runaways. Moreover, the sample was limited to those aged 16 to 21 years since this is the population served by Covenant House. Both older and younger runaways were excluded. The authors further note that data is missing for some questions. Questions relating to ongoing delinquent activities could not be asked nor could in-depth information on the nature and frequency of reported sexual abuse be gathered. This is due to the fact that the interviews were anonymous and there were no assurances that respondents would seek out counselling for issues arising from sensitive questions. Furthermore, there was no linkage to clinical services for respondents. Finally, the authors point out that caution should be used in generalizing the results of the study to the general population of runaways in either Canada or the United States.

The greatest difficulty with this study rests in the procedures used for selecting a sample. No sampling frame was

established nor were those included randomly selected from the population using the agency's services. Also, no information was provided about the criteria used in selecting potential respondents, however, reasons were given for which potential respondents could be excluded. The authors correctly caution the reader about generalizing to the wider population of runaways based on this research. Nevertheless, their results are presented in a context which presumes just such a generalization.

A number of questions exist about those excluded from the sample. Specifically, excluding those who could not read or understand English and those who failed to keep scheduled appointments is questionable. These individuals may represent an important segment of the runaway population. Failing to keep appointments may be symptomatic of those young people with the greatest likelihood of becoming entrenched street youth and an inability to read or understand English may or may not signal the existence of other serious cultural or medical difficulties. Finally, as the authors indicate, the study included only officially recognized or self-reported runaways. Those not using the agency's services could not be included. In addition, the agency's religious outlook may affect those who select its services, although this is improbable.

3.3 The Missing Children's Research Project

In December of 1985, the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada initiated a Missing Children Research Project as part of a larger federal government response to the issue of missing children. The principal researcher for this study was Joan Fisher (1989). The objectives of the study were to examine the nature and extent of missing children cases; assess the relationship between missing children cases and other social problems such as family violence and child physical and sexual abuse; and examine the response of police and social service providers to missing children cases. In order to accomplish these objectives, a study was carried out between the summer of 1986 and winter of 1988 with the cooperation of the Surrey RCMP Detachment, the Edmonton Police Service, the Metropolitan Toronto Police Department, and the Montreal Urban Community Police Department.

This study involved two overlapping research phases. The first phase consisted of an analysis of police occurrence reports of missing children cases collected between December 1, 1986 and November 1987. The second phase involved the in-depth study of 341 missing children identified as repeat runners. Interviews were conducted in Surrey, Toronto, and Edmonton with case workers selected by matching social service agency files with police occurrence reports obtained in phase one of the study. In Montreal, case worker interviews were augmented with interviews with children and parents.

This study is a landmark contribution to the literature on missing children and runaways in Canada. Prior to its appearance, little systematic information was available on the subject. The study examined 12,446 missing children cases. The four sites included in the study represent approximately

30% of the nation's total population - giving us considerable confidence that the data collected are representative of the missing children phenomenon across the country. The study's limitations relate to the type of data gathered and the samples drawn. As Fisher indicates, the analysis of the data collected is restricted by the variability in reporting between the sites, making generalizability and comparability problematic. Furthermore, the author raises several cautions about interpreting the data, given the fact that varying age cutoffs were used in different locations and that many missing children cases may not be reported to the police. In addition, the type and amount of data gathered were limited to what was in the police occurrence reports. These types of problems, however, are usually unavoidable in research based on official data, and while serious, they reveal more than they conceal.

The second phase of this research project is more problematic. It reflects the difficulties researchers experience in attempting to garner information about a vulnerable and elusive population such as runaways and missing children. In order to examine the relationship between running behaviour and other social problems, interviews were conducted with 341 case workers supervising chronic runaways. While the information gathered from these case workers is important, it is not equivalent to that obtained from the target population itself. Moreover, case workers gave their subjective assessments about chronic runaways. While this tells us a great deal about the perceptions of these case workers, we have no way of knowing if this information accurately reflects the experiences of chronic runaways. More importantly, since there was no control group in this study, we cannot ascertain whether the characteristics identified are unique to the chronic runners or widespread throughout the youth population. An effort to address these difficulties was

made in this study with interviews conducted with 31 parents and 19 children. Information obtained from these interviews was used for special comparisons. This is information is limited, however, given the small number of respondents from a single site (Montreal). A larger sample of parents and children in each of the sites would have been desirable and might have ensured greater validity and reliability of the data collected from case workers. Despite these limitations, this remains one of the most important works in the literature.

3.4 The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg Study

A second Canadian study of runaways and homeless youth was initiated in the fall of 1988 and completed in the fall of 1989 by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (1990). This study grew out of a proposal submitted to the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative to establish a shelter for runaways and homeless youth in the city. Broader public concern over this problem led the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, in conjunction with the Winnipeg Coalition on Homelessness, to propose a needs assessment focusing on runaway youth. As was the case in Calgary, an advisory committee was established consisting of representatives of service agencies, the educational system, the criminal justice system, and various other organizations in the community concerned with troubled youth. Initially, the objectives of the study were: (i) to define the nature and the scope of the problem of homelessness among children and youth; (ii) to examine alternative response models to the problem; and (iii) to develop specific recommendations for a response to the problem of homelessness among children and youth in Winnipeg. Once again, the lack of available information on this topic forced the principals in the Winnipeg study to alter their approach. While they had

assumed that there was a substantial amount of information on the subject of homeless youth, they quickly discovered that very little information was actually available. As a consequence, their second and third objectives were rendered inappropriate or premature. The result was a largely descriptive study.

The Winnipeg study was based on data gathered from interviews with 127 young people who had experience with running behaviour. The interview schedule used in the study was developed through a literature review and in conjunction with the advisory committee. The instrument was somewhat lengthy, requiring approximately 1 to 1 1/2 hours to complete. Interviews were conducted from October 11, 1988 to January 13, 1989 with most taking place in the eatery area of Portage Place, a large mall in downtown Winnipeg. Two interviewers were used to carry out the interviews. One had experience as a youth worker and had herself been a "street kid". This experience proved valuable for gaining the trust of a number of young people in a particular network that frequented Winnipeg's downtown core area. Four weeks were required to gain access to the network. The two interviewers spent a great deal of time "hanging out" in the mall and other downtown locations frequented by street youth. After the initial contacts were established, and after the interviewers had gained the trust of the youth, runaways began to make themselves known to the interviewers.

The authors of the Winnipeg study note that several other strategies for making contact with potential subjects were also utilized. This included using a list of runaways made available by service providers. This approach did not prove very useful, however, since many of these youth were found to be back in their homes or placements. Attempts to interview these young people were often influenced by parents or

care-givers who insisted in being present during the interviews. This may have intimidated the respondents and prevented them from being completely frank. The interviewers also visited various youth programmes in an effort to recruit runaway youth for the study. This approach proved to have a very low yield in the identification of runaway youth.

The interviewers offered potential respondents a variety of items as incentives to participate in the study. These ranged from food vouchers and free passes to the YM-YWCA, to condoms and a card about the AIDS INFO-LINE. Respondents were also given a "thank you" letter which was thought to be important. Both the incentives and the gesture of appreciation were deemed to be helpful for the success of the study.

The Winnipeg study grappled with a number of conceptual and methodological problems, however, the authors acknowledge the limitations of their work. For example, they discuss the issue of the age range of their respondents. They indicate that those interviewed for the study ranged from under 10 to 21 years of age. The focus of their discussion was on the experience of minors, i.e. those under eighteen, even though some respondents were between 18 and 21 years of age. This is justified by the authors since many in this older group are still living the life of a runaway, a condition which began many years before for these individuals.

In addition to age, the definitions of such key concepts as children, youth, runaways, and homeless are discussed. In this study the terms children and youth were used interchangeably, although at times, answers were divided for those under and over eighteen years of age. In this case, the older group were referred to as youth while the younger as children. In addition, the study points out that potential future service responses would of necessity differ for very young children as opposed to older teens.

The concepts of homelessness and runaways also posed some difficulties. Homelessness was defined in this study as an umbrella term which encompassed a wide range of sub-populations. This included runaways who are homeless while on the run. However, according to the authors of this study, runaways can be homeless even when they are not officially "on the run". In this conceptualization, being on the run is as much a state of mind as it is a physical reality. This view was based on the responses of those interviewed who noted that for many of them, returning home in the evening or after school was never a sure bet.

The methodological problems addressed in this study deal mainly with sampling issues but some attention is given in the study to the process of data collection. To begin with, the authors acknowledge the lack of a representative sample, randomly drawn from a known population. Instead, a "purposive" sample was drawn based on the criterion that the respondents included in the study were self-reported runaways. This was justified on the basis of gaining some insights into running from youth experienced in such behaviour. Purportedly, if the study had been interested in testing a theory of running behaviour, a different sampling procedure would have been used. Nevertheless, the generalizability of the results of this study are limited by the type of sample

that was employed.

Several other factors are worthy of consideration with respect to the sample drawn in this study. Unlike the Calgary study where interviews were conducted over a one year period, the interviews in this study were conducted during the late fall and early winter. Given the severe climate in Winnipeg, questions can be raised about the nature of the sample actually included in the study and whether a substantially different sample would have resulted had the study been conducted during the summer months. Moreover, the study notes that access to respondents was gained slowly and the contacts of one of the interviewers who had prior street experience were crucial in gaining access to a network of runaways. As the study itself notes, there is no way of knowing if the results obtained from this sample reflect primarily the characteristics of this particular network as opposed to the characteristics of the runaway population more generally.

An effort is made in this study to come to grips with some of these difficulties by utilizing the expert advice of an advisory committee and having very knowledgeable interviewers. In addition, a long interview schedule containing both forced-choice and open ended questions was employed to ensure uniformity in the information collected. Finally, the desirability and usefulness of a larger sample is noted by the authors as are the limitations of their study. They indicate that their findings:

> should be treated as a *preliminary* assessment of the situation and needs of a *select* group of homeless and runaway youth in Winnipeg. While we are confident that many of the issues raised here would be presented by any group of runaway and homeless youth, we cannot verify the extent to which this would occur or that other trends would not emerge if a larger, and more representative sample of youth were included (emphasis added) (1989:2).

This statement makes explicit some of the consequences related to sampling decisions in the study of runaways and homeless youth. The difficulties in designing a study in this area revolve primarily around obtaining a representative sample randomly drawn from a known population. Some of the other studies we will examine fare better than the two already discussed, however, none deals satisfactorily with the sampling problem.

3.5 The National Street Youth and AIDS Study

The next study to be considered is the Street Youth and AIDS (1989) study. This study is far more extensive than either of the two discussed above. It was part of the larger Canada Youth and AIDS Study conducted for the federal department of Health and Welfare. The original sample of the Canada Youth and AIDS study was increased to make it more representative of the broad range of street youth. Interviews were conducted with 712 street youth between 15 and 20 years of age in ten Canadian cities. Responses gathered from this group were compared to two other samples. The first consisted of grade 11 students and the second was a sample of college and university students modified to be more representative of the age range of the street youth sample. These two additional samples were drawn from the larger Canada Youth and AIDS Study.

The survey attempted to determine the extent to which street youth are at risk of contracting and transmitting HIV and other STD's. The study also examined how much the respondents knew about HIV and STD's and how this knowledge influenced their attitudes and behaviour. The respondents were also queried about their use of various services available to them and their assessment of the most and least

preferred services. Other data regarding the demographic and lifestyle characteristics and background of this group were also collected. This information was intended for use by those responsible for developing an AIDS education strategy.

Two factors were used to identify runaway youth in this study: the age of the youth and whether they were absent from home without parental permission (usually for 24 hours or more). The criteria for inclusion in the sample consisted of the following: (i) the respondents had to be from 15 to 20 years of age; (ii) they had to have lived on the street for a day or more during the previous year; (iii) they had to have run from home or a social service agency, or have spent a great deal of their leisure time "hanging out" on the street. Five broad categories for classifying street youth were then developed based on these selection criteria and a conceptualization that contends that street youth are not part of a homogeneous group, but rather, are members of a smaller subculture. This is very important since the youth were to be differentiated specifically by fundamental aspects of their lifestyle as well as by the service agencies they contacted and used.

The five categories outlined in this study include the following: (1) prostitutes, (2) drug abusers, (3) youthful offenders, (4) homeless youth, (5) unemployed youth. This classification scheme was seen as useful since it was linked to services and it could be employed in educational programmes. The categories had to satisfy two criteria: they had to represent an identifiable subculture characterized by a common lifestyle; and they had to have corresponding agencies established to provide services to members of the subculture. It was further felt that this classification scheme ensured a diversified sample of street youth.

Data were collected in ten Canadian centres through contacts with various service agencies. Depending on the size of the centre, as many as fifteen agencies were used to recruit subjects. Different numbers of youth in each of the five categories defined in the study were targeted based on estimates of the number of street youth in each centre that could be classified in each category. A greater number of youth were identified in the larger centres but efforts were made to include a sample of Native youth by including centres known to have Native street youth present. The authors note, however, that the hard to reach street youth were under-represented in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered through a forty minute interview. Small incentives consisting of two dollars in cash or food vouchers were used to assist in recruiting participants.

The Canada Street Youth and AIDS study adds several design elements that were not included in the previous studies we examined. First, this study was conducted in 10 centres minimizing the likelihood that the youth included were part of the same network. Additionally, the scope of this study was much larger with a sample size of 712. Another important element included in this study was the use of two comparison groups. This permitted some assessment of whether the attitudes and behaviours noted in the street youth sample varied to any degree from those of a similar sample of high school and college/university students.

In spite of these laudable improvements, it is a good indication of just how difficult a study like this is when we consider several of the serious conceptual and methodological problems which it was unable to eliminate. For example, the categories outlined in the study and the criteria used to identify these categories are extremely problematic. While

three of the categories refer to lifestyle and behaviour, two do not. Instead they identify a specific condition, i.e., homelessness and unemployment. Consequently, the categories are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive since a single young person could conceivable fit into all five categories simultaneously, especially if they were participating in street culture. Moreover, the notion that people can be categorized on the basis of their participation in a single activity does not reflect a reality in which young people "drift" into and out of street culture. They are not delinquents all of the time but rather, when they are involved in delinquent activity. And while some young people may abuse drugs, this is not the only activity in which they engage even if it may be a primary one.

Another problematic aspect of this study is the reliance on agencies for recruiting and identifying street youth. According to this study, youthful offenders were identified at detention centres or in group homes. Others were categorized in this way because they had just left such facilities. One of the criteria that the categories had to satisfy was that an agency had to exist that provided services to members of the subculture identified by the specific category. Does that mean that in centres with limited services and few agencies to deliver them, few problems exist?

This study also has weaknesses in the area of sampling. As was the case with the two previous studies, the sample is not randomly drawn from a known population. Some effort is made to select a representative sample of street youth by relying on agencies to estimate the number of young people in each of the five categories employed in the study. However, the authors acknowledge that the hard to reach street youth population may be under-represented. There is no way of estimating the size of this population or in fact, how

representative street youth that have contact with service agencies are of the broader population of runaways, homeless and street youth. This is made all the more problematic since part of the sample included in the study consisted of young people who spent most of their leisure time "hanging out". To what extent are these young people similar to or different from youth in contact with agencies or those that are runaways or homeless and deliberately avoiding contact with agencies?

These remarks are not made to impugn the abilities of the researchers in this study but to highlight how difficult it is to conduct research in this area. Our discussion emphasizes the fact that problems of sampling are not trivial and cannot be easily overcome. This is especially the case when studying an elusive population such as runaways and street youth.

3.6 The Hamilton-Wentworth Community Street Youth Task Force Report

During the fall of 1988, a Task Force was organized consisting of representatives from 30 agencies in the Hamilton-Wentworth region that deal with street youth. The objectives of the Task Force included the development of a definition of street youth, determining the extent of the street youth issue and assessing the unmet needs of the street youth in the Hamilton-Wentworth region through the identification of existing service gaps and the need for new services. In order to accomplish these objectives, the Task Force undertook a series of data gathering activities and brought forward a number of recommendations based on their findings (AATD, 1990).

The research initiated by the Task Force included both a literature review and review of relevant legislation. The

literature review indicated that a coordinated, multidisciplinary and holistic approach to the problem was required. Relevant legislation was examined with an eye for aspects of various Acts which might inhibit the provision of appropriate services to street youth.

A number of agencies providing services were contacted and it was estimated that there were approximately 350 street youth in Hamilton. The authors note that no statistics exist for this group and that the figures were derived from interviews with participating agencies. Furthermore, the number of street youth not using agency services was undetermined. The agencies contacted reported that alcohol, cannabis and cocaine were used more frequently by street youth than other substances. Also, concerns over prostitution and abuse in the family were frequently raised by the agencies that were contacted.

In order to get a clearer picture of the service delivery system as it relates to street youth in Hamilton-Wentworth, the Task Force initiated a community mapping exercise. This effort sought to present the view of the member agencies of the services that were available to street youth in Hamilton-Wentworth, to allow members to reflect on the existing service community and to identify issues related to servicing street youth. The picture that emerged demonstrated the confusion and fragmentation in existing services. The exercise showed that no agency existed in the Hamilton-Wentworth region whose mandate was to provide services *solely* to the street youth population.

A Service Providers Symposium was held and a summary of the proceedings was prepared by the Task Force. The Symposium was designed to focus on the perceived problems of youth and families. The larger system of services available in the

region was also examined. Based on discussions held at the Symposium, suggested solutions were divided into three categories including prevention, intervention, and legislation and the courts.

Data was then sought from street youth and their parents and a variety of strategies were employed to obtain this information. First, the Task Force sponsored a public meeting for street youth held at a known "hang out" in the city. Free pop and pizza were provided as an incentive and approximately 40 street youth attended. The needs of the street youth were the major focus of this public meeting and these were discussed by several members of the Task Force in attendance.

The second strategy adopted by the Task Force for collecting information from street youth involved hiring two researchers familiar with this area to conduct interviews on the street. Interviews were conducted during the summer of 1989 with 20 male and 10 female respondents. The authors report that a month was required for the researchers to win the trust of the street youth community. Contacts were made by the researchers on the street and general conversations were initiated. A qualitative approach was used to gather information about the perceived service needs of these young people. The Task Force decided that this was justified since previous research had addressed lifestyle and experiential issues. Awkward topics such as family violence and physical or sexual abuse were deliberately avoided. The interviews concentrated on what the Task Force identified as easy-to-discuss topics such as the needs of the young people and their relationships with others. The researchers did not employ a questionnaire since this was deemed too intrusive. However, the researchers did use a list of pre-determined questions as a mental guide. Notes were recorded immediately following interviews.

Purposive sampling was employed in this part of the study with researchers focusing on both typical and atypical street youth under the age of 25 years. Both agency-connected as well as street youth not using agencies were included in the sample. The research began in the core area of the city but moved eastward after researchers heard that another pocket of street youth could be found in that part of the city.

The next stage of the research involved accessing the parents of street youth. In order to make contact with these individuals, a public meeting was organized at a neighbourhood-based, multi-service centre. The meeting was advertised in local newspapers, television and radio stations and free child care was made available. Unfortunately, no parents attended this meeting. Since information from this group was deemed important, an alternative strategy was employed involving the use of a local phone-in radio programme. The anonymity provided by this approach was thought to be important for enticing participation and additional lines staffed by Task Force volunteers were made available to field calls that did not make it through to the radio programme. A total of 13 calls were taken and data was collected from five parents of street youth. The data gathered in this way was analyzed as case studies.

The concern of the Task Force is obvious in the multi-phase approach it employed in collecting data on the needs of street youth in Hamilton-Wentworth. The objectives of the research, the type of information sought and the strategies adopted for obtaining this information make it inappropriate to generalize to a broader population of street youth. This research was driven primarily by the information needs of the Task Force and their interest in meeting the service needs of the street youth in their area. Information was obtained from various parties including the street youth

themselves, their parents and the organizations that provide services to them. Issues of broader concern such as the involvement of street youth in delinquency or the consequences of participation in street life were given less attention. The research undertaken by the Task Force had a very specific and applied research orientation. It was not intended to be used in generalizations about the wider street youth population in Canada but rather as a means of gathering in depth information about the service needs of the street youth in their region. This was indicated in the choice of a qualitative approach to gathering information through interviews with street youth. And while techniques such as public meetings and radio talk shows may be innovative ways of accessing the opinions of those most immediately involved with the street youth issue, they offer little opportunity for gathering systematic information from a randomly selected sample of either street youth or their parents.

3.7 McCullagh and Greco and the Children's Aid Society Study

The next three studies we will review were conducted in Toronto, a centre with a reportedly large runaway and street youth population. Each of these studies contributes some insights into the difficulties of conducting research on this elusive population. These studies include McCullagh and Greco (1990), Smart et al., (1990) and McCarthy (1990).

In 1990, McCullagh and Greco conducted a study sponsored by the Children's Aid Society of Metropolitan Toronto (CASMT). The objectives of this study were to examine issues about street youth through an investigation of the social services/child welfare response to meeting the needs of this group of young people. The study was to make recommendations for policy and programme changes within the CASMT if

warranted. The study came about essentially as a result of the growing concern around the high risk activities engaged in by street youth. In addition, there was some apprehension that CASMT staff could not connect with this group since many street kids are running from services or never come to the attention of service agencies and "fall through the cracks".

This study sought to discover who the street youth are and how they drift onto the street. The study also sought information on what life on the street is like. Questions about the needs of street youth were included and the study tried to discover how and when these young people leave street life. On the services side, the study examined the types of services that exist for street youth both in Toronto and in other centres. Specific information was gathered regarding the services CASMT provided and whether these were meeting the needs of the young people they served. Questions about the types of services that CASMT could provide were also pursued.

The methodology adopted in this study consisted of a number of different components. The first included a literature review and programme description of materials on runaways and street youth. The second was a series of individual interviews and group discussions with CASMT staff who have experience and an interest in working with young people. Interviews were conducted with both front-line staff and management who deal specifically with street youth. Third, participant observation was used to collect data in six agencies in Toronto that deal with street youth. The intention was to observe the behaviour of these young people, note the intervention strategies being utilized and speak with the young people in a setting they were familiar with. Focus groups to discuss specific issues were conducted with groups of young people at five Toronto agencies. Finally, three key informants were used to construct three alternative

intervention models. It should also be noted that an advisory committee was employed to oversee this research project. The problem of definition is noted by the authors of this study including the definition of age and length of time away from home. They also point out the difficulty of estimating the size of the runaway and street youth population. Existing population estimates of various factions of the runaway and street youth are provided which indicate that the figures vary wildly. In Toronto estimates of street kids range from several thousand to 10,000. It should be noted here that in the research discussed this far, only a very small proportion of young people were actually homeless at the time they were interviewed.

The young people included in this study contained a group under 16 years of age as well as an older group. Those under 16 years were either runaways from their families of origin, involved in high risk activities, were throwaways or had absconded from placements. The older group consisted of wards of the CASMT who drifted in and out of street culture and former wards over 18 who had prematurely severed their ties with CASMT and wished to re-enter care or receive some other form of assistance.

This study differs from those previously examined since it focused specifically on the delivery of services to runaways and street youth from the perspective of the Children's Aid Society. This orientation gives the study more of an "applied research" flavour than was present in the other work examined. A great deal of effort is devoted to developing alternative service delivery models and the information sought by the researchers reflects this objective. As a consequence of this emphasis on service delivery models, less attention is paid to conducting a rigorous scientific study. The report is essentially descriptive and offers

largely impressionistic and highly subjective insights. No effort is made to draw a randomly sample. Instead, focus groups are used to garner information from young people in various placements. While participant observation techniques were employed for part of the study, little information is given regarding how this part of the study was conducted. A similar problem exist for the interviews with front-line and management staff who work with runaways and street youth. No information was provided in the report about who was interviewed and why they were selected, beyond the general criteria that they were experienced or interested the problem of runaways and street youth.

The usefulness of a study such as this is that it sensitizes us to the issue of runaways and street youth and in particular, to the matter of providing services to this group of young people. It synthesizes information from a variety of sources and focuses attention on service delivery alternatives, and at this level it succeeds. However, at another level, it fails to advance our knowledge of the problem of runaways and street youth and may perpetuate many misconceptions. For example, since the study relies so heavily on "expert" information, we may be getting little more than a view from system insiders whose working experiences no doubt influence their definition of the problem and favoured solutions. Little objective and generalizable information is presented that gives us any idea of the size of the problem or how the runaway and street youth population may differ from the general youth population. In fact, the only information gathered from young people in this study comes from young people already receiving services. We do not know if this information is representative of those young people not receiving services or those actually avoiding contact with the authorities. Considering the population we are interested in, this may be a serious shortcoming since service delivery

models are being recommended partially on the basis of information derived from people commonly referred to as "systems kids". Ironically, many current runaways are young people running from service agencies. Moreover, "systems kids" have a reputation of being rather skilled at "working the system" so the information they supply must be considered in light of information garnered from street youth not receiving services and from the general youth population.

3.8 Smart, Adlaf, and Porterfield and the Addiction Research Foundation Study

The second Toronto study we will consider is one of the more systematic and scientifically rigorous Canadian studies in this area. It was conducted by Reginald Smart and his associates for the Addiction Research Foundation (1990). The purpose of the study was to examine alcohol and drug abuse among street youth and to investigate the relationship this has to family and street environments. Further, the study looked at the perceived need for drug and alcohol dependence treatment by this group as well as their need for other social services. Finally, the level of psycho-social well-being among the street youth population was assessed. The study is largely descriptive since it was not intended to explain the relationship between street culture and drug use but rather to describe it.

The problems with defining who should be included in a study of street youth were noted in this report. The authors point out that the population under consideration is very heterogeneous. In response, they suggest that we should not employ stringent criteria but that street involvement represents a continuum with young people drifting in and out at various points. The primary criterion established for this

study was that respondents be 24 years of age or younger. An index approach was established for secondary criteria. These included the following: (i) the respondents must have used at least one social service facility directed toward street youth in their lifetime; (ii) they must have left school before completing grade 12; (iii) they must have lived away from their families or guardians for at least two days during the past year; (iv) they must have run away or been thrown out of their home at least once; (v) they must have been homeless (i.e. without a place to stay) at least once. Youth were included in the study if they responded in the affirmative to the first criteria or to three or more items from two through five.

This study was restricted to the downtown core of the city of Toronto. The authors note that ideally, a representative sample should be used. However, deriving a random probability sample for this population is highly problematical. To begin with, the authors note that no survey has scientifically estimated the size of the population. Furthermore, this population is highly transitory, constantly changing in size and composition. And since contact with multiple agencies is common, it is difficult to know the probability of selecting a particular respondent.

In response to these difficulties in drawing a random sample from a known population, a randomization strategy was employed in selecting the 145 youth interviewed for this study. Essentially, this sample was derived from agencies that provide services to street youth in Toronto. A two stage process was used with the guidance of the Coalition of Youth Work Professionals. A sampling frame was established consisting of 45 agencies servicing the city's downtown core. Some agencies providing specialized services were excluded from this list. Next, 11 agencies were randomly selected from

the 45 previously identified. The authors argue that while no list of street youth exists, a sampling frame of agencies providing services to these people was readily available. Furthermore, the number of agencies included could be controlled and the researchers could ensure that an adequate variation in agencies was achieved. This technique was seen as providing some assurance that a sample could be drawn that was representative of agency-using street youth.

The second stage of the sampling strategy involved selecting at least ten youth from each of the agencies included in the study. Random and systematic selection procedures were used wherever possible; however, in many cases, this was not possible so the required number of interviews were conducted with those youth who volunteered to participate in the study and who met the selection criteria described above - resulting in a potential self-selection bias. Interviews were conducted with 108 young people at their agencies or in the Addiction Research Foundation offices. Agency personnel usually made the initial contact with prospective respondents.

While the agency-derived sample provided invaluable information, the authors were concerned that it may not have been representative of those street youth who did not use services. In order to address this problem, a non-agency sample was also selected. The size and proportion of the street youth population who do not use services is *not* well established. This study used a number of strategies to overcome this problem. First, seasoned street workers were employed to conduct "cold contact" interviews with young people in the study's geographic area. Second, agency personnel working in mobile outreach programmes were used to briefly inform street youth about the study. Third, a word of mouth, snowball sample technique was used by asking

participants from the non-agency sample to inform others of the study. Interviews were conducted with 37 individuals using these techniques. Of these, ten came from cold contacts on the street, 18 were non-agency derived and nine were obtained through word of mouth contact.

Semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 75 minutes were conducted during February and March of 1990. Respondents were paid a fee of twenty dollars for completing the interview. The authors of the study believe the answers they obtained were honest and forthright. Further, they were aware that the twenty dollar fee could clearly influence the data obtained and the participation of individuals. Steps were taken to ensure that consistent information was provided and that individuals could not participate more than once.

While this study does not claim to use a randomly selected sample from a known population, it goes a long way in addressing this research design problem. Clearly the authors were cognizant of the sampling problems inherent in conducting a study of this type and they sought to overcome these by drawing as representative a sample of street youth as they could. They randomized the selection of the agencies used in the study and then attempted to draw a random sample of clients from these agencies. Furthermore, they realized that not all street youth are in contact or use the services of the city's agencies so they included a sample of a non-agency street youth. The non-agency sample was drawn using a variety of techniques to derive as representative a sample of this group as possible.

Although the sampling frame was not ideal, the steps taken in this study to approximate an ideal random probability sample gives us much more confidence in interpreting the results of this research as being representative of Toronto's

street youth population. The agency focus of this project and the emphasis on drug and alcohol abuse limit the usefulness of this study in some respects but as stated at the outset, this represents one of the most rigorous examples of research on runaways and street youth in Canada to date.

3.9 The McCarthy Study

The final Toronto study was conducted by William McCarthy (1990) as part of his doctoral research at the University of Toronto. McCarthy takes a much more academic approach than found in the other studies discussed thus far. He argues that previous research in the area is largely theoretical and methodologically unsophisticated. He states that the purpose of his research is to study runaways rigorously and systematically and to describe their involvement in street crime. In order to accomplish this, he sets out to gather three types of information: (i) the background characteristics of runaways, (ii) the experiences which characterize living on the street, and (iii) the extent to which street crime can be understood through theoretical and empirically derived hypotheses.

McCarthy argues that the diversity of existing typologies makes their use quite problematic. In particular, he favours the use of a more inclusive continuum to measure time on the street rather than a conceptualization that employs discrete categories. Thus, he includes both those young people who are temporarily away from home as well as those whose tenure on the street is more long term. With respect to age, McCarthy includes those older than 12 years and younger than 20 years, arguing that this definition is chronologically based and includes a group of people who share related experiences. The focus on crime in this study is centred on more serious

activities including serious theft, drug dealing and prostitution.

The design strategy laid out in this research is comprehensive and thorough. McCarthy began by seeking expert advice on the nature of the population under investigation. He notes that the population is very diverse, unstable in their daily living patterns and constantly changing. Some members of the population are away from home illegally so they are usually suspicious of strangers, preferring to remain anonymous. According to McCarthy, this makes participant observation methods unsuited to this research. Moreover, the suspicion on the part of the respondents and the need of the researcher to obtain sensitive information - in this case information about participation in illegal activities - led to his decision to employ an anonymous questionnaire as opposed to a personal interview.

A questionnaire was constructed with the input of a number of experts in the field including those working with street youth. The questionnaire took approximately 25 to 30 minutes to complete and included both open and closed ended items. The open ended items were used primarily for non-sensitive information while closed ended items were used to obtain information about sensitive matters. The questionnaire was designed to achieve a grade seven reading level. A pre-test was conducted and it was discovered that questions involving calculations were undesirable and that respondents were reluctant to give the names of friends. The questionnaire was appropriately modified and the process of sample selection begun. Potential participants were identified in two ways. Agencies that provide services to runaways and street youth represented one source of contact. Second, potential participants were contacted in diverse settings where street youth and runaways congregate (parks,

malls, streets etc.).

Contact was made with ten different agencies in Toronto in order to obtain a good cross section of services and presumably clients. Of these, nine agreed to assist with the study. A weekly schedule was posted at each agency which included different times during the week in which those interested could participate. In order to secure a sample from those locations where street youth congregate, information was obtained from the agencies about appropriate locations. Four city parks were identified in this way as were several street locations that were optimum for panhandling or suitable for sleeping. Street youth were distinguished from other youth through observation and conversation. Potential candidates were approached if they were seen to be panhandling or preparing to go to sleep. McCarthy approached the subjects, talked to them to establish that they were not living at home, and asked them to participate in the study. Additionally, notices were put up at all agencies describing the survey and agency workers informed their clients of the project. Word of mouth was also used as participants were encouraged to tell others they knew about the survey. The study was conducted over a one year period.

Ten dollars in restaurant coupons was offered as an incentive as was an appeal to the respondent's expertise on street life. Respondents were assured of the anonymity of the survey and its seriousness and they were encouraged to answer truthfully. Potential respondents were asked to read two lines aloud to ensure that they could read. If they had difficulty with this task, they could either drop out of the survey or have the interviewer read it to them. A low refusal rate was reported for this study (12%).

McCarthy identifies two key research design problems for this type of research: random error and bias. He argues that both random and systematic error are present so steps have to be taken to minimize them. Sampling errors account for most of the variable error in this type of research while non-sampling sources account for biases. He did not make use of a sampling frame but outlines the problems presented when using lists. The most common of these include blanks, duplications and foreign elements. Since the study employed one interviewer to distribute all the questionnaires, no duplication was experienced. Moreover, potential participants were asked their age and current living arrangements prior to being allowed to participate thereby eliminating the possibility of foreign elements in the sample.

The most commonly recommended technique for reducing non-sampling error simply involves increasing the sample size. Non-sampling bias consists of two types: (i) non-observation, and (ii) observation. McCarthy notes that the former occurs when a sample excludes part of the population whereas the latter occurs when observations are obtained or recorded incorrectly. Non-observations involve either non-response or non-coverage. He suggests that he solved the non-observation problem since only 57 of the 475 individuals invited to participate refused. This represents a 12% refusal rate which is quite low. The problem of non-coverage was addressed according to McCarthy through being readily available throughout the week. In all, 390 useable surveys were obtained.

A non-probability sample was used in this study. This sample was drawn on the basis of representativeness rather than on the probability of being selected. Examples of this type of design include quota, convenience, and purposive sampling. McCarthy argues that conceptually, a purposive

sample is appropriate because it relies on the knowledge of experts. While he acknowledges that it is usually best to collect data with a probability sample design, he argues persuasively that a purposive sample is best suited to the requirements of studying street youth. In this type of research, no adequate estimates of the size of the street youth population exist. Nor are there lists of street youth that can be used to draw a sample. Moreover, this population is highly transient and there is a potential for duplication. McCarthy points out that under these circumstances some researchers recommend the use of cluster samples. In this case clusters of elements are used rather than clusters of individuals. This approach is again rejected for studying street youth since these people are too mobile and transitory. He suggests that agencies could be used but notes that this would result in missing those street youth who do not go to agencies.

According to McCarthy a probability sample is most appropriate for studying street youth. He indicates that for this procedure a sampling frame is not required nor is it necessary to know the probability of selection. Exact knowledge of the distribution of a population across strata is not needed nor must the geographic or mobility characteristics for individual members be known. A purposive sampling technique is designed to provide a sample which is as representative of the target population as possible given the nature of the subject matter under investigation.

3.10 The Canadian Census Test of Enumeration in Soup Kitchens

While the previous studies were more substantively germane to our topic, the following report covers research which faced similar methodological limitations. In 1990

Philip Giles conducted some innovative research aimed at improving Statistics Canada's population census by enumerating individuals who are typically missed by the usual home census procedure. Giles wanted to explore more effective ways of including members of the homeless population in the census. In order to accomplish this, he conducted an enumeration of individuals using soup kitchens in various cities across Canada. This study presents the results of test enumerations undertaken in 1990 in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.

The Regional Offices of Statistics Canada in each test city were asked to identify and select a broad set of soup kitchens for inclusion in the study. No attempt was made to include all such agencies. The management of the selected soup kitchens was asked to cooperate and this resulted in ten agencies participating in Montreal, seven in Toronto, and three in Vancouver. The Regional Offices were asked to hire and train research staff for the project. In Toronto, soup kitchen staff were hired while in Vancouver experienced Statistics Canada researchers did the work. Montreal opted to employ a mix of agency staff and Statistics Canada researchers. In each case, qualitative observations were made at the research sites by observers from both Home Office and the Regional Offices.

A one page questionnaire roughly similar in form and content to standard Census forms was developed and administered to all persons arriving for meals on designated days. The survey was conducted on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 6th and 7th, 1990 in Vancouver and Toronto. At the request of the Montreal Regional Office, data was collected in that city on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 3rd and 4th, 1990. The first Tuesday of the month was chosen to correspond with the choice of Census Day in June. When an individual refused to participate in the enumeration, researchers recorded their

sex and estimated their age.

Determining the respondents residence was of considerable concern for this enumeration. The author indicates that for census purposes, two types of residence are important: a person's usual residence and where the person stayed on Census Day. Several items were included to obtain this information. An attempt was also made to gather information that could be used in the event that a trace of an address resulted in the finding of a non-response situation. To deal appropriately with this, respondents were asked where they stayed last night and how many people stayed there last night. This information could then be added to the Census form and used to identify dwellings where it was not possible to obtain a questionnaire.

Giles indicates that in general, the test enumeration was useful. The working group responsible for this study had been concerned with response problems, however, most respondents completed the questionnaire in one or two minutes. The study did show that a standard set of procedures for enumerations does not work in all soup kitchens since each has its own physical layout and meal serving routine. Sometimes the interviews were conducted prior to a meal being served while others were done afterwards. Giles suggests that some flexibility in enumeration procedures is warranted.

With respect to the coverage issue, the study showed that the number of persons indicating that they did not stay at a place with a fixed address, that is, a private or commercial shelter, was lower than had been anticipated with just under 10% of those responding falling into this category. Most reported having a place to stay, usually a room in a rooming house. These people ate at soup kitchens, however, either because their residence did not have cooking facilities or because they had little money left for food once they paid

their rent. One problem this study did encounter was that of overlap due to collecting data in the same agencies on successive days. The data gathered in sites where enumeration was conducted on successive days indicate that just over half of the number of people enumerated on the first day were captured on the second day.

A finding of interest to the present project was that females and young people were not represented in the enumeration to the extent the authors of the study had hoped. In the case of women, only 9% of those enumerated were females. As for youth, approximately one-quarter of the persons enumerated were found to be under 30 years of age. This was thought to be low considering the expected age distribution of the homeless population.

The study demonstrated that the question that asked respondents where they stayed the previous night was well answered. Less success was encountered with the item that asked respondents where they stayed most nights. Most found this item difficult to answer and as a result, the usefulness of this item for further research was questioned. Similarly, very few positive responses were given to the item which asked respondents about other addresses. Responses to this item were usually given by younger respondents who gave their parent's address as their response.

As a result of this study, the author recommends that enumerations at soup kitchens be included as part of the Census. Moreover, Statistics Canada should endeavour to construct a data base for soup kitchen and shelter users in the same way they do for other segments of the Canadian population. Coverage of these places should be restricted to one day and street enumeration should be the exception rather than the rule when trying to enumerate the homeless

population. The other recommendations contained in the report refer to specific items used in the questionnaire.

The experience of the Census team corroborates the difficulties of enumerating a homeless population and suggests the utility of service agencies in contacting them - while recognizing the limits if such an approach.

3.11 The Calgary East Village Community Study

In this study, McDonald and Perissini (1992) assembled an information base for the City of Calgary's Task Force on Housing in the Downtown. These researchers contacted members of the homeless population, seniors, businesses, community organizations and service providers in an area of the city that had been scheduled for redevelopment. The residents were surveyed regarding their attitudes and opinions of the redevelopment of the area and their housing and service needs were assessed. Of particular concern to the present study is the methodology employed by McDonald and Perissini in conducting interviews with the homeless population of Calgary's East Village.

For their study, McDonald and Perissini conducted face-to-face interviews with 110 homeless individuals who were using services in or on the periphery of the target area of the city. This study adopted a modified version of the research design employed by Burnam and Koegel in their 1988 study of Los Angeles' skid row. A probability proportionate to size sampling design was used to draw a representative sample of all homeless persons in the East Village. Several steps were required to accomplish this strategy including estimating the size of the homeless population "passing through" the various facilities in the target area during the

course of a month. Once these estimates were established, a random sample was drawn from each of the facilities in amounts directly proportional to the average proportion of the population using the facility during the month.

The first step in the design was to determine which facilities should be included in the study. Burnam and Koegel identified three strata or sectors in their study. These included beds, meals, and congregation areas. These three represent the main services utilized by the homeless in their study. The next step involved estimating the proportion of the population using each service as well as the proportion using more than one service (the overlap). Once this had been accomplished, a random sample could be drawn from each of the three sites according to the proportion using each of them.

In attempting to follow these procedures, McDonald and Perissini collected information on the characteristics of the services offered in the East Village, the number of beds, eligibility for using these beds, times meals were served, other services provided in the area and the number of persons using other services. Two bed services and three meal services were identified in this way. No congregation services were included since the only service offering a congregation setting also provided beds and meals. An exploratory survey of people using other congregation areas such as the Library and City Hall was also undertaken. A total of 75 people were identified in this way, however, since these people cannot be said to pass through these congregation areas, the researchers decided not to include this sub-sample in the study. In order to minimize bias, contact was made with 36 people in six congregation areas to determine what proportion of this sub-sample used bed or meal services. Of these, 25 or 86% had used the bed sector, the meal sector or both during the previous month. Only three people had used

the congregating area of one of the agencies included in the study and these three reported having used beds or meals at this agency during the previous month. Based on these findings, the researchers felt confident that most of the people in the congregating area in one of the agencies and the people in the outdoor congregating areas would be represented in their sample.

Next, McDonald and Perissini sought to determine the proportion of the homeless population using bed or meal services. Those using beds were thought to be a subset of those using meal services so the overlap had to be measured. A survey of all individuals using meal services was conducted at four times during the month in the three agencies providing meals. In all, 264 individuals were approached. Of these, 36 declined and 61 were not homeless. Information on sector overlap was available using this method for 177 individuals. The results of this survey indicated that 138 individuals or 78% had used a bed service while 22% had used the meal but not the bed service. Given their goal of conducting 100 interviews with homeless individuals, and the refusal rate found during the meals survey, a sample of 110 had to be drawn in order to obtain a sample size of 100. Moreover, the researchers knew that 22% used meals indicating that 24 of those sampled would have to be drawn from the meals sector while 78% or 86 interviews would have to be conducted with those using bed services. The final task involved ensuring that all individuals had an equal probability of being included in the study.

In order to account for overlap in the bed facilities, lists of individuals using both bed facilities included in the study were compared. Those who slept in both facilities were identified and a weight of .5 was assigned to each facility. Using this method, it was determined that a sample of 42 had

to be drawn from one facility and 44 were to be drawn from the other. A similar procedure was followed for the three facilities serving meals.

The strategy proposed by Burnam and Koegel was successfully adopted by McDonald and Perissini in their study of homeless people in Calgary's East Village. This strategy allows researchers to draw a representative sample based on a probability proportionate to size sampling design. Such an approach is extremely useful in situations where no complete list of the population is available or where a sampling frame cannot be established with any degree of confidence since the target population is elusive or transitory.

4.0 Towards A Conceptual Model

One of the most important aspect of designing a successful study is that the problem under investigation be carefully and clearly defined. The lack of available information on runaways and street youth has meant that many of the studies we reviewed were exploratory and descriptive in nature. Some had specific research objectives related to the operation of an organization or the social services community more broadly and thus reflected an "applied" research orientation. The overarching intention in all of these studies, however, was to gain some understanding of the characteristics of the runaway and street youth population. This basic question led to both conceptual as well as methodological problems. Deciding on who should be included in the target population proved to be a major difficulty with a variety of conceptualizations and typologies being suggested. Gathering data on this elusive, transitory and changing population proved to be equally challenging.

The centrality of the question of who is to be included in the target population suggests that this issue receive careful consideration in advance of subsequent design decisions. If we consider the purpose of most of the research conducted in this area, it becomes clear that interest in the area of runaways and street youth is largely reactive, driven by the information needs of those institutions charged with responding to or meeting the needs of this group of young people. All but one of the studies examined above falls into this category - the lone exception being an academic effort directed at testing theories of criminality. The question, therefore, is why are we interested in this group of people. Why have they come to the attention of the public and the service community? The literature review conducted as part of

this project offers many suggestions. Two specific but related issues seem to be the most salient for the present purposes. Both are based primarily on the idea of control as it relates to young people in our society and both transcend the obvious humanitarian concern that people have with poor, homeless, abandoned or otherwise unfortunate youth.

The first aspect in which control over young people presents itself is in its most immediate sense, that is, in the fear that many people experience as a result of encounters with young people "on the street". This is particularly the case when the behaviour, dress, or language of the young people is intrusive, annoying, offensive or threatening. This includes encounters with groups of young people "hanging out" as well as panhandlers, or young prostitutes. As a result of these fears, young people who frequent the streets are often seen as beyond the immediate control of the authorities if not being altogether "out of control". These attitudes may be even more heightened when young people are seen on the street late in the evening when public expectations are that most "conventional" youth, that is those young people that are under someone's control, are safely at home - or under constructive supervision. Those young people that are out "at all hours" must be beyond the control of parents or others in authority, otherwise, they would not be on the streets. This is especially true if they have to get up early in the morning to be at school or at work on time. And if they are on the streets and obviously not under someone's control, these same young people may be capable of becoming violent or inflicting harm on unsuspecting members of the public or otherwise involved in unsavoury behaviour.

This is not purely an academic issue. In the spring of 1992, the Calgary Downtown Business Revitalization Association published a study - Crime Prevention in the Heart of the City

(McLaurin et al., 1992). This was an attempt to understand the fear of crime which appeared to have dampened the attractiveness to shoppers of the downtown retail zone. The report noted that "street youth make up a large proportion of Calgary's homeless population" and that the "high visibility of the homeless and the perceived threat associated with them seriously affects the public perception of safety in downtown Calgary" (1992:5). When asked what made the areas unsafe, "females were more concerned by street kids, while males identified drug addicts or dealers, as their principal concern" (1992:21). More specifically, the characteristics which worried those polled were "type of people" (31%), "transients or street people" (19%), "drunks" (17%), "street kids/punks" (12%) and "drug addicts/dealers" (11%). Clearly, the perceptions were of a menagerie of social misfits identified by several overlapping monikers - street kids, street people, punks and transients. Also the report was no less conclusive about the sorts of danger which these people represented.

Crimes people were most afraid of included personal attacks, muggings, rape, attacks by street youth, and street robbery. The type of person the respondent feared most was a younger male from 14 to 20 years of age. The youth's appearance could vary from clean cut, to "spiked hair" and leather clothes. Male youth were feared because they were "unpredictable" (1992:24).

The immediate concern with control, then, is reflected in the fear expressed by the public such as reported by those interviewed in the Calgary study. Young people in general and young males in particular are seen as unpredictable and potentially dangerous. The specific reference in this study to street kids and punks is telling. Just as important, however, is the fact that various manifestations of the

runaway and street youth population were identified as a source of concern. Thus, drug addicts and drug dealers, homeless people and transients may represent or overlap with that part of the youth population that is not captured by the institutional order - that is, in a traditional job, in school or minimally under some form of adult authority or supervision.

There is another and perhaps deeper sense at which the idea of control may be working. This is based on the apparent idleness and hedonism of the street culture. The existence of large groups of able bodied young people on the streets of Canada's urban centres flies in the face of a society that is predicated on the Protestant Ethic. However, it would be naive to presume that this was the only concern in the public domain. There is widespread sympathy for street kids that arises from a recognition of their vulnerability to exploitation, even if, as in the case of drugs, it is to some extent voluntary. In addition, most people have some sense that economic hardships and widespread slow downs in the economy put the early home leavers in very perilous circumstances. If this supposition is correct, then we have a two pronged problematic - the issue of "street based" subcultures which represent ineffective parental supervision and which may pose a threat to the public, as well as the issue of the vulnerability of adolescents and young adults to the hazards associated with such subcultures.

The point of the discussion is to suggest that it is not entirely the case that public interest stems from a concern with the characteristics of street youth <u>per se</u> - i.e. that they are homeless or that their parents let them down - but, in part, their very presence on our streets disturbs us and may pose a threat to our security. So, at the outset, rather than wrestling with questions of who should or who should not

be included as part of our target population, we suggest that we approach the problem more directly. Simply put, in any study of runaways and street youth, some attention has to be paid to all young people "on the street". This idea rests on a notion articulated in several of the studies discussed above and in particular by Smart et al., and McCarthy. That is, variables such as length of time on the street should be treated as continuous rather than discrete. In terms of the present discussion, this implies that we are interested in young people who present as a visible problem on the street. If they are not visible, as in the case of the person who leaves home prematurely, finds a job and continues with her life unobtrusively, we are less concerned about them in these types of studies. They are not properly part of the "street youth" population - or rather, they represent the end of the continuum of early home leavers who spend no time "hanging out" on the street. However, if they are repeat runners who spend a considerable amount of time on the street, they are of great interest to us. A sufficiently rigorous data collection strategy must be designed to allow us to ascertain the amount of time various groups of young people spend on the street.

Arriving at an accurate estimate of which young people are actually on our streets is more important than drawing artificial distinctions within a population based on arbitrary definitions that we impose. By using continuous variables based on empirical observations we can address two of the fundamental design issues encountered in the studies reviewed above: (i) the need for an estimate of the size of the street youth population; and (ii) distinguishing between the various categories of young people present on the street.

Our first recommendation, therefore, is that in any study of runaways and street youth, a systematic count be made of the size of the population of youth on the street. Specific

strategies for mounting such a task will be outlined in detail below. Suffice it to say at this point that an estimate of the size of this population will be useful for a number of subsequent research design decisions. To begin with, we will have some empirical basis for making sampling decisions. Secondly, a basic count will identify those locations in a community where street youth congregate (as well as times of the week and months of the year), outside of the agencies providing services to street youth. Finally, we will have information that can be used to gather more detailed data about population parameters such as age, gender, race, and length of time on the street. When combined with a strategy for identifying which subgroups those presenting on the street belong to, the initial count gives us important information about the population parameters of the target population. At the moment, we know very little about how many young people that present on the street are occasional participants who Kufeldt and Nimmo called "inners" and "outers" versus those that are actually homeless. The use of a visual count and related methodology will greatly enhance our confidence in the categorizations that are developed. Moreover, measuring time on the street as a continuous variable is clearly supported in our analysis of the literature discussed above.

A second issue addressed in the literature dealt with the issue of age. Once again, our recommendation is to begin with a systematic count of people presenting on the street with selection criteria being employed that are based on information about youth and street culture already available. In echoing the findings of the Winnipeg study, a number of the people they interviewed were over eighteen, and some even lived at home. These people were interviewed, however, because for them running had begun a long time earlier and was still a major factor in their lives. As they noted, being a runaway was as much a state of mind as it was a physical

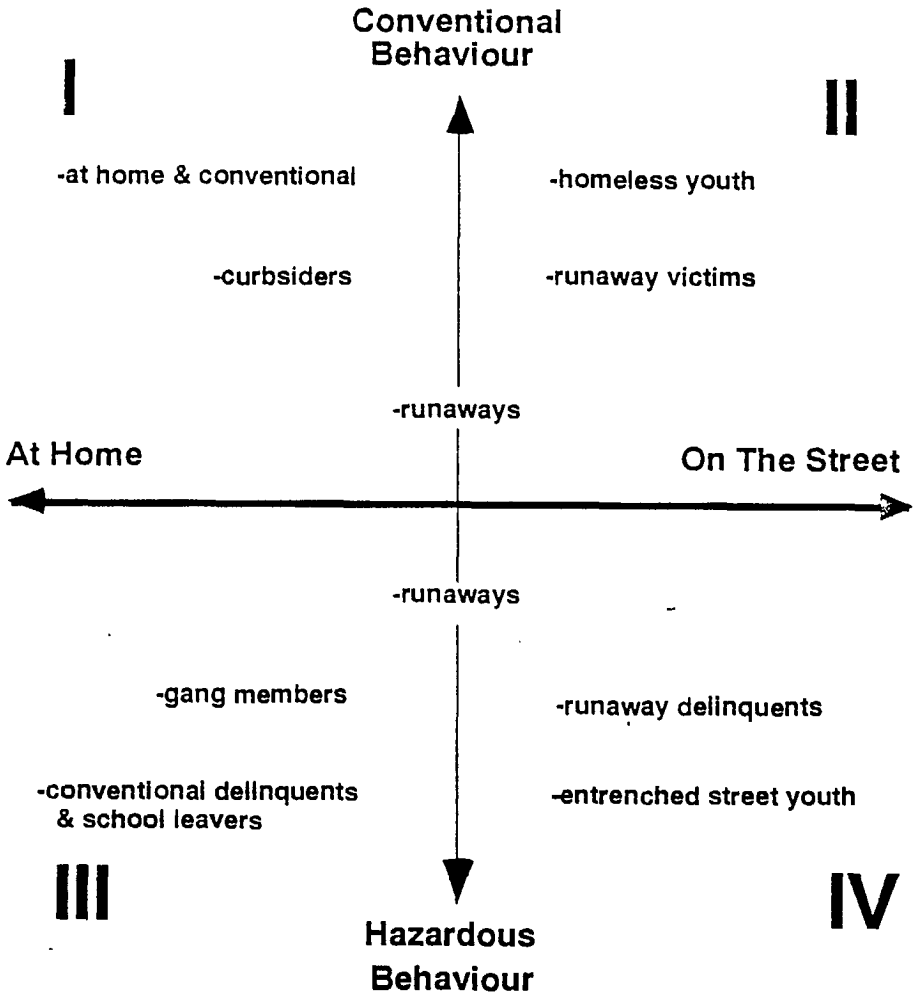
reality. Chronological age, in our view, should be secondary to living the life of a runaway or street youth and participating in street culture. The criteria that are established for inclusion should therefore reflect this approach.

This leads to our second recommendation. The second major variable in studying runaways and street youth should be participation in street culture. Once again, this variable should be conceptualized as continuous and range from no participation or little participation in street culture, to fully entrenched street youth who engage in those behaviours which previous research has identified as inherently related to street culture. These include drug use, participation in high risk sexual activities including prostitution and involvement in other illegal activities such as theft and selling drugs. Such a conceptualization is consistent with that found in many of the studies reviewed above which rely on participation in street culture as a means of identifying street youth. Moreover, it allows us to encompass a broad range of activities and levels of participation which is again consistent with the various typologies suggested in previous research.

The adoption of these two continuous variables suggests a model which has length of time on the street as the horizontal axis and participation in street culture as the vertical axis. This conceptualization further identifies four quadrants which correspond to different amounts of time on the street and different levels of involvement in street culture. A brief description of these quadrants will serve to illustrate both the comprehensive scope of the suggested model as well as its ability to differentiate among the diverse elements of the street youth population previously identified by research in this area.

In Figure Two we have represented time on the street as the horizontal axis of our model. At one end, we find those young people who are present on the street only occasionally and who live primarily in stable environments. At the other end are the entrenched street youth who have unstable and precarious living arrangements or who literally live on the street. In between these extremes, we can locate the various other groups of young people who are commonly included in the street youth population. For example, runaways could be placed on the continuum depending on the length of time they actually spend on the street.

Figure Two



This includes repeat runners who run for very short periods of time as well as those who run for more extensive periods such as several days or several months. The same could be true of curbsiders, throwaways or members of street gangs. What these disparate groups have in common, in fact, is that they are present in public places for extended periods of time, indicating that they are beyond adult or institutional control. As noted above, it is their very presence on the street that is of public concern.

The second dimension conceptualized in Figure 2, which we represent vertically, consists of a behavioural continuum. This axis identifies the extent to which young people are involved in activities associated with street culture. At one end of this continuum we find young people engaged in conventional behaviour. As we move towards the other pole, we find the dabblers, thrill seekers, adventurers and "wannabees" whose participation in street life is usually episodic and transitory. Most of these young people have stable living arrangements and their participation in street life represents an entertaining diversion, a form of rebellion, or both. At the other end of the continuum are the entrenched street youth who participate extensively in the hazardous activities associated with street life including criminal activities, drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution and other high risk sexual activities.

Approaching the problem of street youth and runaways by using both time and behaviour parameters allows us to construct the conceptual map displayed in Figure 2. This model enables us to differentiate the various sub-populations usually subsumed under the street youth umbrella on two key dimensions. This, in turn, anticipates the relationship that each of the subgroups in the population may have with various social institutions such as the educational, health, social

services and legal systems.

The first quadrant appearing in the top left hand corner of the model consists of those young people who spend little time on the street and who are only marginally involved in street culture. They can be categorized as "conventional" youth. At the most distant end - the top left hand corner - this includes youth who "hang out" after school and on weekends as well as "wannabees" who are drawn by the lifestyle and excitement of the street. Moving toward the inner corner of this quadrant, we find those young people that spend increasing amounts of time on the street and who are increasingly involved in more serious activities related to street culture. These people are typically more "out of control" than their counterparts at the other end of this quadrant. Curbsiders and repeat runners can be found here. They are both less under the control of parents or other authorities and more likely to be involved in risky activities.

The occupants of the second quadrant can be characterized as "victims". While they may spend a great deal of time on the street, they are not, as yet, involved to any great extent in street culture. We are thinking of throwaways and runaways here but are cognizant of the fact that this is a precarious situation given the requirements of satisfying basic needs. Since young people usually have limited resources at their disposal, these young people face being "captured" or "recaptured" by the institutional order or by street life. In order to survive, some will contact a service agency while others will run afoul of the law. Still others will return home. Many will become involved in street culture in order to survive. The latter constitutes a move into the fourth quadrant where those young people most entrenched in street culture can be found.

The third quadrant reflects another part of the youth population that presents on the street but who may not necessarily be part of the street youth population. These youth can be categorized as "conventional delinquents". This includes those youth we would ordinarily think of as troublesome, juvenile delinquents, or young career criminals. Members of street youth gangs are typical of the young people in this quadrant. While they are quite involved in the illegal or risky activities associated with street culture, they are normally living at home and are not usually homeless. Their presence on the street, however, contributes to the public concern that exists over street youth. Specifically their involvement in criminal or violent activities plays on the public's fear about street youth being out of control.

The fourth quadrant in the model contains that group of young people that most typifies the street youth population. These are the "entrenched" street youth. Moving out from the centre of this quadrant, we find individuals who spend increasing amounts of time on the street, with the abject homeless located at the far end of the quadrant. In addition, at this end of the quadrant we find those individuals most entrenched in street culture. This group represents the hard core street youth.

In addition to differentiating among the various sub-populations captured under the rubric of runaways and street youth, the model outlined in Figure 2 allows us to examine more critically the types of institutional responses that are both possible and appropriate for the different subgroups identified therein. Thus, family therapy and mediation strategies (Ostensen, 1981; Spergel, 1984, 1986) may be very useful for those young people in quadrants one and three where involvement in street culture may be in its initial phases. These same responses may be totally

inappropriate and ineffective for young people in either quadrants two or four. In these sectors, we are more likely to find that primary and to some extent secondary needs are a higher priority. In other words, just as the youth can be, generally speaking, differentiated by quadrant, the same appears to be the case with the social services and institutional responses.

Adopting the strategy implied by the model described above helps address two difficult design problems encountered in a number of studies examined earlier. Since the model calls for continuous variables, the requirements that categories be mutually exclusive and exhaustive are avoided. The conceptual problem of deciding who should be included, what ages are appropriate, and what the distinguishing criteria should be are all left to empirical investigation. The only criteria needed for inclusion in the study is that the young person be on the street and that they are participating in street youth culture in their actions or other outward manifestations such as style of dress, language, and general demeanour. These criteria are to be more specifically defined with the assistance of expert informants in each research site, including representatives from service agencies as well as street youth themselves.

The only problem anticipated with this approach is at the upper age level where the distinction between older street youth and homeless youth, and homeless adults will be difficult to determine. In this case, the person's identification with and participation in street youth culture will serve as the defining criteria. This decision is consistent with using empirical evidence to establish the various dimensions of the continuums used in the study. Part of this strategy involves using information obtained from the respondents to determine the parameters of the street youth

population as opposed to establishing arbitrary criteria. Moreover, this strategy is consistent with the notion that we are concerned with runaways and street youth because they are present on our streets and beyond societal control.

A final word about this model. It is the case with all of the research we reviewed that no reliable estimates exist of the size of the street youth population. The size of any segment of the street youth population could not be inferred with complete confidence from any of these studies. We simply do not know how many of the young people who appear on the streets of our communities are curbsiders, runaways, abjectly homeless or simply young people "hanging out". We can estimate, with some certainty, the size of the street youth population that uses various types of services. There are problems here, though, since we know that some street youth use multiple services and the degree of duplication must be estimated. These figures are less worrisome, however, than are estimates of the more transient or suspicious elements of the street youth population because we can work with the various agencies involved. Unless we have a better idea of who the youth on our streets are, our ability to establish population parameters for the street youth population will be limited.

5.0 Towards A Methodological Strategy

5.1 Estimating the Size of the Runaway and Street Youth Population: A Systematic Count

Estimating the size of the runaway and street youth population presents us with a number of challenging measurement problems. For example, as with non-sampling errors discussed above, attempting to enumerate the street youth population can involve errors based on non-observation and observation. The first, it will be recalled, consists of failing to count members of the population who properly should be included in the study. In the case of an elusive, suspicious and constantly changing population such as street youth, this represents a significant difficulty. Observation errors have to do with inaccurate identification and recording of information. Steps should be taken to minimize both types of errors. Fortunately, some excellent research exists which can serve as a guide for overcoming these and other measurement problems associated with conducting a systematic count of this type of population. Specifically, Rossi's (1989) seminal study of homelessness in Chicago offers a viable approach which can be modified for use.

Rossi spent considerable resources conducting a systematic count of the homeless in Chicago. While not without its critics, this study stands as a landmark effort in research on the homeless. What makes Rossi's research design so appealing is that he took into account the factors which make research on the homeless so difficult. Essentially, Rossi's method involved dividing the Chicago metropolitan area into census tracts and then using expert advice to identify those tracts most likely to contain homeless individuals.

Next, research teams were sent to canvas each of the tracks included in the study in the dead of night in order to capture all of the homeless people in their survey. Each building and every conceivable place where the homeless could be staying was included. The research teams included an off duty police officer to provide security. The researchers searched alleys, stair wells, rooftops and abandoned buildings in their effort to locate all of the homeless people in their tracks. Rossi presents his results with some confidence since his survey was systematic and as thorough as possible.

Rossi's critics charge that the tactics used in this study were intrusive. Having researchers accompanied by a police officer "rousting" sleeping, homeless people in the dead of night can certainly cause annoyance. In addition, such tactics would be highly implausible with a middle class group or other individuals with some power or a sense of their own civil rights. On the other hand, this was the first contemporary study to document reliably the nature of the homeless problem, and Rossi's strategy for conducting a systematic count was certainly effective. Dividing the city into census tracts and using expert information to identify those tracks with the highest concentration of the target population represents an excellent starting point.

The next step involves designing a means of counting the number of target group members present in the selected tracks. Several issues have to be addressed before the counting can take place. Following Rossi's lead as well as the lessons learned from previous Canadian research, the count should include repeated measures taken at different times of the day, different times of the month, and at different times of the year. As noted above, many studies of this type are conducted near the end of the month since poor families are under most stress at this time. Also, the control issues discussed above

suggest that counts be taken during early evening as well as late at night, both during the week and on weekends. Finally, given the harsh winter climate in Canada, counts should be taken throughout the year.

The second requirement is to establish the criteria to be used by the researchers in identifying members of the target population. As noted above, the issue here is primarily the presence on the street of young people "hanging out". Whether they are street youth or not will have to be ascertained in a subsequent part of the research design. In a systematic count, we are essentially interested in determining how many young people are present on the street at what could be considered inappropriate times - that is late at night. Some differentiation may be possible if measures are taken in both the early and late evening between youth on the street and street youth. Nonetheless, the issue here rests fundamentally on the notion that the public and the institutional order are responding to the presence on the street of young people who appear to be beyond control. The principal factors that can be used to identify these youth are based on their dress and other aspects of their appearance and on their behaviour. The chief distinction will be whether the individuals are youth or young adults. Participation in youth culture will be the determining factor for this decision. Expert advice can be used to identify the visible behavioural and appearance cues of potential members of the target population. Information from service agency personnel who work directly with street youth as well as information derived from street youth themselves can also be used to establish the criteria to be used in identifying youth on the street. Criteria should be developed for each site to account for local or regional variations that may exist in youth culture. Expert advice will also be important in helping to identify the tracts most likely to contain members of the target population. Here,

again, information obtained from both agency personnel and street youth should be considered.

This systematic count can serve as the basis for subsequent data collection. An estimate of the size of the street youth population is essential if we are to approximate a randomly selected sample for this very hard to study population. Given the imprecise nature of the categories of street youth in existing studies, we recommend beginning with an estimate of the size of the entire population of youth on the street. Again, we stress that it is the appearance of youth on the street that may itself be problematic above and beyond the contributions that the street youth population makes to the identification of this as a problem. The important task will be to determine, if possible, where the youth on the street fit on the continua included in our model. How many are just "hanging out"? How many are curbsiders or repeat runners? What percentage of the young people on the street use social service? How many are homeless? These are the types of questions we can begin to address in a more systematic way once we establish the number of youth on the street in different locations in a single community and in different communities across the country.

5.2 Collecting Data From the Street Youth Population

The second step in the systematic count involves making contact with the young people we see on the street during our counts to determine where they fit on the continua outlined in our model. In this phase of the data collection, effort should be directed toward gathering different kinds of information from various members of the street youth population. For example, information should be gathered on the demographic and other background characteristics of

different segments of the street youth population. An examination should also be made of both the antecedents to running and becoming involved in street life, and the process of getting off the street. The consequences of participation in street culture are also of concern.

This part of a study involves making important sampling decisions since the entire street youth population cannot be included in the study. A great deal of our discussion above identified the problems related to sampling decisions. The ideal is to derive a randomly selected sample from a known population. Using a probability sample allows researchers to generalize their findings to the broader population they are studying. In our discussion, we identified a number of strategies which have been used to come to grips with the difficulty of drawing a random sample when a list of the population is unavailable. These strategies included using a quota, convenience, or purposive sample that is representative of the target population. Drawing a large sample to minimize systematic bias in the sampling procedure was also suggested. Finally, using agencies to identify a sample of the street youth population and augmenting this with a sample derived from the street was another approach used in research on street youth.

Some of the Canadian studies were more successful than others at selecting a representative and random sample. The Addiction Research Foundation and McCarthy studies, in particular, took conscious steps to try to achieve high levels of representativeness even while acknowledging the limitations of not drawing a random sample. A number of the techniques outlined in these studies are quite useful and should be incorporated in making sampling decisions. Another excellent approach can again be found in another American study of the homeless. In this case, the detailed, comprehensive and

systematic strategy for deriving a randomly selected sample of homeless people presented by Burnam and Koegel (1988) who examined homelessness in the Los Angeles Skid Row. The Burnam and Koegel approach, as noted above, was successfully applied in Canada by McDonald and Peressini (1992) in their study of homelessness in Calgary's East Village.

Burnam and Koegel direct their attention to identifying the proportions of the target population that is visible in various known locations. The logic here is that once the proportions of the population in different sites is established, a random sample can be drawn which includes an appropriate probability for each individual of being randomly selected. The difficulty comes in establishing accurate proportions for a population that is so amorphous. This is precisely why visual counts are so crucial in this type of research.

The strategy Burnam and Koegel adopt is to start with the known components of the homeless population, that is those individuals in contact with the agencies providing services to these people. This consists primarily of shelter, food, and recreation or congregation facilities. Once a list of the agencies and congregation areas is established, an estimate of the proportion of the homeless population found in each of these locations is made. Since some individuals can appear in more than one site, the design includes ways of avoiding double counting. For example, the shelters represented the most accessible group in the homeless population and counts were made of these locations. Agencies providing hot meals were surveyed next with those having used shelters being excluded from this count. Finally, congregation areas were canvassed with those individuals using either shelters or food services being excluded from this count. In this way, Burnam and Koegel were able to establish the relative proportions of

the homeless population found in different locations. The next step was to draw a random sample in each of the locations.

Adopting the Burnam and Koegel approach to studies of runaways and street youth is straight forward. The initial task is to identify the agencies that provide services to runaways and street youth. Counts can then be made in those agencies which provide services to the largest number of street youth. Additional agencies can be surveyed depending on the number of agencies providing services to street youth in that particular target site and the extent to which any single service is used by street youth. The inclusion of additional agencies depends on the number of street youth in the agency that do not use the services of those agencies previously surveyed. The key is to avoid double counting while establishing the proportion of street youth that can be identified in each agency.

A count is then made in locations outside of the agencies where street youth are known to congregate. The goal here is to estimate the proportion of the street youth population that does not use agency services. Congregation sites are identified through information obtained from expert informants familiar with the congregation areas. Again, the usefulness of starting with an initial visual count is that the congregation sites for runaways and street youth will be familiar to the researchers. Individuals are approached at the congregation areas and included in the count only if they do not use agency services. Once again, the goal is to establish the proportion of the street youth population present in the congregation areas (on the street) that does not use agency services.

Once the proportion of street youth in the different

locations is identified, the appropriate number of individuals can be surveyed in each of the locations. The selection of individuals at each location must be random and each individual in the different locations must have an equal chance of being included in the sample. This ensures that a randomly selected, proportionate to population sample is drawn that is highly representative of the broader street youth population. With this type of sampling strategy, the limitations of purposive or convenience samples can be overcome.

Once a sample has been drawn, a variety of strategies are available for data collection. Given the sensitive nature of the information we are seeking, a combination interview/questionnaire is recommended - as was outlined in the McCarthy study and the Calgary pretest. While less sensitive data can be gathered during the interview portion of the survey, respondents can provide more sensitive information in the questionnaire section that they complete on their own. Both forced choice and open ended questions can be included.

Alternative data collection strategies were considered, but we found them to be unsuitable for this type of research. For example, participant observation is inappropriate given the nature of the data being sought, and the need for a statistically analyzable sample. Telephone interviews are probably also inappropriate with an instrument that takes more than twenty minutes to administer and which deals with relatively sensitive questions. However, telephone contacts may be a viable way of drawing a non-agency sample with arrangements made with prospective respondents to complete the longer survey in person at a later date. Other data collection strategies such as case studies, file studies or focus groups may supplement the approach being suggested but cannot on their own answer the questions we are interested in.

As for exploratory data on the runaway and street youth population, our review suggests that enough of this already exists. What is required at this point in time is a larger scale study of runaways and street youth that can be used to make generalizations about this population.

5.3 Alternative Sources For Drawing A Non-Agency Sample and the Use of Control Groups

The primary limitation of existing Canadian research on runaways and street youth is our lack of knowledge about the broader street youth population. Most of the studies are exploratory in nature. Many rely on samples drawn from or with the assistance of agencies providing services to street youth. Little is known about the size of the street youth population that does not use or is not in contact with these agencies. Moreover, since no control groups drawn from the general youth population are used, we have no way of knowing whether the characteristics of the runaways and street youth using agency services differ from runaways and street youth not using agencies services or from the general youth population.

Our emphasis on control and on counting youth on the street reflects a broader orientation than that usually found in studies of runaways and street youth. That is, we are sensitive to the more encompassing definitions that members of the public may have of the street youth population. This is important since the public's perceptions are crucial for public policy in an area which is highly susceptible to public fear of "street youth". A wide variety of quite disparate elements of the youth population may be included in the public's conceptualization. A variety of problems related to youth may be simply conflated as a result of the public's

perceptions. Thus, the perception of street youth as villains may overshadow the view of street youth as victims in the public policy arena. As a consequence, important problems faced by street youth such as the need for food, shelter, clothing, educational and health related programmes do not get the attention nor resources they require.

Our conceptualization of the problem and the model we have developed raise several other issues. One important implication of our model is that becoming a street youth is often a process which does not necessarily have a clearly identifiable beginning or end point. Young people may drift to and from the street. If this is valid, we would argue that a broader sample of youth must be studied, and that a control group be included. The control group should be drawn from young people of roughly the same age as the runaways and street youth being studied. Only in this way can we hope to include individuals that are just beginning their involvement with street culture as well as those that have been on the street for a long time. Another way of obtaining information about the initial stage of involvement in street culture is asking individuals currently on the street to reflect on their own experiences. These people may be different than other youth, however, precisely because they went beyond fantasising about running away and actually did it. Finally, a broader sample that includes a control group will help us to determine the way that young people who are not necessarily street youth use the street for excitement or just to "hang out". Including a control group will allow a comparison to be made between street youth and young people who we would not consider street youth.

Several strategies for drawing a control group sample exist. These include administering a modified version of the instrument used in the interviews with street youth to a

sample of high school or college students of roughly the same age. Alternatively, contact with a random sample of youth can be obtained through a telephone survey. For example, after an initial screening telephone call, prospective respondents can be invited to participate in the study at a later date and mutually convenient time.

6.0 Conducting A Pilot Study: The Calgary Experience

In order to test some of the ideas presented above, a pilot study was conducted in Calgary in the winter of 1992. Consistent with the literature review, we distinguished four areas of conceptual interest around which we devised the main instrument. These were personal antecedents to running, type of running conduct and the individuals' status in terms of running, consequences of running and social service involvements during or after running. The following table provides an overview of the areas covered in the questionnaire. Questionnaires are in the appendix.

Schematic Overview

Background Antecedents	Personal Status	Consequences	Social Service Sequels
Parental Form	Age & Gender	Self reported Delinquencies (narcotics, theft, prostitution, etc.)	Use of Emergency Shelters
Family harmony	Marital Status	Suicidal thoughts and actions	Food bank
Peer Relations	Educational Attainment	Depression scale	Soup kitchens
Parental Attachments (Instrumental & Emotional)	Running fantasies & planning	Self-esteem scale	Drop in centers
Physical Discipline	Age left home	Risk taking scale	Use of other social services including welfare
Sexual Abuse	Running episodes	AIDS knowledge scale	Use of facilities in other cities
Incompatibility	Running destinations	Employment and recent educational record	
Religiosity	Justifications for Running	Self reported health	
Parental Employment		Fertility and birth control	
Family Activities			
Family Counselling			
Educational Experience			

Many concepts were tapped using single item questions - "which of the following best describes how things were in your home when you lived at home?". Others were based on widely used psychometric or sociometric scales (i.e. the Depression and Self-Esteem scales). As much as possible, we used questionnaire items from previous research to improve comparability. There were 127 items on the main questionnaire and 109 items on the control questionnaire - the latter being somewhat shorter since many items did not make sense to subjects who were not on the run from home or receiving a service from an agency when they completed the questionnaire. These items were dropped to make the questionnaire intelligible while covering all the other common bases. Also, several items on the main questionnaire were open ended and invited the subjects to write responses at length - "How did you find out about the street scene and the social services available in Calgary?". Some items were answerable with multiple responses - "which of the following describes the way you see your present condition?". The possibility of multiple responses required tracking of some 150 variables on the control questionnaire and 168 variables on the target questionnaire.

The questionnaire itself was organized thematically around distinct subjects: "Your Background," "Growing Up," "About Parents," "Residency and Food," "Delinquent Activities," "Personal Feelings and Attitudes" etc.. The responses were described as much as possible to represent a continuum from "never" to "frequently". Or subjects were asked to indicate how often or how many of the items they were involved in ("How many close friends do you have?"). This was done to facilitate data analysis on either a prevalence basis (did this *ever* happen) or an incidence basis (how often). For example, the widespread experimentation with narcotics will yield large means on a prevalence basis in target and control

populations, but the seriousness of the usage - the incidence - will probably show significant variation. The questionnaire is designed to allow this distinction to be drawn from the responses.

A code book was created for the questionnaire to indicate how the responses were scored for data analysis. We avoided numbering the choices on the questionnaire itself. Instead, boxes were checked to indicate the desired response. The code book ensured continuity in the coding process and also allowed a record to be made of a missing response, a "not applicable" response as well as a "don't know" response.

6.1 Contacting Subjects

Since this pilot study was intended primarily as a pre-test for the questionnaires that were developed, we were not concerned about getting a random sample of subjects in numbers large enough to warrant complex data analysis. Given the time constraints, we confined our target interviews to 20 subjects (15 males, 5 females) and our controls to 106 subjects.

We placed a notice in an outreach service targeting street youth ("The Back Door") leaving a phone number and a name to contact. The Back Door provides counselling and modest financial assistance to street youth who are trying to establish themselves on their own resources. It is *not* a residential facility and offers little in the way of traditional social work counselling. Instead, it provides resources for adolescents and young adults to complete resumes, to plan educational and employment opportunities and assists them in establishing housing. All persons who attended during the last three weeks of March were encouraged to call

us. Feedback from the Back Door respondents was very favourable and the agency offered to leave the sign up permanently!

We did not want to conduct the interviews within the agency itself - both because this would have been an imposition on agency space and because it might have put the agency clients in an awkward position since some of what they might want to say could involve the agency itself. Consequently, the interviews were arranged by phone. Subjects usually called from the Back Door and arranged a convenient time to get together. The interviews were conducted in a public place indoors, near the Stephen Avenue Mall or in the Devonian gardens - both of which are downtown and popular congregating areas for street kids. Usually we met at the lunch tables outside the entrance to the Devonian Gardens which afforded a modicum of privacy - as well as security. In virtually all cases a team of two interviewers met the respondent. In some cases, we scheduled interviews back to back and simultaneously.

Not all our respondents were referred from the Back Door. Five were approached "cold" on the street and agreed to participate, including three females. This step was necessary since there are very few females in contact with the Back Door and we believed it would be desirable to talk to as many females as possible.

6.2 Administering the Interview/Questionnaire

The subjects were asked if they could read - which they all could do, even if only haltingly - and were invited to complete the questionnaire over a coffee or coke. In most cases, the questionnaire took about 60 minutes to fill in. We

reviewed the questionnaire with the subjects to determine whether they found any items offensive or needlessly intrusive. In addition, we asked if items of importance in their own lives had been left off, and talked with them about their experiences at home and on the streets, and their plans for the future, including the role, if any, that agencies might play in helping them achieve their goals.

All subjects completed all the questions. Two mentioned that it was easier to note something on a questionnaire than it was to talk to someone about it in an open interview. Our interview/questionnaire approach allowed us to capture certain information systematically while retaining some of the open ended aspects which capture the individual wrinkles in experience. All subjects were paid a $15 interview fee - an amount suggested by the director of the Back Door in keeping with the agency's incentive programmes which operate on that basis. In addition, all indicated a willingness to complete a follow-up interview at the end of the summer if such was required. On the whole, the interviews went very well.

6.3 Informed Consent and Ethical Approval

Every interview started with an acknowledgement of informed consent. The respondents were advised that the interview was strictly voluntary, and that the information obtained in it would be kept confidential. In addition, they were advised that no harm would come to them or their relatives as a result of the interview. The consent form was attached as the top page of the questionnaire. The consent form was removed from the questionnaire at the end of the interview and stored separately.

In addition, the research plan and the questionnaires were sent to the University of Calgary Faculty of Social Sciences Ethics Committee for a certificate of ethical approval. This is done to ensure respect of the integrity and safety of the subjects and is encouraged even where the research constitutes external professional activity. Finally, we contacted Gene Tilmann of Alberta Family and Social Services to obtain permission to interview any street youth who might be wards of the province.

6.4 The Control Groups and the Control Instrument

Just over one hundred students (n=106) were chosen as a control group for the purposes of the pretest of the control instrument. These were students at Mount Royal College and the University of Calgary. Although a high school control might be preferable, access to schools is difficult to achieve, particularly on short notice, and especially when it questions students about their relationships with parents. However, it is not readily apparent that a high school sample is the most appropriate control group. Since some of our subjects did not complete high school, the control groups might include junior high school students - and perhaps even upper elementary. However, sampling respondents this age creates another dilemma as the instruments begin to lose relevance for younger subjects.

6.5 Preliminary Results

In this section we present a cursory overview of some of the more interesting findings. Again, we should caution the reader that the results presented are very preliminary. Their reliability would be improved by establishing a larger sample

of the target population, a sampling frame which assured a random selection procedure for subjects and the use of a control group with greater similarities to the target population. The use of students from college and university populations tends to sample from more affluent sectors of society, from persons with stronger commitments to social and economic advancement, and greater resources to support the pursuit of these goals. In addition, the results may be misleading - without further analysis - inasmuch as the two groups differ in terms of age and gender. The control group was slightly younger than the target group (23 years versus 21 years) and more female than male (.62 versus .3). In addition, the target sample, despite being younger and male dominated, was more liable to have been married than the controls (.65 versus .37), and more likely to have children (.421 versus .13).

The following outcomes are based on the test questions which can be found in the accompanying questionnaires. We report means based on these items from the control and target samples. A t-test was conducted as a simple measure of the independence of the two distributions. The items presented here were chosen because in virtually every case, the tests proved significant.

6.6 Background Characteristics

The background questions covered a variety of issues regarding family life, family form and relationships with parents. Both controls and target groups reported that their fathers had been employed when they were growing up (.947 versus .98) but the controls were much more likely to be from families in which the father owned his own business (.52 versus .15). On the whole, however, the occupational

prestige scale was *higher* for the targets than the controls, contrary to our expectations. In the area of maternal employment outside the home, the target group was somewhat more likely to have grown up in a home in which the mother worked part or full time (2.8 versus 2.6). The control subjects reported a greater experience in religious attendance than the target groups (2.58 versus 1.15). When asked about scenarios that described family life, the target subjects reported higher levels of family disharmony (3.15 versus 2.11), fewer kinds of recreational activities associated with family life (2.58 versus 3.63), and a greater likelihood of having divorced or separated parents (2.44 versus 1.35). In addition, they reported a larger number of close personal friends than the controls (6.15 versus 5.2) which is suggestive of a relatively stronger investment in peer affiliations. In the area of "first wanted sexual activity", the target group was clearly active at a much earlier age (13.7 years versus 16.8 years), although part of the difference may be due to the different gender composition of the samples.

Another area of major differences tapped the strength of the social bond between parents and children. Controls were much more likely to report that their parents knew where they were, and who they were with when they were out with friends, were more likely to talk with parents about things that concerned the adolescents and to spend time doing things with them (13.9 versus 8.93). In addition they were less likely to complain of being "hassled" by parents than the target subjects (2.68 versus 3.9).

On the more negative dimensions, the targets were more likely to report seeing their parents intoxicated or high (1.9 versus 1.36), and to see their parents fighting and shouting (2.78 versus 2.03). In addition, the parents of the target

sample were more likely to use physical punishment in discipline (1.9 versus 1.43) and far more likely to strike a child so hard as to cause a bruise or bleeding (2.78 versus 2.03). In addition, the target group was more likely to feel so unwelcome at home that they *had* to leave (2.65 versus .93). In the area of minor sexual abuse, the patterns in both groups were identical: the incidents were very infrequent in both groups and the means equivalent (.23 versus .25). When we asked about the experience of what the subjects would now consider serious sexual abuse, the means were again very low, but the target group did experience higher levels nonetheless (.11 versus .3). The target sample was also more likely to have received counselling for problems in the family.

6.7 Running Behaviour

Among the controls, there was evidence that some of the respondents thought about running, planned to run and/or actually did engage in this form of behaviour. However, the length of the runs was always reported in hours or days - not weeks or months as in the case of the target subjects. In addition, the targets were more likely than the controls to have siblings who also were runaways. Running was also associated with dropping out of school for the majority of the target group. The latter had completed an average of 9.7 years of education versus 14 for the controls, although again here the sampling strategy may exaggerate this gap. The target group was more likely to have slept outside overnight on numerous occasions in contrast to the controls, and to have developed contacts with a number of friends, hostels and other emergency shelters, both locally and in other cities in the course of their behaviour.

6.8 Hazards of Running

We asked all the subjects how often they had gone without eating for a full day since leaving home. The target group reported an average of 46 days. The controls were asked how many days in the previous year they had gone without food; they reported some 2.4 days. None of the controls had used an emergency food shelter while the target group were all familiar with a range of soup kitchens and other food resources.

In the area of self-reported delinquency and arrest there were also significant differences on virtually every dimension we explored, although the significance of these findings is subject to the provisos attached to age, gender and class noted earlier. There were significantly higher levels of self reported theft for food (2.2 versus .09), panhandling (.71 versus .02) other forms of theft (i.e. not food) (1.85 versus 1.14) and self reported prostitution (1.4 versus .08) between the groups. The targets were more likely to have been arrested by the police (.75 versus .13), to have used a substance detoxification clinic (.65 versus .01) and to have had counselling for substance abuse (1.05 versus .01), and other personal problems (1.11 versus .09). In addition, the targets had significantly more experience selling drugs and using drugs than the controls and had larger numbers of associates who used drugs (51.4 versus 2.1), sold drugs (33 versus .63) and had been arrested by the police (.75 versus .13).

A number of scales were used to estimate variations in psychological states. The results of these measures indicated higher levels of suicidal imagery (1.25 versus 1.06), attempted suicide (.6 versus .13), clinical depression (12.84

versus 9.79), low self esteem (3.0 versus 12.3) and a higher risk taking outlook (6.7 versus 5.3). Again, the differences are significant and indicative of greater stresses associated with street life and a greater interest in stressful or risky behaviour. Teasing out whether this is primarily a consequence as opposed to a predictor of running behaviour requires a larger sampling and more careful questioning.

In addition to self reported delinquency and emotional well being, we asked the respondents to self report on their state of health. Again the means were lower for the target group than for the controls (2.0 versus 3.5). A series of questions tapping knowledge of AIDS transmission indicated no significant differences. Other questions about fertility control were too complex for the current presentation.

One of the last substantive areas we examined concerned the work habits of the respondents. The probability that a respondent was working was about the same in each group. However, those who were employed among the controls reported working some 22 hours in the previous week and earning an average of $177 while those in the target group who had worked put in almost a full week - 39 hours - while earning about $265. In other words, the full time students who worked were earning about $8 per hour on a part time basis while the target group was making about $6.80 per hour in full time employment.

However, the disadvantage to the target group did not begin with their work record, something which suggests that the problems of adjustment faced by the targets were not all sequels to running. In the context of work, we asked about educational experiences. The responses indicate that these subjects had experienced significant problems in school prior to school leaving. Compared to the controls, the targets

recalled greater difficulties in understanding what was being taught (2.3 versus 1.93), greater exposure to special education or learning disability classes (1.05 versus .25), less regular class attendance (1.4 versus 4.15), greater trouble with teachers (2.4 versus 1.11) and greater involvement with peers going out on school nights (2.85 versus 1.9). Despite this, the career expectations of the two groups were not all that different!

6.9 Developing A Data Analysis Strategy

By this point, it should be evident that the comparative approach is very important in helping us understand some of the promises of, as well as some of the problems associated with, intelligent data analysis. In this section, we have only presented the most preliminary gloss on what has been collected. However, even at this stage is should be evident that part of the task facing us involves untangling some very tricky interrelationships. While we have differentiated antecedents, running consequences and hazards/risks following running for conceptual clarity, the real world is not as simple as this. Many of the things which contribute to running behaviour also contribute to involvement with hazardous events after running. Part of the task of a data analysis strategy is to parse out these factors separately. The following section throws some light on how this might be achieved.

How should data analysis be undertaken from the sorts of instruments developed here? In the previous parts of this section we have simply reported means from our target and control groups. Even though the previous overview of the means cannot throw much light on the phenomena of interest, it is nonetheless possible to anticipate how such analyses can be

best undertaken. We propose some strategies to unpack the responses at three levels of analysis.

The major dependent variable in this study is the phenomenon of running. In the first instance, we need to give a description of the nature of these patterns and to explore the typology of runners in terms of the parameters identified in the literature review. The length of time "on the run" was identified - although loosely - as a proxy for the degree of entrenchment in street life. The level of involvement in street hazards was the second dimension - delinquency, school leaving, narcotics use, depression, etc.. The full typology identifies normal youthful patterns, victimized runners, delinquent homebodies, gangs, curbsiders and the entrenched homeless. In our approach, it is unsatisfactory to impose a classification system on the respondents a priori. Instead we need to develop a sampling frame to capture the full variability of this heterogeneous population on the basis of (i) early departure from home, (ii) autonomy achieved privately through work and/or running to relatives and friends, (iii) the use of hostel and emergency services and (iv) participation in street clusters and the "street scene". However, the small scale of this pretest has precluded the establishment of a hard and fast profile of *all* the permutations in the overall population. The first task is to describe the respondents in terms of age, gender, characteristics of the run(s) - numbers of runs, frequency, length, age at time of, and other aspects of the runs, including the origins (homes versus agencies) and destinations (homes versus agencies). These profiles will allow us to give a descriptive overview of the various aspects of the population, and their running patterns. This constitutes the first task.

Examining predictors of running constitutes the next task. The predictors of running behaviour have to be examined in at least a couple of different ways. First, demographic or "SES" variables ought to predict variation in running behaviour from a global perspective. Age, gender, marital status, social class, ethnicity and residency-type ought to exert some influence on individual conduct as parts of the individual's master status. The decision to leave home - other things being equal - ought to increase with maturity and with the ability to overcome family resistance. Males would be more likely than females to exert independence particularly in adolescence where the male children appear to have more autonomy than the female children. We propose that any form of examination include a range of background variables to explore running descriptively. This type of analysis requires no control since the point of the analysis is description against well known population parameters i.e. which ages, genders, ethnicities etc. are more likely to make up the running populations.

The second level of analysis takes us to the role of the background *stresses* in running behaviour. Here we focus on (among other things) parental configuration, the various childhood abuses, school stresses, delinquent associations, parental unemployment and parent/children conflict as predictors of running. *Since we are examining these relationships among those who have already been sampled because they have already run, to determine whether these associations are peculiar to the running group, a control of non-runners is essential.* Here we suggest a comparison of a sample of non-runners matched for age with those who have left their families to determine whether the stresses outlined in our model are more strongly associated with running than in the non-runner population. This is the basic control strategy. If the hazards of family dysfunction are more

prominent in the backgrounds of runners than non-runners, we have grounds for evaluating this area as a potential cause of running. Preliminary investigation certainly bears out the fruitfulness of this approach even if the controls in the pretest were less than optimum.

A second kind of controlled analysis is possible. If we lump the controls and running samples together to conduct a single sample data analysis, we can explore the power of the relationship between the *degree* of family stress and the *strength* of the running conduct. The stresses we have included in our instrument are NOT unique to runners - they are found to some degree in all families. That was evident from the pretest as well the presence of running among the controls. It ought to be possible to measure not whether family stresses are associated categorically with running, but whether the *amount* of such stress is associated with a concomitant amount of running behaviour. Quantifying the latter dependent variable involves more than simply classifying running as "present" or "absent". Here we have in mind some estimation of the degree or intensity of running behaviour conceived empirically as the number of runs, their frequency and duration, the age at earliest run and the degree of involvement with street activities following the run. Our hypothesis is that the intensity of family stress will predict the degree or intensity of running behaviour.

A third level of analysis explores the family dysfunction model in a different way. Our questionnaire measures the degree of hazardous deviant involvements both before and after the departure from the family. If the family constrains adolescent members, running ought to be associated with increased hazardous activities. Since we are asking about delinquent acts *prior* to running as well as after running, it is possible to estimate the change in hazardous activities

associated with running without presupposing that children are blameless prior to becoming homeless. If we recall the problem of explaining running, the inclusion of pre-running hazardous activities forces us to consider whether "consequences" - as per our schematic representation - might also explain the propensity to run as "antecedents". Two matters concern us here. Running may predict increased hazardous involvements. The lack of family restraints may elevate existing tendencies. But a comparison with a non-runner population - controls - can shed some light on whether pre-running delinquency may be a predictor of running, as well as a consequence, particularly if the levels of pre-running delinquency are higher among runners. An examination of the *amount* and *kinds* of hazardous activities both before and after running can shed some light not on the original reasons for delinquency, but on the contribution made to it *by* running.

The third level of analysis pulls everything mentioned previously together. The dependent variables are the hazards of running and the independent variables consist of all the previous elements analyzed as predictors - demographic characteristics, stress factors and running characteristics. At this level we attempt to explain variations in delinquency among ALL subjects by testing three models: the role of predictors, the role of family stresses and the role of running characteristics on the prevalence, incidence and types of hazardous activities. This regression model would examine all respondents in a single data analysis by coding the running behaviour of non-running adolescents as n=0 days, times etc.. Since both runners and non-runners engage in delinquencies, the question examined here is the degree to which a common demographic model of delinquency is improved (or not) by the addition of continuous measures of family stresses, as well as by the addition of the latter *plus* the

effects of running characteristics (number of runs, days of run, years away from home etc.). This approach allows a partitioning of the contribution of background factors which cause delinquency in all adolescents, the role of various family stresses which may enhance these existing tendencies, and the further relationship of running to risk taking conduct.

In the next section, we examine six lessons from the pilot study which we think should influence the construction of instruments and methodological decisions.

7.0 Lessons from the Pilot Study

First, the main questionnaire (targets and controls) took a substantial amount of time to complete, particularly longer for the targets, especially where there were reading problems. It might be possible to design instruments which take longer to administer but there is a limit to how much information can be learned in the interview/survey encounter. The methodological issue is the tension between depth and scope. Our questionnaires attempted to learn a substantial amount of personal information covering a large number of areas. However, we did not learn a great deal about each respondent in any particular area. It would be possible to spend 12 to 14 pages and 45 to 60 minutes inquiring into any one of the subjects which interest us - family relationships, self reported delinquencies, detailed patterns of running behaviour, sexuality and STD control, school performance and employment history. The more areas we attempt to include, the less penetrating our grasp of any one area. And the more penetrating our grasp, the less scope which will prove feasible. For this reason, the nature and extent of the information sought in the questionnaire should be carefully considered to optimize scope versus depth decisions.

Second, the coding of the 126 responses required a far greater investment in time and personnel than anticipated. Steps should be taken to prepare response sheets that can be optically scanned directly into a data base - bypassing the usual steps of manual coding and response entry, particularly if substantial numbers of control respondents are included. Even without controls, the complexity of the questionnaire is such as to make pre-coded, machine readable response sheets preferable.

Third, we have some concern for the security of interviewers. In our initial planning, we proposed to conduct interviews using the skills of two female research associates. In the majority of cases, the respondents contacted through agencies were extremely pleasant. However, in a few cases, it would have been inappropriate from a security perspective to arrange meetings in public with a lone female interviewer. Our very first interview was arranged in this way and involved a gang member who appeared for the interview with an associate. Both persons had serious criminal records. All subsequent interviews were conducted by a team.

Fourth, whatever decisions need to be made about the use of agency contacts for sampling subjects, it is essential that there be continuity in the interview team to prevent duplication of interviews. Two of the people we met on the street on "cold approaches" were later associated with outreach services so that had we not had interviewer consistency, the sample would have been redundant - a situation likely to increase where an incentive is associated with the interview.

Fifth, the collection of interviews from the target population is extremely time consuming. While the interviews themselves may be completed within about 90 minutes, they cannot always be reliably scheduled. Appointments are sometimes cancelled without prior notice or respondents arrive late. Attempts to increase the numbers by approaching people on the Mall were successful but also entailed a great deal of time simply browsing the area without success. On some occasions, interviews were arranged at night. On other occasions, we had several interviews on a single day after going many days without any new contacts. We obtained our 20 target interviews over the course of three weeks. In the Winnipeg Social Planning Council Study, 127 interviews were

collected over 15 weeks - after spending 4 weeks making contacts with people in the street networks *and* using a former street kid to initiate contacts. McCarthy spent almost a year in the field gathering some 400 interviews. In neither case was an attempt made to parachute an out-of-town team into the cities to conduct the work on a short term basis. Another approach might be to use "focus group" interviews with groups of youth in care. However, such settings are completely inappropriate for the sort of information sought in our study.

Sixth, the process of questionnaire construction did not end completely when we started our interviews. The interviews immediately brought to our attention gaps in the questions which we thought should be remedied. However, to the extent that such changes were incorporated, the more items we faced which resulted in "missing values" in interviews conducted before we arrived at the final questionnaire. For the purposes of the pretest, we made very few changes on the actual items on the target questionnaire. However, we imported some changes which we could pretest on the control respondents. These should be added to the revised target interview schedule.

This explains some of the minor discrepancies between the two questionnaires. By way of illustration, where both questionnaires ask about exposure to sexual abuse, the control questionnaire probes further and asks who this involved. Where both questionnaires ask about the age of first consensual sex, the control asks the age of the respondent's partner. Likewise, where both ask about the use of illegal drugs, the control asks about the age of first drug experimentation. In addition, the control includes a standard self-reported rape/sexual victimization item (a hazard measure), as well as an item which asks about the number of employers ever worked for (as a proxy for employment history).

And the control questionnaire asks *why* the respondent was expelled from school, not only *if*. These are the sort of fine tunings which are required to produce a more subtle and useful instrument.

8.0 A Description of Various Calgary Services

Outreach services for street youth in Calgary are better developed than in many other locations. The following description offers a capsule summary of the key services in the city which pertain to street youth and runaways. Following that, we explore a more systematic typology. The descriptive overview covers social services, networks of care givers, medical services and court or law related controls.

"Avenue 15" was created under the auspices of the Boys and Girls Club of Calgary following a needs assessment of street kids and runaways associated with the work of Kufeldt and Nimmo described earlier in the literature review. It provides a residential shelter for up to two weeks for a maximum of 17 young persons 12 to 17 years old. It offers counselling, medical referrals, life skills training and meals. Aside from the director, the facility has a social worker, eight child care workers and a part time cook. The contact person is Madeline McDonald (403) 244-4772.

Catholic Family Service operates "The Safehouse" in an old residential building owned by the Archdiocese. The house provides coed residency for eight persons aged 15 to 18 years on a medium term basis. Clients are persons with status under Alberta Family and Social Services who have already had a number of unsuccessful placements in foster or group homes. Those who want to use the facility's "hostel component" can stay on an emergency basis but must renegotiate their beds every night - which means they must appear before 10 p.m. and stay if space is available. Those who commit to the "transitional living component" are guaranteed a bed as well as access to the kitchen, television and other facilities. Four adult staff and three 16-to-21 year old "peer

counsellors" offer basic child care as well as educational and life skills advice and assistance. The innovative peer counsellor idea typically involves young persons from a similar runaway background who have stabilized their lives and live in as a resource to help the other adolescents. The Alberta Safehouse Society contact person is Marjorie Driscoll (403) 244-4737.

The "JIMY" programme or "Joint Integrated Measures for Youth" was created to deal with the initiatives of young persons 16 to 17 years of age who are seeking new residential opportunities. In some cases, these are "system" kids who are familiar with groups homes. In other cases, they were adolescents who want to move out of home, or who may have already run away and who are seeking work or opportunities to continue their education. The JIMY programme was designed to coordinate access to child welfare services or income security services. Income security can usually be arranged for two months for this age group - although in most cases not beyond the 18th birthday. JIMY steers young people to facilities like Avenue 15, as well as private homes which offer secure and affordable room and board. In addition, social workers can assist the clients to develop a plan to get work. Jim Allison was the contact person at Calgary Integrated Services (403) 228-7171.

Not all the resources in the City are as well known as the above programmes. The Servants Anonymous Society operates several long term shelters in homes for young women acquired with assistance from the AMHC and CMHC. The main facility is a stabilization programme with four or five beds. The programme deals primarily with substance dependent individuals, some of whom may have worked as prostitutes, and some of whom are in exploitative relationships. Transitional facilities have been established to provide longer term

opportunities for some of the women with young children. The agency is run entirely by volunteers, primarily Ms. Machefert who lives in the basement apartment of the main facility. Dominique Machefert is the contact person (403) 237-8477.

In terms of "store front" facilities, the primary resource aimed at young adults and adolescent street kids is operated by Woods Homes (formerly the Woods Christian Homes orphanage). It is called "Exit" and was reached by contacting Randy Diddans at (404) 262-9953. Exit is located near the city core. It allows young people to drop in for an hour to sit in the lounge, talk to the social workers, have a coffee and/or use the laundry facilities. Woods also runs another agency right next door. "Discovering Choices" is a joint venture with the Calgary Board of Education which allows students (up to 12 in the programme at a time) to work with a teacher in order to have their needs assessed and to work towards the acquisition of high school credits on a correspondence basis. Exit also operates a van which distributes coffee and condoms to prostitutes on the main stroll. The Exit design is meant to facilitate access of youth at risk to a wide spectrum of services - community based living networks, wilderness adventure programmes, as well as clinical, residential and educational services. These cover the waterfront from an emergency seven day "crisis diffusion residential placement" for adolescents, to longer term community placements in volunteer homes. The Exit drop-in office has two full-time staff, but Woods Homes employs approximately 140 full time care givers in its wider range of services. Exit can offer an upstairs apartment on a short term emergency basis but most clients are referred to other Woods residential facilities, the Safehouse or Avenue 15.

The "Mustard Seed Church" is a Ministry operated for street people including adolescents. It provides a drop-in

centre with coffee and pool tables and has plans to provide an eight to ten bed emergency hostel in a future facility donated recently to the church. Like the Calgary Drop-In Centre (403) 266-3600, it caters to young adults. Rev. Pat Nixon was the contact person (403) 263-6189.

The "Back Door" was started in 1988 by Carl Deline to assist street people aged 17 to 24 years to establish their own residencies and jobs. Three "coordinators" and a project director develop "contracts" with clients which break down all the steps required by the clients to normalize their lifestyles. Each step results in a $15 compensation and is designed to meet housing needs, as well as educational and employment opportunities. Clients can earn up to five such "credits" a week. The approach is unorthodox and somewhat antithetical to the therapeutic mentality that characterizes a lot of the professional agencies, but has assisted a number of young persons take charge of their own circumstances. Carl Deline was contacted at (403) 253-2139.

In addition to the various agency services, two networks of agency care givers operate in the city, allowing care givers and volunteers an opportunity to routinely exchange information about programmes, resources and other matters of mutual interest. The first network is the Adolescent Needs Network. The contact person there was Dr. John Wu (403) 234-9212. This group meets every month, has a modest budget and publishes a newsletter. One of the main activities of the network is to schedule and advertise presentations about specific local and regional service initiatives that affect adolescent social, educational and health needs.

The Bridge Foundation for Youth was contacted through Linus Fung (403) 234-9213. This organization deals primarily with immigrant school children. It focuses on problems

primarily experienced by Asian students in making the transition to Canadian society. Starting in the fall of 1991, the Foundation initiated an after school programme in two junior high schools (ages 12 to 15) to assist the students with English, to help them do their homework and to talk about problems of adjustment. The children are at risk of dropping out and experience some family communication problems since in many cases both parents are working at full and part time jobs until late in the evening. The boys are also at risk to association with gangs and delinquent peers in the absence of normal after-school supervision by parents. A coordinator from the Bridge Foundation meets with the Adolescent Needs Network, keeping the two groups in contact with one another.

In addition to the Foundation, the "Calgary Association of Young Immigrants" (CAYI) offers counselling services for young immigrants in trouble with the law. Inger Howse was the contact person for this agency (403) 262-8815. It deals primarily with south Asian adolescents and young adults. The agency has two full time workers as well as several volunteers. The CAYI deals with an older and more entrenched clientele than the Bridge Foundation.

The City of Calgary Health Department operates an STD clinic staffed by a Public Health nurse. Our contact person was Jessie Reid (403) 297-6562. The clinic is located on the main stroll and has many referrals of runaways from other social agencies. The clinic is represented on the Adolescent Needs Network.

On one of the busiest congregating areas near the city core is a Christian based drop-in clinic that meets health needs for street people - including adolescents and young adults: Calgary Urban Projects Society (CUPS). Our contact at "CUPS" was John Mungham (403) 237-5554. CUPS can arrange

medical consultations with a doctor. It also operates a needle exchange programme for narcotics users. In addition, CUPS works with other resources in the community to help people find housing ("Transitions Housing") and meets any other needs the 12 staff can offer assistance with.

In addition to the social work approach, the City of Calgary Youth Probation Services is mandated by the courts to assist the re-integration of convicted young offenders into society. They can be reached at (403) 268-5111. In the area of policing, a coordination of approaches is pursued under the Serious Habitual Offender Program (SHOP) initiative. Staff Sgt. Vern Fielder is the contact person for this programme (403) 268-8691. Neither is directly related to street kids per se. SHOP in particular is aimed at "serious habitual offenders" although many of these appear to have earlier histories of running from home before serious involvement with the law.

8.1 Toward A Typology of Services

An important aspect of research on runaways and street youth is the nature and range of services available for these individuals. In most Canadian research on this topic, access to potential respondents was gained through agencies providing services to the street youth population. In some projects, such as the Street, Youth and AIDS study, both the way the problem was conceptualized and the classification scheme used to identify various elements of the target population were based on the existence of agencies established to provide services to runaways and street youth (Radford, 1989:10). Besides identifying services generally available, however, research in this area should identify unique or innovative programmes directed at street youth. Service gaps or overlaps

should also be noted. However, developing a typology of available services presents several considerable difficulties.

The difficulties encountered in the literature over the definition of the runaways and street youth presents an equally challenging problem for identifying a typology of services aimed at this group. The model developed throughout our research design is based on the intersection of two continua which reflect the essence of the runaways and street youth experience: (i) length of time on the street, and (ii) participation in street culture. Following this conceptualization, a typology of services directed at runaways and street youth can be constructed which focuses specifically on those young people that spend a majority of their time on the street and who participate extensively in street culture. Taking such an approach is necessary since a wide variety of services are provided routinely to young people in this society. However, while all young people receive education and health care as part of the normal process of growing-up, some educational or health care services are provided specifically for runaways and street youth. Similarly, law enforcement services such as traffic safety or crime prevention programmes are provided routinely to young people in most communities through the educational system. However, only those young people who runaway to avoid further victimization or those who are themselves committing crimes are likely to come into contact with the types of law enforcement services directed toward the runaway and street youth population. The services of interest here, therefore, include those aimed at young people facing various risks associated with their tenure on the streets and their participation in street culture.

Based on our experiences in Calgary and after a review of the relevant literature, it is possible to identify a continuum of services for runaways and street youth that

encompasses a broad range of programmes. At one end, are those services that are primarily preventative in nature. Here, we have in mind various types of programmes designed to provide young people with information about the dangers of drinking and driving, substance abuse, risky sexual practices or the problems associated with early school leaving. Many of these are broadcast in the mass media and are aimed at all adolescents. Programmes aimed specifically at the runaway and street youth population may include those that provide information and counselling about available services and may extend into the area of providing condoms or a needle exchange services to persons engaged in high risk activities - Exit, or CUPS might fit here.

Moving along the continuum, we find services that are provided to young people who face various levels of risk. These include crisis intervention programmes that respond to immediate problems and try to stabilize individuals in distress or emergency safehouse shelter available on a short term basis - Avenue 15, or the Safe House. Further along the continuum are the maintenance programmes that meet the ongoing needs of runaways and street youth for money, shelter, clothing, transportation, emotional support and a variety of other social services including legal and medical services - i.e. Woods Homes, the Back Door, or JIMY. These may be part of a residential shelter or counselling aimed at establishing shelter at the client's initiative. By way of explanation, many provincial child welfare regimes have a mandate to house homeless children under 16, or to provide opportunities for adolescents 16 and 17 years old. The housing of young adults beyond the mandate of child welfare laws falls in most cases to the private sector and often is not residential per se, but assistance to establish independent residency.

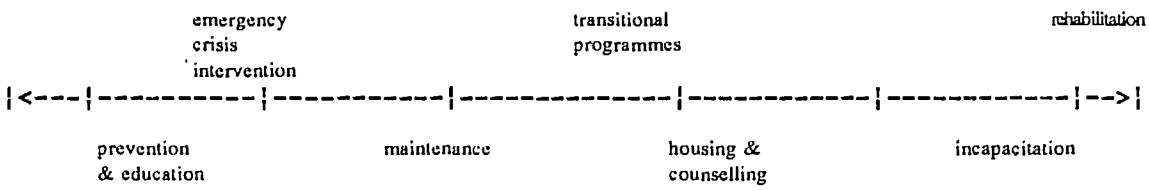
Next on the continuum we find those services designed to assist young people in making the transition from the streets to mainstream society. These include life skills training, special educational services and employment programmes. At the far end of the continuum are the services designed to incapacitate those young people most at risk of harming themselves or the rest of society. To the extent that these incapacitation services are protective, they should be considered as forms of crisis intervention. If they are directed at individuals engaged in illegal activities, they should be considered as incapacitative. However, they may be both, and may be integrated with rehabilitation services provided for individuals who have been in custody - which is also located at this end of the continuum.

Based on this brief description, our conception of the continuum of services can be depicted in Figure 3. On the left extreme we would locate those most closely associated with normal patterns of family residency. Agency involvement is limited to preventative and educational functions. This might involve police programmes at schools or public service announcements from community clubs designed to head off adolescent drug experimentation, drunk driving and the like. A more intrusive contact is represented at the other end of the continuum in the corrections services associated with probation and correctional services. Between emergency shelters and involuntary direction associated with young offenders we find the community voluntary sector - the YWCA & YMCA as well as the range of outreach services providing maintenance and transitional programmes, both residential and non-residential.

As was noted earlier, an important dimension of the various categories suggested here is the time dimension. The length of time a young person is actually in contact with

agency staff is a useful criterion for determining the type of service being provided. In the case of street outreach programmes, for example, contact may be limited to several minutes or several hours. While contact may be repeated in meetings that take place on a fairly regular basis, most preventative programmes and some crisis intervention programmes consist of episodic contacts. Contacts extending over longer periods, from a single day to several days or even a week, may also be considered short term if these services are designed to address immediate needs and to stabilize individuals. Ongoing services addressing such primary needs as food or shelter should be considered under the maintenance category since the problems they address are not episodic but continuous or ongoing in nature.

FIGURE 3: A Continuum of Services for Runaways and Street Youth



A determination as to whether different services should be considered maintenance or transitory depends on whether or not an intrinsic part of the service offered consists of specific programmes designed to assist young people in changing their lives and requires a formal commitment to the programmes, assignment to a case worker, individualized goal setting and the like. Thus, group homes or independent living programmes usually contain a component clearly directed at change while emergency shelters or foster homes usually do not. The former should be considered as transition services while the latter would appear to be more accurately classified

as maintenance services.

A brief discussion of the criteria used to identify services included in each of the categories on the continuum is presented below:

(i) Prevention - these consist of services or programmes whose goals are to educate young people about various hazards they may encounter while participating in street culture. Typically, they offer information and practical advice on avoiding potential risks as well as referral services to both crisis intervention and longer term programmes. Street outreach services may provide these types of programmes as would health clinics or agencies providing a needle exchange service. Contact with street youth here is primarily episodic but may also include ongoing contacts.

(ii) Crisis Intervention - the types of services included under this category are those which seek to stabilize individuals facing an immediate crisis. Contact here is essentially short term. Once the immediate threat has been addressed, contact generally ceases or a referral is made to a longer term programme. Emergency shelter or medical services are the types of services included under this category.

(iii) Maintenance - services that meet the ongoing needs of runaways and street youth and that have no component specifically aimed at getting these people off the streets are included in this category. Agencies providing shelter or meals are examples of maintenance services. These are usually part of a broader range of social services provided in most centres to the poor or homeless population. They may not be directed at the street youth

population specifically, but they do represent a source of food and shelter for many runaways and street youth.

(iv) Transitional - the defining characteristic of services in this category is that they provide young people with assistance in getting off the streets. These usually require a longer term commitment by the young person and ongoing contact with the agency delivering the programme. Many residential services offer these types of programmes and they would be included here. Life skills training, employment services and educational programmes would also be included.

(v) Incapacitation - this is a difficult category to include since we do not usually think of incarceration as a service. Nevertheless, some law enforcement as well as remedial services require that people be placed in custodial settings when their actions are deemed harmful either to themselves or to society. Runaways and street youth convicted of criminal acts are included here as are those detained for mental health reasons.

(vi) Rehabilitation - the services provided to youth by the criminal justice system and in particular, by the correctional system comprise the major component of this category. Probation services, life skills programmes and the like are included here. Unlike transitional programmes, these are usually not voluntary and occur after a person has been in a custodial setting. Some mental health programmes aimed at re-integrating young people into the community may also be considered in this category.

In order to gather information about the types of services available, a questionnaire was constructed and

interviews were conducted with key actors in the agencies that provide services to runaways and street youth. The questionnaire includes items focusing on the agencies themselves and the types of services they offer. It has been our experience in previous research that a small network exists in many centres involving social workers, child care workers and other professionals and community volunteers dealing with issues related to youth at risk. Many of the people working in an area either know each other or are familiar with each other's work. These key actors are also usually aware of any unique or innovative programmes that exist in their areas. Therefore, an overview of the types of services available for runaways and street youth in any given area can be gained through interviews with key actors in these networks.

In order to ensure that the information used to construct the typology of services is gathered in a systematic way in each site, the following procedure is recommended. Initial contacts in each site should be made with the Provincial Directors of Child Welfare in each province or region. These directors act as the formal provincial guardians for children not legally in parental care or control. In addition, they are usually familiar with the range of services offered to young persons since they fund and evaluate many of the agencies and their programmes. In addition, if the agencies are to be used as sources of contact with street youth, permission to interview such individuals will have to be obtained from the Directors since youth under the age of 16 cannot consent to participate in the research without parental approval. Finally, support of the provincial officers may assist the research process if they can lend some validation to the research and its merits.

Secondly, the local police service may constitute a key institution with expertise in street youth, particularly if the youth make special demands on the police service. In some departments specialized youth squads and/or intervention programmes have been created for runaways and street youth. Interviews should be conducted with the police personnel most involved with the runaway and street youth issue.

Finally, information about local networks of social work professionals can be obtained from agencies specializing in youth, such as Children's Aid Societies or municipal Child and Family Services. Our interviews in Calgary suggest that it is relatively easy to identify the institutional network associated with care giving in an area. A list of the key actors in each site can be developed quite efficiently.

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10.0 Appendices

10.1 Street Kids Questionnaire

STUDY OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I hereby give my informed consent to be interviewed. I understand the nature of my involvement, and I have been assured that my answers will be kept strictly confidential. At no point during the future analysis will I be identified by name. I further understand that the questionnaire and the information recorded from these questionnaires will be erased or destroyed after the information has been used in in the large scale level for which it was intended. Any quotations from this interview will appear without anything which identifies who I am.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to answer any questions and that I may withdraw at any time. I agree that the interviewer may also terminate this interview with me.

Finally, I understand that there is no risk to me or to my relatives stemming from this interview.

Please initialize or make your mark. _____ Date ____

Check the following activities if they apply to you. Sometimes you may find that the questions do not apply to you. In that case you can write in "n/a" beside the question - which means NOT APPLICABLE TO ME. Also, if you do not know the answer to a question, you can write in "D/K" beside the question - which means I DON'T REALLY KNOW.

1. When you were at home, what sort of recreations did you engage in?

   [ ] organized sports
   [ ] scouts / guides or similar activities
   [ ] cards and other board games like monopoly
   [ ] watch TV and videos at home
   [ ] went to the movies
   [ ] went out to the restaurant

2. Which of the following best describes how things were in your home when you lived at home?

   [ ] very good - everyone got on with everyone else
   [ ] fairly good - problems from time to time but nothing serious
   [ ] somewhat poor - there were some serious problems which needed attention
   [ ] very poor - there were many serious problems
   [ ] Other (specify) _____

3. When you were living with your family (before you left home) approximately how many friends did you have?

   _____ (please write a number)

4. Of these, how many were <u>close</u> friends? _____

5. Which one of the following describes the way you see your present situation?

   [ ] I am someone who left a home life that was intolerable.
   [ ] I am someone who left home because I like adventure and excitement.
   [ ] I am someone whose parents threw me out because they could not deal with my behaviour.
   [ ] I am someone whose parents couldn't be bothered to have me around, and threw me out.
   [ ] I am someone who ran away from CAS or YOA facilities.
   [ ] I still live at home, but my life is really on the street, and I will probably leave home eventually for the street.

6. Why did you decide to leave home? In other words, what finally happened that made you decide to leave?

---

7. Did your mother know WHERE YOU WERE when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

8. Did your father know WHERE YOU WERE when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

9. Did your mother know WHO YOU WERE WITH when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

10. Did your father know WHO YOU WERE WITH when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

11. How often did your mother spend time talking with you about things YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

12. How often did your father spend time talking with you about things YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

13. How often did your mother spend time doing things with you that YOU WANTED TO DO?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

14. How often did your father spend time doing things with you that YOU WANTED TO DO?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

15. How often did your mother HASSLE you?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

16. How often did your father HASSLE you?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

17. While living at home did you ever see your parents under the influence of alcohol or high on drugs?

[ ] frequently [ ] sometimes [ ] once or twice [ ] never

18. How often did you see your parents arguing loudly and fighting with each other?

[ ] frequently [ ] sometimes [ ] once or twice [ ] never

19. While living at home did your parents or guardians ever use physical force to punish you?

[ ] frequently [ ] sometimes [ ] once or twice [ ] never

20. While living at home had you ever been intentionally struck so hard by a parent (or guardian) that it caused a bruise or bleeding?

[ ] frequently [ ] sometimes [ ] once or twice [ ] never

21. Before you left home, can you remember any experience you would now consider *minor* sexual abuse - like someone trying or succeeding in touching or feeling you against your will?

[ ] this happened frequently over a long period of time
[ ] this happened several times
[ ] this happened at least once
[ ] Never

22. Before you left home, can you remember any experience you would now consider *serious* sexual abuse - like an adult or older brother/sister trying or succeeding in having intercourse with you before you were old enough to consent?

[ ] this happened frequently over a long period of time
[ ] this happened several times
[ ] this happened at least once
[ ] Never

23. Did your family ever attend family counselling or get advice from a minister, a psychologist or a social worker?

[ ] yes
[ ] no
[ ] don't know

24. Before you left home did you talk to any teenagers who had stayed in a hostel or any other place for runaway kids?

[ ] yes, a lot
[ ] yes, a few
[ ] no

25. Before you left home, how many of your friends were *using* drugs regularly? _____

26. Before you left home, how many of your friends were *selling* drugs? _____

27. Before you left home, how many of your friends were arrested for breaking the law? _____

28. Before you left home, were you ever arrested by the police?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, what were you arrested in connection with?

[ ] drugs
[ ] theft or shoplifting
[ ] assault
[ ] drunk driving
[ ] pimping
[ ] other (specify) _____

29. When you were living at home, how many times did you run away?

_____

30. How long did you usually run?

[ ] more than a week
[ ] one-two days
[ ] more than two days, less than a week
[ ] less than a day

31. What was the longest period of the run before you went back?

_____days/weeks/months (please specify)

32. Have you ever run away from a child welfare home, group home or foster care?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

How many times in all? Please specify _____

33. Where did you go to after leaving home or the facility:

	Place?	How many days were you away from home?
The first time?	_____	_____
The second time?	_____	_____
The third time?	_____	_____
The most recent time?	_____	_____

34. Have you ever stayed at an emergency shelter in another city?

city/town?	when?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

35. Did your parents ever make you feel so unwelcome at home that they made you feel you had to runaway?

[ ] very frequently [ ] quite often [ ] a few times [ ] never

36. Do you have brothers or sisters who ran away from home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, are they older or younger than you?

---

37. If you have older brothers or sisters who left home, did their leaving influence your decision to leave home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

38. If you have younger brothers or sisters, did your running influence their decision to stay at home or leave?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

39. How much would you like to move back home at this point in time?
If 1 means "I really want to go home badly" and 10 means "I absolutely never want to go home," where would you put yourself?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

40. Which of the following best describes the parent(s) you last lived with?

[ ] Both natural parents
[ ] Father alone
[ ] Mother alone
[ ] Father and Friend / Stepmother
[ ] Mother and Friend /Stepfather
[ ] with Guardians
[ ] with Foster parents
[ ] Other _____

41. Have you ever slept outside at night when you have runaway?

How many nights? _____

42. Where have you slept during the last 7 nights?

Place	Number of Nights
At Home	_____
At a Friends	_____
At an Emergency Shelter	_____
In a Group Home	_____
At a correction center	_____
Other	_____
	TOTAL = 7

43. Where do you plan to stay tonight?

[ ] on the street
[ ] hostel/emergency shelter (which one? _____)
[ ] a friend's place
[ ] own apartment
[ ] hotel or motel room
[ ] car
[ ] other (specify) _____

44. In the last 12 months have you used the facilities at a drug or alcohol detoxification center?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

45. During the past 12 months have you had any professional counselling for:

	Check if relevent
Substance abuse	_____
Personal adjustment problems	_____
Job finding	_____
Other? (specify) _____	_____

46. Since leaving home, how many times have you gone a whole day without eating? _____

47. In the last 7 days, have you eaten at:

Place	Number of Times
The Soup Kitchen	_____
The Drop-in Centre	_____
The Single Men's Hostel	_____
Alpha House	_____
The Salvation Army	_____
Some other agency?	_____

48. How often have you stolen food because you were so hungry?

[ ] never
[ ] a few times
[ ] once
[ ] on a regular basis

Because many teenagers who leave home have no money they are often forced to steal for money, to sell drugs and to hustle. Even if you have not stolen money, stolen things to sell for money, sold drugs or hustled, try to answer the following questions if you know anything about them.

49. Since leaving home, approximately how many people have you met who you consider to be your friends? (again, write a number) _____

50. How many are close friends? _____

51. How many have been arrested? _____

52. How many sell drugs? _____

53. How many hustle or hook? _____

54a. Some street people "panhandle" for money. Have you ever done this?

54b. How often have you stolen things (not counting food) since leaving home? _____

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never

55. How often has anyone helped you steal or sell the things you took?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
always	usually	sometimes	occasionally	never

56. Has anyone offered to help you sell drugs (get started - show you the ropes)?

[ ] other (please explain)_____
[ ] yes, street friends who weren't doing it offered
[ ] yes, street friends who were already doing it offered
[ ] yes, an adult offered
[ ] no, no one offered

57. How often have you sold drugs since leaving home?
_____

58. Has anyone offered to help you hustle/hook/have sex for money (get started - show you the ropes)?

[ ] other (please explain)
[ ] yes, street friends who weren't doing it offered
[ ] yes, street friends who were doing it offered
[ ] yes, an adult offered
[ ] no, no one offered

59. Since leaving home, have you ever been paid to have sex?

[ ] yes, once
[ ] yes, twice
[ ] yes, three times
[ ] yes, four times
[ ] if more than four, how many?_____
[ ] no

60. Have you ever had contact with the police since you left home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

61. What kind of contact have you had with the police since you left home?

[ ] was questioned but not picked up
[ ] arrested or taken into custody
[ ] was helped by police
[ ] other (specify)_____

62. What kind of job would you say the police are doing?

[ ] very good [ ] good [ ] poor [ ] very poor

63. What are the three most important problems facing street youth today? (double check the most important)

homelessness/housing [ ]
violence/crime [ ]
drugs [ ]
food [ ]
health [ ]
money [ ]
alcohol [ ]
police/criminal justice system [ ]
inadequate services/programmes [ ]
other (specify)_____ [ ]

64. What is the best thing about living on the street?

_____
_____
_____

65. What is the worst things about living on the street?

_____
_____
_____

66. How often have you had thoughts about committing suicide?

[ ] always [ ] often [ ] not very often [ ] never

67. Have you ever attempted suicide?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

68. While living away from home, how often would you say you felt that:

- you were sad
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you were depressed
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you felt like crying
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you just couldn't get going
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you had trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- everything was an effort
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you can't shake the blues
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you can't keep your mind on what you're doing
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never

69. Do you feel good about yourself?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

70. Do you consider yourself a person of worth?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

71. Would you say that you are able to do most things as well as others?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

72. I like to take chances.

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

73. I like to be absolutely certain how things will turn out before I do them.

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

74. How would you describe your overall health? Would you say you were:

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
very healthy	somewhat healthy	not very healthy	not healthy at all

75. What kind of medical care have you received while living on the street?

(specify)_____
_____

76. How did you obtain this medical care?

[ ] through friends
[ ] through relatives
[ ] through a social service agency
[ ] through a community health clinic
[ ] other (specify)_____

77. How would you describe the quality of the care you received?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
very poor	poor	good	very good

78. What types of medical services do you think are most needed by the street youth in your area?

(specify)_____
_____

79. How available are these types of medical services to street youth in your area?

[ ] very available	[ ] not very available	[ ] somewhat available	[ ] not available at all

80. What social services available to street youth in your area have you ever used?

_____
_____
_____

81. How would you describe the social services you received?

[ ] very good	[ ] good	[ ] poor	[ ] very poor

82. How available are these types of social services (welfare) in your area?

[ ] very available	[ ] not very available	[ ] somewhat available	[ ] not available at all

83. Since leaving home, what educational or training programmes have you been in contact with? (specify)_____

_____

84. How would you describe the educational or training programmes that you have been in contact with?

[ ] very poor	[ ] poor	[ ] good	[ ] very good

85. What types of educational or training programmes do you think should be available for street youth in your area? (specify)

_____
_____

86. Have you ever applied for welfare since leaving home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

87. How much money per month did welfare give you?

_____

88. Have you started a full or part-time job since you left home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

89. Are you still working/employed?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

90. Approximately how many hours a week did/do you work? ____

91. Approximately how much money a week did/do you make? ____

92. Have you applied for unemployment insurance since leaving home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

93. Did you quit going to school while you were living at home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

94. Are you currently attending school?

[ ] yes, full-time
[ ] yes, part-time
[ ] no

95. What was your average grade in your last year of school?

_____

96. What was the last grade you completed? _____

97. In school, how often did you find that you didn't understand things?

[ ] always [ ] rarely [ ] sometimes [ ] often [ ] never

98. Have you ever taken special education classes or classes for learning disabilities?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't Know

99. Describe your school attendance while you were living at home. Would you say it was...

[ ] regular - every day unless sick
[ ] fairly regular - skipped school sometimes
[ ] somewhat irregular - skipped several times a month
[ ] very irregular - skipped frequently
[ ] Other (specify) _____

100. How often did you have trouble with your teachers?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
always	rarely	sometimes	often	never

101. Did you have any of the following problems at school?

	Yes
Get into fights	[ ]
Discipline problems	[ ]
Didn't like my teachers	[ ]
Used bad language	[ ]
Failed classes_	[ ]
Didn't do homework	[ ]
Didn't pay attention	[ ]
Other (specify) _____	[ ]

102. On the average, how many evenings a week during the school year would you go out?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
always	rarely	sometimes	often	never

103. How much schooling would you like to get eventually?

[ ] no more than I've already got
[ ] more high school
[ ] high school graduation
[ ] on the job apprenticeship
[ ] vocational school
[ ] college or university

104. What type of job would you like to have by the time you are 30 years old? _____

105. Have you ever been expelled from a school?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
never	once	twice	three times	more then 3 times

106. When were you born? Year? _____ Month? _____

107. How old were you when you last lived at home? _____

108. Are you male or female? Circle one: M F

Some questions about AIDS. Answer True or False

109. The AIDS virus can be spread through hugging.

[ ] True [ ] False

110. The AIDS virus can be spread from á mother to her unborn baby.

[ ] True [ ] False

111. The AIDS virus can be spread through sharing needles.

[ ] True [ ] False

112. A man can get AIDS from having sex with a woman who has it.

[ ] True [ ] False

113. Condoms used with a spermicidal foam or a gel give effective protection from the AIDS virus.

[ ] True [ ] False

114. Homosexual males and lesbian females are equally at risk of contracting the AIDS virus.

[ ] Yes [ ] No

115. How old were you when you had your first wanted sexual experience? _____

116. What is the most important source of information about AIDS for you?

[ ] the media - TV & newspapers
[ ] friends I meet on the street
[ ] public health nurses in clinics
[ ] parents
[ ] social workers
[ ] other (please specify)_____

117. Do you have a source of birth control and safe sex supplies?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, where do you get these things?

_____.

118. When you were growing up, what language did your family customarily speak at home?

[ ] English
[ ] French
[ ] Other (please specify) _____

119. How would you describe your ethnic background or race?

[ ] Caucasian
[ ] Black
[ ] Asian
[ ] Native Canadian - [ ] Metis / [ ] Treaty / [ ] Non-treaty
[ ] Hispanic
[ ] Other (please indicate)_____

120. How frequently did you attend religious services when you lived at home?

[ ] more than once a week [ ] once in a while
[ ] frequently [ ] just about every week
[ ] just about never

121. What is your marital status?

[ ] single	[ ] married	[ ] common law relationship	[ ] divorced or separated	[ ] other_____

122. How many children do you have? _____

123. Was your father employed when you lived at home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, what was his occupation? _____

124. Did your father own the business in which he worked?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

125. When you left home, did your mother work outside the home?

[ ] yes, full-time
[ ] yes, part-time
[ ] no, she did not work
[ ] I did not live with my mother

126. What was your mother's occupation? _____

127. How did you learn about the street scene and the services available in Calgary?

_____
_____
_____

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING! IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE WRITE THEM DOWN FOR US. You can use the back side of this page.

10.2 Control Subjects Questionnaire

STUDY OF ADOLESCENT TRANSITIONS

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I hereby give my informed consent to be surveyed. I understand the nature of my involvement, and I have been assured that my answers will be kept strictly confidential. At no point during the future analysis will I be identified by name. I further understand that the questionnaire and the information recorded from these questionnaires will be erased or destroyed after the information has been used in in the large scale level for which it was intended. Any quotations from this survey will appear without anything which identifies who I am.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to answer any questions and that I may withdraw at any time. I agree that the researcher may also terminate this survey with me.

Finally, I understand that there is no risk to me or to my relatives stemming from my involvement.

Please initialize or make your mark. _____ Date ____

Check the following activities if they apply to you. If you find that the questions do not apply to you, please write in "n/a" beside the question - which means "NOT APPLICABLE TO ME." Also, if you do not know the answer to a question, you can write in "D/K" beside the question - which means "I DON'T REALLY KNOW."

Your Background

1. When were you born? Year? _____ Month? _____

2. How old were you when you last lived at home? _____

3. Are you male or female? Circle one: M F

4. When you were growing up, what language did your family customarily speak at home?

   [ ] English
   [ ] French
   [ ] Japanese
   [ ] Spanish
   [ ] Cantonese
   [ ] Other (please specify) _____

5. How would you describe your ethnic background or race?

   [ ] White/European
   [ ] Black/African
   [ ] Asian
   [ ] Native Canadian - [ ] Metis / [ ] Treaty / [ ] Non-treaty
   [ ] Hispanic/South or Central American
   [ ] Other (please indicate) _____

6. What is your marital status?

   [ ] single [ ] married [ ] common law relationship [ ] divorced or separated [ ] other

7. How frequently did you attend religious services when you were growing up?

   [ ] frequently [ ] quite often [ ] a few times [ ] once [ ] never

8. Have you - as a female - ever *experienced* an unplanned pregnancy? Or - as a male - *caused* an unplanned pregnancy?

   [ ] Yes [ ] No

9. How many children do you have? _____

10. Was your father employed when you lived at home?

    [ ] Yes [ ] No

11. If yes, what was his occupation? _____

12. Does your father own the business in which he worked?

    [ ] Yes [ ] No

13. Does your mother work outside the home?

    [ ] yes, full-time
    [ ] yes, part-time
    [ ] no, she did not work
    [ ] I did not live with my mother

14. What is/was your mother's occupation?

    _____

Growing Up

15. When you were growing up, what sort of recreations did you engage in with your family?

    [ ] organized sports
    [ ] scouts / guides or similar activities
    [ ] cards and other board games like Monopoly
    [ ] watch TV and videos at home
    [ ] went to the movies
    [ ] went out to the restaurant
    [ ] other (specify) _____

16. Which of the following best describes how things were in your home when you were growing up?

    [ ] very good - everyone got on with everyone else
    [ ] fairly good - problems from time to time but
    [ ] nothing serious
    [ ] somewhat poor - there were some serious problems which needed attention
    [ ] very poor - there were many serious problems
    [ ] Other (specify) _____

17. How many friends did you have when you were growing up?

_____ (please write a number)

18. Of these, how many were close friends? _____

19. Were you close friends younger, the same age or older than you?

[ ] younger [ ] same age [ ] older

20. Which one of the following describes the way you see your present situation. In some cases, more than one choice might apply.

[ ] I am living at home with my parents.
[ ] I am living with my spouse/mate.
[ ] I am living in my own place or in residence at college.
[ ] I am living with my spouse and our child/children.
[ ] I am someone who left a home life that was intolerable.
[ ] I am someone who left home because I like adventure and excitement.
[ ] I am someone whose parents threw me out because they could not deal with my behaviour.
[ ] I am someone whose parents couldn't be bothered to have me around, and threw me out.
[ ] I am someone who ran away from a Children's Aid home.
[ ] I still live at home, but my life is really on the street, and I will probably leave home eventually for the street.
[ ] I left home because I wanted to be on my own.
[ ] Other (specify)_____

While some people are quite content to live at home until they are 18 or older, others run into circumstances that result in their leaving home at an earlier age. The following questions concern that possibility.

21. Did you ever think about running away from home when you were younger?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

22. Did you ever actually make plans to run away from home which for one reason or another you did not follow through with?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

23. How often did your parents make you feel so unwelcome at home that you felt that you *HAD* to leave?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

24. How often did you ever talk to any teenagers who had stayed in a hostel or any other place for runaway kids?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

25. Do you have brothers or sisters who ran away from home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, are they older or younger than you?

---

26. If you have OLDER brothers or sisters who left home, did their leaving make you want to runaway?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Not applicable

27. If you have YOUNGER brothers or sisters, did your behaviour influence their decision to stay at home or leave?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Not applicable

28. Have you ever actually run away from home?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If no, go to question 34 below.

If yes, what happened that made you decide to leave?

---

29. How long did your run last the first time?
[ ] more than a week
[ ] less than a week, but more than two days
[ ] one or two days
[ ] less than a day

30. What was the longest period of running away before you went back home?

How many _____ days/weeks/months? (please specify)

31. Have you ever run away from a child welfare home, group home or foster care?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Not applicable

How many times in all? Please specify _____

32. Where did you go to after leaving home or after leaving the facility?

	Place?	How many days were you away from home?
The first time?	_____	_____
The second time?	_____	_____
The third time?	_____	_____
The most recent time?	_____	_____

34. Have you ever stayed at an emergency shelter in another city?

CITY/TOWN?	WHEN?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

About Parents

34. Which of the following best describes the parent(s) you lived with when you were in high school?

[ ] Both natural parents
[ ] Father alone
[ ] Mother alone
[ ] Father and Friend / Stepmother
[ ] Mother and Friend / Stepfather
[ ] With foster parents
[ ] Other _____

35. As an adolescent, did (does) your mother know WHERE YOU WERE when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

36. As an adolescent, did (does) your father know WHERE YOU WERE when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

37. As an adolescent, did (does) your mother know WHO YOU WERE WITH when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

38. As an adolescent, did (does) your father know WHO YOU WERE WITH when you were out?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

39. How often does/did your mother spend time talking with you about things YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

40. How often does/did your father spend time talking with you about things YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

41. How often does/did your mother spend time doing things with you that YOU WANTED TO DO?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

42. How often does/did your father spend time doing things with you that YOU WANTED TO DO?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

43. How often does/did your mother HASSLE you?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

44. How often does/did your father HASSLE you?

[ ] always [ ] usually [ ] sometimes [ ] never [ ] I don't know

45. Have you ever seen your parents under the influence of alcohol or high on drugs?

[ ] frequently [ ] quite often [ ] a few times [ ] once [ ] never

46. How often have you you seen your parents arguing loudly and fighting with each other?

[ ] frequently [ ] quite often [ ] a few times [ ] once [ ] never

47. How often have your parents or guardians ever used physical force to punish you?

[ ] frequently [ ] quite often [ ] a few times [ ] once [ ] never

48. How often were you ever intentionally struck so hard by a parent (or guardian) that it caused a bruise or bleeding?

[ ] frequently [ ] quite often [ ] a few times [ ] once [ ] never

49. Can you remember any experience when you were a child or adolescent that you would now consider *MINOR* sexual abuse - like someone trying or succeeding in touching or feeling you against your will?

[ ] this happened frequently over a long period of time
[ ] this happened several times
[ ] this happened at least once
[ ] never

Who did such incidents involve? _____

50. Can you remember any experience when you were a child or adolescent that you now consider *SERIOUS* sexual abuse - like an adult or older brother/sister trying or succeeding in having intercourse with you before you were old enough to consent?

[ ] this happened frequently over a long period of time
[ ] this happened several times
[ ] this happened at least once
[ ] never

Who did such incidents involve? _____

51. Did your family ever attend family counselling or get advice from a minister, a psychologist or a social worker for family conflict problems?

[ ] yes please specify _____
[ ] no
[ ] don't know

Residency and Food

52. Where have you slept during the last week?

PLACE	NUMBER OF NIGHTS
At my place	_____
At my parents' home	_____
At a Friends	_____
At an Emergency Shelter	_____
In a Group Home	_____
At a correction center	_____
College residence	_____
Other	_____
	TOTAL = 7 nights

53. Where do you plan to sleep tonight?

[ ] at my own residence
[ ] on the street
[ ] hostel/emergency shelter
[ ] a friend's place
[ ] own apartment
[ ] hotel or motel room
[ ] car
[ ] other (specify) _____

54. In the past year, how many times have you gone a whole day without eating? _____

55. In the last 7 days, have you eaten at:

PLACE	NUMBER OF TIMES
The Soup Kitchen	_____
The Drop-in Centre	_____
The Single Men's Hostel	_____
Alpha House	_____
The Salvation Army	_____
Food Bank	_____

Delinquent Activities

56. In the last 12 months have you used the facilities at a drug or alcohol detoxification center?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

57. During the past 12 months have you had any professional counselling for:

	Check if relevent
Substance abuse	_____
Personal adjustment problems	_____
Job finding	_____
Other? (specify) _____	_____

58. How many of your friends are *USING* drugs regularly?

_____

59. How many of your friends are *SELLING* drugs? _____

60. How many of your friends have been arrested for breaking the law? _____

61. If yes, what were they arrested in connection with?

[ ] drugs
[ ] theft or shoplifting
[ ] assault
[ ] drunk driving
[ ] pimping
[ ] other (specify) _____

62. Have you ever been arrested by the police?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

63. If yes, what were you arrested in connection with?

[ ] drugs
[ ] theft or shoplifting
[ ] assault
[ ] drunk driving
[ ] pimping
[ ] other (specify) _____

64. Do you have a criminal record? [ ] Yes [ ] No

65. Have you stolen food because you were really hungry?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

66. Have you ever "panhandled" for money?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

67. Have you ever stolen things (not counting food)?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

68. Have you ever USED illegal drugs?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

69. If yes, how old were you when you first experimented with them? ____

70. Have you ever SOLD drugs?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

71. Have you ever been paid to have sex?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

72. Some males on occasion make physically forceful attempts at sexual activity which are disagreeable and offensive enough that the females respond by crying, fighting, screaming, pleading, etc. How often have you acted - or responded - in this way?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

73. How often have you had thoughts about committing suicide?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

74. Have you ever attempted suicide? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Personal Feelings & Attitudes

75. How often would you say you felt that:

- you were sad
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you were depressed
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you felt like crying
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you just couldn't get going
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you had trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- everything was an effort
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you can't shake the blues
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never
- you can't keep your mind on what you're doing
  [ ] always [ ] often [ ] NOT often [ ] never

76. Do you feel good about yourself?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

77. Do you consider yourself a person of worth?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

78. Would you say that you are able to do most things as well as others?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

79. I like to take chances.

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

80. I like to be absolutely certain how things will turn out before I do them.

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
strongly agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strongly disagree

Health, Employment & School

81. How would you describe your overall health? Would you say you were:

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
very healthy	somewhat healthy	not very healthy	not healthy at all

82. Do you currently work at a full or part-time job?

[ ] Yes, part-time [ ] Yes, full-time [ ] No

83. In the last week, approximately how many hours did you work? ___

84. In the last week, approximately how much money did you make? ___

85. In the past how many different employers have you worked for including full and part time work? _____

86. Are you currently receiving social assistance, ie "welfare"?

[ ] Yes [ ] No If yes, how much per month? _____

87. Are you currently receiving UIC - unemployment benefits?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

88. What was the last grade you completed? _____

89. What was your average grade in your most recent year of schooling? _____

90. In school, how often did you find that you don't understand things?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

91. Have you ever taken special education classes or classes for learning disabilities?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don't Know

92. Describe your high school attendance. Would you say it was...

[ ] regular - every day unless sick
[ ] fairly regular - skipped school sometimes
[ ] somewhat irregular - skipped several times a month
[ ] very irregular - skipped frequently
[ ] Other (specify) _____

93. How often did you have trouble with your high school teachers?

[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
frequently	quite often	a few times	once	never

94. Did you have any of the following problems at school?

	Yes
Got into fights	[ ]
Discipline problems	[ ]
Didn't like my teachers	[ ]
Used bad language	[ ]
Failed classes	[ ]
Didn't do homework	[ ]
Didn't pay attention	[ ]
Other (specify) _____	[ ]

95. In your most recent year of schooling, on the average how many evenings a week during the school year would you go out?

[ ] always [ ] often [ ] sometimes [ ] rarely [ ] never

96. How much schooling would you like to get eventually?

[ ] no more than I've already got
[ ] on the job apprenticeship
[ ] vocational school
[ ] complete college or university training
[ ] professional training: law, medicine, accounting, teaching
[ ] other _____

97. What type of job would you like to have by the time you are 30 years old? _____

98. Have you ever been expelled from a school?

[ ] never [ ] once [ ] twice [ ] three times [ ] more then 3 times

If yes, what was it for the last time? _____

Some questions about AIDS. Answer True or False

99. The AIDS virus can be spread through hugging.

[ ] True [ ] False

100. The AIDS virus can be spread from a mother to her unborn baby.

[ ] True [ ] False

101. The AIDS virus can be spread through sharing needles.

[ ] True [ ] False

102. A man can get AIDS from having sex with a woman who has it.

[ ] True [ ] False

103. Condoms used with a spermicidal foam or a gel give effective protection from the AIDS virus.

[ ] True [ ] False

104. Homosexual males and lesbian females are equally at risk of contracting the AIDS virus.

[ ] Yes [ ] No

105. How old were you when you had your first wanted sexual experience? _____ [ ] Not Applicable

106. How old was your partner? _____ [ ] Not Applicable

107. What is the most important source of information about AIDS for you?

[ ] the media - TV & newspapers
[ ] friends I meet on the street
[ ] public health nurses in clinics
[ ] parents
[ ] social workers
[ ] other (please specify)_____

108. Do you have a source of birth control and safe sex supplies?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, where do you get these things?

_____

109. What form of birth control do you currently use?

_____

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING! IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE WRITE THEM DOWN FOR US.

10.3 Agency Personnel Questionnaire

ALL RESPONSES WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND THE IDENTITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENTS WILL BE KEPT ANONYMOUS. IN ADDITION, PARTICIPATION WILL BE STRICTLY VOLUNTARY.

Interview Schedule For Key Actors

Interviewer:
Date:
Time Started:
Time Completed:
Noteworthy Events:

1. Identification.
   Name of the Agency:
   Mailing Address:
   Telephone Number:

2. Key Contact at the Agency.
   Name:
   Telephone Number:

3. What services does your agency offer?

4. Can you describe the programme(s) your agency offers specifically to runaways and street youth?

5. What percentage of the agency's resources (staff, space, financial etc.) are devoted to programmes for runaways and street youth?

6. Can you tell me approximately how many young people receive services on an average day?

7. Can you describe the general characteristics of the individuals receiving services? That is, do you provide services to a specific segment of the runaway and street youth population? In general can you describe their age, gender, race.

8. Are there any unique characteristics that serve to distinguish these individuals from the rest of the runaway and street youth population?

9. How do these people enter your programme? Can they walk in or do they need a referral?

10. If you get referrals, where do they come from?

11. How extensive is the contact the agency has with the individuals using its services? (length of time - on average)

12. What is the pattern of service delivery in your agency? Do clients come to you more than once? Do you refer them to other agencies? If so, which agencies?

13. Is the service you offer similar to that offered by other agencies in your community? If so, how many agencies offer similar services?

14. Approximately how many young people in your community receive the type of services offered by your agency?

15. Does your agency provide any services that are unique?

16. Do you know of any unique services for runaways and street youth either in your community or elsewhere?

17. What is the major source of funding for your agency?

18. How long has your agency been in existence in your community?

19. How many people work in your agency?

20. How many of these people work with runaways and street youth?

21. What qualifications are required for staff in your agency working with runaways and street youth?

22. Are there any special training programmes in your agency for staff working with runaways and street youth?

23. Is there a network of agencies in your community who deal with runaways and street youth?

24. What other services are available for runaways and street youth in your community?

25. Can you tell me who else I should contact to get information about services that are available for runaways and street youth in your community?