

**For discussion
on 12 March 2001**

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services

Services for Young Night Drifters

Purpose

This paper reports on measures taken to address the needs of young night drifters (YNDs).

Background

2. In 1996, the Working Group on Services for Youth at Risk (subsequently renamed as the Committee on Services for Youth at Risk (CSYR) in 1999) and the Standing Committee on Young Offenders commissioned the Department of Psychology of the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct a research, namely 'An Exploration of the Risk and Protective Factors of Juvenile Gangs and Runaway Youths in Hong Kong'. In response to one of the report's recommendations on setting up mobile youth activity centers for YNDs, two Youth Mobile Teams (YMTs) were set up on a two-year pilot basis from October 1997 to September 1999 with an allocation of \$9.9 million from the Lotteries Fund. An independent evaluation study was undertaken in parallel by a university research team to identify the profile and service needs of YNDs as well as to assess the effectiveness of the YMT service mode in meeting the needs of this group of youth-at-risk.

Findings and recommendations of evaluation study

3. Major findings and recommendations of the evaluation study can be found in the Executive Summary of the 'Report on Evaluation Study on Youth Mobile Team Service for Young Night Drifters' at the **Annex**. To better meet the needs of YNDs, the research team recommended that a multi-system

cooperation approach at district level should be adopted. On the family system, family life education should be promoted in enhancing communication in families and encouraging parents to care for their children. On the school system, prompt referral to guidance teachers or school social workers should be made. On police service, patrol to night drifting spots of YNDs should be increased as a preventive measure. On welfare services, services for YNDs should best be incorporated into the service scope of mainstream outreaching social work teams (OSWTs) / integrated teams (ITs).

4. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation study as well as the progress in providing services to meet the needs of YNDs have been reported to the CSYR on 29 September 1999, and the Fight Crime Committee (FCC) on 22 January 2000 and 3 February 2001. The FCC has endorsed adopting an integrated approach through incorporating services for YNDs into ITs in addressing the issues of this group of at-risk youth.

Services for YNDs

5. In taking forward the recommendations of the evaluation study and strengthening services for youth-at-risk on a territory-wide basis in general, a number of initiatives have been put in place:

On enhancing services for YNDs

6. To meet the needs of YNDs, OSWTs/ITs in all districts have carried out late-night field observations to update on the number, distribution and service demand of this group of youth-at-risk. Currently there are 34 OSWTs and 54 ITs with a staffing provision of 773 professional social workers. Many OSWTs/ITs have made such late-night field observation a regular practice for a better grasp of the current situation of YNDs within their respective catchment areas in order to plan their services accordingly. For instance, in Yau Tsim, field observations were carried out once a week, usually on Fridays or Saturdays, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.; in Sai Kung and Tseung Kwan O, field surveys after midnight were conducted during summer vacation and weekends; and in Tuen Mun, such surveys were done on a regular basis from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.

7. YNDs were located in all districts although in some districts there are only a few YNDs. In some areas, like Tai Po/North, Tsing Yi, Tuen Mun, Wong Tai Sin and Kwun Tong, social workers found that many of the YNDs were known to their services such as the outreaching social work teams and integrated teams. In Tai Po and North, the percentage of YNDs already known to OSWTs/ITs were as high as 70% and 90% respectively. Many OSWT/IT workers indicated that the reported number, distribution and service demand of YNDs in individual districts might be an under-estimation because current manpower has limited the frequency and coverage of their late-night/overnight fieldwork.

8. Making use of available resources, OSWTs/ITs and related services in individual districts have been providing pertinent services according to the identified needs of YNDs. Efforts include:

(i) *Extension of outreaching service hours*

Except in two districts where very few YNDs were found, OSWTs/ITs in 8 out of the remaining 11 districts¹ have been extending their service hours according to the time of activities of YNDs. Owing to manpower constraint, such extension of service hours usually takes effect on weekends and public holidays from 10 p.m. to midnight/2 a.m./6 a.m. when increased late-night activities among young people are noted. By extending their service hours, OSWTs/ITs are able to reach YNDs, provide appropriate services to meet their individual needs, publicize their services among the young people and encourage them to seek assistance when need arises.

(ii) *Multi-disciplinary collaboration*

In a number of districts, related professionals, local leaders and parents have been mobilized to address the issue of YNDs. In Yuen Long, the Young Owls Project, Project Polar Star and Project Reunion jointly operated by Non-governmental Organizations

¹ There are 13 SWD districts to cover the 18 administrative districts.

(NGOs) in the district, the police and services units of SWD have proven to be effective measures to serve YNDs through the formation of a service network for reaching out to YNDs and making referrals to appropriate units for follow up. Similar joint projects involving NGOs, the police, District Councils, District Fight Crime Committees, parents groups, and SWD services units have also been implemented in districts like Tai Po/North, South, Sai Kung, Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing and Kwun Tong. Such multi-disciplinary collaborations are a good way to maintain public awareness of the needs of youth-at-risk and to maximize local resources for efficient delivery of appropriate services.

(iii) *Corresponding day-time programmes*

Apart from outreaching service in late night, OSWTs/ITs have also organized programmes during the day targeted at addressing the identified needs of YNDs in the locality. These include programmes on employment guidance, schooling problems, substance abuse, and so on.

9. As recommended in the evaluation study of the pilot YMT service, a venue to be used as a place of rest, cooling down and/or staying overnight for YNDs as well as a secure place for counselling should be made available as a back-up of the services for YNDs. Pursuant to this recommendation, a grant of \$8.09 million from the Lotteries Fund was approved in October 2000 for an NGO to operate two crisis residential centres for youth-at-risk in need of immediate residential service and crisis intervention for two years starting from January 2001. Some OSWTs/ITs have also made use of their own centre premises as temporary shelter for YNDs during intervention. SWD is also exploring the possibility for extending the existing residential services units to operate similar back-up shelter service.

10. To address the issues of YNDs in a more comprehensive manner, new resources will be made available in 2001/02, as pledged in the 2000 Policy Address, to provide services for this group of young people at-risk on a territory-wide basis. Continuing with adopting an integrated approach in serving young people, the service focus of 8 existing ITs in districts where YNDs concentrate and with higher juvenile crime rate (3 in New Territories

East Region, 2 in New Territories West Region, and 1 each for Kowloon East Region, Kowloon West Region and Hong Kong Region) will be extended in 2001/02 to enhance services for YNDs. Each of the 8 selected ITs will be provided with additional manpower of 1 Assistant Social Work Officer and 2 Social Work Assistants, together with capital and recurrent funds for vehicles, mobile phones and programme expenses. The Subventions and Lotteries Fund Advisory Committee has already endorsed the allocation of recurrent subvention to cover the expenses to enhance the ITs. As announced in the 2001 Budget Speech, the Administration will provide additional funding for non-governmental organizations to employ an extra 30 outreach social workers devoted to helping those on the streets at night and to strengthen the Community Support Services Schemes.

On enhancing the roles and functions of families and parents

11. Family is a vital, basic unit providing a natural and nurturing environment for the growth and development for young people. Enhancing the roles and functions of family, in particular services for parents will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening support for young people and preventing them from leading a night drifting life.

12. As recommended in the 'Report on Evaluation Study on Youth Mobile Team Service for Young Night Drifters', parents should be encouraged to care for their children. Committed to supporting parents in discharging their duties in caring for and providing guidance to their children, the Administration has set aside an additional amount of \$50 million to support parent education with a view to equipping parents with the skills essential for good parenting so as to help their children become healthy and responsible members of the community. A Steering Committee on Parent Education has been formed under the Education Department with participation of representatives from Education and Manpower Bureau, Social Welfare Department (SWD), Department of Health, Home Affairs Department, non-government organizations, parents, schools, local leaders etc. with the following objectives:

- (a) To devise an overall strategy to encourage the widest participation of the community in parent education;

- (b) To ensure effective deployment of the \$50 million to primarily support parent education, encourage the participation of parents in educational affairs and produce reference materials featuring children's physical, psychological and intellectual development for parents and child care workers;
- (c) To better co-ordinate the efforts of relevant government departments and non-governmental organizations on parent education; and
- (d) To monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of the parent education initiative.

13. The Administration will encourage parents to participate in educational affairs in addition to the existing provision of family life education (FLE) by FLE workers and the enhancement of parent education through the parent-teacher associations with the coordination of the full-time school social workers stationing at secondary schools.

On enhancing early identification and early intervention

14. To reduce the likelihood of young people going astray, early identification of potential problems and the provision of early intervention are essential. Two pilot projects commissioned by the Committee on Services for Youth at Risk have been completed to identify effective measures for early identification and intervention for young people who are at risk:-

i) The Understanding the Adolescent Project

Through the support of Lotteries Fund, the Social Welfare Department had commissioned the Breakthrough Ltd. and the Chinese University of Hong Kong to undertake a pilot project namely "The Understanding the Adolescent Project (UAP)". A screening tool for identifying potential at-risk youth among Secondary One students has been developed and validated. A tailor-made primary preventive programme package for young people, their parents and teachers has been produced and tested with the aims of heightening the awareness of the parents on their

children's problems, and enhancing the resilience of young people, parent-child relationship as well as communication skills. Upon confirmation of the predictive power of the screening tool and effectiveness of the primary preventive programmes of UAP, the Administration has pledged in the 2000 Policy Address to implement UAP in 40 secondary schools in 2001/02, and has announced in the 2001 Budget Speech to implement UAP in 200 secondary schools in phases over the next three years. Consideration will be given to extending the scheme to primary schools as soon as practicable.

ii) *The Enhancement of Careers Education in School Project*

The Enhancement of Careers Education in School Project (ECESP) was a pilot project commissioned by the CSYR and financed by the Education Department. It aims at strengthening the career guidance services in secondary schools and providing extra support to the potential junior secondary school leavers. It provides a series of careers guidance activities, talks, workshops, vocational training courses and a work trial programme for the target students. The project has demonstrated the effectiveness and contribution of careers education to the holistic development of the young people. The long-term measure is to incorporate elements of careers education into formal school curriculum. For immediate arrangement, the experience and good practices gained from the project will be shared among secondary schools and non-governmental organizations through the production of a readily applicable careers package.

15. To assist the young school leavers who have just completed junior secondary education and have no work experience to gain some actual experience and to increase their employability, thus avoiding them from becoming night drifters, 1,290 job opportunities will be provided in SWD and NGO service units for these youngsters starting from April 2001.

On enhancing support service for students

16. With a view to meeting the multifarious needs of secondary students, the Administration has implemented the policy of 'one school social worker for each secondary school' in August 2000. To ensure the smooth implementation of this significant policy initiative, the Administration has organized sharing and briefing sessions for teachers, principals, school social workers, children and youth workers and related personnel. To facilitate school social workers and other related disciplines in working with students in secondary schools with an aim to enhancing effective interfacing among them, the Administration in joint hands with the non-governmental organizations and the education sector developed 'A Guide on Multi-disciplinary Collaboration in School Social Work Service' which was distributed to all concerned parties in July 2000. With the successful implementation of the new policy initiative, school social work service has been greatly enhanced. The provision of a full-time stationing social worker for each secondary school increases the contact time of school social workers with students and their families, which, in turn, maximizes the opportunity for identification of problems and intervention. In addition, with the roles of school social workers redefined as detailed in the 'Report on Review of School Social Work Service' released in June 1999, school social workers can collaborate more closely with school personnel, coordinate and mobilize community resources (including IT service, family education, and so on) for the benefit of students, families, and schools, as well as to support Parent-Teacher Associations.

On enhancing district coordination of young people services

17. The 20 SWD Local Committees on Services for Young People (LCSYPs) over the territory have been playing a pivotal role in co-ordinating local efforts to address the issues of YNDs. Chaired by District Social Welfare Officers of SWD with representatives from the Education Department, the police, schools, NGOs, local leaders, young people and parents, LCSYPs have been monitoring the needs of young people in general and YNDs in particular at district level. With its wide representation, LCSYPs have been effectively co-ordinating district efforts in providing services targeted at serving YNDs according to local characteristics. To enhance their work in co-ordinating district efforts in identifying the needs of local youth and providing relevant

services to meet those needs, the Administration has pledged to allocate additional programme expenses to LCSYPs starting from 2001/02.

Health and Welfare Bureau/Social Welfare Department
March 2001

Executive Summary

Background

1. With reference to the increase concern over the problem of young night drifters (YNDs) in the territory and by considering a recommendation in the research report '*An Exploration of the Risk and Protective Factors of Juvenile Gangs and Runaway Youths in Hong Kong*' done by the Department of Psychology of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has experimented a two year pilot project for the YNDs – Youth Mobile Team (YMT) – commencing from November 1997 to October 1999 with the financial support from the Lotteries Fund.
2. Two YMTs have been commissioned to deliver services to YNDs in the territory - YMT1, run by Youth Outreach (YO), is responsible to deliver services to YNDs in districts in the Hong Kong Island and Kowloon regions; and YMT2, run by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (HKFYG), is responsible to deliver services to YNDs in districts in the New Territories (NT) region.
3. Each YMT has 5 trained social workers (1 ASWO, 2 SSWAs and 2 SWAs). Each team is also equipped with a 5-seater sedan and 7-seater vehicle for travelling around the spots in the Team's service area to reach out to YNDs.
4. The service target is young people under the age of 18 who are either fond of loitering in the street after dark for fun seeking or who have actually stayed away from home occasionally without parental approval. The target number of the service recipients for each team per year is 500.

5. The objectives of the YMT are:

5.1 to provide on the spot crisis intervention to YNDs including escort services back to their home or temporary shelter, if required;

5.2 to provide short-term intervention to the YNDs including welfare transferals and referrals, if necessary, escorting them to the agencies concerned; and

5.3 to arrange them to receive mainstream youth services for positive social and personal development.

6. A built-in evaluation study for assessing the effectiveness of this new service mode for YNDs has been implemented. The commissioned research team is formed by Dr. Francis Lee (Department of Social Work and Social Administration, HKU) and Dr. Catherine Tang (Department of Psychology, CUHK).

The Evaluation Study

7. The research objectives of the study are: (1) to explore the profile of YNDs in the territory, (2) to identify the service needs of the YNDs, (3) to assess the effectiveness of the YMT mode of services to YNDs, (4) to examine the operation mode of YMT in relation to interfacing and/or attachment to other mainstream youth services, and (5) if service needs and demand of the YNDs are established, to recommend long-term plan for service provision to the YNDs and viable performance indicators and service standards.

8. The target population of the study includes (1) service consumers (YNDs), (2) service providers (supervisors, team leaders and workers of the YMTs), and (3) relevant professionals (workers in different settings who have cooperated and assisted in the service provision process).
9. The data collection methods include (1) monthly statistical and record returns from the YMTs for 16.5 months (16.11.97 – 31.3.99), (2) individual interviews with service providers, service consumers and relevant professionals, and (3) field observations with the YMTs in operation.
10. The supervisors of the two YMTs were interviewed at the 12-month and 18-month time points after the commencement of the YMT service. The 2 team leaders were interviewed at 3-month, 12-month and 18-month time points. The 8 workers of the two YMTs were interviewed at 3-month and 18-month time points. A total of 20 'relevant professionals' (workers in other service settings who have cooperated and assisted in the service provision process) from 14 service units were also interviewed.
11. A total of 330 YNDs (with 285 contacted during the operation of the YMTs and 45 cases served) were interviewed with a pre-set questionnaire for an in-depth understanding of the night drifting phenomenon of the YNDs and the psychosocial profile of YNDs as compared to the normal school-attending group and the youth at risk group studied in the CUHK Runaway and Juvenile Gangs Research Study in early 1997.
12. Six field observation sessions (3 for each Team) were conducted with the Teams for observing their actual fieldwork.

The Operation Process of Youth Mobile Teams

13. To start the service, both YMTs had travelled around the service areas to identify the prominent spots in the DB districts in the initial months and also had carried out the necessary preparation works such as community liaison and visited to related services organizations. Apart from the outreach work, both YMTs had operated hotline services for facilitating YNDs to seek help. Nevertheless, the operation modes of the two YMTs are different:

13.1 YMT1, being located at its agency's Head Office at Shatin, receives service back-up from their residential centres in Chai Wan. The operation of YMT1 (YO) is normally from Sunday to Thursday each week. Its office hours are from 21:00 to 07:00 with 21:00 to 23:00 for office work and meeting, and 23:00 to 07:00 for over-night outreach operation. The Team does not operate over-night outreach fieldwork but has a meeting session from 18:00 to 22:00 on Friday. During the over-night operation, the 5 workers are further divided into two sub-teams that go to different spots for providing services to YNDs. As YO operates two residential centres (crisis centres) at Chai Wan for boys and girls respectively, YNDs assessed to be in need of temporary shelter service would be escorted back to RCs. The YMT workers would accompany the YNDs until the caseworkers of RCs take over to follow up the cases of YND in the morning.

13.2 YMT2 is attached to Tsuen Wan Integrated Youth Centre of HKFYG. To facilitate the operation, the office of YMT2 is located at its agency's Tsuen/Kwai Outreaching Social Work Team (II) at Shek Wai Kok. The over-night outreach operation hours of YMT2 are normally from 23:00 to

07:00 and office work from 07:00 to 11:00, Sunday to Friday each week. The 5 workers are further divided into two sub-teams. To provide follow up services to the cases taking up during the over-night operation, each sub-team, in turn and continuously, works for 3 over-night outreach operations and 3 day-time operations (10:00/11:00 – 18:00/19:00). Four hours (07:00 to 11:00) in the morning are for making necessary referrals/transfers and the handing over of necessary follow-up work of the cases to the workers on day-time duty.

The Night Drifting Phenomenon of Young People

14. Based on data collected from the interviews with the 330 YNDs, the night drifting behavioral pattern of YNDs is listed below [YNDs can report more than one activity]:

14.1 'Chatting with friends' (184/55.8%), 'Sleeping outdoor' (170/51.5%), 'Idling around' (163/49.4%) and 'Hanging around' (134/40.6%) were the major nocturnal activities reported by the interviewed YNDs (Table 1).

14.2 Reported disturbing negative behaviours include 'Bullying one another' (50/15.2%), 'Fighting' (35/10.6%), 'Vandalizing' (30/9.1%), 'Engaging in sexual behaviour' (18/5.5%), 'Thefting' (12/3.6%), 'Robbery' (6/1.8%) and 'Prostituting' (1/0.3%) were reported (Table 1).

14.3 'Accompanying friends' (233/70.6%) and 'Seeking for excitement/Wanting to play' (154/46.7%) were the 1st and 2nd given reasons for the young people to drift at night. However, other reasons concerning the family, for

examples, 'Feeling bored at home' (120/36.4%), 'Feeling lonely to stay at home' (49/14.8%), 'Avoiding control from parent(s)' (47/14.2%), 'Avoiding family problem(s) and conflict(s)' (27/8.2%), 'Physically punished by family member(s)' (21/6.4%) and 'Being expelled by family member(s)' (13/3.9%) were significantly reported as causes for the YNDs to drift at night (Table 2).

14.4 Half of the YNDs interviewed (55.5%) stated that they would return home after drifting the night (Table 3). 'Friend's home' (234/70.9%) and 'Park/Playground' (183/55.5%) were popular places the YNDs would stay for the night if they did not go home (147/44.5%) (Table 4).

14.5 'Having no money' (164/49.7%) and 'Having played enough outside' (126/38.2%) were the 1st and 2nd given reasons why the YNDs returned home. It is interesting to note that 'Feeling homesick' (67/20.3%) was also a reason given by one-fifth of the YNDs for going home. Seemingly, these YNDs appeared to have attachment to their families (Table 5).

Psychosocial Profile of YNDs

15. From the analysis of the data collected through interviewing 330 YNDs with pre-set questionnaires, the psychosocial profile of YNDs is listed as below:

15.1 Male YNDs, as compared with female YNDs, reported having relatively better relationship with parents, experienced less psychological distress, but engaged in more negative school behaviour, misdemeanor and delinquent behaviour (Table 6).

15.2 The mental health status of YNDs was comparatively less favourable than school-attending students and at-risk youths (Table 7).

15.3 YNDs had some similar negative school behaviour, misdemeanor and delinquent behaviour as the at-risk youths (runaway and delinquent youths) (Tables 10-12).

Profile of YNDs Served

16. Based on the information collected from the 1,477 cases served, the profile of the YNDs served is listed as follows:

16.1 Among the 1,477 YND cases served, 56.7% (838) was male and 43.3% (639) was female (Table 13).

16.2 They were mainly within the age range of 14 to 17 (75.7%) (Table 14).

16.3 Most of them had their educational attainment at junior secondary (F.1 – F.3) (70.0%) (Table 15).

16.4 Half of them were having a full-time student status (50.5%) while more than a quarter (27.0%) was neither student nor working (Table 16).

16.5 Their districts of residence varied and the top 6 districts were: Kwai Tsing (171/11.6%), Shatin (138/9.3%), Tuen Mun (136/9.2%), Eastern (133/9.0%), Tai Po (125/8.5%) and Shamshuipo (123/8.3%) (Table 17).

- 16.6 Among 1,477 cases served, 1106 (75%) cases served were classified as night-drifters i.e. 'One Night Stand Drifter' or 'Occasional Night Drifter' or 'Persistent Night Drifter' while 19% of the cases served were classified as runaway i.e. 'Potential Runaway', 'Short-term Runaway' and 'Long-term Runaway' (Table 18).
- 16.7 The assessed main problems of the 'Runaway' cases included:
- i. 'Improper and inadequate parental care and/or guidance' and
 - ii. 'Impaired family relationship' (Table 19).
- 16.8 The localization phenomenon of the YNDs is observed, that means, they were not that mobile as speculated. Among the 1,477 cases served, 75.8% (1120) drifted in their districts of residence (DB districts) (Table 20).
- 16.9 Thirty percent (440) of the YND cases revealed the marital status of their natural parents as intact (Table 21).
- 16.10 A majority of the YND cases were not ready to reveal if they had any 'previous statutory record' (1087, 73.6%). Twenty-two percent (323) reported to have no any 'previous statutory record' (Table 22).
- 16.11 Similarly, a majority of the YND cases were not ready to reveal if they had any 'present statutory record' (1059, 71.7%) and 347 (23.5%) reported to have no any 'present statutory record' (Table 23).

16.12 While 525 (35.5%) cases had not revealed their situation of receiving other welfare services, 393 (26.6%) reported that they were not receiving any service. There were 239 (16.2%) YND cases revealed that they were receiving Outreach Service and 197 (13.3%) revealed that they were receiving School Social Work Service (Table 24).

The 4 most commonly assessed main problems of the YNDs included:

- i. 'Impaired family relationship',
- ii. 'Improper and inadequate parental care and/or guidance',
- iii. 'Under unfavourable circumstance', and
- iv. 'Unemployment'(Table 25).

Effectiveness of Youth Mobile Team Service Mode

17. As at 31.3.1999, the case status of the 1477 cases served by YMTs was:

17.1 514 (34.8%) cases had been successfully referred to other mainstream services (412 referred to the RCs of YO);

17.2 263 (17.8%) cases had been escorted back home;

17.3 169 (11.4%) cases had been transferred back to their known services;

17.4 92 (6.2%) cases continued to receive intervention;

17.5 295 (20.0%) cases had been satisfactorily closed due to services rendered

or objectives reached;

17.6 113 (7.7%) cases had been closed due to loss contact or difficult to maintain contact; and

17.7 31 (2.1%) cases had been closed due to client refusing services.

18. With reference to the service objectives of the YMT as stated in paragraph 5 above and the target number of 500 cases served by each team per year, the two YMTs are assessed to have provided effective services to YNDs as reflected from the above services outcomes.

19. The two YMTs have been experimenting their perceived effective approaches with the resources given for serving the YNDs. Despite their different service approaches with their own strengths and limitations, both teams have served more or less the same cases i.e. 749 for YMT1(YO) and 728 for YMT2 (HKFYG).

20. It is observed that, based on their professional judgement and with the existing manpower, the 1,477 YND cases served by both YMTs reflected the maximum case capacity that the two Teams could take care of in the 16.5 months' period.

Interfacing and Attachment of Youth Mobile Team to Mainstream Youth Services

21. As the YMTs had not been requested to follow up the progress of the YND cases referred out/transferred back to other services, the service outcome to the cases referred or transferred cannot be adequately assessed. Nevertheless, from the

smooth transferal and acceptance on referrals, the interfacing of the YMT operation to other mainstream youth services was assessed to have been generally achieved.

22. For the attachment of YMT with mainstream youth services, the operational modes of the two Teams cannot provide enough information for examination.

Service Needs of YNDs

23. Based on assessing the 1477 cases served and the 330 YNDs interviewed, the service needs of the YNDs are:

- 23.1 in need of assistance to be off the street so as to prevent them from exposure to possible physical and moral danger;

- 23.2 in need of assistance to handle their problems in the family context (e.g. relationship with family members and parental care), i.e. family service is an outstanding service need of the YNDs;

- 23.3 in need of assistance to handle negative peer influence;

- 23.4 in need of services for promoting their mental health (e.g. increasing social functioning, reducing anxiety and depression);

- 23.5 in need of services for preventing the occurrence of at-risk behaviours (e.g. negative school behaviours, misdemeanor and delinquent behaviour) among the YNDs having these negative behaviours;

23.6 in need of assistance to reduce their nocturnal activities particularly for those YNDs cases with full-time student status (746) i.e. school social workers may have an important role to play in this aspect; and

23.7 in need of employment service for those who were not working (399) or working irregularly (32).

Service Demand of Young Night Drifters

24. Based on the relevant data submitted by the two Teams, 10,277 YNDs under the age of 18 had been identified by the YMTs in the territory throughout the 16.5 months. Case breakdown of the YNDs identified is:

24.1 4713 (45.9%) cases had been assessed to have no need for further services;

24.2 1905 (18.5%) cases had been assessed to have no immediate crisis or no further services to them because night drifting was their normal behavior or they revealed to have been known to other social services in the day-time;

24.3 2182 (21.2%) cases had been assessed to be in need of welfare service but they had declined the YMTs services; and

24.4 1477 (14.4%) cases served i.e. they had been assessed to be in need of service and had received YMT services.

25. Based on the above data, around 35-55% of YNDs identified demand services.

Services for YNDs – The Way Ahead

26. A multi-system cooperation approach at district level is recommended in order to better attend to the problem of YNDs.
27. On family system: As it has been found that night drifting among young people is much related to the problems in the family context, promoting family life education, enhancing communication in families and encouraging parents to care for the children should be strengthened through the media, family life education and family counselling service. Cooperation and coordination with other youth services should be further promoted for helping the families and the concerned young people.
28. On school system: If teachers have spotted possible symptoms of night drifting on students (e.g. tiredness, lack concentration), appropriate attention should be given to these students. Prompt referral to counselling teachers or school social workers should be done for further intervention. Cooperation and coordination with other youth services and police should also be further promoted so that appropriate and prompt attention and care for these young people can be achieved.
29. On police: Increase patrol to night drifting spots of YNDs might serve preventive purpose for reducing unruly behaviours of YNDs. Better coordination, cooperation and division of labour between police and youth workers in local communities should be promoted so as to provide appropriate intervention to the

indigenous YNDs with the effective use of manpower and expertise.

30. On welfare services:

30.1 Five necessary conditions for the proposed mode of welfare services to the YNDs are recommended.

30.1.1 Back-up shelters for short-term stay of the YNDs and crisis intervention/counselling should be made available.

30.1.2 Services to YNDs should be operated in smaller communities.

30.1.3 Local resources should be utilized to deliver services to YNDs who are indigenous.

30.1.4 Continuous intervention with YND cases is needed for guaranteeing better service process.

30.1.5 The trend of service integration of social welfare services in the local context should be considered in developing more effective service mode for YNDs.

30.2 Services for YNDs by Outreaching Social Work Team (OSWT) and Integrated Team (IT)

30.2.1 This recommendation is made with the following considerations:

- The localization phenomenon of YNDs that implies the need to use local service resources for relevancy.
- A considerable number of YNDs are known to OSW.
- To follow the preferred trend of integrated service mode.
- The demographic data of YNDs show that they could be the clientele of OSW.
- With OSWTs and ITs handling the problems of local YNDs, there would be continuous intervention without break that implies better follow-ups and service delivering process.

30.2.2 Operation: To form as an integral part of the services of OSWTs and ITs.

30.2.3 Coverage: All communities with OSWTs and ITs.

30.2.4 Staff strength: Basically all team members of the OSWTs and ITs are included. If proved necessary, additional resources (e.g. manpower) should be provided.

30.2.5 Provision: Back-up shelter for OSWTs or ITs for facilitating rest of YNDs and/or counselling to them.

30.2.6 Performance indicators and Service standards:

Time/Frequency of operation – At least 3 over-night operations per week

- **Number of YND cases served – 25 active cases per over-night outreach worker (manpower) per month.**

- **Outcomes of YND cases served – At least 50% 'successful'.**

30.3 With no additional resources for incorporating the services for YNDs, OSWTs and ITs may need to re-prioritize their service targets and service for some of their customary users might have to be dropped.

30.4 The use of volunteers for services to YNDs is encouraged. However, they should be carefully screened and trained so that they can really facilitate the service provision process.

30.5 A special operation team is needed to serve YNDs in need but who drift farther away from their neighbourhood in non-residential areas or over-night establishments.

31. On district coordination: A coordination group titled such as "Coordination Group on Services for High-risk Youth" with membership of local leaders, representatives from welfare services, schools and police could be set up at district level for promoting better coordination of services for high-risk youth of different nature. Such a platform could be established under the District Fight

Crime Committee.

32. Adopting a pro-active approach to understand the phenomenon of young people is recommended.
33. Clinical audit for youth services is suggested for regular examination of own practices, detecting changing needs of young people and providing prompt feedback to the government.
34. Improving the management system and service delivery approaches of youth services in line with the changing needs and modes of behaviour of young people are necessary.