

Delinquents Find Values

➤ A GROUP of teen-age delinquents in Newark, N.J., are being rehabilitated under special conditions that instill new values.

A facility, called Essexfields, operates on the premise that many juvenile delinquents are not antisocial. They are simply conforming to the values of the street gang, meaning that their lawlessness is, in reality, social.

If such 17- and 18-year-old boys could be placed in a new group with more "lawful" ideas, it was reasoned that they would naturally reform.

This is evidently what has happened at Essexfields. For a start, the day rehabilitation center in the middle of Newark's high delinquency area "seeded" its program with 10 boys from a similar project elsewhere in New Jersey. They were delinquents in the process of reform and provided the basic values for all new admissions to the center. Thereafter, Essexfields admitted only five boys per month and kept the total at 20, so the new "subculture" could be maintained.

The boys were together from 7:30 in the morning until 10 o'clock at night. During working hours they chopped wood and took care of the grounds at a nearby mental hospital. In the evening they took part in a type of group therapy or self-realization session led by two therapists.

At first the delinquent was typically close-mouthed and dishonest in his new setting. But group pressure to reveal himself, tell his story and admit his weaknesses was so great that each boy had to cooperate or be a failure.

Though the values of lawfulness and

self-realization came initially from adults, they were maintained and implemented by the group—a far more successful cure for delinquency than individual counseling, Essexfields supporters believe.

Of 246 boys admitted over a four-year period, 20% were unsuitable and Juvenile Court transferred them elsewhere. Of the remaining 196 boys, 12% later ended up in correctional institutions, in comparison to a normal return rate of 50% to 75%.

Saul Pilnick and Neale W. Clapp of Essexfields, and Albert Elias of the New Jersey State Reformatory, Bordentown, described this new concept in the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 2:109, 1966.

• *Science News*, 89:260 April 16, 1966

PUBLIC SAFETY

Helmet for Drivers Could Prevent Injuries

➤ IF A FASHIONABLE crash helmet for drivers of cars were made, some of the 2.3 million head injuries suffered each year from auto accidents could be prevented.

Dr. A. Earl Walker, Johns Hopkins University neurologist, told a symposium in Chicago that a guard for the forehead and a simple attachment to a shoulder harness could protect drivers from head and neck injuries.

One of every 200 people in the United States requires medical care for a head injury each year, he said.

• *Science News*, 89:260 April 16, 1966

Questions

What has been the cause of distorted heart data from vector cardiograms? p. 258.

What is a "whistler"? p. 266.

Where was the largest meteoritic diamond found? p. 267.

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