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EXTENSION OF SERVICES FOR LEARNING-DISABLED ADOLESCENTS IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA THROUGH USE OF ALTERNATIVE
REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

by

Lorraine Agnes Irvine

B.A., University of Winnipeg, 1969

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS (EDUCATION)
in the Faculty
of
Education

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EXTENSION OF SERVICES FOR LEARNING DISABLED ADOLESCENTS IN

BRITISH COLUMBIA THROUGH USE OF ALTERNATIVE REHABILITATION

PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

Recently, there has been much concern over the plight of learning-disabled adolescents in secondary schools. During the sixties, there was a heavy focus on learning disabilities services in elementary schools and a neglect of services in secondary schools. Over the last ten years, demands for improvement in the quality and quantity of programming for the learning-disabled adolescent have increased steadily. In response to this pressure, program development for the learning-disabled adolescent has become a priority. As programs develop, it becomes apparent that no single prototype program can meet the diversified academic, vocational and psychological needs of this sub-population of secondary students. Rather an appropriate range of services is required.

This thesis takes the position that the Alternate Rehabilitation Program, which is an established special education program in B.C., is an appropriate and productive setting for the learning-disabled adolescent. The thesis begins with a brief history of the field of learning disabilities. It then reviews programming presently available for the learning-disabled adolescent in North America, and isolates program characteristics that are considered necessary to successful education of this population. Subsequently, programs presently available to the learning-disabled adolescent population in British Columbia are critically examined. Finally, the role of the Alternate Rehabilitation Program in extending and improving programming for the learning-disabled adolescent in British Columbia is examined.

DEDICATION

to

Mom and Dad

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my committee for their assistance in completing this thesis.

I would also like to acknowledge the encouragement I received from family and friends. In particular I would like to thank Val and Margo for their hours of work and counsel and David for his loving support and endless patience.

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Chapter I

PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

The purpose of this thesis is to establish the feasibility of incorporating the Alternate Rehabilitation Program into the existing range of services for the learning-disabled adolescent in British Columbia. The Alternate Rehabilitation Program, also called Rehabilitation Program, is a special education program sponsored jointly by the Special Programs Branch, Ministry of Education, B.C. and the Ministry of Human Resources, B.C. Present educational programming in B.C., and programming plans for the immediate future tend to concentrate on mainstreaming learning-disabled adolescents. The literature clearly indicates that a portion of the learning-disabled population cannot be appropriately served by mainstreaming because of the severe nature of their problems. Alternative programming must be provided for these students. Because financial restraints make it difficult to establish a full range of programs for the learning-disabled adolescent, school districts must consider alternative methods of expanding existing services for these students. One method would be to modify existing special education programs to meet the needs of these learning-disabled adolescents. This thesis will examine Alternate Rehabilitation Programs for such potential use.

It is the position of this thesis that the Alternate Rehabilitation Program is a suitable placement for learning-disabled adolescents, particularly those who do not respond well to mainstreaming. This

position will be presented as a pedagogically sound and practical approach to expanding services for the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. The students being served by Alternate Rehabilitation Programs and learning-disabled students share many similar educational and psychological needs. The Alternate Rehabilitation Program is philosophically suited to meet these needs in that it supports an individualized, flexible approach to education. In terms of practicality, these programs are presently established in most school districts in B.C. Thus, they can be used to service students' needs quickly. It will be established that they are appropriate in their present form and that they could also be easily adapted to more specifically address the needs of the learning-disabled student. Moreover, these programs potentially can be expanded further to meet the vocational needs of these students. Keeping in mind the possible areas for improvement and expansion in the Alternate Rehabilitation Program and the gaps in present learning-disabilities services, suggestions will be made for developing an Alternate Rehabilitation Program intended specifically for the learning-disabled adolescent.

The context for the position that Alternate Rehabilitation Programs are one of the appropriate environments for the learning-disabled adolescent will be presented in the first four chapters. Chapter two begins with a statement of definition for the term 'learning disabilities' and a brief history of the field of learning disabilities. It concludes by identifying educational and psychological characteristics particular to the learning-disabled adolescent and dis-

cusses the problems involved in establishing universally accepted programming goals and priorities. Chapter three will identify the learning-disabled adolescent for programmic purposes and survey the programming models currently available to this population. Chapter four will survey the program components of curriculum, teaching methods, and environment as they relate to learning-disabilities programming and address the issue of accountability in educational programming. Chapter five will identify what is considered according to the literature an appropriate range of services for the learning-disabled adolescent. It will also extract, from the literature reviewed, factors identified as consistent with successful programming for this population. It will then discuss the problems inherent in providing these success factors through mainstreaming, the popular programming trend. Chapter six will describe and critique the services presently available to the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. and identify the gaps in these services. Chapter seven will explore the potential for and advantages of incorporating Alternate Rehabilitation Programs into the range of services offered to the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. It will also make suggestions for adapting Alternate Rehabilitation Programs to better address the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent and suggest future program directions.

Finally the thesis concludes with the recommendation that a constructive connection between the Alternate Rehabilitation Program and the field of learning disabilities be established. Specifically it is suggested that:

- (1) The Alternate Rehabilitation Program should be incorporated into the range of services offered to the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. as it is a suitable and productive environment for this population, particularly the severely learning disabled.
- (2) That a portion of Alternate Rehabilitation Programs should be designed to specifically address the needs of the severely learning disabled. The initial target population should be the older severely learning-disabled adolescent as this group has least adequate services presently.
- (3) That Alternate Rehabilitation Programs should be expanded to provide a comprehensive educational alternative to mainstream education.

Chapter Two

Defining Learning Disabilities

One of the most common observations made regarding the field of learning disabilities is how rapidly the term has grown in popularity and how great an impact it has had on the direction of special education over approximately the last two and one-half decades. The situation about to be described will pertain to the United States, as that is where the field originated. There were many children in the public school system who, though of adequate intelligence, were unable to learn in the 'normal' school situation. Their parents were anxious to have their children recognized by the public school system as a category of students in need of special programming and, therefore, eligible for funding toward such programming. In the early sixties Samuel Kirk (Kirk, 1981) supplied the term, 'learning disabilities', and the parent organization of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD) was formed. Five years later, the Council for Exceptional Children formed a division for Children with Learning Disabilities. These two organizations have done much to further the cause of children with learning disabilities.

The term, 'learning disabilities', quickly became popular among parents and educators. One reason for the ready acceptance of this term, was that it is a less offensive term than previous labels such as: minimal brain damage, brain injury, or minimal brain disfunction. In addition, the term 'learning disability' was considered a more apt

and educationally relevant description than the etiological terms in use at that time (Johnson & Moransky, 1977). The widespread use of this term can be seen as a reflection of the number of children in need of special programming services. The category of learning disabilities within special education was now able to cover children who needed special help but who did not fit into other categories, such as mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed.

The student population served by the field of learning disabilities has proven to be very heterogeneous. Many attempts have been made to establish definite parameters for the field and to define 'learning disabled' clearly and succinctly. To date, although there is an official definition of learning disabilities, there is no universally accepted method of identification.

In 1962, Kirk offered the first definition of learning disabilities:

A learning disability refers to a retardation, disorder or delayed development in one or more of the processes of speech, language, reading, spelling, writing, or arithmetic resulting from cerebral dysfunction and/or emotional or behavioral disturbance and not from mental retardation, sensory deprivation, or cultural or instructional factors. (Marsh, Gearheart & Gearheart, 1978, p. 7)

In this definition, Kirk incorporated the basic concepts recognized in the many definitions that followed. Subsequent definitions also identify processing problems as the underlying cause of academic learning problems in the learning disabled. It is also generally agreed that discrepancy between intelligence and academic performance is an outstanding characteristic of the learning-disabled student. One of the

most widely accepted definitions is the one offered by the National Advisory Committee on Handicapped Children in 1968:

Children with special learning disabilities exhibit a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written languages. These may be manifested in disorders of listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling or arithmetic. They conclude conditions which have been referred to as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, etc. They do not include learning problems which are due primarily to visual, hearing or motor handicaps, to mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or to environmental disadvantage. (Marsh et al., 1978, p. 7)

Hammill (1976) suggests that this definition is as good as any and that the problem is not in defining but interpreting the definition. Each professional brings his own orientation to the definition and interprets it accordingly. With a definition as broad as the one above, the scope for interpretation is far reaching.

One interpretation identifies as learning disabled only those students who show hard signs of neurological dysfunction. These students are referred to by Hammill as the 'hard-core' learning disabled. The essential identifying characteristic according to this interpretation, is the determination of a process disorder which is caused by underlying neurological dysfunction. Although it is acknowledged that there are many problems in determining process disorders, the people who advocate this approach, consider the diagnosis of these disorders as central in indicating a learning disability. Indeed, they would go so far as to claim that "Without the diagnosis of process

difficulties the field of learning disabilities really does not exist" (Goodman & Mann, 1976, p. 38). The proponents of this approach are greatly influenced by the medical model; their terminology reflects this orientation. Etiology is attributed to a central nervous system disorder and the condition is termed brain damage, cerebral dysfunction etc. The symptoms of the condition are labelled dyslexia, aphasia, Strauss-syndrome, etc. Only children who clearly display these symptoms would, according to advocates of this interpretation, be served in programs established for the learning disabled.

On the other hand, a second interpretation isolated by Hammill identifies a great variety of students as learning disabled. The students identified by this interpretation are referred to by Hammill as the 'soft core' learning disabled. The advocates of this approach would argue that the term, processes, can also be applied to academic activities such as reading, writing and arithmetic. Therefore, failure to achieve in these areas can be interpreted as an indication of processing deficits. Thus, underachievement in the basic subject areas becomes a criterion for identifying the learning disabled. Using a 'soft core' interpretation of the official definition, a wide array of students such as: the poorly motivated, the disadvantaged or those with behavior problems join the ranks of the learning disabled. The school system, which must educate these youngsters, is a stronghold for this approach.

Hammill suggests that it is the funding system applied to the schools that necessitates this liberal interpretation of the definition.

In both the United States and Canada, funding for special education is allocated only to recognized categories of handicapped students.

Hammill points out that the majority of handicapped learners in the public school system are not clear cut cases that can be easily labelled mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed or learning disabled. However, such a labelling process must be applied before funding becomes available. At present the term learning disabled, being the least objectionable and most loosely defined, tends to be the most popular label to use. Many students formerly ineligible for funding as handicapped learners, become candidates for the individualized attention available in learning-disabilities programs, if a liberal interpretation of the definition is applied. Hammill describes the educator's position as one dominated by administrative requirements.

The advocates of the 'hard core' interpretation also look at the effect of administrative pressures but come to a very different conclusion. They insist that funding will only be available for a small percentage of students under the label of learning disabilities and it is, therefore, necessary to mold the definition in such a way that it will yield the number of students the administration is willing to fund. It is clear that consideration of the same element can yield very different conclusions.

These two interpretations of the definition represent extreme approaches to identifying the learning disabled. They reflect the varied orientations present in the field of learning disabilities and the divergent population needing special education services. Neither

interpretation is generally accepted or used in its entirety by the educator in establishing programs for the learning disabled. The 'hard core' approach, applied in its strictest form, is considered inappropriate for identifying the variety of developmental problems present in the school population. On the other hand, the 'soft core' approach is considered too vague to be useful in defining a specific population. Therefore, elements of both approaches are applied in identifying the learning disabled in schools.

Much of the disagreement around how to define the learning disabled arises from the multidisciplinary background of those working in the field. The historical roots of the field are based in such professions as medicine, psychology, psychiatry, neurology and education. Each profession brings its own perspective and interpretation in terms of definition and descriptive terminology. To obtain a perspective on the definition of learning disabilities demands tracing the history of its development.

Historical Development

Kurt Goldstein, a well known behavioral scientist strongly influenced the direction taken by the field of learning disabilities (McCarthy & McCarthy, 1969). In the 1930's Goldstein conducted clinical studies involving brain injured adults who displayed disorders in spoken language, written language and perceptual-motor coordination. Many of his subjects were World War One soldiers suffering from head wounds, others were stroke victims, but all suffered from acquired

brain damage (Wiederholt, 1978a). Through clinical observation, Goldstein identified five "behavioral characteristics in his patients: forced responsiveness to stimuli, figure-background confusion, hyperactivity, meticulousity, and catastrophic reaction" (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1976, p. 4). The disorders and the behavior characteristics observed in these brain-injured adults were attributed to lesions in specific parts of the brain. The data collected from these observations were correlated with data collected during necessary operations or autopsies performed on these same subjects. He concluded from his studies that certain parts of the brain were responsible for particular functions and that injury to a specific area would result in disorders of a particular function, accompanied by predictable and observable behavior characteristics.

Goldstein's theory on how the brain functioned was based totally on observations of adults who had suffered acquired brain damage which resulted in observable changes in character. His theory was later applied in studies of subjects who had no proven history of brain damage. Goldstein's list of behavioral characteristics of the brain injured was adopted by Strauss. Alfred Strauss was a neuropsychiatrist who, along with such notable colleagues as Werner, Lehtinen, and Kephart, felt that the behavioral characteristics found in Goldstein's patients could be used to diagnose brain damage in other types of children and adults.

Strauss and Werner conducted studies with mentally retarded children in whom they observed behavioral characteristics similar to

those observed by Goldstein in brain injured adults. They concluded that these children had suffered some sort of brain injury before, during or after birth (Ross, 1977). Consequently, they labelled these children exogenous or brain injured mentally retarded, thus differentiating them from what they called endogenous mentally retarded, retardation stemming from genetic factors (McCarthy & McCarthy, 1969). The diagnosis of brain injury did not have to include neurological or historical proof of brain damage; it could be diagnosed solely on the basis of behavioral characteristics such as hyperactivity, perceptual motor disturbances or distractability. These same characteristics, later to be labelled as the Strauss Syndrome, were used by Strauss and Werner to define what brain injury was. This circular logic has been criticized strongly and has weakened the case for a causal connection between brain injury and these behavioral characteristics (Tarver & Hallahan, 1976).

Nevertheless, the impact of Strauss and his associates on special education was indisputable. Their studies led to a general acceptance that the mentally retarded were not a homogeneous group, as was previously thought, and that they could benefit from special educational programming. Educational strategies which have been used widely with learning-disabled children, such as reducing environmental stimulus or tightly structuring classroom experiences, were a major focus in programming suggested by these early pioneers (Marsh et al., 1978).

William Cruickshank and his colleagues applied Strauss' method of identifying the brain injured to still other categories of children.

They conducted studies with intellectually-normal, cerebral-palsied children. These children, already diagnosed as brain damaged, displayed the same behavioral characteristics as Goldstein's brain injured adults and Strauss' exogenous mentally retarded, and they responded to the same educational techniques. Cruickshank and his colleagues concluded that perceptual handicaps were not a function of intelligence but of neuropsychological damage (Cruickshank, 1976). Cruickshank further concluded that the observation of the Strauss syndrome in school children of normal intelligence could be considered indicative of minimal brain injury and that the educational techniques suggested by Strauss and Werner could be successfully used with these children (Tarver & Hallahan, 1976).

The school system was quick to adopt Cruickshank's method of identification and labels such as minimally brain injured, (or minimal brain dysfunction), brain damaged (or brain injured) were applied to students who displayed these behavioral characteristics. These labels were later replaced with the term 'learning disabled'.

The work of these early pioneers formed the base for the perceptual-motor theories that dominated the identification process and teaching methods used during the 1960's. The perceptual-motor theories were based on the idea that injury to the brain manifested itself in behavioral characteristics such as those described by Strauss and his colleagues. It was further theorized that these disorders were at the root of learning problems experienced by the child. Behaviors such as hyperactivity, perceptual motor problems, and distractibility were considered a result of deficient processing by the injured part of the

brain. In other words, the child was unable to interpret or respond to his environment in an appropriate manner because his perception was hindered by deficient processing abilities. Perceptual motor theorists such as: Kephart, Barsch, Getman and Frostig set out to produce educational materials that would identify and remediate the deficient processes, in the belief that this would improve the child's ability to learn, and transfer to performance in academic tasks (Tarver & Hallahan, 1976).

Frostig's (1976) Developmental Test of Visual Perception (DTVP) clearly reflects the influence of Goldstein, Strauss, Werner and Lehtinen. The premise of her test lies in the relationship between perceptual disturbances and learning deficits (Tarver & Hallahan, 1976). The widespread use of this test and related training materials, in the 1960's attest to the acceptance of the perceptual motor theory as valid.

It is generally conceded that the perceptual-motor tests do measure a child's ability to perform perceptual-motor tasks. However, the inability to complete these tasks, which claim to measure adequate perceptual and motor development, has not been proven indicative of specific deficit processes, and training in visual and/or auditory discrimination, or motor co-ordination has not been shown to result in improved academic performance (Hammill & Larsen, 1974). Consequently, the efficacy of this theory is severely questioned by many leading figures in the field of learning disabilities (Tarver & Hallahan, 1976).

Although perceptual-motor theories dominated the early literature and research in the field of learning disabilities, the work of the language theorists in the early 1900's such as Hinshelwood and Orton

also influenced the study of language disorders as it pertains to the field of learning disabilities (Wiederholt, 1978a). Language disorders have not been the subject of much research until recently. However, early in the history of the field people such as Myklebust, McGinnis, Wepman, Osgood, Eisenson and Kirk worked to increase awareness of language disorders. The growth in the area of psycholinguistics further increased attention to language disorders (Tarver & Hallahan, 1976).

One of the earliest and most widely used tests in detecting language disorders, the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (ITPA), was developed by Kirk, McCarthy and Kirk in 1971. It was based on Osgood's communications model (Wiederholt, 1978a) and examines channels of communication, psycholinguistic processes, and levels of organization. The ITPA is based on the assumption that the psycholinguistic and perceptual processes that it measures are necessary pre-requisites to adequate academic functioning (Hallahan & Heins, 1976). It was intended to be both a diagnostic and remedial tool. Specifically, the ITPA was designed to reveal intraindividual differences in the child's development pertaining to the strengths and deficits in psycholinguistic skills. The test results were assumed to yield sufficient information for the educator to build an appropriate educational prescription which would address both the strengths and deficits of the student (Kirk, 1976).

The ITPA was one of the first major tests to focus on language disorders. However, the validity of this test has been seriously questioned. In their review of a number of studies that examined the

efficacy of psycholinguistic training, Hammill and Larson (1974) have come to the conclusion that it has not been effective. They question the assumption that "discrete elements of language behavior are identifiable and measurable, that they provide the underpinning for learning and that if defective they can be remediated" (Hammill & Larson, 1974, p. 5-6). The criticisms directed at psycholinguistic training are similar to those directed at perceptual-motor training. Both approaches to learning disabilities refer to deficient underlying processes as the basis of learning problems. As pointed out by Goodman and Mann (1976) these processes are in fact hypothetical constructs. Although perceptual-motor and psycholinguistic training were used extensively in the 1960's, their popularity has dwindled over the last decade and they are now virtually defunct. Educators stopped using the materials primarily because of construct validity problems and because the skills taught in the training programs did not transfer to academic tasks (Myers & Hammill, 1976). To obtain transfer, it would have been necessary to build into the training programs specific tasks that would apply the psycholinguistic and perceptual-motor skills taught in the programs to specific academic tasks.

The 50's and 60's were formative years for the field of learning disabilities. During this time, the field was attempting to come to grips with some basic issues such as: establishing a definition and identification procedures, determining underlying causes, and developing methods of prevention and remediation. The school system needed solutions to these problems in order to provide educational

programming for the youngsters that were labelled learning disabled. The focus was on developing an effective approach to programming for these children. Etiology was a concern only in so far as it pertained to the development of this programming. The tendency at that time was to look for a correct and complete solution to the educational problems of learning-disabled students.

The prevalent theories of the day, the Perceptual-Motor and Psycholinguistic theories, offered potential solutions to learning-disabled students' educational problems. Both theories focused on training specific skills or processes assumed to underlie successful learning. These prerequisite processes were considered developmental in nature. The premise of these theories was that if these deficit processes were diagnosed and remediated at an early age, the student's prognosis in academic achievement would be substantially enhanced.

The focus on early detection and remediation resulted in a rather exclusive concern with identifying and remediating young children with learning disabilities. Concurrent with such a focus was the development of diagnostic and remediation materials designed exclusively for the elementary and preschool child. Indeed, efforts in all areas, training of staff, construction of programs, and development of curriculum materials and diagnostic tools were centered on the needs of the elementary student. Such emphasis on assessing and treating the young child with learning disabilities, led inadvertently and unavoidably to the neglect of the learning-disabled student at the secondary level. Apparently, there was the assumption that early identification and

remediation of learning-disabled children would render remediation at the secondary level unnecessary (Wiederholt, 1978a).

The preceding assumption proved to be very wrong. Although early detection and remediation may well have been a solution for a portion of the learning-disabled population, there are many whose problems have not been solved despite early identification and remediation. The reasons given for the failure of this plan include: insufficient diagnostic services, poor remediation techniques, and misdiagnosis. Because of these inadequacies in diagnosis and educational programming, the learning problems of many students have persisted through to adolescence (Weber, 1974). Therefore, these students require continual assistance at the secondary level.

The emphasis originally placed on the young child, however, left the field poorly equipped to address the immediate and pressing demand for appropriate programming for the adolescent (Goodman & Mann, 1978; Grill, 1978). Over the last ten years, however, the situation regarding the learning-disabled adolescent has been examined closely by learning-disabilities professionals in an effort to provide effective services for these students (Wiederholt, 1978a). Consequently, characteristics and needs pertaining to the learning-disabled adolescent have been identified. The educational status, characteristics and programming needs of the learning-disabled adolescent, as identified through this examination, will be discussed in the next section of this paper.

The Learning Disabled Adolescent

Recognition in the School System :

There have always been learning-disabled adolescents in the school system. Until recently, however, little attempt has been made to provide appropriate programming for them. The recognition of their learning problems, and the focus now apparent in the educational system on providing appropriate services for these students, can be attributed to several concurrent developments. These include: development and growth within the field of learning disabilities; the increased awareness among other education personnel regarding learning disabilities; the increased advocacy of parents and social agencies concerned with the education of the learning-disabled adolescent; the change in societal expectations and pressures with regards to adolescents and the education system. Each of these factors has contributed to the expansion of services for secondary learning-disabled students and will be discussed in further detail below.

Development within the field of learning disabilities. One of the most important developments that took place within the field of learning disabilities was the change in professional opinion regarding the need for services at the secondary level. As stated earlier, it became clear in the early seventies that the focus on early intervention and ~~treatment~~ had not eliminated the need for services at the secondary level. It had become obvious that many students diagnosed as learning disabled and remediated in the elementary school were still in need of

learning assistance at the secondary level, and that many others had not been detected until high school (Goodman & Mann, 1976; Lerner, Evans & Myers, 1977). It was also recognized that the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent had in fact increased rather than dissipated (Siegal, 1975; Vance, 1977). These students not only have learning problems, but also emotional problems resulting from unsuccessful remediation and continuous failure (Cruickshank, Morse & Johns, 1980). As the reality of the learning-disabled adolescent's situation became apparent, the field of learning disabilities expanded its focus to meet the needs of these students.

The field of learning disabilities had developed considerably in terms of assessment tools and remedial curricula by the early seventies. The professionals in the field had gained experience and knowledge from their work in the elementary schools. Methods of remediation had been expanded and developed and many new materials were available (Siegal, 1975). In addition, the field had attracted and trained many new personnel. Although the materials and training did not relate directly to the adolescent student, with the increase in experience, manpower and materials, learning-disabilities professionals were in a better position to accept the challenge of educating the learning-disabled adolescent.

Once acknowledged as necessary, programs at the secondary level were seen as a natural extension of services offered in the elementary school (Minskoff, 1971). It was also recognized that the field could improve future services at the elementary level by examining the

previous educational experiences of learning-disabled adolescents and determining the effects of remediation programs used with these students (Siegal, 1975). Learning assistance centers, patterned after the centers established in the elementary schools, were instigated at the secondary level in an initial attempt to meet the needs of the learning-disabled student at the secondary level.

Increased awareness within the educational community. The heightened awareness of both teaching staff and administrative personnel greatly influenced the efforts to establish appropriate services for the learning-disabled adolescent. Initially the teaching staff at the secondary level had had little connection with the field of learning disabilities as most services were at the elementary level. However, as the learning-disabled child advanced into the secondary system the staff become more cognizant of the nature of learning disabilities and more familiar with the characteristics of the learning-disabled adolescent. Many students who might previously have been referred to classes for the mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed (Cruickshank et al., 1980) were instead being referred to the learning-disabilities specialist for assessment. Secondary teaching staff also began to recognize that students with learning problems that had previously been attributed to low motivation, low I.Q. or behavior problems (Cruickshank et al., 1980) might also be learning disabled. The teaching staff saw the possibility of assistance in dealing with these problem students and the referrals to the learning-disabilities specialist increased rapidly. It soon became obvious that a great escalation of services

would be necessary in order to meet the needs being identified.

Administrative personnel in the secondary system also became increasingly aware of the presence of the learning-disabled adolescent in the high school. With the growing public awareness regarding learning disabilities (Alley and Deshler, 1979), administration came under pressure from the community and government to establish appropriate services for these students. They responded to this pressure by issuing a mandate to the field of learning disabilities to develop effective programming for the learning-disabled adolescent, and by allocating funds for that purpose. Community pressure and societal change greatly influenced administrative decisions made with regards to the learning-disabled adolescent. Developments in these two areas will be discussed next.

Increased advocacy of parents and social agencies. As stated earlier, parent groups were instrumental in initiating the field of learning disabilities and establishing learning disabilities as a fundable category in the educational system. Initially their efforts were, as were those of the field of learning disabilities, aimed at obtaining services for the learning-disabled child. Advocacy for the learning-disabled adolescent was initially very incidental and ineffectual. The number of parent advocates grew quickly, however, as their children, who had been given assistance in the elementary school, and were still in need of assistance, were abandoned upon entering the secondary system (Hammill, 1978).

In addition to expanding their own focus, parent groups also helped increase the awareness level in the community at large. They provided support and information to concerned parents whose children were experiencing difficulties at school or in the community. Through these efforts, many adolescents, unidentified by the school system, were recognized as learning disabled. Social agencies working with adolescents who had socialization and educational problems, also became more familiar with the concept of learning disabilities (Alley & Deshler, 1979). These agencies recognized the symptoms of learning disabilities in their charges and added their voice to the demands being made on behalf of the learning-disabled adolescent. The pressure applied by these members of the community complimented the efforts of professionals in the field to obtain funds to increase and improve services for the learning-disabled adolescent.

Societal expectatations and pressures. The growing profile of the learning-disabled adolescent in the school system is due in part to the expanding awareness regarding the concept and nature of learning disabilities discussed above and in part to an actual increase in the number of students with learning disabilities that are remaining in the secondary system. This increase is related to the change in the demands of the work force. With the sharp increase in technology, there has been an ever-increasing demand for higher academic education for all students. Simultaneously there has been a sharp decline in the number and variety of available jobs that require only unskilled labourers. This technological trend has made it increasingly difficult for the person without

a high school diploma to find useful and satisfying employment. As a result the student experiencing academic difficulties, who might have left school and entered the workforce as an apprentice or labourer (McBride, 1980), is now being pressured to remain in the system. It is acknowledged that many of the students finding themselves in this position are learning disabled (Washburn, 1979).

The position of learning-disabled adolescents is a difficult one. If these students choose to remain in the school, they find themselves in a system that is ill-prepared to meet their needs. The high-school curriculum has been traditionally designed to serve the academically competent student, in a tightly scheduled and group oriented fashion (Washburn, 1979). It is, therefore, generally ill-equipped to serve the learning-disabled adolescent who requires an individualized and flexible environment (Zigmond, Silverman & Laurie, 1978). The secondary school is usually a confusing and threatening experience for the learning-disabled adolescent (Vance, 1977), who cannot meet the set expectation of this highly structured and complex setting. The learning-disabled adolescent is generally a misfit in the secondary school and her profile, therefore, tends to be negative. It includes such descriptions as "behavior problem", "easily frustrated", "negative attitude" or "gives up too easily" (Cruickshank et al., 1980). On the other hand, if the student decides to leave the school system, she enters a community that is equally ill-prepared to respond to her needs (Kronick, 1975). Today's technological community generally has no constructive role for the uneducated, unskilled adolescent. Thus

the learning-disabled adolescent tends to experience alienation, frustration and failure both in the community and school environments. The repercussions of such failure and frustration are often devastating for both the adolescent and society. The community has been forced to deal more and more with the results of inadequate education in terms of increased crime, unemployment and mental illness (Kline, 1972; Vance, 1977; Weiss & Weiss, 1974). Recognition of the negative effects of school failure has resulted in a demand for constructive education that will equip these young people to adapt more successfully to their environment and thus enable them to fill a more positive role in their community. The field of learning disabilities has been given the responsibility of devising constructive education for the learning-disabled adolescent.

Differences Between the Learning-Disabled Adolescent and the Learning-Disabled Child

Initially secondary learning disabilities services were set up as an extension of elementary services and the tendency was to use the same materials and methods used with the elementary student (Schoolfield, 1978). This practice was due to a lack of materials and procedures developed specifically for the learning-disabled adolescent and because personnel were trained to work with the elementary resource room model (Cruickshank et al., 1980). Currently it is recognized that such practice is inadequate in educating the learning-disabled adolescent because there are many significant differences between the learning-disabled adolescent and the learning-disabled child. These differences

must be addressed in developing appropriate programming at the secondary level (Alley & Deshler, 1979; Wiederholt, 1978a). In addressing these differences some factors to be considered are: differences in educational experience, changes in academic needs, and needs and goals of the learning-disabled adolescent.

Differences in educational experience. It is acknowledged that the learning-disabled student identified at the elementary level is only one portion of the secondary learning-disabled population. There are many more students who have been identified only upon entry into secondary school. These might be students who were able to cope with the more insular environment of the elementary school but in the more impersonal and rigid setting of the secondary institution, their need for assistance becomes apparent. Other students might not have been identified due to a lack of sufficient diagnostic centers or inadequate testing at the elementary level (Lerner, Evan, & Meyers, 1977). Still others might have been misdiagnosed as behavior problems, emotionally disturbed or possibly educably mentally retarded students. These learning-disabled students, all having been exposed to different learning experiences, present a wide range of educational needs and learning styles quite different from the learning-disabled student at the elementary level. In developing a program for the individual learning-disabled student at the secondary level, it is therefore necessary to investigate the educational setting and/or the remediation techniques used previously and to consider their success or failure in planning future programming (Cruickshank et al., 1980).

Changes in academic needs. The focus in many elementary programs is often on remediating perceptual or auditory deficits. Many professionals believe that these problems are developmental in nature and as such are not an appropriate focus in remediating the learning-disabled adolescent. They feel that the adolescent is more likely suffering from the residual effects of having such a deficit during the elementary grades. Further they point out that even if processing difficulties are still present it is unlikely that the adolescent would respond to the same remediation techniques used with the young child. It is the opinion of most professionals in the field that the learning-disabled adolescent needs a direct approach to remediation of academic difficulties (Goodman & Mann, 1975). It is also noted that the secondary student is expected to have a large fund of facts or general knowledge at his disposal. However, such an assumption is questioned by Kronick(1975) who points out that the learning-disabled adolescent has often been removed from the regular class and has thus missed large portions of the knowledge normally accumulated in the elementary school years. She emphasizes that the learning-disabled adolescent needs programming that will supply him with this information.

Changes in needs and goals. Professionals in the field have also noted that it is essential to recognize that the learning-disabled adolescent is in fact a young adult, and as such must respond to societal pressures very different from those of a young child. Adolescents are in the process of learning independence. The delicate balance between the need to assert their own will and the need for

guidance and consultation is an important factor in program planning for these students. These young people are capable of understanding their problems and participating in the development of their own programs. Brown (1978) cites this participation as essential to successful remediation.

Setting career goals is one area in which the learning-disabled adolescent generally requires a good deal of guidance. In secondary schools, students are required to make decisions that involve long range-goal setting. To make these decisions competently, requires a reasonable degree of self-knowledge and self-confidence. It is acknowledged that even for the most well-adjusted young person, adolescence is a time of self-doubt and questioning (Marsh et al., 1978). The average student will manage to cope with the pressure inherent in this decision making process with the help of regular support systems such as, counsellors, family and friends. However, for the learning-disabled adolescent the natural turmoil created by this situation is magnified by the accumulated psychological effects of having a learning disability (Lerner et al., 1977). Learning-disabled students will require additional assistance if they are to approach these decisions constructively. Adequate programming must address this problem and help the learning-disabled student develop appropriate goals (Washburn, 1975).

If programming is to be appropriate, it must also take into account the motivating forces in the learning-disabled adolescent's environment. For most adolescents peer acceptance and adult approval are very

important motivating forces. The learning-disabled adolescent often experiences rejection from his peers and receives negative feedback from the significant adults in his life (Kronick, 1978). This student will usually develop a low self-concept as a result of the failure and frustration experienced both socially and academically. The constant experience of failure eventually destroys the student's belief in his ability to succeed, and results in a low-motivation to achieve (Deshler, 1978b). In defense against expected failure, these students adopt coping or masking mechanisms. They will mask their academic deficiencies and/or social ineptness by demonstrating negative behaviors such as aggression, withdrawal, indifference or obstinacy. These behaviour traits are often diagnosed as the student's primary problem rather than a result of a learning disability (DeWitt, 1977). If these students are to be successfully re-motivated to learn, their negative behaviors must be recognized as defense mechanisms brought on by the pressures of their learning disability. In this way, the social and emotional problems at the root of these behaviors can be examined and appropriately addressed as an integral part of the student's learning disability.

The internal and external environments that the learning-disabled adolescent must cope with are very different from those of the elementary student. Therefore, although the learning-disabled adolescent may have educational problems that appear to be similar to those of the younger learning-disabled student, they require a different approach both educationally and psychologically from that used in the elementary

schools. Recognition of these differences between the learning-disabled adolescent and the learning-disabled child can assist the professional in developing appropriate programming for the adolescent.

Characteristics of the Learning-Disabled Adolescent

The learning-disabled adolescent has been presented as exhibiting many of the same characteristics attributed to the learning-disabled child, i.e. hyperactivity, emotional lability, coordination deficits, disorders of attention, impulsivity, disorders of memory and thinking, disorders of speech and hearing, and specific learning disabilities. The manifestation of these characteristics is however, quite different in the learning-disabled adolescent. For example, while hyperactivity in the child is often experienced as excessive movement of the whole body the adolescent will have learned to control these urges and may express them through more subtle actions such as fidgeting, grimacing facial expressions, or tapping of fingers, feet or pencils (Wilcox, 1970). The heterogeneity of the learning-disabled adolescent population and the variance in professional opinion regarding appropriate parameters for this population has made it difficult to gain consensus on the characteristics indicative of learning disabilities in the adolescent. There are however, some characteristics more frequently and consistently cited in the literature as specifically pertaining to the learning-disabled adolescent. The learning-disabled adolescent is generally accepted as displaying:

- (1) An uneven academic profile - Regardless of her general level of intelligence, the student will perform as anticipated in some areas and be significantly below that performance level in others. This discrepancy in performance is seen as indicating a specific learning disability in that area.
- (2) Poor communication skills - This problem is manifested by poor listening skills, poor verbal and written expression of ideas and a difficulty in grasping ideas;
- (3) Poor organizational skills - This manifests itself in a poor memory, inability to follow instructions, and an unsystematic approach to such basic tasks as studying and test writing;
- (4) A poor self-concept - the effects of this personality trait can be seen in avoidance of assigned tasks, irritability, being easily frustrated, giving up easily and reacting to situations impulsively.

(Cruickshank et al., 1980; Rowan, 1977; Weiss & Weiss, 1974)

Establishing Programs for the Learning-Disabled Adolescent

Identifying programming needs. In the early seventies, with the increasing need and demand for programs, the field of learning disabilities was forced to establish programs immediately despite the lack of concrete data on how to best serve this population (Grill, 1978). There were no clearly delineated guidelines for identifying the learning-disabled adolescent; no teaching methods or materials had been recognized as particularly effective with the learning-disabled

adolescent and there was no specified curriculum to follow (Vance, 1977). Professionals in each school district defined the learning-disabled adolescent and prioritized the educational needs of the students they identified, according to their own philosophy, orientation and training. Because program priorities were dictated by the individual situation, a number of program prototypes evolved. As student need has been perceived quite differently by the various programs, no one curriculum or service has been determined as the appropriate priority for secondary learning-disabilities programs. However, some central questions are being asked, by professionals in the field of learning disabilities, in an attempt to determine appropriate programming priorities for the learning-disabled adolescent.

1) Should the concentration be on basic academic skills?

Most educators agree that the learning-disabled adolescent has not acquired the fundamental academic skills necessary to function in the mainstream of the educational system. In fact, the lack of these basic academic skills is one of the most common indicators used in identifying the learning-disabled adolescent. It is generally accepted that these skills should be developed at least to the point of functional literacy (McNutt & Heller, 1978). Whether the goals from this point should focus on guiding students toward vocational or career programs, returning or keeping students in the mainstream of education or encouraging the establishment of flexible academic programs that would make college education a reality for these students is at this point open to debate.

3) Should career training be a main focus?

The proponents of career and vocational programs would suggest that the learning-disabled adolescent has been unsuccessful with the academic component of education and is running out of time and educational opportunity (Irvine, Goodman & Mann, 1978). They feel the emphasis should, therefore, be on assuring that the student leaves the school system with training that will be of some real value to him in the working world.

4) Should mainstreaming be a major focus in planning services?

On the other hand, a large number of professionals believe the mandate of the learning-disabilities teacher is to maintain the learning-disabled adolescent in the mainstream. The feeling is that the student will suffer from any kind of 'special' placement and should therefore be taught in 'the least restrictive environment' which is assumed to be the regular classroom (Leviton, 1978). This assumption will be severely questioned later in this thesis.

5) Would training in learning strategies be beneficial?

Other professionals, who usually support the idea of mainstreaming, would like to see more emphasis placed on teaching the learning-disabled adolescent student how to learn. They believe that concentration on learning strategies can provide the student with the organizational skills necessary for successful learning and that with these skills the student is more likely to be successful in his endeavors (Alley & Deshler, 1979).

5) Is college a realistic goal for the learning-disabled adolescent?

A follow through from this emphasis on academic skills is the belief that many learning-disabled adolescents are potential college students and should be encouraged to develop their strengths through multi-media methods. They would encourage the development of college programs which allow the student to learn and prove her understanding through the mode of her preference.

6) Should socialization training be a major focus?

The affective education of the learning-disabled adolescent, is an area of much controversy. When setting goals for teaching the learning-disabled adolescent, it must be decided how or whether to address the lack of social skills often apparent in the learning-disabled adolescent. Some would classify the lack of social skills as a major characteristic of the learning-disabled adolescent (Kronick, 1978) and others would exclude students who display severe problems in this area from programs designed for the learning disabled (Goodman, 1978). Whether training the learning-disabled adolescent in the social abilities and basic life skills should fall within the parameters of the learning-disabilities teacher's responsibility is strongly debated. Goodman (1978) emphasizes that learning-disabilities teachers are trained to teach academic skills, not social skills. Others point out that if we refuse to address these social and emotional problems our academic efforts will be less effective (Weiss & Weiss, 1974).

It is clear that a wide variety of needs has been identified within the learning-disabled adolescent population. Although programs tend to focus on one particular area of need, generally they are eclectic in nature with one focus being predominant but not exclusive. The variety of program models presently available in the field of learning disabilities and the method of defining learning-disabled adolescents for placement in these programs will be discussed in chapter three.

Chapter Three

A REVIEW OF SECONDARY LEARNING-DISABILITIES PROGRAMS

Defining the Learning-Disabled Adolescent for Programmic Purposes

The official definitions presented in chapter two are more pertinent to the learning-disabled child than to the learning-disabled adolescent. These definitions do not allow for the changes in identifying traits that come with adolescence (Cruickshank et al., 1980), nor do they refer to the educational lag or behavior problems (Marsh, et al., 1978; Weiss & Weiss, 1974) so characteristic of the learning-disabled adolescent. These deficiencies and the identified developmental, environmental, and personality differences between these two groups make it inappropriate to apply the same definition in identifying these two populations. As a result, a functional definition of the learning-disabled adolescent has evolved from the literature; it divides this population into two groups: the moderately learning disabled and the severely learning disabled. These groupings are used as a guide for placing students in educational programs.

Learning-disabled adolescents are identified as students who show a discrepancy between ability and performance and perform inconsistently. Both moderate and severe cases of learning disabilities share these characteristics. One distinguishing characteristic between these two groups is the degree of academic discrepancy observed. Alley and Deshler (1979) have identified the moderately disabled student as those students who have reading prerequisites which allow them to go beyond

decoding words to developing comprehension skills, vocabulary and speed. Another distinguishing characteristic is emotional stability. The moderately disabled student is also identified as being basically emotionally stable, often having established coping mechanisms that aid him in compensating for his disability (Alley & Deshler, 1979; DeWitt, 1977; Kronick, 1978).

In contrast, the severely learning-disabled students are identified as those in need of basic literacy instruction (Grill, 1978). They are the students that have not acquired the basic reading, writing and math skills that are taught in the elementary school. They are the 'non-readers' (DeWitt, 1977). These students also often display extreme personal, emotional and behavior problems (Grill, 1978; Lerner et al., 1977) and suffer from deficits in social perception (Kronick, 1978). They are the students who are often earmarked as the possible juvenile delinquent or who have already had problem with the law. Their disabilities are often of a multifaceted nature and have severely crippled them emotionally and educationally. They are considered unable to cope in the regular classroom situation, even with extra support (DeWitt, 1977; Goodman, 1978) and are seen as needing the individual attention (DeWitt, 1977) and intensive remediation (Goodman, 1978) offered only in the special class situation.

In a survey of the learning-disabled adolescent populations conducted by Deshler et al. (1979), an estimated 89% of the learning-disabled population was considered moderately disabled, and 11% severely disabled. This estimate is reflected in the incidence of

programs for each group. It is unclear, however, whether these percentages constitute a true reflection of the population or a reflection of the assessment procedures used.

Prevalent Program Models

Four of the most frequently mentioned settings for secondary programs at present are the regular classroom, the resource room, the part-time special class and the self-contained classroom (Lerner, 1978). The choice of a physical setting often reflects a philosophy of education. The regular classroom and resource room settings emphasize the concept of mainstreaming and the more enclosed settings of the part-time special class and self-contained classroom emphasize the strengths of the separate environment. The program models discussed below will be categorized in terms of mainstreaming models, and non-mainstreaming models. The variations within these two groupings will be described and the two groups will be compared.

Mainstreaming Models

Surveys indicate that the most popular programs at the present time are those that emphasize maintaining the student in the mainstream. These programs generally combine the facilities of the resource room with the modification of the regular classroom (Goodman, 1978). Their basic aim is to offer remediation services that will allow the student to function successfully in the regular classroom. The remediation focus can vary in these programs. Three of the most common foci are basic academic skills, learning strategies, and regular course materials.

The most common focus is the resource room program which concentrates on remediating basic academic skills. These programs usually use a diagnostic/prescriptive approach to remedial programming. An individualized academic program is developed and presented in the resource room on a part time withdrawal basis, and/or in the regular classroom. In the latter situation, direct assistance is offered to the regular classroom teacher in terms of implementing the program, monitoring progress, and modifying regular curriculum materials to meet the needs of the individual student (Goodman, 1978). Some programs operating in this mode also consider school survival skills and career education essential curriculum components for their students (Zigmond, 1978), but the main emphasis is academic remediation.

Another focus which is growing in popularity is teaching learning strategies in the resource room. In these programs the student's present learning methods are examined, the student is taught more efficient methods and means of applying them to subject areas. There are strategies designed for both academic and social skill areas.

A third possible focus in the mainstreaming model is the curriculum content of the regular classroom (Lerner et al., 1977; McNutt & Heller, 1978). The students are enrolled in the regular mainstream academic courses and come to the resource room for assistance with their course material. The role of the specialist in these programs is that of tutor. Some tutorial programs include components of school survival and counselling but the main focus is on regular high school curriculum materials.

Although these programs vary in their curriculum focus, they have several aspects in common. First, mainstream programs tend to focus on serving the students commonly labelled as the moderately learning disabled (Alley & Deshler, 1979; DeWitt, 1977; Grill, 1978). Also, although these programs are found at both junior and senior high school levels (Alley & Deshler, 1979), there is a higher percentage of them in the junior high schools (Deshler, et al., 1979), thus indicating that they are considered more suitable for the younger student.

Another very important commonality is the mainstream philosophy which states that the regular classroom is the least restrictive educational setting for the learning disabled and that the student should not be removed from that setting any more than necessary (Alley & Deshler, 1979; DeWitt, 1977; Lerner, 1978). Educators who support mainstreaming would see separate educational settings as suitable only for students who experience extreme difficulty in the regular classroom, and even for these students, it would be seen as a temporary measure. These professionals believe that segregation from peers, and being labelled as handicapped, is very damaging psychologically and is, therefore, educationally inhibiting for the student.

The mainstream philosophy also emphasizes the necessity of identifying and meeting the educational needs of the student on an individualized basis. Each of the programs mentioned attempt to do this. Given the above philosophy, and the nature of the average high school, the final commonality shared by these programs is their need to change the atmosphere of the regular classroom. One of their goals is to alter

the teaching methods and curriculum materials used in the regular classroom so that they can begin to address the individual educational needs of the learning-disabled student (Goodman, 1978).

To affect the necessary changes in the school system, however, requires more than just the efforts of the learning-disabilities specialist. It requires the co-operation of the regular classroom teacher and administration. This co-operation is imperative. Even the strongest advocates for mainstreaming recognize that if the learning-disabled adolescent is to be helped in the regular classroom, school personnel must recognize the need for flexible programming and be willing to commit themselves to implementing and supporting special programming needs (Baily, 1975; DeWitt, 1977; Zigmond, 1978).

Non-Mainstreaming Models

The non-mainstreaming approaches tend to be very individualistic in nature; however, for the purpose of this discussion, they will be classified into three models: the part-time special class, the work/study program and the self-contained classroom. Variations within each model will be discussed.

Part-time special class. The first variant of the part-time special class to be discussed is designed for the student who, due to the severity of her disability cannot make progress in the regular classroom. The emphasis is on providing intensive academic remediation in a special class setting while allowing the student to be mainstreamed into non-academic classes (Wiederholt, 1978a). Because of the intensity of remediation, the part-time special class (self-contained) is seen as

a preferable setting to remediation in the regular classroom, or resource room setting. Goodman (1978) in his description of the Montgomery County Project, an example of this variation, suggested that the program should allow for whatever amount of remediation the students need to "ameliorate their learning difficulties" (p. 255) and provide opportunity for re-entry into the mainstream if feasible. Although return to the mainstream is seen as desirable, the emphasis is placed on academic remediation rather than maintenance in the mainstream. Goodman (1978) also recommends mastery learning over the diagnostic prescriptive approach, which is the most commonly used approach, for teaching basic academic skills.

This variation of the part-time special class can be seen as a link between the mainstreaming models and the non-mainstreaming models because it has elements of both groups. As in non-mainstreaming models, it focuses on the severely disabled student and considers the part-time special class a more appropriate setting. However, whereas other non-mainstreaming models have focused on a more functionally oriented curriculum, this model of the part-time special class still considers academic remediation the appropriate focus for learning-disabled students.

Another variation of the part-time special class is the program that focuses on career exploration. The main aim of these programs is to provide the student with enough information and practical skills to enable an intelligent career choice and the ability to pursue that choice. These programs generally offer a functionally oriented curri-

culum which contains elements of career exploration, consumer information, social adjustment, and academic remediation. This curriculum is offered in a special class setting and generally takes up at least half of the student's day. The other half of the student's time is spent in vocational courses of their choice. In most schools these vocational courses are regular mainstream courses.

An exemplary prototype of a career education program is the Exploratory Occupational Education (EOE) Program referred to by Irvine, Goodman and Mann (1978). In this program the student spends half the day in the EOE Program and half the day in either a special class or in regular school classes. The half-day spent in the EOE Program is split between vocational instruction classes which have been designed specifically for special needs students and classes which offer academic instruction directly related to the vocational material being studied. Both the academic and vocational classes are adapted to each student's needs. The academic content is taught by special education instructors and vocational instruction is given by vocational instructors. These professionals must work as a close team in order to co-ordinate the materials presented to the students. The student participates in this format for two years and is then presented with a variety of options related to specific vocational/occupational training or work/study programs. This is an integrated five year program with a wide variety of career options being explored by each student. In this program the student is given guidance in making career choices and is also given the experience and knowledge necessary in order to make an

appropriate decision. This program has proven very successful with learning-disabled students in terms of improving their self-concept and ability to achieve. The joint efforts of special education staff and regular high school vocational teachers, the varied and relevant nature of the curriculum, the individualized nature of instruction and the emphasis on teaching for success are considered to be among the reasons for the effectiveness of this program.

Work/study program. The work/study program, a second non-mainstreaming model, has yet another focus, that of on-the-job placement. The student spends half of his time in a special class, where the focus is on job-related skills and half his time in an actual job placement. The emphasis is on giving the student practical work experience (James, 1979). In the special class setting the focus is on the practical and social skills the student will need on the job. However, academic remediation is also often a part of the curriculum content. The aims of the work/study model are similar to those of the career education program but the approach employed is quite different.

The self-contained classroom. The final non-mainstreaming model to be discussed, the self-contained classroom, is perhaps the most difficult to define since the curriculum used is the least focused and most varied. The curriculum can include elements of socialization training, life skills training, career information and training, and basic literacy training (Deshler et al., 1979; Grill, 1978). Self-contained programs can contain all or any combination of these curri-

culum elements. The varied nature of this curriculum reflects the multi-faceted nature of the disabilities found in the severely-disabled student (Kronick, 1978), who is the prime focus for the self-contained program. These programs also vary in location and this is a big factor in shaping curriculum and program format. If the program is located within the regular high school building, it tends to revolve around the school community and facilities. The off-campus program, however, is a more separate entity and often utilizes community facilities and connections to a greater extent than the campus based program. Because of the independent nature of these programs, their curriculum focus can be varied to reflect the needs of the current group of students, the outside resources available to the program or the particular talents of the staff.

The self-contained classroom is also perhaps one of the most controversial settings. It is often seen by the advocates of mainstreaming as a restrictive setting suitable only for the most 'severe cases' and then only for as short a time as possible. A more positive view of the self-contained classroom, however, would present it as an alternative approach to providing quality education for students not suited to the mainstream environment. Cruickshank et al. (1980) suggest that the unique challenge of these classes is that they must offer a variety of instruction and opportunity for social development. They also note that if the programs are to dissipate the negative connotations associated with the isolated classroom, the instructor must explain the logic behind the setting and involve the student in planning her

educational program. Many of the self-contained programs in existence today appear to be meeting real needs for students who, due to their severe deficiencies in basic academic and social skills are unable to succeed in the regular classroom. The flexibility in location, format and content of these programs makes them uniquely suited to meet the diverse needs of their student population. With their relative autonomy, they have the freedom to offer innovative and truly individualized educational programming.

As can be seen from the above discussion, non-mainstreaming models, all have features in common. The first, obvious and perhaps most significant, commonality is that these programs focus not on maintenance in the mainstream, but on alternatives considered more relevant and suitable for the severely learning disabled. Secondly, the curriculum focuses on equipping the student with functional skills and information they will need upon leaving school. Academic remediation is considered one of these functional skills but, except in the first part-time special class program discussed, it is generally not the main focus. It must also be noted that these programs focus on older and more severely disabled students, and therefore, are found most frequently at the high school level. A final observation is that these programs tend to acknowledge emotional problems and social inadequacies as characteristics of the severely disabled and therefore, in their curriculum address these problems to a greater extent than do the mainstreaming models discussed.

Conclusion: Prevalent Models

The program models discussed above do not describe all the permutations of the programs now offered to the learning-disabled adolescent. Rather they point out some of the patterns and similarities that emerge from the multitude of programs now servicing this population. It has been suggested (Goodman, 1978; Lerner et al., 1977; Minskoff, 1971) that a variety of programs should be available so that the student can be placed in the program best able to meet his needs. Presently, however, the popular trend is toward mainstreaming programs which are being promoted as the most beneficial type of placement for learning-disabled students. This popular trend must be closely scrutinized as implementation of mainstreaming programs to the exclusion of other program models would prove very detrimental to many learning-disabled students. Supporters of this popular trend would present the ideal program as one in which the learning-disabilities specialist would diagnose the problems of the student, and develop an individualized program which would specify objectives, materials and methods. This program would then be implemented, as much as possible, by the classroom teacher who would have the necessary support services at her disposal (Goodman, 1978).

However, it must be kept in mind that the effectiveness of the mainstream model has not as yet been validated by research. Despite its rapid growth in popularity, Laurie, Buchwach, Silverman and Zigmond (1978) point out that it is a difficult model to implement in the present school system. Even the strongest advocates of mainstreaming

do recognize the limitations of such a philosophy with the existing high school system. This approach requires close co-operation among educational specialists, regular classroom teachers and administrators. For this co-operation to exist there must be planned space and time for consultation, teacher and specialist expertise and a willingness to share such expertise, lend support, and operate in a flexible and open manner. Unfortunately, our present high school system tends to be neither flexible nor open to change and our teachers have usually not been trained to deal effectively with learning-disabled students (Wiederholt, 1978a). Regular teachers have expressed their reluctance to accept the responsibility of educating the learning-disabled adolescent as they do not feel that the regular classroom is conducive to individualization (Hudson, Graham & Warren, 1979). For mainstreaming to work, the system itself must be capable of addressing the individual needs of its students in a way that will allow teachers to prepare, teach, and mark work on an individualized basis. Specialist and counselling help must also be readily available. Since few of these factors exist in the present school system, proponents of mainstreaming must necessarily be proponents of change within the school system. Diamond (1979) believes that in the present school system, the learning-disabled student is at risk in the regular mainstream classes, and that unless the mainstream can be appropriately modified, alternatives will be necessary.

The program models discussed in chapter three implement a variety of curriculum content and teaching methods. These program components will be discussed in the following chapter in greater depth. Chapter four will also look at the role environment plays in the instructional process and how evaluation is affecting, or should affect, the face of programming.

Chapter Four

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Curriculum Content: A Varied Focus

Because of different philosophies and perceived goals regarding a curriculum for learning-disabled adolescents (Touzel, 1978), there is no standardized content or format for curricula. Thus a reasonable course of action appears to be a review of curriculum contents most frequently mentioned in the literature. These include: basic academic skills, learning strategies, regular curriculum, low vocabulary - high interest curricula developed specifically for the learning-disabled adolescent, career development, functional survival skills, work/study curricula and social skills.

Basic Academic Skills Curriculum

One of the most frequently mentioned foci of curriculum for the learning-disabled adolescent is basic academic skills, reading, writing and mathematics. According to a survey conducted in 1979 by Deshler, Lowrey and Alley, 51% of existing programs consider the acquisition of basic academic skills, at least to a grade six level, a primary goal for their students. The acquisition of these skills is considered a fundamental necessity if the student is to function successfully in our society (Johnson, Blalock, & Nesbitt, 1978; Zigmond, 1978).

Instruction in basic skills is generally approached on an individualized basis using a diagnostic/prescriptive form of remediation.

Mastery Learning is another common teaching style used in presenting basic skills curriculum to the learning-disabled adolescent (Goodman, 1978). These two teaching methods will be discussed at length later in this chapter. Whatever delivery system is used to present the material, instruction is initiated at the student's present academic level. The ultimate goal in remediation is to bring the learning-disabled adolescent's performance to grade level. The purpose of remediation can be maintenance in the mainstream, reentry into the mainstream (Goodman, 1978), aiding the student in her content subjects (Alley & Deshler, 1979) or simply the acquisition of literacy skills.

As noted in chapter two, the lack of basic academic skills is an identifying characteristic of the learning-disabled adolescent. Because it is such a prevalent problem among this population, it is addressed to some extent by most programs.

Some of the points supporting a focus on basic academic skills are:

- 1) This focus is likely to increase basic academic skills and thus competence in academic classes (Alley & Deshler, 1979);
- 2) rapid gains can often result from an appropriate combination of programming, student learning rate and severity of learning disability (DeWitt, 1977);
- 3) basic academic skills are necessary to function successfully in our society (Wiederholt, 1978b);
- 4) teaching basic academic skills is the role of learning disabilities teachers and is what they are trained to do (Goodman, 1978).

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Opposition to teaching learning-disabled adolescents basic skills rests on these points: 1) a focus on basic skills is reiteration of previous successful remediation for many learning-disabled adolescents

(Alley, 1977); 2) the learning-disabled adolescent is 'running out of time' for formal education and a focus on academic skills is not sufficient to prepare him for post-school life (Zigmond, 1978); 3) the approach tends to focus on the students' weaknesses and does not search out their strengths; 4) it does not address transfer of basic skills to other situations (Alley & Deshler, 1979).

Learning Strategies Curriculum

Learning strategies is a new approach to teaching learning-disabled adolescents. This approach has been proposed by Alley and Deshler (1979). These authors have developed curricula to accompany teaching strategies in various areas. The learning strategies approach to curriculum is concerned with teaching people how to learn, rather than concentrating on any one subject area. The skills areas covered include reading, writing, math, thinking, social interaction, and speaking and listening. Each skill area is broken into subskills and instructional goals are developed for each subskill. For example, reading would be broken into vocabulary development, word recognition, reading comprehension, reading rate and study skills. Strategies for learning content in each of these skill areas are taught.

In the first step of the learning strategies approach the student is taught on a one-to-one basis. At this stage the student is introduced to the strategy and must become thoroughly familiar with the steps involved so that the strategy can be applied easily and efficiently. The second stage involves practising the strategy on materials controlled for content and vocabulary. Easily comprehended materials allow the

student to concentrate on practising the strategy rather than learning new materials. In the third stage, the student attempts to apply the strategy under controlled conditions to regular classroom materials. This stage is very important in terms of facilitating transfer and generalization of the newly learning strategies to the regular classroom situation. In the fourth stage the student gets group experience in using the strategies while still in the controlled environment of the resource room. These groups attempt to simulate the regular classroom situation. The fifth stage involves the student's transferring the skills to the regular classroom situation.

Alley and Deshler (1979) acknowledged certain prerequisite conditions for the effective application of the learning strategies approach. They stress the importance of supportive administration and positive interaction between staff members. Such co-operation insures an appropriate curriculum, service options and facilitation of curriculum revision. They also emphasize the need for support staff which would free the specialist for in-service workshops and co-operative planning. The resource room model is considered most appropriate for teaching learning strategies because it provides ample opportunity to practice the strategies being taught.

In arguing the strengths of this approach, the authors stress that knowledge changes and accumulates rapidly in our technological society, and that the goals of education should be to promote "the acquisition of principles that will facilitate problem solving and application of skills to a variety of tasks in different situations and setting" (Alley &

Deshler, 1979, page 18). They feel that this approach to education is especially important for the learning-disabled student. The learning strategies approach promotes adjustment to the mainstream, interaction with peers and a variety of staff members, and utilizes the strengths and normal potential of the student. It is understandable why this approach to teaching learning-disabled adolescents has become very popular among secondary learning assistance teachers.

The authors have also considered some of the drawbacks to this approach. They acknowledge that the average high school is not conducive to creating the atmosphere of co-operation necessary for an effective operation of this approach. They also recognize that this approach does not address functional, tutorial or basic skills needs as directly as other approaches but rather is concerned with developing efficient learning patterns. They openly admit that the learning strategies approach needs supportive data and indicate that they are actively engaged in research to provide this data. Their research is designed to test the usefulness of the learning strategies with the learning-disabled adolescent.

Regular Subject Content Curriculum: The Tutorial Approach

The tutorial approach is cited by Deshler, Lowrey and Alley (1979) as being used in 24% of the programs they surveyed. The instructional goals relate to the student's difficulties with regular classroom assignments. Supporters of this approach believe that you must focus on what is immediately relevant to the student, which in their opinion is the subject matter of the student's regular courses (Alley & Deshler,

1979). The basic asset of this approach is that it helps the student pass her academic courses. Laurie et al. (1978) suggest that because the tutorial system makes few demands on the classroom teacher and fits easily into the system, it is readily accepted by the classroom teacher.

However, there are several shortcomings to this approach. First, tutoring is only a short-term solution (Laurie et al., 1978); it addresses only the surface problem in any particular content area. It does not address basic underlying problems, such as a lack of basic academic, study or social skills, that may be hindering the student's progress in the classroom (Deshler et al., 1979). Another problem with this approach is that it places the responsibility for the student's learning squarely in the hands of the learning-disabilities teacher. A final drawback is that the use of this approach, presupposes that the learning-disabilities teacher is qualified to tutor in all the varied subject areas in a high-school curriculum (Deshler et al., 1979). Laurie et al. (1978) state clearly that they do not think the tutoring system helps the student in the long run. Nor does it work to change the system.

Modified Regular Curriculum

This approach to curriculum also concentrates on the subject content of the regular high-school curriculum. However, the emphasis here is on changing the regular content materials to make them more suitable for the learning-disabled student. This is done by lowering the academic level of the material, without altering the actual content,

so that the student can, as Weiss and Weiss (1974) suggest, "be reading to learn rather than learning to read" (p. 74). It may also involve alternate methods of presentation, matching the rate of presentation to the student's ability to assimilate the material and using testing methods that match the student's preferred mode of learning and recall (Johnson et al., 1978). In addition to these specially designed courses, which are taught by regular content area teachers, the student is enrolled in a basic remedial program which is taught by the learning-disabilities specialist. Thus the student benefits from the expertise of both these professionals. This shared responsibility for the student's education is one clear advantage of this approach (Weiss & Weiss, 1974). Goodman (1978) reports that this curriculum approach enabled his students to master the content of their academic courses and improved their basic academic skills.

Career Education Curriculum

The terms "career education" and "vocational education" are often used interchangeably. However, many professionals now draw a distinction between the two. Vocational training is commonly understood to indicate a curriculum that trains a student for a particular vocation or trade. By distinguishing between vocational training and career education, professionals have acknowledged that students need more than training in occupational skills in order to become successfully employed. Career education indicates a more expansive curriculum. This curriculum is intended to help students acquire and develop a body of knowledge, decision-making skills and a self awareness that will facilitate them in

making career choices and adjustments throughout their lives.

Williamson (1975) describes career education as a curriculum that allows students to explore many types of job opportunities, become aware of their own interests and aptitudes, and experience a variety of work skills that could apply to many different occupations. It also allows for a more in-depth study of the areas in which the student shows talent and expresses an interest (Williamson, 1975). In addition to dealing with career information, learning-disabilities programs which focus on career education also teach such skills as job search and interviewing techniques and assist the student in acquiring appropriate social skills (Irvine, et al., 1978; Washburn, 1975).

Often learning-disabled students recommended for career education programs are considered severely disabled and may be very close to illiterate. Therefore, basic academic skills or often basic literacy skills must also be a concern.

Within career education programs, the academic curriculum materials used tend to be related to work (Williamson, 1975). Students are taught in a self-contained setting or part-time special class (Grill, 1978). To profit from career education programs, students should be taught in small classes using a combination of individualized and small group teaching techniques.

Supporters of the career education approach stress that it is more relevant than academic curriculum for learning-disabled students. These supporters consider that learning-disabled adolescents will acquire useful skills through this curriculum and have the opportunity to discover

their strengths and weaknesses (Grill, 1978; Irvine, et al., 1978; Williamson, 1975). Deshler et al. (1979) point out that the relevance of this curriculum can motivate students in a way that the regular curriculum may have failed to do.

Those who question the career education approach fear that the learning-disabled student will not receive an adequate academic background. They also point out that the learning-disabilities teacher is not trained in vocational education. Moreover, because in most cases the student will be exposed to only a limited number of occupations, the critics fear the creation of an educational "ghetto" (Deshler et al., 1979).

Functional Curriculum

Clark (1980) has used the term career education in a yet broader sense. He refers to it as

That formal and informal attempt to make one ready for the course of one's life. This course will involve various roles (family members, citizen, worker, etc.), various environments (home neighborhood and community), and innumerable events (home living, mobility, consumer activities, interpersonal interactions, work activities, etc.)
(p. 2)

What Clark calls career education is also referred to as a functional curriculum approach (Alley & Deshler, 1979). Supporters of the functional curriculum approach feel the current high-school curriculum does not prepare students for life situations (Clark, 1980). The main focus of the functional curriculum approach is to make "instruction relevant and useful for students" (Mauser & Guerriero, 1977, p. 64).

Supporters of this approach argue that functional curriculum will better equip students to operate successfully and productively in society than will the academic focus now evident in most schools. They stress that making curriculum relevant and useful is beneficial not only to the individual but also to society (Clark, 1980). Major problems such as unemployment, socially deviant behavior, or the deterioration of family units are often attributed to school failure and/or inadequate preparation of students for their role in society.

An example of a program focused on increasing functional competency is found in Wiederholt's (1978b) description of the Adult Performance Level (APL) Program. The program defines functional competency as:

- 1) "a construct which is meaningful only within a specific societal context;
- 2) "a two-dimensional construct that consists of the application of a set of skills to a set of general knowledge areas"; and
- 3) considering "both the individual's capabilities and societal requirements" (Wiederholt, 1978b, p. 17). The skills "reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, computation, problem solving, and interpersonal relationships" are applied to the "knowledge areas [of] consumer economics, occupational knowledge, health community resources, and government and law" (Wiederholt, 1978b, p. 17 and 18). Some research has been done on the effects of this program and Wiederholt reports promising results.

The functional curriculum construct can also be applied to the school situation. In this situation, it addresses competency in school survival skills such as: appropriate classroom behavior, study skills,

test writing, etc. (Zigmond, 1978). This interpretation of functional skills is more appropriate in the mainstreaming program models.

As the functional curriculum tends to be most popularly used in the self-contained classroom (Deshler et al., 1979), isolation from peers and limited contact with staff are seen as problems. Another criticism concerns the difficulties in identifying the survival skills in a changing society. Thus any curriculum based on such skills is at best a short term curriculum (Alley & Deshler, 1979).

Counselling and Socialization Training

An unsettled question in terms of the socialization problems often observed in the learning-disabled adolescent, is whether the emotional and behavioral problems are a result or a cause of the learning disability, or a special type of disability in themselves. DeWitt (1977) among others (Cunningham & Barkeley, 1978; Kline, 1972) sees these problems developing as a result of "accumulated academic and environmental demands" (DeWitt, 1977, p. 61) which have proven to be a constant frustration for the learning-disabled student. If the emotional problem is seen as developing from the learning problem, then the student is labelled learning disabled and the primary focus in treatment is the academic deficiency. On the other hand, if emotional problems are viewed as the underlying cause of learning problems, the student's behavioral problems are addressed with the expectation that the learning problem will dissipate. However, as Bailey (1975) points out, if the emotional disturbance is the dominating characteristic, any underlying learning disability will often go undiagnosed and untreated.

Kronick (1978) challenges the view that social problems are a by-product of inadequate academic training or that exposure to adequate educational programming will improve psychosocial behavior. She believes that the behavior problems or social inadequacies recognized in many learning-disabled adolescents are manifestations of 'primary interactional learning disabilities', and that the more severe the learning disability, the more severe the interactional disability will be. She suggests that:

Learning-disabled children behave inappropriately because of deficits in social perception. Difficulties with the perception, inference, labelling, and communication of feelings, gaps in basic concepts, limitations in interpersonal problem solving, inattentiveness, distractibility, and distortions of activity and organization all contribute to inadequacy. (p. 87)

These deficits leave the students unaware of their effect on peers or authority figures.

In order to address the socialization problems of the learning-disabled adolescent various forms of counselling and socialization training have been incorporated into programs designed for this population. However, this training is generally not the predominant curriculum area in any one program. How these emotional and behavioral problems are addressed, in terms of intensity and format depends upon the severity of the disability and the focus of the program. Since the need for counselling and socialization training increases with the severity of the disability observed in the student, the literature recommends that programs designed for the severely disabled place a stronger emphasis on counsel-

ling and socialization training than programs designed for the moderately disabled (Deshler et al., 1979; Grill, 1978; Marsh et al., 1978; Minskoff, 1971).

Mainstreaming programs, which cater to moderately-disabled students, often deal with socialization in terms of school survival skills (Alley & Deshler, 1979; Laurie et al., 1978). These programs try to help the student cope successfully with social and emotional pressures in the school environment (Zigmond, 1978). They explore factors such as appropriate and inappropriate behaviors in the classroom, the impact of behavior on teachers and students, avoidance of negative responses, and classroom skills, i.e. responding, being prepared, being on time, studying, writing tests, etc. It is suggested that this be carried out in both individual and small group settings, using such techniques as role playing, and group discussion. The skills must be practiced in a supportive structure and gradual integration of these skills in the regular classroom situation should be encouraged through co-operative planning between the special education teacher and the regular classroom teacher.

Career education and functional programs, which tend to cater to the severely learning-disabled adolescent tend to approach socialization training with a life-skills orientation. They focus on socialization skills needed in various life roles such as: employee, family member or consumer. In addition, they address the behavior and emotional problems of these students through exploration of basic interpersonal and group communication skills.

Although emotional and behavior problems are not usually the main focus of programs designed for the learning-disabled adolescent, there are some exceptions. Kronick (1978) refers to courses that have been designed by a Canadian children's mental health clinic to "promote social learning in learning-disabled adolescents" (p. 92). The clinic has a variety of course models which usually run for a period of eight weeks. Kronick (1978) outlines some elements that are seen as central to the clinic's successful program models: 1) clarification of general semantics, 2) explanation and demonstration of interactional cues, 3) emphasis on rectifying areas of disorganization, and 4) elimination of negative behavior patterns and development of alternative ones. These elements were approached through: 1) task analysis of deficit areas of concept processing and effective knowledge, 2) remediation of individual and group deficits, using peers as interactors, 3) co-operation with family and teachers in terms of practice and generalization of materials learned, and 4) close supervision of staff in terms of observation of instruction and feedback (p. 92). The clinic also recommends that the programs be preceded and/or accompanied by some form of intensive counselling, i.e. family, individual or group. Programs such as these could be studied for their possible application to learning-disabilities programs in the school system.

Opinions differ on the topic of counselling and socialization as a curriculum focus for learning-disabled students. Goodman and Mann (1976) consider counselling and socialization to be outside the role of learning-disabilities teachers because they are not trained counsellors.

They think the emotional problems of adolescents should be addressed by other programs. However, others consider counselling and socialization of learning-disabled adolescents are important, although less important than academic remediation (DeWitt, 1977). Still others believe that unresolved emotional problems obstruct the remedial progress in learning-disabled adolescents (Kronick, 1975; Weiss & Weiss, 1974).

The literature is inconclusive on whether learning disabilities result from or are caused by emotional and behavioral problems. Nor is it decisive as to whether these problems are independent psychosocial deficits. However, it is generally agreed that lack of social perception, and the behavioral and emotional problems that accompany this lack of perception are major problems of the learning-disabled adolescent (Deshler, 1978a). It is also agreed that incomplete or incorrect diagnosis and/or treatment is likely to increase the student's frustration and thus lead to more social problems. One result of extreme behavioral and emotional problems is the defensive and deviant behavior found in the juvenile delinquent. The link between juvenile delinquency and learning disabilities is recognized by many professionals (Bailey, 1975; DeWitt, 1977; Rowan, 1977; Vance, 1977; Weiss & Weiss, 1974). Clearly, the results of ignoring the emotional and behavioral problems of these students can be devastating. Given the prevalence and seriousness of these problems in the learning-disabled adolescent population, and their negative effect on the remediation process, these problems must be addressed more directly in programs designed for these students.

As Kronick (1975) has pointed out, for the most part disabilities other than academic problems have been ignored by the field of learning disabilities. It is imperative that the development and validation of program components, that will effectively address the behavioral and emotional problems of the learning-disabled adolescent, become a major focus in the field of learning disabilities.

Conclusion: Curriculum Content

In concluding the discussion of curriculum content for the learning-disabled adolescent, it is important to note that when planning curriculum for the learning-disabled adolescent, "the ultimate goal is to provide the student with a sense of hope and with as many skills as possible for integration into society" (Johnson, et al., 1978, p. 36). As most school districts would be hard pressed to provide a full range of services, the variety of needs must, most often, be met within one or two program models. This is perhaps one reason that the curriculum of these programs tends to be eclectic. Programs designed for the learning-disabled adolescent often include some element of each of the curriculum areas discussed in this section. The programs differ however, in the emphasis placed on each area. Academic remediation is perhaps the most common element, and is found to some extent in most programs (Deshler et al., 1979). It is an empirical question as to which combination of curriculum components will prove most effective for which students. Regardless of which curriculum focus is chosen, the concern must be its relevance to the student. Does it address his needs, interests and goals? This can best be determined on an individual basis.

Teaching Methods

In addition to choosing an appropriate environment and curriculum focus, an appropriate method of instruction must be chosen. We all recognize the method of instruction as a determinant of the success or failure of teaching. Thus it seems useful to review briefly some of the teaching methods presently used with learning-disabled adolescents.

The most common approaches to teaching the learning-disabled adolescent are task-oriented approaches. Hammill (1980) has identified two task-oriented approaches. The first one he refers to as an 'atomistic/additive' approach; the second he calls a holistic/integrative approach. Atomistic/additive refers to skill-based methods of teaching such as diagnostic/prescriptive learning or mastery learning. The goal of these methods is remediation of basic academic skills and curriculum content is considered one of the key elements in reaching this goal. The curriculum content is broken into teachable segments and presented to the student in a logical sequence. The 'holistic/integrative' approach, Hammill (1980) suggests, is student centered rather than curriculum centered. In this approach the curriculum is developed through interaction between students and teachers. It is not pre-determined by the instructor. The language experience approach is an example of this teaching method. Diagnostic/prescriptive teaching, mastery learning and the language experience approach each employs its own particular teaching strategies and processes which will be discussed below.

Diagnostic/Prescriptive Approach

The diagnostic/prescriptive method as it presently applies to the learning-disabled secondary student, is an attempt to individualize the teaching of basic academic skills. The concept of teaching to strength and remediating weaknesses, is an integral part of this method (Bailey, 1975; Lenkowsky, 1977; Vance, 1977). Initially, in applying this method, the student is assessed using norm and/or criterion referenced measures to establish the student's general operational level, identify the student's strengths and identify error patterns in basic skills. Students are often also assessed in terms of interests and motivation. This test information is then used to plan an individually sequenced program designed to suit the student's specific needs and interests. Next, instructional objectives are established. An evaluation procedure is built into each program. If appropriate, a behavioral component can also be built into the program (Zigmond, et al., 1978). The diagnostic/prescriptive method is the most widely used teaching method in the field today (Goodman, 1978).

Mastery Learning

Mastery learning also involves an initial student assessment using criterion and/or norm referenced tests. The test results are used to establish the student's basic academic level of operation. The student is then initiated, at the appropriate level, into an already sequenced and tightly structured curriculum. The strategy used to break the curriculum content into manageable units and to sequence them for instruction, is a form of task analysis. The aim in this method is to

make each unit of instruction a small enough step in the learning process that the student does not experience failure. In a mastery learning program each unit is preceded by a diagnostic test. Feedback and correctional procedures are built in, and a post-test is given upon completion of each unit. Supplementary material is provided for those students who need extra work. The program can be individualized by adjusting the work rate and/or the amount of instruction to meet the particular needs of any student. Goodman (1978) notes that the mastery learning approach is not as widely used as the diagnostic/prescriptive approach.

The Language Experience Approach

The emphasis in the language experience classroom is not on learning specific skills but on learning to express oneself easily and effectively through both the written and spoken word (Kennedy & Roeder, 1975). Skills such as phonics or decoding are not approached as goals in themselves, but as tools necessary in order to communicate effectively. The necessary skills are taught from curriculum materials derived from the life experience of the student. This type of curriculum material is considered superior to commercial material because of its true-to-life quality and its immediate relevance to the student. Although the content is less controlled than that in commercial materials, all the components for teaching basic language skills are present.

Kennedy and Roeder (1975) present four basic strategies used by the instructor to elicit curriculum materials. These are: dictation, transcription, directed writing, and free writing. Through dictation

and transcription the student's own content can be used to teach him vocabulary, word attack skills, linguistic patterns, reading, and writing. Directed and free writing can also be used to teach the above and to provide practice, gradually increasing the amount and sophistication of writing. Perhaps the strongest argument in favour of this language experience approach is that eliciting the curriculum from the student ensures relevant content and requires full participation in the learning process from both the student and the teacher.

Learning Environment

As can be seen from the variety of program models, curricula and teaching methods described, many combinations of program components are possible. The underlying educational philosophy of a program often directs the way in which program components are used in the learning process, and thus strongly affects the learning environment of the program. Wiederholt (1978b) and Adelman (1978) suggest that learning is an interactive process involving an exchange between student and environment. Thus program planning should focus on the student's abilities or disabilities, and also on whether or not the environment fulfills the student's needs, goals, and interests (Adelman & Taylor, 1977; Adelman, 1978). One of the basic assumptions of the teaching methods discussed previously is that the learning problem is centered in the student and that remediation should focus on the student's deficiencies. Adelman and Taylor (1977), on the other hand, believe that a learning problem is the result not of deficiencies in the

child but of negative interaction between the student and the environment. Successful learning then is dependent on positive interaction between the environment and the student. Therefore, the environment must be flexible enough to respond to students' needs individually. Clearly such a view of learning is very appropriate to the learning-disabled student who benefits most from individualized and flexible programming.

Wiederholt (1978b) suggests that the environment and the student's perception of that environment are important factors in the learning process since they will affect her attitude and performance. Another important environmental factor that influences the learning process is the attitude of influential people towards the student. All of these factors should be studied in order to determine which environment is best for each student, who perceives them as such, and which factors in these environments promote positive or negative behaviors.

Adelman (1978) suggests that

Environment variables can result in learning problems whenever a person has insufficient opportunities to behave in ways which produce feelings of competence and self-determination. In this connection an environment may be (a) passive, e.g., simply not offering opportunities, (b) subtly undermining, e.g., overemphasizing extrinsics, or (c) actively hostile, e.g., making demands which the person is expected, but is unlikely to want and/or be able to fulfill at the time the demands are being made. (p. 47)

Adelman and Taylor (1977) express the concern that schools rely too much on extrinsic motivations, such as the reward of good grades or the threat of failure, to shape the student's behavior. They feel that

this external pressure renders the students less capable of recognizing or responding to ideas or goals that have intrinsic value for them. These authors believe that creating an environment in which students are responding to intrinsic motivation, as opposed to extrinsic motivation, will greatly facilitate the learning process.

In this organismic approach, the focus is on how the student reacts to his environment, not, as in a behaviorist approach, on how the environment acts on him. This approach assumes that the student's thoughts and feelings toward his environment will be a primary factor in determining his behavior in that environment. Intrinsic motivation is seen to be much more powerful force in changing behavior than are the external stimuli applied in the behaviorist approach. Adelman (1978) suggests that placing the student in an educationally and psychologically supportive environment enables the student to engage in positive behaviors and activities and to develop intrinsic stimuli such as competence and self-determination which will positively affect his behavior and learning.

Adelman and Taylor (1977) offer two teaching strategies that they feel will help create such a constructive learning environment. The first and most important strategy in their estimation is to offer courses of interest and value to the student. They emphasize that to allow for the individual needs of the students, the content, presentation, format, level and style of assignments should vary, and the rate of learning should be adjustable. The second strategy suggested by Adelman and Taylor (1977) is a mutually satisfying learning contract, negotiated

between the student and teacher. The process of contracting is intended to teach the student responsibility and decision making, as well as guide her educational pursuits.

This interactive theory of learning advocates dealing with students from a position of facilitating leadership rather than power. If students are to be responsible and humane citizens, Adelman and Taylor (1977), argue, then they must be exposed to role models that portray responsibility and humanity and encourage possible independence in their students. They advocate that students must be taught to trust their own judgement, and be guided in learning how to choose goals. Clearly to provide the learning environment described above, flexible settings and instruction, which will encourage the freedom and the time to develop student responsibility and self-determination are required. The human elements create the environment and the interaction, but the conditions of the program and setting must be conducive to that positive interaction. Unfortunately, our present school system rarely allows those conditions to exist. An important step in changing the system would be solid evaluation of currently existing programming. Such evaluation would provide data on whether the conditions described above do, in fact, produce better results, and provide data on the effect of lack of those conditions. The following few pages will deal with the issue of accountability and evaluation, since it seems clear that the need for evaluation is vital to determining the validity of available approaches and programs.

Evaluation

Program models, curricula, methods and environment vary and are chosen according to the opinions and beliefs of the educators involved, rather than by reference to reliable data outlining which components are most effective with which students. This is true because the field of education has been derelict in the area of evaluation (Marsh et al., 1978). Because of the rise in funding cost (Csapo, 1978a), and the growing numbers of students leaving the high schools inadequately prepared to earn a living or go on to further training (Deshler, 1978a; Marsh, et al., 1978), the government and public sectors are increasingly demanding an examination of educational practices in terms of relevance and effectiveness. This has necessitated the instigation of evaluation procedures.

In order to successfully evaluate any program, its goals and objectives, and its student population must be clearly defined; further, its curriculum and teaching methods must be clearly described. The evaluation procedure must measure the degree of success and/or failure in meeting these goals and isolate the factors responsible for success or failure. The information gained by evaluation procedures can then be used to support present practices, change and improve services, and identify preferable approaches for specific populations.

Public expectation and government policy indicate that the acquisition of academic content should be the major focus of the public school system (Marsh et al., 1978). Therefore, the predominant measure of the public-school system's success or failure has been the degree of

academic proficiency displayed by its graduate. This unfortunate tendency to hold schools accountable only in terms of the academic success of their students narrows the focus of these institutions to academic pursuits and leads to the neglect of the non-academic student's needs (Marsh, et al., 1978). Recently, the need to expand the focus of education and to hold schools accountable to all students, not just to those with academic talents has become more apparent.

According to Clark (1980), studies have shown that schools are, in fact, inadequate in meeting the career or personal needs of up to one third of their students. This is clearly an indication that change is required. Clark suggests that schools be held accountable for the following: 1) basic literacy and numeracy, 2) work/study programs on a national level, 3) involving the community in joint career education programs, 4) providing appropriate consumer skills, 5) providing appropriate personal and social communication skills, and 6) changing the basic structure of the high school so as to make it smaller and more diverse in approach. The non-academic students in the schools, and this includes the learning disabled, are the ones most obviously suffering under the present system; as they grow in number, the inadequacy of the system becomes more obvious and the need for change greater.

Schools, then, must be held accountable to provide training relevant to the various talent represented in their population; education in areas other than academia can then become recognized as equally important--for example, career education and functional education (Marsh, et al., 1978). Schools must offer relevant curriculum of

practical use and personal interest to the student (Clark, 1980), thereby increasing self-knowledge, self-concept, communication skills, and functional skills so that students can reach their full potential both in school and in their daily life outside the schools. Evaluation must determine if the curriculum, teaching practices, and the goals in education programs, currently do, in fact, provide these skills and attitudes for their students.

Summary

Chapter three has indicated the great variety of programs that have been developed in the last decade to serve the heterogeneous population of learning-disabled adolescents. Chapter four has discussed the variety of possible curriculum content and teaching methods. It has also examined the role environment plays in the instructional process, and the issue of evaluation. In chapter five, the concept of organizing these various components into a comprehensive range of services for the learning-disabled adolescent will be examined. Also, program features considered important to the success of the individual program will be discussed. In addition, this thesis will discuss the philosophy of mainstreaming and assess the regular classroom as an optimal educational environment for the learning-disabled adolescent.

Chapter Five

OPTIMAL PROGRAMMING SERVICES

Range of Services

In this chapter educational services and concepts considered most effective or optimal in educating the learning-disabled adolescent will be discussed. Optimal programming services for the learning-disabled adolescent must incorporate the concept of a range of services. The popularity of this concept in special education presently reflects the belief that no one program model is sufficient in itself to meet the unique range of needs evident in the handicapped students and that, therefore, a continuum of services must be available (Wiederholt, 1978a). Certainly, the divergent programming that has evolved in the field of learning disabilities reflects this premise. Services for secondary learning-disabled students grew out of needs identified at the 'grass roots' level and, as such, there was no underlying organization for the development of these services. The concept of a range of services offers a vehicle for organizing what exists currently, provides a framework from which to examine and evaluate the content and focus of programming, and a means of making decisions regarding future programming directions. In implementing a range of services, the organizational model and service delivery system chosen can vary.

Setting is one of the common program components used to organize a range of services. For example, Wiederholt (1978a) proposes an organizational model that includes six program settings:

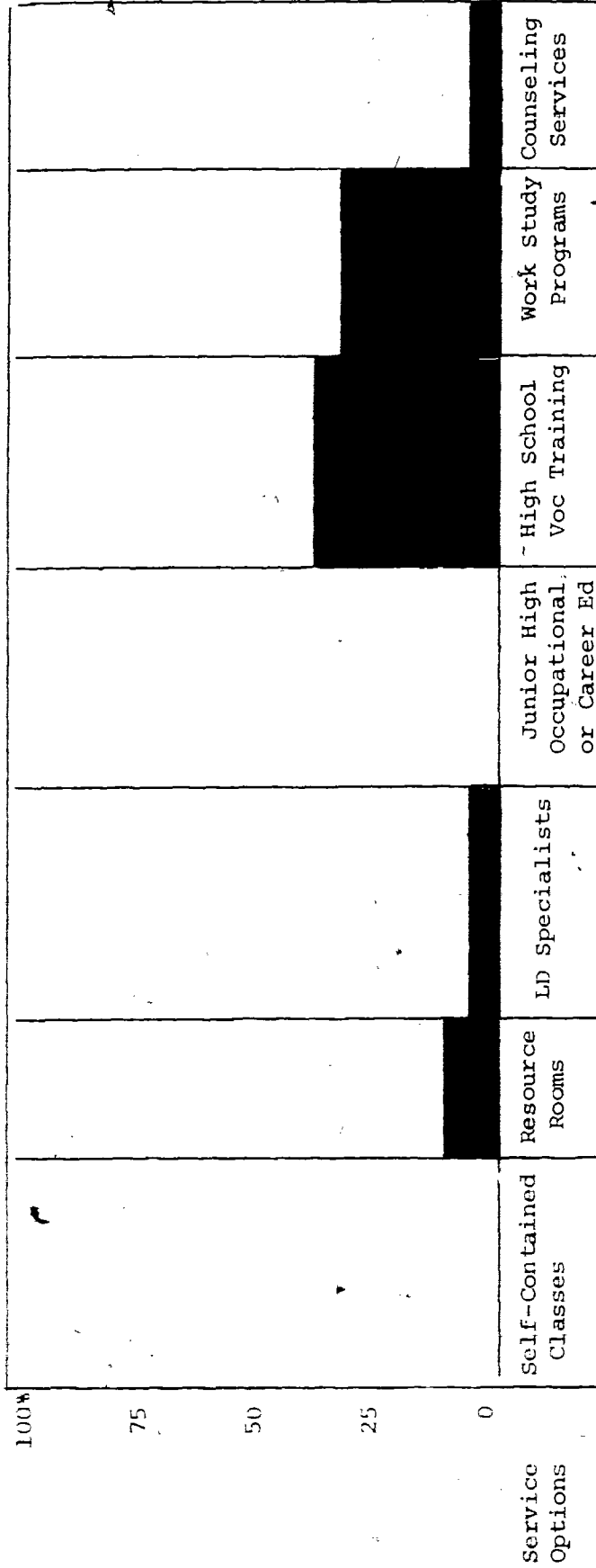
(1) non-educational services (medical, welfare),
(2) residential schools, (3) full-time special
classes, (4) part-time special classes,
(5) resource programs, and (6) consultation
to teachers of handicapped students in regular
education programs. (p. 20)

This organization of services from what is assumed to be the most restrictive to the least restrictive setting is common to the Cascade System. The Cascade System is presently the most frequently used service delivery system in education (Cruickshank, et al., 1980). The focus in this organizational model is to remediate academic deficits to a level that allows successful functioning in the mainstream. The philosophy behind this model assumes that the best location for the student is the regular classroom. The goal is to make the classroom a diverse and flexible setting that can adapt to meet all educational needs. Alternative settings are considered necessary only to the extent that the regular classroom cannot provide adequate settings according to the degree of their disability and the intensity of service required. The premise is that the more restrictive the setting the more intensive the service. If students must be removed from the regular setting then the focus of their programming must always be to move them back to what is considered the least restrictive setting, the regular classroom. This system complements the popular philosophy of mainstreaming, which will be criticized later in this chapter.

In contrast to the Cascade System, Cruickshank et al. (1980) have suggested that the diverse needs of each student require that a continuum of services be available concurrently to the student. Their suggestion

refers to a prime characteristic of the learning-disabled adolescent, namely that of an uneven academic profile. Such academic unevenness entails the student's need of intense remediation in some areas, and less in others. They also note that, in addition to academic remediation, the student may need specially designed services in other areas such as vocational training or counselling. They suggest that each student's program must be designed to take into account the full range of his educational needs. They suggest that a minimum of seven service options be available to each student: (1) counselling services, (2) work/study programs, (3) high-school vocational training, (4) junior-high occupational or career education, (5) learning-disabilities specialists, and (6) resource room and (7) self-contained classes. These services would be designed especially to meet the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent. Based upon complete assessment and analysis of the student's strengths and weaknesses, an appropriate combination of these services would be devised for each student, in much the same manner as the regular student is timetabled into his subject areas. Figure one is an example of an individual program compiled in such a manner. Cruickshank, et al.'s model has two major advantages over the Cascade model. First, this model does not focus on returning the student to the mainstream, but on addressing student need as assessed. Secondly, the continuum of services addresses a variety of possible needs rather than focusing mainly on academic remediation.

Although the instigation of a range of services is desirable, insufficient funding and lack of trained personnel make it difficult



A sample intervention program for Andrea B., grade 11, Deauveaux High School

STUDENT OVERVIEW: Primary difficulties: severe reading disability, socially awkward, shy

Strengths: intelligence, artistic talent, well organized

Regular classes, 25%; Civics, Driver's Education

Resource Room, 10%; Fernald lessons, 40 min./day

LD Specialist, 4%; Consults with regular class teachers and Voc. Center Staff.

Voc Training, 35%; Print Shop and Graphics

Work Study Program, 30%; Walco Wallpaper Co., design transfer apprentice.

Counseling Service, 5%; 12 hr/wk, \$2.35/hr.

*Indirect service, specialist consults with instructors

1 hr/wk L.D. group meeting with guidance counselor

1 hr/wk L.D. group meeting with guidance counselor

Indirect service, specialist consults with instructors

Figure 1. An individualized intervention program developed from the continuum of services.

(from Cruickshank, et al., 1980, p. 200.)

for most school districts to realize this ambition immediately. Initial efforts, therefore, are likely to concentrate on developing one or two of the services described (Wiederholt, 1978a). The philosophy and focus of the organizational and delivery model employed will have a strong influence on the initial programming efforts and on the nature of future services.

Using the Cascade System, a setting considered applicable to a large number of learning-disabled students would be chosen as a starting point in establishing a range of services. The most popular setting presently is the resource room model (Wiederholt, 1978a). Whatever settings are made available, however, would have to be viewed as temporary services as the long term goal of this system is to change the regular classroom in such a way as to eliminate the need for alternative services entirely. The Cascade System depends for its success on the assumption that the entire school system, not only special education, is committed to individualized and flexible education in the regular classroom. The questionable reality of this assumption will be discussed later in this chapter.

Cruickshank et al.'s system, on the other hand, assumes that alternative services are a viable and necessary part of providing appropriate education for learning-disabled students both now and in the future. Therefore, the focus would be on developing appropriate alternatives. Using Cruickshank et al.'s model, the school system, in addition to establishing separate settings such as the resource room model, might also attempt initially to extend or alter regular student

services or already established special education services to address more specifically the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent. In this way the service options for this population might be extended more rapidly. In addition, such services would be established with future development and expansion in mind. Cruickshank et al.'s suggestions for implementing a range of services present a flexible and well-rounded approach to developing individual student programs for the learning-disabled student.

An appropriate range of service options is only one important element in providing optimal programming services. It is also necessary to focus on the individual program, in an attempt to isolate program characteristics conducive to successful education of the learning-disabled adolescent. The next section of this thesis will identify such characteristics.

Necessary Components for Successful Learning-Disabilities Programs

A review of the literature and programs discussed in chapters two, three and four reveals several factors or program components considered consistent with successful teaching of the learning-disabled adolescent. These factors include individualized programming, flexibility, relevant curriculum, appropriate environment, consistency, team approach to teaching and diagnostic services, relevant staff training, student participation, constructive interaction between student and teacher and among concerned professionals, and evaluation of program effectiveness. Table 1 lists the above factors and the authors who support their importance. How these factors are

Table 1

Factors for Success

Factors	Supporting Authors
Individualized Education	Cruickshank, et al., 1980; DeWitt, 1977; Goodman, 1978; Hammill, 1976; Laurie, et al., 1978; Zigmond, 1978; Zigmond, et al., 1978.
Flexibility	Bailey, 1975; Cruickshank, et al., 1980; DeWitt, 1977; Goodman, 1978; Johnson, Blaloc & Nesbitt, 1978; Laurie, et al., 1978; Wiederholt, 1978a; Zigmond, 1978.
Relevant Curriculum	Clark, 1980; Cruickshank, et al., 1980; Deshler, et al., 1979; Irvine, Goodman & Mann, 1978; Kline, 1972; Kronick, 1978; Marsh, et al., 1978; Mauser & Guerrieo, 1977; Vance, 1977; Washburn, 1975; Weiss & Weiss, 1974; Wiederholt, 1978b; Williamson, 1975.
Appropriate Environment	Adelman, 1979; Adelman & Taylor, 1977; Cruickshank, et al., 1980; Deshler, 1978b; DeWitt, 1977; Goodman, 1978; Grill, 1978; Kronick, 1978; Wiederholt, 1978b.
Consistency	Brown, 1978; Cruickshank, et al., 1980; Irvine, Goodman & Mann, 1978.
Team Approach	Alley & Deshler, 1979; Goodman, 1978; Irvine, et al., 1978; Laurie, et al., 1978; Weiss & Weiss, 1974.
Relevant Staff Training	Laurie, 1978; Wiederholt, 1978a; Zigmond, 1978; Zigmond, et al., 1978.
Student Participation	Adelman, 1979; Adelman & Taylor, 1977; Brown, 1978; Cruickshank et al., 1980; Kennedy & Roeder, 1975.
Constructive Interaction	Adelman, 1979; Adelman & Taylor, 1977; Laurie, et al., 1978; Wiederholt, 1978b.
Evaluation	Clark, 1980; Marsh et al., 1978; Zigmond, 1978.

interpreted and applied may vary according to the focus of the program, but these basic components, as they are considered conducive to successful teaching of the learning-disabled adolescent, should be present in any program designed for this population. Each of these factors will be discussed in terms of how it is defined in the program situation and why it is important.

Individualized Programming

The basic expectation from any special education program is that each child will have a program designed to meet her individual needs (Little, 1980). This requires that an assessment of the student's present educational needs be made, that short and long term goals be set, and that a system for continuous evaluation and follow-up be included in the individual's educational plan. The scope of the individualized program can vary greatly. For example, most mainstream programs focus mainly on the student's academic needs. Other programs, such as the Exploratory Occupational Education Program (Irvine, et al., 1978), extend the individualization to include career education needs. Another possibility, suggested by Cruickshank, et al., (1980), is to consider the full range of programs available when developing each student's program. A still more inclusive approach is to assess the full range of the student's needs, both academic and social, and devise an individualized program around the identified needs rather than around the programs available (Brown, 1978). This approach requires a very flexible environment and a staff trained to educate in this manner. Attempting to address the student's needs in this holistic manner would

seem the most complete and useful application of the individualized education program.

The emphasis on individualized programming in the field of learning disabilities is based on the belief that each child has a unique combination of needs that must be identified and addressed if appropriate and successful education is to be provided. There are many reasons for believing that the individualized program is the basic ingredient of appropriate education. First, individualized programs are designed with that particular student's strengths and weaknesses in mind. Therefore, they can be designed to ensure successful learning experiences. In addition, the low ratio and personal contact available in the special education program allows a more flexible and varied approach in terms of content and presentation. It is also possible to obtain more immediate feedback for student and instructor, thus enabling the student process to be extremely responsive to the student's need. The above characteristics of individualized programs are geared to improving self-concept, improving the student's attitude toward learning, and thus facilitating the learning process (Adelman & Taylor, 1977). The effectiveness of an individualized program is believed to be strongly influenced by the presence or absence, in the student's environment, of the factors to be discussed below.

Flexibility

Flexibility must be present in the teaching practices of learning-disabilities programs if they are to be open to variety and change. There must be a variety of teaching approaches such as one-to-one

instruction, group instruction, and multi-media instruction available and utilized if instructors are to enhance particular learning strengths and remediate the learning weaknesses. Varied modes of expression must also be allowed and encouraged. Students must be taught how to gain information from non-text book sources, and how to express it by means other than pen and paper, and a variety of methods of measuring the degree of success of the learning experience must be instigated. There must also be flexibility and variety in terms of the teaching methods employed. Rather than choosing one method for one program or student, a combination of such methods as diagnostic prescriptive teaching, mastery learning, language experience or contract learning should be considered. Each student may have different areas of need that require a different method or approach. For example, in mathematics a mastery learning program may be appropriate, but for reading the student may require an individualized developmental program, and perhaps in the area of social perceptions one-to-one counselling or group interaction will be indicated. If a program is to be truly flexible and open to change, different combinations of these teaching strategies must be possible. In order to allow for this kind of flexibility in teaching practices, there must be flexibility in the time available for programming so that the rate of learning can be adjusted to suit each student's particular need.

Relevant Curriculum

Flexibility and variety are also necessary in order to create relevant, individualized curriculum. It must be possible to alter or adjust the materials used, the content taught, and the sources of the content, if the curriculum content and format are to be truly suited to each student. As noted in chapter three, in the field of learning disabilities a wide variety of curriculum is presented as relevant and there are many opinions as to what is most relevant to the learning-disabled adolescent. The tendency in the public school system at present is toward mainstreaming programs and therefore toward a focus on academic curriculum, thereby ignoring other important curriculum areas. Relevant curriculum in this thesis is defined as curriculum that is meaningful to the individual student, that addresses his needs and interests, and is open to variation, negotiation and change (Adelman, 1978). Presumably, for the high school student, the relevant curriculum must focus upon material that will be useful to the student when he leaves school. For many learning-disabled adolescents, this is likely to be functional curriculum, career oriented curriculum and curriculum that addresses the student's problems in the area of social perception (Grill, 1978). These latter curriculum areas are the focuses of non-mainstreaming programs. The priorities in school systems, which emphasize mainstreaming, must be reconsidered if a truly relevant and flexible curriculum is to be available to the learning-disabled adolescent.

Consistency

This factor will be addressed in terms of curriculum continuity. One of the problems cited in chapter one, in terms of secondary programming for adolescents, was the lack of continuity in programming. Brown (1978) notes the importance of communication between levels of programming and between different programs at the secondary level if a continuity of services and curriculum is to be realized. Continuity in programming requires that a comprehensive educational plan with specific short and long term goals be apparent. This program must, of course, be flexible and open to change. Alterations however, should result from carefully considered evaluation of the student's past, present and future needs, not simply from a change of school, grade or special program setting. A comprehensive approach to programming will identify and consider complementary or future programming needs, and address the issue of follow-up. Continuity in programming is particularly important to the learning-disabled adolescent as often these students feel that they have been removed from where the 'real' education is taking place. An awareness of past and future educational plans will offer them a greater degree of stability and help develop a sense of direction and accomplishment (Washburn, 1979). This sense of participation in an overall plan should increase student motivation and opportunity for success. By developing an overall plan, the efficiency of special education programming will be increased.

Student Participation

Student motivation will also be increased if the student has participated and does participate in planning her program (Adelman, 1978). Student participation is an especially important factor at the secondary level since adolescents are experiencing strivings for independence and need to feel some control over their existence. They are often frustrated by the authority figures in their lives and feel a necessity to test their ability to make their own decisions. Although they are still in need of guidance, they must be given the opportunity to explore the ramifications of decision making and independence (Adelman, 1978). The learning-disabled adolescent is no exception. If the learning-disabilities program is to succeed in motivating and teaching the learning-disabled adolescent, it is extremely important that the student be given the opportunity to participate in developing her own individual program. Students should be involved in making decisions regarding program curriculum content, behavior expectations and program format. In addition to benefiting the student, their participation can also help keep the program content relevant and realistic. Contract learning, as described in chapter three, is a common method employed to ensure student involvement. Student participation has often not been encouraged in the school system (Marsh, et al., 1978), and it is a factor teachers must be trained to encourage if it is to be implemented successfully. The student's participation in planning her own education is a key factor in developing constructive interaction, the next program component to be discussed.

Constructive Interaction

Constructive interaction must be encouraged between students and staff, parents, peers and community and also among staff members if successful programming is to occur. Constructive interaction between student and staff involves shared decision making and shared responsibility for learning between student and instructor. It is believed that such interaction encourages self-confidence and will help to improve the student's concept of his own abilities (Adelman, 1978). Improving self-concept is a frequently quoted goal of learning-disabilities programs.

It is also important to focus on improving the student's interaction with peers, family and community. As noted by Deshler (1978b), inappropriate social and interpersonal responses are considered to be one of the main problem areas for many learning-disabled adolescents as it affects various facets of their lives: school, home and employment. Hence these students must have instruction in intra/interpersonal communication skills included in their program curriculum if they are to realize their effect on others (Heron & Skinner, 1981).

Team Approach

As stated above, constructive interaction among staff is also necessary for program success. One of the factors cited as responsible for the success of the Exploratory Occupational Education Program, described in chapter three, was the combined efforts of regular and special education staff. In this program, the responsibility for

devising and implementing the programs was a shared one, and co-operation of both professionals was required. The lack of co-operation and time to build a working relationship with regular classroom teachers is cited as one of the main problems of the learning assistance teacher in the secondary school. Regular exchange of information and expertise regarding program construction, implementation and adjustment would facilitate co-operation among not only educational professionals but professionals from community and health agencies and parents involved in the education of the learning-disabled student. These people must understand each other's particular vantage point, in relation to the student, in order to offer support and advice as needed and thus benefit the student fully.

Staff Training

Although there has been some improvement in recent years, the training of both learning assistance teachers and regular teachers is considered inadequate in terms of educating the learning-disabled adolescent. Learning assistance teachers are expected to assume a complicated role in the secondary school, involving instruction, assessment and consultation. However, specific competencies are only now being devised for their training (Zigmond, et al., 1978). The regular secondary teacher is trained to teach in a specific content areas on a group basis. However, frequently these teachers are being expected to administer individual programs to students who often need help with basic academic skills. Clearly, teachers must be trained to task. If they are expected to work as part of a team, use a variety of

techniques and approaches, and individualize programming, then they must be given training specific to these tasks.

Appropriate Environment

Appropriate environment focuses on providing an environment flexible enough to adjust to individual student needs as they arise. The tendency in special education and public education programs is to fit the student to the program that is available but not necessarily appropriate to her needs. The truly appropriate environment will be one that is created to meet the student's needs. The interaction of student and environment is seen as a key factor in the learning process and it is suggested that this interaction affects the student's ability and desire to learn (Adelman, 1978; Wiederholt, 1978b). In order for the effect to be positive, the environment created must allow for success and encourage development, thus increasing the self-concept of the student (Adelman, 1978). The factors that have been discussed as important to program success are believed to encourage positive interaction of student and environment.

The physical aspects (e.g. location) of the program are also important and can often affect program and teaching practices, the degree of variety possible in terms of curriculum, and the student's reaction to programming. For instance, the space available might encourage one-to-one or group instruction, facilitate or hinder the use of audio-visual aids or encourage or discourage more than one type of learning activity at a time. In addition the appearance of the room can be oppressive or cheerful and the arrangement of furniture or equipment can

suggest restricted access to materials. Further, a setting independent of the regular school building can encourage more community input and thus influence the content and presentation of curriculum. Whatever the environment, it is important that there be a co-operative and supportive atmosphere inside and outside the program if it is to be successful. There must also be easy access to appropriate support programs or follow-up programs if the program is to be a holistic one."

Evaluation

Evaluation, the final program component listed, refers to the responsibility of special education teachers to monitor and assess their teaching. In order to do this a program must set clear goals, have clear program priorities, student identification criterion, a clearly stated curriculum focus, and well developed evaluation procedures. This approach to educational programming is simply good educational practice, as the data collected is necessary for making responsible decisions regarding program change and can be used for research purposes. Supporting data is also demanded increasingly from the government and the public when educators request renewed or expanded program funding (Csapo, 1978a). Because of the high cost of special education, it is particularly essential for educators in this area to have validating data when submitting programming proposals.

Conclusion

The program components listed above are interrelated and their effectiveness is dependent on the combination of components present and

to what extent each component is incorporated into the program. For example, individualized programming requires a flexible environment and the degree of flexibility will affect the extent of student participation or the variety of curriculum foci within the individualized program. Individualization and flexibility are perhaps the most frequently mentioned components in relation to successful programming for learning-disabled adolescents.

Much of the programming for the learning-disabled adolescent presently is focused on maintaining them in the mainstream. This has considerable effect on the ability of the programs to provide both a range of services and the factors for successful teaching that are considered necessary to adequately serve their population (Poplin, 1981). Therefore, the next section of this thesis will examine mainstreaming in terms of its ability to provide for the above factors considered essential to successful programming for learning-disabled adolescents.

Mainstreaming: Problems Inherent in this Popular Trend

The mainstreaming philosophy suggests that every student should receive an appropriate education in the least restrictive atmosphere possible--that being the regular classroom. If other environments are deemed necessary, the student should be removed from the mainstream for as little time as possible. The goal should always be to provide the appropriate education in the classroom (Goodman, 1978). Appropriate education for the learning disabled means individualized programming. The philosophy of mainstreaming assumes that the regular classroom can

offer the flexibility necessary for individualization and, further, that individualization is a priority of the school system. Neither the philosophy of mainstreaming or its assumptions, however, have been validated by research. Several educators in fact, indicate that these are not valid assumptions (Marsh, et al., 1978; Zigmond, 1978). They argue that our school system, particularly the high school system, is not structured for individualization. The high-school system assumes that the systematic-group approach to teaching used in the regular classroom is the most effective approach to education, and that academics are the appropriate curriculum focus (Bremer and von Moschzisker, 1971). The validity of other instructional environment and curriculum foci are ignored. Alternatives and their students, therefore, are given a negative connotation and are stigmatized as second class (Csapo, 1978a; Marsh, et al., 1978).

Flexibility and individualization, two of the most important factors for successful teaching of the learning disabled, are lost in the mass education process (National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education, 1976). Students who differ from the 'norm' are pushed out (Csapo, 1978a). The nature of the regular classroom is restrictive, failure-oriented, graded and inflexible (Neill, 1970). The need for change in the teaching methods and curriculum content employed by the school system was noted in chapter four. This change would be beneficial for all students but is imperative for handicapped students.

Because there are set standards, little individualization, and competition rather than cooperation, schools accept failure as reality.

Children are classified as handicapped, slow, disabled, etc. because the system is not flexible enough to teach them (Fleming, 1977), nor accept them on their own merits. It is impossible for many students who cannot match up to the prescribed standards at the prescribed speeds, to succeed in the mainstream. Perceived failure has devastating consequences to the individual (Hentoff, 1977). It can result in low self-esteem, low motivation and therefore, poor skills (Deshler, 1978a). Because academic achievement is the main thrust of the school system, students who constantly experience academic failure have little chance of experiencing success in school, no matter what their abilities (Holt, 1969).

Learning-disabled students, even if they can 'get by' in the regular classroom, are doubly disadvantaged by their disability, and by their lack of success and its effect on them. The effect is not just confined to school; it affects their entire lives, and their relationships with peers, adults, and parents (Deshler, 1978a).

If mainstreaming as a philosophy were to succeed, the foci in education would have to include flexibility, openness to change, and a commitment to each student as an individual with different needs and style of learning. Instead of mass education of large groups, there would have to be a focus on individualization, smaller student-teacher ratios, and a non-graded approach that would teach for success not failure (Little, 1980). There would have to be variety in teaching methods, curricula, environments and evaluation methods. All of these would have to be adjusted for each individual so that he could learn material relevant to him in the way and at the speed most suited to him,

in the environment best suited to her. Since he, as the individual concerned, should have input into what suits him best, the system would also have to allow for active student participation in planning his program (Adelman & Taylor, 1977). While the effect of these factors on successful learning must yet be empirically validated educators seem to believe that they are conducive to a successful learning situation.

In order to implement these factors in the regular school, the system would have to be committed to an entirely different training program for its teachers and other staff. It would be training in teaching individually, organizing for such teaching, teamwork, cooperation, teacher-student interaction, allowing student participation in planning, and in evaluation. The school system would also have to commit itself to teaching for cooperation rather than competition so as to eliminate the concept of failure.

There is, however, no such overall commitment in our present school system. There are pockets of people committed to such change, but they are the exception to the rule. What our school system does with the students who do not fit into the regular classroom, and they are an increasing number, is provide them with Special Education programs. Special Education, then, is the mainstream's answer to its inability to individualize (Zigmond, 1978). Within the mainstreaming reality, however, even Special Education is restricted and confined by its mandate to return the student to the regular classroom as soon as possible (Poplin, 1981). Because of this mandate there are limits to curriculum content, evaluation procedures, type of expression choice, environment, and time

allowed the student. Thus the degree of individualization is restricted by the program philosophy. There are limits to cooperation between the student's teachers, dictated by the fact that no regular time is allotted to that. There are also limits to encouraging student participation in planning and taking responsibility for her own program. And finally, when and if the special education goal of returning the student to the regular classroom is achieved, she is back in the same restrictive environment which was a major factor in her initial failure. It is little wonder that many students who do progress in the relatively more flexible and individual environment of special education classes, fail again upon their return to regular classes. The system, in its commitment to mass education and mass standards is simply inadequate in meeting the needs of all the individuals within it, due to its inflexibility and lack of variety. The popular trend to mainstreaming simply perpetuates that inadequacy.

As is currently true of all of North America, the British Columbia government espouses the mainstreaming philosophy of education, seeing the regular classroom as the best placement for students. That has not always been the case, however, as the brief history of Special Education in British Columbia this thesis presents will show. The following chapter of this thesis will discuss and critique special education services, as they relate to the learning-disabled adolescent in British Columbia. Since the educational philosophy in B. C. is mainstreaming, it is important to note that the above criticisms of that philosophy and its inadequacies will underlie the following discussion.

Chapter Six

SECONDARY LEARNING DISABILITIES SERVICES IN B.C.

History of Secondary Special Education in British Columbia

Special education at the secondary level in B.C. began in 1960 with the instigation of the Occupational Programs. These programs were basically work/study programs and were established to serve the 'slow stream' in the secondary schools. The efficacy of these programs was questioned severely by parents and teachers and as a result, between 1971 and 1973, the Department of Education set up a committee to investigate special education needs at the secondary level. This investigation revealed that the occupational program had become a 'dumping ground' for any student who was not succeeding in the regular classroom. The investigation resolved that there was an immediate need for expansion and diversification of special education services for secondary students.

The most significant change occurred in funding policy. In 1973 the funding approvals previously allocated for occupational programs were changed to approvals for Learning Assistance. The purpose of this change was to permit a more flexible and individualized approach to special education programming at the secondary level (Csapo, 1977). At this time, funding approvals for learning assistance were instigated only at the junior secondary level. It was not until 1978/79 that they were established at the senior secondary level.

In 1973 the guidelines for using funding allocated for learning

assistance were very unspecific. They stated only that learning assistance should respond to the particular needs identified in the student population. No definition or description of a learning assistance program was given. However, as in other parts of North America, learning assistance centers patterned after the elementary resource room were the most common type of program to emerge. It was in these programs that the learning-disabled student, only one portion of the student population served by learning assistance services, first began to receive individualized programming services in B.C. During the mid-seventies the government's philosophy became more specifically one of mainstreaming.

In the 1978/79 Guides to Special Education Programs the government states that the emphasis should shift from categorizing children to attending to their educational needs in an individualized way. The importance of providing education in as normal an environment as possible and of encouraging interaction between normally-achieving students and exceptional children was stressed. In 1979 (Province of B.C.) Circular No. 85, the Government points out that it is not their intention to suggest that every child should be mainstreamed. The intention however, is that separate settings, if necessary, should be temporary in nature and that return to the mainstream should be the goal for all but the most severely handicapped. Although the philosophy of programming was clarified, there was still no definition of Learning Assistance in British Columbia nor was a specific learning-disabilities program description available.

The present policy of the Special Programs Branch as stated in the 1981 Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (Province of B.C., 1981) is that every child has a right to an appropriate education, which will develop his full potential and encourage him to lead as independent and productive a life as possible. The stated goals of the Special Programs Branch are to provide services of an individualized nature in the least restrictive setting possible, developing a comprehensive range of special programs, and provide leadership in terms of developing and implementing programming policy, direction and standards of operation. The government advocates a Cascade service delivery model in implementing the range of services presently available. These services include: Learning Assistance Programs (100), a non-categorized, individualized remedial service for mildly handicapped students; Specific Programs (200), intended for students with specific problems such as specific learning disabilities, mental retardation, or hearing or visual problems; Joint Programs (300) refers to joint government funding, with Rehabilitation Programs being the only programs in this category presently; Non-Categorized Programs (400), designed to meet needs not necessarily specific to a particular group of students for example, extremes of climate or distance; Other Programs (500), deals with minority and second language students. Program funding is allocated through the above categories. The Government has recognized in their 1981 Manual, that a system of funding through categories is in conflict with the philosophy of providing individualized education in an integrated setting for all students. The Special Programs Branch states that they are

trying to develop a funding system more compatible with their stated philosophy of education. In the 1981 Manual, program guidelines are given for each program in each of the categories listed above. Those guidelines pertaining specifically to services for learning-disabled students will be discussed in the next section.

Guidelines for Learning Disabilities Services in B.C.

At present, moderately learning-disabled students are served under the funding category of Learning Assistance Program (100) and the category of Specific Programs (200) which includes a newly instigated program designated for the severely learning disabled. A description of the 1981 guidelines, for each of these programs, followed by a critique, will be presented below.

Guidelines for Learning Assistance Programs

In the 1981 Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, published by the Special Programs Branch of the Ministry of Education in B.C., the designation Learning Assistance became Learning Assistance Programs and a definition and description of such a program was given for the first time. However, as will be seen in the following description the guidelines use undefined educational terms and ambiguous language throughout. This lack of specificity will be addressed later in the critique of the guidelines.

The stated goal of the Learning Assistance Program is to maintain students in the regular classroom. This goal is in accordance with the mainstreaming philosophy espoused by the Special Programs Branch. The

population identified as suitable for these programs includes students who are experiencing 'significant difficulty' performing to expected potential in one or more areas of academics. These students are described as those with mild to moderate learning disabilities, or problems related to hearing, visual, or physical handicaps. The guidelines clearly state that these services are not for 'low stream' students, severe behavior problems, or students with severe learning disabilities. It should be noted that the designation of students has changed significantly since the inception of funding approvals for learning assistance. In 1973, slow-stream students were considered an appropriate focus. However, over the last part of the seventies, the focus slowly became more specifically descriptive of mild to moderate disabilities. This change reflects the increased focus on and awareness of the learning-disabled student in the educational communities across North America. It is also important to note that although slow-stream students are not to receive direct instruction in the resource room, the learning assistance teacher is expected to provide consultation services to the regular teacher in an effort to establish a modified curriculum and appropriate teaching strategies for these students. The relevance of these expectations will become evident in the later discussion of the student population presently being served by the learning assistance centers, as the slow-stream student constitutes a large portion of that population. The suggested vehicle for screening and placing students is a school based team consisting of the principal, learning assistance teacher, referring teacher, counsellor and any other significant adults. The program is

further defined by describing the three major services to be offered by the learning assistance program. These are assessment, direct instruction and consultation.

The assessment procedure suggested by the guidelines includes examination of previous school records, accumulation of significant information from parents, teachers, counsellors, nurses and other professionals that may be involved with the adolescent, classroom observation, examination of regular classroom achievement and administration of appropriate education tests. The assessment would be carried out by the above described school-based team, which would be co-ordinated by the learning assistance teacher. The learning assistance teacher would be responsible for initial assessment activities and on-going assessment, in the form of diagnostic teaching and pre- and post testing. These assessment procedures are expected to take twenty percent of the learning assistance teacher's time. In conjunction with the school-based team, described above, the learning assistance teacher would also be responsible for program review and decisions to terminate services. The information gathered by the assessment procedures would form the basis for program placement and programming decisions.

The second service to be offered is that of direct instruction. The government guidelines recommend that an individual education program (I.E.P.) be devised for each student served by the learning assistance program. This program should state the student's present level of functioning, overall goals for the program and instructional objectives. In addition, the instructional services offered should be

described and evaluation procedures should be built into the program. Finally, an approximate completion time should be indicated and a review date scheduled. The I.E.P. should be the result of a co-operative effort among the members of the school-based team with the learning assistance teacher directing the efforts. Sixty minutes per day, per student, in the resource room is suggested as the maximum instruction time and the case load of the learning assistance teacher is not to exceed twenty students. In the course of a year, however, it is expected that up to 40-50 students might be served by the center. Direct instruction is expected to consume sixty percent of the learning assistance teacher's time.

Consultation, the third main service offered, would occupy the final twenty percent of the learning assistance teacher's time. It is suggested that this time be spent consulting with teachers regarding student progress, necessary program modification, and alternate teaching methods that might facilitate the learning of the special education student in the regular classroom. Consultation with administrators and parents would also be part of this service.

The guidelines also suggest teacher competencies which revolve around these three roles. They suggest that learning assistance teachers hired to teach in the programs be competent in the areas of assessment, development and implementation of an I.E.P., have knowledge of and expertise working with variety of teaching materials and instructional techniques, have the skills to manage an educational center and to communicate with peers, administrators and parents. The Branch also

advocates appropriate inservice training for present program staff in order to help them attain competency in these areas.

Critique. The Learning Assistance Program as described above is a mainstreaming program model. As such, it is reasonable to expect that this program will experience the problems described, in chapters three and five, as common to mainstreaming programs in the present school system. Two of the common problems, insufficient allotment of time for service delivery and inadequate training for both learning assistance teachers and regular classroom teachers, are evident in the government guidelines for The Learning Assistance Program.

For example, the time allotment for each major service offered by the learning assistance teacher can be estimated according to the percentages suggested in the government guidelines. These percentages would allow approximately ten minutes of one-to-one instruction per student day, and one hour and twelve minutes each, per day for assessment and consultation services. Given the extent of the individualized instruction expected, the extensive assessment procedures suggested, the co-ordination duties outlined, and the fact that in the secondary school there can be as many as four to five teachers per student to consult with, the time allotment appears very unrealistic. The learning assistance teacher's time allotment becomes even more insufficient when one considers that they are also expected to provide a consultation role which involves curriculum modification for an undetermined number of slow-stream students. It seems inevitable that the student-teacher ratio

in learning assistance programs will have to be reassessed to allow for sufficient allotment of time if the mandated services are to be delivered effectively.

In terms of training, the government guidelines assume that the learning assistance teacher is trained to do major consultation and liaison work, although such training is not specifically alluded to in their recommended course work. The course work recommended focuses on assessment, diagnosis and remediation of learning disabilities, and knowledge in the areas of counselling and psychology. In addition, the guidelines assume that the regular teacher is trained to modify curriculum for slow learners, and to integrate and administer programs for the mildly handicapped in their classroom.

The guidelines, however, do suggest in-service training for the learning assistance teachers, but they leave the instigation of these services to the individual school districts. Schwartz's study (1979) indicates that inservice training in the province is haphazard and inadequate. The quality and quantity varies widely among districts. It seems likely, therefore, that if consistent services are to be achieved, considerable direction and initiative from the Branch will be necessary. It would seem that the area of training must be more realistically addressed if the guidelines are to be truly useful to programs in the field.

Another major criticism of the guidelines is that they have instituted the resource room model developed for the elementary school and made no attempt to distinguish between services offered at the elementary

and secondary levels. The inadequacy of applying a model intended for the elementary school in the secondary school has been well documented (Goodman & Mann, 1978; Marsh, et al., 1978; Wiederholt, 1978a) and has been previously discussed in this thesis. Because of the differences in both the student populations and the two school systems (see pp. 19-31) chapter one), the role of the learning assistance teacher, in terms of assessment, instruction and consultation, is far more complicated at the secondary school level than it is at the elementary level. A further complication is the variance in goals and training between regular and special education staff at this level. Special education staff are trained to teach basic skills and to individualize curriculum, while regular secondary staff are trained to teach specific subject areas on a group basis. These differences in training and goals lead to lack of understanding and, therefore, lack of co-operation. This greatly complicates the instruction and consultation roles of the learning assistance teacher at this level. The above differences influence the effectiveness of this program model in the secondary system (Marsh, et al., 1978; Wiederholt, 1978a). It is clear that modifications must be made if this program model is to be applied in this setting.

Another problem area, that runs throughout the guidelines, is the conditional terminology (Krywaniuk, 1979). The description of the guidelines given in this thesis is written mainly in the conditional tense because that is the style of the original. The permissive language, i.e. 'should' or 'may' instead of 'shall' or 'must', allows many loop holes for school districts applying these guidelines, and

allows differences between the guidelines and reality to continue. For example, the guidelines state that specific space 'should' be assigned to the learning assistance program, that an effort 'should' be made to evaluate programs yearly, and that I.E.P.s 'should' be developed for each student. Specific space, evaluation, and individualized programs are basic to program success and 'could' be lost through this indefinite approach. The goals, criterion and priorities presented in the guidelines also reflect this vague use of language. They are not stated in specific instructional terms. For example, the term 'significant difficulty' could be interpreted to mean one, two, three or more years behind expected potential. The guidelines must be more specific if they are to be useful in identifying students for placement. Programs must presently set their own goals, criterion and priorities (Schwartz, 1979). Guidelines in these areas need not be dogmatic in order to be useful but if the aim is to provide leadership and equitable services the language must be clearer and more specific than it is presently. These guidelines are the most extensive ones offered to date; however, they will not improve the learning programs in the field until the above problem areas are addressed more effectively.

Guidelines for Severe Learning Disabilities Programs

In the 1981 Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, the Special Programs Branch has defined the learning-disabled population in the following manner:

Children with learning disabilities are those who show a significant discrepancy between their estimated learning potential and actual performance. This discrepancy is related to basic problems in attention, perception, symbolization and the understanding or use of spoken or written language. These may be manifested in difficulties in thinking, listening, talking, reading, writing, spelling or computing. These problems may or may not be accompanied by demonstrable central nervous system dysfunctions. (Province of B.C., 1981, p. 11.7)

The severely disabled are stated to be those children who cannot be instructed by conventional methods.

The Special Programs Branch suggests that the identification process for the severely learning disabled consist of a complete psychoeducational assessment which should include medical and developmental information. Parental permission and involvement should be sought in terms of data collection and program placement.

Suggested program settings include: "part-time withdrawal to a resource room (up to 50% - 60% of the time), assessment and programming centres, special day classes, and Regional Educational Support Centres" (Province of B.C., 1981, p. 11.8). The Regional Educational Support Centres will be established by the Special Programs Branch and are intended to offer assessment and educational programming services to students in districts that do not have appropriate services for the severely disabled. Each Centre would serve several districts. These centres will also offer in-service for the referring staff in order to increase their ability to cope with individual differences in the classroom and to facilitate the return of the student to the home school as quickly as possible.

In terms of instructional approach, a fully developed Individualized Education Program is recommended, with intensive, short-term individualized instruction being provided. The goal is always to be to return the students to their classroom as soon as possible. Regular review of each student's program and placement is also recommended.

Critique. Overall, the above guidelines are much less specific than those given for the learning assistance programs. For instance, there is no suggested student-teacher ratio, no recommended time for remediation, and although several alternative settings are suggested, with the exception of the Regional Resource Center, no program descriptions are offered. It is likely that the same variance in quality and quantity of programming that occurred in the development of the learning assistance program as a result of lack of leadership (Schwartz, 1979), may also occur in the development of programming for the severely learning disabled.

There are many similarities in services and problems between the guidelines for learning assistance programs and those for the severely learning disabled. In terms of services, Individualized Educational Programming is recommended for both program categories, and the curriculum focus for both is academic remediation. In reference to curriculum, it is important to note that no mention is made of the need for alternative curricula such as career education, socialization training or functional curriculum, although these are clearly recognized as appropriate, if not preferable curricula foci for the severely learning disabled at the secondary level. In any case it is definitely agreed

that no one focus is sufficient (Grill, 1978; Kronick, 1978; Vance, 1977). One reason for the narrow curriculum focus in B.C. may be that the Government guidelines for Severe Learning Disabilities Programs, as with the Learning Assistance Program Guidelines, do not distinguish between services to be offered at the elementary and secondary level. Career, functional and socialization curricula are mainly of concern in programming for the learning-disabled adolescent rather than the learning-disabled child. If the differences between secondary and elementary student needs were considered, it would be clear that the focus of programming for the severely learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. must extend beyond academic remediation.

Other similar problem areas are the use of conditional terminology and lack of specific goals, criterion or priorities. The goals of these programs differ slightly from those of moderately learning disabled programs, in that they speak of returning the student to the mainstream rather than maintaining her in it. However, the regular classroom is still considered the preferable setting. This focus on mainstreaming is another reason for the narrow focus of curriculum. With the same emphasis on mainstreaming it is likely that many of the same problems in the areas of training and time-allotment discussed in reference to the learning assistance program will be apparent in these programs. In fact, in the programs designed for the severely learning disabled, reviewed in the next section, problems in these areas are apparent.

One of the differences between the guidelines for the two program categories is, of course, the difference in student population. The

population in the programs for the severely disabled is restricted to students with specific learning disabilities; therefore there is not the mixture of handicaps found in the learning assistance programs. However, as the criteria are not stated in instructional terms there is much room for variance in choosing population parameters for these programs. Another major difference is the fact that a variety of settings is suggested. The implication is that the least restrictive alternative setting possible should be chosen. No directions as to how these choices should be made are offered. The choice of program setting and format appears to be completely open as the settings mentioned appear to be only possible examples.

Severe Learning Disabilities is a very new program category and this may account for the vague nature of the guidelines. Again, however, in order to be useful to professionals establishing programs in the field, the guidelines will have to be much more specific. In the next section, programming for the learning disabled as it presently exists in B.C. schools will be discussed. Similarities and differences between the guidelines and the programs will be pointed out, and problems incurred by the programs will be discussed.

Learning Assistance: In the Field

Learning assistance is one of the major services available to the learning-disabled adolescent in British Columbia. Because it developed without centrally mandated standards or terms of reference (Schwartz, 1979), the format and quality of this service varies from school to

school. However, most commonly the services are based on the mainstream model, described in chapter three, which combines the resource room and the regular classroom settings to provide academic remediation to the mildly handicapped student. Schwartz, in his extensive survey Learning Assistance in British Columbia: its forms, its functions (1979), describes the students served by learning assistance as those who cannot succeed in the regular program without extra help, but who do not need special class placement as their disabilities are moderate in nature, or those who do not fit into the special classes available. This would suggest that the population parameters of learning assistance programs in the field are broader than those indicated as appropriate in the Government guidelines. The role of the learning assistance teacher described by Schwartz is similar to that described in the Government guidelines in that it includes the basic services of assessment, consultation and direct instruction. However, the survey indicates that direct instruction can be on a short or long-term withdrawal basis. Therefore, the length of remediation is more variable in the field than that recommended in the Government guidelines. In the next section, the composition of the student population in learning assistance centers in B.C. will be examined and the effects of its varied nature on remediation services will be discussed.

Student Population

The Vancouver School district, the largest district in the lower mainland, has eighteen secondary learning assistance centers which are called Skills Development Centers. Statistics from a survey of these

centers gives a clear picture of the composition of the student population as determined by the programs' learning assistance teachers (Kettle & Hunter, 1979). Slow learners make up the largest portion, about forty-one percent, of students enrolled. Learning-disabled students were the next largest group, about twenty-one percent of the population. The most common distinction made between slow learners and learning-disabled learners is that slow learners generally operate below grade level in most subject areas and their achievement is consistent with their estimated potential as indicated on standardized tests. Learning-disabled students, on the other hand, generally display an uneven achievement profile and perform below projected potential as indicated on standardized tests (DeLoach, Earl, Brown, Poplin, & Warner, 1981; Kavale & Nye, 1981). Other student categories, each constituting less than ten percent of the population, included behavior problems, emotional disturbances, cultural deprivation, clinical language disorders, educable mentally retarded, and trainable mentally retarded. English language training students made up eleven percent of the population (Kettle & Hunter, 1979). Schwartz's survey corroborates these statistics as typical of centers across B.C.

It appears that these centers are not focusing on students needing short-term remediation, such as the moderately learning disabled, as mandated by the B.C. government guidelines. Rather, they are acting as a 'catch-all' for students who cannot be adequately served by the mainstream. The chronically 'slow learner', who presently constitutes the largest portion of the learning assistance program population, requires

assistance on a continual basis in order to keep pace with the curriculum demands of the regular classroom (McBride, 1980). Harber (1981) points out that special education placement has not been shown to increase the academic abilities of these students. He also notes that the large number of 'slow learners' presently receiving long-term assistance considerably diminishes accessibility to learning assistance for the learning-disabled students. Either the mainstream must be altered to accommodate the 'slow learner' or alternative services that specifically address the needs of these students must be established. In this way the learning assistance centers can begin to focus on students requiring short-term remediation.

The Government guidelines state that the 'slow learner' should not be receiving direct instruction in the learning assistance centers. These guidelines suggest that the learning assistance teacher and regular classroom teacher, through consultation, alter content and teaching techniques to make the curriculum more appropriate to the 'slow learner'. In order to accomplish this task the classroom teacher would have to be adequately trained to teach the 'slow learner', who would require alternate approaches to programming. They would also require adequate time to present the curriculum in a flexible manner and to consult with the learning assistance teacher regarding program alteration. To provide consultation and program planning for such a large number of students, would require a major portion of the learning assistance teacher's time. Both professionals would require training in the areas of consultation and team teaching. However, presently neither the learning assistance

teacher nor the regular classroom teacher has been given time to operationalize the suggested program or training for the consultation role (Schwartz, 1979). It would appear that the suggestion made in the Government guidelines for educating the 'slow learner' is not presently realistic. More specific programming arrangements for educating this population must be made. For instance protected classes, similar to those suggested for students with behavior problems, might be established for the slow learner. This is an integrated classroom with a lower teacher/student ratio. Such a class, coupled with adequate training for the regular teacher in alternate approaches to programming, would provide appropriate placement for the slow learner and sustain the principle of integration. Redressing this problem is essential if the learning assistance teachers are to devote their attention to the population of learning-disabled adolescents specified in the Government guidelines.

Services Offered in Learning Assistance Centers in B.C.

The reality of assessment, direct instruction and consultation as they are provided in the field is often very different from the services suggested in the Government guidelines as appropriate for learning assistance centers. The differences in services, as they are outlined in the Government guidelines and are found in reality, will be described and discussed in this section.

Referral and assessment. Referral and assessment is approached on an informal basis by eighteen percent of the secondary schools in B.C. (Schwartz, 1979). Informal assessment procedures usually involve only the learning assistance teacher and the classroom teacher. The learning assistance teacher generally makes the final decision as to program placement. This procedure has the advantage of being very fast and flexible. However, it can also be very arbitrary as there are no established procedures and it relies so much on the judgement of one person. Established entrance criterion for students to be served in learning assistance centers are imperative if arbitrary decisions are to be reduced. Without such entrance criteria learning assistance teachers may be obliged to accept inappropriate students, or the regular teacher may feel powerless to affect placement decisions. Interaction between the regular classroom teacher and the learning assistance teacher forms the base of the informal assessment procedure. Therefore, this procedure requires a good working relationship between these professionals in order to be effective. Unfortunately, as has been noted, co-operation is often poor between special education staff and regular staff in the high school.

A formal procedure is suggested in the Government guidelines and is noted in the literature as essential. Schwartz (1979) points out that a formal procedure requires more time and is not as flexible as an informal procedure, but is more equitable, organized and consistent. The formal procedure establishes who will send referrals, who will be consulted and who will make the final decisions. Criterion and priori-

ties for program entry are established and specific assessment and record keeping procedures are instituted. The B.C. government guidelines suggest that the formal referral and assessment procedures be executed by a school-based team. However, a formally constituted school-based team, such as that described in the B.C. Government guidelines is not available to seven-eighths of the learning assistance teachers in B.C. (Schwartz, 1979).

Because the formal procedure is very time consuming, many school districts operate somewhere between an informal and formal procedure, and the responsibility for the procedure is predominantly the learning assistance teacher's. Principals, counsellors and special education staff in B.C. are sometimes involved in these practices (Schwartz, 1979). Assessment reportedly consumes nine percent of the learning assistance teacher's time. It should be noted that this is eleven percent less than suggested in the Government guidelines, and the learning assistance teachers are presently reporting a lack of adequate instruction time. It must also be noted that learning assistance teachers do not feel adequately trained for the assessment role assigned to them. Assessment is second on a list of professional development needs (Schwartz, 1979). This is clearly an area where provincial inservice training should be instigated.

Direct instruction. Direct instruction is the major role of the learning assistance teacher and occupies 70% of his time in the field. The most common problem areas encountered include reading, language disabilities, math and behavior problems. Multiple problems are observed

in many students. The major goals reported by the learning assistance centers relate to meeting these instructional needs (Schwartz, 1979).

Goals. The major goal related by the learning assistance centers was to provide remedial instruction in reading and mathematics. Other goals related to direct instruction stressed in the documents of the Vancouver and Burnaby School Districts were:

1. Developing individual education programs (I.E.P.)'s for each student.
2. Designing programs that facilitated re-entry into the mainstream.
3. Raising self-concept and improving interaction by providing successful experiences.
4. Designing flexible programs to meet the wide range of academic and social needs identified.

The first two goals relate directly to expectations stated in the 1981 Government guidelines and are well recognized as goals in most mainstreaming programs. The second goal incorporates the assumption that the mainstream is the best place for the student. This goal is related to philosophy and tends to focus on the ultimate environment rather than the student's need. Because learning assistance centers are, as suggested in goal two, geared to returning the student to the mainstream, it is reasonable to interpret goals three and four in terms of mainstreaming needs. In this light, the lack of academic and social skills is examined in terms of what is needed to survive in the mainstream. The danger in this is that the focus tends to be on helping the student

measure up to mainstream standards, rather than assessing their needs on a truly individualized basis.

Individualized educational programs. Thirty-eight percent of the secondary learning assistance centers in B.C. report using the individualized educational program (I.E.P.) as their main approach to instruction (Schwartz, 1979); this corresponds with the first goal listed in the preceding section. In some school districts, for example Burnaby, this means that a fully developed I.E.P., as described in the Government guidelines, is required for each student receiving special education services. Schwartz suggests, however, that because the I.E.P. is such a time consuming and complex task, in many school districts the I.E.P. is more likely to consist of a list of specific objectives for each student. Sixty-six percent of learning assistance teachers report developing such objectives for their students. Given the goals listed and their interpretation as reported in the preceding section, it is reasonable to assume that academic objectives will be the main focus and that both academic and behavioral objectives will relate to skills necessary for functioning successfully in the mainstream. This focus does little to address students' lack of skill and knowledge in other, perhaps more life-related areas.

Teaching conditions. In discussing direct instruction, it is important to examine some of the factors that affect this major role. One factor that strongly affects teaching conditions is the system used to allocate funds for learning assistance centers. One learning

assistance teacher is allowed for every 350 students enrolled in the school. Thus, funding is granted on the basis of student population not student need. This approach is especially hard on small school districts and results in unequal distribution of services across school districts. Another result of this approach is that forty percent of learning assistance teachers are part-time which can further influence the quality of service (Schwartz, 1979). School principals estimate that sixteen percent of the student population is in need of special education services and state that they do not think the allocation for learning assistance centers is adequate. Teachers corroborate this statement. Learning assistance teachers report that they do not have sufficient time for one-to-one instruction and that their instructional groups are too large. A number of these instructors use peer tutors, volunteers and/or student teachers to increase student contact time. However, this strategy often reduces the teacher's actual student contact as she must assign time to co-ordinate these efforts. Instructors point out that this lack of sufficient instruction time reduces the effectiveness of the I.E.P. (Schwartz, 1979). Lack of time generally also affects the flexibility of teaching and programming approaches. Thus both the quality and quantity of instruction is affected by insufficient time. Experienced learning assistance teachers suggest that a ratio of 10 to 12 students is a reasonable load if individual programming is to be effective. The literature supports this view (Schwartz, 1979).

Another factor that affects the working conditions and suggests that the procedure for allocating funds must change is the varied work load

found in the secondary learning assistance centers. School principals, in Schwartz's survey (1979), point out that the work load will vary considerably according to the grade span covered by the learning assistance center, the diversity and severity of disabilities encountered and the range of the teacher consultant role. The system must allow for individual consideration of these factors if realistic student/teacher ratios are to be established and if working conditions are to be conducive to flexible and effective programming. Basically learning assistance teachers, regular teachers, and school principals felt more learning assistance centers and more learning assistance staff were needed to meet the needs of learning disabled students now being served, and that many more students were not receiving help because of lack of facilities. It is clear that an inflexible funding system is a major problem in instigating a philosophy of individualized education.

Consultation. The task of consultation is generally accepted to contain the following components:

1. Consultation with teachers regarding
 - student progress in centers
 - program implementation
 - modification of classroom program
 - sources for teaching materials and strategies
 - progress of student after completing remediation program.

2. Consultation with counsellors, administrators, parents and other involved agencies regarding:
 - identified student needs
 - program placement decisions
 - program implementation
 - progress and termination

3. Resource person for school staff by providing:
 - access to special education materials
 - access to testing materials
 - workshops and in-service for staff

The task described is a complicated and time consuming one, and it must be viewed as playing a major role in any successful mainstreaming program. The expectation of the mainstreaming philosophy is that the education of the student will be a team effort involving principally the learning assistance teacher and the regular classroom teacher. Sixty-seven percent of the school principals surveyed by Schwartz viewed consultation as the major contribution of the learning assistance teacher. The learning assistance teacher is expected to provide expertise, support, and encouragement to regular teachers in an effort to help them adapt their classrooms to better meet the needs of the handicapped student. The ultimate goal is to make the regular classroom a suitable environment for individualized education. However, this concept of interaction and exchange, which must be incorporated into the model of learning assistance centers, is difficult logistically, and threatening psychologically in a system of isolated and autonomous

classrooms such as exist in most public secondary schools. The reality in B.C. secondary schools is the regular teacher would prefer that the learning assistance teacher take difficult students out of their classrooms, remediate them, and send them back when they are capable of coping with regular class material (Schwartz, 1979). These teachers see the role of the learning assistance teacher as that of consulting with them regarding the progress of the student in the center and regarding the student's reentry into the regular classroom. According to Schwarz's survey (1979) many regular teachers were not open to administering individual education programs in the classroom, nor were they comfortable with the learning assistance teacher working in the classroom with the handicapped student. Given these realities, it is clear that there can be little team work in the secondary schools at present. The learning assistance teacher on the other hand sees team work as important to success in these programs but views his/her present role as mainly one of diagnosis and remediation. Learning assistance teachers see themselves as only somewhat effective in the role of consultant as the regular teachers, in their view, only tolerate advice or assistance in a passive manner, rather than actively participating in the consultation process (Schwartz, 1979).

One of the problems cited by both the learning assistance teachers and regular teachers is the lack of time available for constructive consultation. Forty percent of learning assistance teachers report that they average less than two consultations a week and that these are usually less than fifteen minutes in length. The rushed and infrequent

nature of consultation may be one reason for the negative or neutral attitude of regular staff. An organized and consistent approach to consultation that allowed adequate time for learning assistance teachers and regular teachers to consult is needed. This would prove beneficial to the students and staff and could have a significant effect on the attitudes surrounding this area of service. Two separate positions, one of consultant and one of direct instruction incorporated into the learning assistance model, has been proven to increase the effectiveness of consultation and the other services offered by these programs (Zigmond, 1978). In the next section, this thesis will examine the importance of consultation services to the learning environment of the student in the secondary system.

Learning conditions. Secondary students receiving services from the learning assistance center can be given remediation either in the regular classroom or in the learning assistance center. Each location has its own drawbacks.

As discussed in the previous section on consultation, the student receiving remediation in the classroom is very often not welcome. The individualized program is seen as an extra burden by the regular teacher and this inevitably must be conveyed to the student. Even given that the teacher is open to the arrangement, the student is singled out by this process as an underachiever. In the secondary school, achievement is a major factor in determining student status. Therefore, if a student is seen as less capable of achieving, their interaction with teachers and peers is more likely to be negative

(Heron and Skinner, 1981). Much of the possible positive effect of a remediation program, therefore, may well be mitigated by a negative atmosphere in the classroom. These factors will be problems for the learning-disabled student until individualized education in the classroom is the norm (Washburn, 1979).

The second location for remediation, the learning assistance center, is a problem because of the inflexible nature of the secondary school. Withdrawal from the regular classroom even on a part-time basis, creates logistic problems for the system and, therefore, for the student. Regular mainstream courses have specific time lengths and lead to and from other courses in the same area in a predictable and regulated fashion, and the high school time-tabling system is designed to accommodate these courses. Learning assistance, on the other hand, is intended to be flexible in terms of time and to allow the student to re-enter into seemingly unrelated courses on an irregular basis. Clearly, these differences create a conflict. Some high schools, in an attempt to integrate learning assistance, have begun scheduling it into the time-table, but it still has no concrete link to the rest of the course system. Because the regular courses are time scheduled, it is difficult for them to accommodate students from the learning assistance centers, who because of their absence from the regular class are on a different schedule. It requires a great deal of co-operation and planning between the learning assistance teacher and the regular teacher, which, as discussed, does not generally exist, for the student to reenter the regular class. If the student's time in the learning

assistance center is to be profitable, areas such as assigning credit for work done in the learning assistance center, deciding how much missed classroom content must be covered and establishing a testing and grading procedure must be agreed upon. It is important that the student view her remediation as an integrated and positive part of her education if it is to be effective (Washburn, 1979). The learning assistance center cannot be considered an integrated part of the high school system until transition from the learning assistance class to the regular class can be accommodated easily. The environment described above is a conflicting and confusing one at best, and, therefore, is likely to increase the student's feeling of alienation from the system.

Evaluation

As has been previously noted in this thesis, special education programs must be accountable for the effectiveness of their services. In order to be accountable, programs must have clear student entrance criteria and a thorough evaluation process. However, procedures for establishing such criteria and instigating evaluation have not been consistently applied in B.C. learning assistance programs.

Student entrance criteria have been set in three quarters of the secondary schools and eighty-two percent of these schools have set priorities within those entrance criteria (Schwartz, 1979). However these criteria vary from school to school because few student entrance criteria have been set at the school district level. As a result of the indefinite approach to population definition, learning assistance

services in B.C. are inconsistent and inequitable among school districts and also from school to school. More specific provincial guidelines in these areas would help to correct this situation and help to assure a more equitable approach to program placement in learning assistance centers throughout the province. Indefinite population parameters also result in inappropriate referrals and placements. Theoretically, learning assistance programs are best suited to serve a specific population. If that population is not defined clearly then services will be diluted and students will receive less effective programming. Both the students inappropriately placed and those for whom the program is intended suffer.

An example of more specific criterion and priorities are those developed by the Vancouver Skills Development Centers. Students considered for the program are those experiencing difficulty coping with the regular Math and/or English program. The priorities are stated as being students two to three years behind in grade level, problems in reading before problems in math, grade eight students or students referred from elementary services, and academic over behavior problems. There are no stated justifications for setting these priorities over others; however, they are common priorities for programs serving the learning disabled. A two to three year academic lag is a common determiner of the learning-disabled adolescent; reading problems are generally accepted as being more prevalent than other problem areas. Reading problems are also a priority because to so many subject areas in the high school curriculum depend on reading skills for the acquisition

of subject content. Grade eight students or students from elementary learning disabilities programs are often given priority because these students are viewed as the most likely to benefit from the resource room services. The programs are free to add to these priorities or adapt them to suit their particular needs. In this way flexibility is maintained but there is a firmer baseline than is currently offered by the province.

Evaluation of learning assistance centers is also handled at the school level in B.C. The majority of secondary learning assistance programs approach evaluation in an informal manner. Only eighteen percent report any type of formal evaluation and twelve percent report no evaluation at all. This low percentage is probably due to lack of time for and expertise in evaluation procedures. The informal evaluation is usually instigated and processed by the learning assistance teacher. They are sometimes assisted by the principal, classroom teacher or district special education staff.

Learning assistance teachers state that they evaluate mainly in order to give themselves data with which to defend their existence in the school (Schwartz, 1979). This need to validate their program's existence again points to the lack of support for learning assistance within the secondary school system. Other important reasons for evaluation cited, included assessing the effectiveness of their teaching approach and providing a realistic data base for making constructive changes in programming. Learning assistance teachers indicated, however, that the evaluation process was a frustrating one for

them as it pointed out the needed changes they were often not in a position to instigate. The 1981 Manual, in its evaluation section, points out the necessity for the evaluator and the decision maker to agree on the format and uses of evaluation results at the outset so that the evaluation results can be used constructively. The guidelines have indicated that regular evaluation is desirable, but have not set out mandatory expectations for this service.

In the absence of formal evaluation data, Schwartz (1979) asked regular classroom teachers, learning assistance teachers, and school principals to rate the adequacy of the services offered in the learning assistance centers. The services were rated as basically adequate in themselves but there was a consensus that more learning assistance centers were needed, more learning assistance teachers were needed to staff the present centers, and that the programs need a more regular and formal evaluation procedure. A yearly evaluation which will examine the appropriateness of goals and objectives, the efficacy of teaching methods and curriculum materials, student progress and identify the factors responsible for program success and failure is needed (Armitage, 1979). Through such evaluation learning assistance centers can assess and improve their effectiveness. Such an evaluation procedure should be made mandatory at the provincial level, and funding and time should be allocated for this purpose.

Conclusion

It is obvious that the learning assistance centers face many problems and limitations in the secondary school system. In spite of this, they are providing a vital remediation service to students who are floundering under the demands of the system. They lack the freedom to completely individualize programming, however, as inevitably they are expected to equip the student for an inflexible, unindividualized system. One very positive effect of the learning assistance center is that through its central screening role it enabled identification of student needs not yet addressed by the school system. For example, one result was the recognition that the severely learning disabled could not be adequately served in the learning assistance centers. This recognition resulted in the development of a special funding category by the Government to provide services for these students.

Services for Severely Learning Disabled Adolescents

Services set up specifically for the severely learning-disabled student are, at present, few in number. Two programs presently operating in the lower mainland will be discussed. Although both essentially follow the B.C. Government guidelines and address the needs of the severely learning disabled, they are quite different in approach.

The first program to be discussed is operated by the Burnaby School Board (Student Support Services Manual, Note 1) and is tutorial in nature. It is staffed by two itinerant learning disabilities teachers and seven instructional aides. Specific training for the

aides, in tutoring learning-disabled students, is constructed and delivered by the two program instructors.

The tutoring service is run on a district level and students are referred for service only when services offered in the home school have been exhausted. The available student assessment information is collected and reviewed by one of the instructors. It is then presented to a screening committee, consisting of the other tutoring teacher, coordinator, principal and other pertinent staff. As there is a waiting list, the committee must prioritize students for acceptance into the program.

The program instructors are responsible for conducting the necessary diagnostic tests and constructing a fully developed individualized educational program for each student. The program is developed in conjunction with relevant school staff, the student, and parents. Each student is then assigned to an instructional aide, who under the guidance and supervision of the itinerant teacher, implements the program. The program is monitored and adjusted on a continual basis through weekly reports from the instructional aides, and progress is evaluated at least once every three months. The students receive one-to-one tutoring for one hour per day, four to five days per week. The remainder of the day is spent either in regular classes with individualized programs or in modified courses. The student remains in the program until the criteria stated in the I.E.P. are met. This usually involves the student reaching grade level or an operational level that allows integration into regular course materials. The main thrust of the program is academic remedia-

tion. Behavior problems are not considered in the official description of this program. However, the staff feel that the consistent, positive interaction with the tutor and the positive results from the program have an ameliorating effect on the behavior patterns of these students as demonstrated through improved attendance and higher motivational levels.

No formal evaluation of this program has been conducted. However, several observations in terms of its limitations can be made. First, this program is strictly an academic mainstream approach to remediation, an approach that is not largely supported by the literature for the severely learning-disabled adolescent. Also the program can be expected to have limited flexibility in that it is closely related to the mainstream, must follow strict time schedules, and is a set program administered in isolation by a trained assistant. In addition, the need for socialization training, strongly indicated in the literature for the severely learning disabled, is not addressed by this program. In fact, the isolated nature of the remediation process allows little opportunity for monitored social interaction. The program, although it may supply needed remediation services, is a very compartmentalized approach to remediation that addresses only one portion of the problem.

Another example of program developed specifically for the severely learning disabled are the Extended Skills Development Centers instigated by the Vancouver School Board (Kettle, 1980). These programs follow the resource room delivery model but are an extension of this service in terms of intensity of instruction and time spent in remediation. There

are two Extended Skill Development Centers established in two separate high schools and they are operated on a district level. Each center enrolls a maximum of twelve students and operates with one learning-disabilities teacher. Students are referred to the center by the school-based team after a full assessment has been completed and parental consent has been obtained. Only if all special and regular educational facilities in the home school are considered inappropriate are students referred to the Extended Skills Development Centers. All final decisions regarding placement in the centers are made by the central screening committee. The placement criteria include students that are 13 - 16 years of age, are of normal intelligence, have a positive attitude toward school, and have perceptual or cognitive problems attributed to a learning disability.

The students are enrolled in a home room class and in any academic subjects or appropriate elective subjects with which they can cope. The students generally spend half the day in the center to begin with; however, this can vary according to the individual need perceived. Individual prescriptive teaching programs are developed by the learning-disabilities teacher for each student and delivered in both individual and group settings. The primary focus is academic remediation but the development of appropriate socialization skills and improvement of self-concept is also a concern. Instructors are expected to fulfill the roles of assessment, direct instruction and consultation as discussed in terms of learning assistance centers.

The two centers were evaluated (Kettle, 1980) in an effort to

describe the functions of the centers, assess the programs' success, and provide information for future planning. Teachers, parents, students and the consultation team were surveyed and, in general, the response to the program was positive. Generally students improved in the academic areas, and improvement in the affective areas was also noted by students, teachers and parents.

Although the overall reaction to the program was positive, there were a number of concerns and problem areas identified. In terms of referral, there was concern expressed over the length of time students had to wait to obtain initial assessment. The length of time allocated for remediation was also a concern. Instructors in both Centers felt that one year in the program was insufficient for students with very severe problems. It was also noted that consultation time was insufficient. This resulted in the regular teachers not being cognizant of the student's needs or of the program's function. Communication with parents was also considered insufficient. Although behavior and social problems are not among the entrance criteria, instructors in both Centers indicated a need for a full-year program or individual and/or group counselling to help students in these areas, thus indicating that the provisions made now are not sufficient. It was indicated in the evaluation that the demand for these services was greater than the two existing centers could handle and two additional centers were planned for the 1981 school year. Finally, the program instructors emphasized the need for more appropriate alternative placements for students upon leaving the Centers. Only five of the twenty-nine students served in

these centers during the 1979/1980 academic year were fully integrated into the mainstream by the autumn of 1980. The program instructors indicated that students experienced difficulties both academically and socially upon re-entry into the regular system. It appears that the regular classroom is not an appropriate alternative for a very large percentage of these students. Given the above observations it is reasonable to speculate that appropriate alternatives for these students would have to incorporate curriculum other than academic and offer a more supportive environment than is presently available in the regular classroom.

Although these programs show a slightly broader focus than the Burnaby program, in that they address the need for socialization skills, it is still basically an academically oriented mainstream program. As such, the classic problems of lack of time for remediation and consultation, and problems integrating the students into the mainstream are evident.

The emphasis on academic remediation and mainstreaming restricts the services for the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. Not only are present services focused in the direction of mainstreaming, but planned future services as well. Present services must be compared to services indicated as necessary in the literature, and plans must be made to address student needs presently ignored.

Gaps in Service

The literature indicates that the learning-disabled adolescent requires a range of services that will teach basic academic skills, address career education and training needs, provide a functional curriculum and address the socialization problems so often found in this population (Cruickshank et al., 1980; Wiederholt, 1978a). In B.C. presently, as stated above, academic remediation is the prime focus of all learning-disabled adolescent services. This obviously covers only a very small portion of the services indicated as necessary.

The Government, in its 1981 Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, indicates that special education students should have the same range of services afforded the regular student which would include vocational education and work-placement programs. They also indicate that curriculum must be altered appropriately for the special education student. However, no funding allocation has been made available for such services for the learning-disabled adolescent in the Manual. Career education and training are addressed in the regular high school curriculum, but mainstream courses in this area must be adapted if they are to appropriately address the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent. The other two curriculum content areas mentioned above, functional curriculum and socialization training, are not available through the regular high school curriculum nor are they addressed by the learning-disabilities programs in B.C. Although these areas of curricula are available in some special education programs, they are not foci in programs established for the learning-disabled adolescent. The mainstreaming nature of

learning-disabilities services in B.C. tends to narrow the focus of these services to academic remediation.

There is a need for an alternative environment, that is relatively unfettered by the restrictions of the regular high school, to address the areas of self-concept and social skills for the learning-disabled adolescent (Vancouver School Board, Note 2). One of the Government's stated goals in the 1981 Manual is to ensure that appropriate alternate settings are available to meet individual needs as identified. At present the services for learning-disabled adolescents do not meet this stated goal, and do not meet the full range of needs recognized for this population.

As money is a major factor in providing new programming it may be productive to examine presently available programs for potential in meeting the unaddressed needs of the learning-disabled adolescent. The Alternate Rehabilitation Program, a widespread, well-established program presently funded jointly by the Special Programs Branch and the Ministry of Human Resources, could quickly and effectively expand the services presently available to the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. This program has a flexible, individualized approach to programming and a philosophy that allows for individual expression and encourages individual development. It presently addresses a population with similar needs to those of the learning-disabled adolescent and, therefore, conceivably its goals would address the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent. It offers an alternate setting to the regular secondary high school and places a heavy emphasis on improving

self-concept and socialization skills. It also offers varied curriculum content and teaching approaches that are relevant to the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent. The Alternate Rehabilitation Program is available in all but six school districts in B.C.; it would require little alteration to address itself directly to the learning-disabled adolescent and the Director of Special Education has recommended that these programs be expanded (Csapo & Gittens, 1979).

In the next section of this thesis, factors that differentiate the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs from mainstream programs and make them a suitable environment for the learning-disabled adolescent will be discussed. First, the history and philosophy, two of the factors that help set the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs apart from the mainstream, will be discussed. Secondly the goals, student population, environment, and curriculum and programming approaches will be described and their relevance to the learning-disabled adolescent will be determined. Next, the problem areas associated with the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs will be discussed and finally a suggested outline for an Alternate Rehabilitation Program, specifically appropriate to the learning-disabled adolescent, will be given.

Chapter Seven

ALTERNATE REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

History

A brief knowledge of the history and development of Alternate Rehabilitation Programs is important in understanding their present philosophy and approach. The first important fact in their history is that they developed separately from the school system. The first programs developed in the early 1970's from a 'grassroots' community concern for youths that had left or been expelled from the school system. Services that addressed their social and educational problems were deemed essential if these young people were to become responsible and constructive members of their community (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). The complete separateness of these programs from the regular school system was considered an important factor in their success because they were addressing students that the system had failed. The secondary school system evoked extremely negative feelings from this target population and a distinctly different atmosphere and setting were essential in gaining the trust and co-operation of these students. In addition to establishing a distinct educational environment, the founders of these alternate programs proposed to address the social, educational and personal problems of the students in these programs. The restrictive and inflexible nature of the high school are two factors which would have made it difficult, if not impossible to implement the holistic approach to education adopted by these programs.

Unfortunately, funding was a major problem for these initial programs. The initial alternate education programs were financed with short-term federal funding such as Local Initiative Program (LIP) grants or temporary local funds. Many of the early programs ended because of unreliable funding. Despite these problems however, forty-two programs existed by 1974 (Csapo & Poutt, 1974). The Ministry of Education at this time established a policy which stated that federal grants were no longer to be used to support instructional programs, thus curtailing the growth of these programs outside of the school system. They stated that if these programs were necessary for a substantial portion of school aged citizens, then the public school system must reorganize and allocate funds accordingly (Csapo, 1973). This directive resulted in another important point in the development of these programs. It provided the impetus to found the joint funding of Alternate Rehabilitation Programs by the Ministry of Human Resources and the Department of Education (Csapo, 1973).

This joint funding was unique in school funding. The Rehabilitation Programs are still the only special education programs with such funding. This involvement allows for a unique combination of services to be offered and a low staff/pupil ratio in these programs. There is one staff member solely responsible for education and one for social integration. Additionally, there is often a teaching assistant. The Ministry suggests that such joint involvement is very appropriate and should be encouraged on a larger scale (Province of British Columbia, 1981). Presently, there are a few programs, such as Step-up

in Vancouver, that are affiliated with the Ministry of Attorney General (Csapo & Agg, 1974), and some, such as Shaft in Coquitlam (Note 3) that are funded by all three Ministries. Csapo and Gittens (1979) suggest that the Ministry of Health would be another appropriate affiliation for these programs. If the aim of education is to address the needs of the student in a realistic and holistic manner, then such joint involvement is long overdue.

With regular funding established, the number of programs more than doubled from 1974-1978. In 1979, 105 programs existed. This wide spread and rapid increase in programming indicates the real and substantial need being met by these programs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979).

The Alternate Rehabilitation Program, with its well-rounded approach to education is eminently suited, both presently and potentially, to begin to provide a fuller range of services to the learning-disabled adolescent. Some of the program components that make this true will be explored in the remainder of this section.

Philosophy

The independent origin of Alternate Rehabilitation Programs and their holistic approach, which resulted in joint funding from the ministries, were instrumental in shaping this unique non-mainstreaming model as it presently exists within the school system. The philosophy of these programs also sets them apart from the mainstream. It is, as would be expected, student centered. It is based on the right of each individual to an appropriate education and recognizes the right of that individual to be different from the established 'norm'. It states that

it is the responsibility of the system to educate, and that deviations in behavior or academic ability are not acceptable reasons for abandoning the student's education (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). This philosophy interprets education as a liberating experience, one that helps the student to learn about herself and society, gather knowledge, work creatively with it, and thereby come to know her own talents and limitations and how to best utilize this knowledge. It would have education focus on how learning can complement the student, not on how the student can fit into a learning system. Moreover, the philosophy of these programs states that the system must provide the required alternatives to the conventional system and find ways to develop the potential of each child (Csapo & Gittens, 1979).

The recognition of student differences, the responsibility of the system to address these differences, and the need for alternative approaches to education are all particularly pertinent to the education of the learning-disabled adolescent. This student-centered philosophy is basic to all Alternative Rehabilitation Programs. However, because these programs are flexible, and operate independently, the philosophy and specific goals of each program are individually devised according to the students served and the operational environment.

Student Population and Goals

The characteristics and needs of the student population dictate the goals set by the Alternate Rehabilitation Program. Therefore the student characteristics will be described first and then the goals

ensuing from these characteristics will be discussed.

Student Population

These students have been described as those who are unable to cope in the mainstream academically, socially and/or emotionally. They are the dropouts or potential dropouts and delinquents in each district (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). There are many visible signs of the student's inability to cope. Academically, they generally display at least a two to three year lag in basic skills areas. They also exhibit a poor self-concept, low motivation and show discouragement and frustration in reaction to their lack of success in the learning situation. These negative feelings often result in behavior problems or maladjustment. Categorically, these students are most frequently referred to as socially, emotionally, and behaviorally maladjusted or as learning disabled (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). This description is very similar to that given in the literature for the severely learning-disabled adolescent.

The strong similarities between the Alternative Rehabilitation Program population and the learning-disabled adolescent population in terms of characteristics, needs, and response to remediation would suggest that these populations might benefit from similar programming. For instance, two-to-three year gains in academics over a ten month period have been reported for students in Alternative Rehabilitation Programs (OK East Alternate School, Note 4). Similar gains are cited by Goodman (1978) as typical of learning-disabled adolescents. This rapid gain would suggest that neither group had been working to poten-

tial in the system and that both benefit from alternate settings.

Also, the combination of behavior and academic problems is typical of both populations. In addition, improvement academically for the student in the alternate school appears to be interdependent with the improvement of self-concept and social-readjustment (Csapo & Gittens, 1979) as has often proven the case for the learning-disabled (Weiss & Weiss, 1974).

It is recognized that not all students with behavior problems have learning disabilities, nor do all learning-disabled adolescents display behavior problems. However, given the similarities described above, it seems reasonable to assume that there is an overlap between the learning-disabled population and population of the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs. In any case, the characteristics and needs of these populations are so similar that the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs, having demonstrated a successful approach with their population (Csapo & Gittens, 1979), clearly present a potentially appropriate placement for the learning-disabled adolescent. In the following discussion of the goals, environment and curriculum of the Alternate Rehabilitation Program, it will become clear that the aims and services of these programs are extremely well suited to meeting the needs of the learning-disabled adolescent as identified in the literature.

Program Goals

As stated above, the goals set by these programs directly reflect the needs of the students. One of their strongest needs is to improve their self-image. In the 1978 survey the students described themselves as 'dumb', 'unable to cope', and 'out of place' (Csapo & Gittens, 1979).

This low self-esteem is basic to the alienation and frustration they experience in the learning situation. Therefore, one of the central goals of the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs is to raise the student's self-concept. This is also a frequently quoted goal of learning-disabilities programs. Many of the goals stated by individual programs relate to increasing the student's self concept. Some examples are: increasing decision-making skills (Byng Satellite, Note 5), breaking patterns of failure (Riley Park, Note 6; Shaft, Note 3) and developing a sense of usefulness and belonging in the community (Shaft, Note 3; Kumtucks, Note 6; Vinery, Note 6) and improving interpersonal and social skills (Chilliwack, Note 7; Kumtucks, Note 6). This central focus on goals pertaining to personal growth is quoted as one of the main reasons for the success of these programs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). A focus on personal development is basic for the learning-disabled adolescent also, but it is not directly addressed presently in B.C. programs for the learning disabled.

Other pertinent goals in Alternate Rehabilitation Programs focus on the growth of academic and career skills. These goals include: remediating basic academic skills and bringing the student to a grade ten level, providing work experience, career training and education and/or transition to employment, and/or preparing the student for re-entry into the regular high school. These have all been recognized as acceptable goals for the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs and the emphasis on any one of them varies among programs. It is very important to note, however, that the Ministry, in the 1981 guidelines for

Alternate Rehabilitation Programs has emphasized the goal of re-entry. Given the original intent of these programs and the characteristics of their students this seems an inappropriate emphasis.

Re-entry is not the goal being emphasized by the staff in the Alternative Rehabilitation Programs. In fact, it is clearly pointed out, in a follow-up study of the Vancouver School District Alternate Rehabilitation Programs (Brenner, 1978), that many of the students in these programs simply do not learn successfully in the regular classroom environment and that, therefore, re-entry is not an appropriate goal for them. The study emphasizes that these students need an environment that is supportive, personal, and individualized. It is stressed that the student's education should not be curtailed because of these needs. This is often the case presently, as Alternate Rehabilitation Programs are only allowed to educate to the grade ten level. Past this level the student's alternatives, apart from the regular secondary system, are severely limited. Only nineteen out of two hundred and ninety-four students contacted in this follow-up study were successfully re-integrated into the regular system. As is the case in dealing with learning-disabled students, the mainstream will have to be changed significantly, in terms of its ability to individualize and be flexible, before it will provide an appropriate environment for these students (Brenner, 1978). Re-entry may be a feasible goal for a small number of these students and should, therefore, be an option available to them. However, it is inappropriate for the majority of the Alternate Rehabilitation Program's population and, therefore, should not be

emphasized as a major program goal. The unique environment of these programs, which will be discussed next, is instrumental in the realization of many of the program goals discussed.

Environment

Students and staff in both the Vancouver Follow-up Study (Brenner, 1978) and the 1979 Survey (Csapo and Gittens), name individual attention and the informality, flexibility and acceptance in the environment as the most pertinent factors in the programs' success. These are qualities generally not available in the mainstream and are seen as necessary in the successful education of The Alternate Rehabilitation Program's student population. The low teacher-student ratio and the fact that the programs are established in separate quarters from their parent secondary school are two main factors in their realizing such an environment.

On the average there are eleven to twenty students per program, and two to two and one-half staff persons. This low ratio allows time for personal attention to be given each student, and the relative freedom from outside pressure makes it easy to offer flexible scheduling. Factors such as the rate of learning can be adjusted to suit the student, thus helping them avoid the feelings of pressure and restriction often felt in the regular system. In addition, the program's schedule can also be adjusted to respond quickly and easily to community input or events, or to special student needs or interests that might arise (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). An individual personalized approach and

a flexible environment are also factors emphasized as necessary in successful programming for learning-disabled adolescents.

The small size and flexibility of these alternate programs encourages a warm relationship between students and staff. There is an atmosphere of friendliness and acceptance that develops from getting to know a person rather than just teaching them. This atmosphere encourages students to ask for the help they need and to try the variety of activities available through the Program's large recreational component. This component is focused on helping the student find new areas of talent or interest, or expand old ones. In this way, it is hoped the student will develop a more positive self-image and learn to view success and failure in terms other than academics. The wider base of shared experience between staff and students also adds depth to the relationships formed (Csapo & Gittens, 1979).

These programs also focus on breaking the pattern of academic failure usually apparent in their students. They do this by starting the student's program at a level commensurate with his ability, assigning small portions of work at a time, giving lots of feedback and support and using relevant and interesting content (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). They are designed to ensure success and make failure next to impossible. The success-oriented focus of programming in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs is conducive to improving self-image, increasing self-confidence, and thereby inducing improvement in academic and social skills. These are all goals recognized earlier as pertinent for learning-disabilities programs.

Although the atmosphere described above is common to Alternate Rehabilitation Programs, these programs are as individual in nature as the team of people who work within them (Klass Policy Manual, Note 8). The staff forms the core of this team. It is suggested that the staff are most often those who do not agree with the conventional practices of the high school, but believe in the values of alternate educational environments and approaches. They are, therefore, dedicated, enthusiastic and strongly motivated to approach students as individuals and try to address the program to their needs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). The staff team consists of at least one teacher and one child care worker. These two people share a joint responsibility to develop and implement an individual program for each student. The teacher is responsible for developing the academic and career education and/or job training aspects, the child care worker for the counselling, life skills training and recreational components of the individualized program. It requires optimum team work to co-ordinate viable programs for each student. These two staff members are also jointly responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the program as a whole (Province of British Columbia, 1981). This core team is often expanded to include a full or half-time teaching assistant.

The team is further expanded by encouraging the involvement of parent volunteers. Parent participation is required by the programs and by the Government in making initial program placement and future educational decisions for students. The students in Alternative

Rehabilitation Programs are not only observers of this team approach, but active participants. Their participation is required by both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources, and is, of course, strongly encouraged by program staff. Students are expected to share in the responsibility of planning all aspects of their individual programs, and to participate in shaping the alternate program as a whole. They might be expected to help set and enforce rules, plan schedules and field trips, or choose and arrange the guest speakers. Student participation is considered one of the strengths of the program (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). Student participation and constructive interaction are two of the program components identified in chapter five as necessary for successful programming for the learning-disabled adolescent.

Another important component of this team is community resource people. Most programs try to encourage community involvement to as great an extent as possible. Resource people might come into the program as guest speakers or the students might go out into the community to visit and/or utilize various facilities, businesses or agencies. In addition, over forty-four percent of the programs report using volunteers. The students benefit from the varied skills and knowledge present in this extensive team and also benefit from participating in a co-operative and constructive team process. This experience is invaluable in terms of learning successful communication patterns and improving social skills. As Adelman and Taylor (1977) have reminded us, students learn from what they experience, not from what they are

told.

The physical setting of these programs is also a very important factor in shaping their nature. In choosing a setting the staff must consider whether it is conducive to developing the warm and cooperative environment described above. The reasons for preferring a setting separate from the parent school were established in the history section of this chapter. The setting should also be flexible, consisting of more than one room in order to allow for more than one type of activity at a time. Or it might be a space that can easily be altered to accommodate a variety of activities. In addition, it should be central to the community in order to reduce transportation problems and encourage maximum interaction with the community. It is also desirable for the setting to offer as many resources of its own as possible, i.e. a workshop, gym, kitchen, or outside grounds. Churches and houses are popular settings as they offer many of these features. It is not expected that every setting would offer all of these features but the best combination possible should be sought. Another important aspect of program environment is of course, the curriculum and the approach to curriculum used. The varied curriculum and the approach to instruction used in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs will be discussed next.

Curriculum

The curriculum components of the Alternative Rehabilitation Program include academic remediation, career education and training, counselling, life skills (social and survival skills) and recreation. All of these curriculum areas are indicated as relevant to the learning-disabled adolescent in the range of services suggested in the literature.

Sixty-nine percent of the programs spent fifty percent of their time on academic remediation. This is the largest block of time given to any one curriculum area. Math and English are the core academic subjects. Other subjects frequently mentioned are science, social studies and physical education (OK East, Note 4; Byng Satellite, Note 5; Street Front, Note 6; Chilliwack, Note 8). Student participation in these subject areas is dictated by their capabilities and interests. Each program is attached administratively to a parent high school and some programs also encourage capable students to take extra courses at this school. This practice facilitates re-entry for these students and meets academic needs the alternate program is not able to meet internally (Brenner, 1978; Chilliwack, Note 7, Step-up (Coquitlam), Note 9).

Vocational training is the title given in the survey when referring to career education and training or work experience. In forty-three percent of the programs, vocational training meant work experience. Work experience in these programs can be broken into training in skilled areas such as carpentry, welding, truckdriving, typing, catering, or work in unskilled jobs such as woodcutting, tree-

planting, painting or construction (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). Some programs also offered community work projects or part-time community jobs in areas such as child care, community recreation or the S.P.C.A. (Vinery, Note 6; Sentinel, Note 10, Total Education, Note 11).

Industrial education or home economics courses taken at the parent school are another component of vocational education in these programs. Career counselling, intended to increase general awareness of job possibilities, and career education, including areas such as job resumes, job seeking skills and interview skills, are also a part of vocational training in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). Career education and training are areas highlighted by staff as requiring immediate expansion.

Social Skills training, an integral part of the Alternate Rehabilitation Program, includes counselling and life skills training. The Ministry of Human Resources requires that both of these areas be addressed by the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs (Province of British Columbia, 1981). Counselling is available on an individual or group basis and can focus on family, employment, education or intra/inter personal communication skills (Shaft, Note 3; Byng Satellite, Note 5; Chilliwack, Note 7, Step-up (Coquitlam), Note 9, Sentinel, Note 10). Life skills, which can be equated to the functional curriculum discussed in chapter four, includes areas such as health education, consumer education, community awareness, and political awareness. This information is intended to help the student make informed decisions in everyday situations. The social skills component as a whole works on

fostering self-awareness and improving communication skills in order to promote more productive interaction and a more positive attitude.

Recreation is the final curriculum component to be discussed. Its content depends on the facilities available in the community, program and parent school. It also hinges on the interests and skills of staff, students and volunteers and on the transportation available to the program. It usually includes some form of activity in the areas of sports, both outdoor and indoor, crafts, and field-trips. Recreation is, as mentioned earlier used as a vehicle for building self-confidence, increasing co-operation and improving self-image.

The individualized program in the Alternate Rehabilitation Program is constructed according to the student's needs and interests. It can include all of these curriculum components, or whatever parts are relevant for that student. A variety of teaching methods and approaches are used in these programs. The curriculum is presented to students through one-to-one or group instruction, through media instruction, i.e. tape recorders, T.V., movies etc., or by drawing or community resources. One-to-one instruction is a popular approach to teaching basic academic skills; and both mastery learning and diagnostic/prescriptive teaching are commonly employed (Step-up, Note 6; Sunset East, Note 6; Chilliwack, Note 7).

As stated earlier, students are required to participate in the planning of their individual programs. When the programs are designed clear expectations, set with the students needs, goals and abilities in mind, are agreed upon. These expectations provide the student

with the structure and guidance that were noted earlier as necessary in programming designed for adolescents. The expectations most commonly revolve around regular attendance, participation in program activities, and steady progress (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). Contract learning is a popular approach to program planning as it requires a sense of commitment and responsibility on the part of the student and allows for re-negotiation of terms. The approaches to curriculum presentation and planning described above are very similar to those suggested in the literature for the learning-disabled adolescent. The curriculum presently available in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs is well-rounded and flexible in terms of content and presentation.

While the Alternate Rehabilitation Program, as it presently exists, offers a fuller range of services, relevant to the learning-disabled adolescent, than any other one program currently available in B.C., there are areas that must be improved in order to fully realize their potential.

Areas Needing Improvement and Expansion

Several areas that appear to need improvement in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs include: Entrance Criteria, Program Evaluation, Staff Training, Communication with Schools, Conception of Program Function and Status, and Range of Curriculum. Each of these areas will be discussed below.

Entrance Criteria

The present entrance criteria appear to be quite vague, for example, difficulties with regular program; behaviorally, emotionally or socially disturbed; dropout or potential dropout. This vagueness has resulted in an excessively wide range of problem students being referred to the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs. In order to avert the 'dumping ground' syndrome, and to allow staff to specialize, the criteria are becoming more precisely defined. Programs are tending to narrow their focus along specific dimensions such as age or specific types of behavior problems (i.e. delinquent youth, drug problems, etc.). However, more precise descriptions, in educational terms are also necessary (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). Entrance criteria should be defined in terms of specific intelligence or achievement levels, (i.e. I.Q. of at least 90 and scoring at least between grades five and six on the C.T.B.S.). They should also define specific learning or behavioral problems (i.e. poor de-coding skills, poor attitude, low motivation in classroom). These criteria may be as wide or as narrow as deemed appropriate for any particular program, but stating criteria clearly will help define the population and allow staff to address student needs more effectively. In addition, explicit criteria will enable setting more specific and appropriate program goals and hence facilitate evaluation of program strengths and weaknesses.

Program Evaluation

The measures used to evaluate these programs presently, for example, attendance, student placement after program, or attitude improvement, provide very indirect indices of the success of a program. More direct and systematic measures are needed to address the question of program evaluation. To begin with, an organized and accurate program description in terms of student population, physical setting, curriculum content and teaching methods employed should be available, followed by a clear statement of purpose for evaluation.

Two common reasons for evaluation are to determine the validity of continuing, expanding or terminating a program and to determine the effectiveness or interaction of various program components. More specifically evaluation might investigate areas such as: effectiveness of curriculum and teaching methods utilized; change in student attitude over specific periods of time or as it relates to specific program components; curriculum relevance as measured by its usefulness to the student upon leaving the program; success of the program as perceived by students, teachers, parents, etc.; the usefulness of admission criteria in identifying an appropriate population; the need for additional programs.

Staff Training

Alternate Rehabilitation Program staff have found the basic secondary school teacher training, common to most staff members, inadequate in addressing the wide range of behavior and learning problems found among their students. The staff have recommended prepara-

tory training in special education areas, such as learning disabilities, behavior disorders, social and emotional maladjustment, remedial education and counselling. In addition, they recommend experience in secondary school teaching, working with disturbed youth, and individualizing curriculum, a background in psychology, and a teaching practicum in an Alternate Rehabilitation Program.

Providing teachers with complete backgrounds in the above areas would obviously be ideal but very time-consuming, costly, and, therefore, probably unrealistic. However, universities, in extended alternative-teacher-training programs and in post-graduate programs, could provide at least basic knowledge in these areas. The programs could offer courses in psychology, basic client-centered counselling, the special education areas mentioned above, and specifically alternative-teaching oriented areas such as: team teaching, the instigation of varied and relevant curriculum, contract learning, the encouragement of student participation, program management and community liaison. Teacher-training programs could also provide teaching practicums in Alternate Rehabilitation Programs as well as in special education classrooms in secondary schools.

In-service training for present staff is a matter that should receive immediate attention (Csapo & Gittens, 1979) as the staff are central figures in the environment of the Rehabilitation Programs and their skills and resources are crucial to program success. In-service training will encourage the development of new skills, the renewal of resources, and exchange with professionals in other areas of education.

In-service workshops and/or courses in the identified areas of need, offered by school district or university personnel would help meet the in-service needs of the staff. However, a framework for exchange of information among Alternate Rehabilitation Program staffs would be an equally important aspect of in-service. The opportunity to discuss program procedures, problems and solutions among themselves, would provide these professionals with a relatively untapped fund of knowledge. Ninety-three percent of staff indicated a need for a support network of other alternate schools. They recommended that time and money be allocated for workshops and conferences and suggested that a regular publication would increase the communication between programs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979).

Communication with Parent Schools

The basic philosophy of the programs and the school system are incompatible and this leads to a lack of understanding and co-operation between high school administrators and teachers, and Alternate Rehabilitation Program staff. This makes the task of the alternate school much more difficult. The Rehabilitation Program staff perceive high school teachers as intolerant of student differences, and perceive teacher bias towards students' reentering the mainstream from the programs as predisposed to student failure. In addition, the students react negatively toward the high school administration and teachers, which they view as hostile, and the system, which they see as restricting, impersonal, unrealistic in its academic demands and inflexible

(Csapo & Gittens, 1979). As long as the system views these programs as remediation centers for academic and behavior problems, rather than a viable educational approach in their own right, the lack of understanding and communication will persist.

Better communication might be fostered by assigning high-school counsellors or regular content area teachers on a part-time basis to the Alternate Rehabilitation Program in order to expand services and course offerings. The opportunity for frequent and regular contact between regular high-school and alternate school staff would help these professionals develop a better understanding of each other's situations and perspectives. Should the attitude change and communication improve, schools could provide a source of support for these alternative programs. Schools could provide the services of counsellors, the knowledge of regular content area teachers, the resources of special education staff and easy access to facilities not available in the Rehabilitation Programs. If better communication is to be established, however, it must not be at the expense of changing the unique nature of the alternate school to better suit the regular system. It is important to recognize that it is the differences and separateness of these programs that suits their students, who cannot learn in the mainstream. The programs are able to meet needs that the regular system generally cannot address due to its inflexible and impersonal nature.

Conception of Program Function and Status

As stated earlier, the Alternate Rehabilitation Program is presently viewed by the regular system as a temporary remedial setting. As long as the focus is on integration, expansion of these programs to provide viable and sufficient options for their students is less likely. Presently these programs are restricted to offering only a grade ten certificate. This leaves their students with few alternatives beyond this level apart from the mainstream, which as previously indicated, is ill-suited to meet their needs. The staff has clearly indicated the need for an expansion of alternatives for these students beyond the grade ten level (Brenner, 1977). They also indicate a need for continuity of setting and approach.

A need for one hundred and eight-seven new programs, simply in order to cover program waiting lists, has been identified (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). The staff in the Vancouver Follow-up Study (1978) and the staff surveyed by Csapo and Gittens (1979) suggested that some of these new programs should offer grades eleven and twelve curriculum. They suggest that either existing programs be expanded to include the higher grades or that separate programs serving only the older student population be established. They also suggest that some of these programs might specialize in particular populations or curriculum areas. Learning-disabled adolescents would be an appropriate population focus for such new programs. However, a change in perspective, that acknowledges the reality, equality and desirability of alternative learning styles, is necessary if Alternate Rehabilitation Programs are to be

developed to full potential.

Curriculum Expansion

Although the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs presently offer a varied curriculum, an expansion of academic and career education courses and training is needed. One possibility may be an expansion of curriculum choices by increasing access to facilities such as science laboratory materials, business machines and industrial shops. Programs could be expanded to include these services by providing these facilities on site in the programs (Brenner, 1978). As mentioned earlier, content area teachers from the high schools could be assigned to the alternate programs on a part-time basis, to teach specific courses. It is unlikely that all the needed facilities will be provided on site in every alternate program immediately, but expansion in this direction would be very productive. This would be the preferred method of extending course offerings.

Another alternative would be to improve access to high-school facilities (Brenner, 1978), and have students go in the parent school for extra courses. As stated earlier, this is presently the practice in some alternate programs but only the students perceived as very 'able' attempt this partial integration. If the high schools are to be utilized more effectively for expanding curriculum alternatives, then they must be willing to provide more individualized and flexible programs for students in the alternate schools both in academic and vocational training. Students must be assured of the necessary help being available and co-operative programming with instructors must be

made possible by providing adequate liaison time for both regular and Rehabilitation Program staff.

In addition to expanding academic and vocational course options, there is a need to expand the work-experience component of the programs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979). Establishing, maintaining and expanding community contacts for a work-experience program is a time-consuming task and one best done on a large-scale basis. Presently, this task is approached independently by each program. This tends to limit the scope of the work-experience component. More extensive opportunities might be made available if a staff person was hired specifically to organize work-experience or apprenticeship placements at a school or district level. These placements could then be made available to programs such as the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs. This staff person could also facilitate access to job exploration or career counselling services offered by agencies such as Manpower. They might also develop a variety of community contacts and thus increase the curriculum input from community learning resources. Another basic need, if the resources of the community and high school are to be fully utilized, is readily available transport. Both the Survey (Csapo & Gittens, 1979) and the Follow-up Study (Brenner, 1978) indicate a need for improved transportation.

Curriculum expansion as described above is considered necessary for Alternate Rehabilitation Programs in their present status as programs that offer an alternative education to the grade ten level. However, extending these programs to cover grades 11 and 12, would

have further ramifications for curriculum planning. The concept of Alternate Rehabilitation Programs as an alternative to the regular high school, rather than a remediation center, would allow programs to develop more comprehensive, long-range educational plans for their students.

Another ramification of making Alternate Rehabilitation Programs a viable alternative, would be the possible inclusion of students other than those who are totally unable to cope in the mainstream. If these programs were perceived and developed as complete educational alternatives, it would be reasonable to consider the moderately learning-disabled or handicapped student as possible candidates for such services. Although the focus presently is on students completely unable to cope, the appropriateness of alternative settings for those who are just coping, such as the moderately learning disabled or the slow learners in the mainstream, must be realized.

It is unreasonable to assume that because a student can 'get by' or 'struggle through' the regular system, that this is where they will receive the education most suitable to their needs. Alternatives should be available to students who find the mainstream a negative learning environment. Student re-entry into the regular school must be abandoned as a major goal if the extension of Alternate Rehabilitation Program facilities is to be realized. This expansion would make them a more complete alternative for their present population and an appropriate alternative for students experiencing lesser problems in the mainstream. Improvements in the above areas of need would better equip the programs

to serve all students including learning-disabled adolescents.

Summary

According to comments by staff and students in the Vancouver Follow-up Study (Brenner, 1978) and the 1979 Survey (Csapo & Gittens) 1979), Alternate Rehabilitation Programs are seen as successful in raising self-concept and improving academic skills. These programs are considered a constructive alternative for students who can not function successfully in the regular classroom. They offer a warm and personable environment that can foster successful interaction and encourage independent learning, all qualities highly prized in educating the learning-disabled adolescent. In addition they provide individualized programming, flexibility, a team approach to teaching and varied and relevant curriculum, all factors identified as necessary for successful programming for the learning-disabled adolescent. The Alternate Rehabilitation Program presently offers an excellent environment for the learning disabled; they are an accessible, wide spread, established program that can offer an immediate extension to learning-disabilities services in British Columbia.

An Alternate Rehabilitation Program for the Severely Learning Disabled

In discussing expansion of Alternate Rehabilitation Programs, the suggestion was made that some alternate programs might focus on specific populations such as on the learning-disabled adolescent. The suggestions made below are not intended to be a complete program model

model but only to offer appropriate directions for such a program. These suggestions are made in light of the learning-disabilities programs presently available in B.C. and in light of the services offered presently in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs. The suggestions will address some of the present gaps in programming for the learning disabled in B.C. and incorporate some of the areas of expansion and improvement indicated as necessary in the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs. It will be assumed that the basic qualities and program factors presently provided by the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs, as described in the previous section, will be present in this program.

Two major differences between the suggested program and present learning-disabilities programs would be that it would not focus on re-entry, nor on academic remediation. This program would span the full range of high school grades and would focus on providing relevant information in the areas of personal growth, societal roles and career planning. Basic literacy skills would be taught as relevant skills for acquiring the above information and accomplishing student-set goals. Programmed academics would be supplemental, not the main focus of the educational programming. Program suggestions will be discussed below in terms of entrance criteria and priorities, admission and assessment procedures, appropriate staff, program objectives and curriculum focus.

Entrance Criteria and Priorities

Although it is necessary to define the program population, it would be detrimental to design criteria that are too dogmatic. Such criteria could exclude students who might benefit from the services

offered. To insure the admission of appropriate students, it is necessary to discuss entrance criterion in general and specific terms. General criteria will comprise the broad parameters of the intended student population but permit flexibility and judgement within those parameters. Specific criteria however, comprise more limiting guidelines for student selection.

General entrance criteria for this program would concern students who are: 1) of average to above-average mental ability but working below potential, as determined by standardized testing, 2) displaying an uneven academic profile, 3) at least two to three years below grade level, 4) age 14 to 17, 5) not working well in the mainstream as evidenced by disruptive behavior, poor attendance, negative attitude and poor academic progress, 6) for whom the mainstream has been recognized as an inappropriate environment, 7) for whom other available programming is considered inappropriate for academic or behavior reasons. Because the general entrance criteria could result in a large number of students being referred, more specific criteria would be used for further screening. Specific entrance criteria would concentrate on those learning-disabled students with the fewest alternatives available to them presently. They include 1) students aged fifteen to seventeen, 2) those needing basic literacy training, i.e. grades 1-5, in reading, writing and math skills, 3) those with behavior problems which are obviously hindering academic progress and/or making them unacceptable to other programs.

Admission and Assessment Procedures

Referral to the program would be accepted through regular teachers, special education teachers, counsellors, or other involved school personnel. They might also come from social agencies involved with the student, parents or from the students themselves. Admission procedures would include a student application form, intended to help establish student participation and involvement as a basic program expectation. It would also include interviews with the referring personnel and parents. Informal and formal assessment procedures would be utilized to develop a student profile. Informal procedures would include clarification of referral concerns, collection of pertinent academic, medical and personal history, and collection of all previous testing materials. The sources of this information would include the above mentioned interviews, educational and medical files and classroom observation. Formal assessment would initially involve only testing needed to determine entrance criterion and this only if previous testing was judged to be out-of-date. It is felt that the need for more extensive testing can be more accurately judged after the student has been acclimatized to the program. In this way, any necessary testing can be conducted over a period of time, in a less threatening atmosphere and thus yield more valid results. The procedures described are similar to those presently followed by Alternate Rehabilitation Programs (Csapo & Gittens, 1979) and incorporate some of the procedures suggested by Cruickshank et al. (1980).

Staff Composition

One of the essential staff members in such a program would be a teacher trained in assessment and remedial procedures for the learning-disabled adolescent. A child care worker would provide the same services as those described earlier for other alternate programs. However, since much of the academics would be approached through life-skills training, which is indicated as part of the child care worker's role, an even greater emphasis on team work would be required. A third desirable staff member would be an instructor with a background in industrial education. If a second instructor is not possible, a teaching assistant with a varied work background would be a valuable asset to the core team. In addition to this core team, a liaison person with the task of establishing volunteer, part-time, and work training situations in the community should be attached to the program. This person might be shared between neighbouring districts, between programs in a larger district, or be connected to the Job Training Program for moderately or severely handicapped students.

The Job Training is a relatively new program established by the Special Programs Branch to provide work/placement for students in special education programs. This liaison person would need established consultation times with students and staff and would be involved in the construction of the student's individual education program. Additional support personnel would include a counsellor from the parent school, a public health nurse and a manpower counsellor. These latter personnel would visit the program on a regular basis, at least once per week, in

order to become familiar with and approachable to the students. They would increase student access to and knowledge of community and school facilities and be available to address specific student needs through private appointments. This arrangement would increase the direct contact of students with outside personnel on a regular basis and expand the support network of the core team. These personnel would be involved in staff meetings as often as necessary but at least once per month. Other appropriate personnel might be attached to programs as indicated by specific student needs.

Specific Program Objectives

The objectives suggested below relate to the needs of the severely learning-disabled adolescent as identified earlier in this thesis and extend the services presently offered by the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs. The suggested objectives are (1) to increase self-confidence and provide insight into personal talents and areas of interest, (2) to increase functional knowledge of consumer roles, (3) to increase organizational skills in personal, educational and career areas, (4) to increase decision making skills, (5) to help form long and short term personal and career goals, (6) to help the student plan specific educational programming or career training for the following year, (7) to help the students identify and acquire practical skills and academic prerequisites for that program or training, and (8) to provide insight and proficiency in social and interpersonal skills necessary to meeting their specific objectives.

Curriculum Foci

Many of the curriculum areas relevant to the above objectives are presently addressed by the Alternate Rehabilitation Programs and have been previously described; these include recreational and counselling activities that focus on increasing self-concept, self-knowledge, decision making skills and functional life skills. Another objective listed above is the development of organizational skills. The lack of these skills is recognized as a deficit area for most learning-disabled adolescents and must, therefore, be directly addressed. The learning strategies approach (Alley & Deshler, 1979) could be appropriately applied in teaching organizational strategies for decision making, goal setting, scheduling individual timetables, learning curriculum content, mastering job skills and learning social skills. Deshler, Alley, Warner, and Schumaker (1981) make several suggestions specific to the severely learning-disabled adolescent in terms of the acquisition and generalization of skills. The objectives of setting career goals and acquiring necessary work skills are goals also addressed by the Alternate Rehabilitation Program but in this program they would be more central foci and would be established as consistent program components over a three year period.

In planning career and/or educational goals students must be guided through several stages. The initial stage should involve a range of testing including vocational testing, aptitude/interest inventories, personality inventories and a personal analysis of what the student wants from a work situation. This can form a base of information from which to make initial decisions. Next, the student must acquire as

much information as possible in identified areas of interest or talent. This can be accomplished through such means as field trips, guest speakers, books and pamphlets, filmed or taped information community resource people, etc. The next stage involves in-depth analysis in areas of particular interest as identified from steps number one and two. This in-depth study should reveal the educational prerequisites and practical skills needed and the job characteristics of this employment area. These must be examined by the student in light of his information base and he must decide if they are realistic for him. If not, he must explore the possibilities available in related areas of interest and analysis of these areas would take place. If the career choice is found to be realistic and acceptable to the student, then the program must proceed with preparing the student for the specific tasks involved in that work area. Only after this preparation has taken place should the student be placed into volunteer, part-time or job-training work situations.

Another possible direction in terms of job-training would be vocational courses at the parent school. Before any type of external placement takes place, however, it is essential that a complete individual education program be established. Each of the parties involved, instructors, students, employers or agency workers must be fully cognizant of their role and responsibility in the program. Also, regular consultation time must be established to review progress and alter or expand plans as indicated (Washburn, 1979). The Program would provide a support mechanism for the student educationally and emotional-

ly and act as a solid liaison with the work or training situation. A possible time frame for this program might be: to help form goals and bring basic skills to grade eight level in year one; to do in-depth analysis of one or two areas of particular interest and concentrate on acquiring the skills identified and to bring basic skills up to the grade ten level in year two; and in year three have student involved in specific training in job or school situation, working in specific job, or volunteering in specified area of interest. During this final year the student would still have the program as a home base and support system. The training might be conclusive or lead to further training in the same area. This time frame would, of course, vary according to individual student need and capabilities.

The program described is basically a career-preparation program. The central goal would be to help the student establish a realistic and immediate vocational direction and to instill in her the ability to analyse career options on a continuous basis as this is basic to career success in our changing technological society. One of the main differences between this program and other career-education programs referred to in the literature is the emphasis on community rather than high-school training. Another distinctive feature is, of course, the supportive and intimate environment offered by the Alternate Rehabilitation Program. This environment is seen as a central factor to student success.

Conclusion


It has been established that if the learning-disabled adolescent is to be successfully educated in the mainstream of education, the mainstream must change drastically. Until such change is realized, special education programming is necessary for the learning-disabled adolescent, and many others, who cannot profit from or adjust to the academically oriented, inflexible atmosphere of the secondary school system. These students, it has been noted, require the type of environment described as typical of the Alternate Rehabilitation Program in order to begin to develop to their full potential, which is a central goal stated by the Special Programs Branch in B.C.

It is, therefore, inappropriate to establish maintenance in or re-entry to the mainstream as an appropriate goal for these students. Efforts must be aimed instead at providing a comprehensive alternative education program for these students. The least adequately served of the learning-disabled population presently is the severely learning-disabled adolescent with behavior problems. Therefore, it is recommended that initial efforts concentrate on their particular needs. Including the Alternate Rehabilitation Program in the range of services for the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. and extending these programs to provide a comprehensive service, would be an appropriate and constructive method of extending services for the learning-disabled adolescent in B.C. By combining the resources of the learning-disabilities field with the unique environment offered by the Alternate Rehabilitation Program, a worthwhile contribution could be made to the area of special education in B.C.

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