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*Training School for Boys*  
*Eldora*



What is  
the

TRAINING SCHOOL

IOWA TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS, ELDORA - 1957

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## Introduction

**I**nformation concerning the Iowa Training School for Boys is frequently sought by individuals or groups engaged in making studies of such institutions, by those utilizing its services, by agencies and individuals involved in related fields of endeavor, by those interested in the school in a general way, and for various other purposes. This booklet is intended to provide research material for students; to equip judges, probation officers, and attorneys with essential information; to inform public and private welfare agencies, ministers, and schools of our function and program; and to present to the general public a picture of our program. The following material about our school is designed to provide concise answers to a comprehensive series of questions about training school programs. The material has been organized in terms of our situation and program, although most of the questions were originally taken from a Children's Bureau pamphlet dealing with services for delinquent children.

It must be realized that, although a philosophy of rehabilitation is common to training school programs, there are many factors which serve to make each institution unique. Each institution must adapt itself to the size and type of area which it serves, and to the types of youths committed to it. It necessarily must operate in terms of the resources (both material and otherwise) available in the area served, which impinge upon the boy and his family before, during, and after his institutional period.

## Introduction (continued)

It is our purpose to help the delinquent boy acquire a new concept of himself and of the society in which he lives thereby enabling him to achieve goals and satisfactions through patterns of living acceptable in the community. We believe that there is potential good in every boy, which it is our duty to find and develop, and that this discovery and development can occur only in a situation where a boy can express himself within limitations imposed to guide his behavior and to protect himself and others. An acceptance of every boy as he is, and a positive approach to his problem, combined with fair and honest discipline are essential elements in reaching our goal.

Helping a boy achieve an adjustment adequate to meet the requirements of living in a free society, then, is the central purpose of our institution. Improvement of his moral life and his spiritual life; development of better attitudes; achievement of emotional maturity; and acquisition of social, educational, vocational, and leisure time skills, all enter into the process. Evaluation of progress in this direction and resultant promotion through the institution constitutes the core of our program and is described in section "B" of this material. Although recognizing the gap between theory and practice, we are continually and conscientiously involved in translating our basic philosophy into practice, and are attempting to align each phase of our program with this central philosophy and purpose.

We hope that the statement preceding and the questions and answers following will provide a clear picture to our readers of a philosophy and program designed to help those boys who have failed to respond to help offered by local community resources.

## Who are the boys coming to the Training School?



**Q.** From what kind of environment do most of the youths come?

**A.** There is considerable variety, with many economic, social, and professional levels being represented, although the middle and lower economic and social levels and the non-professional group predominate. This is a reflection of commitment policies as well as of prevalence of delinquency in these groups. A large percentage of them come from disrupted homes; these being homes where there has been death of a parent, separation, divorce, or a high degree of dissension, any one of which contributed to an unhappy home life.

**Q.** What is the general marital status of these boys' parents?

**A.** A recent compilation revealed the following information as to the home background of our boys:

156 boys came from homes where both parents were alive and living together. No conclusive evidence is available as to congeniality or its absence in the home.

112 boys came from homes broken by separation, divorce, or where no home existed at the time of pregnancy (illegitimate).

33 boys came from homes broken by the death of a parent.

8 boys came from purely adoptive situations.

**Q.** From what types of localities do most of the boys come?

**A.** The figures on this vary slightly from time to time, but a recent compilation, based on about 300 boys in the institution at that time, showed the following results: 53% of these boys were from 10 communities in Iowa, all of them with populations over 20,000. The remainder of them came from cities, towns, villages, and farms under 20,000 population. This breakdown follows quite closely the overall population distribution in the state.

**Q.** What are some of the kinds of delinquent acts that the boys have committed?

A. Larceny of motor vehicles, breaking and entering, incorrigible, petty larceny, stealing, robbery, forgery, assault, truancy, sex misconduct, malicious mischief, and violation of parole.

Q. How many of the children in the institution have previously been in institutions for delinquent children?

A. With the exception of our own boys returned for violation of parole, there have been only 13 boys admitted here during the last seven years who had previously been in other institutions for delinquents. Some of our boys have spent short periods of time in county juvenile or detention homes prior to their commitment here.

Q. How many of the children in the institution had been known to juvenile courts prior to the juvenile court experience leading to their current commitment?

A. Almost all of the boys committed had previous contact with the Juvenile Court, resulting in either informal or formal probation periods.

Q. From what source or sources does the institution accept children?

A. The institution accepts all children (10 through 17 -- See Iowa Code 1954, Chapter 242.6) committed to it by the courts of Iowa, and by transfer (Chapter 232.29, Code of Iowa, 1954), state wards from other state institutions in Iowa.

Q. How many children of each eligible age were received by the institution during each of the past seven years?

A. Figures for the years ending June, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, and 1956 are as follows:

Age	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
10	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
11	1	5	1	2	0	1	2
12	0	7	3	3	4	7	4
13	10	11	9	12	14	12	15
14	26	26	24	22	30	35	44
15	45	33	52	62	57	48	56
16	48	63	42	53	64	60	79
17	22	44	30	26	34	45	40
18	3	7	5	8	0	11	5

Q. What was the average age of the children in the institution during the past seven years?

**A.** The average age in 1950 was slightly over 15 years, and at the present time is approaching 16.5, which indicates an upward trend during the seven year period.

**Q.** What was the average daily population during each of the past ten years?

- A.** 1946 -- 265  
 1947 -- 217  
 1948 -- 172  
 1949 -- 161 (This decline in population occurred during a period of program readjustment.)  
 1950 -- 181  
 1951 -- 230 (The increase occurring during the first five months of 1951.)  
 1952 -- 229  
 1953 -- 231  
 1954 -- 258 (Another increase occurred during the first part of 1954; the January average being 225, the August average being 270, and the December average being 272.)  
 1955 -- 253 (An average of approximately 270 continued through June, at which point it dropped to approximately 240 where it stayed for the remainder of the year.)  
 1956 -- 294 (On May 10, 1956 our population reached 300 and has consistently remained above this level reaching a high point of 329 on March 12, 1957.)

**Q.** How many of the boys involve themselves in running away from the institution?

**A.** The following table shows the total number of escapees, escapes, average population, and total boys handled for the past three calendar years.

Total Boys Handled	Average Population	Escapees	Escapes
1954 470	258	31	41
1955 500	253	39	74
1956 575	294	43	63

The number of boys involved in running away is fewer than the number of incidents. Some boys ran twice, some three times, and a few four times during the time they were in the institution. This means that about 6% to 8% of the boys handled each year in the institution are boys who run one or more times. Approximately one-half of these are apprehended within a few miles radius of the school by our own staff personnel, while the remainder are apprehended by other law officials.

Q. How many boys coming to the institution are those who are being returned for violation of parole?

A. The present composition of our population is 83% first time boys, and 17% parole violation returnees. This percentage of returnees in our total population varies between 14% and 17% at different times we have checked.

Q. How many children received during the past year were severely emotionally disturbed?

A. The precise percentage would vary according to the definition of the word "severe", but it would be safe to say that 15% were seriously emotionally disturbed.

Q. How many were mentally retarded?

A. 23% were operating well below their capacity, but we have received only a few who were mentally deficient.

Q. How many had severe reading disability?

A. Many of the boys read below the level at which they should be able to read. We have some boys who cannot read, some who are in the eighth grade before entrance who read at the 3rd grade level, and variations on up to those who read at their appropriate level. Percentage figures would depend entirely upon the definition of "severe".

Q. How many were below their normal level of educational achievement?

A. The previous answer applies equally well to this question.

Q. How many had pronounced physical handicaps?

A. It is difficult to translate "pronounced" into a percentage figure, but approximately 2% to 3% of our boys could be designated as physically handicapped. We have received a few epileptic boys whom we would designate as mentally handicapped rather than physically handicapped.



## Program Core

**Q.** Who determines how long a child remains in the institution?

**A.** State law provides that the boy be committed by the court until he reaches the age of 21. See Chapter 232.30 of the Code of Iowa, 1954. Provision is also made for the discharge after attaining 18 years of age, and also parole prior to that time. Within this legal framework the administrative staff of the institution has set up a treatment program with the following provisions. Each boy when he first enters the institution is placed on a minimum nine month program during which time his progress is periodically reviewed. Our goal is for the boy to achieve emotional mat-



urity, positive attitudes, good work habits, and a level of behavior that will enable him to operate successfully in society. Failure to observe the rules necessary to group living, displaying of poor attitudes, lack of respect, poor work, and immature behavior, indicating lack of progress toward this goal, will result in the boy lengthening his stay at the school. When it is felt that the boy is ready, he is given an opportunity to demonstrate his adjustment on parole. If not successful, he is returned to the institution; but if successful, he remains out in society under supervision until he reaches 18 years of age at which time he is discharged from further obligation to the Training School. If he attains 18 years of age while in the institution he is directly discharged upon completion of his readjustment program.

**Q.** Is review made of each case at the end of a specified time or times?

**A.** Yes. A boy spends a basic eight weeks in "D" Class, 10 weeks in "C" Class, 10 weeks in "B" Class and eight weeks in "A" class, with a review made at the completion of each class. Conduct and Adjustment reports are prepared by all staff members who have supervised the boy during the class period (cottage parents, detail officers, school teachers). These reports, plus observations and reports by the counsellors who are members of the staff, are studied by the Classification Staff and discussed with the boy. Strengths and weaknesses are pointed out to him and a decision on promotion to the next class is made. If the reports are poor the boy may be held

four weeks in classification, in essence adding to his time here; or he may be given a review date four weeks later, during which time he has the opportunity to improve and earn a promotion retroactive to the day he was given the review date, in essence giving him the opportunity to save the time. On the basis of good reports he will be immediately promoted to the next class.

Quality of the reports is related to the class being reviewed, more being expected of a boy in "B" Class than of a boy in "D" Class; and also related to the basic potential of the individual boy, more being expected of the boy with greater ability than of the boy with lesser ability. Both privileges and responsibilities accrue as the boy progresses. A boy may also add to his period of time in the institution between review dates as will be indicated under questions on discipline.

**Q.** By whom is the review made?

**A.** The review is made by the Classification Staff composed of the following members: Assistant Superintendent, Dean of Boys, Sociologist, Chaplain, Educational Director, and Vocational Director; sitting as a group and meeting as a group with the individual boy. Individual counselling in the school is primarily done by the Psychologist, Chaplain, Dean, and Sociologist; with the Educational Director and Vocational Director available for consultation in their areas. Classification and individual counselling resultant are easily coordinated and integrated.

**Q.** How and by whom is parole eligibility established?

**A.** Actually each review conference is a step by the boy toward parole, with the review upon the completion of "A" Class being the final step. It is the Classification Staff which at the time determines if this boy has reached the point where he should be given an opportunity on parole. The staff, having periodic personal contact with the boys and made up of members who have daily contact with the boys, composes a group which is well equipped to evaluate the boy's readiness for parole on the basis of their acquaintance with him and his step by step progress in the program.

**Q.** What types of disciplinary measures are used in the school?

**A.** Each staff member is expected to instruct and advise the boys in his charge and when necessary caution them and warn them about any activity which is not proper. If such action does not bring the desired result, the staff member writes a detailed report which is given to the Dean of Boys. The Dean, upon receiving the report, discusses it with the boy, attempts to find the reason for the behavior, may warn him against further infractions, **may add time to his program,** and/or refer him to other staff members for

further counselling. The time penalties are relatively standardized but their application is determined by factors such as the attitude of the boy, circumstances involved, and the repititious quality of the offense.

For more serious infractions a boy may be placed in segregation for a period of time during which he has the opportunity to think over his problems without having the pressure of daily group living interfering with his thought. While in segregation he has the opportunity to work, the opportunity to think, and access to personal counselling. The cases of all such boys, and the length of such stay, is considered and determined by the Discipline Staff consisting of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, the Dean of Boys, and the Sociologist, with the head of the discipline unit also present. Each boy appears before this group individually and has the opportunity to discuss his problem with them.

**Q.** What happens if a boy runs, or tries to run away from the institution?

**A.** Upon being caught, he is placed in segregation. If he is caught before leaving the institution grounds he will have the period of time spent in segregation added to his period of time in the program. If he is apprehended after leaving the institution he automatically spends 4 weeks in segregation, upon the completion of which he begins an extended program. Special provisions are made for those boys who turn themselves in voluntarily, depending upon the circumstances of the particular instance.

**Q.** Is there any special program for special cases?

**A.** Yes. We have one special program for those boys whose conduct and activity in the school program indicate their inability and/or unwillingness to operate adequately in the regular program. These boys are given the opportunity to develop in a program which affords closer supervision, individual living quarters, and special work details separate from the regular program activities. These boys live in the segregation building where the daily pressure of group living is reduced and where the supervision is geared to more difficult problems. They continue to attend Chaple Services and movies, but do not participate in activities with the regular program boys. This also serves to protect those boys in the regular program from the negative influence exerted by such nonconformists.

**Q.** What is the average length of stay in the institution?

**A.** The average length of stay falls just under 12 months.

## Program Areas



**Q.** What is done during the period immediately following admission to help young persons accustom themselves to their new environment?

**A.** During the first three weeks the new boys are kept separate from the regular program, giving them the opportunity to adjust to the new situation, and to learn the philosophy and program of the school from the proper sources. It is during this time that a battery of psychological tests is administered, and various members of the staff meet them as groups and individuals. This period, known as the orientation period, is designed to do exactly that, orient the boy to the life, program, and philosophy of the Training School.

**Q.** By what means are the boys studied in order to gain understanding of their needs?

**A.** A psychological battery is given them, including I.Q., personality inventory, general attitude, interest, and aptitude tests. Further testing and referrals are performed if the picture presented by the regular battery indicates severe problems.

**Q.** How, and by whom, is placement into the regular program accomplished?

**A.** Upon completion of the orientation period the boy is placed in a regular cottage on the basis of his age, size, and general level of maturity. A committee composed of the Dean, and the Directors of Education and Vocations determine the educational and vocational or trade placement of each boy. He is placed on the basis of the test results, the interests he expresses verbally to the committee, the openings available, and also the criteria utilized in cottage placement. These placements are in the general sense, permanent, although transfers in both cottage and activity areas are made when circumstances indicate their advisability or necessity.

**Q.** Does the program provide for individualized treatment and personal interviews?

**A.** Yes. The boys have access to various types of individual counselling. The Psychologist provides psychological counselling, the Sociologist provides casework, the Chaplain and the Priest provide religious and spiritual guidance, and the Dean provides general behavioral and discipline advisory guidance.

**Q.** Is educational and vocational guidance available?

**A.** Yes. The Educational Director is available for counsel on academic problems and planning. The Vocational Director is available for counsel on vocational and pre-vocational planning. Complete vocational testing and guidance is provided by the Psychologist for any boys desiring it.

**Q.** How does a boy make contact with these services?

**A.** Boys come into contact with these services by their own request, by their lack of adjustment, by the request of the individual counsellor, or by referral from either the Dean's office, Classification Staff, or Discipline Staff. A boy may ask to see a particular counsellor. His behavior may bring him in contact with the Dean and also by referral to one of the other counsellors. Either of the two staffs mentioned may refer a boy to an individual counsellor for assistance with his problems.

**Q.** Are ample provisions made at the Training School for the religious training of a child in his own faith?

**A.** Yes. Our Religious Department is an integral part of our program. We have a full time non-demoninational Protestant Chaplain in residence at the school. The local parish Priest is employed on a part time basis to minister to the spiritual needs of the Catholic boys.

The Priest provides religious guidance for the Catholic boys, holding catechism weekly, counselling with them, and hearing their confessions. These boys attend their regular Sunday services, and also special observance services, at the Catholic Church in Eldora.

Our resident Protestant Chaplain conducts services on Sunday and on special occasions, teaches a full schedule of Bible classes, conducts devotional periods, counsels boys individually each day, and is active in the Classification Staff, endeavoring in all these ways to make religion real in the lives of the boys.

Each boy is required to attend services on Sunday morning, has the opportunity to voluntarily attend the classes of his choice, and is encouraged to seek counsel for his spiritual life from the Chaplain or Priest. We have

a large Chapel on the grounds used for regular services and also a small Chapel which is used for classes and devotional periods. Contact with local pastors and priests is also encouraged.

**Q.** Do the boys avail themselves of the religious opportunities provided?

**A.** All of our boys attend the Sunday services each week as a required part of our program. Approximately 40% of our boys participate in the voluntary aspects of the religious program offered. This probably compares favorably with the percentage of Sunday morning Church attendance in most Iowa communities. It is also encouraging in light of the fact that very few of these boys have participated in any active way prior to commitment.

**Q.** Do boys in the Training School have educational opportunities equivalent to those offered in the community?

**A.** Yes. Our Education Department under the Education Director provides education equivalent or comparable to that available in the community and geared to the needs of these particular students. Both grade and high school subjects are taught. The students below 6th, 7th, and 8th grade level are placed under ungraded category. Most of the boys have reached one of the mentioned grade levels prior to commitment so the ungraded group is small.

Credits are transferable to other schools in the state, and graduation from both grade school and high school occurs each year. Several of this year's high school graduates are beginning college work this fall. The Director's duties are similar to those of a superintendent and principal in a public school program.

**Q.** Is the educational program adapted to the needs of institutionalized delinquent children?

**A.** Yes. The adaptation is accomplished by the use of comparatively small classes which provide for individual attention, better supervision and control; thereby helping the boy to direct his activity and energy in proper channels. Emotional and other blocks to learning are identified and, insofar as possible, removed, and remedial study is initiated. Actually much of the



work is remedial in a sense since most of the boys have encountered school difficulty of some sort before entering the Training School.

**Q.** Does the Academic School operate on a full time basis?

**A.** A regular nine month school year is conducted from September through May each year. This summer (this varies from year to year) we are conducting a 10 week summer school session, which has as its basic orientation remedial work in basic skills. The latest remedial reading material and equipment is being utilized in this program.

Boys participating in the academic program attend school one-half day, during which they take four basic courses, and spend the other half-day on a vocational, trade, or work program. Approximately half of the boys in the academic program attends in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. Physical education, music, and similar activities are carried on separate from the academic program.

**Q.** Does the vocational education program in the Training School provide occupational opportunities suited to the abilities of the boys?

**A.** Yes. Under the guidance and supervision of the Director, our Vocational Department provides a variety of opportunities for those boys whose test results indicate the necessary ability and whose general attitude indicates genuine interest. Academic school attendance is required of the boys enrolled in the vocational education program. Each vocational education area operates under a prescribed course of training including both class work on its theories, fundamentals, and methods; and actual work experience utilizing the knowledge gained from the course material. They meet the requirements for accredited vocational training.

The short period of time, in terms of vocational training, that a boy spends here precludes the development of a finished workman. In this respect this program might perhaps be better defined as pre-vocational although legitimately described as vocational training. Approximately nine months of concentrated training, utilizing new equipment, will develop good working habits, provide a solid footing in basic fundamentals, and develop operational skills in each specific area of training.

Our Barber Training Program is a notable exception to the general statement above. The State Barber Board has approved our program thereby making a boy, upon completion of the training in our modern shop, eligible to take the examination which if passed would qualify him as a licensed apprentice barber. Thus far, in a year and a half of operation, six boys have completed our program and all have passed the licensing examination.

**Q.** What are the vocational training areas?

A. Barber Shop, Auto Mechanics, Printing, Shoe Repair, Truck Driving, Agriculture, Baking, Meat Cutting, and Commercial Cooking. At present we have these nine vocational training areas. We are in process of setting up prescribed vocation programs for more of our trade areas with the goal being the establishment of such curricula for as many fields of endeavor as possible.

Q. Is the vocational program geared to meet the needs of the boy upon his return to community living?

A. This training is designed specifically to meet two needs, the first being the provision of training commensurate with the individual boy's ability; and the second being the provision of training which will enable him to meet the demands of the employment world after leaving the Training School. Our institution actually constitutes a small community, and services necessary to our operation are similar to those necessary to most communities in the state. This means, then, that in training boys to provide the services necessary to our operation we are also training them to provide similar services in the community to which they will return. This is also applicable to the trade and work programs described below.

Q. Is trade training available for those boys not involved in the vocational training program?

A. Yes. Trade training is available for those not placed on vocational training programs, and work training is used for those not placed in either vocational or trade programs. We have many trades, such as farming, dairying, horticulture, carpentry, painting, and plumbing, where our boys gain much practical knowledge and experience. We differentiate these from our vocational areas in that they do not include class work on theory, fundamentals, and methods. Areas such as these are projected additions to the vocational training areas. Some boys who would qualify for vocational training are placed on these trade details as are many other boys who would not qualify for vocational training.

In addition, we have several routine work details for those boys who are only capable of simple routine work or who are too young to be placed on either of the other two programs even though they may have the ability. In conclusion, our total program provides opportunities for those with high ability, medium ability, and those who are limited in ability.

Q. Does the Training School have a recreation program? Of what does this program consist?

A. Yes. The Recreation Program consists of a full intra-mural athletic program, including both group participation by cottage teams, and indi-



vidual competition in activities such as badminton. We have two movies per week on the grounds for all the boys, and occasional movies downtown as special rewards to cottages. Each cottage has an adequate playground area and equipment. Inside games are permitted and furnished, as is hobby activity such as model construction. Several radios are in use in each cottage and television sets are expected to be added this fall. A variety of outside entertainment groups come to the school and present programs from time to time. All of the boys have the privilege of attending our home athletic events which are discussed below.

**Q.** Does the Training School have an athletic program and of what does it consist?

**A.** Yes. The Academic School of our institution is a member of the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and our athletic teams participate in inter-scholastic athletics on a home and home basis. We belong to a football conference; participate in basketball, track, and baseball competition, including state tournament and meet eliminations. A state meet record in our classification was set by one of our boys in the football throw in this year's state track meet.

**Q.** What facilities are available for the athletic teams?

**A.** We have a fine gymnasium housing a basketball court, balcony running track, swimming pool, and adequate equipment and dressing room facilities. In addition we have a lighted football field inside a quarter-mile cinder track, a baseball diamond, and a softball diamond. These facilities are also available for the intramural program.

**Q.** Are there hospital beds available, and infirmary facilities suitable for care of minor physical ailments in operation on the institution grounds?

**A.** Yes. There are 28 hospital beds available in our hospital building, with the infirmary facilities designed to handle the routine ailments and to discover the more serious conditions. Surgery, when necessary, is performed at University Hospitals in Iowa City. Emergency treatment is given here when essential.

**Q.** Does the Training School have available the services of a physician?

**A.** Yes. There is a local doctor who serves in this capacity.

**Q.** Does the Training School have available the services of at least one registered nurse?

**A.** Yes. We have a registered nurse in charge of the operation of the in-

firmly and hospital facilities. She is assisted by two licensed practical nurses.

**Q.** Does the Training School have available the services of consultants and specialists who supplement the medical staff regularly available at the school?

**A.** Yes. There is available a dentist; and an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist; and also the full services of the University Hospitals in Iowa City. Psychiatric services are available there and also at the Mental Health Institute, Independence, Iowa.

## Physical Plant and Grounds

**Q.** What is the capacity of the Institution?

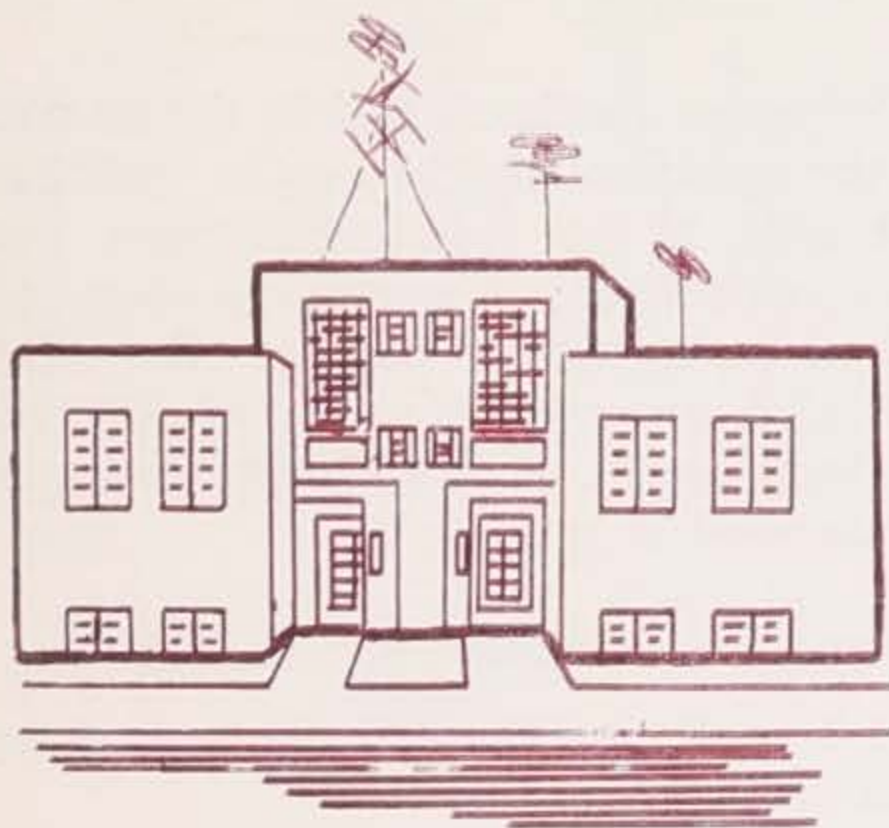
**A.** The capacity is 250 boys.

Four cottages of 45 boys.

One cottage of 50 boys.

One cottage of 20 smaller boys.

Our Orientation-Segregation building contains, in addition to this, 60 individual rooms, with one wing of 30 rooms being used for orientation and the other wing of 30 rooms being used for segregation. The basement level of a new duplex cottage building is in process at the present and we hope to be able to use it by fall. Each of the two units is designed to house 45 boys.



**Q.** Is the institution required to operate above capacity?

**A.** Yes. The additional cottage being constructed is necessary to replace an old one now in use and to provide additional housing. Our recent population average has varied around 325 which is 75 above the optimum operating capacity of the institution.

**Q.** Is it small enough to make it possible for the staff to attend to the needs of the individual youth?

**A.** Although smaller cottage units are desirable to aid individualization, each boy is afforded a great deal of individual attention, as illustrated by the answers in the Program sections of this material. Although our recent population growth has curtailed to some extent our efforts at individualization, our details and classes remain small enough to enable the supervisors to give individual attention to each boy. It has placed additional pressure on these persons involved in the individual counselling aspect of the program. Presently our staff consists of about 150 members supervising approximately 325 boys.

**Q.** Are the grounds and buildings of the Training School adequate for the needs of the program?

**A.** The grounds are adequate, consisting of 876 acres of Iowa farmland, over 600 acres of which is under cultivation. But there are limitations placed on our program due to limitations of the facilities. Our newer buildings are adequate and serve their purpose well, but more new buildings are needed to supplement those we have and to replace many old buildings being used because of necessity.

**Q.** Are the buildings architecturally sound for the purposes for which they are used?

**A.** The buildings are designed by competent architects and fit the purpose for which they were intended, with the exception of the older buildings which are being used, because of necessity, to the best advantages possible. Five of our present cottages are comparatively new and in good condition, while the sixth one has outlived its usefulness. Most of the staff members are living in buildings that have been condemned or whose condition warrants such classification. Replacement of these buildings is perhaps the most imperative construction need at present.

**Q.** Are the cottages in the school attractive, homelike, and liveable?

**A.** Yes. They are as attractive and homelike as possible for large group living, and are very comfortable and liveable.

**Q.** Are they easy to maintain in good condition?

**A.** Yes, with the exception of the old cottage which, as mentioned earlier, has long outlived its usefulness.

**Q.** Are they constructed in such a fashion that it is easy for the staff to supervise the children?

**A.** Yes. Their construction is conducive to good supervision.

## Institution Living

**Q.** What are the school regulations pertaining to dress and personal clothing?

**A.** All clothing is furnished by the school. It consists of a basic blue work outfit; a green or gray outfit for school and semi-dress wear; and dress slacks, white shirt, and jacket for Sunday wear. Boys are permitted to have personal underclothing, pajamas, dress socks, shoes, and Sunday dress suit if they so desire. Our boys do not wear uniforms, all that is requested is that they wear their clothing neatly and reasonably. Last summer a limited number of Bermuda shorts were issued and worn.



**Q.** Must their hair be cut in a standard fashion?

**A.** It must be kept at a 1½ inch maximum length, but variations are allowed within this limitation.

**Q.** What personal items may a boy keep in his possession?

**A.** Necessary toilet articles, personal clothing, radios, hobby supplies, and games, as well as food packages from home.

**Q.** Do the boys have an opportunity to purchase such items?

**A.** Yes. Through the business office the boy may order such items to be purchased downtown with funds drawn from his canteen account.

**Q.** What type of buildings do the boys occupy?

**A.** The buildings are of fireproof brick construction incorporating on the lower floor a reading room, kitchenette, and a locker room which contains toilet and shower facilities. The dormitory which is used exclusively for sleeping is on the floor above.

**Q.** Are the dining rooms in the Training School attractive and homelike?

**A.** One end of the reading room is designed for use as a living room, while the other end is utilized as a dining area with the boys eating at four person tables. They are served their food cafeteria style from the adjoining kitchenette. The atmosphere is very pleasant and natural with normal conversation permitted during the meal. These tables are also used for playing games during other than meal times.

**Q.** Do the staff members eat with the boys?

**A.** No. They eat separately from the boys in the staff dining hall which is in the newly constructed dietary building. The cottage parents eat their meals with the boys.

**Q.** Do the staff members eat the same food?

**A.** Yes. All the food is prepared in the central dietary building which supplies the entire population. It is transported from there to the individual cottages and to the staff dining hall.

**Q.** Does the Training School maintain close contact with the parents of boys in the institution?

**A.** Yes. The contact is maintained through correspondence between the boys and their parents, visits by the parents, and by correspondence and interviews by the staff with the parents, including reports on the boys' adjustment during their stay in the school. Another important element in this area is that of the parole agent who, during the boy's stay, visits, evaluates, and helps prepare the boy's home for his return, and who also continues contact with the boy and his home while he is on parole.

**Q.** With whom may the boys correspond?

**A.** The boys may write to parents, brothers and sisters once each week, and to a minister, teacher, probation officer, or similar professional person once a month. The boy's family may write to him as often as they please, while the other group mentioned may write to the boy once a month. All letters are censored to see that their contents are acceptable and positive in nature and not upsetting or detrimental to his adjustment.

**Q.** Are certain boys permitted to make home visits?

**A.** Yes. Emergency visits resulting from the death or serious illness of an immediate family member are permitted at any time while the boy is in the school. Sunday visits during both "B" and "A" classes include a two hour uptown visit privilege.

**Q.** Do residents of neighboring communities participate in Training School activities?

**A.** Yes. They provide entertainment programs, assist in various ways in the religious program (organist, teachers, soloists), and high schools provide athletic competition. Legion Auxiliary, and similar groups supply homemade cookies, candy, and personal items throughout the year with a peak at Christmas time.

**Q.** What opportunities, if any, are provided for the children to use school, recreational, religious, and other facilities in neighboring communities?

**A.** Adequate facilities, equal to those in the surrounding communities, are available to the boys on the school grounds. Our Catholic religious program utilizes the facilities of the local Catholic Church. Athletic teams use the facilities of the opposing teams on away-from-home games, and in tournament competition. Cottage groups attend downtown movies on a reward basis. Local and state park facilities are available for the boys on their uptown visits.

**Q.** How much is the annual budget of the institution?

**A.** Figures for the fiscal year 1955-1956 show a budget of \$479,321.00.

**Q.** What was the annual average per capita cost during that fiscal year?

**A.** Annual per capita cost averaged \$1,875 during that year and this does not vary noticeably from the present average.

## Aftercare Program

**Q.** Is there an aftercare program for the guidance of boys released from the institution?

**A.** Yes. There is a parole staff which conducts the aftercare program. All boys under 18, upon completion of their program, leave the school on parole, and remain under the supervision of a parole agent until they reach 18 years of age. Those boys who are 18 years and older upon completion of their program generally are directly discharged.

**Q.** What training and experience have the persons who conduct this program?

**A.** One of the men has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Iowa University plus eight years of experience. The other two men have each had



more than 15 years of experience in the field.

**Q.** What is the caseload and territory covered by each agent?

**A.** There are three agents for the state of Iowa, each covering a particular part of the state and their caseloads vary from time to time. At this time they are carrying an average of about 75 each, which is an increase from last year. This is perhaps the weakest part of our program since it is impossible for three men to do an adequate job of supervision with a caseload of that size scattered over approximately one third of the state.

**Q.** What plan is there for contact and cooperation between the Training School and the community to which the child will return?

**A.** In addition to the family contact previously mentioned, the parole agent serves as the contact between the school and community. As the situation indicates, various agencies and services in the community are utilized to aid in a boy's placement, adjustment, and in the preparation of the family or other placement. The parole agent contacts school, social and welfare agencies, church, and all other agencies which pertain to a particular boy's placement and adjustment.



**Q.** Are the child's home and neighborhood conditions taken into consideration in the planning for his release and return to community living?

**A.** Yes. They are taken into consideration but often there are limitations on what can be done to change or alleviate them. Efforts to educate the family are made while the boy is at the school which in many cases results in improvement of the home situation. If return to the home is impossible the parole agent secures a substitute placement for the boy.

**Q.** What is the average length of the parole period?

**A.** The average length of the parole period is presently 16 months.

## Institution Staff



**Q.** How is the Superintendent of the Training School selected?

**A.** The Superintendent is appointed by the Board of Control of State Institutions. See Chapter 218.9 of the Code of Iowa, 1954. No specific qualifications are provided in that section to guide the Board's selection.

**Q.** What education, training, and experience did the Superintendent have prior to his appointment to the present position?

**A.** Our Superintendent has had three years of college work in the areas of psychology, education, and business administration. He served as a parole agent for twenty years prior to his selection for his present position. During this time he met

regularly with the quarterly conference of institution heads which meets with the members of the Board of Control.

**Q.** Is the Superintendent in any way responsible to a board?

**A.** Yes. He is appointed by, serves at the pleasure of, and may be removed by the Board of Control. See Chapter 218.9, Code of Iowa, 1954.

**Q.** What are the functions of the Board of Control?

**A.** The Board has full power to contract for, manage, control, and govern 14 different state institutions of which the Training School is one. See Chapter 218.1 and .2 of the Code of Iowa, 1954.

**Q.** Who appoints the members of the Board?

**A.** The governor with the approval of the Senate. See Chapter 217.2, Code of Iowa, 1954.

**Q.** What are the qualifications for appointment?

**A.** There are no qualifications specified in the area of education or training. There are limitations on political party membership and activity, and

standards of conduct during their period of service. The Board consists of three members only two of whom can belong to the same political party. They are restricted from exerting political influence while in office. See Code of Iowa, Chapter 217.1 through 217.7. Members may be removed from office for cause as provided in Iowa Code, Chapter 66.1 and 66.26.

**Q.** How often does the Board meet?

**A.** Daily, each member must devote his entire time to the duties of the office.

**Q.** Does the institution have available the services of a psychiatrist?

**A.** There is no resident psychiatrist, but we have available the facilities and services of Iowa University's Psychopathic Hospital, and the Independence Mental Health Institute for diagnostic and treatment purposes.

**Q.** Does the school have available the services of one or more clinical psychologists?

**A.** Yes. We have a resident psychologist who administers an entire intake battery, subsequent testing where necessary, offers vocational testing and vocational counselling. He also counsels with a selected caseload of emotionally disturbed boys. In addition to this he also provides testing and screening services to all prospective employees, as part of a staff improvement program.

**Q.** What training and experience did he have prior to his appointment?

**A.** He has his Bachelor's degree in Sociology, and a Master's degree in Psychology and has had a long period of service with the Veteran's Administration.

**Q.** Does the school have available the services of one or more social workers?

**A.** Yes. There is a resident Sociologist/Social Case Worker.

**Q.** What education, training, and experience did he have prior to the present appointment?

**A.** He has a Master's degree in Sociology and Social Work, specializing in Criminology and Juvenile Delinquency study along with case work. He has an undergraduate degree in Sociology and has completed two years of law school, all at the University of Iowa. Three semesters of actual case work experience, two in a social agency, and one in a mental hospital, was part of the social work training.

Q. What is the nature of his work at the school?

A. Counselling with individual boys, and participation in the classification and discipline staffs constitutes one large area of the department. General social service activities such as contacts with parents and acquiring and supplying social histories comprises another area. Public relations activity, including compilation of material such as this booklet and replying to requests for information about the program composes a third area of the department.

Q. Who supervises the program in the group living quarters?

A. Cottage parents, with one couple serving as the regular parents and another couple serving as relief parents for two cottages. The regular parents are in charge four days and then have two days off duty. The relief parents work two days of relief in one cottage, two days relief in another cottage and then have two days off duty.

Q. What are the duties and responsibilities of these supervisors?

A. They serve as parents to the boys in all respects possible, supervising their activity and helping them with their problems of daily living. During the past two years the cottage parents have been relieved of all duties beyond their cottage responsibility, in other words they do **not** have to double as work supervisors in addition to the responsibilities as parents in the cottages.

Q. What education, training, and experience did they have prior to the present appointment?

A. There is no special training or education required, but they are couples who have children of their own in all cases. There are no special qualifications but they are chosen on the basis of their apparent and tested ability to fulfill the role of substitute parents to a large group of boys. There is no merit system.

Q. Do the teachers in the Training School meet state standards or certification?

A. Yes.

Q. Are they selected for their professional qualifications?

A. Yes.

Q. Do they have special training and experience in handling emotionally disturbed children?

**A.** No, although experience is quickly gained here.

**Q.** What education and experience did the teachers have prior to their present appointment?

**A.** As indicated above our teachers meet state standards, and are like any grade and high school teacher group of comparable size in the state, with some new teachers and some veterans, one of whom has taught here for approximately 25 years.

**Q.** Does the school have available the services of one or more recreation leaders?

**A.** Yes. We have a recreation leader who organizes and supervises intramural activities and other athletic and recreational activity in the school, in addition to which the athletic coaches and cottage parents also participate.

**Q.** Is the staff of the Training School selected on the basis of merit alone? Do they have the opportunity to advance?

**A.** There is no merit system, but they are selected and have the opportunity to advance on the basis of their individual merit and ability.

**Q.** Do they receive compensations at least equal to that paid in the community to persons with similar training, experience and responsibility?

**A.** This is a difficult comparison to make, but it compares favorably with the state as a whole in general, although exceptions might well be found. There are exceptions which are low, and also certain capacities for which comparisons are difficult to find. It rates higher than the immediately surrounding communities, while probably lower than other larger communities in the state.

**Q.** Does the Training School provide for development of staff?

**A.** Yes, in various ways. Educational leaves can be obtained for furthering academic achievement. Various in-service training activities are utilized from time to time. Attendance at conferences of all types applicable to our program directly or indirectly from the local to the national level is encouraged; as is participation in professional and community activities and affairs.

## Historical Note



Several official names, numerous changes in policy and procedures, accompanied by the building and tearing down of various buildings, have marked the almost 90 year history of our institution. During those years almost 14,500 boys have experienced living in Iowa's juvenile correctional institution.

**A Reform School** for boys and girls was established through the provisions of a law passed by the Iowa General Assembly on March 31, 1868. Its temporary location was at Salem, in Henry County, where it continued until the completion of the first buildings at Eldora in 1873. The Eldora site had been chosen by a board of commissioners appointed by the 1871

General Assembly for the purpose of selecting the permanent location for the boys' institution. By the summer of 1873 two two-story family buildings, and another building to be used for manufacturing purposes, dining hall, and school room were ready for occupancy and it was possible to make the move to Eldora. The boy population had increased from 45 the first year to 125 at the time of the move.

A huge castle-like structure, rising four stories above the basement, and built of native stone and brick, was begun in 1876 and completed within a few years. An additional wing was constructed at a later date. This building still stands and is presently used for administrative offices and staff living quarters. A variety of buildings has been constructed over the intervening years to meet the needs of a growing population and to implement an expanding program. Many of them such as the school building, hospital, and gymnasium, built between 1907 and 1922, as well as the administration building are still standing and in daily use. All but one of the old housing units for boys have been replaced by new cottages culminating in the one presently under construction. Other recent additions have been a central dietary building, vocational building, and auto shop.

For a period of time **Industrial School** was the name used to design-

nate our institution. The conception of its purpose and the resulting emphasis can be readily seen in its name, primarily that work training would serve as the central corrective influence for the boys.

Emphasis on group discipline, coupled with military type organization and drill for the boys marked another phase in the history of our institution. Long term institutionalization, often until 21 years of age, was an important factor during this period since it brought varying results. It made possible the development of a nationally rated band by rigorous daily band training extended over long periods of time. It also tended to cause overinstitutionalization of the individual boy, and brought about an extremely high population which from necessity placed a premium on the custodial aspects of the institution's operation. The population climbed into the seven hundred plus range on occasions, resulting in extreme overcrowding of facilities and overloading of the limited staff, the boy to staff ratio frequently approaching 10 to 1.

The **Iowa Training School For Boys**, as the institution is now known conveys in its title a connotation of the purpose and program which has been in process for the past ten years. A disturbance, occurring in 1945, resulted in a re-evaluation of philosophy, purpose, and program. After a period of readjustment many new policies and procedures were initiated affecting the operation of the institution in various ways and providing the basis for much subsequent development. Prior to that time many young men remained until reaching 21 years of age, but subsequent to the change, in keeping with good juvenile procedure, 18 years of age has developed as the terminal point for stay in the Training School. The classification program as described in Program Core has served as the coordinating element in a broad and varied training program. Individual development of basic abilities and skills in many areas of daily living has been a guiding theme in our program during the past ten years. Improvement of services to reach all areas of a boy's life more effectively, containing many elements combined in a broad and balanced program, describes our desire at this point in the history of your Training School.

The preceding material was compiled and prepared by the Department of Sociology, Iowa Training School for Boys, Eldora, Iowa. The sources from which the material was gathered were the Iowa Code, 1954, research data maintained in this department, and various departments and staff members of the Training School. It is an attempt to provide a concise, yet fairly comprehensive picture of our school as of the first of July, 1957. We realize that there are limitations to a presentation such as this; since it is comparatively brief it must at many places be descriptive rather than definitive; since it describes our program at a particular point it tends to miss its dynamics and variety; but it is hoped that it has helped our readers to better understand our philosophy, boys and program.

Although the material was gathered and prepared by the Sociology Department credit must also go to the Journalism Instructor and Detail for the layout and art work and to the Printing Instructor and Detail for printing the booklet. Visiting groups are always welcome during weekday working hours, and such visits may be arranged by writing to: Superintendent, Iowa Training School for Boys, Eldora, Iowa.



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