

Ask many teenagers about police and the courts and they will tell you the cops are out to get them and the judge is there to hand out punishment.

"Not so," says Juvenile Court Judge, Donald August. "The whole idea behind the Juvenile Court is help.

Juveniles get special treatment from the two branches of the law because they want to aid a juvenile not punish him.

Judge August said when he sees a child coming from the areas of Lakeview, Dixie, and Clarkson coming up before him, that the juvenile has had every other avenue explored.

"Only when a child shows he can no longer be governed by the parents or

other interested agencies does he come before me, and I know this child needs help." Judge August says.

A criminal record begins at 16 when a juvenile is classified as an adult by the courts.

Being under 16 does not give immunity from the law as the juvenile is still held responsible for a criminal act.

The only difference is that an adult is tried in a criminal court while the juvenile comes to the Juvenile Court which has special privileges and procedures.

"We don't have this (the Youth Bureau) in the rest of Peel County yet but I hope we will soon so we can help more of these kids," Judge August says.

Juvenile Court aim: to help not punish

By JIM ROBINSON

A juvenile comes before the court from Lakeview, Dixie or Clarkson only after every other course of action has been tried.

When the child first gets into trouble he comes to the attention of the Youth Bureau.

A member of the Bureau will investigate the child's background, get a general impression of the home life, and talk to the child's principal about his progress in school.

If the problem can be solved in the home or at school, it is usually left at that unless the child has had previous run-ins with the law.

The next group to be called in will be one of the six Peel County Board of Education attendance counsellors.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The counsellors are employees of the board and it is their job to research the child's school background and report their findings to the Youth Bureau or the Regional Counselling Team.

The information gathered by the attendance counsellors, like all other information compiled on the child, is strictly confidential.

Another specialist who is often called in by the Youth Bureau is Dr. Ashton McKinnell, head of psychology for the board of education.

If a child can be helped in this manner, Dr. McKinnell will handle proceedings in conjunction with the Youth Bureau.

The next plateau reached by the child is the Regional Counselling Team which convenes to discuss the future of a juvenile if all else has failed.

AGENCIES OR COURT

They will decide if the juvenile can be helped by any of the agencies working with them or if the child will have to go to court.

The team will compile a list of suggestions made from the child's background which will be used in court by the Youth Bureau officer during court proceedings.

Judge August said: "If I see a child coming up before me in this court I know he has a problem and that everything else has been tried to help this child.

"A child is entitled to every protection under the criminal court."

"The big thing about the Juvenile Court is help. I haven't ever punished a child in this court."

Judge August emphasises the role of the court is to give help, guidance, and the proper supervision to a child in trouble.

Using the example of a juvenile who

has pleaded guilty to a charge of shoplifting the procedure is as follows.

Constable Greg Jones, or one of the other Youth Bureau officers will read the evidence.

This is the convicting role of the Youth Bureau.

TURN AROUND

"The next thing I do is a complete turn around. I give the background of the child as I know it and try to assist the court.

"When I give the background, I can give some of the recommendations of the Regional Counselling Team that might help the juvenile," Constable Jones said.

After hearing the evidence, Judge August will give a finding which doesn't always mean declaring a child a juvenile delinquent.

"When I see a child is up before me on a once in a lifetime occurrence, I do not have to declare him a juvenile delinquent and I can let it go at that but with a stern warning that he better not appear before me again," Judge August said.

If the juvenile is declared a juvenile delinquent, Judge August has seven alternatives under the Juvenile Delinquent Act.

"I can suspend final disposition, in other words, let it go at that.

"I can adjourn the hearing which means I adjourn it for ever and ever re-adjourn it if need be."

"I can impose a fine on the child if I feel it would help.

"And in imposing a fine it can be left at the discretion of the court that the parent or guardian may be held responsible for damage of costs assessed the child.

SUPERVISION

"I can commit the child to the supervision of the probation officer, the parent, or a responsible adult."

"I can allow the child to return to the home under the guidance of a probation officer and request the child to reappear in the court."

"I can send him to a suitable family home or foster home under supervision can have the child sent to a training school."

Training school is the last and most serious step the Juvenile Court can take and is only used in an extreme case where a child no longer be governed by any other agency or person.

"I don't think a child should come up on every charge. If I see a child coming up from the south (Mississauga) I know that everything else has been tried.

"This is where Sgt. John Kelly and



Provincial Judge Donald August has a positive and straightforward approach to children in trouble. He believes Juvenile Court should be a source of help and not punishment to the young people who are sent there.

the Regional Counselling Team are doing such a great job."

"If more people knew what is going on we could get the help we need for all the juveniles in Peel County, not just Mississauga," Judge August said.

MORE HELP NEEDED

Judge August said that he would like to see more private citizens and service clubs coming to the aid of the juvenile court system.

"When people invest in our youth they are making the biggest investment of all."

"We need more foster homes and there just aren't any available to use. What we need are more persons to open their homes to these kids."

"People have got to understand that kids are not born bad. They are born alike. It's the home that makes them bad."

"Most of these children, and you can see this in their background, come from broken homes and naturally they are going to get into trouble. I'd be surprised if they didn't."

"All these service clubs in the area like Kiwanis and the Lions are sup-

posed to be involved in bettering the community."

CENTRE FOR CHILDREN

"If they want to help, I would like to see them establish a centre for children and have it staffed by experts."

"If we had to send them somewhere to get help this would be ideal as we would have everything we need right there."

"One other suggestion is more people like those in the Youth Bureau. Sgt. John Kelly and his men have done a tremendous job and I think it could apply to Peel County."

"If the Youth Bureau had more men, if there were more people at the Family Service Bureau and in the Probation Offices, the job of the court wouldn't be so frustrated."

Judge August said the combined roles of the court, the Youth Bureau, and the Regional Counselling Team have proved their merit in the cases he has been dealing with.

"This is a new approach to juveniles and I think it is the only logical one if we are going to try and help these kids."

Chief McGill wants to expand Youth Bureau

By DANA COOK

Mississauga Police Chief Garnett McGill would like to expand his department's Youth Bureau to include two more officers and a policewoman and extend the bureau's counselling team to include 16, 17 and 18 year olds.

Presently the Youth Bureau, which is staffed by four officers and works closely with a regional counselling team, deals with youth under 16 — those subject to juvenile court.

"I'm most anxious to expand the program

"I'm most anxious to expand the program by adding two more men to work in the Erindale area and Malton," Chief McGill said. "And a policewoman to work

with girls. They have problems too."

The problem is dollars and cents.

"I wish I had the money to do it," he added. "It's a question of trying to get the money to get the staff to do the job."

Chief McGill, most pleased with the way the Youth Bureau has worked out since started about three years ago, hopes Council sees fit to allocate enough extra money to hire two extra men specifically to do youth work.

Next year's police budget includes \$64,000 for Youth Bureau, mostly for salaries. To hire two more men and a woman for the rest of the year would involve an extra \$20,000, the chief estimated.

The Youth Bureau is currently staffed by Sgt. John Kelly and Constables Greg Jones, Walter Richardson and Tom Crosson and mainly covers Lakeview, Clarkson and Dixie.

The bureau works with youth under 16 and, along with a regional counselling team, tries to decide whether it is a good idea to send a youngster who gets in trouble with the law to juvenile court.

REHABILITATION

Chief McGill said the Youth Bureau and Juvenile Court try to work hand in hand in the best interest of the youngster. He said "rehabilitation" is the key word.

"If we can get the money now and

expand this program and help these youth who have problems, we won't be spending nearly as much money in the future on penitentiaries and reformatories," Chief McGill said.

Mississauga's Youth Bureau was started in 1967 after Chief McGill and Sgt. Kelly studied a unique program in Flint, Mich. The one here is modelled closely after Flint's and Chief McGill believes the key to its success has been the counselling team.

Chief McGill credits Sgt. Kelly for making the Youth Bureau what it is today. "John Kelly has been the spark-plug," he said. "He and his men are doing an excellent job."