



VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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July 15, 2002

Honorable Bruce A. Clark
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Ventura County Hall of Justice
800 So. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Response to the 2001-2002 Ventura County Grand Jury Report
Regarding "Truancy Problems and Solutions in Ventura County" and
"Lack of Facilities and Programs for Juvenile 601 Offenders"

Dear Judge Clark:

As required by California Penal Code section 933.05, this letter is a response to the 2001-2002 Ventura County Grand Jury's Report dealing with *Truancy Problems and Solutions in Ventura Count* and *Lack of Facilities and Programs for Juvenile 601 Offenders*. Listed below are the findings and recommendations, followed by my response dealing with the VIDA program.

Truancy Problems and Solutions in Ventura County

- F-9 Los Angeles County Sheriff's program, VIDA, is for at-risk youth. This is a 16-week all-day program on Saturdays staffed by Sheriff personnel and volunteers. It also includes Thursday evening counseling and learning sessions for the youth, counseling for parents, in-school checking and drug testing of all youth attending.
- C-7 VIDA is an excellent program and should be started in Ventura County to reach at-risk youth before they become 602s. (F-9)
- R-4 A "boot camp" type program like VIDA needs to be established countywide to reach at-risk youth before incarceration becomes necessary. (C-7)

SPECIAL SERVICES

800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2315 FAX (805) 650-4039

PATROL SERVICES

2101 East Olsen Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
(805) 494-8261 FAX (805) 494-8295

DETENTION SERVICES

800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2305 FAX (805) 654-3500

SUPPORT SERVICES

800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-3926 FAX (805) 654-2109

Programs for Juvenile 601 Offenders

F-10 Following is a list of what other counties in California are doing to try and prevent 601 offenders from becoming 602 offenders:

3. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department does not incarcerate 601 contempt cases, but their VIDA program deals with at-risk youth. This program is a structured sixteen-week non-custody youth intervention program, which is specifically designed to assist at-risk youth between 11 and 17 ½ years of age and their families. VIDA, overseen by law enforcement personnel, covers community service, physical training, behavior modification, career guidance, counseling the youth and parent(s), and drug and alcohol testing. The Grand Jury requested and received a power-point presentation about the program and visited the training area in Malibu Hills to observe that local "boot camp" portion and lecture. Grand Jury members also attended the ceremony in East Los Angeles for VIDA graduates from all of Los Angeles County.

C-5 Ventura County has at-risk youth programs in different communities in the County but there are none such as VIDA for a countywide effort. It is important that a solution for at-risk youth for the whole county be developed. A "boot camp" and counseling program like VIDA is an outstanding way to accomplish this solution (F-10, #3)

R-5 Institute a protocol program by law enforcement like VIDA countywide so all at-risk youth have the same type of program available. (C-5)

Response

The Ventura County Sheriff's Department reviewed the VIDA program of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and concluded that the program does afford some potential for success in dealing with at-risk youth prior to incarceration; however, budget reductions in FY 2002-2003, both current and anticipated, have required the Department to reduce or eliminate some existing programs. As a result, the development and institution of the VIDA program by the Ventura County Sheriff's Department cannot be considered at this time.



BOB BROOKS
Ventura County Sheriff