Court, schools assist youths

They were youngsters in trouble on the road to nowhere.

John, 16, was a shoplitter who was flunking out of Troy schools.

Bill, 13, skipped school. When he was attending classes in the Rochester area, he was distruptive.

Dawn, 14, also had an attendance problem at Oak Park schools. She'd missed 45 days in a single school year.

single school year. These are some of the young-sters who recently came to the at-fention of Oakland County Youth Assistance, a cooperative venture between Probate Court and Oak-land Schools.

Missing school was bad enough in Itself. But idle hours left lots of time for drugs, promiscuity, violence and other, more serious problems.

problems.

"Luckily we got to some of these youngsters before they got into serious trouble," asid Richard Thibodeau, resource development specialist with Youth Assistance. "Some of the youngsters we help are in more serious difficulty. But out goal in to get to them early, before they get in real trouble.

"Sometimes with the help of their parents or other responsible adults, we are able to turn them around, get them headed in the right direction." Youth Assistance was able, for example, to get special tutoring for John in Troy. His math and reading skills improved and now he's enrolled at Oakland Community College.

For Bill. the 13-wear-old in the

For Bill, the 13-year-old in the Rochester area, Youth Assistance arranged a different kind of help. His dad died when Bill was 10, so with the help of his mother, Youth Assistance arranged for counseling, including a wilder-ness experience in Northern Michigan.

Michigan.

His life turned around. He even volunteered to work, under supervision, as a youth aide at Youth Assistance summer recreation programs for younger children.

For Dawn, who had missed 45 days of school, Youth Assistance arranged for counseling and special attention from her grandmother. One year later Dawn not only like school, but she was working on a 3.5 grade point aver-

age.

The youngsters are helped, and Thibodeau, through the determined effort of volunteers working in close relationship with court and school authorities. "The goal is to provide help that effectively meets the needs of individual youngsters." he said. "We try to strengthen the family and guide and encourage the youngster."

In honer of its 40th anniver-

"We try to strengthen the family and guide and encourage the youngster."

In honer of its 40th anniversary, Youth Assistance will sponsor Dr. James P. Comer, on eminent psychiatrist, educator and director of the School Development Program at the Yale University Child Study Center.

Comer will talk on "Parents and Schools Working Together" beginning at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 26, at the Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen Road, Tickets are \$5 in advance, \$3 at the door. To register call Thibodeau at 588-0053 of Elaine Sturman at 972-2534.

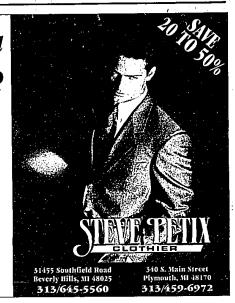
Among other things, Comer will address is the need for parents to cooperate with teachers and other faculty members in the governance of schools.

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Author of national guidelines for K-12 dance curriculum Head of the Dance Department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

National Dance Association 1994 Scholar Author of Dance for Young Children: Finding the Magic in Move

Thursday, February 3

Detroit Country Day **Lower School** 3003 West Maple Road, Bloomfield Hills

10:15-11:15 a.m. workshop for parents and 5 year-olds

Admission is free. Registration is limited. To register, call the Lower School, 433-1050, today. Sponsored by the Detroit Country Day School Friends of the Arts

9-10 a.m. workshop for parents and 4 year-olds