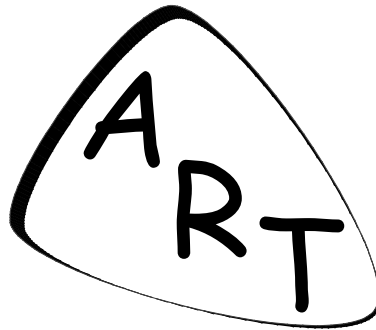


# Beyond Social Services' Anti-Delinquency Model

February, 2003



## Our business concept:

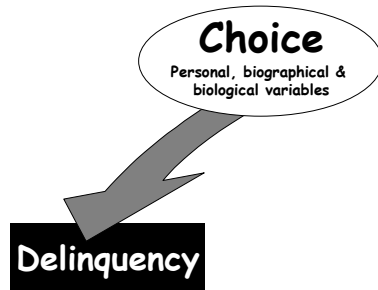
In January and February 2003 we sat down and decided an important shift regarding our target group and our future work approach. The outcome of this exercise was what we call 'BEYOND'S future strategic profile' in which 'children and youth at risk' will be the main driving force. This means in other words that **we do exist to “fight” delinquency among children and youth in the lower strata of Singapore Society**. We will pursue this through reducing the need for delinquent behaviour by providing, creating, facilitating, advocating or training access to mainstream alternatives.

We will adopt a proactive and holistic approach that encompasses the roles of Advocate, Service Provider and Motivator, and which incorporates programmes and activities that help our beneficiaries realise their potential.

We will be a leading agency as well as the voice to bring about positive government policies that promote an all inclusive society, an adequate network of service providers and a low juvenile delinquency rate.

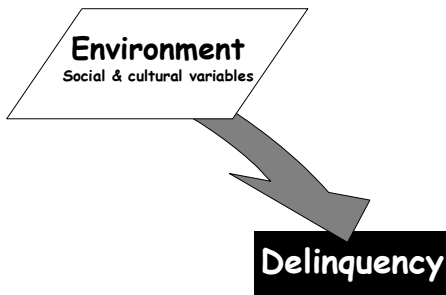
## Beyond's Model of Delinquency

Model of Delinquency focusing on the **Individual**



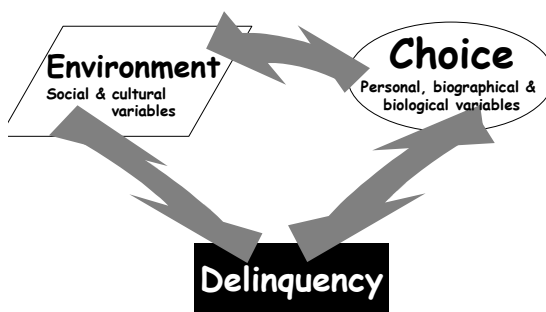
When we talk about delinquency we are not just referring to a specific behaviour displayed by an individual or a group. In our view delinquency is a far more complex phenomenon than individual behaviour though this individual behaviour may be the eye catching factor. Therefore many scientific as well as laymen's attempts to explain delinquency focus on the individual. If the focus is on the individual, personal variables or personality traits are viewed as the cause of delinquency. Consequently it is believed that it is the individual who needs to be changed, re-trained, counselled and thus re-adapted to society.

Model of Delinquency focusing on the **Individual's Situation**



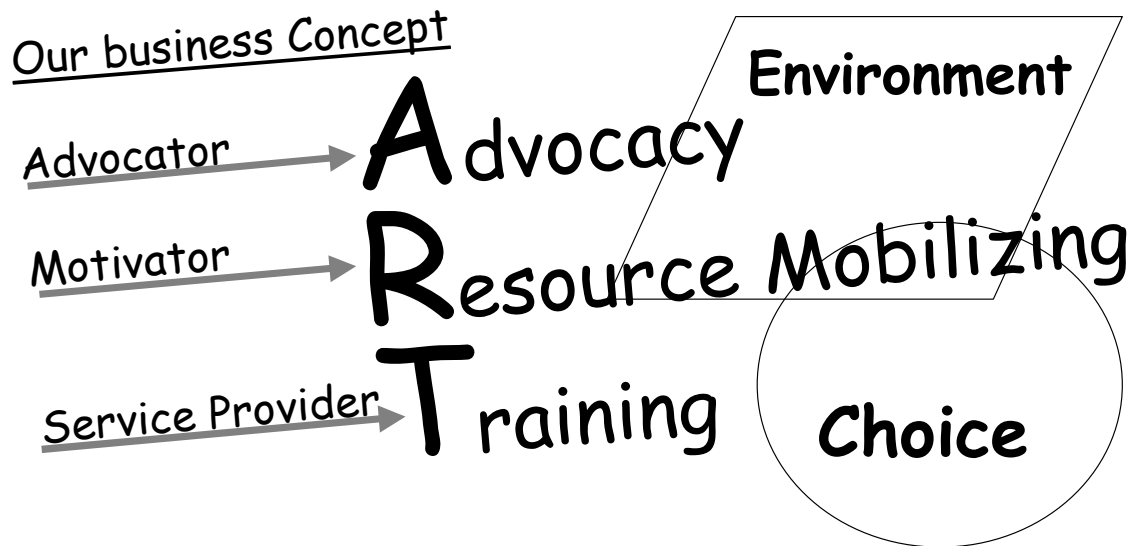
The alternative model views the main cause for delinquency in the individual's environment. The family as well as the network of friends and acquaintances is considered as the primary environment. Secondary environment are all the organisations that have a direct influence on the individual's life, like pre-schools and schools. Tertiary environment is made up of all these institutions that play their part in the process of defining, preventing and treating delinquency. The relevant sociological theories are the "Block Opportunities Theory" and the "Labelling Approach"

A Complex Model of Delinquency



Our model of delinquency stresses the interaction of personal and environmental factors. Although the individual makes a choice his/her environment impacts their personal preferences. In delinquent environments the options perceived by the individual may be limited to choices which perpetuate delinquent behaviour. It is ultimately the mainstream environment which provides or denies options beyond delinquent patterns.

### 3 Dimensions of Anti-Delinquency Work



**Alize Salomon, 1879: "Social Work is an ART,  
Build on Science, Values and Experience"**

Since a Model of delinquency was adopted which stresses both individual responsibility as well as the responsibility of the community, a more complex and more comprehensive approach of Anti-Delinquency work was needed to create mainstream alternatives by utilizing resources and strengths of clients and community.

The delinquency model described above has resulted in us to developing a three-dimensional anti-delinquency work approach. We named this approach ART to highlight that anti-delinquency work is not just a scientific technology but based on values and experience. There are no straightforward and proven methods or concepts to work on delinquency although the experience of 25 years has helped us to understand which tools and concepts are more likely to work than others.

Besides experience and facts it is a specific concept of values that shapes our Anti-Delinquency work. As shown above, we view both the contribution of the individual as well as the contribution of the environment as absolute necessities for non-delinquent life styles. We assume further that the individual, his/her social network and the community are full of strengths and resources we have to utilize if we want to generate sustainable solutions.

These resources may need to be identified, further developed or mobilized but they are indeed prevalent and valuable. In fact only such “natural” resources are long lasting enough to guarantee sustainability.

In that sense the ART model is also a certain view about the world, a theory defining the type of Social Work delivered by BEYOND Social Services. It guides how we assess clients and their situation. It describes how we view the community and how we collaborate with community resources. It is the paradigm for designing, fine tuning and evaluating our services. It is the corporate identity and culture of BEYOND as well as a source of motivation and renewal.

The 3 dimensions of ART have been designed to pay equal attention to individual and environment, to focus on problem solving rather than on problem diagnosing, to base interventions on strengths instead of treating deficiencies and to explore opportunities instead of identifying needs. ART demands entrepreneurship from our staff as well as the courage to explore unconventional ways.

### ***Dimension 1: Training***

**Training** means direct Social Work with the individual and his/her family. The goal is to develop opportunities for alternative behaviour instead of delinquent behaviour. Morally delinquent behaviour is viewed as fundamentally incongruent with the core values of society but therapeutically delinquent behaviour is also interpreted as an attempt to solve a problem, of course by creating even more serious problems via consequences.

Our conventional perception most often emphasizes on problems because we tend to say “this is why the people come to us.” Dysfunctional aspects catch our attention more easily than functional attributes. Often service delivery is shaped according to the problems of clients. Interventions are based on their needs and whole organisations are structured along deficits of communities.

Upon such assessments of deficits Social Work experts try to treat them based on their expertise and their programmes. This is what we call the conventional way built on the conventional and simple wisdom that a problem is something we want to avoid, stop or eradicate. Following the conventional way produces these conventional outcomes we see all over the country: Problems get identified by experts and hopefully solved by applying their expertise. Success is paradoxically defined by numbers of served clients. This is the same as if the fire brigade would evaluate their success by the number of fires fought and not the number of prevented fires by utilizing the abilities of residents to take precautions (example by Heng Chee How).

The more problems get identified, the more experts will be needed and vice versa. The more skilled experts are, the sharper, it is believed, their understanding of the problems of people, the causes and treatment is. Marginalized people get surrounded by experts. These artificial networks often dry out their own genuine

networks and capacities and isolate them even more from the mainstream community. **Indeed, these people have needs but their main need is to connect again with the centre of community.**

Often however, we observe the opposite. A self-reinforcing circle might be put in place, where too much is emphasised on what professionals can do for clients and too less is trusted in what people can do for themselves- if the mainstream was re-opened for them. Although we do think that expertise is valuable and necessary we doubt whether the simplest and most normal way of dealing with delinquency is the most successful one.

The single mother who may appear neglecting her 4-year-old son leaving him alone at home half of the night can be viewed through a conventionally tainted “deficit lens.” In that case you’ll perceive a lack of responsibility and parenting skills. The conclusion will be that such behaviour is morally wrong and needs treatment or “righting”. A strengths perspective however brings into view that she is spending her time earning money for the family as a waitress in a Karaoke club. She appears responsible and disciplined although the way she solves her single parent problem is likely to produce unintended side effects. Her goal to be a good mother by feeding the family is a strength- and by using this strength, an alternative solution can be built planned.

The mother may have a network of neighbours and friends who are willing to help. There may be yet unknown neighbours who can be mobilized, even relatives perhaps. She may have the skills to do another job during day care opening hours. To find those neighbours or the alternative job or the day care is a strengths based solution. To put her in a programme where she is thought parenting skills would be a deficit based solution.

For professionals however it is much more convenient to run a programme than to tailor an intervention according to her unique resources. The price for convenience is high. It may even weaken the mother’s genuine interest and expertise when professionals take over by what we call “colonising the family.” Our working hypothesis assumes that there are always options for alternative behaviour no matter how skewed the situation may be. However it seems crucial whether we want to choose these options and go for them with all the energy we have. **Therefore one of our key principles is that we do not motivate but we try to identify motivation.** We do not believe in working on people to follow our advice but we are seeking their advice which way *they* think might work. We are supporting people to achieve their goals by using skills of not knowing what should be done.

We do not furnish intervention plans FOR clients but we do enter into contracts WITH them. All this does not mean we need to be agreeable to every motivation or is required to support each and every goal. An honest NO is more helpful than a nice OK. However we do carefully differentiate rational NOs from conventional NOs. While the first is beneficial feedback the latter is a well-disguised anxiety of the professional to leave behind his/her conventional way of doing and seeing things. It is of course easier to follow a routine than to build a solution around resources of clients.

Strengths assessment is for us, an essential tool and a starting point. It is followed by a contract expressing genuine wants of clients. Contracts are written in an I-Want ... Because-Format. They should leave no doubt about the driving force behind the goal and they must be in line with the head as well as the heart.

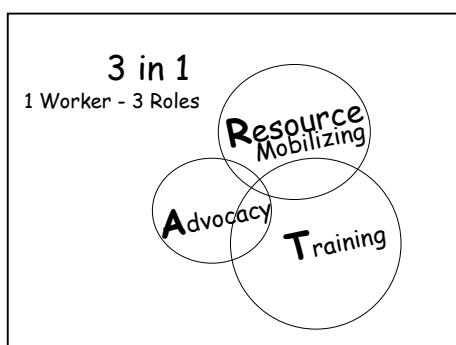
### ***Dimension 2: Advocacy***

**Advocacy** targets to influence the mind set of people, organisations and the community as a whole thus promoting an all inclusive society. "All inclusive society" is a vision which postulates that the mainstream organisations of society have to be open, suitable and capable to deal with all young people and not only these who readily fit into their structure. Surveys have proven that staying in school for example (which is the key mainstream organisation for young people) is an outstanding protective factor when we deal with delinquency. Pre-schools can have similar protective effects. But these organisations "may not yet be fully prepared and equipped to take up the challenge" (Dr Vaso). **Advocacy work is not just demanding from organisations that they accomplish the impossible but to support them in pursuing the goal of all inclusiveness.**

Advocacy work is work against excluding dysfunctional people and work towards normalisation. Based on the theory that the environment has a significant impact on the individual we believe that if there is a problem, it is also the environment which can be optimised. Schools, child care facilities and pre/schools which are the organisational key players in the life of young people have the option, the power, the responsibility as well as the capability to be inclusive, thus providing individuals with opportunities.

### ***Dimension 3: Resource Mobilizing***

**Resource Mobilizing** is the bridging dimension between individual and environment. A pure therapeutic approach where a team of experts tries to re-engineer a delinquent client is not sustainable enough to ensure lasting long term results. Experts can never replace caring relatives, supporting friends, beneficial role models in sports clubs, teachers, etc. The prerequisite for sustainable solutions is that they are built on resources which all ready exist in the environment of the individual, although they might not have been fully developed or utilized in the past. The paradox of helping process shows us that substituting help might show short term effects but in the long run has weakening effects. Also efficiency demands that Social Work strengthens and utilizes existing resources rather than producing them.

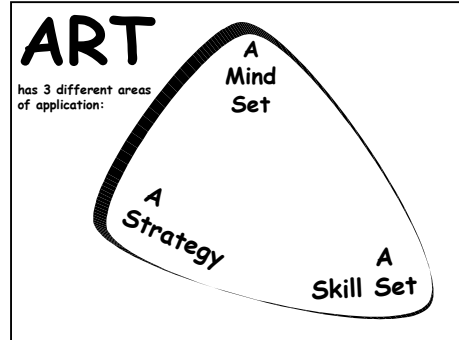


The ART- Model enriches the work of the front line workers by asking for proficiency in 3 different roles. The Advocator, the Mobiliser and the Trainer describe the dimensions every intervention will have. Casework gets a new meaning since to case may not necessarily be an individual client but also a school, a church, a

group of potential volunteers, a Mc Donalds outlet or even a MP.

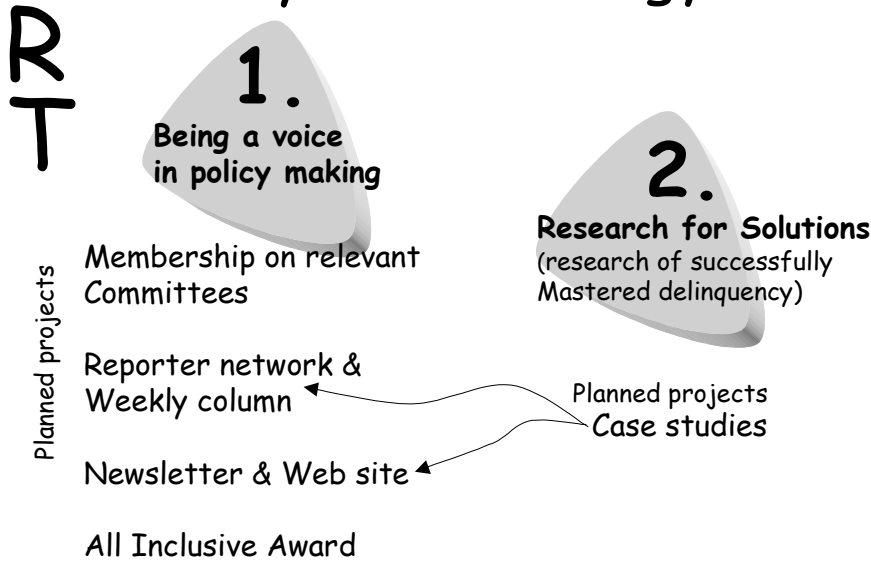
### 3 Applications of the ART Model

ART our Anti-delinquency approach is a **mindset (1)** as shown above. It stresses that both individual and environment are different sides of the same coin. Successful anti-delinquency work tries to advocate and mobilize as many community resources as possible for the purpose of sustainability. The ultimate goal is an all inclusive society where delinquent individuals are successfully re-connected with the mainstream and thus normalized. Mainstream organisations need to be supported in this non-excluding normalization process.



ART as a **strategy (2)** means that the future profile of service delivery will be shaped according to the ART philosophy. Existing programmes will be optimised according to ART while new programmes and projects will be developed during this 3-year process of reinventing Beyond's Social Work as outlined in the following charts:

## Advocacy as a strategy:



ART as a **set of skills (3)** is referring to techniques and methods. These are transferable skills working on all ART dimensions: advocacy, resource mobilizing as well as training.

Resource Mobilizing uses mainly 3 co-ordinated techniques. One2ones is a method as well as an indicator for success designed to detect and mobilize community resources by every day face to face contacts. What is important is not how many resource people might be all ready known to you, but how many new people/resources you can identify and get to know every week. A target of 1 new contact per week seems realistic for a start. This will multiply throughout the year to  $1 \times 52 \text{ weeks} \times 20 \text{ staff} = 1040$ . The systematically obtained information will be processed by the team before being categorized and stored in a database for easy access. The chart attached in the appendix provides some ideas how the One2one method works.



Networking basically means winning organisations to support all inclusiveness by contributing whatever resources or opportunities they can offer. The organisations we'll concentrate are those which play a key role for young people Pre-schools, schools and potential employers. (For some details see appendix)

Projects and programmes refer to activities like the Streetwise Run which specifically focus on mobilizing a vast diversity of resources.

What is critical here is that with these three techniques, there should be a team effort at co-ordination. We must ensure that the contacts on the one2ones and the resources mobilized via networking and projects can be utilized not only by those workers who first established the relationship- but by the entire team. Therefore the team has to plan, co-ordinate, facilitate and evaluate this kind of work. A database should always be set up to ensure that everyone has access to the information obtained.



## Training

The main skills for the training dimension deal with strengths assessment and creating of contracts.

**A  
R  
T**

Outline of a curriculum  
for the dimension

Training

### Skills for Strengths Assessment

Eco mapping

- +Resource check
- +Genogramme as a resource finder

### Skills for Creating Contracts

- +Skills for Not Knowing
- +3-step-Questions
- +The I-want-because-Format for documentation
- +From Wants to Goals
- +Creating achievement agendas: strengths and resource based goal setting
- +HH-contracts: involving head and heart in contracts
- +Family Group Conferencing