

"We also are criticized for the practice in this State of using juvenile institutions as detention centers for holding young people who are awaiting court action.

"These are problems that already are receiving attention from our juvenile authorities. We realize that too many of our youngsters are being sent to institutions who shouldn't be there, and who, through the lack of effective rehabilitation programs and parole supervision, grow up to a life of adult crime.

"We intend to introduce modern, efficient screening methods to help the juvenile courts reduce the population of our institutions. We also will examine the advisability of building regional detention homes similar to the Maryland Children's Center.

"Coupled with this will be a greater emphasis on development and use of community services to aid those who require supervision but not institutional custody, and also those who are ready for release but have no home to go to. This would include the use of shelter homes and half-way houses where young people would reside under informal supervision but with freedom to continue school or pursue fulltime employment.

"Our new Department of Juvenile Services, which goes into operation July 1 and will have full authority over institutions as well as providing uniform services to juvenile courts, is unique in the nation.

"It has a sweeping mandate to improve a system that had much study but saw little progress prior to the 1966 Act. Judge George B. Rasin, Jr., the chairman of the new Advisory Board of Juvenile Services, and Mr. Richard A. Batterton, director of the new department, both assure me that the majority of changes recommended in the report already are planned or are under way.

"These include the reassessment and updating of treatment programs in our juvenile institutions, improvement and uniformity of juvenile probation services throughout the State, reduction of case-loads for probation officers, construction of a new 204-inmate institution for boys, development of in-service training programs and related professional improvement opportunities for personnel, and plans for improved psychiatric evaluation, vocational training, and post-institutional care of young boys and girls released from State institutions."

The Governor said funds were included in the budget which takes effect July 1 to meet many of the initial improvements, and that the agency will continue to have the active support of his administration.