

Why Not Delinquents Anonymous?

By Ruth Latimer

Headlines reveal today's tragic destruction of tomorrow's citizens. Society must rescue these young people now from perils described in these headlines.

From a staggering total of youthful lives wasted, one young man emerges to tell us how his own life was salvaged. At the age of 17, John was a chronic alcoholic and a delinquent discouraging to professional workers with youth. He seemed destined for the drastic - and by no means 100 per cent successful - therapy of a correctional institution. Then he joined Alcoholics Anonymous.

Within a short time he was telling his friends, "I'm through with the habit and everything that goes with it."

John is only one of more than 100,000 to whom Alcoholics Anonymous has given a wholesome new outlook on life. Many more thousands have found freedom from other problems through such groups as Addicts Anonymous.

Could a Delinquents Anonymous group do for juvenile delinquency

what these groups have done for other social problems?

Alcoholics Anonymous proposes fellowship, faith and action. It seems, then, that this basic program for self-help is ideally suited for a new group, Delinquents Anonymous.

Most programs to combat juvenile delinquency have focused on doing something for the delinquent, ignoring youth's eagerness for independence from adult interference. A Delinquents Anonymous program would encourage the young person's self-reliance and capacity for self-help. It would provide incentive to reform, rather than coercion. It would, nevertheless, benefit from the sponsorship of adult "honorary members," experienced in youth's problems.

Alcoholics Anonymous was founded by two men getting together. Who will be the first successful ex-delinquents to found Delinquents Anonymous?