



Chuck Hollister, sound studio coordinator for the Synthesis program, displays some of the equipment used by young people in the workshop.

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I.C. arts workshop helps kids develop self-esteem

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Most communities don't have a program in which a teenager can learn to play a synthesizer, develop skills in audio and video recording, participate in poetry workshops, receive instruction in pottery or take free lessons in guitar, bass and percussion. Iowa City is one of six cities in the country that does, and the staff of the year-old Synthesis program sees no reason why every community cannot provide an arts workshop for young people.

Synthesis was created by Jim Swaim of United Action for Youth as a delinquency-prevention program with grant money from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, the United Way, the Johnson County Board of Supervisors, the City of Coralville and the Iowa Arts Council. The program took up residence in the basement of Center East with equipment purchased with

grant funds as well as instruments, amplifiers and tape recorders donated by the staff and members of the community. Although the size of the program's staff has increased, much of the teaching is done by volunteers.

YOUNG PEOPLE may be referred to Synthesis by the courts, juvenile homes or UAY counselors. But although 75 percent of the young people involved in the program have had some problem with the law, the program is open to any person between the ages of 12 and 18.

"I feel the basic aim of the workshop is to get kids back in touch with their environment and to get them turned on to creative ways of working out some of their frustrations and alienation," said Jim Elniski, multi-media coordinator. Chuck Hollister, sound studio coordinator, said this outlet can improve a participant's self image: "The individual who participates in the program should have better self-

esteem at the end of the program than they had at the beginning."

The program attempts to provide an environment with maximum creative possibilities and minimum pressure. Hollister feels the most important element in creating a hassle-free atmosphere is the one-to-one relationship between staff members and participants. "A lot of this has to do with trust. And it can't be phony trust like, 'Hi. I'm a nice guy. Relate to me.' They've got to see how involved in the studio you are and how important it is to you. They identify more with you as a person than they identify themselves with an art form."

THE SYNTHESIS program consists of three phases. In the first phase the young person comes to the studio but is not involved in any particular project. "I see them as more or less feeling out the program," said Elniski.

After a person has come to the
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