



NCJRS—Sharing Information for More Than 30 Years

by Cheryll Bissell and Jonathan Witte

About the Authors

Cheryll Bissell and Jonathan Witte are with the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Ms. Bissell oversees networking and outreach activities, and Mr. Witte is a senior writer/editor.

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) has been bringing the government and the field together to improve justice policy and practice for more than 30 years. It may not seem unusual today, but in 1972, when NIJ created one of the first federally funded clearinghouses, it embarked on a bold endeavor to give criminal justice professionals a single resource for information.

Today NCJRS staff answer questions; provide statistics; offer referrals; select publications to match needs; compile packages of information; search for additional resources; and provide other technical assistance to the President, Congress, Federal, State, and local policymakers and practitioners, educators, and the general public.

How To Reach NCJRS

The easiest way to get to NCJRS is to visit its Web site (<http://www.ncjrs.org>), where “What’s New” and “In the Spotlight” showcase recent publications and topical issues related to criminal and juvenile justice and drug policy.

From the NCJRS home page, an assortment of tools and services are available:

- **Full text publications.** The full text of more than 2,000 titles are searchable and can be downloaded or read online. These include grant research reports, State and local program/project summaries, white papers, and a variety of articles.

- **Abstracts database.** The NCJRS database contains more than 170,000 summaries of publications, reports, articles, and audiovisual products. Each abstract provides a 100- to 200-word summary and lists the sponsoring agency or organization, purchasing address, and journal citation, along with links to the full text, if available.
- **Online shopping.** NCJRS’s online store is always open. Click on “What’s Hot” under “Order Print Publications” to see which publications are the most frequently requested. To make shopping faster, set up a personal account to store your shipping address and other information.
- **Grants and funding opportunities.** Discover funding opportunities at the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and other Federal agencies by visiting the “Grants and Funding” section of the Web site. Link to other resources—such as *Federal Business Opportunities* and the *Federal Register*—to learn about the types of funding (including formula and discretionary) most often available to State, local, and private agencies and organizations.
- **Calendar of events.** Learn about upcoming regional and national conferences, training and technical assistance workshops, seminars, and other events.
- **Links.** Find additional resources from other agencies and organizations around the world through links to the 15 agencies that sponsor NCJRS.

It's Free To Join NCJRS

Joining the NCJRS network helps you stay informed. Register online at <http://puborder.ncjrs.org/register> or request a print copy of the registration form by calling 1-800-851-3420. When you register, indicate your areas of interest so NCJRS can send you notifications about what's new in the areas you specify. Registered users can receive the following:

- The *NCJRS Catalog*, a bimonthly periodical that lists recent publications and includes sections called "Spotlight On...," which discusses timely topics, and "Grants and Funding," which describes recent awards made by OJP and other agencies.
- *JUSTINFO*, an electronic newsletter issued twice a month that lists funding opportunities, newly released publications, agency initiatives, and upcoming conferences.
- Periodic email notices about publications and issues that match your specific interests.

A Special Network for the Press

NCJRS sponsors a network of editors in the field of criminal justice. Any agency or organization that publishes a newsletter, magazine, bulletin, or other document can join the Criminal Justice Editors' Group. Members regularly share information with one another and with their respective readerships.

Your Feedback Welcome

Tell NCJRS about your experiences with their services. Describe the resources you have used and how they have helped with your research, policymaking, or practice. Suggest new services or refinements to existing ones. NCJRS would also like to know how you describe NCJRS to your colleagues. Send your comments, feedback, and descriptions to cbissell@ncjrs.org.

NCJRS TIMELINE

Thirty-one years ago, professionals in the field had to read microfiche, make long-distance telephone calls, and wait at least a week to receive database search results. Today, they can receive information and assistance almost instantaneously.



NCJRS: From 1972 to 2002

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| 1972 | NCJRS established. |
| 1979 | The first NCJRS regular publication—called <i>SNI</i> , or <i>Selective Notification of Information</i> —was produced. |
| 1980 | Toll-free telephone number introduced. |
| 1988 | Electronic bulletin board established. |
| 1995 | Web site launched. |
| 1997 | Abstracts database put online. |
| 1999 | Automated calendar of events went live. |
| 2001 | Online ordering service introduced. |
| 2002 | All grant research reports posted online and available for downloading. |

For More Information

- Visit NCJRS at <http://www.ncjrs.org>. Join the mailing list by registering online at <http://puborder.ncjrs.org/register>.
- Send email to:
 - askncjrs@ncjrs.org (for criminal justice information).
 - askjj@ncjrs.org (for juvenile justice information).
 - ondcp@ncjrs.org (for drug policy information).
 - tellncjrs@ncjrs.org (for suggestions and general comments).
- Contact NCJRS at P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000, 1-800-851-3420. If calling from outside the United States, call 301-519-5500; TDD/TTY: 877-712-9279 (toll free in the United States) or 301-947-8374 (outside the United States). Telephones are staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., eastern standard time, Monday-Friday.