

A collage of images related to justice: a police officer driving a car, a hand holding a magnifying glass, and a woman in a courtroom.

***Creating a
New Criminal
Justice System
for the 21st Century:***

**Findings
and Results
From State
and Local
Program
Evaluations**

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Creating a New Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century:

**Findings and Results From
State and Local Program Evaluations**

Effective Programs Monograph No. 2

Foreword

Improving the nation's criminal justice system is the central mission of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). Building safer, less violent communities is a major challenge all states and local communities are facing. Real progress can be achieved only if we demonstrate and confirm "what works," so we can all profit from the impact of more than 10 years of federal funding through the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant Program. In the year 2000, our knowledge of effective programs will continue to be critical as we solve one of the nation's toughest problems.

Underlying our ability to gain reliable knowledge and disseminate information on effective programs and activities is our commitment to evaluating and publicizing those programs and activities as we implement our plans and strategies. Evaluation done right permits program managers to find out what is and is not working, and why. BJA carries the responsibility of building the capacity of state and local governments to design and conduct their own assessments and evaluations of criminal justice programs. BJA's handbooks and technical assistance help to provide a systematic, disciplined framework that focuses on performance and results, both quantitative and qualitative, to be measured and evaluated. This initiative also represents an area of close participation with the National Institute of Justice to build federal, state, and local evaluation systems over the past decade.

BJA is pleased to present this monograph, *Creating a New Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century: Findings and Results From State and Local Program Evaluations*. It is the second in a series of reports to highlight and document approaches and results of evaluations funded at state and local levels. The first report, *Improving the Nation's Criminal Justice System: Findings and Results From State and Local Program Evaluations*, Effective Programs Monograph No. 1, was published in December 1997. Six demonstration projects affecting many components of the criminal justice system were the focal point of the evaluations presented in the previous monograph. Having been identified as effective, these programs have become models for other states and localities to replicate.

This monograph has been produced to make proven state and local programs more accessible to planners and practitioners alike. The document is divided into two parts. Part One provides descriptions and evaluations of programs in seven states: Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Hampshire, Oregon, Illinois, Utah, and Oklahoma. Part Two is a summary of evaluations of state and local multijurisdictional task forces funded by BJA.

Future reports in the series will continue to communicate the results of strong federal, state, and local partnerships that are enhancing the role of evaluation, building excellent evaluation systems, and reporting on the impact of efforts to combat crime in America. BJA is proud of its work of identifying effective drug abuse and violent crime prevention programs and communicating lessons learned at state and local levels that can be shared nationally to ensure that the most promising approaches have a broad impact.

Nancy E. Gist
Director

Acknowledgments

This second monograph on effective state and local program evaluation is a product of a cooperative effort by the states and the Bureau of Justice Assistance as part of the State Evaluation Development Program, coordinated by the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA).

The State Evaluation Development Program relies on the expertise of the State Planning Agencies to ensure the success of its publications. The following State Planning Agencies contributed their knowledge and time to make this monograph a success:

- Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.
- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.
- New Hampshire Office of the Attorney General.
- Oregon Department of State Police, Criminal Justice Services Division.
- Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
- Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice.
- Oklahoma District Attorneys Council.

The Justice Research and Statistics Association prepared this document under the direction of Joan C. Weiss, Executive Director. JRSA staff who worked on this publication, under the supervision of Michael Connelly, Director of Special Projects, include Kate Ahern, Craig Cussimano, Nancy Michel, Laura Parisi, Marylinda Stawasz, and Kate Wagner.

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Part One

State Program Evaluations

State and Local Evaluations and the Effective Programs Initiative

The Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA's) evaluation strategy is designed to determine the effectiveness and impact of BJA's grant programs. The goal is to confirm whether performance objectives established by the states are being achieved and, if they are, what critical elements were responsible for success. Hence, the overall goal of the evaluation program is to identify programs of proven effectiveness so that they can be publicized and replicated in other jurisdictions. By building strong assessment and evaluation foundations in the 50 states and 6 territories, BJA can account for the efforts of programs funded by its grants and add to the knowledge of what works and what does not work throughout the criminal justice system.

BJA relies on data and the results of research and evaluation to monitor program development under the discretionary program and provide guidance and model programs under the formula and block grant programs. BJA uses evaluation results to guide the formulation of policy and programs within federal, state, and local criminal justice agencies and to ensure that policies and funded programs are based on proven results. The required state annual reports are useful in working toward this goal, but BJA intends to go further to capture both quantitative and qualitative measures of program performance.

As part of a continuing effort to provide the criminal justice community with improved access to information on successful programs dealing with problems of drug abuse and/or violent crime, BJA is publishing this second volume highlighting innovative state and local programs. The evaluations, as well as the programs being evaluated, reflect the results of program development and implementation activities funded under BJA's Formula Grant Program to state and local governments and organizations.

Lessons learned at state and local levels can be shared nationally to ensure that the most promising approaches have a broad impact. In addition to wanting to know about successful initiatives, justice system planners and managers need to understand the scope and level of effort required for innovative approaches. Readers of this report will observe that state and local agencies are actively funding, implementing, and evaluating a broad range of programs to deal with drug abuse and violent crime.

Enhancing state and local assessment and evaluation capabilities is a very high priority. The success of federal, state, and local partnerships yielded many results within the states. The Effective Programs Initiative is designed

to develop or enhance drug control and system improvement strategy performance monitoring, measurement, and evaluation capacities in the states and territories.

BJA believes that setting standards for evaluation will have major benefits, while informing the public about how federal dollars are spent. Evaluation requires establishing new partnerships among funding agencies, program managers, and evaluators. No longer the sole domain of academic researchers, evaluation is making a real difference in the ability of the criminal justice community to base policy and decisions on accurate and useful information. This is the result of the strong relationships formed between evaluators and practitioners.

In response to the Attorney General's charge to "find out what works and spread the word," BJA began this new initiative with the goal of creating a mechanism for enhancing the design, implementation, measurement, evaluation, and dissemination of information on programs in high-priority program areas.

The objectives of the Effective Programs Initiative are to:

- ❑ Enhance the ability of state and local agencies to generate and use evaluation results for strategy development, program improvement, and effective program identification.
- ❑ Identify and document useful approaches for designing and conducting evaluations at state and local levels.

By identifying effective state and local criminal justice programs, practices, and products . . . BJA will help improve the criminal justice system at the national level.

By identifying effective state and local criminal justice programs, practices, and products and disseminating this information to policymakers and practitioners, BJA will help to improve the criminal justice system at the national level. Through this approach, which might be called "leading by example," information on successful programs will be disseminated to the field in a credible and timely fashion. The assessment and evaluation results from the 56 laboratories (50 states and 6 territories) put in place under the Byrne Formula Grant Program are the products of this initiative.

See appendix A, Identifying Effective Criminal Justice Programs: Guidelines and Criteria for the Nomination of Effective Programs, for instructions on submitting potential programs. Once the effective programs have been approved, additional BJA monographs and bulletins will be published.

Identifying and promoting sound programs is essential to developing effective strategies at federal, state, and local levels. BJA wants to enhance the criminal justice system in general, while recognizing the many exceptional state and local advances that have been made in combating violent crime and drug abuse through the use of federal funds.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is an active participant in BJA's evaluation program. BJA and NIJ develop evaluation guidelines and conduct

comprehensive evaluations of selected programs receiving Byrne Discretionary Grant Program and Formula Grant Program funds. BJA worked closely with NIJ to develop the guidelines and criteria for documenting the seven program evaluations presented in this monograph.

A program development model that tests innovative state and local ideas in action and then shares the information gained with the broadest audience has proved promising in discovering what works and what does not work at state and local levels.

Pennsylvania: School-Based Probation

This summary was adapted from the report School-Based Probation in Pennsylvania, which presents evaluation research conducted by David S. Metzger, Ph.D., Principal Investigator, and Danielle Tobin-Fiore, B.S., Project Coordinator, the University of Pennsylvania Center for Studies of Addiction.

School-based probation (SBP) is an approach to supervising youth that shifts the primary location of probation operations to the school environment. The first SBP program was established in 1990 in Lehigh County with pilot funding provided by the Juvenile Court Judges Commission (JCJC). Since its inception, the program has expanded rapidly, supported by grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). By the end of 1995, SBP programs were in place in more than 40 counties.

Program Overview

Traditionally, juvenile probation officers in Pennsylvania have been based in county offices, often located in the county courthouse. Under this model, juveniles are seen by their probation officers in the county office, at home or in school during periodic visits, or in various other community locations. Consequently, contact and “supervision” most often occur in brief, planned encounters with defined purposes.

The SBP program was developed in response to the recognized need for closer communication between probation officers and school staff. Although the shift in location to the school environment is rather simple, it has significant “systems” implications. SBP involves the integration of the juvenile justice system with the educational system at the local level and is believed to enhance both.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the program are to:

- Reduce disciplinary referrals in school.
- Reduce the frequency and length of detentions.
- Improve attendance and academic performance.
- Decrease dropout rates.
- Reduce recidivism and out-of-home placements resulting from delinquent behavior.

The SBP program was developed in response to the recognized need for closer communication between probation officers and school staff.

Program Activities/Components

SBP is a community-focused approach in which a juvenile probation officer is housed in the school building to provide direct supervision of juvenile offenders on probation. This allows the officer to spend more time on the case and less time traveling and doing intake paperwork. The configuration provides more contact with the offender's family and gives the probation officer more involvement in the student's life and the opportunity to routinely observe the youth in his or her peer group and social environment.

Two basic strategies are used by probation officers to manage cases assigned to SBP—single case management and dual case management. In the single case management approach, completion of all work required for an assigned case is the responsibility of the school-based officer. In the dual approach, the responsibility for the case is shared with other probation officers; the division of labor is intended to allow the school-based officer to remain in the school while “nonsupervision” activities are completed by other probation staff.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

The overall objective of the SPB program evaluation was to build a foundation upon which future experimental studies, designed to objectively evaluate program outcomes, could be constructed. To this end, a series of descriptive studies were completed between January 1996 and July 1997.

Phase I

The first phase of the evaluation focused on the production of a demographic profile of the youth who had been assigned to SBP. Data from existing PCCD SBP reporting forms were linked with the JCJC statistical card database, allowing the profile to include both demographic and arrest data.

Descriptions of cases assigned to SBP were derived from SBP reporting forms compiled for youth who completed probation in 1993, 1994, and 1995—4,159 cases from 31 counties. All PCCD-funded SBP programs are expected to forward completed forms to PCCD annually on all youth completing probation during the reporting period. Between 1993 and 1995, 43 counties had been awarded grants to support 5,398 cases.

The SBP reporting forms include basic identifying and demographic information (e.g., name, gender, race, date of birth, date of assignment to SBP) as well as performance characteristics such as school attendance, academic performance, in-school and out-of-school suspensions, and enrollment status at the end of SBP.

The overall objective of the SPB program evaluation was to build a foundation upon which future experimental studies, designed to objectively evaluate program outcomes, could be constructed.

A database was created from all valid forms received from PCCD. To ensure the integrity of the database, several steps were completed in the review of the form and during the entry processes. Prior to data entry, each form was screened for completeness, legibility, and validity (i.e., that values fell within valid ranges). All omissions and notations were marked and, when possible, corrected. Data from these forms were then entered into two separate data files and cross-checked for accuracy. All mismatched entries were identified, inspected, and, when possible, rectified. Approximately 694 forms from 170 cases were not able to be entered into the database. (The majority of these were from one county that submitted forms on a quarterly basis for all active cases.) Forms on 4,159 cases were received; of these, 3,913 (94 percent) were determined to be valid and were entered into the database for subsequent analyses. The breakdown by year was: 555 (14 percent) of the cases were assigned in 1993, 1,982 (51 percent) in 1994, and 1,376 (35 percent) in 1995.

A number of cases from counties that did not return valid reporting forms were omitted from the database. Thus, analysis of the data that were included should be interpreted with some caution because of the possibility of selection bias. These data did, however, represent 93 percent of cases and collectively formed the largest existing database on juveniles assigned to SBP; as such, the data provide an opportunity to gain some important insights into the characteristics of the youth assigned to SBP in Pennsylvania.

While the descriptive data noted above provide information on the demographic characteristics of the youth served by SBP programs, they do not address the important issue surrounding the nature of the offenses that brought the juveniles into the system—are the charges in cases assigned to SBP programs different from those assigned to other forms of probation? To compare the criminal justice characteristics of SBP cases with the characteristics of the cases assigned to “traditional” probation, data from the SBP reporting forms were matched with data from the “statistical card” database. A form known as the statistical card must be completed for each youth who enters the Juvenile Court System in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; it contains information on the youth’s involvement with the juvenile court system, including the nature of the offense that brought him or her into the SBP program. The form is completed by the county staff and forwarded to the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research for entry into a uniform database that includes important information regarding charges and dispositions for more than 30,000 cases annually.

The matching process was complicated by several factors, but most significantly by the lack of a uniform identification number on both the statistical card and the PCCD form. This necessitated scanning by name. Minor differences in spelling or the use of different versions of first names, errors in data entry, and other differences between the two databases further contributed to the difficulties in matching, even by name. Given these challenges involved in achieving matches between the two databases and the size of the statistical card databases, the search was restricted to the 1993 database, the first

year of the program. A total of 451 cases in the statistical card database were matched to SBP cases, which represented 81 percent of the total number of 1993 SBP cases with valid PCCD forms.

Phase II

In the second phase of the evaluation, site visits were conducted to develop an operational understanding of the programs delivering SBP in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The goal of these site visits was to better understand how programs differ and to help identify specific program features that may affect the youth they serve. To accomplish this goal, comprehensive interviews were completed during site visits scheduled between March and July 1996.

Each county that had been implementing the program for at least 1 year was scheduled for a site visit. This resulted in visits to 29 (89 percent) counties with PCCD-funded SBP programs operating for more than 1 year. With input from the project's technical consultants and advisory board, semistructured interview guidelines were developed for each of the three respondent groups: probation officers, school administrators, and juveniles assigned to SBP. Each interview was designed to collect both objective information about program operations and subjective data regarding perceptions of program performance. The interviews were conducted by technical consultants and a team of six interviewers; the latter participants were probation officers who were selected on the basis of their experience and training. Prior to the onsite visits, the interviewers participated in a 1-day training session during which each interview item was reviewed and discussed to assess its intent and the method of questioning.

In addition to being asked about how they spent their time and what type of case management system they used, probation officers were also asked about how their role was perceived by others in their work environment—school faculty, administration, their cases, the parents and guardians of their cases, and the community at large. Officers were asked to select the role that best described their view of how they were seen by members of these other constituency groups. Officers also assessed their own roles. The interviews concluded with a series of questions regarding the officers' views of the effectiveness of the SBP program in four key areas—academic performance, school attendance, delinquent behavior, and disciplinary referrals (in-school and out-of-school suspensions).

School administrators selected for interviews were those who worked most closely with the SBP officers and thus had responsibility for and familiarity with the program in their school. The administrators were asked to assess the range of involvement of the officers, the performance of the program, and the effectiveness of the program in the same four areas as the SBP officers.

A total of 111 youth assigned to school-based probation were interviewed during the site visits. Students completing these interviews were randomly selected onsite by the interviewers from a list supplied by the probation officer prior to the visit. To ensure unbiased selection and adequate representation of both genders, interviewers were instructed to interview the third male and the third female on the list from each school visited.

Phase III

The third phase of the evaluation was devoted to the completion of a case-control study comparing program impact in 75 randomly selected SBP cases with 75 non-SBP cases matched according to age, gender, race, crime, and county of supervision criteria. Rates of rearrest, placements, and cost of placement were used as outcome measures. For those with multiple charges, the most serious charge was used as the basis for matching. This process, although retrospective in nature, was a strategy designed to identify youth who are equivalent in every way except in the type of probation to which they were assigned. Controls were selected from the statistical card database.

In selecting counties for this study, several requirements had to be met. First, potential counties must have had an SBP program in operation since 1994 to allow 18 months of followup on each individual selected for the study. Counties also had to have sufficient numbers of cases to select 25 school-based cases and 25 matched controls. Finally, potential counties needed to have documentation accessible to the study staff. Five counties met all criteria, and three counties were included in the study—Erie, Lehigh, and Somerset.

For each of the participating counties, data for 18 months from the date of assignment to probation were examined for both cases and controls. This time interval provided an adequate period of observation during which rearrests, probation violations, and placements would be expected to have occurred. These outcomes were assessed through onsite review of case records of the participating counties, with case data documented on structured recording forms developed by the project staff.

The primary outcomes measured in this pilot study were related to reinvolvement with the court. The specific events that were monitored for both cases and controls were: (1) arrests for probation violations and new charges and (2) placements made by the courts. Originally, this study had planned to include data from the schools, including attendance reports, behavioral histories, and academic performance records. However, participating schools had a variety of approaches to the collection, retention, and storage of such data with none of these data elements recorded in a consistent manner by all schools.

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Phase I

The majority (80 percent) of cases, both SBP and non-SBP, were male. The proportion of female cases assigned to SBP increased over the period of observation—from 16.8 percent in 1993 to 22.2 percent in 1995. The racial distribution in SBP and non-SBP cases was not significantly different. When comparing the ages of SBP and non-SBP youth, important differences can be found, with SBP serving younger youth. This difference is most obvious in the 1995 reporting year in which 58 percent of school-based cases were youth aged 13 to 15, while only 40 percent of the non-SBP cases were from this age group. Since both age and gender showed changes over the reporting period, the relationship between these two variables was evaluated. A significant correlation was identified reflecting a higher representation of female cases among younger age groups. Since the increased representation of female cases was not seen in the general population of cases, it is likely that the younger ages of those being served by SBP account for the increased proportion of female cases. While the proportion of youth assigned to SBP from grades 7 to 9 increased during the study cases, the proportion of cases from grades 10 to 12 declined.

Data from the statistical card database reveal that these 451 cases had 1,694 allegations of crimes, 25 percent (n=428) of which were against persons, 44 percent (n=746) related to property, and 4.5 percent (n=77) related to drugs. These allegations resulted in 875 (52 percent) substantiated charges, of which 26.6 percent (n=233) were crimes against persons, 42.3 percent (n=370) were property crimes, and 6.3 percent (n=55) were drug-related crimes. In examining the five most common crimes among these cases, theft was the most common substantiated charge (n=79) followed by simple assault (n=72), receiving stolen property (n=65), burglary (n=43), and conspiracy to commit theft (n=34).

Summary

These data suggest that the program served a diverse population of youth who were somewhat younger than their non-SBP counterparts. The average age of the youth assigned to SBP was just over 15. Given the association between age and gender found in this data set, the SBP cases were also more likely to be female.

With respect to the criminal charges that brought these youth into the juvenile court system, there appeared to be few differences between SBP and non-SBP cases. Nearly identical rates of personal, property, drug, and other crimes were found when the juvenile court data for these two groups were compared.

In conducting these descriptive analyses, it became apparent that no existing data systems could be used to monitor even the most basic characteristics of

the juveniles assigned to SBP. Despite the fact that a significant amount of probation officer time was devoted to the completion of forms documenting the characteristics of the cases assigned to SBP, the forms were not routinely compiled or reviewed.

As currently designed, the retrospective completion of performance data regarding behavior, school attendance, and academic performance yields unusable evaluative data at the aggregate level. The validity and reliability of these data are compromised by a variety of problems. In some situations and locations, information required to complete the form was not available. Methods for completing and submitting the forms were not standardized, which resulted in great variations in procedures for completion of the forms. Consequently, a significant amount of evaluative data could not be used.

It was recommended that the data collection system be redesigned into a two-part process. The first form would be completed as the youth begin their school-based probation and the second completed at the close of supervision. Both assessments should report on verifiable information for the same intervals. To maximize the value of these data, a numerical identifier common to the statistical card should be included on the form.

Phase II

School-Based Probation Officer Interviews

The 51 SBP officers who were interviewed had an average of 5.6 years (range=0.3 to 25) of probation experience and an average of 1.8 years (range=0.1 to 5.5) of experience as school-based probation officers. Although they reported an average caseload of 26.7 cases (range=6 to 78), 60 percent of these officers also maintained caseloads that were not school based. Those with only school-based cases carried an average caseload of 29, while those with both carried an average of 31.

Seventy-three percent of the officers interviewed reported using the single case management model, in which they complete all work related to each of their assigned probation cases. Officers using this management approach spent an average of 66 percent of their time in the school environment compared with 81 percent for those using the dual case management approach, where casework is shared among probation officers. The differences were statistically significant and translated to officers using the dual case management approach being in school an average of 75 percent of a day per week longer than their single-case cohorts.

Probation officers reported spending an average of 48 percent of their time in direct case contact and 18 percent in contact with case collaterals, 10 percent in court, 10 percent in travel, and the remainder in training and intake. Although the median percentage of time spent in school was reported to be 70 percent, the percentage ranged from a low of 25 percent to a high of 95 percent. The percentage of time spent in school correlated to the amount of

The majority of officers saw their primary role as advocating, arranging for, and delivering needed services for their cases (75 percent).

time spent in direct client contact. The range of activities in which SBP officers reported involvement included: visiting the parents of juveniles participating in SBP (94 percent); participating in the disciplinary decisions of assigned cases (84 percent); attending nonacademic school activities (84 percent); giving presentations in classes and monitoring the lunchroom, hallways, and study hall (76 percent); and serving as active participants in the school's Student Assistance Program (68 percent). Seventy-eight percent of the officers interviewed reported that they had developed, or helped to develop, special programs in their schools, including support groups, tutoring services, and mentoring programs. Drug testing was reported to have been used in probation programs by 86 percent of the SBP officers and electronic monitoring, by 79 percent.

The majority of officers saw their primary role as advocating, arranging for, and delivering needed services for their cases (75 percent). Responses revealed inconsistencies between the self-defined role and the perceived role of the officer, with others more likely to define the role of the SBP officer as one of police, security, and surveillance.

While four areas—academic performance, school attendance, delinquent behavior, and disciplinary referrals—were viewed as being positively affected by the program, the area perceived to have been affected the most was school attendance. Nearly 50 percent viewed the program as extremely effective in this area.

School Administrator Interviews

Consistent with the ratings of the probation officers, school administrators saw school attendance as the area that had been affected the most.

Fifty-two school administrators were interviewed during site visits. Like the probation officers, the administrators reported a range of officer involvement within their school environment. Administrators described the officers as having full access to school documentation (academic and disciplinary records) for the cases they supervised. The majority of respondents, 85 percent (n=44), indicated that the officers participated in making decisions regarding formal disciplinary actions to be taken with students on probation but were not overly involved.

Although ratings in five areas of performance for the school-based program were extremely positive, ranging from a low of 85 percent to a high of 98 percent, it is important to note that the concerns expressed by those who were not satisfied seemed to reflect a desire for the probation officers to fill a policing function. The positive assessments were reflected in the overall ratings of the working relationship with the school-based officer: 87 percent indicated that they had an excellent relationship and 12 percent indicated they had a good relationship. No one indicated a poor working relationship. Eighty-five percent of the administrators believed the program was such an important part of the school environment that it deserved financial support from the school district. Thirty-three percent believed that their school boards would be willing to provide such support.

Consistent with the ratings of the probation officers, school administrators saw school attendance as the area that had been affected the most.

SBP Case Interviews

Of the 111 SBP youth who were interviewed, 67 percent (n=75) were male and 32 percent (n=36) were female; 65 percent (n=72) were Caucasian, 26 percent (n=29) African-American, and 5 percent (n=6) Hispanic. The average age of these students was 15 years, and the median grade level was ninth. These cases had been under supervision for an average of 9.4 months, and 78 percent (n=86) of those interviewed were on probation for the first time. Thirty percent (n=33) had been in some form of out-of-home placement (e.g., foster home, residential center) prior to being assigned to SBP.

Frequency of contact with probation officers reported by respondents was found to be significantly associated with the integration of the officer into the school environment. Twenty percent of the youth (n=22) were required to report to their officers daily; overall, the youth reported seeing their probation officer an average of 2.7 times per week.

Respondents were also asked a number of questions about the impact the program had had on their behavior. Unlike the probation officers and the school administrators, these respondents reported that the greatest impact of the program had been on their behavior both in and out of school.

Summary

Assigning the probation officer to the school allowed much greater opportunity for the establishment of relationships that facilitated supervision and an understanding of the needs of the youth. The percentage of time spent in the school environment may have been the best indicator of this opportunity. More time spent in the school environment was not only a logical prerequisite for building strong working relationships; it was also statistically associated with the amount of direct case contact. Given that this time in school may have been the defining characteristic of the program, it was recommended that a minimum standard be established for the percentage of time an officer must be present in the school environment for the probation program to be considered school based.

The presence of the officer in the school was also perceived as directly responsible for improvements in attendance by the youth assigned to SBP. The attainment of this goal was important not only because school attendance is a prerequisite for academic success, but also because school was the primary location of the probation supervision. Thus, a juvenile attending school was exposed to an educational environment as well as the behavioral controls inherent in the frequent contact with their probation officer.

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More time spent in the school environment was not only a logical prerequisite for building strong working relationships; it was also statistically associated with the amount of direct case contact.

Phase III

The subjects in the case-controlled study had an average age of 14 years at the time of their assignment to school-based probation. Eighty-six percent of the subjects were male (n=129), 54 percent (n=81) were Caucasian, 23 percent (n=34) were African-American, and 19 percent (n=29) were Hispanic. The characteristics of the school-based cases and control sample were statistically equivalent on all of the basic demographic measures.

Thirty-two percent (n=48) of the control sample had charges filed during the 18-month study period. There were no significant differences between the school-based probation cases (36 percent) and the controls (28 percent) in the number of individuals who were charged with crimes. For those who had any charges filed against them (n=48), the average number of charges was somewhat lower in the SBP group (1.6) compared with the matched controls (2.1). The group average, including all subjects, for number of charges was 0.55 and 0.53 for SBP and controls, respectively.

Although no differences existed between these groups with respect to the number of new charges accrued, significant differences existed in the severity of the charges and the time to first charge. Charges were classified by the following types of offense: (1) probation violations and status offenses and (2) all other charges. Consistent with increased case contact, the SBP group had significantly more charges of probation violation and status offenses than did the non-SBP controls—50 percent versus 18 percent, respectively.

Additionally, the time between assignment to probation and the date of the first charge was significantly longer for those assigned to SBP—271 days for SBP cases and 206 days for the controls.

Overall, 27.6 percent (n=21) of the SBP cases and 29.7 percent (n=22) of the controls were assigned by the court to some form of placement during the 18-month study period. Placements included detention centers and secure placements, drug and alcohol programs, general residential placements, and a number of less restrictive community-based placements such as foster and group homes. Among those who were placed, SBP cases had a significantly longer period of time until first placement than controls—118 days versus 300 days, respectively. SBP cases also had significantly fewer days in placement than controls: 35.7 days versus 83.8 days.

Differences in placements between the two groups resulted in dramatically different costs for placements. Cost of placement was determined using the authorized per diem rate schedule. The average cost of placement for the matched controls in the study was \$39,314.86, while that for SBP cases was \$17,701.44. To estimate overall program costs, the average cost per individual assigned to each condition was computed, which revealed a significantly lower cost for placing offenders in SBP than in other probation programs (\$5,023.38 versus \$11,688.20). This estimate could be used to project cost savings for counties adopting school-based probation.

The number of placements had a direct impact on the amount of time the subject was in the community without additional supervision. Youth assigned to SBP spent more days in the community than controls who were assigned to traditional probation (448 days versus 400 days). Once placement occurred, the potential for rearrest was also altered. To account for the different rates of placement, rates of charges for new offenses, excluding probation violations and status offenses, were calculated as a function of time in the community. These rates, expressed as number of events per person year in the community, reflect a 43-percent lower rate for SBP cases (0.23 events per year for SBP and 0.40 events per year for controls).

Summary

The data presented show important differences between a group of randomly selected SBP cases and their matched counterparts who were assigned to more traditional forms of probation. It cannot be stated with certainty that the observed differences in charges and placements are due to the SBP program. The data can only suggest a program effect. Although the case control design is a powerful quasi-experimental approach, it is retrospective in nature and does not involve the random assignment of subjects to experimental and control conditions. Also, these data are derived from only three counties; therefore, the current study cannot address their generalizability to other counties. To confirm these findings, larger prospective studies are required. Despite the limitations of this approach, the findings are very encouraging. In addition to cost savings, reductions in the destructive effects of extended placements and less emphasis on the more restrictive components of the juvenile justice system can be expected.

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Virginia: Detention Center Incarceration Program

This summary was adapted from the report Detention Center Incarceration Program, which presents evaluation research conducted by the staff of the Planning, Research and Certification Unit, Virginia Department of Corrections.

The Detention Center Incarceration Program was implemented in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1995 to provide an effective intermediate sanction for adult probationers. The creation of the program was stimulated by the determination that younger, nonviolent offenders must be assigned to less secure, shorter term programs to reserve the more costly and more secure prison-bed space for violent offenders whose prison terms were expected to lengthen with the abolition of parole. The source of funding was state general revenues.

Program Overview

The Detention Center Incarceration Program includes two primary components and is patterned after programs in Georgia. The first component is a short residential phase that emphasizes military-style discipline, physical work, and intense educational and treatment services. The second component provides intensive supervision coupled with treatment and transitional services in the community. The philosophy of the program is based on the rationale for the earlier Boot Camp Incarceration Program, which is generally regarded as successful in Virginia. The Detention Center Incarceration Program is designed for newly convicted felony offenders or probation violators who meet the following criteria: convicted of nonviolent felony offenses, determined by the court as needing more security or supervision than that provided by the Diversion Center Incarceration Program (similar to work release), and disqualified by age or physical condition from the Boot Camp Incarceration Program. The offenders are also seen as possibly benefiting from a regimented environment and structured program. Program participation is voluntary; therefore admissions are gender, race, and age neutral. Two features make Virginia's program unique: (1) the strong emphasis on substance-abuse education and treatment in the facility phase and (2) solid community transitional services and followup by probation and parole field staff. The potential for program replication is also a major consideration.

The goals of the Detention Center Incarceration Program are to safely divert nonviolent felony offenders from long-term incarceration, to avoid the costs of building and operating correctional facilities, and to reduce recidivism.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of the Detention Center Incarceration Program are to safely divert nonviolent felony offenders from long-term incarceration, to avoid the costs of building and operating correctional facilities, and to reduce recidivism.

Objectives for achieving these goals include:

- Shifting nonviolent offenders and probation violators from long-term incarceration to shorter term incarceration coupled with community supervision.
- Reducing the targeted offender group's criminal activity.
- Implementing a correctional program that is cost effective when compared with incarceration.

Program Activities/Components

Detention Center Incarceration Program activities include 20 weeks of military-style management and supervision, physical labor in organized public works projects, counseling, remedial education, substance-abuse testing and treatment, and community reentry services. Nonviolent felony offenders may volunteer for the program in lieu of imprisonment at the time of initial sentencing or a probation violation. Their acceptance depends on an evaluation and recommendations made by probation/parole officers to the court. If accepted, an offender receives a suspended prison sentence and is placed on probation supervision with a special condition to complete the program. Transportation to the facility is provided by local correctional facility and center staff. Physical examinations are conducted immediately upon arrival. Platoons are formed at intake, and the introduction to military-style discipline and general orders begins.

The average day begins at 0550 and concludes at 2200 hours. Daily activities include personal hygiene and area cleanup, military drill, supervised work details at nearby state prison or public service sites, individual and group treatment and education, and brief moments of free time. The environment is spartan; there is no television; and visitors are permitted only on alternate weekends. A graduation ceremony to which friends and family are invited concludes the residential phase of the program. As graduation day approaches, the program probation and parole officers begin developing transitional plans with the detainee's assigned community probation/parole officer. The transition plans address living arrangements, employment, payment of court-ordered fines, costs, restitution or community service, and substance-abuse or other treatment services. Upon return to the community, the detainee is assigned to intensive supervision for a period of time specified by the sentencing judge. The supervision is supplemented as needed with treatment or transitional services from community or contractual service

providers. Once the detainee has successfully completed intensive supervision, he or she is placed on a regular supervision caseload for at least 1 year.

There are currently three detention centers for men, with a fourth to be opened in 1999, and one center for women. Additional centers are in the planning stages. A staff of 45 include the superintendent, 5 probation and parole officers and counselors, 31 correctional officers, and other maintenance and administrative workers. Their activities include general management and direction; information dissemination to the public and education for field staff and judges; provision of individual and group assessment, treatment, and rehabilitative services; transportation; and other maintenance services. The program also provides training for staff to meet the basic and specialized requirements established by the Department of Corrections (DOC) for their respective positions. Additionally, staff must participate in training in the proper use of military-style maneuvers and discipline. Care must be taken to ensure that the forceful disciplinary approach does not degenerate into detainee abuse. Monitoring and evaluation procedures and instruments include an offender database in each center, consolidation of data into a monthly management summary report, program reviews and audits, and evaluation of program outcomes (requested by the executive staff), as needed.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

The purpose of the report *Detention Center Incarceration Program* was to address the following questions:

- What is the offender profile of detention center participants?
- What are the program outcome rates (i.e., successful completion versus dropout)? What is the average length of stay for offenders completing the program versus dropouts?
- What percentage of detention center participants commit new offenses following release or have a subsequent probation/parole revocation within the 12 months following release?
- How many program participants were diverted from prison or were included in the program as a result of net widening?
- Is the program cost effective compared with prison incarceration?

To analyze the issues, the Planning, Research and Certification Unit at the Department of Corrections collected profile and recidivism information on all offenders who cycled through the program during calendar year 1996 and used the following methodologies to complete this research project:

- Review of existing community corrections programs.

The sample consisted of all offenders . . . who cycled through the Southampton Detention Center, Nottoway Detention Center, and Southampton Detention Center for Women during calendar year 1996.

- ❑ Analysis of detention center participant and completion data compiled and maintained by detention center staff.
- ❑ Development of a computer program to merge data obtained from detention center staff with data of all probationers and parolees maintained in DOC's automated database.
- ❑ Development of a survey instrument for use by probation and parole officers to compile recidivism and probation/parole revocation data.
- ❑ Review of budget reports prepared by the DOC Budget Unit to obtain per capita costs for prisoners and detainees.

The sample consisted of all offenders (n=425) who cycled through the Southampton Detention Center, Nottoway Detention Center, and Southampton Detention Center for Women during calendar year 1996. Completed survey instruments were received for 87 percent of this cohort, or 368 of the 425 offenders.

The survey instrument collected the following data elements: type of obligation (parole, probation, or both), referral source, location prior to program admission, reconviction data, and sanction and revocation data. In addition, a question was included to determine whether the offender was sanctioned to the Detention Center Incarceration Program as a last resort prior to beginning the revocation process. To ensure consistent coding and reliable data, an instructional booklet listing available codes was disseminated to the probation and parole officers responsible for completing the survey instrument.

The first phase of data collection began with compiling the offender's name, identification number, supervising probation/parole officer, admission date, exit date, and reason for admission from detention center staff. These data were then merged with the probation and parole automated database to extract demographic variables, including date of birth, gender, race, marital status, number of children, educational level, and most serious offense. The second phase of data collection, which began in June 1997 and lasted for 1 month, concentrated on the completion of survey instruments by the supervising probation and parole officers. Data collected during the first phase of the project were included and were supplemented with information provided by the officers or the researchers. Once completed, the survey instruments were faxed or mailed back and entered into a database for analysis and interpretation. After all data were entered into the database, file edits were run to ensure data consistency.

The data analysis phase of the project conducted by the Planning, Research and Certification Unit focused on completing offender profiles and assessing program outcomes for offenders who successfully completed the Detention Center Incarceration Program and for those who dropped out. Program outcome was cross-tabulated with gender, age at admission, race/ethnicity, and obligation type. Additional analysis compared the cost-effectiveness of the program with that of prison incarceration.

Characteristics of the study population were as follows:

- ❑ Almost all detention center participants were probationers referred by circuit court judges.
- ❑ The vast majority of program participants were single African-American males with no children.
- ❑ The average (mean) age at time of admission to the Detention Center Incarceration Program was 27 years. The youngest participant was 17 at admission, and the oldest was 57.
- ❑ Just over 25 percent were high school graduates or had received a general equivalency diploma (GED).
- ❑ Almost half (48 percent) of the detention center participants were drug offenders; 68 percent of this group were convicted for drug distribution.
- ❑ The second most prevalent offense was a probation/parole violation, followed by burglary.
- ❑ The average (mean) sentence was 5 years.

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Program Outcome Rates

Nearly 8 out of 10 offenders (78 percent) admitted to the program successfully completed it. The mean length of stay for this group was 134 days; the average length of stay for dropouts was 41 days. There were no absconders.

For those who dropped out of the program, the following reasons were recorded: medical/psychological (42 percent), disciplinary infractions (29 percent), voluntary withdrawal (18 percent), and other (11 percent).

Parolees exhibited lower success rates than probationers: 78 percent of probationers successfully completed the program compared with only 43 percent of parolees. However, the vast majority of detention center participants were probationers; only seven parolees were in the program, and they were under concurrent probation supervision to meet the required eligibility criterion.

When program outcome was measured by race/ethnicity, little difference was found in the success rates for African-American and Caucasian offenders with success rates of 76 and 80 percent, respectively.

Release Outcome Rates

The Detention Center Incarceration Program was effective in reducing reconviction and subsequent probation/parole revocation rates for those who completed the program—only 15 percent (42 out of 286) had a subsequent probation or parole revocation. Dropouts had a rate of 63 percent.

The data analysis phase of the project conducted by the Planning, Research and Certification Unit focused on completing offender profiles and assessing program outcomes for offenders who successfully completed the Detention Center Incarceration Program and for those who dropped out.

Parolees exhibited lower success rates than probationers: 78 percent of probationers successfully completed the program compared with only 43 percent of parolees.

Only 3 percent of the offenders (9 out of 286) who successfully completed the program had been reconvicted for new offenses (2.4 percent felony conviction and 0.6 percent for misdemeanor conviction). Offenders who dropped out of the program exhibited a slightly higher rate of felony reconviction (4 percent).

For those who had successfully completed the program and subsequently received a probation/parole revocation, almost 70 percent (29 out of 42) of this group were assigned for technical violations rather than new crimes.

Prison Diversion/Cost-Effectiveness

Alternative placement programs are most effective when participating offenders would, absent these programs, be incarcerated in prison at a much higher cost. To assess whether the offenders studied were true prison diversions or were in the program as a result of net widening, a question was included on the survey instrument to determine whether the offender was assigned to the program as a last resort to prison incarceration. Probation and parole officers completing the survey instrument indicated that 128 (35 percent) of those assigned to the Detention Center Incarceration Program were prison diversions. Since probation/parole revocation was the most serious sanction for 57 of the 368 participants and these offenders accounted for 45 percent of the 128 offenders identified as prison diversions, it is reasonable to expect that, at minimum, these offenders were assigned to the program as a last resort to prison incarceration.

To address the question of whether detention centers are cost effective, the per capita cost for detention center placement was compared with the per capita cost of prison incarceration. Data prepared by DOC's Budget Unit in November 1996 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1996, indicated that the per capita cost for detention center placement was \$14,186, compared with \$16,590 for prison incarceration (a cost differential of \$2,404). Diverting 128 offenders from prison resulted in a cost savings of \$307,712.

The findings of this research study suggest that the Detention Center Incarceration Program was successful in meeting its intended goals and objectives. The program's strong discipline and physical requirements, focused treatment services, and period of intensive probation supervision in the community served to divert offenders from prison incarceration, thus resulting in cost savings to the Commonwealth of Virginia, reduced felony and misdemeanor reconvictions, and fewer subsequent probation and parole revocations.

Offenders who cycled through the program in 1996 have outcome rates (successful completion versus dropout) that are similar to those for boot camp participants during the same time period. Seventy percent of the boot camp participants successfully completed their program, compared with 78 percent of the detention center participants. Furthermore, subsequent probation/parole revocation rates are comparable for detention and boot camp

Alternative placement programs are most effective when participating offenders would, absent these programs, be incarcerated in prison at a much higher cost.

participants. Sixteen percent of those successfully completing the boot camp program had a subsequent probation/parole revocation hearing compared with 15 percent for the detention center program. However, for those who dropped out of the boot camp program, 51 percent had no subsequent probation/parole revocation, compared with only 28 percent for detention center dropouts.

In 1998, the Department's Planning, Research and Certification Unit conducted a followup study of the 1996 participant cohort and found that 80 percent of the participating offenders had not returned to jail or prison.

Overall, the results of these evaluations to date suggest that this intensive, short-term program is an effective and safe alternative for selected offenders.

Overall, the results of these evaluations suggest that this intensive, short-term program is an effective and safe alternative for selected offenders.

New Hampshire: Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program

This summary was adapted from Evaluating the Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program: Final Report, which presents evaluation research conducted by D. Alan Henry and Spurgeon Kennedy of the Pretrial Services Resource Center in Washington, D.C.

Under an agreement dated December 12, 1996, the Pretrial Services Resources Center (PSRC) agreed to conduct process and outcome evaluations of the Merrimack County (New Hampshire) Adult Diversion Program. The process evaluation would assess:

- Whether the program's operations and procedures comply with standards for pretrial diversion adopted by the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA), the National District Attorneys Association, and the American Bar Association.
- Whether the program's structure and services address the specific problems that contributed to its participants' criminal behavior.
- How other criminal justice officials, program clients, and program alumni view the diversion program.

The outcome evaluation would determine:

- Rates of recidivism and defendant compliance with conditions of diversion.
- Performance of program defendants compared with similar defendants remaining in existing case processing.

Program Overview

The Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program was established in 1992 under grant number 209-619-02 from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

The diversion program was originally part of the County Attorney's Office but was moved in 1994 from Concord to its current location in Boscawen with the Department of Corrections (DOC). The program's full-time staff consist of a director, programs coordinator, and receptionist. A DOC employee serves as the program's substance-abuse counselor, and a contracted social worker assesses potential diversion clients. In addition, an advisory board helps establish the policy direction and actively reviews client participation.

The Diversion Offender Profile was created by Merrimack County police agencies and the county attorney during the program's development phase to identify nonviolent, non-habitual defendants eligible for referral.

The program accepts defendants aged 17 years and older who are charged with nonviolent felony offenses and have no history of violent criminal behavior. Consistent with accepted standards, there are no restrictions on program participation except for current and past criminal history and a defendant's receptiveness to the program. A guilty plea is not required for diversion participation.

Diversion program placement is a three-step process:

1. Local arresting agencies determine initial eligibility using a Diversion Offender Profile. Defendants identified as eligible for diversion are referred to the Merrimack County attorney.
2. The county attorney, after discussing the referral with the arresting agency, determines the strength of the case and whether diversion from conventional case processing is appropriate. If charges are filed and diversion appears suitable, the charging documents are completed, the defendant's case is placed on a suspended calendar, and the defendant is referred to the program for a final assessment.
3. The diversion program conducts an assessment that includes an investigative interview with the defendant, a substance-abuse evaluation to determine current drug use and appropriate monitoring or treatment, and a social work evaluation to identify potential clients whose mental or emotional problems make them unsuitable for diversion and determine an appropriate alternative program.

The Diversion Offender Profile was created by Merrimack County police agencies and the county attorney during the program's development phase to identify nonviolent, nonhabitual defendants eligible for referral. According to the profile, defendants are ineligible if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Are charged with a violent, sex-related, or drug-trafficking crime.
- Have a previous conviction resulting in an incarceration of more than 7 days.
- Have already participated in diversion.
- Are charged with an offense that "represents a major threat to society or requires general deterrent."
- Are charged with a crime whose conviction "would justify" a prison sentence.
- Have a prior person, property, or drug-related felony conviction.

The program has an automated management information system containing data on all referrals, accepted clients, rejected defendants, and program outcomes (successful completion or termination).

Goals and Objectives

According to its mission statement, the diversion program seeks to:

Divert nonviolent offenders from the criminal court docket into a rigorous, comprehensive, community-based rehabilitation program. . . . To assist in this self-rehabilitation, the program provides opportunities for treatment, community service, restitution, counseling, and education.

Program Activities/Components

Diversion program assessment takes 138 days on average and uses two main screening instruments—substance-abuse and social work assessments. The substance-abuse assessment, performed by a DOC substance-abuse counselor, includes evaluations based on a drug-abuse test and an alcohol-screening test. Based on the results of these tests, the counselor recommends placement in one of three supervision groups:

- ❑ Level One—for participants assessed as not having substance abuse-related disorders. Clients under this level of supervision attend informational and educational workshops on substance abuse.
- ❑ Level Two—for participants assessed as having substance-abuse problems. Besides the workshops mentioned above, these clients are required to attend 90-minute group sessions and submit to regular substance-abuse testing.
- ❑ Level Three—for participants whose substance-abuse problems require a level of inpatient treatment. Upon successful inpatient treatment, these clients are referred to Level Two supervision.

The social work assessment gauges a defendant's current and prior mental, emotional, and behavioral conditions. It is performed by a licensed social worker and is extensive, focusing on a defendant's self-perception, problems that may contribute to negative behavior, and past and present mental and emotional problems and treatment.

The program director and program coordinator make the final decision to accept or reject a defendant based on the results of the initial social work assessment, a drug-abuse test, and an alcohol test.

Once a defendant is accepted into the Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program, he or she and his or her defense attorney meet with the program director or a designated staff member for a program review during which the defendant's conditions and responsibilities under direct supervision are presented to the defendant as a written diversion contract. After thorough review, the document is signed by the program director, the defendant, defense counsel, and the county attorney.

Program supervision includes four mandatory conditions:

- 600 hours of community service work.
- A tour of the New Hampshire State Prison for Men located in Concord.
- Restitution payments, if ordered by the county attorney.
- 10 hours of substance-abuse classes to be completed within 6 months of program acceptance.

Specific diversion program conditions are categorized under the life skills component. This consists of educational classes and 2-hour workshops, and clients must complete a total of 30 hours. Programs are selected through joint consultation between a client and the program coordinator and include topics such as conflict resolution, stress management, domestic violence, job search skills, parenting skills, wellness, communication skills, and AIDS/sexually transmitted diseases. Classes are open to a client's family members and partners to enhance the classes' rehabilitative effects.

The evaluation focused specifically on:

- Client eligibility and enrollment.
- Supervision services and conditions.
- Organizational structure.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

Process Evaluation

The process evaluation was based on PSRC's onsite inspection of the diversion program using a checklist of diversion program policies and procedures drawn from relevant criminal justice standards and onsite interviews with the program director, staff, and advisory board; county DOC administration; county attorney; defense bar; and program clients and alumni. Diversion program procedures also were compared with those of 20 similar programs surveyed by PSRC. The evaluation focused specifically on:

- Client eligibility and enrollment.
- Supervision services and conditions.
- Organizational structure.

Client Eligibility and Enrollment

Criminal justice standards recommend that eligibility criteria for pretrial diversion be stated in writing. They should include all defendants who might benefit from diversion and should ensure that program placement is not denied to a client because of race, gender, sexual preference, economic status, disability, or inability to pay restitution or potential program fees. In addition, criteria should not require a guilty plea and the defendant's participation should be voluntary.

Supervision Services and Diversion Conditions

Diversion standards suggest that diversion conditions address specific client needs, particularly addressing behavior that may lead to criminal activity. These conditions should be specific, achievable, and as minimally restrictive as possible to achieve the goals of rehabilitation and deterrence. An appropriate diversion service plan also may include voluntary community service, restitution, and drug testing as general conditions.

Diversion standards also recommend that supervision include clear time limits for program completion and a mechanism for reviewing and possibly revising conditions as needed to achieve contract goals. NAPSA standards also encourage supervision time that is neither longer nor more costly than necessary to achieve the goals of rehabilitation and deterrence. Most diversion programs surveyed had supervision times of 6 months to 1 year.

Finally, diversion standards suggest that programs not release client-based information without the client's knowledge or consent and have in place written agreements with the courts, prosecutors, and service providers detailing the type of information the program will release and under what circumstances.

Organizational Structure

NAPSA standards suggest that diversion programs have a written mission statement or statement of goals and objectives, an information system that allows program information to be recorded and managed, and a staff sufficient in size and experience to help clients meet program requirements.

Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation sought to identify differences in recidivism rates among defendants completing the diversion program successfully, those terminated from the program, and those who withdrew during the assessment phase and to determine if these differences could be explained wholly or in part by program participation.

A quasi-experimental design was used due to problems implementing an experimental design—that is, a smaller sample size and a shorter duration. This method constructed comparison groups (rather than control groups) from program records of defendants who closely matched diversion participants. The groups included defendants who either failed or withdrew during assessment and clients terminated from the program. These groups were then matched against successful program participants by the variables studied, with differences attributed in some degree to diversion program participation. The design allowed PSRC to consider all defendants referred to or accepted by the program as comparison or program group participants. In most cases, the evaluation also allowed more time to track behavior after program development.

The outcome evaluation sought to identify differences in recidivism rates among defendants completing the diversion program successfully, those terminated from the program, and those who withdrew during the assessment phase and to determine if these differences could be explained wholly or in part by program participation.

Group One included successful program participants; Group Two, defendants who dropped out during assessment; and Group Three, program terminations. Each group was originally screened through the Diversion Offender Profile, which ensured similarity in categories such as type of charge, prior criminal history, prior diversion program participation, and circumstances regarding the most recent offense. To further evaluate similarities, PSRC compared each group by characteristics found in the database, including age, gender, race, professional status, marital status, and educational level.

Due to the small number of cases in the overall sample, PSRC evaluated all defendants and clients considered for diversion. Because sampling was not used, measures of association could not be applied; differences between the groups were therefore presented in percentages.

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Process Evaluation

PSRC found that the Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program met the guidelines for client eligibility and enrollment by having no restrictions on program participation except current and past criminal history and a defendant's receptiveness to the program.

PSRC found that the Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program met the guidelines for client eligibility and enrollment by having no restrictions on program participation except current and past criminal history and a defendant's receptiveness to the program.

Client Eligibility and Enrollment

The evaluation suggested that the profile categories "offense represents a major threat to society or requires general deterrent" and "prison-bound offender" required prosecutorial input. From interviews with police officials and the prosecutor, PSRC could not determine whether these categories were ever used by arresting agencies and, if so, whether the agencies defined these categories consistently. If they did not, it was possible that similarly situated arrestees in separate police districts were not being screened for diversion in the same way. Other profile categories seemed inconsistent or vague. For example, while the profile excluded defendants with prior jail incarcerations of more than 7 days, past sentences such as probation, fines, and restitution were not considered restrictions. Additionally, there were no time limits on the prior jail time restriction. For example, a defendant who served a 30-day jail sentence 10 years ago apparently would score the same as a defendant who served a similar sentence within the past 3 months.

PSRC recommended that the Diversion Offender Profile be used by arresting agencies to gauge only a defendant's current and past criminal behavior and that the following restrictions be used to ensure that exclusions to diversion eligibility were specific and less restrictive:

- No current violent, sex-related, or drug-trafficking offense.
- No prior felony convictions.

- No prior misdemeanor convictions within a specified period of time (for example, the past 2 years).
- No prior diversion participation.
- No pending criminal charges or current probation or parole status.

The 138 days needed for assessment was longer than the 1- to 3-month assessment period noted by most survey diversion programs. According to data from 160 reviews, the diversion program offered 110 defendants contracts after the screening period. For cases for which substance-abuse evaluation data were available (n=104 cases), 50 screened defendants (48.1 percent) were placed into Level One supervision and 53 (50.9 percent) into Level Two. This suggests that a significant number of screened defendants have substance abuse-related issues that can be addressed through counseling and/or regular drug and alcohol testing. After assessments of 20 defendants who failed during this period for reasons other than rearrest or withdrawal were reviewed, it was found that only three exhibited mental or emotional problems, making them inappropriate for placement. This finding suggested that most defendants who had been assessed would not require extensive social and psychological screening to determine needed services. PSRC recommended that the diversion program consider replacing the substance-abuse assessment with a procedure based on a defendant's current and prior drug use and results from drug and alcohol tests. Placement into drug monitoring or treatment would depend on a defendant's admitted drug or alcohol usage, test results, and the circumstances of the current charge. PSRC also recommended that the diversion program consider discontinuing the social work assessment since the county's population eligible for diversion does not exhibit emotional or mental problems requiring such a lengthy screening process.

Client Supervision and Diversion Conditions

PSRC found that none of the four mandatory diversion conditions addressed specific client needs. Rather, as expressed in interviews with criminal justice personnel, these conditions are meant to have an overall rehabilitative effect and serve as community service and restitution to allow the clients to "repay" the community during their time in diversion. While mandating these conditions runs counter to the diversion standards' recommendation for voluntary participation, each condition appears designed to meet diversion goals. However, PSRC cautioned that diversion, as a sanction, was not intended as punishment and, therefore, its conditions should not carry a potentially punitive effect, which may be the case with an across-the-board community service requirement. Most surveyed diversion programs that include a community service requirement limit the condition to a 50-hour maximum. PSRC recommended that the diversion program drop its policy of a uniform 600-hour community service condition and adopt a "sliding scale," with hours based on a client's overall supervision plan, employment

status, and schedule, and limit the maximum community service hours to a total more in line with current diversion program practices nationwide.

The specialized courses under the life skills component appear to provide an excellent avenue for addressing specific client behavior that may lead to future criminal behavior and meet the standards' requirement for establishing conditions suited to client needs.

Diversion program time is open-ended, depending on the client's completion of diversion classes, community service, and restitution payments. Data supplied by the program show that the median supervision time was 660 days for clients successfully completing the program and 224 days for clients terminated for noncompliance. The bulk of supervision time is spent meeting community service obligations. PSRC recommended that the diversion program limit supervision to 1 year (since most diversion conditions could be completed within that period) and extensions be made on a case-by-case basis.

The program releases client data only to agencies providing services to clients, such as substance-abuse treatment or testing facilities; however, no formal written agreements exist regarding release of such data. To avoid the possibility of problems and to be consistent with standards, PSRC recommended that the program enter into written memoranda of understanding with service providers outlining appropriate release and use of program data.

Organizational Structure

The program has a clear mission statement and an automated management information system. However, PSRC believes the staffing levels make maintaining adequate supervision and the current level of services problematic and expansion impractical. Accordingly, PSRC recommended that the program use its existing budget allocation for contracted social work to hire a part-time programs coordinator.

PSRC also noted in several onsite interviews that the Boscawen location was inconvenient. Program data showed that nearly a third of the clients are from Concord or surrounding townships, and most of the service providers are in the Concord area. Given Concord's location within the county, easier access, and proximity to most program clients and services, PSRC recommended that county officials move the diversion program back to the Concord area.

Conclusion

The Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program is an established and well-respected component of the county's efforts to address and deter criminal conduct. According to criminal justice officials as well as current and past clients, the program has a definite and positive effect on defendant behavior.

With certain revisions to its policies and expansion to other appropriate defendant populations (such as misdemeanor and juvenile offenders), the program will continue to maintain its current high level of service to its clients and the criminal justice system.

Outcome Evaluation

In evaluating variables that favorably affected recidivism rates, PSRC found the following:

- ❑ **Recidivism:** There is a notable difference in recidivism rates by group; there were no rearrests in Group One after program completion as compared with the rearrest of 22.7 percent of Group Two cases and 24.1 percent of Group Three cases.
- ❑ **Recidivism and Diversion Participation Points:** Most clients or defendants involved with the diversion program were arrested before 1995. In both Groups Two and Three, recidivism occurred within 1 year of program or assessment termination.
- ❑ **Recidivism and Age:** Younger clients and defendants were rearrested more often than older: 22.7 percent of clients and defendants between ages 18 and 25 were rearrested, compared with 11.1 percent of those between ages 26 and 34, 5.9 percent of those between ages 35 and 40, and none of those over 40.
- ❑ **Program Compliance and Recidivism Rates:** Of the 67 program clients in the sample, 56.7 percent (38) successfully completed supervision and 10.4 percent were rearrested after program termination.

From an initial database of 160, 111 defendants were assigned to an “evaluation group” resulting in 38 diversion program clients successfully completing supervision; 44 defendants from 1 of 2 “comparison groups” dropped from consideration following the program’s initial assessment; and 29 program clients terminated from supervision.

Conclusion

The outcome evaluation of the Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program yielded the following findings:

- ❑ There is a marked difference in recidivism rates between persons successfully completing diversion and other similar defendants not participating in or having been terminated from diversion.
- ❑ The relationship between diversion completion/recidivism weakens when variables such as age, educational level, and marital status are used as controls.

There is a notable difference in recidivism rates by group; there were no rearrests in Group One after program completion as compared with the rearrest of 22.7 percent of Group Two cases and 24.1 percent of Group Three cases.

There is a marked difference in recidivism rates between persons successfully completing diversion and other similar defendants not participating in or having been terminated from diversion.

- Although successful diversion program participation may have some effect on the likelihood of future recidivism, given the impact of the control variables, PSRC cannot state conclusively that participation is the reason for the differences between diversion clients and similar defendants.

These findings are tempered by the limitations of the research design and the data sample. The quasi-experimental design relied heavily on crafting comparison groups that closely matched the evaluation group. While Groups Two and Three were similar enough in many respects to Group One, the differences in educational levels and marital status leave room to reasonably question whether these groups were similar enough to compare. Despite these limitations, certain definite conclusions about diversion in Merrimack County were reached following the process and outcome reviews and included:

- *A well-defined defendant subgroup exists in Merrimack County that is suitable for diversion placement.* County officials managed to identify a stable and well-defined defendant population eligible for diversion consideration. The relatively low failure rate for those accepted into the program, defined through recidivism, and the willingness of most clients to comply with supervision appear to justify the use of diversion for this population.
- *The diversion program has established itself as an effective and needed component in the county's continuum of sanctions to address and deter criminal behavior.* In their onsite interviews with PSRC, county criminal justice officials stated that the diversion program had become an effective sanction for eligible defendants. The combination of supervision, life skills and services, and community service work gave participants the means to address circumstances in their lives that might lead to future criminal behavior while “paying back” the community for the privilege of participating in diversion. Most interviewees also believed the defendants eligible for diversion benefited more from their program participation than they would have through other more expensive sanctions such as incarceration or probation.
- *The diversion program operates in compliance with nationally recognized diversion standards.* With certain noted exceptions, the Merrimack County Adult Diversion Program conforms to national criminal justice standards. It has written guidelines that identify eligible defendants and that determine each client's eligibility and specific program needs. A defendant's decision to participate in diversion is voluntary and is made with the advice of defense counsel and after a thorough review of general and specific program requirements. An admission of guilt is not a program requirement; moreover, successful program participation results in dismissal of charges. Most conditions and services are specific, reasonable, and, with certain exceptions, geared to a client's needs. Finally, the program regularly reviews each client's progress and has specific in-house sanctions to address minor rule infractions.

- *The diversion program is in a good position to apply services that may help reduce future recidivism.* The outcome evaluation appeared to show that educational level has a controlling effect on, though not a direct relationship to, reduced recidivism. Defendants with higher educational levels who are subject to criminal justice supervision may be less involved in future crime. This finding suggests that future supervision efforts should include education components, such as GED instruction, or encourage continued school enrollment. As the sanction applied earliest in case processing, the diversion program is in an excellent position to promote education to its participants.

Oregon: The Multnomah County STOP Drug Diversion Program

This summary was adapted from the report An Outcome Program Evaluation of the Multnomah County STOP Drug Diversion Program, which presents evaluation research conducted by Michael Finigan, Ph.D., Northwest Professional Consortium, developed under technical assistance grant SJI-96-06X-T-A-174 from the State Justice Institute.

The STOP (Sanction-Treatment-Opportunity-Progress) Drug Diversion Program was initiated in 1991 to reduce the increasing backlog of drug cases in Multnomah County and to encourage treatment for those with first-offense drug charges.

Program Overview

The Multnomah County STOP program includes the following components:

- Court oversight and active judicial case management.
- Immediate access to a dedicated treatment resource.
- Drug testing.
- A range of intermediate sanctions.

In 1995, STOP added a series of enhancements to expand its target population and to provide additional access to health, mental health, family intervention, resource coordination, and aftercare services.

Goals and Objectives

STOP program goals were to reduce substance abuse by improving treatment outcomes and to reduce recidivism by improving program impact. Objectives for the first goal included the diversion and treatment of up to 700 clients from the drug court docket in 1994 and 1995, successful program completion by 65 percent of program participants, and the delivery of drug-free babies borne by all pregnant women in the program. Objectives for the second goal included a recidivism rate of no more than 15 percent, a conviction rate of no more than 10 percent within 1 year following program completion, partnership and funding with an outside institution to complete process and outcome evaluations, 1-year followup on participants by program staff, and opportunities for program staff to provide technical assistance to other Oregon jurisdictions wishing to implement similar programs.

STOP program goals were to reduce substance abuse by improving treatment outcomes and to reduce recidivism by improving program impacts.

Program Activities/Components

Judicial Process

After review by the district attorney, defendants are offered the opportunity for drug court diversion at their first appearance before the court; they are eligible only if the charge is for possession of a controlled substance (PCS) (not distribution or manufacturing), preferably in small quantities. If there are additional nondrug criminal charges, individuals are eligible provided conditions of probation do not interfere with participation in the program. Between 900 and 1,100 cases per year are first-time appointments from district court to petition for the STOP program, with from 400 to 700 actually being admitted and participating in part of the program.

About 46 percent of admitted cases graduate from the program.

The STOP program is voluntary; when defendants petition to enter the STOP track, they agree that if they fail the program, they will be tried solely on the basis of the police report. This “stipulated facts” trial is brief with a swift and sure sanction resulting from program failure. One negative side of this process is that some of the “front-end” costs savings expected by a diversion program are lost since legal representation and judicial time are required throughout the process. Nonetheless, it clearly adds a powerful incentive to remain compliant in the program, because a violation of any rule involves, at minimum, an appearance before the judge who oversees the program.

Treatment

Treatment is provided by InAct, Inc., a private, nonprofit agency that provides outpatient, multiphased intervention, including group counseling sessions and acupuncture treatments. STOP clients are required to engage in group and individual counseling sessions at InAct every weekday during the initial phase of the program and once or twice a week during the final phases. The court provides active case management involving monthly status hearings at which time the court reviews drug test results and treatment progress. Other specialized services are also available, including women’s services, Hispanic services, and a literacy program. The level of intervention and accountability for STOP clients far exceeds what is typical in outpatient treatment. About 46 percent of admitted cases graduate from the program.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

The evaluation had two major goals:

- Assess whether program participants have positive outcomes particularly focusing on outcomes related to criminal recidivism (e.g., lower subsequent arrests and convictions and more compliant probation or parole supervision).

- Assess the ratio of the program's cost to the avoided costs resulting from the program's positive outcomes (if any).

The study sample included all cases—those who graduated and those who did not complete the program but received partial treatment; incompleteness could be due to either drug test failure or failure to appear (FTA) at a status hearing. Because the period from 1991 to 1992 was the early implementation phase, a period often premature for reviewing an innovative program such as this, the sample was taken from the 1994 to 1995 period to study results of the fully implemented program. The sample included 150 subjects who were diverted and graduated and 150 subjects who were diverted but did not graduate, which included those who received a great deal of treatment and those who received little; random selection was used for both the graduate sample and the nongraduate sample. The groups did not differ significantly in gender, age, or race/ethnicity composition. Both groups were approximately 72 percent male, the average participant age was 33, and the proportion of nonwhites was 23 percent. Hispanic clients were excluded due to a preponderance of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) holds. Because the groups differed, however, in the number of prior arrests, this category was used as a control variable. The mean number of prior arrests for all program participants was 2.5; however, graduates averaged 1.6 prior arrests, while nongraduates averaged 3.4.

The selection of a comparison group is a critical element in a nonrandomized research design. In this case, the best comparison group for the STOP program graduates was a contemporaneous sample of arrestees who were eligible for the program but were not able to participate. These individuals needed to meet the following criteria: a charge for PCSI or PCSII (preferably not with large amounts of the drug in possession) and eligibility but not entrance into the STOP program. Figures given by the Metropolitan Public Defender's Office indicated that approximately 2,400 individuals were arrested each year with drug offenses as the primary charge and 4,400 were arrested with drug offenses as the secondary charge. Because 400 to 500 defendants, out of an estimated 1,100 first-time appointments from district court to petition for the STOP program, were actually admitted to the program, the comparison group was rather large. The reasons for nonentry into STOP included withdrawal, client refusal (choosing trial instead), court denial, and prior bench warrants. These reasons had the potential to introduce a bias that may have made these clients unfit to be part of a comparison group; to offset this bias, a representative matched sample approach was used. County and state databases were used to compile a pool of eligible clients who were randomly selected to be representative of program participants based on the following: gender, age, race/ethnicity, and prior criminal history. This effort produced a sample of 150 individuals with backgrounds similar to those who had entered the program. There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on these critical control variables.

Data were collected on the three study groups (graduates, nongraduates, and comparison group) on treatment outcomes for 2 years before and 2 years after the respective criterion dates.

Data were collected on the three study groups (graduates, nongraduates, and comparison group) on treatment outcomes for 2 years before and 2 years after respective criterion dates. The criterion date for graduates was the date the client graduated from the STOP program; for nongraduates, the date the client left the program; and for the comparison group, the date the client received the STOP appointment. Data were collected using various sources including but not limited to Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS), Client Process Monitoring System (CPMS), and Adult and Family Services.

Supervision focused on providing a positive reentry of the criminal into the community.

The key outcome variables (performance measures) focused on the following societal outcomes:

- Subsequent arrests.
- Subsequent convictions.
- Subsequent incarcerations.
- Types of crime committed.
- Supervision experiences.
- Use of public assistance resources, including food stamps.

Supervision focused on providing a positive reentry of the criminal into the community. Signs of positive adjustment included finding employment, receiving training and education, receiving substance-abuse treatment and counseling, finding housing, and using other services to develop a noncriminal lifestyle. To assist in the analysis of these positive adjustment outcome measures, a scale of positive adjustment for parolees was designed, adapted from Latessa and Vita (1988). Data collection staff used this scale to measure each client's adjustment in becoming a productive member of society after examining the client's supervision officer file.

Substance abuse is one of the strongest motivating factors for an individual to continue criminal activity.

Outcome data were also used to assess the relative cost/benefits of the STOP program to the taxpayer. This study focused on "avoided costs" or costs to taxpayers had the participants not received treatment. The cost-to-taxpayers approach measured the costs related to untreated substance abuse that was paid by taxpaying citizens. Avoided costs were assessed for Multnomah County taxpayers and Oregon taxpayers and included criminal justice system costs (police protection from crime, adjudication, jail, supervision), victim losses, theft losses, health-care services, and public assistance.

The primary analysis strategy was to examine each outcome measure for all three sample groups and analyze a covariance model with prior arrests as the chief covariate. If statistical significance was gained for the model, individual comparisons (e.g., graduates versus eligible candidates) were tested for significance. This method was preferred since a series of bivariate tests can occasionally produce spurious statistical significance.

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Substance abuse is one of the strongest motivating factors for an individual to continue criminal activity. A study of substance use, abuse, and dependence in the Multnomah County Justice Center found that approximately two-thirds of those arrested were recent users of drugs (based on urinalysis) and that about half could be classified as clinically dependent on either alcohol or drugs. Drug use played a major role in the life of this population. Reducing substance abuse should have had a positive effect on reducing criminal recidivism.

Subsequent New Arrests

Participants Versus Comparison Group: Those who participated in STOP had 61 percent fewer subsequent arrests over a 2-year period than the control comparison group.

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: Program graduates had 49 percent fewer subsequent new arrests than nongraduates over a 2-year period.

Amount of Program Completed: For those who completed less than one-third of the program, the rate of subsequent arrests was more than twice that of those who completed at least a third of the program (139 rearrests versus 62 rearrests per hundred participants). Participating in a substantial portion of the program had positive effects on recidivism.

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: Program graduates had 76 percent fewer total subsequent arrests than the comparison group over a 2-year period.

Completing and graduating from the STOP program had the most positive effect on reducing recidivism.

Subsequent Serious Arrests (Felony Type A and B)

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: Clients who participated in the STOP program had 64 percent fewer subsequent felony arrests than the comparison group over a 2-year period.

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: Program graduates had 56 percent fewer subsequent Class A and B felony arrests over a 2-year period than program participants who did not graduate.

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: STOP graduates had 80 percent fewer total subsequent felony arrests than the comparison group clients over a 2-year period.

Completing and graduating from the STOP program had the most positive effect on reducing recidivism.

Subsequent Convictions

In Oregon, new arrests are a better measure of recidivism than convictions or incarcerations for two reasons: (1) most new arrests reported in LEDS are felony arrests and most lead to some kind of conviction and (2) actual adjudication outcomes are dependent on variables that are difficult to interpret as outcome measures. A combination of plea bargaining, jail release or transfer programs, and prior bench warrant issues complicate sentencing and incarceration in any given case. Nonetheless, it is interesting to examine the rates of conviction among the three groups.

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: There was a 57-percent difference between the two groups in total convictions over a 2-year period, with those participating in STOP having fewer total convictions than the comparison group.

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: There was a 51-percent difference between the two groups in total subsequent convictions over a 2-year period, with a conviction rate of 59 per 100 nongraduates compared with 29 per 100 graduates.

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: Program graduates were convicted at a rate of 29 new convictions per 100 participants in a 2-year period compared with 111 per 100 for the comparison group. This was a 74-percent difference between graduates and the comparison group in total subsequent convictions in a 2-year period.

Subsequent Drug Arrests

Since a drug-related arrest was the chief criterion for eligibility in the STOP Drug Court Diversion Program, and since drug treatment was a central part of the diversion, examining the rate of subsequent arrests for drug-related crimes was of particular interest. All subsequent drug-related arrests collected from LEDS for each group were felonies.

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: There was a 72-percent difference between participants and the comparison group in total subsequent drug-related arrests over a 2-year period (22 new drug-related arrests per 100 participants compared with 78 per 100 of the comparison group).

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: There was a 56-percent difference between graduates and nongraduates in total subsequent drug-related arrests over a 2-year period (12 rearrests per 100 graduates and 27 rearrests per 100 of nongraduates).

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: There was an 85-percent difference between the two groups in total subsequent drug-related arrests over a 2-year period (12 rearrests per 100 graduates compared with 78 rearrests per 100 of the comparison group).

A substantial difference between program participants and the comparison group existed in the rate of drug-related arrests in the 2-year period after the program. The difference in drug-related arrests between groups was greater than the difference in total new arrests. The STOP program appeared to have its greatest effect on reducing subsequent drug arrests.

Subsequent Property Crime Arrests

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: There was a 58-percent difference between program participants and the comparison group in total subsequent felony property arrests over a 2-year period. STOP participants had a rate of 13 new arrests per every 100 participants after leaving the program compared with 31 per 100 of the comparison group. STOP program participants had a total of 2 new subsequent serious property crime arrests per 100 participants compared with 6 per 100 of the comparison group.

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: Program graduates were rearrested at a rate of 7 new felony property crime arrests per 100 participants compared with 10 per 100 of nongraduates. This was a 30-percent difference between the two groups over a 2-year period. STOP program graduates had a total of 2 new subsequent felony property crime arrests per 100 participants compared with 3 per 100 nongraduates.

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: Graduates were rearrested at a rate of 7 new felony property crime arrests per 100 compared with 29 per 100 of the comparison group who were eligible but did not participate in the program. This is a 76-percent difference over a 2-year period. STOP program graduates had a total of 2 new subsequent felony property crime arrests per 100 participants compared with 6 per 100 of the comparison group.

A substantial difference in the rate of all property crime arrests existed in the 2-year period after the program for program participants compared with the comparison group. Graduates, in particular, had far fewer subsequent property crime arrests than the comparison group. The percentage differential in property crime arrest was similar to the difference in total new arrests for all comparisons.

Subsequent Personal Crime Arrests

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: STOP participants had subsequent felony (Class A and B) arrests at a rate of 1 per 100 participants in a 2-year period compared with 4 per 100 of the comparison group. This was a 75-percent difference over a 2-year period.

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: No graduates were rearrested for serious personal crimes. But the rearrest rate was 2 per 100 in the nongraduate group. This represented a 100-percent difference over a 2-year period.

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: No graduates were rearrested but the rearrest rate was 4 per 100 of the comparison group. This was a 100-percent difference in total subsequent serious personal crime arrests over a 2-year period.

A substantial difference in the rate of all personal crime arrests existed in the 2-year period after the program for participants compared with the comparison group. Graduates, in particular, had far fewer subsequent personal crime arrests than the members in the comparison group. The percentage differential in total personal crime arrests was similar to the difference in total new arrests for all comparisons; however, the percentage difference in serious personal crime arrest was greater than the difference in total new arrests for all comparisons.

Subsequent Parole Violation Arrests

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: STOP participants had subsequent probation or parole violation arrests at a rate of 2 new arrests per 100 participants compared with 10 per 100 of the comparison group. This was an 80-percent difference over a 2-year period.

Program Graduates Versus Program Nongraduates: There was no difference between the two groups in a 2-year period. Rearrests for new probation or parole violations were 2 per 100 graduates compared with 2 per 100 nongraduates.

Program Graduates Versus Comparison Group: Graduates were rearrested at a rate of 2 new probation or parole violations per 100 whereas 10 per 100 of the comparison group were rearrested for violations, representing an 80-percent difference over a 2-year period.

A substantial difference between program participants and the comparison group existed in the rate of parole or probation violation arrests in the 2-year period after the program. Graduates and nongraduates, however, showed no difference in subsequent parole or probation violation arrests.

Positive Adjustment Score of 1 or More

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: More than half of STOP participants for whom supervision records were available scored at least 1 point on the Positive Adjustment Scale, a set of indicators measuring factors such as employment, enrollment in school, standard of living, participation in self-improvement programs, and other important variables of positive community adjustment and successful supervision. Just under 40 percent of the comparison group individuals scored as well.

Positive Adjustment Score of 4 or More

Program Participants Versus Comparison Group: Twenty-seven percent of program participants for whom supervision records were available scored 4 or more points compared with 10 percent of the comparison group.

Cost Analysis

The STOP Drug Diversion Program saved the Multnomah County Criminal Justice System \$2,476,795 per cohort during the 2 years of data collection after participation in the program. The study estimated the avoided costs to the taxpayers of Oregon to be \$10,223,532 over 2 years. Every taxpayer dollar spent on cohorts of clients who participated in the program produced \$2.50 in cost savings to the taxpayers of Multnomah County. The ratio of benefit to the Oregon taxpayer was \$10 saved for every \$1 spent.

Advantages of the STOP Drug Diversion Program

The STOP Drug Diversion Program in Multnomah County offers advantageous features in both its court management and its substance-abuse treatment procedures.

In court management:

- A judge overseeing the process, creating a continuity in the judicial process.
- A “stipulated facts” trial, allowing for swift and sure punishment for program failure.
- Careful court monitoring with frequent drug testing and frequent appearances before the judge.

In substance-abuse treatment:

- A single provider, ensuring consistency on the treatment side.
- A multiphase, multiaspect 12-month treatment program.
- Frequent drug testing.
- Court-enforced attendance and progress.

Summary

This study had certain limitations. Because it was retrospective, random assignment to treatment and control conditions was not possible (and probably not possible even if it had been a contemporaneous sample). Therefore, some unmeasured (and possibly unmeasurable) differences may have existed among the three groups that affected the study outcomes. Nonetheless, the comparison group was matched on all critical variables, removing possible sources of bias.

This study found that program participants, especially graduates, had significantly fewer subsequent arrests and convictions.

This study found that program participants, especially graduates, had significantly fewer subsequent arrests and convictions, particularly felony arrests, and had lower rates of drug-related arrests—both of which suggest that the program may have had an effect on lowering participant involvement with drugs.

This lower rate of recidivism, in turn, affects public safety and public costs. Fewer arrests and convictions lessen the pressure on the criminal justice system, particularly the jail system, and can lead to more reasonable loads on the current system, fewer future expenditures, or both. Lower rates of recidivism can also result in savings to taxpayers in terms of costs for dealing with new offenses, treating victims, and improving safety.

Illinois: Homicide and Violent Crime Strike Force in Madison and St. Clair Counties

This summary was adapted from the report An Evaluation of the Homicide and Violent Crime Strike Force Program in Madison and St. Clair Counties, which presents evaluation research conducted by Richard Schmitz, J.D., and Pinky S. Wassenberg, Ph.D., J.D., Center for Legal Studies, University of Illinois at Springfield.

Madison and St. Clair Counties experienced severe levels of violent crime during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The cause of the influx of crime may have been due to educational inadequacies, loss of industry, and the lack of funding to local law enforcement. In response to this epidemic, the Homicide and Violent Crime Strike Force (hereinafter referred to as the “task force”) was created by the Illinois State Police (ISP) Department and the Illinois Attorney General’s (AG’s) Office.

The task force was designed as a joint venture between ISP and the Illinois AG’s Office.

Program Overview

The task force was designed as a joint venture between ISP and the Illinois AG’s Office. The ISP program component was made up of one supervisor and four case agents who were experienced homicide investigators with strong community ties to the selected counties. The AG’s Office program component, made up of two attorneys, one investigator, and one secretary who served both agencies, was designed to assist local prosecutors in the prosecution of task force cases and give legal advice to the State Police component. It was anticipated that task force attorneys would occasionally take a lead role in the prosecution of task force cases. Resources and personnel levels were consistent throughout the program, but there were changes in task force operating procedures and interagency relationships. These are discussed in detail under Program Activities/Components on page 51.

This study focuses on St. Clair and Madison Counties in Illinois, which are located in the southwestern section of the state and share a border with Missouri. Their combined population in 1992 was approximately 516,000. More than two-thirds of all persons residing in St. Clair County are white, as are 90 percent of those in Madison County; during the past 30 years, both counties experienced increases in nonwhite populations. Both counties report more female residents than male: 52.2 percent in St. Clair and 52.1 percent in Madison. Less than 15 percent of the population in either county possess a bachelor’s or higher degree.

According to the Regional Economic Information System, St. Clair County residents reported a 1994 per capita personal income (PCPI) of \$18,452, compared with \$20,530 reported by Madison County residents. This placed St. Clair County 52nd (out of 102) in the state for income level and represented approximately 78.2 percent of the state average (\$23,611) and approximately 85 percent of the national average (\$21,696). Madison County was ranked 22nd in the state, and its PCPI was 87 and 94.6 percent of state and national averages, respectively. Of all St. Clair families, 13.9 percent reported an income below the poverty level; 43.4 percent of all single female head-of-household families lived in poverty. In Madison County, fewer families (8.5 percent) reported an income below the poverty level with 32.9 percent of households headed by females falling into that category. In both counties, the majority of residents were employed in wholesale and retail trade industries: 22.5 percent for St. Clair and 21.9 percent for Madison. In St. Clair, 14.0 and 10.7 percent were employed in manufacturing and health care, respectively; in Madison, the percentages for manufacturing and health care were 21.3 and 8.6 percent, respectively.

Two indicators are commonly used to report levels of crime and subsequent police response: the number of crimes known to law enforcement as having occurred within a particular jurisdiction and the number of arrests made. Both of these indicators were considered for the jurisdictional area covered by the Homicide and Violent Crime Strike Force. During 1991, 25,504 serious crimes were known to police working in the 2 counties as having occurred within their jurisdictions. Of these, 14.2 percent were violent and 85.8 percent were property related. From 1982 to 1995, a sizable increase in the number of serious crimes known to law enforcement was observed in St. Clair County (40.6 percent), while Madison County experienced a decline. During the same period, the majority of violent crimes that occurred within these two counties occurred in St. Clair County; on average, less than 20 percent of all violent crimes known to police over this time period occurred in Madison County. Based on Illinois Uniform Crime Reports (IUCR) data, law enforcement agencies within the 2 counties arrested an average of 5,073 individuals each year for serious crimes between 1982 and 1995. The majority of individuals arrested each year were from St. Clair County. Similar findings were revealed when only violent crime arrests were considered—that is, while the 2 counties averaged 1,163 arrests involving violent crimes each year, the majority of such arrests originated in St. Clair County. Madison County reported a higher incidence of arrests for criminal sexual assault while St. Clair County reported higher numbers of arrests for murder, robbery, and aggravated assault.

During the years 1992 through 1996, the territory covered by the Homicide and Violent Crime Strike Force weathered congressional redistricting, loss of industries (plant closings and the flood of 1993) in the region, political scandals, and acknowledgment of educational inadequacies. In 1994, the East St. Louis (ESL) School District 189 was taken over by the state of Illinois after it

was revealed that the district was operating \$2.7 million in debt and holding classes in unsafe, dilapidated buildings. However, it also received millions of dollars in revenue generated by gambling in the most impoverished city, East St. Louis, and a new railway system that linked St. Clair County with downtown St. Louis and the St. Louis airport (Metro-Link Rail). Each of these factors may have affected the ease with which the task force was able to interact with communities and their political leaders. Also during these years, other law enforcement initiatives operating throughout the area may have affected the impact of the task force in realizing its goals.

Goals and Objectives

The program goals for the Illinois State Police component were to:

- ❑ Select experienced homicide investigators who also had significant ties to the communities in which the task force operated.
- ❑ Obtain the involvement of local law enforcement officers, especially those of the ESL Police Department.

The program goals for the Illinois Attorney General's Office were to:

- ❑ Assist local prosecutors in the prosecution of task force cases.
- ❑ Give legal advice to the State Police component.
- ❑ Take a lead role as requested in the prosecution of task force cases.

The objectives of the evaluation of the Homicide and Violent Crime Strike Force in St. Clair and Madison Counties included:

- ❑ Documenting and examining the original goals of the task force, its initial operating procedures, practices, organizational structure, and resource allocation, as well as its internal and external relationships.
- ❑ Documenting and examining changes in the structure, procedures, practices, resources, and relationships that occurred over time.
- ❑ Documenting and examining the impact of the task force on cases, law enforcement, prosecutors, the judicial system, and the communities in which it operated.

Program Activities/Components

The main activity of the task force was investigating homicides and other violent crimes (which had already been investigated by other agencies in the two counties) by combining the resources of ISP and the AG's Office. The AG's Office investigator was the primary source for the selection of cases for the task force. The investigator reviewed unsolved homicide and violent crime cases and then selected cases to be moved directly to the ISP squad leader. The perceived solvability of a case was the greatest determinant in

The main activity of the task force was investigating homicides and other violent crimes (which had already been investigated by other agencies in the two counties) by combining the resources of ISP and the AG's Office.

whether the case was accepted by the task force. As the task force evolved, cases were also referred by local law enforcement agencies.

The task force, however, did engage in other activities. For example, it investigated four shootings by local police officers. In addition, investigators from the task force rendered assistance to ISP, federal law enforcement agencies, and local police departments. Because this assistance did not entail extensive involvement of the task force, neither the task force nor the evaluation counted these “assist cases” as task force cases.

The task force experienced relative stability in both resources and personnel. Two ISP case agents and one AG’s Office attorney transferred out of the task force. One of the case agents and the attorney left during the first year of operations. The other case agent left in 1995. There were no other personnel changes. Resources were also stable and generally deemed adequate to accomplish the job.

As the two components of the task force adjusted to and more clearly defined their roles in the internal operations of the task force, operating procedures changed. The original design called for joint decisionmaking between both components regarding whether to initiate investigation, proceed further with a case, or ask for an arrest warrant and prosecution of a case. During the first year of task force operations, the process moved away from attorney participation in these decisions in all cases to consultation of the attorneys by the ISP component on an as-needed basis. Within the first year of operations, an understanding was reached whereby the ISP component controlled task force activities up to the point of arrest and the AG’s Office component controlled task force activities after arrest.

The task force was unable to realize its goal of local law enforcement participation from the ESL Police Department. At the time of task force initiation, the department was understaffed and coping with the demands of high violent crime rates. On the one hand, the city was financially unable to contribute resources to replace any officers who might join the task force; on the other hand, the task force was not able to pay any local officers who wanted to participate in task force activities and was thus only able to obtain the services of one local officer from the Alton Police Department. He was recalled after 9 months.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

The evaluation included four parts. First, the evaluation team evaluated the process through which the task force was designed and implemented. This evaluation was divided into two sections—one describing the initiation and design of the task force and one describing the evolution of the task force since its inception. Second, the team examined the impact of the task force on the cases handled, law enforcement and the judicial process, and the

larger community. Third, by combining the information gained in the implementation and impact evaluations, the team assessed whether the task force was a viable approach to the investigation and prosecution of homicides and violent crimes. Fourth, the evaluation team made recommendations for the future development of the task force in Madison and St. Clair Counties and for those interested in starting similar task forces elsewhere.

A variety of strategies was used to obtain the information needed to describe the operating procedures and practices of the task force. Two sources of information were central to the evaluation: task force program documents maintained by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) and interviews with task force participants. The program documents obtained from ICJIA included task force grant applications, correspondence between ICJIA and the task force, and the task force's monthly data reports. UCR data were also used in the evaluation. Additional information was obtained from personal interviews with ISP and AG's Office administrators, task force personnel, and other agencies or individuals involved in the creation and development of the program. These interviews were based on written protocols developed by the evaluation team in conjunction with ICJIA.

The impact portion of the report relied on quantitative and qualitative data collected to describe the effectiveness of the task force program. This three-part analysis investigated the impact of the task force on the cases chosen for investigation; law enforcement, prosecutors, and the courts; and the broader community.

The goals of the case analysis were to describe the cases handled by the task force and to examine the movement of those cases through critical decision points in the criminal justice process.

In assessing the impact of the task force on both criminal justice staff and the broader community, evaluation project staff interviewed task force personnel, local law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, judges, defense attorneys, and community leaders. Areas of inquiry included their impressions of the effect of the task force on the behavior of local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, the ability of these local entities to deal with homicide and violent crime, and the perceptions of the public.

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Task Force Impact on Cases

The task force handled 72 cases involving the investigation of crimes in St. Clair and Madison Counties. The majority of these cases involved crimes that eventually produced charges of first-degree murder against suspects. Most of these cases were investigated to a conclusion, and most defendants charged as the result of task force investigations were either convicted or

In assessing the impact of the task force on both criminal justice staff and the broader community, evaluation project staff interviewed task force personnel, local law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, judges, defense attorneys, and community leaders.

pled guilty and received sentences harsher than state averages. Given that the task force accepted cases that other law enforcement agencies felt were not progressing, the task force had a clear, positive impact on the cases it chose to handle.

Fifty-seven of the task force cases involved murder, and another 10 involved assault or battery. The task force experienced great success in obtaining arrests and convictions in these cases. The impact was more strongly felt in St. Clair County, which was the source of more than 90 percent of the task force cases. In 43 percent of the cases, one or more defendants had either pled guilty or been convicted. In another 11.1 percent of the cases, one or more suspects had been arrested, but the cases had not progressed beyond that stage. In 16.7 percent of the cases, a suspect had been identified but was deceased. Of the 33 task force cases that went to trial, 30 resulted in convictions and 3 resulted in mistrials.

However, it should be noted that cases were not always concluded due to task force efforts. For example, 12 cases were closed because the defendant or defendants died. Incomplete information regarding the extent to which a case had progressed prior to being assumed by the task force made it impossible to determine the relative impact of the task force's investigation on case resolution compared with the efforts of the law enforcement agency initially responsible for the investigation. In addition, the task force did not prosecute most of the court cases generated by task force investigations. Most of the court cases were prosecuted by a lead prosecutor from a state's attorney's office with some level of assistance from the task force attorneys. No documentation existed to allow the evaluation team to assess the extent of the assistance provided by task force attorneys in these cases.

Those interviewed generally agreed that the work of the task force enhanced the ability of the local prosecutors to gain convictions in homicides and serious crimes.

Task Force Impact on Law Enforcement, the Courts, and Communities

Those interviewed generally agreed that the work of the task force enhanced the ability of local prosecutors to gain convictions in homicides and serious crimes. Prosecutors, from both the local state's attorney's office and the AG's Office program component, were especially appreciative of the efforts of case agents in locating witnesses and ensuring their presence for trial as well as other trial preparation assistance. The ability of the case agents to deal with witnesses was also highly regarded by prosecutors and judges who felt the work of some local departments closely approximated the work of the task force case agents while other departments fell far short due to either lack of expertise or lack of resources. All agreed some undeterminable number of cases would not have been prosecuted but for the task force.

The impact of the task force on the work of local law enforcement, particularly the ESL Police Department, is difficult to assess, other than anecdotally. The addition of four homicide investigators into an area with an understaffed police department should have helped relieve the pressure on the

local department. In fact, most task force personnel believed their presence allowed the department to focus more resources on current cases. Other factors may also have allowed the department to focus on “hot” cases. During the period of the grant, the ESL Police Department was able to make significant additions to its forces, and the homicide rate in the city decreased. These factors may also have freed up time for police officers to investigate other crimes.

Those interviewed regarding the impact of the task force on the homicide rate in Madison and St. Clair Counties were nearly unanimous in their agreement that the task force was a factor in the decline in the number of homicides in the two-county region. They were also near unanimity in their belief that the precise impact of the task force was unmeasurable. Along with the task force, the freeing up of staff of the ESL Police Department, the infusion of funds from river boat gambling, the installation of Metro-Link Rail commuter train service, and the plethora of other law enforcement initiatives operating in the area were mentioned as factors in the improved outlook for the area.

Several explanations of the task force’s role in the declining homicide rate were offered. First, the task force was responsible for removing from the streets several persons suspected of killing more than one person. Thirty suspects had killed two or more people, and six suspects appeared in more than one task force case, indicating a pattern of homicidal conduct. Second, as stated above, not only did the task force clear cases, it gave the ESL Police Department an opportunity to react more effectively to new cases by freeing up the local department’s resources from some time-consuming cases.

To assess the impact of the task force on the court system and the judiciary, the project staff interviewed task force personnel, as well as prosecutors, judges, and defense attorneys who were involved in task force cases. The staff inquired about the general behavior of the judiciary and differences in sentencing practices compared with similar cases handled by local law enforcement. Members of the judiciary were also asked for their impressions of the work of the task force. None of the individuals interviewed identified any differences in general behavior or demeanor on the part of the judiciary in task force cases when compared with other cases of similar magnitude. However, most task force members felt that their cases, in some measure, obtained harsher sentences than similar cases emanating from other agencies; they felt the sentences were harsher because their cases were better investigated and organized.

The prosecutors, defense counsel, and judges interviewed generally disagreed with this assertion; they felt too many variables influence sentencing to allow any judgment about the impact of the task force on sentences. The nature of the crime and the past criminal history of the defendant were frequently cited examples of important variables that influenced sentencing.

These professionals agreed that the extent to which a case was investigated and prepared influenced the likelihood of a guilty verdict. There was also general agreement that task force cases were well prepared, witnesses were present at the trial, and task force witnesses were poised and prepared for testimony. Also, one trial judge revealed a way in which the clarity of guilt has an impact upon sentencing—the degree to which guilt is clear makes handing down a severe sentence easier, he indicated, because there is less concern about the verdict being overturned. Any error at trial would most likely be deemed a harmless error by an appellate court.

The degree to which the number of task force requests from local law enforcement changed over time is difficult to ascertain. The task force did not keep records of the number of requests; only the number of cases opened by the task force was available as a limited indication of the number of requests received. When task force members were asked about changes in the number of local referrals, responses were inconsistent. Those who believed requests increased thought that increased local awareness of the task force accounted for the change. Those who believed requests decreased gave one or more of the following reasons for their belief: the task force reduced the number of unsolved cases, so the pool of potential task force cases was depleted; local law enforcement was better able to handle cases because of better staffing or other reasons; local law enforcement wanted to keep the cases local because of competition with the task force; or homicide was down in the area, thus reducing the pool of potential cases.

Community members from Madison and St. Clair Counties were interviewed regarding awareness of the task force and the perceived impact it had in their communities. The initial design of the evaluation project expected surveys of community leaders, but because of the small number of persons involved, interviews were used as a means of obtaining more detailed and complete information. The majority of community members stated that they were aware of the task force; however, perceptions of its purpose varied and included conducting undercover police work to seize drugs and recover automobiles acquired through drug trafficking, investigating all major crimes, assisting smaller cities that lacked the resources and personnel to handle major crime investigations, investigating homicides and domestic abuse that leads to homicide, and clearing homicides that were left unsolved due to insufficient evidence. Of those interviewed, most rated the task force as very important and necessary. The consensus was that many old cases would have remained untouched without the task force initiative. Regarding the task force's impact on the communities of the two counties, responses ranged from having no impact to having significant impact. When asked for suggestions regarding the task force, community members suggested involving more resources and people.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Task force participation resulted in several benefits to the participating agencies. All task force personnel identified one or more of the following three items as a benefit: clearance of cases that otherwise would have remained unsolved; enhanced recognition and prestige for law enforcement in general and the Illinois State Police Department and Attorney General's Office in particular; and additional experience conducting homicide investigations or prosecutions.

Among those interviewed, there was a strong perception that the task force had an impact on the homicide and violent crime rates in both counties but particularly in St. Clair, the source of most task force cases. This impact cannot be empirically verified because multiple initiatives designed to reduce violent crime in St. Clair County operated simultaneously with the task force. Also major economic and demographic changes in East St. Louis at this time may have had an impact on the crime rate.

Interview data suggest that several elements were key to task force success:

- Experienced homicide investigators who had the added advantage of being familiar with the communities in which they operated.
- Resources for investigators to travel to conduct interviews and collect evidence.
- The ability of investigators to concentrate on a case without having to be diverted to more recent crimes, which allowed a level of concentration and specialization usually not possible in police departments.
- Modification of a pool of potentially solvable cases by an AG's Office investigator who had been a homicide investigator in ESL law enforcement long enough to be familiar with cases that he believed could have been solved had sufficient resources been available.
- Early successes that gave the task force a reputation for reliability, which led to more case referrals and enhanced credibility with prosecutors and judges.

Evaluation of future initiatives similar to the task force would be aided by establishing an evaluation team early in the history of the unit. The evaluation team would then be able to have input regarding the data collection protocols to be established. In spite of the task force secretary's substantial efforts to anticipate evaluator data needs, much of the data needed to analyze this task force's impact on its cases had not been collected and could not be reconstructed in a timely fashion due to their dispersal among local law enforcement, the task force, and local prosecutors.

While the task force experienced many successes, its original vision fell short in two areas: participation from local law enforcement and the use of the

Among those interviewed, there was a strong perception that the task force had an impact on the homicide and violent crime rates in both counties but particularly in St. Clair, the source of most task force cases.

AG's Office attorneys. Jurisdictions contemplating similar initiatives should carefully consider this experience.

All parties involved in the initiative agreed that the primary focus of task force operations should be on East St. Louis due to its high per capita homicide rate and its high number of unsolved homicides. It was felt the task force could help address the crime problem with its resources and skilled personnel and also assist in improving the ability of the various police departments to deal with serious crimes by bringing local officers into the task force operation. Although the program narrative provided for the full-time assignment of two ESL police officers, the program budget did not allow any grant funds to pay the salaries of local officers. During the conception and beginning operation of the task force, the ESL Police Department was understaffed, overwhelmed with a serious crime wave, and poorly financed. Interviews with officials in more financially resourceful communities revealed that they could not afford to lose officers and generally felt they should not be responsible for assigning officers to a task force they perceived was primarily concerned with another city's crime problem. If similar initiatives are undertaken in the future and local participation is regarded as important, provision must be made for the payment of salaries for assigned officers.

While the underrepresentation of local law enforcement appears to be mostly a financial issue, the reduced use of the AG's Office attorneys by local prosecutors and by ISP seems to have been more complex and subject to various interpretations. The original task force design specified a very active role for the AG's Office attorneys in supporting local prosecutors and even managing and leading some prosecutions—a role that was realized in Madison County. However, the bulk of the task force investigations and prosecutions involved St. Clair County cases; during the course of the grants, only two St. Clair cases involved an AG's Office attorney as the lead prosecutor.

One possible explanation for the difference in use by Madison and St. Clair Counties may be related to familiarity with the AG's Office lead prosecutor. Whereas the initial lead attorney for the AG's Office component had no criminal prosecution experience, the subsequent lead prosecutor had been employed as a special prosecutor in homicide and other serious cases in Madison County (state's attorney's office) before joining the task force. No attorney had a similar prior association with St. Clair County, although familiarity with and respect for the lead prosecutor's credentials was evinced by the representatives of the St. Clair County state's attorney's office. The more likely explanation for the lack of use of the AG's Office attorney by St. Clair County appears to be a philosophical preference for using local prosecutors.

Two recommendations may help similar future initiatives avoid some of the frustrations experienced by the AG's Office attorneys. First, prior to initiation of the project, the parameters and conditions for assistance should be clearly

established between the local prosecutor and any entity offering assistance to the prosecutor. It appears that this was not accomplished in the case of the task force. Second, outside assistance to local prosecutors may be of more value in counties with staff too small to handle current caseloads or where specialized expertise is not available in the local office.

The initial task force design also envisioned a substantial role for the AG's Office attorneys in initial case screening and in decisionmaking regarding whether to proceed with case investigations. After less than a year, the involvement of the attorneys moved from regular to as needed, as determined by the case agents or their squad leader. Several factors appear to have contributed to this change. The initial staffing of the AG's Office component with a lead attorney who had no criminal prosecution experience eroded the faith of the ISP component in the ability of that attorney to make a positive contribution to the process. Even after the replacement of the lead prosecutor with an attorney whose credentials were respected by the ISP personnel, the AG's Office attorneys were still involved only on an as-needed basis. The initial staffing does not, however, provide an explanation for the continually limited role of the attorneys in case-screening and investigation processes. Two factors appear to account for the permanent nature of the change. First, while the lead prosecutor's abilities were widely respected, he was not always available to the task force. Eventually, the ISP component controlled the case up to an arrest warrant, after which control of task force activity shifted to the AG's Office component. Second, as the task force developed, even the ISP component moved away from roundtable decision-making to a model that centered on joint consultations between the investigator and the squad leader in the early phases of case development and between the case agent and the squad leader for decisions after assignment to a case agent.

The internal decisionmaking process that eventually took hold in the task force seems to have worked well. The division of labor complemented the areas of expertise of each component. In addition, the ISP component valued access to legal advice when needed. The source of the legal advice and the amount of resources devoted to the legal component were matters of disagreement among task force members. In future projects, a careful appraisal should be made of potential sources of legal consultation and the costs and benefits associated with various sources. For example, using the local prosecutor for regular legal consultation could result in a closer liaison; frequent contact could also increase tension by providing opportunities for disagreement. Also, assignment of a particular member of the prosecutor's office as legal counsel to a task force might breed jealousy and resentment among other members of the prosecutor's office. Each situation should be evaluated individually, taking into consideration historical relationships and personal dynamics.

The internal decision-making process that eventually took hold in the task force seems to have worked well.

Utah: The Utah Day Reporting Center—Success With Alternative Incarceration

This summary was adapted from the report The Utah Day Reporting Center: Success with Alternative Incarceration, which presents evaluation research conducted by Edward I. Byrnes and Russ Van Vleet, Social Research Institute, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Utah. The report A Review of the Salt Lake Day Reporting Center, by Jan Solomon, Utah Department of Corrections, Division of Field Operations, also provided information for the Program Activities/Components and other sections.

Day reporting centers (DRCs) are a relatively new addition to the continuum of intermediate sanctions for criminal offenses. They began in the United States during the 1980s as a means of reducing rising jail and prison populations and the huge costs associated with those rising populations. The Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) opened its first DRC in Salt Lake City in 1994.

Program Overview

The Utah DRC administers an intermediate sanction program geared to the offender in need of additional structure and assistance beyond normal probation or parole supervision. The program blends high levels of control with intensive delivery of services needed by the offenders in the program, who are referred from several sources for a variety of reasons. The program was designed to serve high-risk/high-need offenders with drug and alcohol problems who have committed a new offense or technical violation while on probation or parole. Offenders are served in a manner that reduces the likelihood that they will be incarcerated; by maintaining them in a community setting, the costs of corrections in Utah are reduced.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of the day reporting center are to reduce offender recidivism and improve the ability of offenders to conform to community norms. Methods to achieve these goals include providing therapeutic intervention to offenders having difficulty succeeding on probation or parole and providing intensive community supervision.

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The goals of the day reporting center are to reduce offender recidivism and improve the ability of offenders to conform to community norms.

These methods are achieved for probationers and parolees by:

- Enhancing coping skills.
- Decreasing substance-abuse relapses.
- Increasing their ability to find work and stay employed.
- Structuring activities within the community.
- Providing increased documentation for their supervising agents.

Program Activities/Components

The day reporting center offers probationers and parolees:

- Educational opportunities.
- Development of employable skills.
- Psycho-educational programming.
- Substance-abuse treatment.
- Intensive mental health therapy.
- Increased contact between the offender and UDC staff.
- Daily structure.

No one set of services fits all offenders; services are rendered on an individual basis to meet the needs of the offender, increase the potential for success, and reduce recidivism.

The DRC is open 6 days a week with flexible hours to accommodate both offender and programming needs. It is located in central Salt Lake City on public transportation lines and is near services offenders need. Transportation is provided for offenders residing in release facilities and halfway houses, and offsite outreach sessions have been conducted to accommodate offenders. No one set of services fits all offenders; services are rendered on an individual basis to meet the needs of the offender, increase the potential for success, and reduce recidivism. Some offenders are regularly or randomly tested for drugs. All offenders receive more services than they would under normal probation or parole, and the referring agent is kept informed of the offender's progress or problems. Although operations have changed only slightly since the inception of the program, additional treatment groups dealing with domestic violence and sexual orientation have been added.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

An evaluation of Salt Lake City's DRC was conducted to inform UDC staff about policy decisions regarding other day reporting centers. As part of its mission, the Division of Field Operations operates community programs that fall on a continuum between routine supervision and highly structured community residential programs. Since 1994 the Field Operations' continuum

has included a day reporting center for probationers and parolees in the Salt Lake City metropolitan area. The main questions to be answered by this evaluation were:

- ❑ How much does participation in the day reporting center program help reduce the number of criminal charges made against clients?
- ❑ How is the amount of participation related to reduced criminal charges?

As a theoretical framework for the evaluation, the restorative justice model (Bazemore and Malony, 1994) was employed. The three major elements of this model include public safety, accountability, and competency development:

- ❑ **Public safety** was assessed in two ways. In addition to the basic question of recidivism (i.e., whether program participants returned to criminal activity), the question of reduced criminal activity by individuals served by the program was addressed. The amount of criminal activity engaged in by subjects prior to and subsequent to receiving services was compared.
- ❑ **Accountability** was assessed through subjects' DRC discharge status and compliance with the substance abstinence requirements of the program.
- ❑ **Competency development** was assessed by examining the length of participation in the program and the frequency of participation in group intervention programming. The relationship between competency development and criminal activity outcome was also evaluated. Characteristics related to involvement with DRC, including parole or probation status, referral source, and recent incarceration history, were also inspected for their relationship to subject outcomes.

Subjects

Subjects of the evaluation were 312 clients of DRC who were served and discharged between July 31, 1995, and July 31, 1996. Of these, 13 (4.2 percent) were excluded because of excessive incarceration during the followup period and 2 were unable to be located within the UDC database, leaving 297 subjects who were included in all data analyses. The male and female subjects ranged in age from the early twenties to the fifties. A total of 124 (41.7 percent) were probationers, and 173 (58.3 percent) were parolees. All data were collected from UDC and DRC archives; subjects were not contacted directly during the study.

Data Collection

Arrest records were examined to determine the number of criminal charges for a period of 1 year prior to and subsequent to receiving DRC services. These data were used to calculate the recidivism rate within 1 year and to make pre- and post-DRC comparisons.

Arrest records were examined to determine the number of criminal charges for a period of 1 year prior to and subsequent to receiving DRC services.

Charges were categorized as being:

- Technical (e.g., probation or parole violations).
- Alcohol and drug related.
- Other victimless (e.g., solicitation).
- Property related (e.g., theft, burglary).
- Person related (e.g., assault, robbery).

Arrest records included UDC custody data, which were used to determine whether a subject had been incarcerated at the Utah State Prison (USP) within a year before or after receiving DRC services. Evaluators obtained information about dates of registration at DRC, referral sources, probation or parole statuses, and DRC discharge statuses (successful, unsuccessful, other, or referred). Data were also collected on the number of DRC intervention activities subjects participated in, the educational tutoring received, and urinalysis results.

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Of the 297 subjects included in the analysis, 133 were charged in some category within 1 year of receiving DRC services. This resulted in a recidivism rate of 44.8 percent, with 55.2 percent of subjects remaining free of any charges for 1 year after receiving DRC services. When recidivism is examined in terms of technical versus criminal charges, a different picture develops. Of the 133 subjects who had post-DRC charges, 34 (26.6 percent) had charges that were only technical, leaving 99 with criminal charges. Therefore, of the original 297 subjects, only 99 recidivated on criminal charges, resulting in a recidivism rate of 33.3 percent. Thus, two-thirds of all the subjects remained free of criminal charges for 1 year subsequent to receiving DRC services.

Study results indicate three main findings:

- Subjects displayed a statistically significant reduction in alcohol and drug use, property crime offenses, and overall criminal charges during the first year subsequent to receiving DRC services.
- The duration of DRC services was significantly related to the reduction in alcohol and drug and overall criminal charges during that period, though some of this effect decreased as DRC services duration increased beyond 120 days.
- The relationship between a subject's success at discharge from the DRC (as assessed by DRC staff at the time of discharge) and reductions in the number of his or her post-DRC alcohol and drug charges was statistically significant.

The statistically significant reduction in alcohol and drug use, property crime offenses, and overall criminal charges among subjects illustrates the achievement of the DRC mission and at least one requirement within the restorative justice framework. In this framework, public safety is a key element, and with the reduction in criminal activity that DRC clients demonstrated, the public safety requirement of restorative justice appears to have been met. Moreover, the expectations of the retributive model of justice, emphasizing public safety, were also met (Umbreit, 1989).

The relationship between competency development variables and reduced criminality initially appeared to be slight, as only duration of services significantly predicted reduced criminality. This may have been due to the different categories of duration of service to which offenders were assigned: less than or equal to 90 days; 91 through 120 days; 121 through 180 days; and greater than 180 days. The separate DRC groups that resulted were exposed to multiple rehabilitative themes; it may be that the staff who implement the different groups used an underlying process that is somewhat effective with their particular client population over the time period provided.

DRC services are equally effective with clients regardless of their probation or parole status, prior USP incarceration, or source of referral to DRC. These referral characteristics did not significantly determine the reduction in post-DRC charges; however, subjects' discharge status did significantly relate to outcome in terms of alcohol and drug use. This suggests that DRC staff do an exceptional job assessing the subjects' quality of program participation.

Study limitations and strengths

The study's primary limitation was the absence of a control group, which limits the ability to make clearly causal statements from the data. The threat of regression to the mean, a statistical artifact in pre/post designs, also exists.

The study's primary strength was the outcome data—the presence or absence of criminal charges. This was a strength for two reasons: (1) the data are observations of actual behavior, which is less susceptible to inaccuracies that might occur were the data self-reports of behavior or measures of subjects' perceptions and (2) the occurrence of criminal charges is an easily understood variable that interests both policymakers and the public at large.

Summary

DRC services appear to assist in reducing the number of criminal charges, particularly those for alcohol and drug use and property crimes, that subjects face subsequent to program participation. It also seems that DRC staff can be relied on to assess the quality of subject participation in a way that is useful for determining the likelihood of subsequent criminal charges for alcohol and drug offenses. Finally, the duration of DRC services appears to be the most strongly predictive among the competency development factors for alcohol and drug use, property, and overall offenses.

DRC services appear to assist in reducing the number of criminal charges, particularly those for alcohol and drug and property crimes.

The study recommended that the Salt Lake DRC increase its staff to improve the availability of services for offenders and that additional DRCs be opened in other areas of the state.

Oklahoma: Drug Court Program

This summary was adapted from the following reports: An Evaluation of the Freedom Ranch Inc. C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program and the Impact of Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) and Quality Control Systems, which presents evaluation research conducted by William Nichols, M.S.W., and Travis Nelson of ND Enterprises in Oklahoma City; and A Summary of An Evaluation of the Freedom Ranch Inc. C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program and the Impact of Moral Reconciliation Therapy and Quality Control Systems, by Kenneth D. Robinson. Portions of this summary are excerpted from Moral Reconciliation Therapy and Problem Behavior in the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, by Doris L. MacKenzie and Robert Brame with Arnold R. Waggoner and Kenneth D. Robinson.

The National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) defines a drug court as follows: a special court given the responsibility to handle cases involving less serious drug-using offenders through a supervision and treatment program. These programs include frequent drug testing, judicial and probation supervision, drug counseling, treatment, educational opportunities, and the use of sanctions and incentives.

A drug court is responsible for all drug rehabilitation cases until all treatment requirements are completed. The defendants are placed in the drug court program for rehabilitation with frequent monitoring. A single judge provides leadership and direction, which includes the supervision of the defendant's participation in treatment.

In September 1993, Freedom House opened its first outpatient alternative sentencing program, A.T.T.A.C. (Alternative Training, Treatment, and Corrections) in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The A.T.T.A.C. Program was initially created in conjunction with the district attorney (DA) and judiciary to offer an alternative to prison sentences for nonviolent, drug-abusing/drug-using offenders. The A.T.T.A.C. Program, which was later renamed C.B.T.I. (Cognitive Behavioral Treatment Institute), became the first freestanding alternative sentencing model to use a unique cognitive behavioral program called moral reconciliation therapy (MRT). In 1995, to further lower rearrest rates, the A.T.T.A.C. Program gained the backing of judiciary leaders to become the first drug court in the state.

The C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program defines its target population as repeat adult felony offenders with identified substance-abuse problems.

Program Overview

The C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program defines its target population as repeat adult felony offenders with identified substance-abuse problems. The core treatment modality of the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program is MRT, an objective,

systematic treatment system designed to enhance self-esteem and promote social, moral, and positive behavioral growth in a progressive, step-by-step fashion. MRT has from 12 to 16 steps, depending on the treatment population. MRT attempts to change how drug abusers and alcoholics make decisions by raising their moral reasoning. The program, developed by Dr. Greg Little and Dr. Ken Robinson after years of research with felony drug offenders in a therapeutic community, addresses the specific needs of the treatment-resistant populations. In addition, C.B.T.I. uses cognitive models to address other needs—character development, relapse prevention, parenting, and job readiness. Other services include drug education, judicial supervision, urine drug screens, and frequent supervision and contacts by C.B.T.I. staff.

The goals of the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program are to reduce overcrowding in jails, provide treatment to offenders, and decrease crime.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program are to reduce overcrowding in jails, provide treatment to offenders, and decrease crime. To achieve these goals, the following program objectives were set:

- Reduce rearrest and recidivism rates in Payne and Logan Counties through incentive-based treatment opportunities.
- Address offenders' psychological, social, vocational, and educational needs through screening evaluations, recommendations, and referrals, giving special attention to histories of chronic substance abuse and social dysfunction.
- Facilitate increases in social skills, moral reasoning, identity growth, and life purpose and decreases in sensation-seeking behaviors through the use of MRT.
- Increase child support collections in Payne and Logan Counties through the use of the cognitive, behavioral Family Support and Parenting Program.

Program Activities/Components

The drug court has three supervisory tracks a defendant may follow. Each track has specific eligibility criteria:

Track I—Prosecution Diversion Agreement (PDA) or Motion to Strike, Subject to Call. This track is designed for:

- Drug-related or drug-motivated offenders (e.g., those charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance, burglary, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of stolen property, shoplifting, forging checks).
- First- or second-time felony offenders.
- Those who are at low risk of reoffending based on assessments by the district attorney, C.B.T.I. staff, and questionnaire results.

- Defendants motivated to deal with their substance use and abuse.
- Defendants admitting guilt and desiring change.
- Defendants agreeing to participate in drug court procedures/phases, including clinical assessment, urine drug testing accountability, completion of Phases I through V of the program, payment of fee for services and restitution (as applicable), and completion of community service (as applicable).

Track II—Condition of Deferred Sentence or Condition of Suspended Sentence. This track accepts:

- Those who have committed drug- or alcohol-related offenses (e.g., driving under the influence, possession of a controlled dangerous substance, possession of drug paraphernalia).
- Second- to multiple-time felony offenders.
- Those who are considered appropriate by the DA's office based on C.B.T.I. assessment, questionnaire results, Oklahoma Department of Corrections (DOC) presentencing reports, and alcohol assessment reports by the local treatment provider.
- Defendants motivated to deal with their substance abuse and use.
- Defendants agreeing to participate in Drug Court procedures/phases, including clinical assessment, urine drug testing accountability, completion of Phases I through IV of the program, payment of fee for services and restitution (as applicable), and completion of community service (as applicable).

Track III—Direct Referral to the Court Alternative. This track is for:

- Those whose condition of probation is overseen by DOC; those who have been referred by DOC and the parole board; or those who have been referred by DOC to male or female boot camps.
- Those who have been referred by the Department of Human Services to treatment or those with drug- and/or alcohol-related problems and/or offenses.
- Defendants agreeing to participate in drug court procedures/phases, including clinical assessment, urine drug testing accountability, completion of Phases I through V of the program, payment of fee for services and restitution (as applicable), and completion of community service (as applicable).

The treatment component of the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program has five phases, all lasting at least 90 days and having differing frequency of contact and attendance requirements for program sessions. To graduate from each phase, the defendant must complete program requirements, judicial requirements,

urine drug testing, and education and training courses and be current on all required court fines and fees.

- ❑ Phase I (stabilization and adjustment) includes an initial assessment of the defendant and treatment plan, urine drug testing, and participation in an MRT group, drug education group, and job-readiness group. Specific graduation requirements of Phase I include the completion of drug education and job-readiness training and step 3 of MRT.
- ❑ Phase II (recovery and issues resolution) includes MRT group participation, a treatment plan update, a 12-step support group, progress reports, and urine drug testing. Minimum requirements to graduate are similar to those of Phase I.
- ❑ Phase III (sobriety maintenance) includes relapse prevention treatment, 12-step support groups, drug court appearances, urine drug testing, progress reports, and individual counseling. Specific graduation requirements of Phase III include attendance on all group session and court dates and completion of relapse prevention training.
- ❑ Phase IV (application of principles) includes character development groups, 12-step support groups, individual counseling, urine drug testing, etc. Specific graduation requirements include completion of character development or completion of posttesting, completion of discharge summary, and completion of graduation testimony in drug court.
- ❑ Phase V is the aftercare phase. Minimum requirements include participation in any and all uncompleted, required counseling sessions of the drug court and progress reports; there are no minimum drug court appearances unless for disciplinary reasons. To graduate from Phase V, the client must attend all group sessions as scheduled, attend all court dates, pass all urine tests, be current on restitution (as applicable), pay the entire balance of drug court fees, and complete the requirement checklist signed by the counselor.

Performance Measures and Evaluation Methods

In 1996, William Nichols and Travis Nelson of ND Enterprises of Oklahoma City conducted a program evaluation to determine whether the implementation of the planned treatment model was effective with its target population and whether the program was meeting its objectives. In addition, information on the following indicators was sought:

- ❑ Program impact as measured by pre- and postscales.
- ❑ Impact of sanctions, as measured by recidivism and retention.
- ❑ Use of MRT in an intervention environment as a comparative measure of recidivism among the target population.

- Effectiveness of the drug court compared with the first year's voluntary program implementation. (Recidivism and pre- and postmeasures would be used as measurements of impact.)

Two areas of concern arose regarding the methodology of the evaluation. First, there had been a lack of urine drug testing during the first 2 years of the program. Urine drug testing data collection began in 1995, the third year of program operation, but the evaluators opted to exclude that year because of the lack of data from the first and second years. Second, there had been a lack of significant data for 1993 due to incomplete data logs. The data logs were not kept for the first 6 months of the program. In addition, until 1995, referrals versus treatment start dates were not clearly recorded. As a result, the evaluators had to exclude seven of the clients admitted to the program from the evaluation.

C.B.T.I. staff developed the initial data collection system, and the data were submitted in raw format to the evaluators. The data were compiled and grouped into several demographic groups (age, ethnicity, and so on). For this evaluation, only the defendants who had taken the pre- and posttests were used in the sample. All clients who participated in treatment were included in the recidivism study. The samples were placed in one of three categories for analysis:

- A.T.T.A.C. Program.
- C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program.
- A.T.T.A.C. and C.B.T.I. Drug Court combined.

In the analysis of the A.T.T.A.C. Program pre- and posttests, the evaluators used three instruments. The first instrument was the Life Purpose Questionnaire, an instrument used to estimate the client's perceived purpose in life. The scores ranged from 0 to 20 (higher scores show a greater perceived purpose in life), with a normative mean of 10.8 and a standard deviation of 4.3. The second instrument was the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, which measures the participant's self-concept. The normative data of self-esteem is scored by gender, ethnicity, and age (see table 1). The third instrument was the Short Sensation-Seeking Scale, which measures hedonistic orientation and correlates with antisocial personality. The scores range from 0 to 10, with a normative mean of 5.12 and a standard deviation of 1.82.

The total number of participants in the A.T.T.A.C. Program from September 1, 1993, through March 1, 1995, was 88; 38 completed the program, and 50 did not. Of the 38 who completed the program, 8 were female and 30 male. Their ethnic makeup consisted of 32 Caucasians, 1 Hispanic, 4 Native-Americans, and 1 African-American. The total number of participants in the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program from March 1, 1995, through March 1, 1996, was 110; 43 completed the program: 13 females, 30 males, 38 Caucasians, 1 Hispanic, 3 Native-Americans, and 1 African-American.

Table 1 Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Normative Data

Demographic	Mean	Standard Deviation
Female	71.6	19.5
Male	68.4	18.5
Caucasian	72.3	18.3
African-American	71.2	18.4
Hispanic	64.0	19.2
Ages 16–19	66.7	19.2
Ages 20–34	71.7	18.8

Program Evaluation Findings and Results

Results from the evaluators’ analysis of offenders using the three instruments described above were provided by the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program.

Offenders in the A.T.T.A.C. Program sample (n=38) were in treatment for 191.7 days. The Life Purpose Questionnaire had a standard positive variance of 1.06, meaning the graduates’ perceptions of how they viewed their purpose in life had improved significantly. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory had a positive variance of 1.7, showing an increase in the graduates’ self-esteem from pre- to posttest. The Short Sensation-Seeking Scale had a standard positive variance of 1.7, showing a decreased hedonistic orientation and an increased ability to delay gratification.

Offenders in the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program sample (n=43) were in treatment for 179.2 days. The Life Purpose Questionnaire had a positive variance of 6.175, which was statistically significant. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory had a positive variance of 2.4, showing an increase in the self-esteem of defendants. The Short Sensation-Seeking Scale had a positive variance of 2.2, indicating an even greater reduction in hedonistic orientation than that found in A.T.T.A.C. participants.

Comparison of the findings regarding the A.T.T.A.C. and the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Programs and summary results from the national level revealed the following:

- ❑ The program completion rate was higher among C.B.T.I. Drug Court participants than among A.T.T.A.C. participants.
- ❑ Dropout in treatment tended to occur earlier the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program than in the A.T.T.A.C. Program.

- ❑ The MRT treatment model impact evaluation showed that participants in other, non-MRT programs had recidivism rates that were higher by at least 9 percent.
- ❑ On the national level, the Stillwater, Oklahoma, retention rates fell within the national averages.
- ❑ Recidivism rates are high when compared with the national average of graduate recidivism rates: 26 percent for program graduates versus the national average of 9.5 percent.
- ❑ In examining drug court programs that have control groups, the 10-percent completion difference falls within the norms of drug court versus control group on the national level, according to the Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Clearinghouse.

In addition to these evaluations, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation conducted a full criminal inquiry report on all A.T.T.A.C. and C.B.T.I. graduates and terminations. Recidivists were defined as any client having an arrest resulting in a conviction. Recidivists did not necessarily serve any portion of their sentence in a county jail or state prison. In the A.T.T.A.C. Program, offenders who were discharged from the program had a higher recidivism rate than those who completed the program (39 percent versus 26 percent). In the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program, a client who was successful was four times less likely to reoffend than a client who was unsuccessful (18 percent versus 4 percent).

These findings support the shift from the current alternative sentencing model to a drug court model for the Stillwater community. The treatment modality—MRT—was shown to be an effective drug court therapy, as well as an alternative sentencing tool, by reducing hedonistic behaviors, increasing self-esteem, and increasing life purpose in the treatment-resistant population. These findings support the effectiveness of the judiciary's involvement in a properly constructed treatment model for felony offenders.

In the C.B.T.I. Drug Court Program, a client who was successful was four times less likely to reoffend than a client who was unsuccessful (18 percent versus 4 percent).

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Part Two

Multijurisdictional Task Force Evaluation

Multijurisdictional Task Forces: Synthesis of State and Local Evaluation Findings

Multijurisdictional task forces (MJTFs) have become vital elements in the national effort to reduce the availability and use of illegal drugs and to reduce levels of violent crime. Because most law enforcement authority is limited to specific jurisdictions, but criminal activity is not, it is possible for large criminal enterprises to commit crimes beyond the scope of power of a particular law enforcement agency. Dealing with this problem requires cooperation among numerous law enforcement agencies.

BJA's grant programs promote the development of MJTFs that combine the talents of a variety of organizations and eliminate procedural barriers that prevent criminal justice system efforts from crossing jurisdictional lines. Specifically, BJA guidelines recommend that task forces combine and coordinate the capabilities of otherwise disparate elements of the criminal justice system, such as law enforcement, prosecution, and the courts.

Through previously conducted assessments, evaluations, and surveys, BJA has learned the following about task forces:

- ❑ Task force organizations have been set up quickly to respond to the need for reactive apprehension by law enforcement. Increased use of planning has become the mode of operation for most task forces. Emphasis has expanded from limited apprehension activities to all elements and support needed for successful prosecution.
- ❑ Formerly, information and intelligence gathering systems were almost nonexistent or, at best, weak and fragmented. Establishment of intelligence systems is a major result of federal funding of MJTFs. It is unlikely that this could have been achieved by individual agencies. Now, jurisdictions involved in many MJTFs have access to vastly improved information resources.

This summary on state and local evaluations of multijurisdictional task forces is a product of a cooperative effort by the states, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and BJA-funded task forces, as part of the State Evaluation Development Program that is coordinated by the Justice Research and Statistics Association.

It is the final synthesis by BJA in response to requests from Attorney General Janet Reno. Robert A. Kirchner, BJA's Chief of Evaluation and Analysis, is the principal author and was assisted by Jill Kateman, formerly of the Evaluation and Analysis Branch. Invaluable contributions to the report were also made by Dr. Donald Rebovich and Dr. James Coldren, Jr., with assistance from the following JRSA staff: Kellie J. Dressler, Deputy Director, who supervised compiling and editorial efforts; Terrylynn Coffin, Program Assistant; Tara O'Connor, Program Assistant; and Nancy Michel, Editor/Writer.

BJAs grant programs promote the development of MJTFs that combine the talents of a variety of organizations and eliminate procedural barriers that prevent criminal justice system efforts from crossing jurisdictional lines.

- Little, if any, consideration was initially given to the impact task force arrests have on other components of the criminal justice system. Participation on task forces and direct coordination of MJTFs with probation, prosecution, courts, and community groups have evolved over time. Today many task forces are managed by prosecutors.
- Guidelines for MJTF development, implementation, and evaluation were initially not available. As a result of efforts by BJA, the National Institute of Justice, and others, the steps necessary to establish MJTFs, as well as the critical elements to ensure successful implementation, are widely accepted and have become the basis for guidance, training, and technical assistance.
- Federal participation was initially limited and involved primarily the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). As the popularity of MJTFs grew in the fight against drugs and violent crime, the number and types of federal agencies directly involved have likewise grown.

The Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program has provided substantial resources to state and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. Under the Byrne Formula Grant Program, states have allocated a significant portion of their funds to MJTFs, substantially affecting the development and maintenance of such task forces.

The Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program has provided substantial resources to state and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. Under the Byrne Formula Grant Program, states have allocated a significant portion of their funds to MJTFs, substantially affecting the development and maintenance of such task forces. In 1995, BJA created the MJTF Working Group. Participants include MJTF commanders, Byrne State Planning Agency program managers and evaluators, and BJA and NIJ staff. The purpose of the group is to discuss how federal, state, and local partnerships can assist in future initiatives to enhance the role of MJTFs, while improving their effectiveness and reinforcing accountability.

On October 24, 1995, BJA mailed a survey to formula grant-funded MJTFs in 29 states. The survey results provided comprehensive information on task force organization and operations, including the amount of task force expenditures per budget category (including overtime), information about whether federal agencies participate in or coordinate with specific task forces, and data on a number of other programmatic issues and concerns. A parallel analysis of MJTFs funded under the Byrne Discretionary Grant Program was conducted in FY 1994. In addition, BJA has synthesized the results from the RAND reports that make up the *National Assessment of the Byrne Formula Grant Program*, including information about the funding, importance, and impact of MJTFs.

BJA's Multijurisdictional Task Force Working Group came to a consensus and produced the following definition of an MJTF:

Cooperative law enforcement efforts involving two or more criminal justice agencies, with jurisdiction over two or more areas, sharing the common goal of impacting one or more aspects of drug control and violent crime problems.

Multijurisdictional Evaluation Findings

Determining the Effectiveness of Multijurisdictional Task Forces

State Planning Agencies assess and review task force performance quarterly and annually, resulting in revisions to the states' Byrne Formula Grant Program strategies. BJA encourages the adoption of a continual self-evaluation process in the management of MJTFs, including those funded under the Byrne Discretionary Grant Program. This practice is designed to ensure the establishment of goals, objectives, and performance measures. A central purpose of the evaluation function is accountability and feedback to improve operations, as well as reporting requirements.

Although self-evaluation has proved its worth to individual MJTFs, its most important result has been to provide *lessons learned and information about critical components or elements* that are essential for MJTF success and/or maintenance. The following section summarizes the most often cited critical elements. They are based on the findings compiled by BJA from project assessments and the many national evaluations reviewed.

Consensus on Critical Elements of Success for Multijurisdictional Task Forces

The Bureau of Justice Assistance compiled and reviewed all existing assessment and evaluation reports from BJA's Discretionary Grant and Formula Grant Programs. This systematic search resulted in the identification of 12 *critical elements* that lead to the accomplishment of both programmatic and organizational objectives of MJTFs. The reports presented discussions on both the establishment and implementation of MJTFs. BJA's review identified an emerging consensus about what program elements and activities are essential to maintain (1) successful management and performance and (2) institutionalization and future sustainability. The 12 critical elements of MJTFs presented below have been confirmed by a number of task forces as "what works."

Critical Element 1: Written interagency agreements adhered to by all participating agencies establish broad objectives and funding methods for the task force. Well-thought-out written agreements can minimize future questions about activities and responsibilities and serve as a strong statement of the task force's intention to set aside turf issues and work as a unit for the benefit of all agencies. A supportive feature of many successful task forces is the

The Bureau of Justice Assistance compiled and reviewed all existing assessment and evaluation reports from BJA's Discretionary Grant and Formula Grant Programs. This systematic search resulted in the identification of 12 critical elements that lead to the accomplishment of both programmatic and organizational objectives of MJTFs.

establishment of an advisory board or group to guide decisionmaking and oversight processes. This “board of directors” can play a number of critical roles, including policy development, support for long-term funding, and coordination with external officials and other agencies.

Critical Element 2: Prosecutor involvement, either as the “lead agency” or as a direct member and participant on a task force, is common and has improved a task force’s ability to process cases and evidence, planning and tactics used in pursuing cases, and law enforcement linkages to other components of the criminal justice system.

Critical Element 3: Computerized information/intelligence databases and systems of the agencies involved in task forces have become increasingly sophisticated. The development and maintenance of intelligence networks have become key components in the task force maturation process and have resulted in establishing capabilities in the individual participating agencies that few could have managed on their own. Enhanced investigative capabilities have led to expansion of task force objectives and activities to include financial investigations and surveillance of racketeer-influenced and corrupt organizations (RICOs). These networks often result in agencies avoiding duplication of investigative efforts.

Critical Element 4: Target decision, case planning and selection, and enhanced investigation tactics are now based on clear, specific criteria that focus the procedures used by task force members. Initially task force participants agree upon and describe offenses and offenders for priority apprehension. All participants work together as a team when deciding on tactics to be used, both investigative and prosecutorial. This also leads to enhanced ability to coordinate the efforts of task force agencies with other agencies.

Critical Element 5: Communication among task force participants and their sponsoring agencies, other responsible officials, and other components of the criminal justice system is critical to the sustenance of the task force. Task forces should never become isolated or outside the reach and direction of their home agencies. Continually open channels for communication are critical to MJTF acceptance and support externally and meeting objectives internally. Many states are using the framework of statewide cluster meetings for all task forces to share information on improvements and modifications that produce more effective results. **Frequent, regular meetings** help keep task force officers focused on overall direction and program goals and objectives. By building relationships among agencies, the meetings minimize organizational problems. They also promote improvements through feedback to the group and reinforce the roles of various participants. Occurring weekly or more frequently, these meetings provide a venue in which to review current cases, planned arrests or surveillance projects, or other developments. An unanticipated result of communication concerning task force activities is better overall communication among agencies.

Critical Element 6: Coordination of task force activities often determines the long-term acceptance and, hence, viability, of the task force. Many studies have produced innovative means to promote coordination given the objectives and activities involved. Larger, urban task forces are more complex and must put in place multiple forms of coordination. Specialized task forces (gangs, border crimes, rural) often rely on coordination to gain resources critical to the success of their operations on an as-needed basis. Many task forces now hold meetings, at least on a monthly basis, with all local, state, and federal entities operating within their jurisdiction.

Critical Element 7: Establishing the basis for a task force's **budget** is the central feature of interagency agreement and is predicated on a consensus to support the cost of operations across the jurisdictions involved, including any federal funding that may be included. Reliable, long-term funding sources are crucial to a task force and, if found, often indicate that a task force has institutionalized itself. **Funding** must match the complex needs most task force operations have if they are to meet their objectives. The availability of advanced technology and computerized systems has created ever-increasing pressures to find funding to support more than the salaries and benefits of task force participants. Training, the need for external expertise, and the use of overtime during periods of surveillance require additional resources. **Long-term funding allocations** would alleviate many funding issues, but too often task forces exist on a year-to-year basis.

Critical Element 8: Clearly formulated **goals, objectives, and performance measures** are often a challenge to develop in the creation of a task force but are critical to success in the future. When task forces achieve their goals, they gain specificity about what is to be accomplished, with objectives that are both measurable and observable. Numerous examples of task force objectives and performance measures exist, making this exercise much less difficult and creating opportunities for comparing results across task forces. At the time task forces apply for continuing funding from outside or within their jurisdictions, the results of assessments and evaluations become critical and often determine if they will receive support.

Critical Element 9: Monitoring and evaluation should be constant throughout the implementation of a task force and throughout its lifetime as these assessment tools are key to revising task force goals, targets, procedures, and related activities. Strong management practices, including evaluation, lead to the long-term institutionalization of task forces within their environment. This, in turn, often leads to changes in their objectives and adaptation of tactics but does not undercut their ability to serve unique and essential functions.

Critical Element 10: Staffing and recruitment begins with the recognized need for experienced leadership and supervision. Supervisors often seek seasoned officers to work for them but often recruit younger, less experienced officers or even prosecutors who need training. Most task forces set limits on the length of time individuals, including supervisors, can participate in a

specific task force. Individual agencies often profit greatly when task force members return to their home agencies to use their new skills. Numerous task forces depend on part-time members, working when needed for special duties or on overtime from their regular positions. The flexibility required when faced with limited resources explains both the success and fragile nature of some task force configurations.

Critical Element 11: Effective asset seizure and forfeiture activities are not critical for all task forces because of the differences in constraints and applicability in individual jurisdictions. In general, however, offenders' forfeiture of assets seized in drug arrests benefit task forces both as a practical enforcement tactic and as a means of ensuring financial viability of the task force.

Critical Element 12: Technical assistance and training programs that draw on the experiences of current and former task force participants are critical to the maintenance and continuity of task force operations. Federal sources often provide funds for personnel training. Such training may be replaced in the future with existing guidelines and manuals and successful train-the-trainer programs that provide cost-effective opportunities for training at local levels. The success of many task forces relies on supervisory experience and sufficient expertise to accomplish objectives. However, effective training programs are critical to ensuring that personnel at all levels will be able to contribute to the success of the task force.

Multijurisdictional Task Forces Then and Now: 1986–1997

In 1995 BJA initiated its most recent in a series of analyses of formula-funded programs, which included an analysis of more than 34 percent of all Byrne-funded task forces. BJA's Discretionary Grants Program Division (DGPD) conducted a parallel analysis of discretionary-funded multijurisdictional task forces in FY 1994. The findings and conclusions added to current understanding of MJTFs, while complementing previous studies and evaluations.

Task forces vary in size, number of assigned personnel, and diversity of agencies involved. Hence, task force operations can be very complex. Analysis of the formula-funded task forces revealed the following: 70 percent ranged in size from 1 to 10 members; 20 percent ranged in size from 11 to 22 members; and the remaining 10 percent ranged in size from 23 members to Connecticut's statewide task force of 355 members. During FY 1994, the total amount of BJA formula funds going to task forces in the study was \$45.504 million, or just over 17 percent of the total formula budget. The vast majority of task forces are small, comprising 10 or fewer staff members. These small organizations are likely to be more dependent (sometimes totally) on federal funding than larger task forces.

Task forces have enabled agencies to dedicate personnel full-time to such activities as drug enforcement, gang abatement, and major financial investigations. The use of such dedicated personnel permits task forces to increase the size of caseloads and obtain better equipment. Undercover operations are improved by the facilitated exchange of undercover officers among agencies. Task forces generally adopt a problem-solving approach that includes targeting and apprehending higher level criminals, deterring distributors from entering markets, and making movement across jurisdictional boundaries more difficult.

Analysis of task force budgets revealed that personnel costs (wages and benefits) accounted for 63.4 percent of the total amount of a task force's budget. Other budget item costs included: confidential funds (7.2 percent), overtime (2 percent), equipment and supplies (1.85 percent), and travel (0.5 percent). The final category combined all other expenses, including training, office space, outside contractors, and other costs (25.05 percent). The MJTF Working Group noted that in most cases, task forces also receive in-kind contributions, such as materials, equipment, and other support. These contributions are not represented in their budgets but nevertheless are critical to the operation of task forces. Although some of this support comes from state and federal agencies, most comes from community associations and groups.

Almost 65 percent of the formula-funded task forces stated they would shut down if Byrne funding were discontinued. Additionally, many of the remaining task forces reported that they would continue to operate but with diminished capability. The dependence on federal dollars is not limited to newly formed task forces; nearly half of the task forces that were in existence before receiving federal funding reported that their operations would shut down if federal funding were discontinued.

These findings may be explained by the local use of federal funding to keep a task force operating. In terms of participation and coordination, federal funding supports cooperative agreements across jurisdictional boundaries in a horizontal task force organization by forming partnerships across contiguous jurisdictions. Federal funds also provide a means for supporting local, county, state, and federal participation. Finally, these funds are directed specifically at providing means for linking law enforcement with other agencies or organizations, both public and private. Conversely, MJTFs enable federal agencies to operate more efficiently in certain settings, such as rural jurisdictions.

According to BJA's telephone followup to the survey, as well as other MJTF evaluations, the following would likely occur with the withdrawal of federal funds:

- Services critical to task force objectives would no longer be available, (e.g., a financial investigator working across jurisdictions or a hot-spot mapping system shared by all).

Almost 65 percent of the formula-funded task forces stated that they would shut down if Byrne funding were discontinued. Additionally, many of the remaining task forces reported that they would continue to operate but with diminished capability.

- ❑ Existing innovative surveillance/investigative methods would be disrupted, undermining task force strategies.
- ❑ Undercover operations would be difficult without “on-loan” personnel from other jurisdictions.
- ❑ Readily accessible legal expertise, especially from prosecutor’s offices, would be discontinued, leading to a decrease in the quality of casework.
- ❑ The “cross-designation” capability would likely disappear, diminishing the ability of local and federal authorities to seek increased penalties and prosecutorial options.
- ❑ The ability to pool the resources of individual agencies that make unique contributions to a task force would decrease as agencies withdrew their support.

Federal funding is an important “seed” in initiating MJTFs and in generating specific innovative activities. Federal funds are also critical to the sustenance of task force operations. If federal dollars were to disappear, some task forces could become financially self-sufficient, but the large majority could not.

MJTFs changed the enforcement model that instructed an individual agency to be responsible for task force resources by requiring that the resources of a number of agencies be strategically pooled. This permitted medium-size and small rural departments, as well as part-time prosecutors, to receive the benefits of specialized enforcement. Generally, MJTFs have led to improved cooperation among agencies, enabling the agencies to work as a single unit across jurisdictional boundaries. Smaller departments have been able to engage in undercover activities that they could not perform solely with their own resources.

Municipal agencies were participants in 88 percent of the task forces surveyed, making them the most common agency type funded through the Byrne Formula Grant Program, followed closely by county agencies (83 percent). Clearly, a major result of MJTF funding has been increased direct assistance to local agencies, which is a primary goal of the legislation (Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C. 3711, et seq.).

State law enforcement agencies and state prosecutors have increased their roles and activities in support of MJTFs over time. Task force members interviewed reported that whether state agencies provide direct personnel support or specialized assistance, or play lead roles on task forces, many new and lasting relationships have been forged between state and local jurisdictions and agencies.

BJA encourages the establishment of a formal structure for coordination to assist in the management and direction of MJTFs. BJA also recommends the inclusion of members of federal agencies on the coordinating bodies as well as their direct participation on state and local MJTFs. BJA’s guidelines

specifically identify the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the DEA, as well as other federal agencies and offices, such as the U.S. Attorney's Office, United States Customs Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), and the U.S. Department of Defense.

In some instances, intelligence and information sharing may be preferable to full participation in MJTF, because state and local task forces typically have different objectives than federal task forces. A major conclusion of the evaluations is that state and local MJTFs perform a complementary function to federal activities, especially in rural areas.

Federal law enforcement agencies serve as members on 24 percent of Byrne-funded task forces, and 8 percent include a federal prosecutor. Federal participation also occurs when a task force with no federal members conducts joint investigations and operations with one or more federal agencies that may provide equipment and/or share intelligence. The survey revealed that, of all federal agencies participating, the DEA is the agency most involved with task forces (34 percent). This was to be expected since the primary objectives of Byrne MJTFs are to address drug-abuse and control problems. Almost a quarter of the task forces included ATF, a somewhat higher level than expected by the Working Group. Although the level of participation with the FBI is approximately what the Working Group expected (18 percent), the level of involvement by the U.S. Attorney's Office was higher than expected (almost 20 percent).

Task forces and federal agencies may communicate and cooperate regularly, even though they do not conduct operations jointly. This type of coordination remains high across the major federal agencies. The DEA (71 percent) is reported as being most involved with these task forces, followed by the FBI (54 percent), ATF (53 percent), and the U.S. Attorney's Office (53 percent).

These and other findings are the result of MJTF analyses and evaluations and have helped identify common characteristics and experiences of MJTFs. As with most programs and organizations that support them, MJTFs continually evolve from their initial implementation into mature programs. Table 2 presents a summary of improvements and changes in MJTFs reported and analyzed between 1986 and 1997.

Future Directions

State and local agencies, with assistance from BJA, are committed to conducting more analytical work on task force structures, the roles of task force participants, and the long-term impact of task force activities on law enforcement and local jurisdictions. Future process and impact evaluations will also include non-law enforcement issues, since many MJTFs target community-wide problems. Improved quantitative and qualitative measures of performance and impact have opened the door for more longitudinal research and

If task forces are to be successfully sustained, they must be able to integrate themselves into the existing criminal justice system and adapt to changes in their environment. Federal leadership should emphasize documenting, evaluating, and disseminating information to assist MJTFs.

Table 2 Multijurisdictional Task Forces Then and Now: 1986–1997

1986	1997
1. Task force were focused primarily on drug control targets . Some task forces were created to investigate career criminals or conspiratorial financial investigations.	1. Task forces have expanded their focus to include reducing specific types of violent crimes, controlling gang activity and firearms trafficking, etc.
2. Task force organizations were set up to ensure quick response by law enforcement to identified needs.	2. Increasingly, planning and specific criteria for pursuing cases, by both priority and impact on objectives, have become the mode of operation for most task forces. Emphasis has expanded from apprehension alone to the enhancement of evidence and case credibility and to prosecution.
3. Task forces had weak and fragmented information and intelligence gathering systems .	3. Establishment of intelligence systems is a major result of federal funding of MJTFs. This could not have been achieved by individual agencies. Now, the majority of jurisdictions involved in MJTFs have access to vastly improved information resources.
4. Target areas included urban or primary suburban locations, leaving out rural jurisdictions.	4. Numerous MJTFs now cover expansive rural areas, with the purpose of not only controlling drug use in their jurisdictions but also abating drug trafficking through these areas. Like other MJTFs, rural task forces also address violent crime issues.
5. Little, if any, consideration was given to the impact task force arrests have on other components of the criminal justice system .	5. Participation in task forces and direct use of and coordination with MJTFs by probation, prosecution, and court staff, as well as community groups, have evolved over time.
6. Jurisdictional members usually included those within a single county or state or even an area or region within a single county or state.	6. The complexity of many MJTFs and their problem-oriented approaches require membership from a number of states and counties, as well as local and federal agencies.

**Table 2 Multijurisdictional Task Forces Then and Now: 1986–1997
(continued)**

1986	1997
7. Initially, few task forces had developed operational procedures or interagency agreements .	7. Formal procedure manuals help to establish MJTFs and clearly articulate their purposes and activities. Interagency agreements go further to build consensus on task force membership, leadership, and, especially, budgeting.
8. Training for task force members, as well as supervisors and managers, was generally unavailable.	8. Many states have instituted training courses for both new members and current and future managers of MJTFs. Options often include training from a number of federal agencies, including a diverse set of training programs provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.
9. Developing goals and objectives and monitoring, assessing, and reporting on task force activities were not high priorities.	9. At national, state, and local levels, MJTFs have recognized the need to provide direction to attain expected results—agreed on by responsible officials and task force managers. BJA can provide hundreds of state and local evaluation reports on the operation and impact of task forces.
10. Model guidelines for multijurisdictional task force development, implementation, and evaluation were not available.	10. The steps necessary to establish MJTFs, as well as the critical elements to ensure successful implementation, have been identified and have gained wide acceptance.
11. The need for regular coordination meetings within the task force, and with other agencies operating in the same jurisdictions, was not given high priority.	11. Well-executed and well-maintained coordination activities are essential to both short- and long-term success. Evaluations have concluded that coordination is critical to task force success.
12. Federal participation , in terms of both number and types of agencies involved, was low and primarily focused on the DEA in larger jurisdictions.	12. As MJTFs grew in number and popularity as a tactic to fight drugs and violent crime, the number and types of federal agencies directly involved or coordinating their activities have likewise grown to produce enhanced operations.

analysis. Completing this summary is a comprehensive reference section highlighting national, state, and local research and evaluation efforts to date.

This synthesis identifies the need for fine-tuning policies, leadership intervention, and/or procedures to direct future MJTF implementation by state and local agencies. If task forces are to be successfully sustained, they must be able to integrate themselves into the existing criminal justice system and adapt to changes in their environment. Federal leadership should emphasize documenting, evaluating, and disseminating information to assist MJTFs.

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Identifying Effective Criminal Justice Programs: Guidelines and Criteria for the Nomination of Effective Programs

The Bureau of Justice Assistance has created the Intensive Program Evaluation (IPE) Initiative to respond to the Attorney General's charge to "find out what works and spread the word." This new initiative establishes a mechanism to validate the effectiveness of criminal justice programs based on published criteria, including evaluation results, and to disseminate information about effective programs through U.S. Department of Justice networks directly to practitioners. Dissemination approval for effective programs is based on peer review conducted by the Program Effectiveness Review Panel. This independent panel is rigorous in its recommendations to the BJA Director of the panel. In the development of the guidelines, BJA relied heavily on the panel and on past activities of the National Institute of Justice to identify exemplary, model programs.

The program objectives are to:

- Enhance the ability of state and local agencies to generate and use evaluation results for strategy development, program improvement, and effective program identification.
- Identify and document useful approaches to designing and conducting evaluations at state and local levels.

BJA needs to identify effective state and local criminal justice programs, practices, and products as part of broader efforts at the national level to improve the criminal justice system by disseminating useful program information to policymakers and practitioners. It is an approach that might be called "leading by example." Through this approach, information on successful programs is disseminated to the field in a credible and timely fashion. The effective programs monographs from this initiative communicate the results from the 56 laboratories (50 states and 6 territories) put in place under the Byrne Formula Grant Program.

The following guidelines and criteria, to be used for submitting information about potential programs, are also used by the Program Effectiveness Review Panel in its review of nominated programs. The panel reviews the programs and submits its recommendations to the BJA Director of the panel. Once

effective programs have been approved by the BJA Director, BJA monographs describing these programs are published.

I. Abstract

To be considered by the panel, the appropriate state agency must submit an abstract about the program. The abstract should be a concise, 1-page statement (200–300 words) of concrete, observable program outcomes delineating the following aspects of the program: goals, purposes and needs addressed, method of operation, audience, and expected result(s).

II. Basic Information

Basic information should be approximately one page.

A. Project Title

Applicant Agency

Contact Person

Give the title of the project (including any acronym or abbreviation), the name of the applicant agency, and the address and a daytime telephone number of a contact person within the applicant agency.

B. Original Developer

Mission of Applicant Agency

Provide the name(s) and title(s) of those who originally developed the program. Describe the mission of the applicant agency.

C. Project Dates

Provide date(s) developed, date(s) operated, and date(s) evaluated.

D. Source(s) and Level(s) of Development Dissemination Funding

List sources of funding for the project and amounts by year. Categories of sources include federal, state, local, and other.

III. Description of Program

Describe the program in approximately five to six pages.

A. Background

Foundation

Theoretical Framework

Discuss briefly the history of how and why the program was developed. Present the theoretical or empirical framework upon which the program is based.

B. Purposes and Needs Addressed/Problem Statement

Describe the specific needs the program was designed to address. Needs should be linked to the target audience and special features of the program.

C. Goals

Provide a clear and concise statement of the program's goals. Include only those goals that relate directly to claims of effectiveness. In the case of evaluation models designed to meet intermediate objectives, link the objectives to the ultimate purpose of the program.

D. Objectives

Objectives are the intermediate effects or results to be achieved by the program in pursuing its ultimate goal(s). Objectives measure the extent to which program goals are being accomplished. Identify appropriate objectives that logically flow from program goals. Objectives should be stated in terms of outcomes (expected effects or results). A distinction should be made between outputs (quantities produced) and effects/results.

E. Intended Audience

Identify the relevant demographic characteristics of the population for which program objectives are designed.

F. Features: How the Program Operates

Provide a complete description of how the program actually operates, identifying all features critical to its implementation. Include the following topics as they apply to the project: scope (Does the project supplement or replace an existing program, or is it a component of a larger program?), staff activities and staffing patterns, staff development activities, management activities, and monitoring and evaluation procedures.

G. Significance of Program Design Compared With Designs of Similar Programs

Describe the features of the program that distinguish it from similar programs. Discuss ways in which the program addresses special problems. Note innovative or unique features.

IV. Potential for Replication

In two to three pages, describe the potential for replicating the program.

A. Settings and Participants (Development and Evaluation Sites)

Briefly describe the community(ies) where the intervention was developed or field tested. Socioeconomic, ethnic, and geographic descriptions are appropriate.

B. Replicable Components and Documentation

Indicate which aspects of the program are appropriate for replication at other sites. If the program has developed support materials for dissemination, indicate the type of documentation available.

C. User Requirements

Describe the minimum requirements necessary for implementing the project at another site (e.g., special staff, facilities, staff training time).

D. Costs for Implementation and Operation

Present a brief explanation of the recurring and nonrecurring costs associated with replicating the project. Discuss costs for personnel, special equipment, and materials and supplies that are necessary for installing and/or maintaining the program at an adopting site. Costs associated with the development of the original program should be excluded from this discussion.

V. Evidence of Program Success

Provide evidence of the program's success in approximately six to eight pages.

A. Impact Statement(s)

The impact statement should include: the target group for which results are available, the nature of the change effected by the program, the process and evaluation methods used for measuring the impact of the program, and the standards used to determine whether the gains achieved are significant.

A clear impact statement is critical, because the panel judges the adequacy of evidence based on the claim. Further, the statement identifies the project objectives/outcomes that will be approved for dissemination (i.e., only those objectives/outcomes reflected in the impact statement and supported by convincing evidence will be approved).

B. Description of Methodology

1. Design

An evaluation design usually addresses three factors: the timing of data collection (e.g., pretests and posttests or different points in a time series), the groups involved (e.g., a group receiving the program and a comparison group receiving an alternative program), and the way in which a standard of comparison will be determined (e.g., a treatment group's gain or change will be compared with national or state benchmarks).

Describe the type of design used for each claim and the reason for the choice. Address any assumptions or problems inherent in the research design that was used.

2. Sample

The discussion of sampling procedures should answer four questions: Who participated in the study? How was the sample selected? How many participants were included in the final sample? How representative is the sample of the target population and program participants as a whole?

3. Instruments and Procedures

This section should describe the evaluation instruments and/or procedures and how each assessment technique relates to program outcomes. Provide sufficient information so that a judgment can be made about the technical strength and appropriate use of the measure (e.g., validity, reliability, levels, subscales).

It is especially important to describe validity and reliability procedures for project-developed instruments. In such cases, the procedures for instrument development and field testing should also be explained.

4. Data Collection

Describe the procedures used to select and train reliability testers and the actual strategies used to ensure quality control during data collection. Indicate the periods of data collection, the persons responsible for supervising data collection, and the scoring and data summary procedures. It is especially important to describe in detail the data collection and quality control procedures for qualitative evaluations.

5. Data Analysis

If data are quantitative in nature, indicate the statistical technique(s) and levels of significance used in the analysis.

If data are qualitative in nature, describe the procedures used to code and categorize or reduce information for summary purposes. Describe ways in

which linkages were made across data elements to draw and verify conclusions.

C. Description of Results

Present detailed results of analyses in table or chart form, if appropriate. Sufficient detail should be provided for the reader to check conclusions separately. Also, summarize the results for the claims in narrative form, relating the specific outcomes to the accomplishment of goals.

D. Summary of Supplementary Evidence

Provide additional evidence that supports the results, including anecdotal information, perceptions of quality, and levels of satisfaction. Supplementary evidence can also be evidence of the program's generalizability.

E. Interpretation and Discussion of Results

1. Relationship Between Effect and Treatment

Summarize the results of all data related to the claim that the treatment was effective. Link the results to specific features of the program design.

2. Control of Rival Hypotheses

Provide evidence of program attribution—that is, evidence that suggests that the effects can be attributed to the program and not to some other equally plausible factor. As appropriate to the design, show how the following alternative explanations can be eliminated from consideration: maturation, other treatments, historical factors, statistical regression, attrition, differential selection of groups, and testing. (Note: Sound evaluation design can control most rival hypotheses; however, other data may be used to show attribution of effects.)

F. Significance of Results

1. Relationship of Results to Needs

Demonstrate the importance of the results obtained: How do these results show that the needs for which the project was designed were met? Establish the importance of the needs, and demonstrate that the results are broad enough and powerful enough to be viewed as significant.

2. Comparison of Results With Results From Other Program Results

Compare the program results with results of similar projects or national or statewide initiatives, if appropriate.

Sources for Further Information

For more information on the State Evaluation Development Program, contact:

Bureau of Justice Assistance

810 Seventh Street NW.

Washington, DC 20531

202-514-6278

World Wide Web: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse

P.O. Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

1-800-688-4252

World Wide Web: www.ncjrs.org

U.S. Department of Justice Response Center

1-800-421-6770 or 202-307-1480

Resources on evaluating criminal justice programs may also be obtained by visiting the BJA Evaluation Web site:

www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org

Bureau of Justice Assistance Information

General Information

Callers may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center for general information or specific needs, such as assistance in submitting grants applications and information on training. To contact the Response Center, call 1-800-421-6770 or write to 1100 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005.

Indepth Information

For more indepth information about BJA, its programs, and its funding opportunities, requesters can call the BJA Clearinghouse. The BJA Clearinghouse, a component of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), shares BJA program information with state and local agencies and community groups across the country. Information specialists are available to provide reference and referral services, publication distribution, participation and support for conferences, and other networking and outreach activities. The Clearinghouse can be reached by:

- Mail**
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
- Visit**
2277 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850
- Telephone**
1-800-688-4252
Monday through Friday
8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
eastern time
- Fax**
301-519-5212
- Fax on Demand**
1-800-688-4252
- BJA Home Page**
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA
- NCJRS World Wide Web**
www.ncjrs.org
- E-mail**
askncjrs@ncjrs.org
- JUSTINFO Newsletter**
E-mail to listproc@ncjrs.org
Leave the subject line blank
In the body of the message,
type:
subscribe justinfo
[your name]

