



National Institute of Justice

July 1998

JOURNAL



PULLING LEVERS: GETTING DETERRENCE RIGHT

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

**Breaking the Cycle of
Drug Abuse in Birmingham**

**The Impact of the Opportunity
to Succeed Program on
Employment Success**

**Smart Cards: An Information
Tool for the Future**

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This summer edition of the *National Institute of Justice Journal* showcases community-based programs that respond to crime and its destructive effects with a comprehensive approach that reaches beyond a reactive criminal justice response alone.

The feature article, "Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right," looks at Boston's Operation Ceasefire, a two-pronged intervention strategy developed to come to grips with the city's youth homicide problem. The Ceasefire approach combines a strong law enforcement response with a "pulling levers" deterrence effort aimed at chronic gang offenders. The dramatic reduction in youth homicide in Boston in recent years is testament to the effectiveness of the community's response to this deadly problem. The author poses a tantalizing hypothesis—perhaps the Ceasefire model might achieve similar success when applied to other criminal and public safety problems.

We are witnessing an increased level of support for drug treatment of criminal populations. This support is based on research results—findings show that treatment can be effective in reducing drug use and recidivism. As a result, new policies are being shaped merging a public health approach with a public safety approach. Criminal justice supervision can serve as a booster to enhance the effectiveness of treatment. In Birmingham, Alabama, a project is under way to find out what happens when the full force of the criminal justice system's coercive powers are applied to reduce drug use among the offender population. "Breaking the Cycle of Drug Abuse in Birmingham" describes this initiative.

This edition of the *Journal* also looks at another tool being implemented to reduce drug abuse and criminal recidivism among offenders—the Opportunity to Succeed program. Begun in 1994 in five communities, the program pairs a local probation/parole agency with a lead social services agency to provide a comprehensive range of services, frequent supervision contacts, drug use monitoring, and graduated sanctions to offenders who relapse. The article focuses on the employment services component, seen as a key factor in reducing the risk of recidivism among program participants.

Ceasefire, Breaking the Cycle, and Opportunity to Succeed are excellent examples of efforts to develop rational public policies regarding crime and substance abuse and to ameliorate their harmful effects on our communities. Communities—and the governmental agencies that serve them—are increasingly taking ownership of the problems that are facing them and seeking out effective, innovative responses. NIJ will continue to support these efforts and help spread the word about successes achieved.

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National Institute of Justice

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Jeremy Travis
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On the cover: Photos by Stella Johnson © 1998

Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right

*by David Kennedy**

August 29, 1996, Boston, Massachusetts.

More than 20 members of the Intervale Posse, a street gang in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood, are arrested in an early-morning sweep after a nearly 9-month investigation. Fifteen of the arrestees face Federal drug charges and 10-year minimum mandatory sentences; many face even stiffer sanctions. In the weeks after the arrests, Boston's Ceasefire Working Group—composed of frontline members of the Boston Police Department's gang unit, the departments of probation and parole, the U.S. Attorney's and county prosecutor's offices, the Office of the State Attorney General, school police, youth corrections, social services, and others—meets with gangs around the city, goes to youth detention facilities to talk with inmates, and speaks to assemblies

in Roxbury public schools. The message Ceasefire members deliver is simple and direct:

The city is not going to put up with violence any longer. We know who's behind the gang violence. We're warning gangs to stop; if they don't, there are going to be consequences. There are people here who want to help you—we can offer services, job training, protection from your enemies, whatever you need—but the violence is going to stop. The Intervale Posse was warned, they didn't listen, and they're gone. This doesn't have to happen to you. Just put your guns down.

**David Kennedy is a Senior Researcher in the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and Director of the Boston Gun Project.*

Getting deterrence right

Can we make deterrence work? Criminal justice agencies have always tried, but the results—whether of preventive patrol or the death penalty—have always been dubious. The three vignettes on Boston, Lowell, and Minneapolis highlight a new approach to crafting deterrence strategies, and in the larger tales that lie behind them there is reason to be optimistic. In Boston, youth homicide fell by two-thirds after the Ceasefire strategy was put in place in 1996. In Lowell, youth assaults declined; according to Lowell High School headmaster William Samaras, who had been dealing with gang conflicts among students, there was “an immediate quieting effect on the school.”²² In Minneapolis—one of several Midwestern cities that had experienced an increasing homicide rate—homicide fell by 45 percent citywide in the months after the city kicked off its homicide prevention strategy with the Bogus Boyz’ arrests. None of these operations were controlled experiments, and a detailed evaluation of the Boston intervention is still under way. But the experiences to date are interesting enough to support an exploration of the basic crime-control logic that was applied to the work in Boston, Lowell, and Minneapolis and that is currently being explored in a number of other jurisdictions.

The basic approach was developed in Boston as part of the National Institute of Justice-supported Boston Gun Project, an attempt to bring problem-solving policing to bear on the city’s youth homicide problem. A two-part intervention—the Ceasefire strategy—emerged from the Gun Project’s research and planning phase. One part mounted a direct law enforcement attack on the illicit market that was supplying youths with firearms. The other part was what the Gun Project’s inter-agency working group eventually came to call a “pulling levers” strategy:

May 1997, Lowell, Massachusetts.

One by one, 20 of Lowell’s worst young troublemakers are brought into a meeting with 14 representatives of 7 city and State agencies. In 2 additional meetings, the authorities meet with a group of 35 less chronic offenders and 16 members of a city street gang. The message basically is the same as Boston’s. “We just wanted to tell you that we know who you are,” says assistant district attorney Michael Ortiz. “If you continue to get into trouble, you’re going to end up in jail, or hurt, or even dead. But if you want to get out of a gang or back into school, or you want a job or counseling, we’re here to help.”¹

detering violent behavior by chronic gang offenders by reaching out directly to gangs, setting clear standards for their behavior, and backing up that message by “pulling every lever” legally available when those standards were violated. The deceptively simple operation that resulted made use of a wide variety of traditional criminal justice tools but assembled them in fundamentally new and different ways. (See “What It Isn’t, and What It Is.”) It may be that the basic “pulling levers” logic can be applied in a variety of settings and against a range of different

crime and public safety problems. And it may be that “pulling levers” can, where applicable, substantially alter the balance of power between the authorities and offenders.

The traditional approach: deterrence through case processing

Criminal justice has sought to generate deterrence in a variety of ways: police agencies through patrol and rapid response, probation and parole agencies

June 1997, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

A dozen members of the Bogus Boyz, a street gang composed of members ejected from other gangs and notorious for street violence, are arrested on Federal weapons charges after a short, intensive investigation spearheaded by the Minneapolis Police Department’s gang unit, in cooperation with Federal authorities. At the same time, teams of police and probation officers hit the streets to visit some 250 individuals identified by the gang unit as the city’s most chronic gang offenders. The teams tell the gang members:

The Bogus Boyz’ arrests were no accident. The Bogus Boyz were violent, and their violence won them this treatment. This is how the city is doing things from now on. We’ve got a dozen agencies, from probation to the Feds, meeting regularly and focusing on gang violence. Where we find it, we’re going to act.

Gang officers visit injured gang members—victims of assaults by other gangs—in the hospital and say to them:

This is a terrible thing that’s happened to you. But understand, we’re going to deal with it. Retaliation will not be tolerated. Remember the Bogus Boyz.

WHAT IT ISN'T, AND WHAT IT IS

It is worth noting that while a "pulling levers" strategy like Ceasefire may seem to be like certain existing criminal justice approaches, they are different in important ways. Ceasefire was not, for instance, a targeted prosecution strategy: No attempt was made to systematically take chronic offenders off the street. It was not a strategy for use against gang crime as such. It was not an antigang strategy to disrupt or dismantle Boston's gangs. Rather, it was an attempt to deter and control the particular problem of gang-related violence. If gangs refrained from violence but continued to commit other crimes, the normal workings of police, prosecutors, and the rest of the criminal justice community attended to them. But if they hurt people, Ceasefire members came calling.

It is possible to sketch the essence of what "pulling levers" encompasses. What follows is the basic structure, along with the key differences from more traditional deterrence approaches.

(1) Select a "target category" of behavior to be addressed, such as gang violence. (Traditional deterrence approaches have much broader targets, such as "offending" or "gang offending.")

(2) Assemble an array of agency capacities that can be deployed in the service of the strategy. In Boston, for example, the Ceasefire Working Group included police; probation; parole; Federal and local prosecutors; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; school police; youth corrections; and gang outreach workers. Other agencies and groups that became deeply involved included clergy, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Immigration

and Naturalization Service, and neighborhood groups. (Traditional deterrence approaches tend to rely primarily on the routine workings of the police, prosecutors, and corrections.)

(3) Deliver a direct and explicit "retail deterrence" message to a relatively small target audience regarding what kind of behavior will provoke a special response and what that response will be. (Traditional deterrence approaches vaguely "send signals" to a large and indeterminate population, generally promise only arrest and prosecution as a response, and do not focus services and other opportunities on the same population in a complementary fashion.)

(4) Follow through. In Boston, the Ceasefire Working Group met roughly every 2 weeks, in addition to constant informal communication, to assess the violence problem in the city and craft necessary responses. (Traditional deterrence approaches are generally unable to deliver a sustained and focused response.)

(5) Continue to communicate with the target audience as the strategy unfolds. (Traditional deterrence approaches rely on the routine workings of criminal justice agencies to send signals to offenders and do not draw explicit cause-and-effect connections between the behavior of the target population and the behavior of the authorities.)

(6) Select, if desired, a new category of target behavior. If the original target behavior is controlled, a new one—overt drug trafficking, domestic violence—may be selected. (Traditional deterrence approaches do not take a strategic approach to winning selected battles in a manner of the public's choosing.)

through supervision, prosecutors and judges by focusing attention and sanctions on repeat and violent offenders, and the like. The main engine for creating deterrence, however, has been the basic case-processing mechanisms of the criminal justice process: the apprehension, prosecution, and sanctioning of offenders. In this model, deterrence is generated by the threat that an offender will face a formal penalty for the crime he has committed. We calculate—and presume that offenders calculate—this threat on the basis of the expected costs, imposed by the criminal justice process, on offenders for the crimes that they commit.

Unfortunately, both scholarship and everyday experience suggest that the deterrent power of this strategy has not been great. It is not hard to see why. Most crimes are neither reported to nor observed by the police; in many types of crimes, such as drug dealing and prostitution, both parties to the transaction actively strive for concealment. And the majority of crimes that are reported do not result in an arrest. In 1994, 12,586,227 offenses were known to the police; only 21.4 percent were cleared by arrest.³ When police make an arrest, it generally takes some time for the case to make its way through to a disposition. In 1992, the

average number of days between arrest and conviction for felony cases disposed by State courts was 173.⁴ Finally, most of the resulting sentences are not terribly severe; it is estimated that 52 percent of all *felony* convictions result in probation.⁵ Traditional probation is the most extensively used sanction in the correctional system. About 60 percent of offenders under correctional supervision are on probation.⁶ And while research has repeatedly suggested that the certainty and swiftness of sanctions matters more than their severity, most of the political and policy debate has centered on increasing sanctions. Debates center on the

death penalty and three-strikes laws, not on clearance rates for violent crimes or the workloads of prosecutors and judges.

The resulting weakness of deterrence is perhaps particularly vexing where chronic offenders are concerned. It has long been known that a relatively small number of criminals offend at very high rates, are repeatedly arrested and sanctioned, and—if only by virtue of their continued offending—demonstrate a particular resistance to both deterrence and rehabilitation. This is a particular problem where violent offending is concerned. Not all chronic offenders are violent offenders, but a large proportion of violent crimes are committed by chronic offenders, who commit not only crimes of violence but also property crimes, drug crimes, disorder offenses, and the like. Such offenders are themselves victimized at very high rates. Boston Gun Project research, for example, showed that youth homicide was concentrated among a small number of serially offending gang-involved youths. Only about 1,300 gang members—less than 1 percent of their age group citywide—in some 61 gangs were responsible for at least 60 percent, and probably more, of all the youth homicide in the city. These gang members were well known to authorities and tended to have extensive criminal records. (See “Boston’s Victims and Offenders.”)

Pulling levers in Boston

Deterring violence by this group of chronic offenders became a central Gun Project goal. The “pulling levers” strategy the Gun Project Working Group designed was built on a simple but crucially important realization: Chronic offending made these youths, and the gangs they formed, extremely vulnerable. Authorities had a large and varied menu of ways—“levers to pull,”

as the Working Group came to call them—they could impose costs on these gangs. They could disrupt street drug activity, focus police attention on low-level street crimes such as trespassing and public drinking, serve outstanding warrants, cultivate confidential informants for medium- and long-term investigations of gang activities, deliver strict probation and parole enforcement, seize drug proceeds and other assets, ensure stiffer plea bargains and sterner prosecutorial attention, request stronger bail terms (and enforce them), and even focus potentially severe Federal investigative and prosecutorial attention on, for example, gang-related drug activity.

This was, of course, not news to the authorities. There were two problems: It was impossible to give all the gangs this kind of heightened attention all

the time, and occasional crackdowns, while useful in the short term, had little long-term impact. The ability to deliver overwhelming crackdowns, however, was not in doubt. The Working Group’s innovation—again, simple but important—was to make it clear to gangs that *violence* would draw such crackdowns and then *continue to communicate* with gangs as the resulting strategy unfolded.

This changed the game rather dramatically. From a world in which the cost to a gang of committing a homicide was, perhaps, that a gang member would be caught and prosecuted (while “street” benefits such as a reputation for toughness accrued to the gang as a whole), the cost soared. Added to the original risk would be everything else the authorities could bring to bear: cash-flow problems caused by street

BOSTON’S VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS

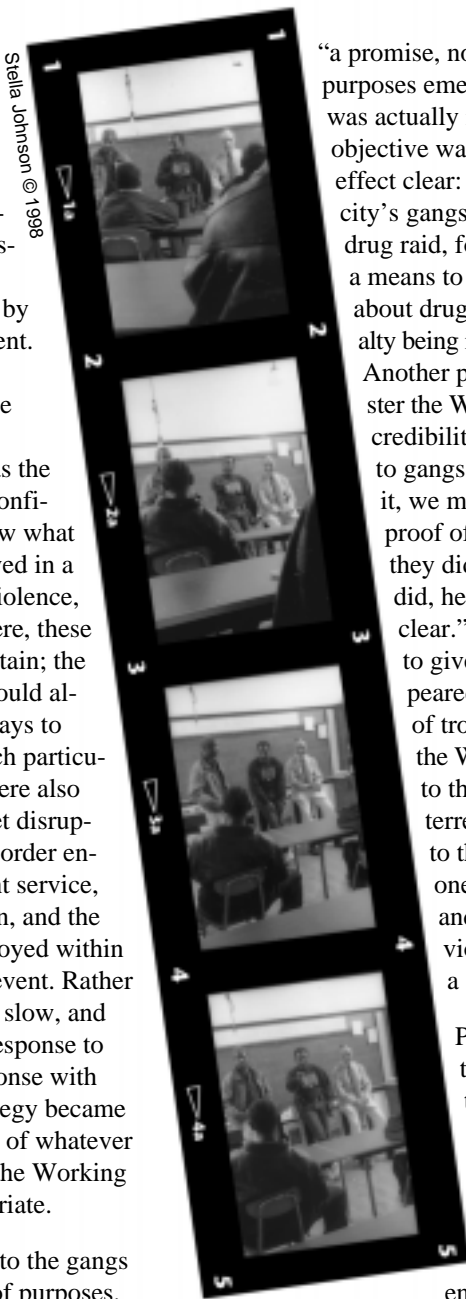
The Boston Gun Project examined records on 155 youths age 21 and under who had been killed by a gun or a knife over a 5-year period. Prior to their murders, 75 percent had been arraigned for at least one offense in Massachusetts courts, 19 percent had been committed to an adult or youth correctional facility, 42 percent had been on probation at some time before their murder, and 14 percent were on probation at the time of their murder. Of the 125 youthful offenders known to be associated with those homicides, 77 percent had been arraigned for at least one offense in Massachusetts courts, 26 percent had been committed to a facility, 54 percent had been on probation, and 26 percent were on probation at the time they committed the homicide. For the 117 homicide victims with at least 1 arraignment, the average

number of arraignments was 9.5, and 44 percent had 10 or more arraignments. For the 96 offenders with at least 1 arraignment, the average number of arraignments was 9.7, and 41 percent had 10 or more arraignments. For both victims and offenders, arraignments for property offenses, armed violent offenses, and disorder offenses outnumbered drug offenses. For offenders, unarmed violent offenses also outnumbered drug offenses. Even within this population, the rate of offending was skewed, with the worst 5 percent and worst 10 percent of the 125 offenders responsible for 20 percent and 36 percent of 1,009 total arraignments, respectively. The worst 5 percent and worst 10 percent of the 155 victims were responsible for 17 percent and 33 percent of 1,277 total arraignments, respectively.

PULLING LEVERS

drug market disruption, arrests for outstanding warrants, the humiliation of strict probation enforcement, even the possibility of severe sanctions brought by Federal involvement. Those costs were borne by the whole gang, not just the shooter. As long as the authorities were confident that they knew what gangs were involved in a particular act of violence, as they usually were, these penalties were certain; the Working Group could always figure out ways to reach out and touch particular gangs. They were also swift: Drug market disruption, increased disorder enforcement, warrant service, probation attention, and the like could be deployed within days of a violent event. Rather than an uncertain, slow, and often nonsevere response to violence, the response with the Ceasefire strategy became certain, rapid, and of whatever range of severity the Working Group felt appropriate.

Talking regularly to the gangs served a number of purposes. Originally, the Working Group wanted to make sure that gangs knew about this new policy—so they could comply if they wished—and to tell other gangs when a gang was being punished for violence. The Working Group also wanted to make clear to gangs that while violence would bring strong attention, refraining from violence would not win them a “pass” to deal drugs or do other crimes: This was, in language the Working Group used explicitly in the gang meetings,



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“a promise, not a deal.” Other purposes emerged as the strategy was actually implemented. One objective was to make cause and effect clear: to explain to the city’s gangs that a particular drug raid, for example, was but a means to an end and was not about drugs as such but a penalty being imposed for violence. Another purpose was to bolster the Working Group’s own credibility: to be able to say to gangs, in effect, “We said it, we meant it, and here’s proof of that: Here’s what they did, here’s what we did, here’s how you steer clear.” Another goal was to give gangs that appeared to be on the verge of trouble a dose of what the Working Group came to think of as “retail deterrence”: to reach out to them directly, one on one and face to face, and make it clear that violence would bring a strong response.

Perhaps most important, however, was that the Working Group came to realize that communication allowed the creation of a fundamentally different balance of power between the authorities and the streets. The Working Group could deploy, at best, only a few severe crackdowns at a time. But like an old-West sheriff facing down a band of desperadoes with one bullet in his gun, direct communication with gangs allowed the Working Group to say, “We’re ready, we’re watching, we’re waiting: Who wants to be next?” And, as with the sheriff, when that message was clear and credible, not only did nobody want to be next, it was not necessary to fire

the shot. So it appears to have transpired in Boston. There was one serious crackdown in May 1996, followed by another—the one described above—in August 1996. Enforcement actions of the severity of the Intervale crackdown have not been necessary since.

Strategies against other problems

It is interesting to consider applying the “pulling levers” strategy to other important crime problems. Imagine a city with 20 active street drug markets and associated problems of violence, disorder, and the involvement of juveniles as corner dealers, lookouts, and drug couriers. Such drug markets are notoriously resistant to ordinary enforcement attention. A “pulling levers” strategy could begin by creating channels of communication with each drug market: through beat officers, probation officers, community representatives, even posters and fliers. On, for example, May 15, the authorities send the following message to all 20 markets:

We have three serious crackdowns ready to deploy. They will involve heavy police and probation presence, warrant service, and the like. Those arrested will receive special prosecutorial attention and, if convicted to probation, will be put on strict-supervision probation regimes; groups and individuals with a history of violence will be screened for added attention by DEA and the U.S. Attorney. We will decide, over the next 2 weeks, where to direct those crackdowns. We will make our decisions based on whether, between now and then, there is any violence associated with your drug market.

Presumably at least one or two of these hypothetical markets are violent, and they receive crackdowns lasting 6 weeks. On July 15, new messages

go out to the drug markets. The authorities say:

We're gearing up again. We remind you that you've been warned before and that several markets broke the rules. Here's what happened to them. Once again, we warn you that any violence will bring serious consequences.

This cycle is repeated until drug market-related violence is controlled.

At this point, the authorities change their message to the following:

The old rules still apply. Violence will bring consequences. But now that the violence is nearly gone, we're also going to insist on order. In 2 weeks, we're launching new crackdowns. We're going to assign them based on what is bothering the community the most: unruly buyers, late-night traffic, public drinking and urination, street-corner sales, and the like. (And, by the way, pick up your trash.)

Once again, the authorities repeat the cycle of communicating, responding, and communicating again until order is established.

The authorities then send a final message:

The old rules still apply. Violence and disorder bring attention. (And, by the way, congratulations on behaving. We knew you were rational people.) We have one new rule. Don't use juveniles in your trade any more; the kids are off limits. And since those of you using juveniles are usually one or two steps removed from the streets, we're going to have to resort to serious investigations, in concert with DEA, to reach you. You don't want that. We don't want to have to do it. So pay attention.

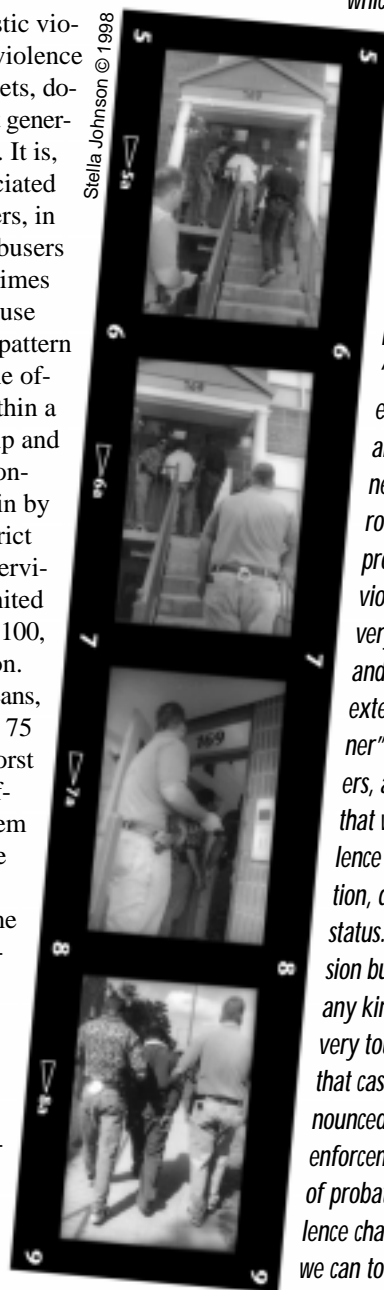
It may not be unreasonable to think that such a strategy could address many of the worst problems associated with street drug markets. It would not address drug trafficking as such to any great extent; the market would no doubt reestablish itself in a safer, quieter, and more discreet fashion. But until we figure out how to stop the drug trade, this would be a considerable victory, and one many cities would be happy to win.

Or how about domestic violence? Unlike gang violence and street drug markets, domestic violence is not generally public and overt. It is, however, often associated with chronic offenders, in the sense both that abusers also commit other crimes and that domestic abuse tends to be part of a pattern of misbehavior by the offender over time, within a particular relationship and serially across relationships. We could begin by creating a special, strict surveillance and supervision regime for a limited number of offenders: 100, for sake of illustration. Using appropriate means, the authorities select 75 of a jurisdiction's worst domestic violence offenders and place them on this regime. Some will be subject to restraining orders; some will be put on probation for domestic offenses; some will be identified by police officers, probation officers, and victim advocates as particularly dangerous but not currently on restraining orders or

probation (or, perhaps, they will be on probation but for other offenses). The authorities will then brief them:

You have made the "A team" by virtue of your intransigent behavior or the fact that you are clearly a threat at the moment. We are watching you carefully. If you are on probation for a domestic violence offense, we will be asking the judge to attach onerous conditions of probation, which will include frequent drug

and alcohol testing, mandatory counseling, restriction, frequent and unannounced curfew checks, and supplying district police officers who cover your "partner's" home and work areas with your name and picture. [Technological possibilities like "reverse house arrest"—an electronic bracelet that sounds an alarm when the wearer goes near the victim—might have a role to play here.] If you are on probation, but not for a domestic violence offense, you will get very strict probation supervision, and we will be working to the extent possible with your "partner" and advocates, patrol officers, and prosecutors to bring a case that will result in a domestic violence charge and, if not incarceration, domestic violence probation status. If you are not under supervision but are arrested for a crime of any kind, we will consider taking a very tough line in the disposition of that case as part of our recently announced "repeat domestic offender enforcement policy." For any violation of probation or any new domestic violence charge, we will do everything we can to take you off the street. And



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remember, you can earn your way off this list: Go a year without a probation violation, a new arrest, or some other sign that you remain a threat, and we'll happily give your slot to somebody else.

The authorities now go to the much larger group of somewhat less serious domestic offenders and say:

You are the "B team." Here's how you win a seat on the "A team." We have 25 slots just waiting for you.

And they back up the entire scheme by regularly communicating to both groups what happens to people on the "A team": how they misbehave and are predictably sanctioned, how they behave well and are rewarded, how members of the "A team" are "graduated" to the "B team," and vice versa.

Can this work? It would certainly have to be implemented in a way that minimizes the threat domestic violence victims face from abusers angered by official attention; takes advantage of all that domestic violence specialists have learned in recent years about victim safety plans, when and why offenders are most dangerous, and patterns of offending by chronic abusers; and integrates the strategy into the robust steps many jurisdictions now take in an attempt to control domestic violence offenders. Quite possibly the scale of the example is wrong; we might need 500 slots, or 5 levels of supervision. But it seems worth exploring such a scheme: creating a tight web for a small but meaningful number of offenders; creating clear rules

for admission and exclusion from that select group; and informing the larger universe of offenders of the progress, both good and bad, of those who are subject to such strict attention.

Conclusion

Community policing and problem-solving policing can be viewed as attempts to escape what have become the routine, and often extremely unsatisfactory, choices posed by traditional thinking about crime control. Deterrence, or, failing that, incapacitation, was the business of criminal justice, yet the ordinary case-processing business of criminal justice agencies often manifestly failed to deliver sufficient crime control. The other alternatives were root-cause strategies that prevent crime by making fundamental improvements in communities and the lives of the people and families that constitute them. Yet these too were uncertain, hard to carry out in the midst of high levels of local crime and fear, and offered little help to communities needing immediate help with serious public safety problems. Community policing and problem-solving policing have tried to escape that bind by borrowing from the repertoire of both enforcement and prevention, crafting strategic interventions for particular problems in concert with a wide variety of new partners. It may be that the "pulling levers" framework offers some useful guidance to shaping some of those interventions. Deterrence may not be so hard to come by after all. And, remarkably, it may be that a key aspect of getting the deterrence equation right is simply

communicating directly with the last group that is usually considered for inclusion in crime control strategies: offenders themselves. It would be nice if this were so. Talk, after all, is cheap.

Notes

1. Berard, Darrin, "Turning Bad Apples Around," *Lowell Sun*, November 16, 1997.
2. Ibid.
3. Maguire, Kathleen, and Ann Pastore, eds., *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1995*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996: 425, NCJ 158900 [hereinafter *1995 Sourcebook*].
4. Maguire, Kathleen, and Ann Pastore, eds., *1995 Sourcebook*: 509.
5. See Cuniff, Mark, *Sentencing Outcomes in 28 Felony Courts, 1985*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1987: 1, NCJ 107760.
6. Maguire, Kathleen, and Ann Pastore, eds., *1995 Sourcebook*: 540.

Operation Ceasefire was a 1997 Innovations in American Government program award winner. Every year, the Innovations in American Government program, administered by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, recognizes creative government initiatives. For descriptions of other 1997 criminal justice award winners, see page 30.

BREAKING THE CYCLE | OF DRUG ABUSE IN BIRMINGHAM

*by Adele Harrell, Foster Cook, and John Carver**

In 1997, Birmingham, Alabama, became the first major U.S. city to take a comprehensive approach to the challenge of addressing offender drug abuse. With the support of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the National Institute of Justice, Birmingham began the arduous task of implementing a systemwide initiative that encompasses all drug-involved offenders throughout their period of criminal justice supervision under an award to the Birmingham Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime program. This initiative, Breaking the Cycle (BTC), is being implemented as a large-scale demonstration project designed to answer the following questions:

- What happens when all components of the criminal justice system focus on drug addiction and apply proven practices to lower the levels of drug dependency among the offender population?
- What would the impact be on the incidence of drug use and crime in a given community if all drug users could be identified early, assessed for their drug treatment needs, referred to appropriate drug treatment, monitored through regular drug testing, and immediately sanctioned for drug use?

Traditionally, the criminal justice system has not been particularly effective in addressing, in any substantive way, the substance-abusing behaviors exhibited by its “charges,” despite the existing broad authority over individuals under supervision.

Criminal justice practitioners are often the first to point out that they have been operating a “revolving door” for drug abusers. When left untreated, drug abusers eventually return to their communities and resume the old behavioral patterns that brought them to the criminal justice system in the first place—perpetuating the cycle of substance abuse and criminal activity. Treatment-oriented drug courts have demonstrated that an arrest of a drug-dependent individual presents an important opportunity for intervention. Moreover, if that intervention takes place in an environment of accountability, encouragement, and support, favorable outcomes often result.¹

BTC is designed to apply the lessons learned over the past two decades. Research has shown that when substance abuse treatment is reinforced by the coercive power of the criminal justice system, defendant outcomes improve. BTC fully integrates drug testing, referral to treatment, judicial supervision of treatment,

**Adele Harrell is Director of the Program on Law and Behavior at The Urban Institute. Foster Cook is Director of the University of Alabama at Birmingham Substance Abuse Programs and the Birmingham Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime program. John Carver, now Trustee for the District of Columbia for Offender Supervision, conducted much of the baseline process evaluation for the Justice Management Institute.*

BREAKING THE CYCLE

and graduated sanctions. Specific objectives include the following:

- Close collaboration between criminal justice and drug treatment

BTC envisions that every drug-using defendant entering the criminal justice system will be assessed by a neutral organization that serves the court but

is not an advocate for the defense or the prosecution. Recommendations for court-ordered treatment will be made, and conditions of treatment will be based on

individualized treatment plans. Judicial supervision will then take the form of reviews of treatment participation and drug testing at each court appearance.

- Early intervention

Early identification of defendants with substance abuse problems is a goal of BTC, which calls for identifying offenders eligible for drug treatment immediately after arrest. An arrest can provide the best opportunity to intervene in the offender/abuse cycle, because it may force an individual to confront a substance abuse problem. An essential first step in accomplishing this goal is routine, prearrest drug testing between the arrest and the first appearance in court. Following this testing, defendants would receive a clinical assessment. Placement of the abuser in an appropriate treatment modality shortly after the assessment

completes the initial steps in the intervention process.

- Judicial oversight

BTC involves close judicial oversight of drug treatment participation. The experience of the drug court movement has shown that close judicial oversight can be effective in reducing drug use and criminal behavior among partici-



Presiding Circuit Court Judge Mike McCormick, Criminal Division

Birmingham Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime

pants.² BTC applies this lesson to all drug-using defendants under all forms of criminal justice supervision. Judges have broad authority to impose and enforce conditions of

pretrial release that address public safety. To optimally exercise this authority, judicial officers need quick access to compliance information. BTC envisions regular reviews of drug test results and treatment participation information at each scheduled court hearing. In this way, the criminal justice system broadens its focus beyond the resolution of legal issues presented by an arrest and begins to concentrate on the underlying factor of substance abuse.

- Use of graduated sanctions and incentives

An integral part of BTC is the close judicial supervision that will be carried out through regular reviews of the progress of drug-dependent offenders. The goal of these reviews is to apply steady leverage to retain offenders in treatment. Borrowing from concepts pioneered by drug courts across the country, the idea is to manage risk

through the immediate judicial application of both sanctions and incentives, such as time in jail or increased frequency of drug testing. Sanctions should be measured or graduated and based on the idea that certainty in their application is more important than severity of the consequences. Immediacy is also important. Sanctions should be applied as soon as possible after program violations.

In Birmingham, BTC is building on a strong foundation of court-based programs for drug-involved offenders. For the past 25 years, the courts have been referring drug-involved offenders to the Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime (TASC) program for assessment, case management, and treatment referrals. Need for treatment was typically identified in a presentence investigation report, and defendants were ordered to TASC at sentencing. Innovative programs developed by the district court expanded TASC services to defendants before sentencing through a deferred prosecution program, a drug court, and pretrial release program. These programs placed Birmingham at the forefront of efforts to address substance abuse problems.

At the same time, Birmingham faced its share of problems in expanding services for drug-dependent offenders. As in most jurisdictions, several agencies were faced with growing workloads. The courts faced huge caseloads and backlogs. The Jefferson County Jail, built to hold 750 inmates, was housing over 1,200 offenders in 1996 at the time of the BTC proposal, placing constraints on the capacity of the jail to provide staff and space for screening, urine testing, and jail-based treatment. In spring 1997, the probation department had five or six vacancies at a time when the average caseload had grown to 110 to 140 cases per officer. As a condition of the Federal grant, Breaking the Cycle was mandated to improve the existing systems.

Immediate challenges were the major procedural changes and substantial investments in upgrading the probation department's basic infrastructure. These upgrades included changes in the physical facility, enhancing drug-testing capability, developing better case management techniques, and adapting a state-of-the-art management information system—developed in New York for the Brooklyn Treatment Court—to meet the needs of Birmingham. To build a more efficient system capable of intervening with substantial numbers of offenders in need of treatment, Birmingham began its multipronged strategy to incorporate the following initiatives:

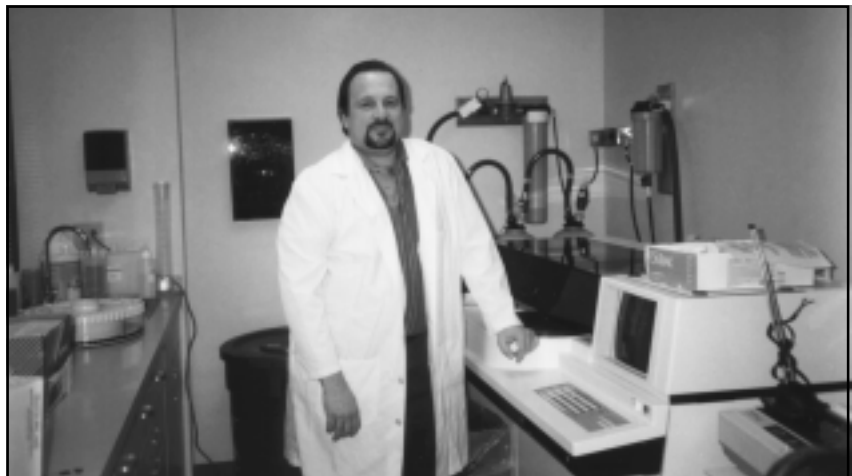
- Develop a collaborative planning process to engage all relevant agencies in decisions on how the new system will operate, and use this process to identify the challenges facing various agencies, the resources available, and the resources needed.
- Create policies and procedures for early case identification and intervention.
- Build a case management and tracking system to facilitate timely exchange of information on offender legal status, treatment needs and progress, and compliance with treatment conditions.
- Broaden the array of treatment options and providers to meet the expanded needs for service.

Collaborative planning

Implementation of a systemwide concept such as Breaking the Cycle required input and support from all system participants. Prior to implementation, a group representative of the criminal justice and treatment systems—including the presiding judge, circuit and district judges, sheriff, district attorney, and TASC program staff—traveled to New York to view

the information systems and operations of the Brooklyn Treatment Court and the Midtown Community Court. NIJ Director Jeremy Travis joined the group to discuss BTC's expanded scope and historical significance.

The Jefferson County Commission appointed retired Judge Daniel J. Reynolds as adviser to the project. Ongoing planning meetings with staff from the Jefferson County Jail, Office of the District Attorney, probation department, and other agencies culminated in a 2-day fall retreat in November 1997 where a formal BTC policy board was created. The full board meets at least once a month to review the progress of the project and make recommendations on program and system changes. Smaller groups meet more often to focus on specific problems.



Research technician Gerald Kitchens with urinalysis machine

Early identification and intervention.

As in other communities, drug-involved offenders commit crimes to support their habits and repeatedly cycle through Birmingham's criminal justice system. NIJ Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) positivity rates revealed 67 percent of the offenders tested positive for an illegal drug at arrest in spring 1997. Prior to BTC's implementation, the majority of those arrested were released on bond without supervision or expectation that they would abstain

from using drugs. For most arrestees, it would be months before they were asked if they had a drug problem, required to take a drug test, or offered treatment. TASC intervention had traditionally occurred at the time of a plea of guilty and application for probation. BTC has moved the intervention phase to the time of arrest or shortly thereafter, drastically changing how drug-involved offenders in Birmingham should behave if they want to remain out on bond.

Implementation of Breaking the Cycle required Birmingham TASC as the agency responsible for case management of BTC clients to expand its drug-testing capacity, resulting in the creation of an inhouse drug-testing lab. Interviewing offenders and collecting urine specimens became a cooperative project

between the Jefferson County Jail and TASC. During initial implementation, it became obvious that universal collection of urine specimens from all offenders would be compromised by issues such as the quick turnarounds of offenders with prearranged bonds. To implement Breaking the Cycle, three district court judges instituted a policy in early 1998 ordering all drug offenders into the TASC program at their initial hearings. To make even earlier intervention possible, a

BREAKING THE CYCLE

systemwide judicial order was later issued in May 1998 requiring appearance at TASC within 48 hours of release on bond.

Implementation of BTC revealed that while drug testing at arrest has value, using each court hearing as a potential intervention point greatly expands the capability of the system in identifying drug-abusing offenders.

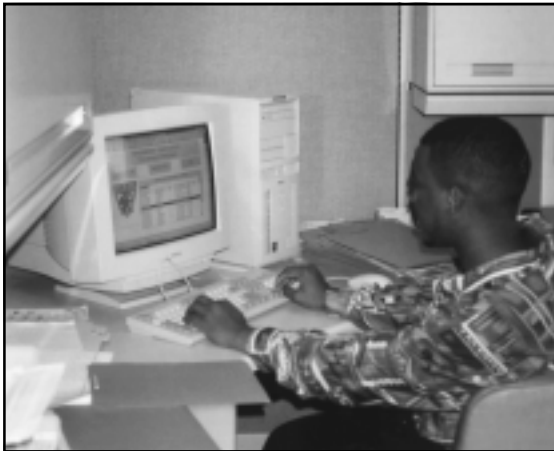
Computerized assessment and case tracking.

BTC offender management is based on the TASC case management model linking criminal justice and treatment. This formalized structure is based on TASC's 10 Critical Program Elements, which provide the framework for TASC programming. Case management functions in the context of program rules and judicially applied graduated sanctions, such as jail time. The initial screening and urine test measure each offender against the broad eligibility criteria for BTC participation. A followup assessment combining clinical evaluation with criminal history produces a case management plan and recommendation to the court.

The case management plan outlines supervision and service needs over time. An offender is referred to the most appropriate treatment intervention and supervision plan. Case tracking and monitoring of drug use and compliance with treatment extends throughout the offender's involvement

with the criminal justice system. The case manager is responsible for measuring the offender's performance against TASC success/failure criteria and court mandates. If an offender fails to comply, the case manager recommends program-level or judicially applied graduated sanctions.

Because Breaking the Cycle is a systemwide approach, the Alabama Department of Pardons and Paroles is supporting the project by adopting a postconviction complementary



TASC staff member utilizes client database

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case management supervision and sanctioning schedule. This collaboration has leveraged the capacity of the project to provide a consistent program of super-

vision from pretrial to probation and parole. As the project moves forward, assessment, case management, and tracking will be supported by the management information system developed by the Center for Court Innovation for the Brooklyn Treatment Court. This next step will support the project in its full implementation.

Treatment options

The Birmingham project addressed the need for expanded treatment and supervision options through the following:

- Developing a day reporting center.
- Expanding an electronic monitoring program.
- Instituting a cognitive behavioral training program.

- Contracting for additional drug treatment beds through community-based providers.
- Expanding intensive outpatient drug treatment.

These strategies have helped; however, waiting lists for treatment have grown since the implementation of Breaking the Cycle.

Learning from the Birmingham experience

Breaking the Cycle was funded as a research demonstration project to answer questions about systemwide intervention. The evaluation, being conducted by The Urban Institute, includes a process analysis of the changes implemented, the barriers faced, and creative solutions identified. It also includes an impact evaluation that will examine BTC's effects on four key areas: (1) lowering drug use among the offender population, (2) reducing criminal behavior in the subject population, (3) improving indicators of social functioning such as employment levels and health, and (4) making more effective use of criminal justice resources, especially detention capacity.

Next steps

Implementing Breaking the Cycle has required major commitments of time and effort by the Jefferson County Jail, the courts, the probation department, and other criminal justice agencies that have produced significant beneficial results. TASC has more than doubled the number of offenders under supervision who are receiving treatment from 1,127 in June 1997 to 2,893 in May 1998. Drug-abusing offenders are identified and admitted to TASC at a much earlier stage than they were before BTC was initiated. The manner in which offenders

receive pretrial supervision has drastically changed and improved.

The project was implemented in phases. This was necessary to allow the system time to absorb the significant changes inherent in Breaking the Cycle. Phase I admitted drug cases at arrest and also selected other cases that had been awaiting a grand jury hearing or sentencing. Phase II is expected to double the number of admissions from 390 per month to between 800 to 1,200 per month and include all chargeable offense categories. Achieving this goal will require

automated reporting, expanded case management services, and additional treatment options.

Beyond Birmingham

NIJ is in the process of selecting four additional sites for the implementation of BTC programs. The plan is to transfer the Birmingham model to two adult and two juvenile justice systems. The selections will be made later this year, and NIJ will work in partnership with the sites to adapt the BTC model based on local needs. Together with ONDCP, NIJ will support developmental efforts for 3 years.

Notes

1. *Looking at a Decade of Drug Courts*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office, June 1998, NCJ 171140.

2. *Preliminary Results From the Evaluation of the DC Superior Court Drug Intervention Program for Drug Felony Defendants*, presented at the American Society of Criminology conference, San Diego, California, November 1997.

the Impact of the Opportunity to **SUCCEED** program

on Employment Success

Shelli Rossman, Sanjeev Sridharan, and Janeen Buck*

The Opportunity to Succeed (OPTS) program is designed to reduce substance abuse relapse and criminal recidivism by providing comprehensive aftercare services to felony offenders with histories of alcohol and drug offenses. A key supposition underlying the OPTS initiative is that alcohol and drug abuse—together with personal histories of crime, economic and family instability, social disorganization, and compromised health or mental health—are disorganizing factors in offenders' lives that increase the likelihood of continued criminal activity. The program's rationale is that individuals will be less likely to relapse and engage in future crimes if they are exposed to the following:

- A comprehensive suite of aftercare services, including substance abuse treatment, counseling, and skills-building activities.
- Frequent supervision contacts and drug-use monitoring through urinalysis.
- Graduated sanctions that include incentives/rewards for positive behavior and penalties for failure to comply with program requirements.

The OPTS program model was developed by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. OPTS programs were initiated as 3-year demonstration programs in five communities in 1994 and continue to operate beyond the demonstration period in Kansas City, Missouri, St. Louis, Missouri, and Tampa, Florida. The five demonstration programs were funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The national evaluation is being

funded by RWJ and the National Institute of Justice and will be completed in September 1998 by The Urban Institute. Both the program implementation and evaluation occurred under CASA's administrative oversight.

Focus on employment services and outcomes

Employment is a central requirement of probation and parole supervision programs. OPTS planners identified employment services as integral because unemployment and unstable employment are risks factors for engaging in criminal activities and because enhancing individual self-sufficiency is a goal of the program. Additionally, practitioners recommended that the OPTS initiative's success should be assessed from a broad perspective that includes intermediate outcomes, such as employment successes, because they believed that the propensity of substance abusers to periodically relapse might mitigate against a finding of program success if success was measured solely in terms of sobriety and compliance with supervision requirements.

Employment issues are also both theoretically and empirically relevant. Considerations of economic stability play a central role in numerous theories of criminal behavior. For example, social strain theory assumes that crime is the result of blocked opportunities, including limited economic and educational opportunities.¹ The OPTS model itself is closely aligned with age-graded theories of informal social control,² which suggest that life events, such as obtaining steady employment, can modify a person's pathways toward

*Shelli Rossman is a Senior Research Associate, Sanjeev Sridharan is a Research Associate I, and Janeen Buck is a Research Associate II at The Urban Institute. This article was supported by grant number 94-IJ-CX-0010 awarded by the National Institute of Justice.

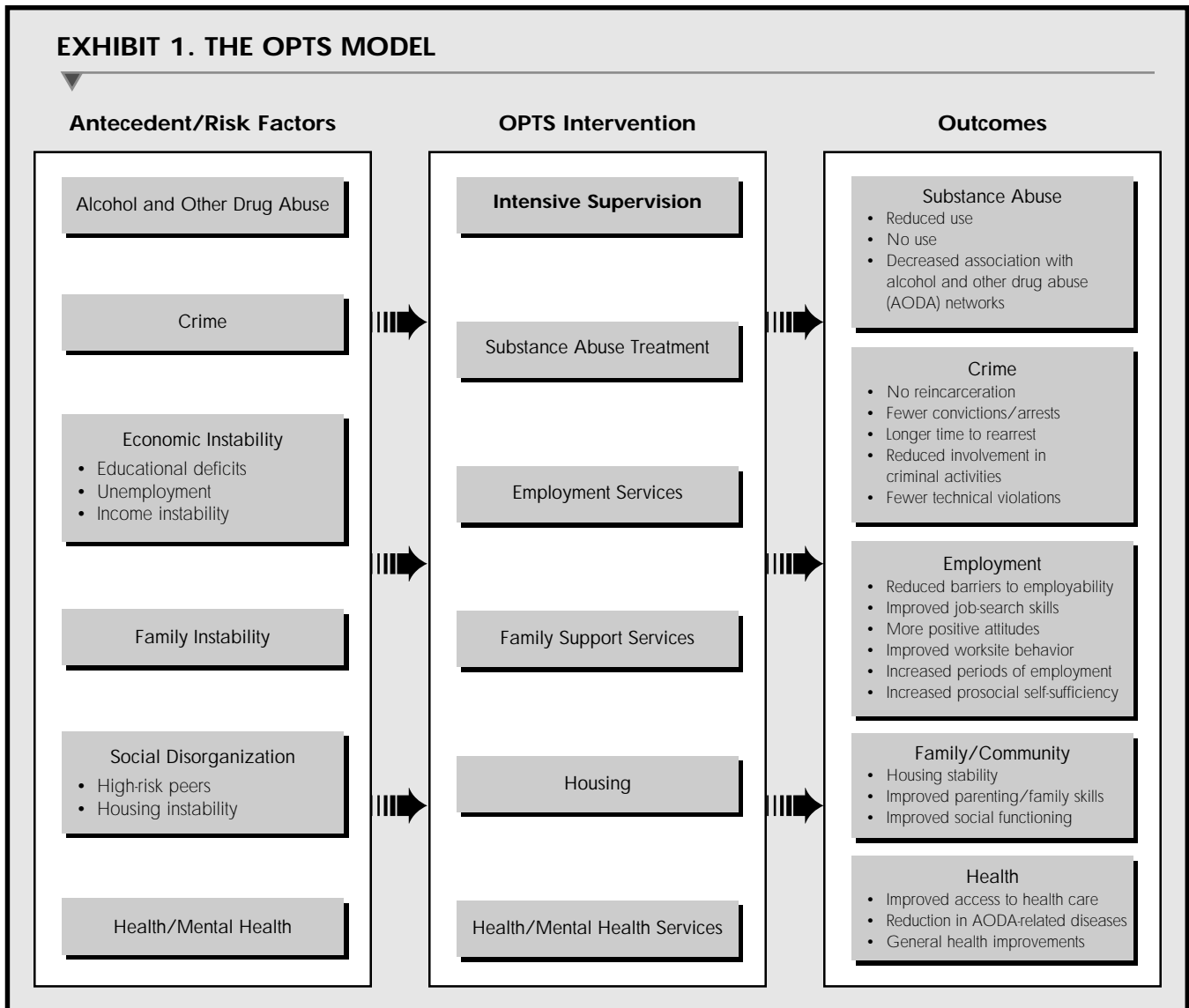
crime. In line with this theoretical perspective, initial analysis of the OPTS baseline self-report data used statistical models to examine causal linkages (focusing on individuals' drug use and criminal behaviors in the period before the incarceration that led to inclusion in the OPTS study). One finding of the analysis was that individuals who were employed full time were less likely to participate in short-term predatory and drug crimes in the months before incarceration. Full-time employment decreased by 46 percent

the likelihood that an individual would commit a predatory crime in any given month and by 65 percent the likelihood that an individual would commit a drug crime in any given month.³ This underscored the importance of the link between full-time employment and the commission of crimes and suggested that ongoing evaluation activities should highlight employment services offered to OPTS clients and related outcomes anticipated by the model.

The OPTS model

The OPTS model was designed to coordinate services within five areas identified as aftercare priorities for substance-abusing offenders (see exhibit 1):

- **Mandatory substance abuse treatment**, ranging from 12-step programs through intensive residential placements, is a key component of the OPTS model.
- **Employability training** involves a set of services to help clients find



and maintain legitimate employment. For some individuals, suitability for employment may be related to educational deficits, which can be mitigated by completing a general equivalency diploma (GED) or vocational training. For others, service needs may be more limited (e.g., assistance in identifying job openings).

- **Housing** is a central concern because incarcerated offenders cannot be released without a home plan indicating that satisfactory living arrangements have been designated. OPTS housing services include placement in drug-free, supportive environments (e.g., halfway houses, group homes, apartments to share), as well as related emergency services such as crisis assistance if a domestic situation deteriorates and requires immediate relocation or emergency funds to cover unanticipated expenses (e.g., unusually high utility bills).
- **Family intervention services and parenting skills training** include parenting classes, family counseling, anger management training, and domestic violence counseling to help clients assume responsibility for their children and end violent or destructive domestic behaviors.
- **Medical and mental health services**, ranging from regular checkups to specialized care, are part of the model because substance abusers often have a wide range of physical and mental health problems.

Although the OPTS model calls for the provision of these core services, it does not expect that each client will require the full spectrum of support. Rather, services are provided on an as-needed basis.

Service delivery is structured around case management, involving in each demonstration site collaborative partnerships between a lead social services

agency and the local probation/parole office. The case management function offers:

- **Linchpin or brokering** activities to coordinate referral and provision of services.
- **Intervention activities** to keep clients out of institutions, provide crisis management, and help staff serve as advocates with courts and other entities.
- **Therapeutic activities**, including counseling and therapy designed to help clients understand their strengths and problems and to develop relapse-prevention skills.
- **Integrative activities** such as arranging for or providing transportation, teaching life skills, and helping with employment or educational problems.

Enhanced supervision is anticipated based on keeping caseloads small for both case managers and probation/parole officers (POs); a single PO in each demonstration site will be designated the OPTS PO, and service and supervision staff will be co-located where feasible.

OPTS in action

Lead agencies. In each demonstration site, OPTS pairs the local probation/parole agency—the Missouri Department of Probation and Parole in Kansas City and St. Louis and the Florida Department of Corrections in Tampa—with a lead social services agency that provides case management and other services. The lead service providers in each community are nonprofit organizations with offices located in selected target areas. The primary agencies in Kansas City and Tampa—the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) and the Drug Abuse Comprehensive Coordinating Office (DACCO), respectively—have

long histories of providing substance abuse treatment and other services to probationers and parolees. The lead agency in St. Louis, Lutheran Family and Children’s Services (LFCS), differs from the other two in that the organization has a religious affiliation and its primary focus is not on substance abuse or offender services.

Although they had not planned to do so, lead agencies directly delivered job-related services in addition to referring OPTS clients to one or two employment/job-training entities with which the primary partners had prior relationships or that they identified early as being sources of assistance. In all three communities, case managers were proactive in job development, contacting and cultivating potential employers. In St. Louis, for example, case managers contacted employers who had hired OPTS clients to inquire about job opportunities for others, actively searched newspaper ads for appropriate openings, advocated for their clients by responding to publicly displayed “help wanted” signs, and networked with colleagues who had ties to training and placement services or employers. At one point, LFCS seriously considered helping OPTS clients to open a small business (e.g., cabinetmaking or cooking) that could build skills and provide revenue. They did not pursue this type of program because probation staff cautioned against it: POs felt it could be a very risky undertaking because it might give offenders too much freedom and control. However, LFCS did hire at least one OPTS client for temporary rehabilitation work in some of the agency-owned transitional housing units. In Kansas City, NCADD sponsored a “labor market overview” and invited representatives from a range of employment and training services providers, union representatives, etc., to introduce their programs and organizations to OPTS clients and provide

clients with information about labor market trends, skills training, and accessing resources.

Service provider partnerships. As expected, each site established memorandums of understanding or developed close working relations with one or two organizations providing employment services. Most of the agencies selected had experience serving low-income populations and offered programs developed for populations with characteristics similar to those of OPTS clients. Kansas City OPTS aligned with the Full Employment Council (FEC) and also used the services of the Missouri Division of Employment Security. St. Louis primarily relied on the services provided by the Employment Connection (EC), which was co-located with a substance abuse treatment program, Drug Alcohol Rehabilitation and Treatment, Inc., and OPTS case management and PO staff. Tampa OPTS most often used the services of the Florida Job Services. Both St. Louis and Tampa used vocational rehabilitation services for eligible clients, who include individuals with physical or mental handicaps that interfere with or preclude their ability to work. OPTS case managers determined

that some clients could be eligible for these services because substance abuse problems can be considered disabilities.

Employment services. Across the sites, the various employment organizations provided a range of services, differing in intensity and duration. Core elements included assessment of client skills and career interests; basic job-search skills training, largely focused on how to develop a resume, complete applications, identify job openings, and conduct oneself on job interviews; and job-referral and placement services. A few agencies offered more extensive services, such as basic education or GED courses, vocational skills training, apprenticeship programs, other opportunities for on-the-job training, and support services for work-related needs. (See “Preliminary Employment Outcomes.”)

Challenges in serving OPTS clients

Not all OPTS clients required employment services or used the services offered. Some individuals returned to jobs they had occupied prior to their

incarceration; others were returning to the community from court-ordered, residential treatment facilities or halfway houses that required offenders to be employed for a period of time before they were released. In addition, some clients independently found employment using their own resources or networks. However, each of the OPTS programs encountered challenges in providing services for the majority of their unemployed clients. Commonly cited difficulties included client resistance to services, a lack of high-quality jobs, limited services accommodating clients with special needs, organizational factors that mitigate against serving some types of clients, and client characteristics that undermined success.

Client resistance. OPTS staff and service providers in all three communities reported some resistance to employment services. Most of the resistance was fairly benign. For example, staff noted that they periodically had to remind clients about the importance of attending scheduled meetings and taking personal responsibility for locating employment, but that they rarely had to exert pressure on clients to follow job leads. However,

PRELIMINARY EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

The OPTS evaluation collected self-reported information from a sample of 398 substance-abusing felony offenders who had been randomly assigned to either OPTS (the treatment group) or routine supervision (the control group, receiving standard services commonly associated with probation and parole). In a preliminary analysis of employment outcomes based on a sample of 261 cases (139 OPTS clients and 122 controls) for whom both baseline and 1-year followup surveys were available, 82 percent of the OPTS group, compared with 73 percent of the control group, had a full-time job during their first year of community-based supervision. OPTS was found to have had a statistically significant positive effect on full-time employment:

- **Periods of gainful employment.** OPTS clients were employed full time for an average of 6.4 months during their first year, compared with 5.1 months of average full-time employment for the control group during that same timeframe.
- **Job-search skills.** More OPTS clients reported improvements in their ability to identify job openings, complete job applications, and successfully interview.
- **Job-related behavior.** More OPTS clients reported improvements in their ability to consistently arrive on time for work, get along with supervisors and coworkers, and receive positive reviews or increased responsibilities because they were doing a good job.

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some clients actively resisted participating in the employment programs to which they were referred. Clients offered a range of explanations for this behavior, including:

- They did not need help and preferred to find a job on their own.
- The program was too intrusive in its time demands (i.e., they did not believe they needed to attend daily sessions).
- The curriculum was designed with a different population in mind and did not suit their needs.
- They had already been through this exact training component or a similar job-search skills program and did not want to repeat it.
- They had little confidence in the agency's ability to help them find a well-paying job with opportunity for advancement.

Overcoming resistance. Resistance was handled on a case-by-case basis. Generally, case managers could resolve problems by identifying each client's issues and suggesting acceptable alternatives. Occasionally, sterner measures were required, and OPTS POs were instrumental in reminding clients that employment was a condition of supervision and that they needed to comply with the requirements of the services to which their case managers directed them. Some POs reinforced the message by discussing clients' plans for obtaining jobs during scheduled meetings, engaging in development activities to identify job openings, or routinely verifying client employment by checking pay stubs or contacting employers.

Service capacity and scope. Case managers and POs were often sympathetic to clients' objections because they considered some of them to be valid. At various times, key OPTS staff regarded employment services offered under the program as not

being as strong as some of the other service components. Among the weaknesses noted was the fact that some of the employment services providers had limited capacity and were ill-prepared to place clients in diverse and high-quality jobs. Regarding capacity, employment agencies may not be able to respond efficiently in providing intensive services to many clients simultaneously. Some agencies acknowledged waiting periods of 2 to 3 weeks. Although this may not seem like a long time, many clients were frustrated by having to wait before their assisted job hunt could begin in earnest; some were concerned about economic problems, while others were pressured by their POs to comply with the employment requirements of supervision.

Many of the employment agencies had structured their operations to serve the least skilled, least educated job seekers. Some employment services repeatedly dealt with only a handful of employers representing high-turnover industries with a steady need for new labor. Many of these types of positions paid minimum wage or less. Apparently, few of the collaborating employment services had a policy such as that of the Florida Job Services; the lowest wage it deemed acceptable in identifying suitable job openings for client placement was \$5 per hour (which exceeded the minimum wage—in place until October 1996—of \$4.25 per hour).

Most of the service providers networked with a limited number of market sectors mainly offering low-paying, entry-level positions (e.g., fast food operations, unskilled factory jobs) and were unable to adequately serve clients with paraprofessional or professional skills and experience. Because of this, and despite the stereotype that offenders are hard to place because of deficient skills and a lack of legitimate work experience, St. Louis, for example, struggled to place experienced, educated

clients in positions of responsibility paralleling those they had held prior to their incarceration.

Augmenting services. Case managers in each of the OPTS sites responded to deficits in their employment services capacity or their scope by cultivating relationships with an expanded network of service providers. In addition, case managers and POs became more directly involved in trying to identify suitable job openings. Also, in Tampa and St. Louis, case managers referred some clients to temporary employment agencies, which provided an opportunity for clients to update their skills in short-term work assignments that sometimes led to permanent positions.

Organizational barriers and solutions. Other barriers were introduced by employment services' requirements. For example, some agencies limited the number of times a client could be served or the timeframe within which they could return for services. St. Louis's Employment Connection required people to wait 1 year after job placement before returning to request assistance in finding another job. However, the agency made an exception for OPTS clients, permitting them to return for assistance more frequently because the clients experienced high job-turnover rates.

A different kind of problem was encountered in Kansas City. FEC requires that its clients have a fixed address to receive its employment services because lack of a stable or permanent address complicates service delivery. However, some OPTS clients are homeless—they may be living in short-term transitional housing or moving from one relative's or friend's home to another—and have difficulty meeting this requirement. Program staff tried to resolve the issue by referring such clients to the Salvation Army. However, this solution was not always workable because the Salvation Army charged a

modest fee, which some individuals were not able to pay without a job.

Client placement. In addition to barriers presented by external factors, some difficulties may be introduced because of characteristics of the client. Employment counselors typically expressed the view that if clients wanted to work, they could be placed in jobs. Realistically, however, some clients were harder to place than others. Clients who could not read or write were difficult to place, although they could be helped through the vocational rehabilitation service assisting individuals with disabilities. Also, women were somewhat harder to place than men because many had young children and, as a result, required more flexibility in working arrangements or additional services, such as assistance in securing suitable child care.

Staff of the employment services agencies reported that clients were relatively easy to place in jobs, even with their histories of substance abuse and criminal activity, when potential employers were familiar with the backgrounds of the population being referred from OPTS and its service-providing agencies. In general, clients were encouraged to acknowledge their criminal history on job applications or in interviews, especially when dealing with employers unfamiliar with their background. (The criminal history will be found, in any event, if the employer performs a records check.) Employment counselors often suggested that on their resumes and applications clients first emphasize positive aspects, such as education, training, or experience, and then briefly discuss their incarceration history.

Job retention. Apparently, many employers were willing to hire recovering addicts. However, relapse was always a major issue. Some employers will be supportive through a client's relapse; others will not only terminate the

employee but also refuse to accept future placements from the service agency. As one counselor reported, employers may feel it is not cost effective, especially if they invested time and money on training the new hire. Some employment counselors mentioned that tax incentives for employers have been intermittently offered in both Florida and Missouri and suggested that they are an asset in attracting and maintaining a spectrum of employers willing to work with probationer and parolee populations.

OPTS clients demonstrated fairly high job-turnover rates: One counselor estimated that clients stayed in their first job approximately 1 month and that some clients did not settle into employment until after their second or third placement. According to counselors, some clients repeatedly displayed poor work habits or attitudes, while others quit with little or no warning. In some cases, this was because of substance abuse relapse. Some of the employment counselors reported that they will work with a client to negotiate time off for relapse treatment or to secure new employment, although they find it harder to place a client in a second job if the person has been dismissed from a prior position because of a relapse.

Lessons Learned

OPTS case managers play a central role in directly delivering and brokering services as well as in effectively serving as advocates for their clients. By and large, case managers were knowledgeable about community resources and able to link clients to appropriate services; had flexibility that may not exist in the offender-PO relationship; and had frequent client contact under a variety of circumstances: in their own or other providers' offices, by telephone, through home visits, or by onsite

meetings at the client's workplace. In addition, OPTS case managers reached out to employers to inform them about the program and educate them about the potential benefits of hiring an ex-offender. Staff at the employment services organizations in at least one site noted that OPTS clients differed from other individuals they served in that they had case managers who provided significant encouragement and followup, which appeared to motivate OPTS clients to be more seriously committed to finding and sustaining gainful employment. As one case manager put it, "Clients appreciate the chance to try and make it on their own, and case managers help clients get that chance."

Programs such as OPTS should cultivate relationships with more than one service provider in each service domain. In employment services, it is important to include providers that have experience working with offender populations but that also are prepared to offer services to meet the needs of a diverse group of clients. Forming collaborative relationships with multiple employment services providers should result in such benefits as an increased capacity to serve numerous high-need clients simultaneously in a timely fashion and more depth in the services offered because providers can be selected to respond to different service needs (e.g., some may offer training, while others offer job-placement assistance) or to link clients to different market sectors.

By design, OPTS programs forged many of their service provider alliances either before or shortly after the program was initiated. The process for selecting service partners should retain some flexibility. Service providers may be included (or conversely, overlooked) based on who was involved during the planning phase. Although advanced planning is otherwise desirable, decisionmaking

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often occurs before staff have been exposed to clients and their actual needs. Some of the originally selected providers may be unprepared to serve the range of clients that subsequently enter the program, or they may be unable or unwilling to introduce new approaches into their preexisting service configuration.

Actively working with employers as well as employees is important. Several staff and service providers across the three sites expressed frustration with the lack of high-quality positions available to their clients. A number of case managers felt the program and employment services providers needed to be more proactive in promoting the program to employers, networking with employers before client intake, and finding willing employers before clients are ready to be placed in jobs. Stronger working relationships with employers have other potential benefits. Networking may help shape employers' expectations and willingness to deal in a more realistic and, possibly, tolerant fashion with offenders returning to the workforce. At a minimum, improved communication between employers and program staff or service providers may alert case managers or employment counselors to emerging workplace problems, which can be resolved before they undermine a client's success. For example, one of the agencies created a new position—work adjustment counselor, who serves as a liaison between employed clients, employers, referral agencies, and OPTS staff—to assist in solving worksite problems by counseling employees and employers who are experiencing adjustment difficulties, which may boost job-retention rates.

Incentives may be needed to induce employers to hire ex-offenders. Although some employment counselors believed that inducements were not necessary, others reported they had prior experience when tax credits to employers were available and felt the lack of such incentives was a problem. Some of the employment services agencies were able to bond clients; others were unable to and had to either seek employers that did not require bonded employees or refer bondable clients to State agencies, such as Missouri's State Employment Security Office.

Clients trying to pursue job training to achieve more stable, better paying jobs experienced significant counterpressures. Case managers frequently expressed the belief that clients need to develop career skills to obtain more economically and personally rewarding employment. Although vocational training is often cited as the key to long-term placement success, it is among the weakest service link. Probationers and parolees must be employed to comply with supervision requirements. Also, they generally need income to cover minimal housing and living expenses. As a result, they are frequently pressured into accepting the first job offer they receive—generally a low-paying position in a high-turnover operation. One case manager suggested establishing a safe haven of transitional housing that includes employment and job training to facilitate successful reentry. She pointed out that existing, safe transitional housing charges clients rent, so they must be working within 21 days to cover even minimal costs.

Coordination and co-location of services is beneficial to clients, OPTS staff, and service providers. Some benefits of coordinating services were seen in the improved employment outcomes evidenced by OPTS clients. "One-stop shopping" is more convenient for clients—it saves their time and limited resources (including money for transportation to various job locations). Team members (case managers, POs, and service providers) liked the face-to-face interaction across agency lines and the opportunity to share decisionmaking, particularly when troubleshooting difficult cases. St. Louis staff pointed out the benefits of co-located services, but they also noted that this may involve additional costs to rent satellite space to accommodate personnel who are being repositioned to one-stop service locations.

Notes

1. For example, see Cloward, R., and L. Ohlin, *Delinquency and Opportunity: Theory of Delinquent Gangs*, New York: The Free Press, 1960.
2. For example, see Sampson, R.J., and J. Laub, *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points Through Life*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
3. Rossman, S.B., and S. Sridharan, *Using Survey Data to Study Linkages Among Crime, Drug Use, and Life Circumstances: Findings From the Opportunity to Succeed Program*, Washington, DC: Urban Institute Report, November 1997.

Smart Cards: An Information Tool for the Future



By Lois Pilant*

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) is leading the way toward a revolution in inmate access and information management with a pilot project that has prisoners using “smart cards.”

Peggy Ritchie-Matsumoto, deputy director of ODRC’s Office of Management Information Systems and a systems strategist, said this National Institute of Justice-funded project marries computer chips with photo identification cards. Initially, the cards will be used to track the medication activity of 2,300 inmates in a medium-security men’s facility.

“It’s like a driver’s license with a computer chip in it,” Ritchie-Matsumoto said. “Inmates’ photos are electronically stored, as is the data that says who they are and their inmate number. When inmates come up to the pharmacy, they put their card into a reader that reads the microchip on the card. If I’m the pharmacist, what I see on my computer screen is their pharmacy record. I know what their history is and what medication they are supposed to have. I also know if they have refused meds before, or if they’ve not picked up their meds. This system will track all of that.”

**Lois Pilant is President and CEO of Wings Publishing.*

SMART CARDS

The processor and memory chip are embedded in the cards, and they have the capacity for off-line storage as well as encryption for security. One of the benefits of such a system will be the increased ability to manage inmate data; another is that it will speed the process of dispensing medication. ODRC currently spends 1 minute per patient dispensing medication. The smart card is expected to significantly reduce the time required to complete this paper-intensive process from 1 minute to a few seconds.

The project relies on software created by the Battelle Institute, a nonprofit company that works on national security, health, environmental, transportation, and industrial technologies. Battelle has been working on smart card technologies since 1980. It helped the U.S. Department of Defense develop electronic dog tags for soldiers in the Persian Gulf and created a smart card for colleges that deducts purchases from student accounts.

Smart cards can include several different types of technologies and are issued for a variety of purposes. Some provide access to restricted areas; others are service related, such as telephone calling cards or those that deduct purchases from the holder's account. Some are for identification purposes only; others enable remote payment, money access, and information exchange via computer, telephone, or television "set top" boxes. Biometric information from fingerprints, eye scans, or "finger geometry," which takes measurements of a finger and converts it into a three-dimensional model for matching, can all be used as identifiers.

The first use of smart cards in a corrections environment was in the Naval Consolidated Brig in Miramar, California. That program, initially called the Multi-Technology Automated Reader Card, or MARC, used three different media: a bar code, a magnetic strip, and an 8-kb integrated-circuit computer chip. Steve Morrison, who manages the smart

card program at the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center's (NLECTC's) Southeast Regional Center in Charleston, South Carolina, heard about the MARC program and recognized its potential. "I knew immediately that smart cards could reduce manpower and paperwork. We could use them to document medical treatment. They also could carry emergency medical information for first responders. That information would be stored in the chip, and first responders would carry a palmtop smart card reader to access the data, determine current medical problems, and get a medication history,"

Morrison said. He also envisioned that the cards could be used for access control and to record inmate movements as well as an electronic purse for commissary purchases and to store biometric or demographic data.

In addition to the ODRC project, NLECTC-Southeast worked with the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center in Charleston to develop a

smart card biometric access control system that uses a smart card and an ultrasound fingerprint reader. It is currently being used by the U.S. Marine Corps to control two-man access to sensitive areas in Hawaii.

For all of their potential, however, smart cards have not been especially well received by the public. When Utah legislators

talked about implementing a smart card driver's license in 1997, one of the biggest concerns was about the privacy of the data. When New Jersey began considering a smart card driver's license that would include a fingerprint of the driver, the American Civil Liberties Union protested, and the idea eventually was scrapped. Privacy issues also figure prominently in discussions about using smart cards for health care.

This lack of acceptance in the United States is the antithesis of the cards' widespread use in Europe, where most automated teller machines require a thumbprint for identification, and in Australia, where there is a national debit card system and where noncash payments are growing at about 50 percent each year.

"There is a lot of resistance to smart cards in the general population," said ODRC's Ritchie-Matsumoto, "which is why part of the research is happening in closed environments like prisons, universities, and the medical arena. The public in this country doesn't seem quite ready to have smart cards, but it is definitely where we're going. Pretty soon our computer keyboards will have biometrics built right into them. Even now there is an identification

"Pretty soon our computer keyboards will have biometrics built right into them. Even now there is an identification device that can be plugged into the keyboard."

device that can be plugged into the keyboard.”

Although smart card technology is still in its infancy in the United States—Americans bought only 2 percent of the 826 million cards sold worldwide in 1996—its popularity is beginning to grow. A 1997 conference sponsored by the Smart Card Industry Association boasted 530 exhibitors and 7,500 attendees from 65 countries. Total U.S. card sales are expected to increase as well, from 2 percent of worldwide sales in 1996 to 15 percent by 2000.

The ODRC smart card project is not only addressing the technical aspects of this technology.

Its attendant issues also are being considered, such as the legality and acceptability of an electronic signature and the problem of authenticating a pharmacist’s signature. ODRC is working with the State’s pharmacy board on a workable solution.

A second problem may be inmates’ reactions to the cards.

“That is difficult to predict,” said Ritchie-Matsumoto. “Will they destroy their cards? Will they try to exchange their cards? Will they try to carve the chip out of the cards? If this project is successful and the cards become so totally integrated that the inmates need it for meals, access to certain areas, or to the commissary,

my guess is that they won’t do anything to damage them.”

Morrison agreed. “Early on, we identified the fact that the smart card should only be used for positive data storage and collection. If nega-

tive information such as disciplinary action is incorporated, the inmates would have no incentive to keep the cards intact.”

In the early stages, the smart cards will be integrated with ODRC’s electronic photo-imaging system so that

when the card is used, it will automatically bring up a picture of the inmate on a computer screen. In the future, however, plans are to activate magnetic strips, bar coding, and some form of biometric identification. Inmate classifications, medical and mental health information, and parole information also will be stored on the microchip.

“Smart cards are the tool of the future in corrections facilities to save valuable staff time and paperwork,” said Morrison. “In this age of computers and rapidly changing technology, we must keep pace with the growing demand to do more with less. Smart cards can help us take that step into the future. The results of the Ohio project should lay the groundwork for the use of smart cards in prisons and jails.”

For more information on the project, contact Peggy Ritchie-Matsumoto at the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 614-752-1262, or Steve Morrison, the program manager at the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center—Southeast in Charleston, South Carolina, 800-292-4385.

“ In this age of computers and rapidly changing technology, we must keep pace with the growing demand to do more with less.”

1998 R&E conference set for July

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and other Office of Justice Programs (OJP) bureaus will sponsor the Annual Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation July 26–29 in Washington, D.C.

The conference is designed for criminal justice researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and students interested in the criminal justice field. The purposes of this national conference are to:

- Convene NIJ, BJA, OJJDP, and OJP grantees currently conducting criminal justice program evaluations and research studies, together with other participants interested in evaluation and research results.
- Create a national forum for the exchange of evaluation results, research findings, and program information related to crime, drug control, and violence initiatives.
- Produce a summary of program abstracts to report on promising programs and approaches in critical areas of preventing and controlling crime, drugs, and violence.
- Showcase the Federal Government's priorities in criminal and juvenile justice research and evaluation funding.

This conference will include 45 plenary sessions, panels, and training workshops. More than 125 leading criminal justice evaluators, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers will be featured as presenters.

This year's conference will provide a special forum where prominent researchers and discussants will synthesize findings on the following major themes:

- Viewing Crime and Justice From a Collaborative Perspective: Raising the Questions.
- The Changing Role of Research in Helping Collaborations Work.
- Replicating Complex Community Partnerships: Can It Be Done?
- Examples of How Collaboration Has Worked in Domestic Violence Partnerships.

Panels will present findings on a wide range of criminal justice topics and related health, behavioral, social service, and community research and evaluation efforts.

For more information, call 703–684–5300, fax 703–739–5533, or e-mail nijpcs@ilj.org.

NIJ research to be highlighted at APPA

NIJ research will be highlighted at the upcoming American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) conference August 29 through September 2 in Norfolk, Virginia. Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) staff members will lead panel discussions on the following topics:

- Managing Sex Offenders in the Community (chaired by Voncile Gowdy). Three specific topics will be discussed: the impact of sex offenders on Wisconsin communities, the use of lie detector tests to improve the management of sex offenders living in the community, and the risk factors contributing to recidivism of sex offenders.
- Institutional Treatment and the Implications for Aftercare: Findings From Current Research on the Effectiveness of Substance Abuse Treatment Programs (chaired by Laura Winterfield). Several NIJ grantees will present findings from

their current work on Residential Substance Abuse Treatment for State Prisoners (RSAT). Among the programs to be highlighted are the Delaware Key-Crest program for substance-abusing adult offenders (Steve Martin), an aftercare program for youths who have completed their sentences at the Barrett facility (Jill Gordon), aftercare for the Maryland RSAT program being run in local jails for adults (Faye Taxman), and a parolee RSAT program operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (Douglas Young).

In addition, Nancy La Vigne and the Crime Mapping Research Center (CMRC) staff will present a crime mapping workshop outlining the benefits to the criminal justice system of geographic information systems (GIS) technology. The CMRC staff will explain how this technology enhances the ability of researchers and practitioners to identify hot spots and analyze complex spatial patterns of crime.

NGA Center/NIJ regional workshops planning under way

The National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) is working with NIJ to plan three regional policy forums tentatively set for fall 1998, winter 1999, and spring 1999. These forums will be designed to inform policymakers about the latest research on crime prevention and the effective administration of juvenile justice and corrections. NIJ will be coordinating with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in developing issues and topics.

While topics for sessions are still in the planning stages, NGA is particularly interested in discussing research on the following issues:

- Identifying children prone to violence before they become dangerous and implementing appropriate school- and community-based interventions.
- Promoting effective community-based primary and secondary crime and drug abuse prevention strategies targeting teens and preteens.
- Lessening the allure of gangs and combating violent youth gangs and drug-related youth crime.
- Reducing recidivism rates and improving outcomes of juvenile

offenders by reexamining preadjudicatory, probation, and community-based treatment; and nonsecure residential, secure residential, and aftercare services.

- Treating and managing violent juvenile and youth populations within both the juvenile and adult correctional systems.

In addition, the NGA Center has expressed an interest in discussing relevant violence and criminal justice research within the context of welfare

reform implementation. Sessions may focus on policymakers' concerns about domestic violence within welfare families. A joint NGA/NIJ planning group will consider these and other topics for the forums. After each forum, the NGA Center will publish and disseminate *Issue Briefs*, publications highlighting the issues, research findings, and best practices. In addition, *Issue Briefs* will be posted on the juvenile crime page of the NGA Center Web site.

NIJ IN THE JOURNALS

The following articles are based on studies sponsored by NIJ. Copies are available on loan from NCJRS; in some cases, photocopies may be obtained. For information on availability, call NCJRS at 800-851-3420; or send an Internet e-mail to askncjrs@ncjrs.org. Please cite the accession (ACCN) number.

“Changing Patterns of Homicide and Social Policy,” *Homicide Studies* 1(2)(May 1997): 190-196, by M.A. Zahn and K.M. Jamieson, grant number 95-IJ-CX-0115, ACCN 170167. This article reports the findings of a 2-year homicide study. The authors examine homicide during a 15-year timeframe from 1980 to 1994 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Phoenix, Arizona, and St. Louis, Missouri. The research tests hypotheses related to urban economic and social environments and how changes in these conditions may be related to changing types of homicide (e.g., circumstance and relationship). The results of this study may provide an indication of how social-structural conditions evident in these urban areas influence the pattern of lethal violence. Of

particular importance with this research design is the ability to identify meaningful approaches to violence prevention that are grounded in the experiences of these cities.

“Consent to Search and Seize: Evaluating an Innovative Youth Firearm Suppression Program,” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 59(1)(Winter 1996): 197-220, by R. Rosenfeld and S.H. Decker, grant number 95-IJ-CX-0067, ACCN 169550. This article describes the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department's Firearm Suppression Program (FSP) conducted by St. Louis' Mobile Reserve Unit (a police squad that responds to pockets of crime and violence throughout the city). FSP seeks parental consent to search for and seize guns from juveniles, considers criticisms of its methods and purposes, and presents a plan for evaluating the operation and outcome of this and similar programs.

“Do Fair Procedures Matter? The Effect of Procedural Justice on Spouse Assault,” *Law and Society Review* 31(1)(1997): 163-204, by R. Paternoster, R. Bachman, R. Brame,

and L.W. Sherman, grant number 96-IJ-CX-0058, ACCN 169870. This analysis of the Milwaukee Domestic Violence Experiment explores whether the perception of police procedural fairness by suspects arrested for spouse assault effectively inhibited subsequent violence. Consistent with expectations, procedural justice suppressed subsequent violence. Suspects who were arrested and perceived they were treated in a procedurally fair manner had subsequent spouse assault rates that were as low as those for suspects who were warned and then released without arrest.

“Double Your Trouble: Dual Arrest in Family Violence,” *Journal of Family Violence* 12(2)(June 1997): 139-157, by M.E. Martin, grant number 89-IJ-CX-0038, ACCN 169580. This study uses data from family violence cases in Connecticut in which both the perpetrator and the victim were arrested to examine the characteristics of the crime and the people involved. Emphasis was placed on the women arrested, 40 percent of whom were previously victimized in a domestic assault incident. Those involved in dual arrests were primarily white,

young, nonurban, unmarried, employed persons. Findings suggest that dual arrests may reflect both the differential use of violence in domestic relations and the excessive enforcement of arrest policies by some police agencies.

“Gang Membership and Criminal Processing: A Test of the ‘Master Status’ Concept,” *Justice Quarterly* 14(3)(September 1997): 407–427, by T.D. Miethe and R.C. McCorkle, grant number 94-IJ-CX-0053, ACCN 170262. This study provides some support for the characterization of gang membership as a master status, finding that gang membership had a significant net effect on both charging and sentencing decisions. Data collected from 370 criminal defendants processed in 1993 in Clark County, Nevada, also reveal that sentencing decisions for gang members were far less likely to be affected by other offender and offense characteristics than those for nongang members.

“Impact of Prison Crowding on Male and Female Imprisonment Rates in Minnesota: A Research Note,” *Justice Quarterly* 14(4)(December 1997): 793–809, by L. Stolzenberg and S.J. D’Alessio, grant number 96-CE-VX-0008, ACCN 169867. This study examines the relationship between gender and criminal sentencing. The researchers used longitudinal data from Minnesota to test whether gender-specific levels of prison crowding interact with mitigated departures from the State’s sentencing guidelines in mediating the relationship between gender and rate of imprisonment. Results suggest that legally mandated sentencing factors are important in determining severity of sanction for both males and females but that male offenders are more likely to receive mitigated departures when crowding levels are high in male prisons. This relationship exists even though the women’s prison in Minnesota is in reality more overcrowded

than the male prison. These findings cast doubt on the frequent assertion that female defendants are treated more leniently in criminal sentencing than similarly situated male defendants.

“Meaning of Punishment: Inmates’ Orientation to the Prison Experience,” *Prison Journal* 77(2)(June 1997): 135–167, by P. Van Voorhis, S.L. Browning, M. Simon, and J. Gordon, grant number 85-IJ-CX-0063, ACCN 169925. Inmate attitudes toward the prison experience and perception of sentencing intents were studied by means of a survey of 114 minimum-security and 111 maximum-security Federal prisoners in Indiana 4 months after prison admission. Data were collected as part of a larger classification study conducted at the United States Federal Penitentiary and the Federal Prison Camp at Terre Haute, Indiana, between 1986 and 1988. Multivariate analyses for the penitentiary inmates reveal that inmates most likely to focus on rehabilitation were nonwhite, young, unemployed at the time of their arrest, and not entrenched in crime as a lifestyle. In contrast, older white inmates and those employed at arrest were more likely to believe that prison served no purpose. The findings are less conclusive for the minimum-security inmates.

“Measurement Error in Calls-for-Service as an Indicator of Crime,” *Criminology* 35(4)(November 1997): 705–726, by D.A. Klinger and G.S. Bridges, grant number 95-IJ-CX-0023, ACCN 169421. This study used data from an observational study of policing in 60 neighborhoods to examine the limitations of the use of calls for service to police 911 centers to measure crime at the address, neighborhood, and city level. The results reveal that calls-for-service records substantially undercount the amount of crime that police officers encounter on patrol and indicate that data from the Uniform Crime Reports have a heretofore

unrecognized advantage over data on calls for service. Remarkable variability existed across crime types in the discrepancies between dispatch crime counts and crimes that police officers encountered.

“National Survey of Pursuits and the Use of Police Force: Data From Law Enforcement Agencies,” *Journal of Criminal Justice* 25(4)(1997): 315–323, by D.J. Kenney and G.P. Alpert, grant number 93-IJ-CX-0061, ACCN 170274. This article presents the results of a survey conducted between October 1994 and May 1995 to collect pursuit and use-of-force information from police agencies throughout the United States. Nearly all police agencies reported having written policies regarding pursuit situations. Municipal police agencies were significantly more likely than county police agencies to restrict pursuits to felony incidents, and municipal police agencies restricted pursuits to marked vehicles and imposed supervisory responsibility more often than county police agencies. Twenty-five percent of police agencies said pursuits resulted in officer use of force, in addition to the pursuit itself, to apprehend a suspect.

“Public Support for Correctional Treatment: The Continuing Appeal of the Rehabilitative Ideal,” *Prison Journal* 77(3)(September 1997): 237–258, by B.K. Applegate, F.T. Cullen, and B.S. Fisher, grant number 96-IJ-CX-0007, ACCN 170256. The authors studied public attitudes toward rehabilitation using a survey of a randomly selected sample of 1,000 Ohio residents. Results show that not only does the public still believe that rehabilitation should be an integral part of corrections policy, but such support for a treatment approach is fairly consistent across demographic groups. Findings also indicate that policymakers consistently overestimate public punitiveness attitude and consistently underestimate public support for rehabilitation.

“Youth Violence in Boston: Gun Markets, Serious Youth Offenders, and a Use-Reduction Strategy,”

Law and Contemporary Problems 59(1)(Winter 1996): 147–196, by D.M. Kennedy, A.M. Piehl, and A.A. Braga, grant number 94-IJ-CX-0056, ACCN 169549. This article describes the findings of the Boston Gun Project.

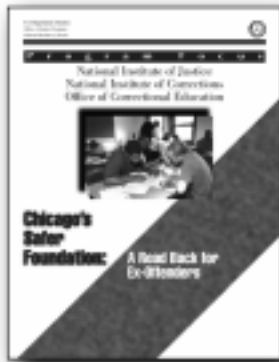
Participants in the project made important discoveries about the nature of youth violence in Boston; namely, the centrality of gangs and gang conflict; the criminality of both victims and offenders; and the “knownness” of high-risk individuals and groups to front-line police, probation, and gang mediation workers. They also made

significant discoveries about the illicit gun market, including the importance of intra-State trafficking and a disproportionate youth preference, relative to other criminal consumers, for new semiautomatic pistols, and their apparent preference for particular brands of those pistols.

RECENT NIJ PUBLICATIONS

The following recent and forthcoming NIJ publications are available in both online and hardcopy formats. To order hardcopy, call NCJRS at 800-851-3420; or send an e-mail to askncjrs@ncjrs.org. Electronic copies can be downloaded from the NIJ Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>.

Chicago’s Safer Foundation: A Road Back for Ex-Offenders, Program Focus, by Peter Finn, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute



of Justice, June 1998, 20 pp., NCJ 167575. This report examines a highly successful effort to help ex-offenders find employment and avoid further criminal activity. Produced in conjunction with the National Institute of Corrections and the Office of Correctional Education, this publication details the Safer Foundation’s program for success

through data analysis, project evaluations, and firsthand accounts from clients, employers, and staffers.

Community Policing in Action: Lessons From an Observational Study, Research in Progress Preview, by Stephen Mastrofski, Roger B. Parks, and Robert E. Worden, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, June 1998, 4 pp., FS 000199. Community policing seeks to establish crime-prevention partnerships between the police and the neighborhoods they serve. This report presents research demonstrating that cooperation between the police and citizens created a feeling of security among neighborhood residents, officers with community policing training were more likely to control a citizen at the request of another citizen than officers without community policing training, and the police supervisor role had changed from controlling officers to supporting them.

Crack, Powder Cocaine, and Heroin: Drug Purchase and Use Patterns in Six U.S. Cities, Research Report, by K. Jack Riley, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, December 1997, 46 pp., NCJ 167265. Drug purchase and consumption patterns differ substantially depending on the drug involved. For example, crack users are more likely to know numerous dealers, live on the

street or in a shelter, and purchase the drug in their own neighborhood. Having such information can shape the way law enforcement officers, service providers, and policymakers address the problem. This report, produced in conjunction with the Office of National Drug Control Policy, explores the differences in drug markets with the intention of forecasting future trends in drug use and purchase.

Early Childhood Victimization Among Incarcerated Adult Male Felons, Research Preview, by Robin Weeks and Cathy Spatz Widom, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, April 1998, 2 pp., FS



000204. An NIJ-sponsored study finds that 68 percent of male inmates at a New York State prison suffered some type of abuse—physical abuse, sexual

abuse, or neglect—before the age of 12. The study, outlined in this Preview, presents findings that address the widespread preconceptions that most incarcerated felons were victims of abuse and that sexual offenders were most likely sexually abused as children.

Forensic Laboratories: Handbook for Facility Planning, Design, Construction, and Moving, Research Report, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, April 1998, 212 pp., NCJ 168106. Designing and constructing a forensic laboratory requires a high level of diligence and attention to detail. NIJ, in collaboration with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, created this report to help laboratory managers and developers maximize organizational efficiency, ensure the economical expenditure of resources, and develop a safe, secure, and well-designed facility. This handbook provides useful guidelines throughout all stages of production.

Kids, COPS, & Communities, Issues and Practices, by Marcia R. Chaiken, U.S. Department of Justice,



National Institute of Justice, June 1998, 67 pp., NCJ 169599. National youth organizations such as 4-H Clubs and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America have had years of success helping at-risk youths develop into responsible citizens. Their experiences,

and the recent innovations in community policing, provide the basis for this report. Designed to help law enforcement, administrators, and policymakers prevent youth violence, *Kids, COPS, & Communities* explores juvenile crime and cooperative, community-oriented means of preventing it.

Predicting Criminal Behavior Among Authorized Purchasers of Handguns, Research in Progress Preview, by Garen Wintemute, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, April 1998, 4 pp., FS 000198. This report reveals that handgun purchasers with a criminal record are 3.7 times more likely to commit a criminal offense than buyers with no prior criminal history. The study, based on historical data, also shows that the risk of reoffense rises with an increase in the rate of prior offending. In an appeal to update laws that prevent certain groups from buying firearms, the report suggests further research to define those high-risk populations.

Stalking in America: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey, Research in Brief, by Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, April 1998, 20 pp., NCJ 169592. Highly publicized incidents of celebrity victims have focused public attention on stalking. NIJ and the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control collaborated on this report to answer some fundamental questions about stalking. The study, based on the first national data on stalking collected in the United States, describes the prevalence of stalking, the characteristics of victims and offenders, what stalking is, how often it is reported, and the consequences of stalking on individuals and society.

Successful Job Placement For Ex-Offenders: The Center for Employment Opportunities, Program Focus, by Peter Finn, U.S. Department of

Justice, National Institute of Justice, March 1998, 20 pp., NCJ 168102. New York City's Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) seeks to lower recidivism by addressing one of the primary reasons ex-offenders become reoffenders: unemployment. Many offenders have difficulty finding permanent, unsubsidized, well-paid employment after release because they lack job-seeking experience, a work history, and occupational skills. This



report focuses on the program's successful use of short-term work crews to help recently released offenders develop job skills and become reliable employees.

Texas' Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders), Program Focus, by Peter Finn, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, June 1998, 20 pp., NCJ 168637. Re-Integration of Offenders, or Project RIO, is Texas' innovative answer to recidivism. Based on the theory that ex-offenders who find steady employment soon after release are less likely to reoffend, Project RIO begins job training while offenders are still incarcerated and continues service after release. A cooperative effort between NIJ, the National Institute of Corrections, and the Office of Correctional Education, this report presents data evaluations and firsthand testimony of Project RIO's success.

Trends in Juvenile Violence in European Countries, Research in Progress Preview, by Christian Pfeiffer, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, May 1998, 4 pp., FS 000202. Since the mid-1980s, juvenile violence has risen sharply across the European Union. This study links the increase in juvenile violence to an increase in unemployment and poverty. The report also notes the rise in juvenile victimization and details two studies currently under way that will analyze these trends and recommend solutions.

The Unrealized Potential of DNA Testing, Research in Action, by Victor Walter Weedn and John W. Hicks, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, June 1998, 8 pp., NCJ 170596. DNA analysis is recognized as a vital part of criminal investigations. Improvements such as detailed collection procedures will result in more samples, and new testing methods will cut testing times



from weeks to days. The creation of networks of DNA databases will increase the usefulness of DNA profiling. This report discusses the impact of innovations on collection procedures, laboratories, and databases that will help criminal justice professionals realize the full potential of DNA evidence.

Using Gunshot Detection Technology in High-Crime Areas, Research in Progress Preview, by Lorraine Green Mazerolle, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 4 pp.,

June 1998, FS 000201. A gunshot detection system is composed of acoustic sensors that identify and discriminate gunshots, transmitting a message to the police computer dispatch center within seconds of firing. Researchers at the University of Cincinnati, with support from NIJ, undertook this study to determine the accuracy of these systems and their potential impact on police response times and workloads. This publication reports the study findings and makes suggestions for future research.



SOLICITATIONS

Proposals for Comparative, Cross-National Crime Research Challenge Grants. To further the development of cooperative crime prevention, NIJ is soliciting proposals for cross-national research. With decreases in language, communication, information, and technology transfer barriers and the ever-increasing globalization of the economy, cross-national crimes are on the rise. In an effort to address bilateral and multilateral interests, U.S. law enforcement agencies at all levels

have forged new partnerships with their counterparts abroad. The application deadline is September 1, 1998. Call NCJRS at 800-851-3420 to receive a copy of this solicitation (SL 000277).

Data Resources Program Funding for the Analysis of Existing Data.

NIJ is looking for original analyses of previously collected research. This solicitation asks researchers to use information stored in the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data to

develop new ideas on criminal behavior and the criminal justice system. NIJ is particularly interested in studies of NIJ-supported research, comparisons of similar research from different sites, the application of innovative methodologies, and research that can have an immediate impact on the development of programs. Application deadlines are August 15 and December 15, 1998. Call NCJRS at 800-851-3420 to receive a copy of this solicitation (SL 000278).

Violence research consortium sponsors roundtable on violence in schools

The National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR) is a research and education center that focuses on the causes of interpersonal violence in the United States. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation, in partnership with NIJ and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, NCOVR was established in 1995 and is headquartered at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

NCOVR's mission includes advancing research on violence by pursuing a comprehensive research agenda, establishing a data center to share research data, training violence researchers through a fellowship program, and disseminating its research findings to practitioners, policymakers, and the public.

In late June 1998, NCOVR sponsored the first in a series of public interest discussions focusing on key areas related to violence in the United States. The Roundtable on Violence in the Schools brought together a panel of 10 national experts from the researcher, practitioner, and policymaking fields.

The panelists included:

- William Modzeleski, Director, U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program.
- Wesley Mitchell, Chief of Police, Los Angeles Unified School District Police Department.
- Pamela Riley, Director, Center for the Prevention of School Violence, North Carolina State University.
- Ronald Stephens, Executive Director, National School Safety Center, Westlake Village, California.
- Frederick Rivara, Director, Harborview Injury Prevention

and Research Center, Seattle, Washington.

- Mercer Sullivan, Senior Research Fellow, Vera Institute of Justice, New York, New York.
- Jeffrey Fagan, Director, Center for Violence Research and Prevention, Columbia University.
- Faith Samples, Senior Research Associate, CSR Consulting, Washington, D.C.
- Marcia Chaiken, Director of Research, LINC, Alexandria, Virginia.
- James Mercy, Associate Director, Science Division of Violence Prevention, Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The panel was moderated by Mark Scott Kamlet, Dean, H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management, Carnegie Mellon University.

NCOVR plans to produce and disseminate a 20–30 page nontechnical monograph in conjunction with the Roundtable, authored by former *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* writer David Anderson. In addition, a 60-minute videotape synthesizing the discussion will be produced and disseminated. These items will be available in early September for a fee of \$25. NCOVR will accept written requests directed to ber@andrew.cmu.edu; include your full name, title, organization, address, and phone number.

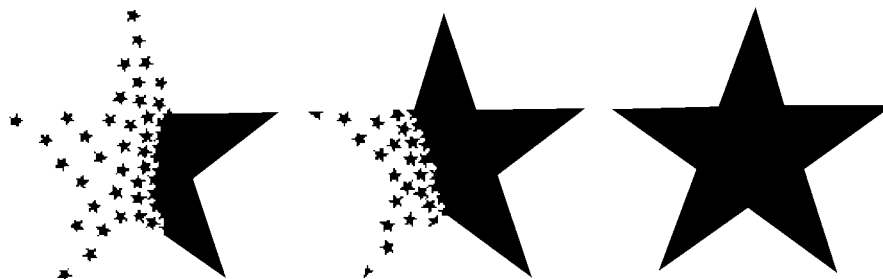
For more information about the National Consortium on Violence Research, the Roundtable on Violence in the Schools, or the availability of the Roundtable monograph and videotape, visit the NCOVR Web site at <http://www.ncovr.heinz.cmu.edu>.

Innovations in American Government: Awards program includes winners in criminal justice

The Innovations in American Government program recognizes creative governmental initiatives that are especially effective in addressing vital public needs. These initiatives can be in any area and at any level of government—municipal, county, tribal, State, or Federal. The program's aim is to draw attention to exemplary achievements in government problem solving and amplify the voices of public innovators in communicating their practices. Special effort is made to identify initiatives that involve interagency collaboration, tap the creativity of frontline employees, reshape agency missions and routines, or entail significant departures from policy.

Administered by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, one of the Nation's foremost schools of public policy, the Innovations program has recognized

INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT



more than 200 programs and administered more than \$13 million in Ford Foundation grants.

Criminal justice winners span diverse fields

As it has since its inception in 1986, the program this year has included among the award winners and finalists a number of initiatives in criminal justice that address issues of pressing concern to the public and policymakers. Of the criminal justice programs selected for recognition in 1997, several have been the subject of NIJ evaluations, reports, or other types of support. The award recipients range widely in scope, covering programs based not only in criminal justice agencies but also in related organizations, such as health services. Among them are initiatives in prevention as well as control, and their aims include reducing gang violence, reducing firearms violence, achieving rational sentencing, streamlining access to correctional information, preventing child abuse, and promoting job skills among at-risk young people.

1997 winners

Operation Ceasefire—preempting gang violence in Boston. In a city where funerals for children and teenagers—most a result of gang and gun violence—had become all too common, there has been a remarkable turnaround. Part of the recent, dramatic decrease in youth firearms violence may be attributed to a collaborative approach launched by the Boston Police Department, local clergy, probation officers, community workers, educators, and school police. Essentially, the partners in Operation Ceasefire work to identify hot spots of incipient gang trouble and then move swiftly and deliberately to head it off. The program combines education for gang members with severe penalties for possession of even a single bullet.

NIJ-sponsored researchers are evaluating the program, which has been summarized in a recent NIJ publication, *Juvenile Gun Violence and Gun Markets in Boston*, by David M. Kennedy (NIJ Research in Progress Preview, March 1997, FS 000160). The report of the evaluation will also be published by NIJ. (See page 2, “Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right,” to read more on this program.)

Gallery 37—arts-based jobs for at-risk youths. From the metamorphosis of “Block 37,” a vacant eyesore just off downtown Chicago’s Loop, has arisen a job-skills and employment program for the city’s young people. When Block 37 became “Gallery 37,” 14- to 21-year-olds were given the opportunity to work in a multimedia art studio and gallery that focused on the visual and performing arts, literature, media, and architecture. Under the tutelage of professional artists, young people from all over the city are offered paid apprenticeships to produce works for display and sale. Boosting job skills and work habits was and remains the major aim of the program, which has been replicated in several other cities both in this country and abroad.

Structured sentencing—managing prison growth in North Carolina.

Like many other States, North Carolina was concerned about the discrepancy between the sentences required by statute and the length of sentences actually served as well as crowding in prisons. The response was an approach to sentencing that accommodates the requirement for tough sanctions and the need for cost control in corrections. The structured sentencing guidelines enacted by the legislature call for lengthier prison terms for the most serious offenses, with steps taken to strengthen community corrections and intermediate sanctions programs as less costly alternatives to prison for less serious offenders. Computer

analysis ensures that the State’s prisons can handle the sentences imposed.

The approach has proved to be tough on crime, while at the same time has reduced prison crowding. NIJ is sponsoring an evaluation of the program and will publish a report of the findings. An indepth description of the program is presented in the NIJ report *Managing Prison Growth in North Carolina Through Structured Sentencing*, by Ronald F. Wright (NIJ Program Focus, February 1998, NCJ 168944).

1997 finalists

Disarming the Criminal—reducing firearms violence. The strategy behind this Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) program is to focus on gun trafficking as a way to reduce gun violence. The program uses a computer database to help law enforcement throughout the country identify and arrest illegal firearms traffickers. ATF’s automated illegal firearms trafficking information system analyzes data when firearms are recovered in crime investigations, and the system shows trends and patterns that may reveal links to illegal traffickers. This information is then distributed to law enforcement offices.

Since the program’s inception, the amount of time taken to respond to firearms trace requests has been cut, although requests for traces rose 46 percent. As a result of the program, ATF recommended the prosecution of traffickers responsible for marketing more than 34,000 guns and estimated that incarcerating these violators would avert an even greater number of gun crimes.

Constituent Services Office—meeting the need for corrections information. Missouri’s Department of Corrections reduced the number of inmate lawsuits by addressing the root causes of complaints in the correctional system. The Constituent Services Office established

by the department is a clearinghouse that handles questions and complaints—from both inside and outside the system—about the State’s prisons. It helps inmates, their families, and friends to decipher rules and regulations governing prison visits, inmate medical services, and transfer policies. The most important effect has been on the inmates, because ready access to the department has meant scores of complaints have been resolved that otherwise might have resulted in lawsuits. Inmate litigation has declined nearly 70 percent, with attendant cost savings, despite the fact that the prison population has risen by more than half.

Healthy Start of Hawaii—preventing child abuse and neglect. Hawaii’s program prevents child abuse and neglect by identifying and counseling at-risk families early—even before children are born. Operated by the State’s Department of Health, the program offers intensive, home-based services to families with young children. Its community-based assistance is directed at relieving stress on new families before problems start. Followup studies indicate that Healthy Start has been successful in seeking out such families and preventing child abuse and neglect. In operation for more than 10 years, the program has also increased family access to health care, including childhood immunization.

The program is described in an NIJ publication, *Helping to Prevent Child Abuse—and Future Criminal Consequences: Hawai’i Healthy Start*, by Ralph B. Earle (NIJ Program Focus, October 1995, NCJ 156216).

First Offender Prostitution Program—diverting offenders from repeat involvement. San Francisco’s District Attorney’s Office offers first-time offender prostitutes and customers an alternative to the typical and ineffective cycle of arrest, jail, release,

and rearrest. In collaboration with law enforcement and public health and private agencies, the office provides the women and girls counseling and other assistance and the “johns” the opportunity to pay a fine and attend an educational program in lieu of prosecution. Since the program began in 1995, 1,350 women and girls have received services that helped them escape prostitution, and only 4 of the 1,300 customers who have completed the program have reoffended. To date, of the 165 women who have enrolled in substance abuse programs, 68 successfully completed the program and found legal employment.

With NIJ support, the First Offender program was showcased at the second conference on community justice that the Institute sponsored in collaboration with the other bureaus of the Office of Justice Programs. At the conference—“Community Justice: Transforming the System to Serve Communities,” held March 8–10 in Washington,

D.C.—program staff presented details of this innovative strategy.

A look ahead

The semifinalists for 1998 were announced this May. In early September, that list will be narrowed to 25 finalists, with the 10 winners for 1998 selected in October. Each of the 10 winning programs will receive a \$100,000 award, and the remaining 15 finalists will each receive a \$20,000 award.

More information

The Innovations in American Government Web site (<http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/innovations>) has more detailed information about 1997 winners and finalists and those from previous years. The information includes the names of contacts for each program. NIJ’s Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>) also has information about the award recipients. The Innovations program can also be reached at 617-495-0558.

Visit NIJ’s Web Site



For the latest information on NIJ research, programs, and grant opportunities, visit:

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

Janet Reno
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice

Raymond C. Fisher
Associate Attorney General

Laurie Robinson
Assistant Attorney General

Noël Brennan
Deputy Assistant Attorney General

Jeremy Travis
Director, National Institute of Justice

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World Wide Web Site
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>

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<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>
