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R e s e a r c h i n B r i e f

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Issues and Findings

Discussed in this Research in Brief: A national process evaluation of the U.S. Department of Justice's Operation Weed and Seed demonstration program. The study, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, gathered information on Weed and Seed program implementation and activities in 19 sites through the end of 1993.

Key issues: The initiative was launched in 1991 as a comprehensive, coordinated effort to control crime and to improve the quality of life in targeted high-crime neighborhoods. Approximately \$1.1 million was provided to each of the 19 sites selected for the 18-month demonstration period. Each city, working from a blueprint provided by the U.S. Department of Justice, customized a program to meet the needs of its targeted communities. "Weeding" generally involves law enforcement and prosecution efforts against criminals. "Seeding" entails prevention and revitalization programs.

Key findings: Grant funds were used more often to support weeding efforts and community policing than seeding programs. Among the evaluation's findings were:

- The weeding emphasis in most sites was on drug-related, gun-related, and violent crimes. A majority of cities targeted street-level dealing, but a few directed

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National Process Evaluation of Operation Weed and Seed

by Janice A. Roehl, Robert Huitt, Mary Ann Wycoff, Antony Pate, Donald Rebovich, and Ken Coyle

The U.S. Department of Justice launched Operation Weed and Seed in 1991 to demonstrate that a large array of resources can be mobilized in a comprehensive, coordinated effort to control crime and drugs and to improve the quality of life in targeted high-crime neighborhoods. The initiative's name was drawn from its two-pronged strategy: to "weed out" violent offenders through intensive law enforcement and prosecution and to "seed" the neighborhood with prevention, intervention, treatment, and revitalization services. An integral part of this strategy involves community policing, which is designed to bridge the gap between weeding and seeding.

Despite differences in the size and nature of target neighborhoods and in the severity of crime and drug problems, 19 cities were awarded approximately \$1.1 million each for an 18-month demonstration period.¹ The programs were initiated between April and December 1992, and the national process evaluation, supported by the National Institute of Justice, began in early 1993 to gather information on program implementation activities through the end of that year. Its purpose was to document and assess the implementation and activities of the 19 Weed and Seed demonstration projects.

The primary data collection methods were:

- Two site visits to each project to interview key staff, steering committee members, and community representatives.
- A review and content analysis of program materials, including grant applications, progress reports, steering committee meeting minutes, and policy memorandums.
- Surveys of program staff to gather uniform cross-site information on the key elements of program and target area characteristics, law enforcement tactics and arrests, prosecution tactics and case processing, community policing activities, and seeding efforts.

This Research in Brief summarizes the findings of the national process evaluation by offering an overview of how the sites structured and operated their programs and by discussing the implications of their efforts for future programs of this type.

A comprehensive, multifaceted program

Goals and objectives. Based on a research and experiential history of innovative approaches to crime prevention and control (see "Background of the Weed and Seed Initiative"), the goals of Operation Weed and Seed are simple and ambitious:

Issues and Findings

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resources toward curbing drug trafficking and high-level operators.

- People who ordinarily did not consult with one another, such as prosecutors, area residents, police officers, and social service personnel, were able to coordinate their efforts, share resources, and solve problems.
- Interagency cooperation was reported to be stronger among law enforcement agencies than among prosecution offices in a majority of sites.
- The most common seed programs involved primary prevention for children and intervention strategies for older youths. Safe Havens—multi-service centers that offered a variety of youth and adult services—were established in each site and were integral parts of seeding.

Implications for the future include:

- The program’s Federal funding levels and permissible uses should be clear from the start, but guidelines should continue to permit flexibility to meet neighborhood needs.
- To enhance coordination, interagency task forces should be developed, the critical role of local prosecutors should be recognized, and key representatives from the district attorney’s office and participating neighborhoods should be included in planning the local program.

Target audience: Federal, State, and local policymakers; criminal justice professionals and practitioners; and community leaders.

- To eliminate violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime from targeted high-crime neighborhoods.
- To provide a safe environment, free of crime and drug use, where law-abiding citizens can live, work, and raise families.

Underlying these goals is the premise that they are interdependent and inseparable. Often described as a *strategy*, not just a grant program, the essential and defining characteristic of Weed and Seed is its emphasis on collective and coordinated action (see “Weed and Seed Objectives”).

Federal level management. The U.S. Department of Justice did not require the selected Weed and Seed sites to implement specific strategies or programs. Instead, each site had to develop its own approach to the central program elements of weeding, including prosecu-

tion; the “bridge” of community policing; and seeding, including prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration.

Within the U.S. Department of Justice, the Executive Office for Weed and Seed and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) have been the lead agencies in administering this program at the Federal level. BJA and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) supplied 19 demonstration sites with grant funds totaling more than \$20 million. The U.S. Department of Justice also has worked hand in hand with other Federal agencies to provide guidance, technical assistance, and Federal funding to participating Weed and Seed sites because coordinated mobilization of resources from numerous government agencies is one of the central tenets of the program.

Background of the Weed and Seed Initiative

The roots of the Weed and Seed initiative can be traced to several programs initiated in Philadelphia: the Violent Traffickers Project, a Federal-State multiagency task force for drug enforcement; the Federal Alternatives to State Trials (FAST) program, involving collaboration between the district attorney’s and U.S. attorney’s offices; and two projects implemented in the Mantua and Spring Garden neighborhoods that involved Federal, State, and local government agencies, community organizations, and neighborhood residents.

Development of Weed and Seed also was guided by the results of a number of research studies and practical experiences.

Research results on the effectiveness of vigorous police drug enforcement efforts have been mixed. Although crackdowns

have been shown to be effective deterrents in the short term and to have some residual effects,² this evidence has been coupled with reports of unwanted side effects, including displacement and increases in certain violent crimes.³ These findings suggest that intensive law enforcement strategies need to be supplemented by other measures, particularly citizen-based anti-drug efforts⁴ and community policing.⁵ Other research has pointed to the additional advantages of prosecutorial collaboration across agencies, government levels, and jurisdictions; cooperative investigation; vertical prosecution; and the application of a full range of Federal, State, and local criminal and civil laws.⁶ Finally, the importance of multiagency, private/public collaborations has been indicated by research on community partnerships for crime and drug control and prevention.⁷

Weed and Seed Objectives



Weed and Seed objectives focus on a strategic, coordinated approach to crime prevention and control:

- To develop a comprehensive, multi-agency strategy to control and prevent violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime in targeted high-crime neighborhoods.
- To coordinate and integrate existing as well as new Federal, State, local, and private-sector initiatives; criminal justice

efforts; and human services, and to concentrate those resources in the project sites to maximize their impact on reducing and preventing violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime.

- To mobilize residents in the targeted sites to assist law enforcement in identifying and removing violent offenders and drug traffickers from their neighborhoods and to assist other human service agencies in identifying and responding to service needs in the target areas.

tions, and two sites targeted four neighborhoods. While the average population of single-target areas was 11,200, they ranged from a 1-block public housing development with 717 residents (Philadelphia) to a 15-square-mile section with 38,770 residents (Fort Worth).

The racial and ethnic composition of the demonstration cities also varied. In four sites African Americans constituted more than 50 percent of the population (Atlanta, Richmond, Washington, D.C., and Wilmington, Delaware); in three cities Hispanics made up more than or nearly 50 percent of the population (Chelsea, Massachusetts; San Antonio; and Santa Ana, California); and four areas had predominately non-Hispanic white populations (Madison, Omaha, Pitts-

Overview of the demonstration sites. The 19 cities with Weed and Seed demonstration sites, listed in exhibit 1, reflect a wide range in population

size and density. Although most cities chose to concentrate Weed and Seed in one area, five cities selected two localities, one site designated three sec-

Exhibit 1: Population and Density of Demonstration Cities and Their Target Neighborhoods

Site	City Population*	City Density (per square mile)	Number of Target Areas	Combined Population of Target Areas	Average Density of Target Areas (per square mile)
Atlanta	403,085	2,990	2	2,150	23,889
Charleston	82,104	1,861	1	12,542	3,136
Chelsea, Massachusetts	35,000	17,500	1	-----	-----
Chicago	2,811,478	11,172	1	5,660	80,857
Denver	479,468	3,050	2	8,962	11,064
Fort Worth	457,171	1,614	1	38,770	2,585
Kansas City	438,188	1,397	3	32,949	-----
Madison	193,735	3,309	2	6,034	4,310
Omaha	338,987	3,338	1	-----	-----
Philadelphia	1,596,699	11,736	4	53,710	12,788
Pittsburgh	372,349	6,653	1	17,836	-----
Richmond	206,292	3,379	2	6,881	-----
San Antonio	955,905	2,811	1	16,506	5,502
San Diego	1,133,681	3,428	1	31,337	9,793
Santa Ana, California	299,860	10,839	1	7,500	-----
Seattle	532,418	6,153	1	12,460	10,383
Trenton	89,017	11,516	4	-----	-----
Washington, D.C.	598,000	9,884	1	-----	-----
Wilmington	73,036	6,623	2	16,372	-----

* Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, March 1992.

burgh, and Seattle). Although the target areas also varied widely in their racial and ethnic composition, on the whole they tended to have relatively high concentrations of minorities.

Many of the demonstration cities have struggled for a long time with crime, poverty, social disorganization, and urban decay. Others, however, have only recently had to contend with these problems. At the extremes were Madison, which reported 770 violent crimes in 1991, and Atlanta, a city with twice the population of Madison, which reported 21 times as many violent crimes. Crime rates in the target areas also varied and were generally substantially higher than the corresponding citywide rates. All the target sites have suffered from relatively high rates of substance abuse, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime and violence. Gang activity has been prevalent and is implicated in the drug trade in many of the sites.

Local management and structure.

Weed and Seed grantees included mayoral and city manager offices, local police departments, State law enforcement agencies, and one nonprofit organization.

Local steering committees were established to guide program development and policy setting as suggested by the Weed and Seed *Implementation Manual* developed by the Office of Justice Programs. The steering committees typically were chaired by U.S. attorneys, who were accorded a key role by the Justice Department. They were often responsible for making the Weed and Seed concept known locally and for organizing the application process. In many sites, the U.S. attorneys remained acknowledged leaders of local programs. In others, U.S. attorneys

played small roles and avoided major involvement in what they saw as essentially community-based projects.

Other officials frequently found on steering committees were chiefs of police, district attorneys, mayors, law enforcement coordinators in U.S. attorney's offices, Federal law enforcement agency representatives (e.g., from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); Drug Enforcement Agency; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; or Immigration and Naturalization Service), police officers, and community representatives.

Putting weeding policies and strategies into daily operations was typically the responsibility of weed committees. They generally were composed of high-ranking local and State law enforcement and prosecution officials and regional representatives of Federal agencies (e.g., the special-agent-in-charge, or SAC, of the FBI) with decisionmaking and policy-setting authority. The U.S. attorney or his or her representative often chaired these committees. Representatives from the FBI and Drug Enforcement Administration were typically involved, and representatives from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Immigration and Naturalization Service; and U.S. Postal Service were included in sites with crime problems appropriate to these agencies' missions. State law enforcement agencies were less frequently involved.

Most sites also had a seed committee, composed of government agency and community representatives, responsible for implementing seeding activities.

Each site was typically staffed by a Weed and Seed coordinator; often there were separate coordinators for

each phase. While some of these coordinators were newly hired, full-time staff, others devoted a portion of their time to the coordination of Weed and Seed activities while working at other positions.

Allocation of funds. At each site, the Weed and Seed grant funds were used mostly to support community policing (an average of \$457,352) and weeding (\$434,145); less was spent for seeding (\$273,177). These averages, based on data available from 13 of the 19 programs, conceal the diversity among the sites. The amounts shown do not include the sizable in-kind and leveraged resources that also were devoted to Weed and Seed activities. Police overtime and other law enforcement personnel costs were the major grant expenditures for weeding and community policing. Seeding funds were used to support staff, provide prevention and treatment services, and develop a variety of community activities, often through minigrants.

The law enforcement half of weeding

The weeding component of Weed and Seed consists of linked law enforcement and prosecution strategies. The central features of the law enforcement portion of weeding are inter-agency cooperation, targeting of specific crimes, and development of enforcement strategies.

Interagency cooperation. The Federal, State, and local agency members of the weed committees developed specific strategies of crime and drug enforcement. In many sites a smaller working group was created early in the program or evolved over time to direct day-to-day operations following the weeding committee's overall guide-

lines. The membership of these working groups was often dominated by local police department command staff and appropriate Federal agency representatives.

Interagency cooperation in law enforcement strategy was reported to be strong in the vast majority of sites. Some sites solidified good local-Federal partnerships that existed prior to the Weed and Seed program; others formed new alliances. Joint strategy development and information sharing were the major benefits of interagency cooperation. Although local police departments received substantial portions of the Weed and Seed program funds, which were used to cover overtime and equipment, they also contributed large quantities of personnel time. In-kind contributions from Federal agencies in the form of agent time, undercover agents, key informants, and buy money also were substantial, with estimates amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars in many sites.

Crimes targeted. The nature and severity of crime in Weed and Seed neighborhoods determined the specific focus and form of the weeding efforts; in most cases the emphasis was on drug-related, gun-related, and violent crimes. Most sites focused on street-level dealing of relatively small amounts of drugs, primarily crack cocaine and, in several northeastern sites, heroin. A few directed their attention to drug trafficking and high-level operators. State and Federal agents were more likely to be involved in weeding strategies directed toward higher level dealers and organized operations.

Enforcement strategies. Police-based weeding activities generally consisted

of traditional drug enforcement and investigation tactics (see exhibit 2) that were enhanced by interagency collaboration, targeted enforcement, additional personnel, and coordinated direction. Some noteworthy innovations included:

- Cross-training of patrol officers in narcotics strategies, including search warrant preparation, high-risk warrant tactics, surveillance operations, buy/bust operations, and the use of confidential informants.
- Use of civil remedies, problem solving, and community resources to close drug houses, evict dealers, and mitigate hot spots.
- Application of state-of-the-art technologies of crime analysis, drug market mapping, offender data bases, and video surveillance in investigations.
- Inclusion of probation/parole officers on weeding teams.

Investigations also were helped by data provided by task force members and through “word-on-the-street”

information brought by community police officers and residents.

Immediate effects of law enforcement weeding

Weeding activities most often were welcomed by citizens in the targeted neighborhoods who had felt ignored and besieged for some time and were heartened that the police were beginning to step up the response to their concerns. In interviews with program officials and community leaders, few reported any significant backlash resulting from the implementation of weeding.

In several sites, however, the mere *announcement* of the weeding initiative initially elicited negative reactions from citizens, particularly residents of the target areas, as well as from community and civil rights groups. They viewed weeding’s significant law enforcement component as “targeted” at predominantly minority neighborhoods. In response, certain sites greatly increased the involvement of residents in the planning process,

*Exhibit 2: Law Enforcement Tactics in Order of Reported Use and Number of Times Ranked in Top Five Most Effective Tactics **

	No. of Times in Top Five (n=18)
1. Identification and security of “trouble spots”	7
2. High visibility/saturation patrols	12
3. Search/arrest warrants	11
4. Controlled buys by informants	10
5. Identification/apprehension of felon fugitives	4
6. Buy/bust operations	13
7. Enforcement of disorderly conduct laws	3
8. Enforcement of nuisance ordinances	3
9. Identification/apprehension of probation/parole violators	5
10. Drug tip hotlines	3

* One site did not rank tactics.

lowered their attention to weeding, and enhanced the program’s seeding components.

Arrest data. Arrest statistics cannot serve as comparable outcome measures across sites because of differences in the nature and magnitude of problems addressed, in target area size and composition, and in policies and intensity of weeding activities. The sites also shared neither a common definition of “Weed and Seed” arrests nor a baseline measure of arrest activity in target areas that could have been used to indicate how the number and type of arrests were affected by weeding activities.

Sixteen of the 19 sites, however, reported arrest data for June 1992 through December 1993. A total of 38,863 arrests were reported, an average of just over 2,400 per site over the 18-month period. Arrests ranged from 149 in Omaha to 8,477 in Philadelphia.⁸

Prosecution: The other half of weeding

Prosecution in the Weed and Seed initiative involved the coordinated efforts of the offices of U.S. attorneys, local prosecutors, and State attorneys general. The objectives of these agencies, as designed by the U.S. Department of Justice, were to remove “the worst offenders” from the target neighborhoods for as long as possible through pretrial detention and incarceration.

Interagency cooperation. The nature and strength of interagency cooperation in prosecution varied, but it was generally weaker than the cooperation and coordination among law enforcement agencies. Interagency cooperation for effective prosecution occurred on two different planes: among the three central prosecution agencies

(and primarily between the U.S. attorney’s offices and local district attorney’s offices) to determine strategies and criteria for prosecuting at the Federal or State level, and between prosecutors and law enforcement officers to work together on case preparation and investigations.

Strong preexisting relationships between the district attorney’s and U.S. attorney’s offices were positively correlated to the level of cooperation between these offices in regard to the Weed and Seed initiative in nearly half the sites. In several others the Weed and Seed initiative facilitated interagency cooperation that had not been a potent force earlier. In some sites, however, effective cooperation was not achieved even though some progress was reported over time.

In sites with low levels of interagency cooperation among prosecution agencies, key obstacles appeared to be:

- The exclusion of the district attorney’s offices from planning and subsequent decisionmaking processes.
- The absence of Weed and Seed grant funds to support district attorney staff, even though 92 percent of the Weed and Seed cases were prosecuted by them.

- District attorney resistance to differential handling of cases from a specific geographical area.

- Issues surrounding the U.S. attorney’s leadership role.

In sites with effective interagency cooperation, district attorneys were brought to the table early, remained involved in policy setting, and often received grant funds to support at least one prosecutor dedicated to Weed and Seed cases.

Strategy. Although the Executive Office for Weed and Seed repeatedly provided the sites with written definitions of a Weed and Seed case (see “Definition of a Weed and Seed Case”), prosecutors differed in how they applied the definition and how they handled Weed and Seed cases. Some sites targeted these cases for enhanced penalties and expedited prosecution; others handled them no differently from any other cases. A few sites had dedicated Weed and Seed prosecutors for vertical prosecution of cases.

Cases involving large quantities of drugs, firearms, defendants with prior convictions, and criminal enterprises typically were funneled to the U.S.

Definition of a Weed and Seed Case

T

he U.S. attorney’s office defined Weed and Seed reportable cases as:

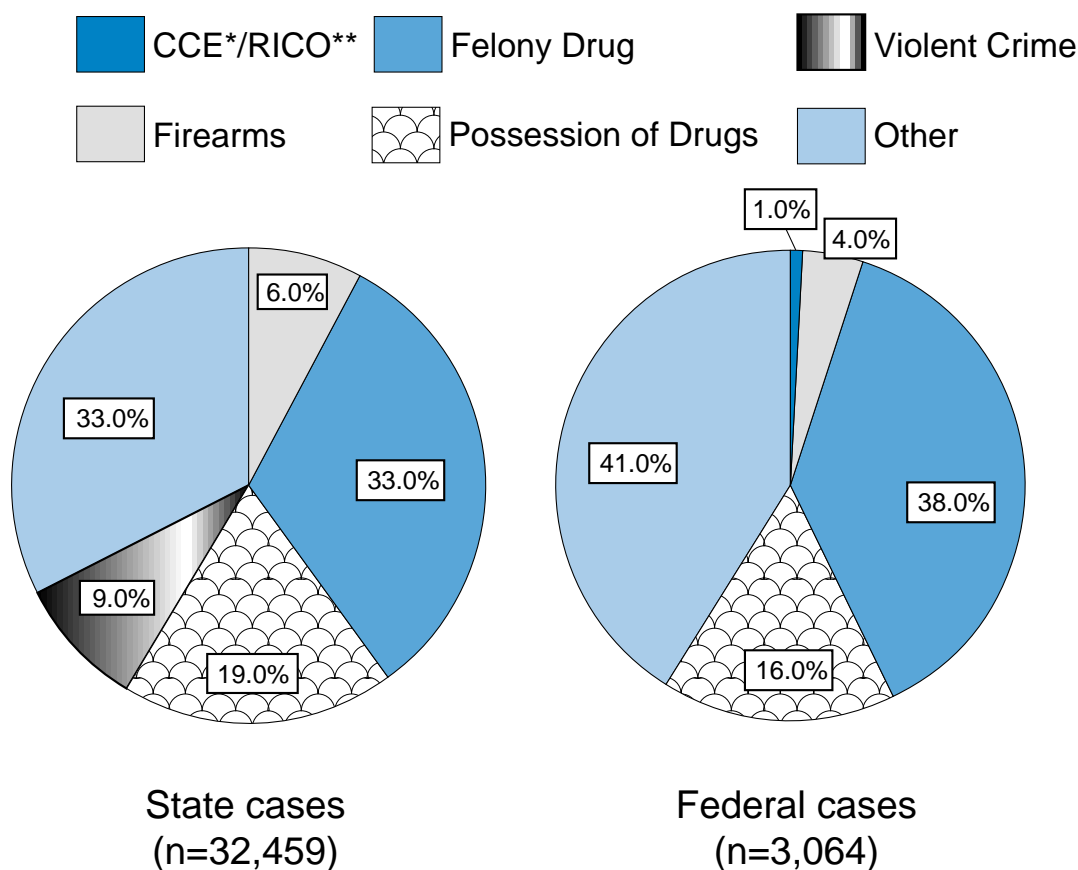
- (1) Any felony or misdemeanor relating to the distribution or possession of drugs and/or firearms within the confines of the Weed and Seed target area.
- (2) Aiding/abetting or causing such felonies and misdemeanors in (1).

- (3) Conspiracy to sell or possess drugs and/or firearms within the area.

- (4) Commission of other felony offenses within the area.

- (5) Felonies or misdemeanors not committed in the target area that directly affect the area or have a significant connection thereto.

Exhibit 3: Prosecution Charges at State and Federal Levels



* Continuing Criminal Enterprise
 ** Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations

attorney’s offices, although selection criteria varied substantially among the sites. U.S. attorneys applied existing and specialized initiatives to Weed and Seed cases, such as Operation Triggerlock,⁹ but the extent of their application is unknown.

Effects of prosecutors’ weeding activities

Signs of successful interagency cooperation. In several sites police-prosecutor cooperation contributed to successful prosecution of Weed and Seed cases. In Santa Ana, for ex-

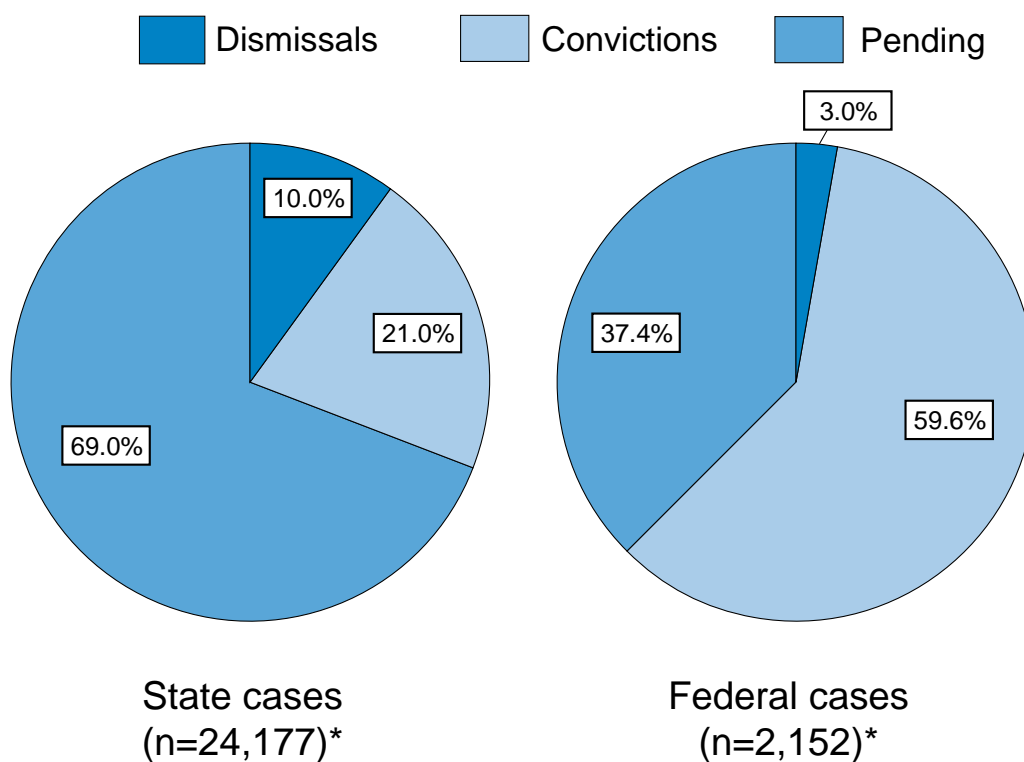
ample, the assistant district attorney in charge of Weed and Seed cases often participated in the planning and execution of undercover buys, and the police instituted careful video recording of buys, thus providing the prosecution with solid evidence.

One positive sign of the effect of interagency cooperation of prosecutors in Operation Weed and Seed has been expansion of community prosecution activities by local district attorneys. In many sites local prosecutors and, to a lesser extent, U.S. attorneys opened lines of dialog with neighborhood resi-

dents, improving community-prosecutor awareness and relations in both directions. Prosecutors obtained information about community needs and concerns that assisted them in establishing short- and long-term prosecution priorities and in turn benefited from community residents’ improved willingness to assist with investigations and to serve as witnesses.

Supporting data. Data collected by EOUSA provide some information on prosecution outcomes, although these data are affected by variations in case definitions, law enforcement out-

Exhibit 4: Prosecution Outcomes at State and Federal Levels



*No explanation was provided for the discrepancy between the number of cases for which outcomes were reported and the number of cases reported as charged in exhibit 3.

comes, and prosecution approaches. Of the 35,523 defendants charged during the first project period (as reported to EOUSA), 92 percent were prosecuted by local district attorneys or prosecutors. As shown in exhibit 3, there were no large differences in the types of cases handled by Federal and local prosecutors, although the majority of the cases that involved a continuing criminal enterprise and violation of racketeering laws were handled by U.S. attorney’s offices.

Local prosecutors reported a 21-percent conviction rate at the end of 18 months, with a large number of cases (69 percent) pending (see exhibit 4).

Delays in reporting may account for some of the pending cases. At the Federal level, almost 60 percent of the cases resulted in convictions, with 37 percent pending. More than 90 percent of Federal cases ending in conviction led to prison sentences, compared with 53 percent at the State level.

Role of community policing

There was substantial similarity across cities in the general approach to community policing. Officers were assigned to the target areas to develop relationships with residents and promote joint efforts to address neighborhood concerns. In some sites commu-

nity policing was a new experience; in others it was a familiar one where existing community policing programs were able to expand the number of personnel. Most community police officers were not assigned to respond to dispatched calls for service; instead they focused on nonenforcement activities such as community contacts, problem solving, and youth projects.

The number of dedicated officers ranged from 1 in each of 6 neighborhoods in Madison to 22 officers and 2 sergeants in Chicago who covered 3 shifts. Other sites assigned teams of between 3 and 12 officers to the targeted neighborhoods. Community

police officers often worked in pairs or teams, and they typically were linked to or supplemented by others, such as probation/parole officers, social workers, nurses, narcotics officers, truancy officers, and Federal agents.

A few sites did not differentiate weeding from community policing functions. In these sites community police officers conducted enforcement activities as routine parts of their work, although their participation in undercover investigations was limited. In many sites community police officers concentrated on community contacts and problem solving, but they participated in enforcement activities as needed. Most police officials did not see any contradiction in community police officers assuming two roles, nor did the majority of community leaders interviewed. Community police officers were generally lauded by community leaders and residents, and their presence was said to contribute to reducing tension between citizens and police, solving social order problems, and mitigating some of the public's distrust of weeding.

Seeding

Seeding is arguably the most diverse and complex element of the Weed and Seed concept. The target neighborhoods have deeply rooted social and crime problems, and the majority contain a large percentage of residents whose income is at or below the poverty line.

Local management. Most sites found that a dedicated seed coordinator was needed. Every site except one established a seed committee to plan and oversee seeding strategies, although authority and activities varied from site to site. Many seed committees were unable to function effectively in

the first project period, and they often were dominated by local agency representatives from the police, city agencies (e.g., community development and social services), large nonprofit organizations (e.g., United Way), and the mayor's office. (Federal seed agency representatives were active in just two sites.) In some sites community leaders and citizen representatives were underrepresented and given little decisionmaking authority.

The stronger, more active seed committees began with or evolved into a membership comprising substantial numbers of community representatives with decisionmaking authority over seeding funds. Although two sites formed Federal agency seed committees comprising representatives from the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Labor, and Health and Human Services, Federal seeding agencies were usually not involved in the program since they did not have funds allocated for Weed and Seed target areas and had no mandate to give the areas priority in existing grant funds.

Seeding strategies. An inclusive, neighborhood-specific view of seeding activities was adopted. The two broad categories of seeding strategies were:

- Prevention, intervention, and treatment services.
- Neighborhood revitalization and economic development.

Seeding activities and programs aimed at prevention, intervention, and treatment were more prevalent in the target areas than revitalization and economic development strategies, and Weed and Seed grant funds more often were allocated to them (see exhibit 5).

Prevention, intervention, and treatment encompassed a wide range of services, including substance abuse programs, alternative activities for youths, health and nutrition services, improved access to services, personal and family development and education, victim assistance and protective services, and community crime prevention. Primary prevention for children and intervention strategies for older youths were most common. Treatment services were not expanded by Weed and Seed, with the exception of one site.

Safe Havens, founded in each site through a major grant given to Cities in Schools, Inc., were integral parts of seeding. These centers, originally planned as facilities within schools but founded in a variety of community settings, are multiservice centers where a variety of youth and adult services are located together in a safe neighborhood facility.

Neighborhood revitalization and economic development encompass jobs and job training; homeownership programs; and renovation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment. Where these strategies were under way, most had existed prior to the Weed and Seed initiative. Planning was common for physical revitalization and economic development, including strategies for leveraging and raising funds for support of these plans, particularly among agency-dominated seed committees.

Funding for seeding activities. Some activities viewed as seeding were funded directly by grant funds, in whole or in part; some were coordinated by seeding staff or committees; and some were already present in the target area and incorporated as part of the Weed and Seed program. Approximately one-third of the seeding funds

were distributed to local organizations. Federal funds supported several seeding initiatives directly, including Safe Havens; Boys and Girls Clubs; and the Race Against Drugs, Wings of Hope, and Step-Up programs.

Many local, State, and Federal programs continued to support existing services and resources covered by the seeding umbrella. Examples include HUD renovation projects, D.A.R.E.[®] (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) programs, Police Athletic Leagues offered by local police departments, VISTA volunteers, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and Job

Training Partnership Act positions.

Consequences of Federal funding. Although there were no *new* Federal agency seeding funds specifically allocated to the Weed and Seed sites, the early announcements of the program and pronouncements of Federal officials led site residents to *believe* that significant funding for prevention and treatment services, alternatives for youths, and neighborhood revitalization would be forthcoming. The consequences of this misunderstanding included community feeling that this might be “just another Federal program,” decreased support from the

community and grassroots organizations, decreased citizen participation, and difficult situations for regional representatives of Federal agencies that were involved with existing seeding programs.

Alterations in Federal asset forfeiture policy financially benefited several target communities. The U.S. Department of Justice ruled that real property, forfeited according to Federal law because of connections with illegal activity, could be transferred to private nonprofit organizations to support Weed and Seed programs. Ownership of several buildings was transferred to

Exhibit 5: Most and Least Common Seeding Activities

	Number of Sites Found In (n=19)	Number Using Weed and Seed Funds to Support Activity (n=19)	Type of Activity*
Most common seeding activities:			
Prevention/education	19	7	P/I
Safe Havens	19	19	P/I
Boys and Girls Clubs	16	5	P/I
Cultural/entertainment activities	16	8	P/I
Community cleanups	16	5	NR
D.A.R.E. [®] (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) programs	15	4	P/I
Basic education and skill development	15	9	P/I
Victim/witness assistance	15	6	P/I
Neighborhood/block watches	15	2	P/I
Least common seeding activities:			
Self-employment programs	5	0	NR
Rehabbing seized property	5	1	NR
Farmers' markets	4	1	P/I
Scouting programs	4	2	P/I
TASC (Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime/Special Clients) programs	4	1	P/I
Race Against Drugs	4	4	P/I
Pediatric AIDS Service	2	0	P/I
SOS (Save Our Streets) Crime Watch	2	0	P/I
Wings of Hope	1	0	P/I

*P/I = prevention/intervention; NR = neighborhood revitalization

community organizations in several sites; the facilities now serve as permanent locations for such seeding services as Safe Havens and victim/witness centers.

The sites' allocation of an average of 25–30 percent of their budgets to seeding meant this money (from \$100,102 to \$566,758, with an average of \$273,177) had to cover coordinator salaries and community projects. Pursuing major neighborhood revitalization and economic development strategies could take place only through a variety of optimizing strategies involving partnerships, leveraged funds, and interagency coordination. Most programs thus completed the planning phase only.

Implications

Working from a common blueprint drawn by the U.S. Department of Justice, each of the 19 Weed and Seed sites customized a program to meet each target community's needs. Communities varied in such dimensions as size and severity of crime and drug problems and in their city's history of interagency cooperation, community policing, and neighborhood empowerment. Yet, each site was given essentially the same amount of Federal funding. Despite these differences across sites, and in some instances because of them, a number of important lessons can be distilled from the Weed and Seed demonstration programs (see "Impact Evaluation Under Way").

Implementation issues. Most of the programs had slow and rocky beginnings for a number of reasons, including:

- Problems with the organizational infrastructure, such as complex city

government bureaucracies and elaborate contracting rules.

- Phasing problems, such as the need to complete a storefront or other facility and reliance on the implementation of Safe Havens to provide seeding programs.
- Differences of opinion with BJA about how funds could be used, particularly the initial limitations placed on the percentage of Federal funds that could be allocated toward seeding.

Good management and leadership—with experienced, effective, and well-regarded individuals in major management positions—helped mitigate these problems. The experience suggests that in the future, the program's Federal funding levels and permissible uses should be clearly stated and consistent from the start. Guidelines should continue to be structured with enough flexibility to enable communities to do what they think is needed within their neighborhoods.

Interagency cooperation. Through steering committees, community policing, community prosecution, weed task forces, and seed committees, groups of people who ordinarily did not communicate with each other (e.g., prosecutors and neighborhood residents, police officers and recreation directors) came together to coordinate their efforts, share resources, and solve problems. The reasons and capacity for getting together existed prior to Weed and Seed, but the motivation and vehicles for doing so resulted from the program's implementation. Contributions of time and resources from agencies, community organizations, and individuals undoubtedly exceeded the Federal grant funds allocated for the program.

It is critical to bring the right people to the table from the start. Future endeavors should include key representatives from district attorneys' offices and the target neighborhoods as well as from Federal law enforcement and

Impact Evaluation Under Way

As this Research in Brief indicates, an impact evaluation is necessary to gain a full understanding of the effects of Weed and Seed programs. The National Institute of Justice is supporting a multipart impact evaluation conducted by Abt Associates.

The evaluation—examining in detail Weed and Seed programs in Akron, Hartford, Las Vegas, Pittsburgh, Salt Lake City, Sarasota, Seattle, and Shreveport—consists of the following four approaches:

- Residential and business surveys. Approximately 6,400 telephone surveys are being conducted to assess views about Weed and Seed efforts.
- Analysis of police and prosecutor records. Records that predate Weed and Seed funding are providing a baseline for the weeding evaluation; records collected since funding began are measuring the impact of weeding activities.
- Onsite assessment of community-based programs. Working with Weed and Seed offices and with community service providers, researchers are conducting an intensive examination of seeding activities.
- Regular and systematic offsite contact. Frequent contact with Weed and Seed participants is being maintained to foster a high level of cooperation and collaboration throughout the evaluation.

municipal agencies. The U.S. attorney's office is an appropriate leader, although this does not preclude individual circumstances where other local officials might be equally effective. Consideration should be given to having separate weed and seed coordinators with substantial experience and established working relationships with other key people.

Effective weeding. The extent to which the program succeeded in removing the most violent and problematic offenders from target neighborhoods is unknown. Of the tens of thousands of Weed and Seed arrest cases prosecuted, the majority were reported as pending at the end of the demonstration period. Over 92 percent were prosecuted by local district attorneys, many of them in locations in which jail caps and prison overcrowding may limit the length of sentences even where convictions were obtained. Yet it is also certain that a number of serious criminals were convicted under Federal law and sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

For effective weeding the formation of interagency task forces consisting of all relevant Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies should be considered. Future efforts should include recognition of and support for the critical role of local prosecutors. They should participate from the outset on interagency task forces and be granted additional resources to address the increased caseloads and community involvement promulgated by the Weed and Seed program.

Community policing. The Weed and Seed program helped spread and reinforce the idea of community policing, which was a positive experience for both the community and police agen-

cies. It also helped demonstrate that enforcement can be enhanced by close contacts with the community and that enforcement and service are not necessarily incompatible policing functions.

Community policing principles and practices should be advocated and supported by police departments and city governments, with appropriate recognition, compensation, and room for advancement for officers. Model efforts should include training for both citizens and police, means for officers to possess a sense of ownership of the area they serve, and substantial coordination among service providers and enforcement personnel.

Effective seeding. Federal seeding coordination and funding were much less than Federal weeding support, and seeding services became the primary responsibility of city agencies. (In cities with financial problems, the target areas received very little.) Yet despite the problems in Federal funding of seeding activities, several communities discovered the resources within themselves to launch a number of significant prevention and restoration efforts. It is unlikely that they would have done this so quickly without the focus and coordination offered by the Weed and Seed program. It cannot be determined by the national process evaluation if the "right" seeding activities were supported or if enough seeding was activated. But generally, given the seriousness of the target neighborhoods' drug and social problems, extent of physical deterioration, and severe economic problems, seeding activities alone could not have overcome them, especially in the limited time allotted.

The dual approach of prevention and revitalization within seeding should be

continued, and training and technical assistance for citizens in leadership, planning, and program development and management are recommended.

One of the important messages delivered by the U.S. Department of Justice in its design and shepherding of the Weed and Seed initiative was that a community's crime and drug problems are best addressed in a comprehensive fashion. In the context of the current policy debate over whether to provide funding for enforcement and incarceration or prevention, the Weed and Seed programs serve as a demonstration that the sensible answer is *both*. Seeding is necessary to rebuild and sustain a safe and vital community; at the same time, seeding cannot occur—community participation cannot be achieved, businesses will not invest, and young people cannot be deterred from the economic attractions of drug dealing—until weeding results in a basic level of security.

Notes

1. Federal funds were provided in two stages: \$613,000 in spring 1992 and \$487,000 in early 1993. In mid-1994 the demonstration sites received an additional \$750,000. This Research in Brief does not discuss program activities and progress during this second grant period.
2. Sherman, L.W. (1990). Police crackdowns: Initial and residual deterrence. In M. Tonry and N. Morris (eds.), *Crime and justice: A review of research*, Volume 12, 1–48. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
3. See Moore, M.H. (1988). Drug trafficking. *Crime File Study Guide*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice

(NCJ 104555); and Reuter, P., et al. (1988). *Drug use and drug programs in the Washington metropolitan area*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp.

4. Skogan, W.G. (1989). Communities, crime and neighborhood organization. *Crime and delinquency*, 35(3), 437–457. See also Davis, R.C., A. Lurigio, and W.G. Skogan (1991). *Community responses to crack*. Report to the National Institute of Justice. New York: New York City Victim Services Agency.

5. See, for example, Greene, J.R., and S.D. Mastrofski (eds.) (1988). *Community policing: Rhetoric or reality?* New York: Praeger; and Rosenbaum, D.P. (ed.) (1994). *The challenge of community policing: Testing the promises*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

6. Coldren, J.R., and M.J. Sabath (1992). *Multijurisdictional drug control task forces, 1988–1990: Critical components of state drug control strategies*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. Chaiken, J., M. Chaiken, and C. Karchmer (1990). *Multijurisdictional drug law enforcement strategies: Reducing supply and demand*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. Schlegel, K., and E.F. McGarrell (1991). An examination of arrest practices in regions served by multijurisdictional drug task forces. *Crime and delinquency*, 37(3), 408–426.

7. Botvin, G.J. (1987). Prevention research. In *Drug abuse and drug abuse research: The second triennial report to Congress from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services*. Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse. Cook, R., J. Roehl, C.

Oros, L. Saunders, C. Andrews, T. Arrington, R. Hersch, G. Wisdom, R. Huitt, and J. Trudeau (1993). *National evaluation of the Community Partnership Demonstration Program: Third annual report*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

8. A quarter of the arrests were for felony drug crimes, 19 percent were for violent crimes, 16 percent were for possession of narcotics, 4 percent were for firearms violations, and 35 percent were for “other crimes.” Only 47 arrests were made for organized drug trafficking under RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) and similar Federal laws.

9. A Department of Justice project, Operation Triggerlock uses a task force approach, with extensive involvement of State and local law enforcement, to capture and incarcerate violent and repeat offenders (career criminals) who violate Federal firearms statutes.

Points of view in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

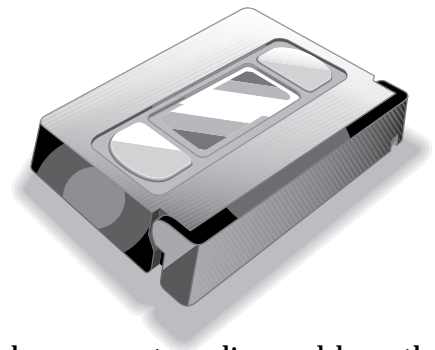
The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

NCJ 161624

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Selected Recent OJP Publications and Products

Listed below are some recent, relevant Office of Justice Programs (OJP) publications related to the Weed and Seed program; they concern issues of law enforcement, community policing, prosecution, crime prevention, and neighborhood revitalization. These publications are free, except as indicated, and can be obtained from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS): telephone 800-851-3420, e-mail askncjrs@ncjrs.org, or write NCJRS, Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000.

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Please note that when free publications are out of stock, they are available as photocopies or through interlibrary loan.

Community Involvement

Evaluation of Boys and Girls Clubs in Public Housing, NIJ Research Preview, 1995, FS 000100.

Innovative Community Partnerships: Working Together for Change, OJJDP Program Summary, 1996, NCJ 147483.

Kelley, Patricia, M.P.P., Mark H. Moore, Ph.D., and Jeffrey A. Roth, Ph.D., *Violence in Cornet City: A Problem-Solving Exercise*, NIJ Issues and Practices, 1995, NCJ 154258.

Matrix of Community-Based Initiatives, OJJDP Program Summary, 1996, NCJ 154816.

McGillis, Daniel, *Beacons of Hope: New York City's School-Based Community Centers*, NIJ Program Focus, 1996, NCJ 157667.

Rising Above Gangs and Drugs: How to Start a Community Reclamation Project, OJJDP, 1995 (third printing), NCJ 133522.

Sampson, Robert, Ph.D., *Communities and Crime: A Study in Chicago*, NIJ VHS videotape, 1995, NCJ 156924, U.S. \$19, Canada and other foreign countries \$24.

Taylor, Ralph B., and Adele V. Harrell, *Physical Environment and Crime*, NIJ Research Report, 1996, NCJ 157311.

Responses to Youth Violence and Delinquency

Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan, OJJDP Report, 1996, NCJ 157105; OJJDP Summary, 1996, NCJ 157105.

Curfew: An Answer to Juvenile Delinquency and Victimization?, OJJDP Bulletin, 1996, NCJ 159533.

Evaluation of Violence Prevention Programs in Middle Schools, NIJ Update, 1995, FS 000094.

Gang Suppression and Intervention: Community Models, OJJDP Research Summary, 1996, NCJ 148202.

Gang Suppression and Intervention: Problem and Response, OJJDP Research Summary, 1996, NCJ 149629.

Harrell, Adele, Ph.D., *Intervening with High-Risk Youth: Preliminary Findings from the Children-at-Risk Program*, NIJ Research in Progress Research Preview, 1996, FS 000140. Also available as a VHS videotape, 1995, NCJ 153270, U.S. \$19, Canada and other foreign countries \$24.

Intensive Aftercare for High-Risk Juveniles: A Community Care Model, OJJDP Program Summary, 1996, NCJ 147575.

Intensive Aftercare for High-Risk Juveniles: Policies and Procedures, OJJDP Program Summary, 1996, NCJ 147712.

Community Policing

Community Policing and D.A.R.E.: A Practitioner's Perspective, BJA Bulletin, 1995, NCJ 154275.

Community Policing Strategies, NIJ Research Preview, 1995, FS 000126.

Sadd, Susan, and Randolph M. Grinc, *Implementation Challenges in Community Policing: Innovative Neighborhood-Oriented Policing in Eight Cities*, NIJ Research in Brief, 1996, NCJ 157932.

Sherman, Lawrence W., Ph.D., *Reducing Gun Violence: Community Policing Against Gun Crime*, VHS videotape, 1995, NCJ 153730, U.S. \$19, Canada and other foreign countries \$24.

Skogan, Wesley, Ph.D., *Community Policing in Chicago, Fact or Fiction?*, NIJ Research in Progress Research Preview, 1995, FS 000105. Also available as a VHS videotape, 1995, NCJ 153273, U.S. \$19, Canada and other foreign countries \$24.

Law Enforcement

Policing Drug Hot Spots, NIJ Research Preview, 1995, FS 000128.

Rich, Thomas F., *The Use of Computerized Mapping in Crime Control and Prevention Programs*, NIJ Research in Action, 1995, NCJ 155182.

Prosecution and Courts

Anderson, David C., *In New York City, a "Community Court" and a New Legal Culture*, NIJ Program Focus, 1996, NCJ 158613.

Bourque, Blair B., Roberta C. Cronin, Daniel B. Felker, Frank R. Pearson, Mei Han, and Sarah M. Hill, *Boot Camps for Juvenile Offenders: An Implementation Evaluation of Three Demonstration Programs*, NIJ Research in Brief, 1996, NCJ 157317.

Finn, Peter, *The Manhattan District Attorney's Narcotics Eviction Program*, NIJ Program Focus, 1995, NCJ 153146.

Johnson, Claire, Barbara Webster, and Edward Connors, *Prosecuting Gangs: A National Assessment*, NIJ Research in Brief, 1995, NCJ 151785.

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