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SNOHOMISH COUNTY SEX OFFENDER PROJECT:  
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT'S IMPACT ON CLIENT BEHAVIOR

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a follow-up to Snohomish County Sex Offender Project: 1985 Progress Report. The 1985 progress report described project operations and clients, and examined sentencing practices in Snohomish County. That analysis indicated that a significantly greater percentage of sex offenders were assigned to community supervision, in lieu of institutionalization, in Snohomish County compared to other counties in Washington State. However, no conclusive re-offense data were available to assess whether the community was adequately protected while these youths remained within the community.

This report updates the analysis of sex offender sentencing practices in Snohomish County and elsewhere in the state. The results demonstrated that there were significant differences between Snohomish County and the other counties over the study period. While other Washington State counties remained constant between 1982 and 1985 in terms of the percent of sex offenders committed (30%), Snohomish County went from a higher than average percentage (34%) in 1982 to a lower than average percentage (19%) in 1984 and 1985. The implementation of the project appears to have had a considerable impact on sex offender sentencing practices in Snohomish County.

Patterns of re-offending and social development among project clients are then examined in the report. A total of 43 Snohomish County Sex Offender Project clients were compared to 36 similar sex offenders institutionalized from other Washington State counties.

An analysis of sexual re-offending indicated that the Snohomish County youths were no more likely to commit a sexual re-offense during or after supervision than the institutionalized sex offenders. The project was as effective as institutional supervision for the prevention of further sexual re-offenses in the community.

An analysis of general re-offending (including all types of offenses) indicated that the Snohomish County youths were more likely to re-offend during their stay in supervision. The finding suggests there is a somewhat greater incidence of (non-sexual) re-offending among sex offenders while they are supervised in the community, as compared to institutional supervision. However, an analysis of re-offending after supervision indicated that the project had a rehabilitative effect equal to that available in institutions. Additionally, a combined measure of during-supervision and post-supervision re-offending indicated that the Snohomish County youths were no more likely to re-offend over the full during- and post-supervision period than the institutionalized youths. This last finding suggests that community supervision is equal to institutional supervision in terms of protecting the community from additional re-offenses (of any type).

The analysis of general re-offending also indicated that youths who used force during previous sexual offenses, and youths with extensive prior criminal histories, were more likely to re-offend. These findings have useful implications in terms of determining which sex offenders present the greatest risk to community safety, and whether these offenders should be assigned exclusively to institutional supervision.

The Index of Social Development (ISD) was used to analyze changes in social development. The Snohomish County youths demonstrated patterns relatively similar to those among a sample of institutionalized sex offenders. The behavioral and cognitive skill scales on the ISD failed to indicate differences between youths treated in the community and youths treated in an institution, suggesting that community treatment is no more or less effective than institutional treatment in changing these dimensions of social development.

In summary, community supervision can serve as a viable alternative to the institutionalization of selected lower risk sex offenders, given the lesser costs of supervising offenders in their community and the finding that community treatment is as effective as institutional treatment in terms of impacting re-offending and social development. The significant decrease in sex offender commitments from Snohomish County since the project's implementation suggests that considerable state dollars have been saved without an increased risk to community safety.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Snohomish County Sex Offender Project, fully implemented in 1983, provides community-based evaluation and treatment of juvenile sex offenders as an alternative to placement in a state institution. The goals of the program are to provide effective treatment and to assure public safety, while saving the state the expense of institutionalizing juvenile sex offenders. The project is funded through the Consolidated Juvenile Services program of the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation (DJR).

A report assessing the progress of the project from January of 1984 through June of 1985 was completed during the summer of 1985 (Guthmann, D. and J. Steiger, Snohomish County Sex Offender Project: 1985 Progress Report, Department of Social and Health Services, August, 1985). This report provides a follow-up to that report. Data on sex offender sentencing practices in Snohomish County and elsewhere in the state are updated, and re-offending and social development among project clients are compared to a group of institutionalized sex offenders.

Four sections follow. The 1985 progress report is reviewed. The research methodology used in the analysis for this report is then described. The findings from the analysis follow. A summary and conclusions section completes the report.

## II. SUMMARY OF THE 1985 PROGRESS REPORT

The primary purpose of the 1985 Snohomish County Sex Offender Project progress report was to provide a description of the project and its clients. Project operations, including the various treatment modalities used by the project therapists, were reviewed. Client characteristics were outlined. No conclusions, however, were developed regarding the success of the project in impacting clients--the major focus of the analysis was on the sentencing of sex offenders in Snohomish County compared to other Washington State counties.

The 1985 report found that the Snohomish County Juvenile Court, acting on the client evaluations completed by the project therapists, frequently selected the community supervision option for both committable and non-committable offenders. (The recommendations of the project therapists for the placement of offenders were followed in 95% of the cases.) The court committed only 39% of the committable offenders and 10% of the non-committable offenders.

The 1985 report also showed that sex offender commitments decreased significantly in Snohomish County since the project's implementation. In other Washington State counties, the percentage of sex offenders that were committed remained fairly

constant between 1982 and 1984--approximately 30%. In Snohomish County, however, only 15% of sex offenders were committed in 1984, as compared to 34% in 1982. These data suggest that approximately seven offenders were not committed during that year because of the project. The average commitment costs the state approximately \$35,000; therefore, the project apparently saved the state nearly \$250,000--compared to the project's operating costs of \$63,000.

An important factor in assessing the value of assigning sex offenders to the community is whether the community is adequately protected. The 1985 report only provided a brief and fairly limited assessment of re-offending among Snohomish County Sex Offender Project clients. Re-offenses committed between the youth's entry into the project and the preparation of the report were examined, indicating that approximately 25% of the project offenders were adjudicated for additional offenses; 4% were adjudicated for additional sex offenses.

The 1985 progress report's re-offense findings can not be considered conclusive because of several limitations in the data analysis. First, no comparison group data were available to suggest how much re-offending would have occurred had the project youths been institutionalized. Second, the project entry dates varied considerably for the youths in the analysis; therefore, the length of time that the youths could potentially re-offend also varied considerably. Third, because only some of the clients had completed their supervision, the re-offense rates represented a undifferentiated combination of during-supervision offending and post-supervision offending. Finally, because a large number of the offenders had entered the project a relatively short time before the data analysis, the at-risk period for most offenders was relatively short.

The 1985 analysis was also not able to examine changes in social development, i.e., prosocial attitudes and behavior, among the sex offender project clients. Though the collection of survey data describing initial levels of social development had been completed, there was an insufficient number of post-treatment surveys for an adequate analysis when the report was prepared.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first data analysis in the report examines sentencing of sex offenders in Snohomish County as compared to other Washington State counties. The 1985 progress report presented sex offender disposition data for the years 1982 and 1984. For this report, the analysis was updated by including sentencing data for 1985. The data were obtained from the Administrator for the Courts Juvenile Information System (JUVIS).

Descriptive data and re-offense data are then presented for two groups of youths: Snohomish County Sex Offender Project clients and comparison group youths. The 1985 report examined the 55 youths who had entered treatment at the time the report was written. This report examines only those 43 youths who have terminated from the project at least six months prior to the data analysis to allow a sufficient period for analysis of post-supervision offending.

The comparison group includes 36 institutionalized sex offenders from counties other than Snohomish County. First, all sex offenders institutionalized during 1983 and 1984 were identified. Of those, the 36 offenders who were most similar to the sex offender project youths in terms of their committing offense, prior criminal history, and age were selected.

The offenders' patterns of re-offending were examined over two time periods: 1) the period that the youth was under supervision of either Snohomish County (if in the project) or was institutionalized (if in the comparison group) and 2) the six-month period after the youth's supervision. During-supervision offending was examined to determine to degree to which community supervision was able to protect the community compared to institutional supervision. Post-supervision offending was examined to assess whether the project had a rehabilitative effect on its clients after treatment had been completed.

The re-offense analysis examines re-offense summary scores, combining the seriousness of all offenses committed during the period under study. Each re-offense was assigned a value based on the class of the offense (i.e., an "A+" offense was assigned a value of 9, an "A" offense was worth 8, and so forth). For example, a summary score of 8 is the equivalent of one "A" offense, four "D" offenses, or another combination adding to a value of 8.

Specific changes in the offenders' level of social development are then analyzed based on data from the Index of Social Development (ISD), a 45-item survey developed and validated within DJR. (See Steiger, John C. and David R. Guthmann, Index of Social Development: Scoring Manual, Department of Social and Health Services, February, 1984.) The ISD was administered to 44 Snohomish County youths and 55 comparison group youths prior to treatment and 28 Snohomish County youths and 38 comparison group youths after treatment.

#### IV. FINDINGS

Results from five data analyses are presented in this section: an analysis of sentencing of sex offenders in Snohomish County and other Washington State counties, a description of youths in the sex offender project and comparison groups, an assessment of

sexual re-offending patterns of youths in the project and in the comparison group, an analysis of all types of re-offenses, and a comparison of changes in social development as measured by the Index of Social Development.

Sentencing of Sex Offenders

The 1985 progress report found that a greater proportion of sex offenders were assigned to community supervision (as opposed to commitment to DJR) in Snohomish County (85.0%) than in other Washington State counties (67.3%) in 1984. Data from 1985 were collected so that the analysis could be updated for this report. Table 1 presents the distribution of sex offender dispositions across Snohomish County and all other Washington State counties for the year prior to the project's full implementation, 1982, and the years 1984 and 1985 combined.

Table 1: Sentencing of Adjudicated Sex Offenders in Snohomish County and Other Washington State Counties

|                       | <u>Snohomish County</u>                |                      |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
|                       | <u>1982</u>                            | <u>1984 and 1985</u> |
| Community Supervision | 25 (65.8%)                             | 76 (80.9%)           |
| Committed to DJR      | 13 (34.2%)                             | 18 (19.1%)           |
|                       | <u>Other Washington State Counties</u> |                      |
|                       | <u>1982</u>                            | <u>1984 and 1985</u> |
| Community Supervision | 125 (70.2%)                            | 502 (70.1%)          |
| Committed to DJR      | 53 (29.8%)                             | 214 (29.9%)          |

The data in Table 1 indicate that Snohomish County continues to commit sex offenders to institutions at a lower rate than other Washington State counties. Prior to the implementation of the project, Snohomish County committed sex offenders more frequently (34.2%) than other counties in the state (29.8%). During the two most recent calendar years, Snohomish County committed 19.1% of all sex offenders to institutions, while other Washington State counties committed sex offenders at virtually the same rate as in 1982, 29.9%. There was some indication that the sex offender commitments in Snohomish County increased slightly in 1985; 22.2% of Snohomish County sex offenders were committed during 1985 compared to 15.0% in 1984. However, the findings suggest that the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project continues to have a significant impact on sex offender sentencing practices within the county.

Description of Project and Comparison Group Youths

Table 2 presents the most serious current offense for youths in the sex offender project and youths in the comparison group. The

groups were not significantly different; indecent liberties was the most common current offense among both populations.

Table 2: Most Serious Current Offense by Group

| <u>Offense</u>     | <u>Snohomish<br/>County<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Comparison<br/>Group<br/>Youths</u> |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Indecent Liberties | 67.4% (29)                             | 72.2% (26)                             |
| Statutory Rape 1   | 16.3% (7)                              | 16.7% (6)                              |
| Public Indecency   | 4.7% (2)                               | 0.0% (0)                               |
| Statutory Rape 2   | 4.7% (2)                               | 5.6% (2)                               |
| Non-Sex Offense    | 4.7% (2)                               | 5.6% (2)                               |
| Incest             | 2.3% (1)                               | 0.0% (0)                               |
| Total              | 100.1% (43)                            | 100.1% (36)                            |

Table 3 presents a comparison of several additional variables describing youths in the project and comparison groups. Data were missing for some of the variables presented in the table; therefore, the totals for the individual variables in Table 3 do not necessarily total to the full sample size.

Table 3: Characteristics of Snohomish County  
and Comparison Group Youths\*

| <u>Characteristic</u>         | <u>Snohomish<br/>County<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Comparison<br/>Group<br/>Youths</u> |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Prior Criminal Record:</b> |  |  |
| No Prior Record               | 65.1% (28)                             | 72.2% (26)                             |
| Prior Record                  | 34.9% (15)                             | 51.9% (10)                             |
| <b>Age:</b>                   |  |  |
| 13 Years Old or Less          | 14.0% (6)                              | 19.4% (7)                              |
| 14 Years Old                  | 18.6% (8)                              | 30.6% (11)                             |
| 15 Years Old                  | 18.6% (8)                              | 13.9% (5)                              |
| 16 Years Old                  | 30.2% (13)                             | 11.1% (4)                              |
| 17 Years Old                  | 14.0% (7)                              | 19.4% (7)                              |
| 18 Years Old                  | 4.7% (2)                               | 5.6% (2)                               |
| <b>Sex:</b>                   |  |  |
| Male                          | 97.7% (42)                             | 97.2% (35)                             |
| Female                        | 2.3% (1)                               | 2.8% (1)                               |
| <b>Age of Victim:</b>         |  |  |
| Younger than Offender         | 78.0% (32)                             | 90.9% (20)                             |
| Same Age                      | 17.1% (7)                              | 9.1% (2)                               |
| Older                         | 4.9% (2)                               | 0.0% (0)                               |

Table 3: Characteristics of Snohomish County  
and Comparison Group Youths (Continued)

| <u>Characteristic</u>                                     | <u>Snohomish<br/>County<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Comparison<br/>Group<br/>Youths</u> |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Victim Relationship to Offender:</b>                   |  |  |
| Stranger  | 5.1% (2)                               | 9.5% (2)                               |
| Acquaintance  | 56.4% (22)                             | 38.1% (8)                              |
| Family Member   | 38.5% (15)                             | 52.4% (11)                             |
| <b>Type of Force:</b>                                     |  |  |
| Weapon  | 0.0% (0)                               | 10.0% (2)                              |
| Physical Force  | 23.1% (9)                              | 40.0% (8)                              |
| Threat of Force   | 17.9% (7)                              | 15.0% (3)                              |
| No Threat or Force  | 59.0% (23)                             | 35.0% (7)                              |
| <b>Living Situation:</b>                                  |  |  |
| Living with Natural Parents                               | 30.6% (11)                             | NA                                     |
| Living with Remarried Parent                              | 25.0% (9)                              | NA                                     |
| Living with Single Parent                                 | 33.3% (12)                             | NA                                     |
| Other   | 11.1% (4)                              | NA                                     |
| <b>Other Family Member Has<br/>Committed Sex Offense:</b> |  |  |
| Yes   | 33.3% (9)                              | 80.0% (12)                             |
| No  | 66.7% (18)                             | 20.0% (3)                              |
| <b>Other Family Member Has<br/>Been Sexually Abused:</b>  |  |  |
| Yes   | 40.7% (11)                             | 83.3% (15)                             |
| No  | 59.3% (16)                             | 16.7% (3)                              |
| <b>Offender Has Been<br/>Sexually Abused:</b>             |  |  |
| Yes   | 50.0% (15)                             | 93.8% (15)                             |
| No  | 50.0% (15)                             | 6.2% (1)                               |

\*=Groups differed significantly for last three variables only.

The results in Table 3 indicate that the groups did not differ significantly in terms of most of the characteristics, such as prior criminal history, age, and sex. However, the two groups differed significantly on three of the characteristics. Youths in the comparison group were more likely to have another family member who has sexually offended, were more likely to have another family member who has been sexually victimized, and were more likely to have been sexually assaulted. Differences between the groups for these three variables may be due to different data collection procedures for the two groups. For the sex offender project youths, the data were based upon information generated in

the youth's initial evaluation. For the comparison group, the data were based on information gathered after the youth's participation in treatment. The additional treatment contact before the comparison group data collection likely enhanced the amount of detailed information known about the offender.

The average length of stay in the treatment component of the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project was 302 days. Youths in the comparison group were institutionalized on the average 245 days. The Snohomish County youths received an average additional 70 days of supervision after treatment ended, while the comparison group youths received an additional 139 days of parole supervision. The average total length of supervision, including post-treatment or parole supervision, was 372 days for the Snohomish County youths and 384 days for the comparison group youths. Those lengths were not significantly different; Snohomish County Sex Offender Project youths and the institutionalized comparison group youths served similar lengths of supervision.

#### Impact of Project on Sexual Re-Offenses

Sexual re-offense summary scores were calculated to assess the impact of the project on sexual re-offending among project clients compared to institutionalized sex offenders. Table 4 presents average sexual re-offense scores for the Snohomish County and comparison group youths. Average scores, describing the frequency and seriousness of sexual offenses during the youth's supervision, are presented first in the table. (Supervision also includes post-treatment supervision for the Snohomish County youths and parole supervision for the comparison group youths. The during-supervision re-offense scores were adjusted by the youth's length of supervision to indicate during-supervision re-offending over a twelve-month period.) Sexual re-offense scores, during the six months after supervision, are then presented. Finally, sexual re-offense scores are presented for the period of supervision and the following six months combined. Only youths terminated from supervision at least six months prior to data collection were included in the analysis.

Table 4: Average Sex Re-Offense Scores by Group

|  | <u>Snohomish<br/>County<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Comparison<br/>Group<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Significant<br/>Difference?</u> |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
| Sexual Re-Offenses During<br>Supervision (Adjusted<br>for 12-Month Period)           | .41                                    | .12                                    | No                                 |
| Sexual Re-Offenses<br>During Six Months<br>After Supervision                         | .44                                    | .19                                    | No                                 |
| Sexual Re-Offenses During<br>and Six Months After Super-<br>vision (18-Month Period) | .85                                    | .31                                    | No                                 |

Table 4 indicates that the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project youths and the comparison group youths did not differ significantly across the measures of sexual re-offending. There was some indication that the Snohomish County youths had higher scores, yet the incidence of sexual re-offending was generally very low for both groups (e.g., only four of the offenders had sexual offenses during supervision) and the differences between the groups were not significant.

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the effects of several variables, including whether the youth was in the sex offender project or was institutionalized, on sexual re-offending, controlling for each of the other variables in the analysis. For example, the sex offender project group may have included more sexual re-offenders because more youths in that group had a characteristic related to sexual re-offending (e.g., the youth's prior criminal history). Multiple regression analysis indicates the independent effects of the variables in the analysis on the dependent variable, i.e., sexual re-offending. Each of the variables previously assessed in Table 3 was included in the analysis.

The multiple regression analysis indicated that none of the variables were significantly related to sexual re-offending. In particular, the Snohomish County youths were no more likely to re-offend sexually, either during or after supervision, than the comparison group youths, controlling for the other variables in the analysis. The results suggest that assignment of sex offenders to the project does not present an increased threat to the community in terms of sexual re-offenses.

Impact of Project on All Re-Offenses

Total re-offense summary scores, including all types of re-offenses, were calculated to assess the impact of the project on general patterns of re-offending. Table 5 presents average total re-offense scores, combining the seriousness of all re-offenses, for the Snohomish County and comparison group youths. Average re-offense scores are presented for the period during the youth's supervision, the six months after supervision, and for the two periods combined. (As in the analysis of sexual re-offending, supervision also includes post-treatment supervision for the Snohomish County youths and parole supervision for the comparison group youths; the during-supervision re-offense scores were adjusted by the youth's length of supervision to indicate during-supervision offending over a twelve-month period; and the analysis only includes youths terminated from supervision at least six months prior to data collection.)

Table 5: Average Total Re-Offense Scores by Group

|   | <u>Snohomish<br/>County<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Comparison<br/>Group<br/>Youths</u> | <u>Significant<br/>Difference?</u> |
|---|--|--|------------------------------------|
| All Re-Offenses During Supervision (Adjusted for 12-Month Period)         | 2.90                                   | .66                                    | Yes                                |
| All Re-Offenses During Six Months After Supervision                       | .67                                    | 1.22                                   | No                                 |
| All Re-Offenses During and Six Months After Supervision (18-Month Period) | 3.57                                   | 1.88                                   | No                                 |

The results in Table 5 indicate that the Snohomish County youths had a significantly greater total re-offense score during supervision than their institutionalized counterparts. The comparison group youths appeared to re-offend more often than the Snohomish County youths after supervision; yet, the difference was not statistically significant. When examining the combined during- and post-supervision period, the two groups did not differ significantly.

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine which variables, including whether the youth was in the sex offender project or not, were related to likelihood of general re-offending, controlling for each of the other variables in the analysis, i.e., the variables previously assessed in Table 3. Table 6 presents the results of the regression analysis for general during-supervision offending. The table provides two pieces of information. The first column presents the percent

that the variable predicts the youth's during-supervision offense summary score. Variables with greater percentages are more strongly related to during-supervision offending.

The second column in Table 6 indicates the degree that the re-offense summary score increases as the variable increases by one. For example, the youth's re-offense summary score is, on the average, four units greater, or the equivalent of one "C" offense (e.g., theft 2nd degree), if force was used during the youth's previous offenses. In effect, the average re-offense score for youths who did not use force was .5, while the score for youths who used force was 4.5. Only those factors that were significantly related to during-supervision offending, after controlling for all other variables in the analysis, are included in Table 6.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis - Variables That Are Significantly Related to During-Supervision Offending

| <u>Variable</u>  | <u>Percent Variable Predicts During-Supervision Offending</u> | <u>Degree One Unit of Variable Changes During-Supervision Re-Offense Score</u> |
|--|---|--|
| Whether Force was Used in Prior Offenses (No Force=0; Force=1)                             | 11.6  | 4.0  |
| Prior Offense Summary Score  | 8.7   | 0.2  |
| Whether Youth was in the Snohomish County Project (Comparison Group=0; Snohomish County=1) | 7.5   | 2.6  |
| Length of Supervision (in Months)  | 4.1   | -0.2   |

The results in Table 6 indicate that youths who typically used force during previous sex offenses were most likely to commit an offense of any type during supervision. The table also indicates that youths with greater prior offense summary scores and youths who were in the Snohomish County Project had a greater general re-offense score during supervision, while youths with greater lengths of stay in supervision had lower during-supervision re-offense scores. (Length of supervision was related to during-supervision offending even after adjusting the re-offense score by length of supervision; a longer stay in supervision ultimately decreases a youth's likelihood of offending during supervision.)

A similar multiple regression analysis was performed for general offending after supervision. The results indicated that none of the variables, including whether the youth was in the sex offender project or not, was significantly related to patterns of post-supervision offending. In addition, a multiple regression analysis was performed assessing offending over the combined period of supervision and the following six months. Level of force in previous sex offenses and prior criminal record were significantly related to likelihood of general offending (between project entry and six months after project termination), yet whether the youth was in the sex offender project or was institutionalized was not significantly related to offending, of any type, over the combined 18-month period.

Impact of Project on Social Development

Table 7 presents Index of Social Development subscale scores, before and after treatment, for the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project youths and a sample of institutionalized sex offenders.

Table 7: Pre-Treatment and Post-Treatment  
Index of Social Development Scores by Group

| <u>Subscale</u>              | <u>Snohomish County<br/>Youths</u> |             | <u>Institution<br/>Youths</u> |             |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
|                              | <u>Pre</u>                         | <u>Post</u> | <u>Pre</u>                    | <u>Post</u> |
| Social Competence            | 12.4                               | 12.2        | 12.7                          | 12.0        |
| Sex Role Equality            | 13.4                               | 13.6        | 13.6                          | 15.0        |
| Accountability               | 15.7                               | 16.6        | 15.4                          | 16.4        |
| Self Esteem                  | 11.4                               | 11.7        | 11.6                          | 11.8        |
| Anger Control                | 12.3                               | 11.7        | 11.3                          | 10.5        |
| Non-Assaultive<br>Fantasy    | 16.6                               | 16.0        | 15.7                          | 16.4        |
| Internal Locus of<br>Control | 12.6                               | 13.9        | 12.5                          | 14.0        |
| Problem Solving<br>Skills    | 14.4                               | 15.0        | 14.3                          | 14.8        |
| Total Index Score            | 108.7                              | 110.8       | 107.2                         | 110.8       |

Differences in how youths in the two groups changed over time were assessed by comparing post-treatment scores, statistically controlling for the youth's pre-treatment score. There were no significant differences between the two groups for any of the scales presented in Table 7. Youths in the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project apparently change in terms of social development (as measured by the Index of Social Development) in a manner no different than youths assigned to institutional treatment.

## V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results from the analysis of sex offender commitments indicated that Snohomish County has reduced the percentage of Snohomish County sex offenders committed to state institutions as a result of the sex offender project's implementation in 1983. Approximately 19% of all sex offenders were committed to a state institution from Snohomish County during the years 1984 and 1985; 34% of the sex offenders sentenced in 1982 were committed to an institution. Approximately 30% of sex offenders from other Washington State counties were committed in each of the years 1982, 1984, and 1985. These findings indicate that Snohomish County committed a greater percentage of sex offenders than other counties prior to the project's implementation, and a smaller percentage in the two years after the project's implementation.

The analysis of sexual re-offenses indicated that the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project clients were no more likely to sexually re-offend during or after supervision than their institutionalized counterparts. The placement of sex offenders in the community does not appear to present any greater risk to the community in terms of sexual re-offending.

The analysis of patterns of general re-offending (including all types of re-offenses) indicated that youths in the project had greater during-supervision re-offense scores. This finding is not surprising; institutional supervision, which should theoretically eliminate most offending, represented approximately two-thirds of the comparison group youths' time in supervision. Placement in the community tends to feature some additional, though minor, re-offending during the offender's period of supervision. (The analysis in this report suggests that the average offender supervised in the community will commit, during supervision, one "D" offense, e.g., shoplifting, more than the average institutionalized offender.)

However, the analysis of general re-offending after supervision indicated that there were no significant differences between the Snohomish County sex offenders and the comparison group youths in terms of post-supervision re-offending. This finding suggests that the project provided a rehabilitative effect equal to that available in institutions. It should be noted, however, that the follow-up period was relatively short (i.e., six months) and a longer period would provide a more conclusive assessment of the long-term rehabilitative impact of the project.

Re-offending over the combined period studied--project entry to six months after project termination--was then examined. This analysis indicated that project clients did not re-offend more often than the institutionalized youths over the combined study period. Project supervision and institutional supervision appear to be equally effective in terms of protecting the community over

the full 18-month period following project/institution entry. It appears that institutional supervision delays the opportunity for re-offending, but, in the long-term, the community is not affected adversely by the use of community supervision for selected sex offenders.

The analysis of general re-offending additionally indicated that youths who used force during prior sex offenses, and youths with a more extensive prior criminal record, were more likely to commit a re-offense. The data suggest that youths who used force during prior sex offenses will commit, on the average, an additional "C" offense compared to youths who did not use force. The data also suggest that youths will have an additional "E" offense for every five prior offenses. These findings have useful implications in terms of determining which sex offenders present the greatest risk to community safety, and whether these offenders should be assigned exclusively to institutional supervision.

The analysis of social development also did not demonstrate any significant differences between the project youths and the institutional youths in terms of program impact. The project offenders' performance on the social development survey was quite similar to the performance of institutionalized offenders completing the survey.

In summary, there were no significant differences between the Snohomish County Sex Offender Project youths and the comparison group youths in terms of re-offending and social development. Given the lesser costs of community supervision, and the legislative intent to "provide for the handling of juvenile offenders by communities whenever consistent with public safety" (R.C.W. 13.40.010), these findings support the continued use of community supervision for selected sex offenders.