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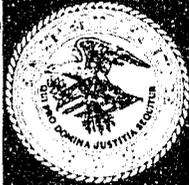
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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

Research in Brief

Charles B. DeWitt, Director

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NIJ Evaluates Drug Control Projects

The President's National Drug Control Strategy made evaluation a key research priority by calling for "development of a comprehensive information base about 'what works' in controlling drug use"

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) measures the *impact* of a wide variety of programs to control crime and drugs, finding out what works and why, and shares that information with State and local agencies. NIJ places special emphasis on drug control projects supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

This *Evaluation Bulletin* is the first in a series. It outlines the background of NIJ's evaluation efforts, describes previous evaluations, discusses ongoing programs for 1992, and explains the Institute's long-term evaluation goals. Future *Evaluation Bulletins* will examine lessons learned from such strategies as expedited court processing of drug cases, community policing in both urban and rural settings, community-based drug prevention programs, prosecution programs for complex drug cases, structured fines for drug offenders, and "boot camp" prison programs for drug-using offenders.

These *Bulletins* will present case studies of promising approaches communities may adopt. They will summarize current knowledge on criminal justice sanctions and treatment programs, drug enforcement strategies, and other issues of concern to criminal justice agencies and local communities.

Background

Across the country, a broad array of anti-drug programs, many supported with Federal assistance to States and localities, are working to diminish the impact of drugs and crime in our society. Recognizing NIJ's longstanding evaluation role, beginning with the 1968 Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, Congress included in the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 provisions directing NIJ to evaluate drug control programs financed by BJA.

Between 1989 and 1991, NIJ awarded nearly \$12 million for evaluations of State and local anti-drug programs, with funding support from BJA. These have included evaluations of police crackdowns, community policing, new court practices, sanctions targeted at both casual and persistent drug users, promising approaches to monitoring and controlling the behavior of convicted offenders, and other programs of importance to the criminal justice community. In all instances, the Institute has sought objective information on the value of these approaches and their alternatives so that State and local officials can move policy in productive directions.

Ongoing programs

NIJ's evaluation program enhances knowledge of what works to prevent and control crime and disorder, particularly in the area of drug abuse. Research that assists criminal justice professionals and policymakers can come from program assessments, process evaluations, impact evaluations,

and evaluation reviews of programs, literature, and data. In selecting topics, NIJ is guided by previous evaluation research and the priorities outlined by the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in its annual program plan.

Areas of particular interest in the current year include evaluations of the Correctional Options Program, Operation Weed and Seed, Drug Market Analysis, Gangs, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, and the Denial of Federal Benefits Program.

National evaluation conference

The National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) annually cosponsor an evaluation conference in Washington, D.C.—in 1991 attracting more than 400 Federal, State, and local participants. The conference presents findings from evaluations sponsored at all levels of government, including work in progress on current programs. It also presents special workshops on evaluation topics and new program concepts.

Panel sessions span the interests of the criminal justice system, ranging from community-based anti-drug initiatives, law enforcement tactics, and new court programs to intermediate sanctions and drug treatment in corrections. The conference is of interest to researchers, administrators of Federal and State grant programs, and professionals in State and local operations.

From the Director

As the Federal Government's principal research and development agency for improvement in the criminal justice system, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) numbers among its most significant functions the job of *evaluating* new ideas and new programs: reporting to police, prosecutors, judges, corrections officials, and political leaders on the innovations and improvements that will better enable them to turn back the challenges of drug trafficking, drug abuse, and violent crime.

What works? and what more can be done? Those are the questions NIJ is charged with answering through its evaluation program, an effort given new focus through the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988. Not every program that the Institute has evaluated has been successful, but it is important in research and evaluation to be candid and accurate about what works and what doesn't. Our Nation needs reliable answers to the drug problem, not wishful thinking.

Furthermore, we see a need to let criminal justice professionals know in easily accessible fashion the results of evaluation research.

This paper launches a new series of summary reports, the *Evaluation Bulletins*. They will communicate the findings that Federal, State, and local criminal justice professionals can put to use.

This first in the series outlines the total NIJ evaluation program as it has developed over the past 4 years and sets the stage for the forthcoming series of *Bulletins*.

Charles B. DeWitt
Director
National Institute of Justice

Building evaluation capabilities

As can be seen by the table on the adjoining page, drug program evaluation funding totaled over \$4 million in 1991. With the creation of a new Evaluation Division in 1992, NIJ continues to carry out a well-planned and comprehensive program, including efforts to enhance the capability of State and local jurisdictions to conduct their own evaluations. In this regard, three projects will be initiated:

- *National Assessment of State Evaluations*. A national survey of evaluations of justice programs in the States will provide information about the scope and focus of evaluations, the use of evaluation findings, and the level of resources available to States.

- *Assessment of State-Level Evaluation Capacity*. This study will provide information about the nature and extent of evaluation capacity at the State level. Site visits, interviews with key personnel, and an assessment of evaluation programs are included in this project.

- *Compendium of State Drug Program Evaluation Findings*. Since 1989 a number of State- and local-level evaluation projects have been completed. The combined experiences of the States in both evaluation implementation and evaluation findings have not been collected and documented in a fashion that facilitates the sharing of those experiences and findings. This project will result in a compendium of State evaluation findings and training materials for publication and distribution by NIJ.

New evaluations in 1992

Gangs and Targets of Intervention—a comprehensive evaluation of strategies for gang prevention and intervention. The evaluation will emphasize the role of social service agencies, schools, family, peers,

and community groups in the lives of those high-risk youths who become involved in gangs and those who do not.

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act of 1988—an impact evaluation of the Family Violence Law Enforcement Training and Technical Assistance program and the Family Violence Information Dissemination program.

Drug Market Analysis: An Enforcement Model—development of a program model for NIJ's Drug Market Analysis (DMA) program so that State and local law enforcement can adapt the approach to meet their own needs.

Correctional Options Demonstration Program—an evaluation of correctional options demonstration projects, funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Options include community-based incarceration, weekend incarceration, correctional boot camps, electronic monitoring, intensive supervision probation, and any other innovative sanction. These intermediate sanctions are designed to have the greatest impact on offenders who can be punished more effectively in an environment other than a traditional correctional facility.

Denial of Federal Benefits Program—a process evaluation of a new user accountability sanction: denial of Federal benefits to persons convicted of drug possession or trafficking.

Operation Weed and Seed—a process evaluation of Operation Weed and Seed, a major urban anti-crime initiative of the U.S. Department of Justice. Operation Weed and Seed is a community-based, comprehensive, multiagency approach to combating violent crime, drug use, and gang activity in high-crime neighborhoods.

Boys and Girls Clubs in Public Housing—a process evaluation of the Boys and Girls Clubs in public housing as an individual part of Operation Weed and Seed.

NIJ drug program evaluation funding for fiscal year 1991

Program area Specific topic	Funding
Community-based policing	
Evaluating the New York City Police Department's model precinct program	\$125,202
Evaluation of the Baltimore County Police Department's community-oriented drug enforcement program	72,226 ^a
Innovative neighborhood policing in rural areas	400,000
Implementation and impacts of innovative neighborhood policing	399,920
Community-based programs	
Anti-drug initiatives in small cities and towns	147,492
Community effects of street-level narcotics enforcement	150,000 ^b
Past and future directions of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program	300,000
Prosecution and adjudication	
Assessing the impact of the Dade County drug court on drug-related felons	114,172
Improving the court response to drug cases	150,806
Prosecuting complex drug cases	144,348
Drug testing	
Drug testing throughout the criminal justice system	199,997
Corrections and intermediate sanctions	
Boot camp, drug treatment, and aftercare	49,820
Evaluation of drug offender treatment in local corrections	346,020
Structured fines	299,942
Systemwide programs	
Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988: program assessment	499,990
Emerging drug enforcement tactics	99,749
Multiagency approach to drug and gang enforcement	177,294
Special emphasis programs: OJP priorities	
Weed and Seed in Kansas City: evaluation design for a multiagency crackdown on drugs	197,640
Evaluation capacity-raising	
1991 conference on Evaluating Drug Control Initiatives	272,980
Evaluation conference and workshops	480,000
Total	\$4,627,598

^a \$72,226 supplement to total award of \$97,666.

^b \$150,000 supplement to total award of \$600,000.

For more information

To learn more about the National Institute of Justice evaluation program, write to National Institute of Justice/National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20850, or telephone

800-851-3420 (if outside the United States, call 301-251-5500); or write Dr. Craig Uchida, Director, Evaluation Division, National Institute of Justice, 633 Indiana Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20531.

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.

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