

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
National Institute of Justice



National Institute of Justice

Research Report

**Boot Camps for
Adult and Juvenile
Offenders:
Overview and Update**

149175

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Boot Camps for Adult and Juvenile Offenders: Overview and Update

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I. Introduction

One of the most closely watched developments in corrections today is the proliferation of boot camp programs. Characterized by a strong emphasis on military structure, drill, and discipline, these programs offer a new twist on the use of residential programs for convicted criminals. Beginning with a single 50-bed program in Georgia in 1983 (Parent, 1989), boot camps now operate in more than half the States. They serve local as well as State inmates, juveniles as well as adults, and women as well as men.

This report provides an overview of the latest available information about boot camp programs in the United States and describes research and development activities that are currently underway. The American Institutes for Research (AIR), in collaboration with the Institute for Criminological Research (ICR) at Rutgers University, is responsible for carrying out two of these efforts: one is a case study evaluation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Demonstration of Juvenile Boot Camps in three sites, and the other is an evaluation of three boot camps for youthful offenders that receive Bureau of Justice Assistance funding. These and other ongoing efforts will be producing their results within the next 1 to 2 years.

Scope of this report

There is no widely accepted or official definition of the term "boot camp." Because boot camps have proven so popular with legislators and other potential backers, no doubt many program developers find it prudent to stretch the term to include as broad a range of programs as possible.

In this report, however, we will reserve the term "boot camp" exclusively for a residential facility for delinquents or adult criminals that has made military-style structure, rules, and discipline a prominent part of its program. Although some researchers use the terms "shock incarceration" and "boot camp" interchangeably (MacKenzie, 1990), we will avoid the term shock incarceration, because it is sometimes applied to other types of interventions, such as shock probation, shock parole, or split-sentencing. In the latter programs, a short term of imprisonment is imposed along with community supervision, to shock the offender into renouncing criminal behavior; but a shock program need not involve a military-style setting. Programs that do will qualify as boot camps by the definition above.

This definition also excludes programs that have many of the boot camp program elements, but without the military overlay. For instance, it does not include work camps, a popular correctional option operated by many States and local jurisdictions (American Correctional Association, 1993). While work camps require the same types of hard physical labor as many boot camps, there is no military flavor. Nor do we consider wilderness or adventure programs to qualify as boot camps unless they incorporate military structure and discipline.

In conventional usage, boot camps fall into the broader category known as "intermediate sanctions" or "intermediate punishments." This category contains a variety of correctional approaches that fall between the extremes of traditional probation and traditional incarceration (Morris & Tonry, 1990; U.S. Department of Justice, 1990). It includes options like intensive probation or parole supervision, house arrest, day treatment centers, day fines, and community service or restitution. Often these approaches are used in combination. Boot camps are no exception; they often have an intensive aftercare component and may include community service activities in their regimen.

Methods

This report draws upon three primary sources of information.

- **Published and unpublished documents** about boot camp efforts, focusing particularly on materials that have become available during the last 2 to 3 years. Other authors have done a thorough job of examining the evidence from earlier periods, so we will draw heavily on their findings.
- **A mail survey** of State correctional departments in all 50 States and the District of Columbia, conducted in May-June, 1993. This brief survey was intended to update the information recently reported by the U.S. General Accounting Office (1993).
- **A telephone survey** of State juvenile correction agencies, conducted in August 1992, as part of our ongoing evaluation of OJJDP's Juvenile Boot Camp Demonstration.

This report also draws on what AIR and ICR have learned from our evaluation of the first year and a half of the Juvenile Boot Camp Demonstration, as well as informal insights and information offered by other researchers and programmers who are involved with boot camp efforts.

Organization of this report

The next chapter briefly reviews the reasons boot camps have generated so much interest. Then Chapter III describes the prevalence and distribution of boot camps today and summarizes some of their key features. Chapter IV turns to the question of whether boot camps work, addressing both short- and long-term measures of effectiveness. Finally, Chapter V summarizes this study's findings; highlights several research efforts that are underway; and reviews key research, policy, and program issues in the boot camp arena.

II. Why Boot Camps?

Presumably all fields of endeavor are subject to changing fashions, and corrections is no exception. However, while faddism may have played some role in the proliferation of boot camps, the phenomenon has deeper roots. It is a product of at least two interrelated developments in the last decade or so. One is the astounding growth in the number of offenders incarcerated nationwide. The other is a reappraisal of sentencing policy, based on changing views of the role of punishment and rehabilitation in the correctional system.

Increasing prison populations

The correctional system is often characterized as a system in crisis (Byrne, Lurigio, & Petersilia, 1992). In a little over a decade the prisoner population has grown a remarkable 150 percent (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993). The Federal prison system has been especially hard hit, doubling its population in a decade (Klein-Saffran, 1992). Thus, both the rate of prison incarceration and the absolute number of inmates reached their highest levels ever in 1992 (American Correctional Association, 1993). Many State facilities find themselves under court order to reduce overcrowding, and inmates are increasingly being held in county jails. In 1992 over 40,000 inmates were being held in county jails because there was no space for them in State institutions (American Correctional Association, 1993; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1992).

The composition of adult prison populations is also changing. Drug incarcerations rose 327 percent in a recent 5-year period. By 1991 drug offenders made up 21.6 percent of the prison population, more than double their percentage of the population in 1986 (Criminal Justice Newsletter, 1993). In the Federal system, drug offenders constitute 58 percent of the total prison population (Klein-Saffran, 1992).

Although the juvenile justice system nationwide is not as severely burdened as the adult system, it exhibits the same general trends. Juveniles in custody for delinquent offenses increased 35 percent from 1978 to 1989, although the youth population of the U.S. declined by 11 percent (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1992). Also, young drug offenders were more likely to be placed in custody. In 1989, 35 percent were removed from their homes, compared with 24 percent in 1985 (Butts & Sickmund, 1992).

Changing sentencing policy

The surge in inmate populations is inextricably intertwined with other developments in sentencing theory and policy. The Nation entered the 1980's disillusioned by research that appeared to debunk the potential of rehabilitation (Martinson, 1974; Palmer, 1992). And throughout much of the 1980's, the pendulum swung the other way; public concern with safety and giving offenders their "just deserts" dominated sentencing policy. To many, incarceration seemed the most natural way to achieve these goals. And if courts were not sufficiently responsive, then statutes could be passed to make sure that offenders were locked up.¹

By the late 1980's, however, the trend was clear. Prisons were straining at the seams, correctional costs were spiraling, and crime did not seem to be diminishing. Meanwhile, new studies were causing policymakers and practitioners to reappraise rehabilitative approaches. Apparently, some interventions did work, sometimes, for at least some offenders (Palmer, 1992), and they did not always involve incarceration (Morris & Tonry, 1990).

The search for alternatives

Together all these developments have converged to produce a vigorous interest in "intermediate" correctional approaches that can satisfy the public's demand for protection and punishment without further taxing correctional facilities and budgets. Not all proponents of intermediate sanctions support them for the same reason, however. Some defend them on the grounds that they can offer a more just system of punishment, which holds offenders accountable and satisfies the public (Morris & Tonry, 1990), even if it does not reduce costs or crowding. Others caution that if intermediate sanctions do not control crime better than the alternatives, they will be irrelevant to the current correctional crisis (Clear & Byrne, 1992).

To meet the needs of diverse offenders and provide supervision adequate to the risks they pose, it is generally recognized that a variety of intermediate options is needed (American Correctional Association, 1990). In any case, most intermediate sanctions claim multiple goals: to save money, to deter future crime, to protect the public, and to rehabilitate offenders (Byrne et al., 1992).

¹ There were other motives for new sentencing statutes, most notably decreasing the disparity in sentences for offenders with similar offenses and criminal history. Intentional or not, the result may have been greater reliance on incarceration in some instances (Morris & Tonry, 1990).

The “universal” appeal of boot camps

One expert has noted that boot camps “can be — at least in perception — all things to all people” (Parent, 1989). At least in theory, boot camp programs respond to virtually all of the concerns that have fueled the intermediate sanction movement. Thus, boot camps promise to:

- **Protect the public** by keeping offenders under tight supervision. Public protection is further enhanced if boot camps closely supervise their graduates when they return home.
- **Reduce institutional crowding** by diverting offenders from institutions or releasing them earlier. In the longer term, the program will reduce crowding if it also reduces recidivism.
- **Save money** by providing a shorter, and therefore cheaper intervention than prison, or by moderating or terminating criminal careers much earlier than other alternatives.
- **Punish or hold the offender accountable** by placing him or her in a harsh environment, stripped of some privileges that even a conventional prison provides. If the boot camp builds in community service projects or paid work, the offender can even make some direct restitution to society or the crime victim.
- **Deter future crime** by demonstrating that crime does not pay, both to offenders in the boot camp and to criminally disposed members of the general public.
- **Rehabilitate offenders** by teaching them self-discipline and good work habits, fostering more pro-social attitudes, and improving their health and fitness. In some camps, educational, drug/alcohol, and other counseling programs will further enhance their potential for law-abiding behavior.

Doris MacKenzie and Dale Parent (Parent, 1989; MacKenzie & Parent, 1992), experts on boot camp programming nationwide, have commented on the extraordinary appeal of these programs to the general public. They note that the programs are a “natural” for media coverage, which tends to focus on the disciplinary aspects and appeals to “get tough” sentiments. In a culture where many people view military service as a formative experience, the public also seems to intuitively grasp the rehabilitative rationale for the programs.

Public enthusiasm for boot camps and their familiar outward trappings has sometimes obscured the fact that when sweeping promises or goals are translated into a concrete program, the goals may conflict. In practice, for example, pressures to protect the public and reduce prison crowding often contend for dominance; a boot camp program that tilts

toward public protection may find itself handling many offenders who would otherwise have been put on probation, thereby compromising its goal of freeing up prison beds. Understandably, perhaps, proponents may find it easier to get support for boot camps by sticking with the rhetoric.

To find out whether boot camps really work, however, their claims must be measured against the reality. Despite public support for the concept, many policymakers, practitioners, and researchers recognize that the evidence is not yet in. In the interim, programs have been warned to make a clear choice of goals, and to ensure that their methods of offender selection and program operation serve those goals, or they will risk disappointment (Parent, 1989).

Also, the boot camp concept is not entirely without critics. Some observers have forcefully questioned the appropriateness of the military model for working with offenders. Moreover, they argue that approaches used in some programs are outmoded in terms of current military practice, having been abandoned by the military itself as counterproductive (Morash & Rucker, 1990; Sechrest, 1989). We will return to these themes in Chapters III and IV.

The role of the Federal Government

The Federal Government — the Department of Justice in particular — has played an important role in trying to determine whether the early enthusiasm for boot camps is justified, as well as in helping jurisdictions that have already decided to take the plunge.

Department of Justice initiatives

Several agencies within the Justice Department, including the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, support boot camp research and demonstration programs. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) funded the first national assessment of developments in the boot camp field (Parent, 1989). In 1987, NIJ also began sponsoring systematic research on the operations and outcomes of several State programs, with a major report on the multisite experience expected from Doris MacKenzie and her colleagues in Fall 1994. More recently, NIJ commissioned a study of a boot camp run by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Meanwhile, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) launched a three-site demonstration of boot camps for juvenile offenders in 1991, and in 1992, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) funded several pilot programs incorporating boot camp concepts under its Correctional Options program, with more sites added in 1994.

American Institutes for Research (AIR) is currently evaluating the OJJDP demonstration and three of the BJA-sponsored initiatives through cooperative agreements with NIJ. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency is evaluating three additional BJA sites. NIJ is also funding researchers at Southern Illinois University to do a national assessment of substance abuse programming in boot camps and during boot camp aftercare.

While various research efforts are still underway, there are programs to address the immediate needs of agencies that already are planning or operating boot camps. BJA has hired a technical assistance contractor, Criminal Justice Associates, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to work specifically with the Correctional Options sites. BJA and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) also are sponsoring a broader training and technical assistance effort, under the direction of Correctional Services Group, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri, that will develop training and resource materials on boot camps for nationwide use. Finally, BJA and NIJ are funding the American Correctional Association to develop standards for adult and juvenile boot camps.

Other Federal efforts

The Department of Defense has also assisted boot camp programs under Section 1004 of the National Defense Authorization Act. Under this program, Federal, State, and local agencies have been able to secure training for corrections officers who will serve as drill instructors in boot camp programs. The training, which lasts 4 weeks, is available at Ft. McClellan, Alabama. (It was originally available at Quantico, Virginia, as well.)²

The legislative branch has also taken notice of boot camps. Responding to congressional interest in this area, the U.S. General Accounting Office has completed three relevant reports since 1988; one on intermediate sanctions, including boot camps, and two on boot camps only (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1988, 1990, 1993).

In 1990 Congress authorized the Correctional Options Program, to be administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. In 1992 Congress earmarked \$13 million for the program. Three million dollars was set aside for boot camps for youthful offenders (up to age 25) under Part 3 of the program, but boot camps could be funded under the broader Part 1 category as well. Also in 1992 Congress included authorization for up to 10 juvenile boot camps when it extended the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act for 4 more

² It is interesting that the Navy and Marine Corps are planning their own boot camp effort, called the Junior Leadership Corps, as part of a broader effort to decrease the demand for illegal drugs. This program would serve military family members, aged 15-17, who have dropped out of school (personal communication, Captain G. C. Gigon, U.S. Marine Corps, January 1993).

years. These camps, serving 150 to 250 youths, would combine the usual elements of military-style discipline, drill, and training with substance abuse treatment, and educational and counseling programs. So far the OJJDP program has not been implemented, however, because Congress has not appropriated funds for this initiative.

III. Boot Camps Today

Introducing military-style discipline into correctional settings is not new. There were prisons with military regiments in the 1800's — most notably the Elmira Reformatory, which like many correctional boot camps today included a combination of rehabilitative and military elements (Morash & Rucker, 1990). After World War II, the British set up quasi-military detention centers for adolescents in England and Wales. These centers, which emphasized tough discipline, were intended to give teenagers the "short, sharp shock" that would end their criminal careers. These programs continued into the 1960's and 1970's despite research that showed their recidivism outcomes were no better than other institutional programs (Wilkins, 1969).

In the United States, however, the first modern-day correctional boot camp opened in Georgia in 1983. Faced with unprecedented overcrowding in its prisons and jails, Georgia was looking for alternatives to incarceration for adult offenders (Flowers, Carr, & Ruback, 1991). The idea caught on quickly. By late 1988 there were 15 programs in 9 States (Parent, 1989). Seventeen States were on board by 1990 (MacKenzie, 1990). Also in 1990, the first boot camp for juveniles began in Alabama (Toby & Pearson, 1992). The last published survey, by the U. S. General Accounting Office (1993), found 26 States were operating a total of 57 boot camps for adults in spring 1992. These camps had a combined capacity of 8,880.

Below we review the prevalence and characteristics of boot camps today. We begin by looking at State boot camps for adults, since they have a longer history and are better documented than other types of boot camps. We then consider what is known about boot camps for juveniles, locally operated boot camps, and boot camps for Federal prisoners.

State boot camps for adults

The American Institutes for Research (AIR) surveyed correctional systems in all 50 States and the District of Columbia in May-June 1993, to identify any recent additions to the State boot camps for adults identified by the GAO's survey last year. The AIR survey was

addressed to the Commissioner or Director of Corrections, or the State's contact person for boot camp inquiries, if known. Extensive followup resulted in a 100-percent response.³

The results are shown in table 1. Note that Georgia is given special treatment in the table because the Georgia program is very large and has three distinct components, serving quite different populations.⁴ The first type serves probationers, the second serves prison inmates, and the third serves probationers in detention centers who are not physically fit enough for the standard probation boot camp.

The statistics in table 1 indicate that the surge in boot camp programming has not subsided. Since the GAO survey, three more States, California, Massachusetts, and Minnesota, have added adult programs. This brings the total number of camps to 59 and total capacity to 10,065 in 29 States, representing about 1.4 percent of the adult State prison population as of mid-1992 (American Correctional Association, 1993).

Of the programs that were operating at the time of the GAO survey, most have remained the same size or changed their capacity by less than 10 percent. The overall increase in national capacity is attributable to the three new programs coming on line in 1993, as well as sizable increases in capacity in three other States — Georgia, Illinois, and New York. The only States to decrease their capacity in the past year were Michigan, with 240 fewer beds, and Texas, with 28 fewer beds. Georgia and New York continue to maintain by far the largest programs, accounting for half of the total capacity nationwide. The typical program size is somewhere between 100 and 250.

Boot camps are increasingly open to women, with capacity up about 10 percent over last year. Fifteen States, including the new Massachusetts program, now place females in their boot camp programs, compared with 14 in 1992. Kansas dropped women from its program while Michigan added them.

³ A copy of the survey can be found in appendix A. There were two versions of the cover letter, one for States known to have boot camps already and one for States believed to be without boot camps. Respondents were offered the option of completing the survey in a telephone interview or by mail. All but six States responded by mail.

⁴ We excluded a fourth component of Georgia's program, the Intensive Discipline Units, because we considered these units substantially different in purpose from the usual boot camp. They are used for offenders whose behavior in regular prison has been unacceptable; given satisfactory progress in Intensive Discipline, offenders are returned to the general prison population.

Table 1. State Boot Camps for Adult Offenders, as of spring 1993

State	Year Started	Number of Camps			Capacity			Usual Length of Stay	Can Stay be Extended?
		Male	Female	Co-ed	Male	Female	Total		
Alabama	1988	1	0	0	180	0	180	90	Yes
Arizona	1988	0	0	1	144	6	150	120	Yes
Arkansas	1990	1	0	0	150	0	150	105	Yes
California	1992	1	0	0	176	0	176	90-120	Yes
Colorado	1991	0	0	1	92	8	100	90	Yes
Florida	1987	1	0	0	100	0	100	90	Yes
Georgia/Probation	1983	3	0	0	465	0	465	90-120	Yes
Georgia/Inmates ¹	1991	5	0	0	926	0	926	120	Yes
Georgia/Detention	1988	11	1	0	1719	166	1885	60-120	Yes
Idaho	1989	1	0	0	210	0	210	100	Yes
Illinois	1990	1	0	1	420	10	430	120	Yes
Kansas	1991	1	0	0	104	0	104	180	No
Louisiana	1987	0	0	1	136	12	148	90-180	No
Maryland	1990	0	0	1	²	²	454	180	Yes
Massachusetts	1992	0	0	1	³	³	256	120	No
Michigan	1988	0	0	1	336	24	360	90	Yes
Minnesota	1992	1	0	0	72	0	72	180	Yes
Mississippi	1985	1	1	0	262	30	292	120	Yes

Table 1. State Boot Camps for Adult Offenders, as of spring 1993 (continued)

State	Year Started	Number of Camps			Capacity			Usual Length of Stay	Can Stay be Extended?
		Male	Female	Co-ed	Male	Female	Total		
New York	1987	4	0	1	1500	180	1680	180	Yes
North Carolina	1989	1	0	0	90	0	90	90	Yes
Ohio	1991	1	0	0	100	0	100	90	No
Oklahoma	1984	2	2	0	346	100	446	45-180	Yes
Pennsylvania	1992	0	0	1	190	10	200	180	No
South Carolina	1986	1	1	0	196	29	225	90	Yes
Tennessee	1989	1	0	0	150	0	150	90	Yes
Texas	1989	1	1	0	372	12	384	90	No
Virginia	1991	1	0	0	100	0	100	90	No
Wisconsin	1991	1	0	0	40	0	40	180	No
Wyoming	1990	1	0	0	24	0	24	90	Yes
Total		43	6	10	8,756 ⁴	599 ⁴	10,065		

¹ Does not include two Intensive Discipline Units.
² Maryland can accommodate varying proportions of males and females.
³ Massachusetts did not report capacities for males and females separately.
⁴ Does not include beds in Maryland and Massachusetts.

Nor are boot camps losing their appeal to policymakers. Two additional States, Kentucky and Oregon, have boot camp openings scheduled this year. Both programs will serve males and females. Eight other States report that they are considering the implementation of boot camps; five of them — Delaware, Hawaii, Montana, Nebraska, and West Virginia — are far enough along in their plans to have some idea of the probable program capacity.

Objectives of adult boot camps

Earlier, we noted that part of the appeal of the boot camp concept is the fact that it can claim to achieve multiple goals. Which of these goals do existing programs emphasize? State correctional officials responding to AIR's survey rated the importance of various goals for their particular programs on a 5-point scale. As seen in table 2, deterring future crime, rehabilitating the offender, protecting the public, and lowering recidivism receive the strongest emphasis.

Table 2. Program Goals as Reported by State Corrections Officials

	Not a goal	Relatively unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important	Average Rating*
Reducing crowding	3%	3%	38%	21%	35%	2.8
Reducing cost	0	3	24	31	41	3.1
Punishing the offender	21	14	45	21	0	1.7
Protecting the public	0	3	17	14	66	3.4
Deterring future crime	0	0	0	21	79	3.8
Rehabilitating the offender	0	0	3	38	59	3.6
Lowering recidivism	0	0	7	52	41	3.3
Addressing public dissatisfaction	11	11	32	32	14	2.3

* Scale runs from 0 to 4, with 0 = Not a Goal and 4 = Very Important

Reducing costs and prison crowding, two of the goals most prominently associated with boot camps, received intermediate ratings. However, the averages mask the fact that cost reduction is of at least moderate interest almost everywhere. Opinion is more divided on reducing crowding, with some State officials viewing reduction of crowding as crucial and others downplaying its importance. Although the States with the largest programs, Georgia

and New York, both emphasize crowding, program size and commitment to reduction of crowding are not necessarily associated elsewhere.

Punishing the offender and addressing public dissatisfaction with the justice system are seen as the least important goals by most respondents. No one rated punishment as "very important," and over a third said it was relatively unimportant or not a goal at all. The lack of emphasis on punishment is particularly interesting in light of the proliferation of sentencing policies that emphasize "just deserts" (see Chapter II). However, the ratings of these State officials are generally consistent with those of the boot camp administrators surveyed by the GAO (1993). Like the State officials, the administrators placed the traditional goals of reducing costs, crowding, and recidivism, and protecting the public relatively high on their list, but downgraded punishment and addressing public dissatisfaction.

Other groups — legislators, for example — might rank these goals differently of course. And as we noted earlier, goal statements alone do not reveal the operational choices of a program.

The AIR survey also asked corrections officials whether their programs were intended to be alternatives to prison, a means of early release from prison, or an alternative to probation. All but three States, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and New York, characterize their programs as prison alternatives, although only nine States viewed that as their only intent. Minnesota and New York characterize their programs exclusively as early release mechanisms, and 14 additional States say that early release is at least one of their intentions. Only three States — Georgia, Kansas, and Mississippi — view their programs as providing an alternative to probation in addition to other functions.

Boot camp participants

Eligibility criteria are a way to ensure that a boot camp program meets its broader goals, whatever they may be, as well as to screen out offenders who cannot tolerate the program regimen. Thus, criteria generally involve a balancing act and some fine-tuning over time. Programs that want to reduce prison crowding, for instance, do not want criteria that are too restrictive, or too few offenders will qualify. On the other hand, most programs do not want to accept dangerous offenders who require a high level of security, or offenders whose placement in boot camp would provoke a public outcry.

Typically, boot camps target healthy, young, nonviolent offenders without prior prison experience, who are willing to volunteer for boot camp (Parent, 1989; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993). In voluntary programs, at least one major incentive for enrollment is usually a shortened prison term.

As of Spring 1993 (see table 3), most boot camp programs continue to limit themselves to offenders who enter voluntarily, and most rule out offenders with physical or mental impairments because the programs are so strenuous and demanding. Despite the voluntary nature of a program, some offenders may not perceive that they have much choice, if the alternative is a much longer prison stay (Parent, 1989).

While most adult programs limit themselves to younger offenders, the age range is broadening both ends. Six States — Colorado, Georgia, Kansas, Maryland, South Carolina, and Tennessee — report higher age limits than in last year's GAO survey. Colorado, Kansas, and Virginia also now accept younger offenders than before. Most programs now accept offenders older than 25, and 12 states take offenders over 30. Five States have no limits.

Taken at face value, the eligibility criteria also suggest that a number of States may admit more serious offenders than is commonly assumed. Only 28 percent of the States limit eligibility to first-time offenders.⁵ Another 17 percent limit themselves to first-time felons, and 31 percent to offenders without a prison record. Although 14 of 29 States (48 percent) claim to restrict themselves to nonviolent offenders, each State imposes its own definition of "nonviolent."⁶ For example, California will accept offenders convicted of second degree robbery, and Tennessee's criteria specifically exclude offenses involving bodily injury. However, in practice differences may not be that significant, since even programs that admit "violent" offenders usually rule out some serious offenses from the program. Nine States specially target probation or parole violators.

Seventeen States reported that they target drug-involved offenders; another State commented that although they do not specifically target them, a significant proportion of their boot camp pool was drug-involved.

States commonly set restrictions on maximum sentences eligible for boot camp. Twenty-three of the 29 States with boot camps have such restrictions. In 10 States the maximum is 6 years or less. Insofar as maximum sentences are dictated by current offense and prior record, a limit on sentences may have much the same effect as restricting offense type and history. In any case, age and other eligibility restrictions interact, making it difficult to determine the exact profile of offenders that would result from applying any set of criteria.

⁵ The term "first offender" also is subject to local variations in interpretation (MacKenzie & Parent, 1992).

⁶ The GAO (1993) reported that only three States accepted participants who had previously served time in prison. We have no ready explanation for the discrepancy between their findings and ours on this point.

Table 3. Eligibility Criteria for State Boot Camps

State	Placement authority	Age limits	Limitations								Specifically target:	
			Nonviolent	First offenders	First-time felons	Offenders without prison record	Minimum sentence (in years)	Maximum sentence (in years)	Voluntary entry	Reject physically/mentally impaired offenders?	Drug involved	Probation or parole violators
Alabama	Judge	—	1	●	●	●	1	15		Mentally only		
Arizona	Judge and corrections authorities	18-25	1	●			1	7	● ⁹	●		●
Arkansas	Corrections authorities	—	● ⁷	●	●	●	½	10	●	●		
California	Corrections authorities	—	●	●			1	3	●	●		
Colorado	Corrections authorities	30 and under	●				—	—	●			
Florida	Judge	15-24	●	●	●	●	1	10		●		
Georgia	Judge and parole authorities	17-35 ²	● ⁵				¾ ⁶	10 ⁵	● ⁵	● ⁸	●	●
Idaho	Corrections authorities with judge's agreement	15 and up	1				1	Life	●		●	
Illinois	Corrections authorities with judge's recommendation	17-29	1			●	1	5	●	●	●	

Table 3. Eligibility Criteria for State Boot Camps (continued)

State	Placement authority	Age limits	Limitations								Specifically target:	
			Nonviolent	First offenders	First-time felons	Offenders without prison record	Minimum sentence (in years)	Maximum sentence (in years)	Voluntary entry	Reject physically/mentally impaired offenders?	Drug involved	Probation or parole violators
Kansas	Judge and corrections authorities	16-27	●				1	3	●	●	●	●
Louisiana	Judge, corrections authorities, and parole board	17-39	¹				1	7	●	●		
Maryland	Corrections authorities	16-32	●				¾	10	●	●	●	●
Massachusetts	Corrections authorities	17-40					—	2	●		●	
Michigan	Judge and corrections authorities, with judge's agreement	25 & under ³	¹				1	—	●	Physical only		●
Minnesota	Corrections authorities	—	●				2½	4½	●	Mentally only	●	
Mississippi	Judge	—	¹			●	—	All but life		●		
Nevada	Judge	18 and up	●				1	—		●	●	●
New Hampshire	Corrections authorities, with judge's agreement	18-30	●				2	4	●	●		

Table 3. Eligibility Criteria for State Boot Camps (continued)

State	Placement authority	Age limits	Limitations								Specifically target:	
			Nonviolent	First offenders	First-time felons	Offenders without prison record	Minimum sentence (in years)	Maximum sentence (in years)	Voluntary entry	Reject physically/mentally impaired offenders?	Drug involved	Probation or parole violators
New York	Corrections authorities with judge's agreement	16-35	●			●	—	Parole-eligible within 3 yrs.	●	●	●	
North Carolina	Judge	16-26					—	—	●	●	●	●
Ohio	Corrections authorities	18-25	●	●	●		1	5	●	●	●	
Oklahoma	Corrections authorities	18-22 ³	●				—	5			●	
Pennsylvania	Corrections authorities	18-35	¹	●	●		2½	5	●	Mentally only	●	
South Carolina	Judge and corrections authorities	17-29	¹	●		●	¼	8	●			
Tennessee	Corrections authorities	18-35	●				1	66		●	●	
Texas	Judge	17-25					1	10		●		
Virginia	Judge	15-24	5			●	—	20	●	●	●	●
Wisconsin	Corrections authorities	18-30	5				—	—	●	●	●	

Table 3. Eligibility Criteria for State Boot Camps (continued)

State	Placement authority	Age limits	Limitations								Specifically target:	
			Nonviolent	First offenders	First-time felons	Offenders without prison record	Minimum sentence (in years)	Maximum sentence (in years)	Voluntary entry	Reject physically/mentally impaired offenders?	Drug involved	Probation or parole violators
West Virginia	Judge	17-25	5			●	—	—	●	Physically only	●	●
No. of States with this type of limitation		24	14	8	5	9	20	23	22	24		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some offenses are excluded, but not all violent offenses. 2. 17-35 applies to inmate boot camps. Range is 17-30 for probation boot camps. There are no limits for probation detention centers. 3. No limits for prisoners. 4. Regimented Inmate Discipline only. Other programs have no limits. 5. Inmate programs only. Other programs are not restricted. 6. 12 years for certain drug offenses. 7. "Unless sentenced by a judge." 8. Limits apply only to probation boot camps. Inmate programs and probation detention centers are unrestricted. 9. Limit applies only to correctional inmates. 												

Offender profiles have been reported for some of the more extensively studied boot camp programs, but in most cases eligibility criteria have since broadened. For example:

- During the first 25 months of Florida's boot camp program, the typical inmate was 19 years old upon admission. The most common admitting offenses were burglary, robbery, or drug crimes; one in four had violated probation or community control. On average, inmates had been sentenced to 3.6 years of incarceration. Despite the fact that offenders with prior prison experience were not eligible, a few had been in prison before under a First Offender statute that kept the earlier conviction silent (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990).
- In 1990 offenders admitted to Georgia's Special Alternative Incarceration Program (SAI) had to be age 17 to 25 and could not have been previously incarcerated as an adult (Flowers, et al., 1991). As a result, the boot camp population averaged 22.5 years old, with 81 percent age 22 or under. Nearly half were property offenders, 26 percent were drug offenders, and 15 percent had committed violent crimes. All were male. SAI is a precursor of Georgia's current probation boot camps, which now accept offenders up to age 30, with sentences up to 10 years.
- When South Carolina's program was studied, it was limited to offenders age 26 and under, versus a top age of 29 now. Offenders admitted to the boot camp program between July 1990 and October 1991 had an average age of 20, with 79 percent age 22 or under. Nearly 80 percent of their offenses were property crimes like burglary or larceny and drugs. Robbery and assault accounted for about 10 percent of the cases (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992).
- New York excludes older and violent offenders from boot camp. These criteria produce a predominance of drug offenders: in 1993 they accounted for 72 percent of the males and 93 percent of the females. About half of the inmates were second-time felons. Seventy percent of males and 90 percent of females were age 21 or older (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

Gatekeepers. Access to boot camp programs is usually controlled either by sentencing judges or State correctional authorities. This is the case in 19 States, with State correctional authorities having placement authority in 11 States and judges having it in the other 8. Elsewhere, more than one entity has placement authority, or judges must concur with correctional authorities. In two States, probation or parole authorities participate. Often, where more than one entity has placement authority, they concern themselves with different pools of offenders. Judges place offenders coming up for sentencing, while the department of corrections places offenders already sentenced to the correctional system.

For programs that aim to reduce prison crowding and overall system costs, careful control over placement is generally considered essential (Parent, 1989; MacKenzie & Parent, 1992; U.S General Accounting Office, 1990). Otherwise, boot camp slots may be used for offenders who would not have gone to prison anyway, a phenomenon that is commonly referred to as "net-widening." At least one State, South Carolina, amended its "shock

incarceration" statute in 1990 in order to give placement authority to the Department of Corrections, rather than sentencing judges. This change was expressly designed to maximize the program's impact on prison crowding, by ensuring that offenders considered for boot camp are drawn from those already sentenced to prison (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992).

Programming in State boot camps for adults

While many State boot camp programs are adopted to contain mushrooming costs and prison populations, at bottom, all State boot camp programs share a belief that military-style structure and discipline will benefit the participating offenders and help them become law-abiding citizens. Why should this be so?

Programs rest on a core rationale (Hengesh, 1991):

- Offenders selected for boot camp are still young enough, or insufficiently committed to criminal lifestyles, to change.
- Offenders enter boot camps without basic skills, in poor physical condition, and without having experienced success or pride in conventional pursuits like employment and education. Offenders may lack self-esteem, or their self-esteem may be based on criminal exploits and the approval of criminal peer groups.
- Offenders lack self-discipline, respect for authority, and the ability or motivation to take responsibility and be accountable for their actions.
- A relatively short, intensive experience with military structure and discipline can ameliorate some of these deficits. Like new recruits in military boot camps, offenders can learn self-discipline, responsibility, self-esteem, and teamwork. These skills can help set offenders on the path to new lifestyles.

Critics object that the core rationale for correctional boot camps is flawed. Military boot camps serve a fundamentally different purpose — they train fighting units — and besides, military boot camps are just the initial step in a much longer training process (MacKenzie & Parent, 1992). Proponents respond that the purposes are not so dissimilar: military boot camps "provide a foundation of discipline, responsibility and self-esteem the military can build on during the advanced training that follows. Correctional boot camps are designed to do much the same thing" (Hengesh, 1991).

Perhaps partly in response to the critics, some programs have expanded their rationale beyond the core set of assumptions. New York posits a theoretical model of delinquency known as "control theory" as the underlying basis for its program (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).⁷ Such an explicit Statement appears to be

⁷ Control theorists view delinquency as resulting from weak or absent bonds to conventional society. The most prominent proponent of control theory is Travis Hirschi (see *Causes of Delinquency*,

unusual, however. More typically, programs expand the core rationale to include assumptions about the programs and services that offenders will need, above and beyond military structure, to overcome their deficits. These may include programs and services offered while the offender is in boot camp, or after his or her release.

Below we consider the key features of State boot camps for adults.

Program location. Most State boot camp programs are located together with other correctional facilities, usually at a larger prison. However, 10 of the States surveyed report having boot camps located separately; another State had been operating a separate facility, but recently converted one section to house other offenders, since the boot camp was not operating to capacity. Georgia has both types of programs, some that are independent and others that share space.

Co-location with other facilities allows for sharing of some services and programs, which generally reduces costs. Programs that share space do segregate boot camp inmates from other prisoners, however (Parent, 1989).

Military structure and discipline. While military structure and discipline are the defining features of a boot camp, the specific activities and procedures that make up military structure and discipline can vary considerably. Currently, there are no sources of information that describe the range of variation nationwide.

No doubt this lack of documentation has contributed to the controversy surrounding boot camps for offenders. Prison boot camps are accused of using methods already abandoned by the military as ineffective and harmful, such as capricious or negative leadership, degrading treatment, and work assignments without legitimate purpose (Morash & Rucker, 1990; Sechrest, 1989). This may be true of some boot camps, but it is difficult to know how widespread these practices are. Some programs have adopted explicit rules forbidding humiliating treatment or language (e.g., New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993; Maryland Division of Correction, 1990).

AIR's survey of the States attempted to pin down some of the more mundane aspects of the military environment, by asking respondents to indicate whether their programs included a variety of features associated with military boot camps. The results are shown in table 4.

Two of the elements of military boot camps are present in every State's program, the use of military titles and military-style protocol, such as standing at attention and responding with "Yes, sir" or "No, sir." Nine out of 10 States house at least some of their inmates in barracks, another familiar feature of the military environment. And at least four out of five States also use drill instructors, group inmates in platoons as they enter boot camp, and hold public ceremonies when they graduate.

Most States have adopted some of the punishment styles of the military setting as well. Eighty-six percent use summary punishment, which entails on-the-spot sanctions for misbehavior, such as push-ups or an extra work assignment. The States are somewhat less likely to use group rewards and punishments, although some programs see this as one way to develop teamwork and group responsibility. Both of these styles of punishment fall outside the standard procedures of many traditional facilities and may even be prohibited elsewhere in the correctional system (Parent, 1989). Another mode of punishment associated with military settings — the “brig” — is the feature least likely to be present in State programs. Only six States report using it.

According to the survey, other elements that are present more often than not include barracks housing and military-style uniforms for staff. Military-style uniforms for offenders, such as fatigues, are used in less than half the States.

Characteristic	Programs with this feature (N=29)	
	Number	Percent
Barracks-style housing	26 ⁸	90
Military titles (captain, sergeant, etc.)	29	100
Military-style protocol	29	100
Drill instructors	25 ⁹	86
Military-style uniforms for staff	22	79
Military-style uniforms for offenders	14	48
Grouping in platoons (members enter together)	25 ¹⁰	86
Summary punishment	25 ¹¹	86
Group rewards and punishments	17	59
"Brig" or punishment cell	6	21
Public graduation ceremony	24	83

AIR's survey indicates that most boot camps employ an array of military features. Only a few States lack more than three of the elements shown in table 4. Judging from a count of their military features, some of the newest programs, California and Texas, appear to run the least "militaristic" programs overall. Texas noted on its survey response that they had previously used summary and group punishments, but no longer do so. However, both the Texas and California programs incorporate barracks-style housing and drill instructors, as

⁸ Four of the States included here do not use barracks for all their boot camp programs. One State included here reported that they use quonset huts, rather than barracks.

⁹ This feature is present only in Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps, not in the probation detention centers.

¹⁰ This feature is present only in Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps, not in the probation detention centers. It is present in only one of Illinois' two boot camps.

¹¹ This feature is present only in Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps, not in the probation detention centers.

well as military titles and protocol.¹² At the other extreme is the new program in Massachusetts, which claims all of the military features shown in the table.

Newspapers and other published accounts highlight some of the military aspects that were not covered in the AIR survey (Appleby, 1993; Frank, 1991; Parent, 1989; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993; Waldron, 1990). Some of these include spartan surroundings, early morning reveille, and the highly scheduled and regimented nature of the boot camp day. For instance, inmates may be required to march from place to place and practice drills. There may be little or no access to telephones or radios and limited visiting privileges. Some programs start inmates with a period of intense verbal confrontation, which diminishes over time. As in many other correctional settings, inmates typically earn privileges by demonstrating that they are responsible and are abiding by program rules.

Remedial and treatment programs. Although the first of the modern boot camp programs, Georgia's, offered little besides military structure and discipline at its inception (Parent, 1989). Most States, including Georgia, have moved toward a richer mix of programming. Survey respondents in 13 States specifically mentioned enhancements to their education or treatment programs in response to an open-ended question about significant changes in the program over time.

The survey results in table 5 confirm that most States are now offering more than military structure and discipline. All States currently include some type of drug or alcohol counseling or education in their programs, and several specifically mentioned upgrading this aspect when commenting on changes over time. Nine out of 10 States provide some sort of educational program as well. About half provide vocational training or job preparation assistance, and nine States now offer adventure or challenge programming. The latter category includes programs like ROPES, which involves a series of physically challenging tasks that require teamwork to complete.

¹² One component of the Georgia boot camp system, the probation detention centers, is even less "militaristic" than the Texas and California programs since its only military features are titles, protocol, and the brig or punishment cell. However, the other two major components of the Georgia boot camp system — inmate boot camps and probation boot camps — include more military features.

Table 5. Programming in State Boot Camp Programs for Adult Offenders

Characteristic	Programs with this feature (N=29)	
	Number	Percent
Military drill and discipline	29	100
Physical labor	28	97
Physical fitness or exercise programs	28 ¹³	97
Challenge or adventure programming	9 ¹⁴	31
Drug/alcohol counseling or education	29	100
Other counseling/therapy	24	83
Education	26	90
Vocational training or job preparation	15	52

All programs except Idaho's also incorporate physical labor and physical fitness programs. Although these elements often are treated as part of the disciplinary side of the boot camps, work programs at least can be multipurpose. Some programs, like the one in New York State, provide community service experiences that may become a source of pride to inmates (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

Programming mix. Although media accounts of boot camps all sound alike, because they tend to highlight the drill and discipline aspects, observers of the boot camp movement emphasize how much the program mix differs from place to place (MacKenzie, 1990; Parent, 1989; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).

AIR's survey respondents estimated what proportion of a typical program day was allocated to: (1) military drill, discipline, and physical labor; (2) fitness or exercise programs; and (3) education, vocational education, and counseling activities of all types.¹⁵

¹³ This feature is present only in Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps, not in the probation detention centers.

¹⁴ This feature is present only in Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps, not in the probation detention centers.

¹⁵ Because these activities may be so intertwined in practice, it may have been difficult for the survey respondents to calculate percentages. Sometimes the figures for the three categories did not add up to 100 percent, and usually the respondents gave no explanation for the missing percentage. When this occurred we recalculated the State's percentages assuming a base of 100 percent. One State allocated

Their estimates are shown in table 6. More than half of the States devote at least 50 percent of their program day to military discipline, drills, and training, and few devote less than 20 percent. As might be expected, physical fitness or exercise programs take up less of the program day, typically falling in the 10 to 19 percent range, and rarely exceeding a third. Time devoted to educational and counseling activities was the most variable percentage across all sites. Three States spend half or more of the program day on these activities, 10 others spend between a third and a half of the day, and 11 spend between a fifth and a third of the day on them.

Proportion of program day allocated	States devoting time to:					
	Military		Fitness		Education/ counseling	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
50 percent or more	14	52	0	0	3	11
33-49 percent	9	33	3	11	11	41
20-32 percent	3	11	8	30	10 ¹⁶	37
10-19 percent	1	4	13 ¹⁷	48	3	11
Less than 10 percent	0	0	3	11	0	0
Total ¹⁸	27	100	27	100	27	100

The extremes in program mix are represented by Pennsylvania and South Carolina. Pennsylvania allocates 70 percent of its program day to education and counseling, with 20 percent devoted to fitness and 10 percent to drill, discipline, and physical labor. In contrast,

the balance of its time to community service activities; we reallocated this time to the drill, discipline, and labor category. Another State provided separate percentages for two phases of the program; we simply averaged the two. Two States declined to answer the question entirely.

¹⁶ Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps fall into this category. Programs in the probation detention centers spend a third of their time on educational and counseling activities.

¹⁷ Georgia's inmate and probation boot camps fall into this category. Programs at the probation detention centers provide no physical fitness activities.

¹⁸ Two States did not provide any percentages.

South Carolina spends just 10 percent of the day on education and counseling, and 10 percent on fitness; the remaining 80 percent of the day is devoted to military activities and work.

There are a few States that allocate roughly equal amounts of time to the military and the education/counseling components. These include California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin. All of these programs, except New York's, started within the last 2 or 3 years. In general, there seems to be greater emphasis on educational and counseling activities among the programs started since 1990.

Regardless of the program mix, these statistics confirm previous findings that, with rare exceptions, boot camp inmates "spend a fairly large amount of time in rehabilitation-type activities, at least in comparison to offenders serving time in a regular prison" (MacKenzie, 1990).

Program duration. The typical length of boot camp is around 90-120 days (see table 1). The new program in Minnesota lasts 180 days, however, along with programs in six other States. California describes its new program as lasting 10 months, but the boot camp phase lasts only 90-120 days. Only one State, Oklahoma, has programs shorter than 90 days, but some of the State's boot camp programs last as long as 6 months.

The survey shows that about 70 percent of the States will extend an inmate's stay under some circumstances. In Wyoming, stays can be extended for up to 1 year, and in Idaho for 6 months. Most other States specified an extension of 30 or 60 days; however, several States did not specify or commented that it depended on the specific case or on the decision of the sentencing judge.

Presumably, most extensions occur because the inmate has not made satisfactory progress in the program. However, Michigan commented that extensions are allowed only for temporary medical problems. At least one State will extend an inmate's stay to allow time to find a suitable community residence (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992). This practice may be more widespread than is documented. We know it has occurred in the OJJDP-sponsored boot camps for juvenile offenders, at least occasionally.

States like South Carolina and New York have implemented a relatively structured process for determining who gets to extend his or her stay in boot camp. Used too liberally, retention of offenders beyond their usual term may tie up beds for other eligible inmates and raise the costs of the program (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992). It may also send the wrong message to other program participants about the level of tolerance for misbehavior. New York's "re-evaluation" program, instituted in 1991, will not consider inmates who have committed serious infractions such as assaulting staff or other inmates (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

About two-thirds of the States also allow offenders to quit the boot camp program. In general, programs that require voluntary entry allow voluntary exit, but in 6 States, once an offender has opted in, he or she is required to stay. Mississippi's and Georgia's probation detention centers are the only places where inmates are put in boot camps involuntarily, but are allowed to quit.

In 21 States, and in Georgia's inmate program, offenders who quit or fail in boot camp are returned to prison. The remaining seven States and Georgia's two probation programs reported that there is no general rule, or that offenders are treated differently depending on whether they came to boot camp via prison or a judge's sentence. If an offender was sentenced to boot camp by the judge, he may be returned to that judge for a new sentence.

Aftercare for graduates. We noted earlier that in response to critics of the military model in corrections, proponents have noted that correctional boot camps are not expected to be stand-alone interventions (Hengesh, 1991). Like military boot camps, they simply provide a sound foundation for the next steps. But what **does** come next?

In his review of several of the earliest boot camp programs, Parent (1989) reported that re-entry planning and subsequent supervision varied considerably, constrained both by judicial sentencing and the quality of relationships between the boot camp and probation or parole officials. The picture does not look too different now.

As of spring 1993, 14 States reported that graduates would receive more intensive supervision than the typical offender, and one other State indicated that supervision would be more intensive or would vary by case. Thus, about half of all programs expect their graduates to receive some form of intensive aftercare. The remaining States responded that the level of supervision for graduates would be about the same as for other offenders or would vary depending on the particular case.

Aftercare programming for boot camps has received surprisingly little attention in the literature. One exception is New York's program, referred to as shock parole. It is an elaborate aftercare program, especially for the two-thirds of graduates returning to New York City. Two-person parole officer teams supervise a caseload of 38 shock parolees for 6 months, after which graduates continue on regular supervision. Graduates also receive temporary residential placement for up to 90 days, if needed. Educational and vocational training, employment assistance, relapse-prevention, and peer group counseling are arranged through contracts with community-based agencies. In upstate New York, the aftercare program is less comprehensive because parolees are widely dispersed, but supervision is still more intensive than regular parole (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

California also reports a strong aftercare component. Its boot camp graduates move on to a 60-day placement in a work furlough facility, followed by another 120 days of intensive parole supervision. This transitional living phase may be unique to California.

According to the GAO report (1993), graduates of Georgia boot camps are now assigned to intensive supervision for a minimum of 3 months, before dropping down to regular supervision.

Costs. Our survey of the States did not cover cost questions because differences in methods of calculation would make the findings uninterpretable. There is general agreement, however, that boot camps usually cost as much or more per day than regular prisons, because boot camps tend to have more staff and more rehabilitative programs. The savings that boot camps exact result from reductions in the number of days offenders are incarcerated. Boot camps also cost more per day than noninstitutional alternatives (MacKenzie & Parent, 1992; Parent, 1989; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).

Other types of boot camp programs

Our survey looked only at programs run by State correctional agencies, and most of the documentation about boot camps that is available pertains to them. In this section, we look at what is known about three other types of programs.

Adult boot camps operated by local governments

Austin and Bolyard (1992), researchers at the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), report that counties are becoming interested in boot camps for much the same reasons as the States. In fact, crowding in local jails is being exacerbated by lack of space in State facilities.

NCCD's nationwide survey in 1992 identified 10 active local programs in 5 States — California, Louisiana, Michigan, New York, and Texas.¹⁹ All programs were being operated by sheriffs or county corrections departments. Three of them started before their State corrections department had its program.

¹⁹ An 11th program, run by the Los Angeles County Sheriff, was excluded from the survey report, because it had just been discontinued for lack of funding. NCCD is releasing an evaluation of that program separately. Unless otherwise noted, all statistics reported in this section for local programs are drawn from NCCD's survey report (Austin & Bolyard, 1992).

Under the Bureau of Justice Assistance Correctional Options programs, two more local boot camps were expected to come on line during 1993, one in the city of St. Louis and the other in Cook County, Illinois.

According to the NCCD survey, the capacity of local programs ranges from 12 to 384, with the smallest and the largest programs located in Texas. The programs tend to be small in comparison with State-run programs; 5 of the 10 have less than 50 beds. They also are small in relation to the size of the jail systems that operate them, accounting for only 3 percent of the average daily population. Most programs operate with empty beds, averaging 77 percent capacity across all sites.

In terms of their goals and services, local programs are quite similar to State-run programs. They are less likely to emphasize reduction of crowding as a goal, but they accord the same low rankings to punishment.

Local and State programs also serve similar target populations except that the local programs are more likely to serve females. Two of the 10 local programs are designated solely for females; 4 others are coed. Most local programs prefer serving first-time and nonviolent offenders, but they do not exclude other populations; several include parole violators. Participation is almost always voluntary. Local programs may inherit some of the overflow from State programs. For instance, Travis County, Texas, reports that three-fourths of its boot camp participants during the first 6 months of operation were under State prison sentences, but they were being held locally because the State could not accept them (Littleton, 1989).

The most striking difference between the State and local programs is that local programs are often shorter. Although the New Orleans Parish program, at 250-300 days, exceeds the longest State program, and four other programs fall into the "standard" 90-120 range, the remaining five programs are brief. Four of them last between 56 and 70 days, and one lasts only 5 days. Although this very short boot camp has fewer goals than the other programs, it still rated rehabilitation and reducing recidivism as "very important."

In 7 of the 10 programs, inmates graduate to some form of community supervision, but only 2 States reported that the supervision is intensive. Graduates of the New Orleans program go on to a work/school release program (Caldas, 1990).

No information is available yet about program costs, either for local boot camps or their aftercare.

Programs for Federal prisoners

Following the passage of authorizing legislation, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) opened a boot camp for 192 male offenders in 1991. A second 120-bed camp opened for women in mid-1992 (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).

The 180-day Federal program is voluntary. Like State programs, it uses early release to the community as an incentive, but overall sentences are not shortened — just served in a different location. The Federal program targets younger and less serious offenders, as dictated by criteria specified in the legislation.²⁰ However, in practice the Federal boot camp population tends to be older and have more previous incarcerations than that of State boot camps. Because initially there were not enough boot camp eligibles among new entrants to the Federal prison, the program also has accepted eligible inmates from elsewhere in the system. A large proportion of the participants are drug offenders and rated as minimum-security prisoners (Klein-Saffran, 1991).

In contrast to many State programs, Federal boot camps do not use summary punishment or a confrontational approach. Both are deemed inconsistent with BOP's treatment philosophy and standard operating procedures (Klein-Saffran, 1991). The male program adheres more closely to the military model, with its use of the platoon structure, than the female program does. Both programs require participation in work details. Inmates have access to a variety of self-improvement activities, including basic education and vocational training programs, drug and alcohol counseling, and life skills training (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).

Unlike graduates of the typical State program, Federal boot camp graduates are not released directly to the community, but must reside in a halfway house. During this intermediate phase, the offender is expected to go out to work, but otherwise his or her time is restricted. After several months, the offender is released to home confinement status.

Cost information about the Federal program has not yet been published.

Boot camps for juvenile offenders

Boot camps for juvenile offenders, like those for Federal prisoners, are a relatively recent phenomenon. A 1992 telephone survey of State departments of juvenile corrections, conducted by colleagues at ICR/Rutgers University (Toby & Pearson, 1992), discovered only eight programs for juveniles. Through AIR's survey of the States, we discovered that one of these programs is now defunct. We also found two other programs in operation, bringing

²⁰ The women's program has no age limit, however (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).

the current total to at least nine. The oldest program, in Orleans Parish, Louisiana, dates to 1985. Two other programs began in 1990. Three of the newest programs — in Cleveland, Ohio; Denver, Colorado; and Mobile, Alabama — are funded through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's national demonstration of boot camps for juvenile offenders.²¹ A list of the programs is shown in table 7.²²

Except for Alabama's State-level program, which has 25 female beds, all of the juvenile programs serve males exclusively. Their combined capacity is 956 beds. However, 4 of the programs have 100 beds or more, including Los Angeles County, which operates two facilities. Several of the programs are small by comparison to adult facilities. The smallest program, in Denver, has just 24 beds, and 2 others have 30 beds each. Not all of these programs were operating at capacity when surveyed, but several were just getting underway.

²¹ In this section, where no other authority is cited, we are drawing upon observations made during AIR's and ICR's evaluation of the three OJJDP programs.

²² Data come from the original ICR/Rutgers survey, except for the two programs recently identified. These are the programs in Los Angeles County and Orleans Parish.

Table 7. Key Characteristics of Boot Camps for Juvenile Offenders

Program	Operated by:	Year began	Capacity	Program duration (in days)	Age limits	Limited to:				% of time devoted: ¹		Level of supervision after boot camp
						Nonviolent offenders	First serious offense	First custodial commitment	volunteers	Physical training, drill, and work	Education and counseling	
High Intensity Treatment, Chalkville, AL	State	1990	100 ²	30	12-18			•		36	64	Depends on risk
Environmental Youth Corps, Mobile, AL	County/Private	1992	52	90	13-17	•	•	•		43	57	Intensive
LEAD, CA	State	1992	60	120	16-20		•		•	34	66	Intensive
Drug Treatment Boot Camp, Los Angeles, CA	County	1990	210	140	16-18					NA	NA	Intensive
Camp Foxfire, Denver, CO	State/Private	1992	24	90	14-18	•				58	42	Intensive
Orleans Parish Prison, New Orleans, LA	Parish	1985	275	Depends on sentence	13-18					NA	NA	None, usually
Mississippi Rehabilitative Camp, Raymond, MS	State	1992	175	168 ³	10-20					24	76	Minimal
Youth Leadership Academy, South Kortwright, NY	State	1992	30	120	15-16			•	•	44	56	Intensive
Camp Reulston, Cleveland, OH	County/Private	1992	30	90	14-17				•	38	63	Intensive

1 = Available only for programs in the ICR/Rutgers survey (Toby and Pearson, 1992).

2 = Includes 25 beds for females.

3 = Average actual completion time.

NA = Not Available

Eligibility. Boot camps for juveniles, like boot camps for adults, are typically looking for "midrange" offenders — those who have failed with lesser sanctions like probation but are not yet hardened criminals. Midrange offenders in the juvenile system are likely to be different from midrange offenders in the adult system, of course. It is difficult to compare the seriousness of the criminal records of these groups because statistics about the prior record of adult boot camp inmates disregard their delinquency history. Given what is known about criminal careers, however, it is likely that many, if not most, adults assigned to boot camps have a delinquency record, plus an adult record.²³

Juvenile programs typically exclude some types of offenders, such as sex offenders, armed robbers, and youths with a record of serious violence. But only a few programs expressly limit themselves to offenders who are nonviolent, have committed their first serious offense, or are receiving their first custodial sentence. As in the adult system, definitions of terms like "nonviolent" vary from program to program. Taken at face value, the Mobile, Alabama, selection criteria appear to be the most exclusionary in terms of delinquency record. The Orleans Parish program, in contrast, accepts anyone sentenced by the judge.

Most programs tend to focus on youth in their mid to late teens, although the Mississippi program takes offenders as young as 10, and two Alabama programs take 12- or 13-year-olds.

Goals and rationale. Programs participating in the Rutgers survey gave uniformly high ratings to the goals of lowering recidivism, providing safe custody, and rehabilitation — a pattern quite similar to that observed for boot camps serving adults. Not surprisingly, given the traditional rehabilitative focus of the juvenile system, punishment, which received low ratings from officials responsible for adult programs, gets even lower ratings from juvenile officials.

Although documentation about juvenile boot camps is limited, it appears that they share the core rationale of adult boot camps. In keeping with the juvenile justice system's historical focus on rehabilitation, the rationale for juvenile boot camps typically incorporates explicit assumptions about the needs and deficits of delinquent youth, and the remedial, counseling, and aftercare programs necessary to address those needs (Bottcher, 1993; Bottcher & Isorena, 1993; Institute for Criminological Research & American Institutes for Research, 1992; McFate & Reed, 1992).

In the case of the three OJJDP-sponsored boot camps, a rationale combining assumptions about the benefits of discipline and the benefits of rehabilitation was imposed from the Federal level. Nonetheless, the authors assume that a similar rationale would have

²³ It is also interesting to note that in our survey of State corrections officials, only 4 of 28 States reported that an adult's juvenile record was considered in determining eligibility for boot camp; 4 other States said it would depend on the case.

emerged even without Federal direction. There are some differences of emphasis, however. For instance, the Denver, Colorado program places primary emphasis on discipline during the boot camp phase, reserving most of the emphasis on rehabilitation until the aftercare portion of the program. Boot camp is viewed as the phase in which youths acquire the self-discipline, work ethic, and personal responsibility to take advantage of later rehabilitative opportunities. The Cleveland and Mobile sites place more emphasis on the potential for making other sorts of gains — in educational achievement, for example — during boot camp itself.

Boot camp programming and duration. Most juvenile boot camps share the 90- to 120-day duration typical of adult boot camps. Only Alabama's State-level program is shorter, at 30 days, and Mississippi's program, averaging 168 days, is considerably longer. From the survey results, it appears that most programs will extend a youth's stay, typically for not more than 30 days.

Little information is available about the military regimen in boot camps for juvenile offenders, other than what has been reported so far for the OJJDP programs (Institute for Criminological Research & American Institutes for Research, 1992). All of those programs exhibit most of the military features discussed in connection with State-level adult programs. That is, they employ military customs and courtesies, have uniformed drill instructors, use a platoon structure, and subject participants to summary punishment and group punishment under some circumstances. Mobile has barracks and Denver's incoming platoon temporarily sleeps in a common dayroom.

Once again, there are differences of emphasis, with Denver creating the most militaristic environment. Denver's drill instructors (DI's) are "in your face" and the boot camp has a "brig," although it is used less now than when the program started. Both Denver and Mobile start platoons off with a period of intense verbal confrontation. In general, the experience of the demonstration sites suggests that juvenile boot camp programs must tailor their environment to the maturity levels of the participants. Denver staff believe their intense military approach is too tough for younger delinquents and admit few youths under 16 to the program. Mobile, which accepts offenders from 13 to 17, has reported difficulty accommodating this age range in the same platoon.

Besides military structure and discipline, all juvenile boot camps except the one in Orleans Parish appear to include some type of work detail. In Los Angeles County, participants alternate days of work experience on 7-man work crews with full days of academic education; the boot camp receives \$450 per day from the government agencies that hire boot camp crews, and youths earn \$10 a day, which helps pay their fines and restitution (Los Angeles County Probation Department, 1992). According to the ICR/Rutgers survey, the New York program devotes about 6 hours a day to work, but the other respondents reported spending anywhere from under an hour to 3 hours on work.

The ICR/Rutgers survey confirms that there is considerable emphasis on rehabilitative activities in boot camps for juveniles. In State programs for adults, it is unusual for boot camps to allocate more than half the day to educational and counseling activities. Among the juvenile programs surveyed, all of the programs except the one in Denver do so, and two of the eight spend three-quarters or more of their time on these activities.

At least some of the difference in emphasis between adult and juvenile programs may be attributable to the fact that States mandate education for juvenile offenders. Thus, all programs spend a minimum of 3 hours on academic education. Most programs also include some vocational education, work skills training, or job preparation.

All of the juvenile programs except Alabama's State-run boot camp include some form of drug and alcohol counseling or treatment, and all but California's include other forms of rehabilitative counseling. Both the Los Angeles and California Youth Authority programs specifically target drug-involved offenders and emphasize drug and alcohol counseling (Bottcher & Isorena, 1993; Los Angeles County Probation Department, 1992).

Aftercare. Most boot camp programs for juveniles, including the three OJJDP demonstrations, assign their graduates to a period of intensive community supervision. The one program with minimal aftercare supervision reports that this situation is forced upon them by personnel shortages (Toby & Pearson, 1992).

Like some of the other juvenile boot camps, the two programs in California dedicate aftercare staff solely to the boot camp caseload. The State boot camp program is the most intensive. For 6 months, graduates are assigned to intensive parole officers, who have caseloads of about 15 (California Youth Authority, 1992). In the Los Angeles County program, a team of 6 probation officers has been assigned to work with caseloads of 35-50 boot camp graduates for up to 6 months. Afterwards, probation may be terminated or youths may be transferred to standard probation (Los Angeles County Probation Department, 1992).

The OJJDP demonstrations have taken a less conventional approach to aftercare supervision.

- In Denver, youths released from boot camp attend a special school operated by New Pride, a community-based agency, for 6 months. The school is patterned along the lines of a private academy with a required uniform of a tie and blue blazer. Youths retain their regular probation or parole officer during this phase and continue under supervision afterward as long as their sentence dictates. They may also be required to participate in drug and alcohol counseling and other programs.

- Cleveland requires its boot camp graduates to report to a day center for 6 months, where case management and supervision, counseling, recreation, and other services are provided. Cleveland has decided to create an alternative school at this center as well, after finding it difficult to return boot camp graduates to regular school settings. The center provides transportation and meals.

- Mobile assigns boot camp graduates to their choice of seven Metropolitan Boys and Girls Clubs, based in low-income neighborhoods throughout the area. Youths are required to report there after school on a schedule set by the program and their probation officers. Boys and Girls Clubs offer tutoring, recreation, drug and alcohol education, and other special programs. Mobile's aftercare program lasts 9 months, but requirements for attendance at the Boys and Girls Clubs are relaxed as time goes on.

Costs. So far, cost information is not available about boot camps for juveniles.

IV. Do Boot Camps Work?

In 1989, Dale Parent (1989) concluded his assessment of the first 10 modern-day boot camps by noting that little was known about their impact and effectiveness. In the intervening years, the level of knowledge has increased somewhat. Although no evaluations of Federal, local, or juvenile programs have been released yet, a handful of States have completed evaluations of their boot camp programs for adults. Based on a review of these evaluations, as well as field visits to several boot camps, the U.S. General Accounting Office (1993: 33) recently concluded that boot camps may reduce costs and crowding, but said that "recidivism is still an unknown factor."

Understandably, decisionmakers would like to know more. In AIR's survey of the States, the authors asked corrections officials what information they would like to have about boot camps. Nine of the States without programs and eight States with programs mentioned research on effectiveness. Four States explained that they had no plans to implement boot camps, in part because the evidence available so far is not compelling.

This chapter reviews and expands upon the GAO findings with respect to costs, crowding, and recidivism. It also looks at whether boot camps benefit society in other ways, and, aside from these questions of effectiveness, considers how difficult it is to implement them.

However, all of the evaluations cited below have methodological limitations. In addition, some of the older and best documented boot camp programs have been modified substantially since their evaluations were done, changing selection procedures, eligibility, and programming in some instances. New York's evaluation is the most elaborate and also the most current, as it is updated every year. However, New York's program is somewhat atypical, in that the boot camp phase lasts longer than the usual program and is followed by a well-defined, intensive aftercare program.

Do programs reduce overcrowding?

The effect of a boot camp program on institutional crowding and costs is a function of several factors:

- The number of participants.
- The probability that participants would otherwise have been imprisoned.
- The rate of program completion.
- The difference between actual time served in prison and in boot camp.
- The rate of return to prison of inmates released from each type of program.

In other words, to maximize effects on prison crowding, a program must be large in relation to the rest of the institutional system, it must serve offenders who would otherwise have been incarcerated elsewhere (i.e., it must not widen the net), its participants must graduate, they must spend less time in boot camp than they would have spent in prison, and they must not return to prison (MacKenzie & Parent, 1992).

According to the GAO's most recent report (1993), several States now do have programs large enough to affect institutional crowding. It is difficult to gauge how well these programs measure up on some of the other criteria, however. It is particularly difficult to determine what proportion of participants would otherwise have gone to prison, although it has been suggested that programs where correctional authorities control placement are the most likely to maximize this proportion (MacKenzie & Souryal, 1991). However, 11 of the 26 States that had boot camp programs in 1992 told the GAO (1993) that they believe their programs have reduced crowding to a great or a very great extent.

A few States have released evaluations that corroborate their beliefs. In its most recent report, the New York State Department of Correctional Services (1993), which runs the Nation's second largest program, concludes that without the boot camp program, the department would need 1,846 more beds. Savings of 154 beds have been estimated for Louisiana's much smaller program, using a model that takes into account several key factors

(MacKenzie and Parent, 1991).¹⁸ Florida also concludes that its program affects prison populations (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990).

Do boot camp programs reduce costs?

It is difficult to interpret the cost data from different States or make meaningful comparisons across States because of differences in methods of accounting. However, most States believe that boot camps cost as much or more per day than incarceration elsewhere. Of the 16 States that provided cost comparisons to the GAO (1993), 9 States believe boot camp costs more, and four believe it costs about the same. Cost savings result from the fact that boot camp participants spend less time institutionalized than their counterparts in prison.

Four States — New York, Georgia, Florida, and Louisiana — have estimated the cost savings associated with their programs. New York has been gradually refining its procedures for estimating cost savings over 5 successive years of evaluation. New York estimates a savings of \$2.02 million in care and custody costs for every 100 inmates released from boot camp, amounting to over \$124 million so far. In addition, evaluators estimate that without the program, the State would have needed to build 1,540 additional beds, at a cost of nearly \$102 million (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993). The New York estimates do not factor in the value of community service performed by inmates, which amounted to 800,000 hours of labor in 1992.

Evaluators of the Louisiana program (Louisiana, undated), using the modeling approach described above, attribute annual savings of about \$1.6 million to the boot camp program there. Florida offers a "conservative estimate" of \$1.25 million saved during fiscal year 1987-88.

Georgia estimated that average costs per offender in their Special Alternative Incarceration (SAI) program — the original prototype for Georgia's current probation boot camp program — were \$5,219 per offender, including the costs of subsequent probation. This made the program cheaper than several other institutional alternatives, estimated at from \$7,913 to \$19,861 per offender, but more expensive than either intensive supervision alone (\$2,279) or placement in a diversion center (\$4,279). Georgia evaluators did not estimate how SAI participants would have been allocated among these other alternatives, if SAI had not been available, nor did they calculate overall cost savings for the program (Flowers et al., 1991).

¹⁸ This model can vary assumptions about the proportions of participants who are prison-bound, who fail to complete the program, who return to prison, etc., or it can incorporate actual proportions when these are known. This model is also being used in the NIJ-sponsored Multisite Study that is nearing completion.

All of the available evidence concerning reduction of costs and crowding relates only to State-level programs. Among local programs for adults and programs for juveniles, there are some that appear sufficiently large to affect institutional populations. However, the extent to which they meet the other key criteria for saving beds and costs is unknown. The GAO (1993) concludes that the current boot camp program for Federal prisoners — which has room for only 0.5 percent of Federal prisoners — is too small to appreciably affect either crowding or costs.

Do boot camps reduce recidivism?

To determine whether boot camps affect recidivism, the ideal approach is to compare results between inmates who were randomly assigned either to boot camp or to an alternative such as regular prison. Properly done, this approach ensures that the groups being compared were truly alike before exposure to the program and therefore, it is the program that accounts for any differences in results. Unfortunately, there are many practical obstacles to random assignment, and none of the evaluations completed to date have employed it. Thus, they are all open to the criticism that the comparison groups may have been different to begin with, or that there has been some “selection bias.” This may mean, for example, that boot camp inmates were more highly motivated than other groups or that they presented less of a correctional challenge. Additionally, evaluators often use only the boot camp graduates as the point of comparison, thereby eliminating the influence of failures or dropouts.

Setting aside concerns about the adequacy of the evaluation designs, so far there is no compelling evidence that boot camp participants recidivate less than the groups with which evaluators have compared them (MacKenzie & Souryal, 1991; MacKenzie & Parent, 1992; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).

In Georgia, recidivism rates for boot camp graduates were significantly lower than for offenders placed in prison or on intensive supervision, at followup periods ranging from 1 to 5 years. Boot camp graduates did about the same as offenders placed in diversion centers and much worse than those on regular probation, however. The pattern varied in the first 6 months, when a couple of the prison groups did better than boot camp graduates, but apparently this effect was temporary. It is difficult to interpret these results, because judges had the authority to select offenders for boot camp during the period under study. Ostensibly, they were looking for mid-range offenders who needed more than probation but less than prison. And in general, recidivism for boot camp graduates falls in between recidivism for prisoners and regular probationers. Recidivism does not differ from that of offenders assigned to community diversion centers, but is better than that of offenders assigned to intensive supervision. In any case, Georgia evaluators draw no firm conclusions from the recidivism analysis (Flowers et al., 1991). By the 5-year followup point, however, about half of all boot camp graduates had returned to prison.

In Florida, 25.3 percent of the first 281 graduates of boot camp were returned to prison versus 27.8 percent of those in the comparison group. Rates of return for felonies were virtually identical, while boot camp graduates had a higher rate of return for misdemeanors and a lower rate of return for probation violations. The evaluators also note that recommitments for new felonies tended to occur soon after release (midway through the 4th month on average) for both groups. Recommitments for misdemeanors and technical violations occurred later for the boot camp group (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990), so perhaps boot camp delayed or depressed less serious forms of misconduct.

In Louisiana, evaluators conclude that boot camp graduates were no more likely to succeed on community supervision than comparison groups of parolees (Louisiana, no date). About 31 percent of boot camp graduates failed on community supervision and 38 percent were arrested at least once (MacKenzie, Shaw, & Souryal, 1992). No figures are reported for the comparison groups.

New York has been following the largest number of boot camp graduates, as well as several comparison groups, for up to 36 months. The comparison groups consist of: (1) a "pre-boot camp" group, made up of parolees who fit the legal and demographic criteria for boot camp participation but were sentenced to prison before boot camp was available; (2) a "considered for boot camp group," who met the official eligibility criteria but did not enter for some reason; and (3) a "removed" group, who dropped out or were removed from boot camp and were returned to another facility. Male boot camp graduates do better than the comparison groups, but the differences are statistically significant only at the 12- and 24-month points. At 12 months, 89 percent of the boot camp graduates are still in the community, versus 85 percent of the "pre-boot camp" and the "considered" groups, and 82 percent of the "dropout" group. By 36 months the differences are smaller: 51 percent of the graduates are free, versus 49 percent of the pre-boot camp group and 46 percent of the "considered" and the "dropout" groups. Female boot camp graduates have only been followed for 12 months so far; 93 percent of them remain in the community versus 88 percent of the pre-boot camp and "dropout" groups, and 90 percent of the "considered" group.

The evaluators note that in the longer term comparisons, boot camp graduates are at a disadvantage, because more of them remain on parole than the comparison groups, and therefore they are at greater risk of being returned to prison for parole violations (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993). However, there are many other differences between the boot camp graduates and each of the comparison groups, and some differences would put the boot camp group at an advantage. Also, all New York's boot camp graduates are assigned to a special aftercare program upon release. It is impossible to determine from the current evaluation design whether any superiority of boot camp graduates over comparison groups is a result of the aftercare component, the boot camp phase, or both. If we take the results at face value, however, it is still clear that many boot camp graduates do not succeed in the community and that the differences between them and the comparison

groups shrink over time. Perhaps most interesting is the fact that success rates of boot camp graduates and boot camp dropouts are separated by only a few percentage points.

Does boot camp lower recidivism for any subgroups of offenders?

Looking at the big picture, the effects of boot camp on recidivism look marginal at best. It would be useful to know, however, whether boot camp is succeeding with any subgroup of offenders. Such information might assist program managers to develop better classification/eligibility criteria and refine policies concerning technical violations. A few studies have compared recidivists and nonrecidivists among the boot camp graduates. Some have also compared graduates of the boot camp phase with failures, broadly defined to include those who drop out as well as those who are expelled from boot camp.

South Carolina evaluators report only on the characteristics of the successes and failures during boot camp itself (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992). Although no direct comparison is presented, from inspection of the data, it appears that boot camp graduates were more likely to be nonwhite (72 percent of graduates versus 63 percent of failures), were less likely to be serving indeterminate sentences (62 percent versus 72 percent), and were more likely to be drug offenders (32 percent versus 18 percent of the failures.)

Florida looked at successes and failures during boot camp as well as during aftercare (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990). Evaluators note that certain subgroups of boot camp inmates—including those age 16 or 17 at admission, those with sentences in the 2- to 3-year range (versus sentences between 1 and 2 years), and whites — seem to have recidivated less than others. They conclude, however, that further study would be needed to confirm these patterns. A comparison of graduates with dropouts indicates that successful inmates were more likely to be nonwhite, were more physically fit initially, were slightly older, much more likely to have completed high school, and slightly less likely to report using drugs. They were also more likely to have committed armed robbery or other violent crimes and more likely to have committed a first degree felony.

Louisiana evaluators also compared both boot camp failures and graduates, as well as successes and failures during aftercare (MacKenzie, Shaw, & Souryal, 1992). Initial analyses showed that being younger, being nonwhite, entering as a probation violator, younger age at first arrest, having more prior incarcerations, being unemployed during the first month, and experiencing poor community adjustment during aftercare were related to reincarceration or arrest during aftercare. More sophisticated analyses, using multiple variables, revealed that only work status and positive community adjustment remained significantly associated with recidivism or lack of it while in boot camp aftercare. In a separate analysis, the researchers found that positive community adjustment was a function of

the intensity of community supervision, leading them to suggest that enhanced aftercare supervision for boot camp graduates might pay off in reduced recidivism.

It should be noted here that, in general, research on the effectiveness of intensive supervision programs (ISP's) has shown conflicting results (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1990). The most recent findings, based on several programs with varying levels of supervision, showed no significant differences in recidivism between intensively supervised probationers and control groups (Petersilia & Turner, 1993). These findings are particularly worthy of attention because of the strength of the research design, which randomly assigned offenders to the different supervision levels. However, all these studies focus on ISP as a primary disposition, not as a follow-up to residential programs, as it is being used by some boot camp programs. It is also unclear how closely the "intensive supervision" delivered to boot camp graduates matches the intensity of supervision delivered by some of the ISPs that have been evaluated. Most of the latter involve at least weekly face-to-face contacts as well as some form of enhanced monitoring and control, such as drug testing, curfew checks, or electronic monitoring.

Returning to the Louisiana experience, evaluators found that boot camp graduates had received longer sentences, had higher IQ's, and had a higher sense of personal efficacy (locus of control) upon admission. Having a longer sentence might raise the incentive to perform well in boot camp, since it provides an early out from prison (MacKenzie, Shaw, & Souryal, 1992). In a separate analysis, Louisiana evaluators also found that drug-involved and other offenders were about equally likely to drop out of boot camp, but that drug-involved offenders were more likely to recidivate. This suggests that although drug offenders were no more resistant to boot camp than other offenders, the Louisiana program was of no special benefit to them (Shaw & MacKenzie, 1992).

In any case, Louisiana evaluators point out that the variables that predict success during boot camp are not the same ones that predict success during aftercare (MacKenzie, Shaw, & Souryal, 1992). One might be tempted to draw a similar conclusion from the Florida results although it would probably be premature, and the evaluators do not do so.

Do boot camps have other positive effects on offenders?

The boot camp rationale assumes that the boot camp regimen and the supplemental services it provides will change offenders' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in a way that ultimately produces more law-abiding behavior. So far boot camps have shown negligible effects on the recidivism of participants. But is there any evidence that they have produced other positive changes in offenders — changes that might confirm some of the optimism about boot camp approaches?

Unfortunately, this aspect of boot camps has rarely been evaluated, although there is some support for the rationale. For instance, there is some evidence that inmates find boot camp to be a positive experience, mostly based on offenders who were still in boot camp at the time of interview. Juvenile offenders participating in boot camp at the OJJDP demonstration sites and the California Youth Authority appear to believe that boot camp exposure has helped them learn self-discipline and given them a sense of accomplishment (Bottcher, 1993; Institute for Criminological Research & American Institutes for Research, 1992). Juvenile participants appear to like the military discipline and structure, in some cases preferring it to be even stricter. They often cite other elements of the program, such as the educational services and the drug counseling, as particularly helpful. On the other hand, participants complained sometimes that the rules were applied inconsistently or the drill instructors were too harsh.

Adult inmates in Louisiana began with positive attitudes to boot camp and these attitudes became even more positive over time, in contrast to regular prison inmates whose attitudes became more negative over time (MacKenzie & Shaw, 1990). On the down side, inmates reported more conflict with other inmates as time went on, although most of the conflict appeared to be relatively minor.

Florida is the only program to report on the opinions of boot camp failures, specifically those graduates who had been reincarcerated (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990). The Florida sample expressed strong positive opinions of the boot camp experience, but suggested an expanded emphasis on counseling, drug treatment, and training would be helpful.

There is much anecdotal evidence that boot camp improves the physical condition of participants. The Florida program documented some weight loss, marked decline in resting heart rates, and improvements in running speed and ability to perform push-ups and sit-ups (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990).

New York inmates are reported to have gained almost one grade level in math and .4 grade levels in reading during the course of the 6-month program (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993). Evaluators note that the size of the improvement appears related to initial entry score; as entry levels have gone up, the size of the improvement in scores has gone down. Also, 12.7 times as many inmates of New York boot camps earned GED's as the inmates of five comparison facilities.

New York has also documented higher employment rates and greater participation in community-based reintegration programs among boot camp graduates. In 1992, 58 percent of New York graduates were employed 6 months after release, compared with 47 percent of the pre-boot camp group, 32 percent of those who were considered for boot camp but not recommended, and 29 percent of those who were removed from boot camp. Even more were active in programs — 81 percent of the boot camp group versus 52 to 55 percent of

those in the comparison groups. Whether these results are attributable to the residential boot camp experience or the aftercare program or the combination of the two cannot be determined from the research.

Research on the now-defunct program of the Los Angeles County Sheriff also found significant improvements in reading and math skills and some effects on employment (Austin & Bolyard, 1992).

One other positive benefit of boot camps for offenders may be the greater safety the environment provides, despite its rigors. New York is the only State to have reported the frequency of inmate-to-inmate assaults; as noted above, there were none recorded last year (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993). However, participants in the California Youth Authority's program said they felt safer in boot camp than in other facilities (Bottcher, 1993). Other observers have characterized boot camps as safer and more orderly than regular prisons (Parent, 1989). Although inmate safety is not an explicit part of the core rationale for boot camp program, a safe setting is arguably an important ingredient of any program that hopes to rehabilitate.

How difficult is it to implement boot camp programs?

Clearly, given the increase in boot camp programs around the country, obstacles to implementation are surmountable. Only two boot camp programs are known to have terminated so far. One was the Los Angeles County Sheriff's program—apparently a victim of unanticipated State and local budget shortfalls (Austin & Bolyard, 1992)—and the other a juvenile boot camp program in Memphis, Tennessee, which was not meeting the expectations of local correctional officials (personal communication). Nonetheless, this section highlights several challenges for boot camp programs. These are drawn from the literature on boot camps, the authors' experience with the OJJDP demonstration sites, and responses given by State corrections officials to this study's national survey.

Initial acceptance and support

The literature on boot camps tends to emphasize the popularity of the boot camp concept (Parent, 1989; MacKenzie, 1990). Parent (1989) reported only one instance of opposition to boot camps—from a citizen's group. However, in the study's survey of State programs, in response to an open-ended question about what obstacles the programs had encountered, six programs indicated that they had encountered resistance from judges or correctional personnel. Usually the responses were not detailed enough to determine the reasons for resistance.

From the OJJDP sites, however, the authors found that some system personnel are skeptical about the approach or uncomfortable with what they perceive to be its punitive aspects. The OJJDP sites have remarked on the pitfalls of media coverage that emphasizes the militaristic side of juvenile boot camps. Although it may please the public, it can create a one-sided image that disturbs correctional personnel who are committed to rehabilitation. More mundane issues like sharing facility space and resources can also be an issue. And some judges simply dislike losing control over placement decisions.¹⁹ One of the OJJDP sites also encountered citizen opposition over siting the new program near a residential neighborhood, a dispute that is still unresolved. Meanwhile the facility operates at another location, where there is already a correctional center.

Identifying and selecting participants

As noted earlier that selection criteria for participants must be carefully tailored to the goals of the boot camp program. For example, a program that wants to significantly reduce prison costs and crowding should be open to a wide range of inmates or it will not make a dent in the general prison population. Yet programs rarely have single goals. If the program is trying to satisfy a public demand for greater punishment, it will need to screen out offenders for whom boot camp is perceived as too lenient (serious recidivists, for example) and those for whom it would be too harsh (older inmates, perhaps). If the program is intent on public protection, it will have to weed out offenders considered dangerous. Typically, some selection criteria are imposed by the authorizing legislation for boot camps, while others are added by program managers.

The result is that programs often need to screen large numbers of candidates in order to find those who fit program criteria. The experience of programs like New York and South Carolina is instructive:

- Last year, New York identified 6,054 inmates who met the program's age, offense type, and sentence criteria. Only 54 percent of them survived subsequent screening: 38 percent were disqualified, most frequently for medical/psychiatric reasons (14 percent) or criminal history (14 percent), and 8 percent refused to enter the program. Refusals were almost twice as high in the early years and continue to be consistently higher among women than men (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

¹⁹ In the OJJDP sites, loss of control in part was a function of the random assignment procedures imposed by the research design. But judges elsewhere may be resentful of programs that give corrections authorities exclusive control over placement.

- In its first 16 months, the South Carolina program screened 8,542 candidates to find 1,131 that met initial shock criteria. Of these eligibles, 723 (64 percent) survived subsequent screening; the primary reason for dropout at this stage was refusal to participate (23 percent). Because South Carolina does not routinely exclude offenders for physical or mental disability, medical/psychiatric disapprovals were negligible (1 percent) (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992).

These are not the only indications that programs may experience difficulty locating qualified offenders. A number of the extant programs report empty program beds, despite the general overcrowding in correctional facilities. For instance, during the first year of the Louisiana program, on average there were only 64 offenders in the 120-bed program (MacKenzie & Parent, 1991). South Carolina too has reported underutilization of its program, especially the women's facility (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992). Aside from problems with funding, underutilization was the program obstacle most commonly reported in the spring 1993 survey. Nine States mentioned having problems with low numbers of candidates at some point, either because of rigid eligibility criteria or because judges were not using the program enough. While some programs were still grappling with this problem, others had alleviated it over time either by expanding the criteria or through better communication and education of judges.

On the other hand, two States complained that they had a backlog of offenders awaiting placement. A few programs also complained that they were receiving offenders who were inappropriate.

Operationalizing military structure and discipline

As noted earlier, critics have objected to using the military model for offenders, challenging its overall effectiveness and arguing that the military itself has abandoned some of its former boot camp practices (Morash & Rucker, 1990; Sechrest, 1989). Some of these discarded practices — such as calling inmates demeaning names — may have been more characteristic of early boot camps for offenders than they are today. Nonetheless, aside from newspaper accounts, there is little documentation of actual practices at this point, nor of the specific rationale for using them with offenders.

The Morash and Rucker (1990) critique raises a number of questions about specific practices. Drawing on previous sociological and psychological research, they question the effectiveness of tactics based on fear and intimidation to change criminal behavior. They doubt the long-run utility of hard labor that provides few transferable skills and equates work with punishment. They also suggest that aggressive models of leadership may exacerbate aggressive tendencies and that certain styles of verbal confrontation and punishment may undermine rather than enhance self-esteem and self-confidence, at least for some participants. Finally, they suggest that the boot camp environment may embody an image of masculinity

that devalues women and makes boot camps a particularly poor setting for female offenders. Robinson (1992) has similarly questioned the appropriateness of the boot camp setting for women, warning that it may make those who have previously endured controlling and abusive relationships feel even more powerless.

These criticisms deserve to be taken seriously by all program developers. It may not be necessary to reject the entire military model in order to respond to them. There is anecdotal evidence that programs are concerning themselves with these kinds of issues. Programs forbid the use of verbal slurs, and some call their participants "trainees" or "recruits" rather than inmates, in order to change their self-image. Some programs are giving more careful attention to the kinds of punishment imposed. In Mobile's juvenile boot camp, for instance, participants no longer dig holes for punishment; they plant trees. Some programs link up their work programs to community service projects.

Staffing, staff training, and supervision

More generally, programs need to develop procedures that govern the use of punishment and discipline and ensure that their staff behave consistently with the program's philosophy. Some programs have reported difficulty with "overzealous" staff who cross the line between exercising authority and abuse (MacKenzie, Gould, Riechers, & Shzw, 1989; Parent, 1989).

New York State has developed a highly structured training program for boot camp staff, which emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches and is designed to ensure that all staff understand the therapeutic principles on which the New York program is based. New York also accepts out-of-State trainees (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993). Most other States in our survey reported that staff receive some training before going to boot camps, and a few mentioned taking advantage of the military program at Fort McClellan. In general, however, there is little documentation about the quantity and quality of training received nationwide. Two States reported in the study's survey that staff training had been a problem area because it required correctional officers to learn new roles and approaches.

At the time of Parent's study (1989), all programs recruited staff from within the correctional system, although one program had previously experimented with hiring retired military personnel as drill instructors. At that time, military experience was seen as an asset for DI's, but not a requirement. Hiring practices may have changed since then, but none of the subsequent boot camp studies provide much information about them. However, the three juvenile boot camps funded by OJJDP all hired drill instructors from outside the youth correctional system, because the private partners in the demonstration did the hiring.

Parent (1989) reports that staff turnover in adult boot camps is higher than elsewhere in the correctional system, with drill instructor being a high-stress position. He also observes that stress and burnout is higher in programs that stress verbal confrontation. MacKenzie also reports a relatively high level of burnout among both DI's and parole agents assigned to the Louisiana program; for the latter group, heavy workloads were a problem (MacKenzie et al., 1989).

Program drop-outs and failures

Programs can expect that some boot camp inmates will not complete the boot camp phase, due to misconduct, noncompliance with the program, medical problems, a change in legal circumstances, or other reasons. MacKenzie (1990) reports that noncompletion rates for five States participating in a multisite study range from less than 3 percent in Georgia to 42 percent in New York. There are figures available for other types of programs as well:

- The local boot camps surveyed by Austin and Bolyard (1992) lost anywhere from 7 to 52 percent of their inmates; the most common reason was disciplinary action, but dropouts for medical reasons were also significant in some locations.
- The relatively new Federal Bureau of Prisons program has lost 16 percent of its first 668 inmates — 11 percent to voluntary withdrawal, 3 percent to program failure, and 2 percent to medical problems (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993).
- Los Angeles County's juvenile boot camp reports a 19-percent dropout rate since its inception in 1990, including 16 percent classified as program failures (Los Angeles County Probation Department, 1992). The California Youth Authority also reports a 19-percent attrition rate after 5 months of boot camp operations (Bottcher, 1993). Preliminary data from our evaluation of the three OJJDP demonstration sites show boot camp attrition running at a similar rate in two of the sites, and somewhat lower in the third.

Typically, dropout or failure occurs relatively early in the boot camp program. In Florida (Florida Department of Corrections, 1990), over half of the failures had occurred by the 5th week of the 90- to 120-day program, and two-thirds had occurred by the 7th week. In Louisiana over half were gone by the end of 2 weeks (Shaw & MacKenzie, 1992). In South Carolina (South Carolina State Reorganization Commission, 1992), on average, dropout occurred 36 days into the 120-day program. And in New York, the average boot camp participant spends 57 days in the 6-month program before removal (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

No doubt differences in dropout rates are affected by variation in the amount of misconduct that is tolerated, as well as factors such as the adequacy of medical screening. Only New York has reported extensively on the types of misbehavior that occur in its boot camps, finding that 28 percent of inmates were involved in moderate to serious misbehavior, usually consisting of just one incident. Comparing incident rates with other minimum and medium security facilities in the New York system last year, evaluators found that no assaults on fellow inmates were recorded in boot camps, while they accounted for 13 to 15 percent of serious incidents in other facilities. Contraband incidents also were much less

frequent than in comparison facilities, but assaults against staff, including assaults with injuries, were more likely. New York's policy is to expel all assailants from boot camp (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

In the abstract, there is no "ideal" level of program completion. Expulsion policies must be set in terms of overall program goals. If a program expels too many inmates and the failures are returned to prison, its effects on prison crowding and costs will diminish. On the other hand, retaining troublemakers may lower the morale of other boot camp participants and undermine staff authority (MacKenzie & Parent, 1992).

Concerned about salvaging some of the marginal inmates who were washing out of boot camp, New York instituted a formal "re-evaluation" program in 1991. Carefully screened inmates are removed from their regular platoons and given up to 5 weeks to bring their performance up to par. Since the program's inception, 39 percent of those who have been "re-evaluated" have graduated from boot camp, while the balance were returned to regular prison settings (New York State Department of Correctional Services, 1993).

Transition to the community

Returning to the community from boot camp is almost universally recognized as a key transition for boot camp graduates, as it is for any prison releasee. Little is known about how boot camps have helped with the transition, although there appears to be a trend toward placing offenders under intensive supervision during this period. Extrapolating from the experience of a few States, however, programs should be prepared for the possibility that many boot camp graduates will fail on aftercare.

In New York, in spite of having intensive parole supervision, at least 11 percent of shock graduates are returned to prison within a year after graduation (New York Department of Correctional Services, 1993). In Louisiana, MacKenzie reports that 31.1 percent of graduates were rejailed, had parole revoked, or absconded during a year of intensive community supervision (MacKenzie, Shaw, & Souryal, 1992). The first few platoons at the three OJJDP demonstration sites also have experienced substantial attrition during aftercare, although it may be that those rates will diminish as the sites "de-bug" their programs.

In any intensive supervision program, there is always the possibility that misconduct is detected more effectively than in a program of standard supervision. Nonetheless, aftercare programs face the same challenge that arises during boot camp — how best to respond to a participant's misconduct, especially if it is noncompliant but not criminal, or involves a relatively minor offense. At this stage, little is known about disciplinary policies during boot camp aftercare.

V. Policy, Program, and Research Issues

This chapter briefly summarizes the findings from previous chapters and then consider their implications for policy, program, and research.

Summary of findings

How widespread are boot camps and what are they like?

- The enthusiasm for boot camp programs continues unabated. As of spring 1993, there were at least 59 State and 10 local boot camps for adults operating in 29 States. Two more States had boot camp openings scheduled for later in 1993, and eight other States were considering boot camp plans. In addition, there were at least nine boot camp programs for juvenile offenders open, as well as a program for Federal prisoners.
- Boot camps are intended to serve multiple goals, with deterrence, public protection, rehabilitation, and reducing recidivism foremost among them. Reducing costs and crowding receive stronger emphasis in some States than in others. The use of boot camps as punishment, although it may be important to the public, is deemphasized by corrections officials.
- Boot camps for adults continue to target the youthful offender population, especially those with less serious, less violent crimes, and shorter criminal histories. Over time, though, many boot camps have extended the eligible age range and relaxed other criteria, in part because of difficulties in filling programs to capacity.
- The authority to place offenders in boot camp most often belongs to correctional authorities, although in several States it belongs to judges, and in several others, more than one entity has placement authority. States that hope to use boot camps to reduce institutional crowding and costs sometimes opt for correctional control of admissions, on the theory that it provides greater assurance that the offenders chosen would otherwise have gone to prison.
- In applying the military model to offenders, the typical boot camp incorporates many of the features found in military boot camps, such as military-style titles and protocol,

barracks housing, and drill instructors. It is unclear how often boot camps use capricious or negative leadership styles, degrading treatment, and other practices that have been harshly criticized by some observers. Some boot camps have implemented policies intended to control objectionable practices, however.

- Although some early boot programs offered few educational, drug counseling, and other rehabilitative services, "bare bones" programs now appear to be the exception. The typical State program for adults devotes at least 20 percent of the program day to education or counseling, and 41 percent of programs spend more than a third of the day on these activities. Newer programs often more evenly balance time spent on military discipline and drill with time spent on education and counseling.
- Most programs still last 90–120 days, although several States run 6-month programs. About 70 percent of States will extend an inmate's stay, typically for not more than 30 to 60 days. Usually, offenders who fail in boot camp are returned to prison.
- In about half the State programs, boot camp graduates go on to intensive supervision in the community. Elsewhere they receive standard supervision or supervision varies according to the offender's characteristics. A few States, including California and New York, have developed special aftercare programs exclusively for boot camp graduates.
- State boot camps cost as much or more per day than regular prisons. Savings, if any, accrue because boot camps keep offenders for shorter periods of time than they would have spent in prison.
- Because boot camps for Federal, local, and juvenile prisoners are relative newcomers to the scene, their characteristics are less well-documented. In general, they appear similar to the State boot camp models. However, juvenile programs place more emphasis on rehabilitative services than the typical adult program; almost all juvenile programs allocate half a day or more to educational, vocational, and counseling activities. Also, unlike most State programs, graduates of Federal boot camps spend time in a halfway house before living on their own in the community.

Do boot camps work?

- Boot camp programs have the potential to reduce institutional crowding and costs, provided they are (1) large enough, (2) target offenders who would otherwise have served a longer sentence in another institution, and (3) keep enough participants from returning to prison. Some States, including New York and Louisiana, conclude that they have met these tests and have reduced their costs and their need for prison beds.
- There is still no clear evidence that boot camps reduce recidivism. Marginal differences between boot camp graduates and comparison groups have been found in some locations, but they may result from other differences between the groups, rather than the boot camp experience. However, there is no reason to believe that boot camp graduates do any worse than comparison groups.
- A few researchers have attempted to distinguish subgroups that do better or worse in boot camp itself or during aftercare, but no clear picture has emerged. However, in one State, Louisiana, the results suggest that boot camp graduates who are supervised more intensively during aftercare may adjust to the community better and ultimately have lower rates of reincarceration.
- Apparently, many participants consider boot camp a positive experience, despite its rigors, and most observers consider boot camp a safer environment for inmates than regular prison. More importantly, some programs seem to have helped participants improve their physical conditioning, educational level, employment prospects, and access to community programs. However, these results have been documented for only a handful of programs so far. Also, it is possible that some improvements are a result of the intensive aftercare program rather than boot camp itself.
- Although boot camp programs face some operational challenges, most are surmountable. Typical challenges connected with implementing a boot camp include overcoming resistance from others in the correctional system; establishing appropriate criteria and identifying sufficient numbers of offenders who meet them; operationalizing military structure and discipline; selecting, training, and supervising boot camp staff; coping with boot camp dropouts and failures; and helping offenders make the transition to community living.

The implications for research

After a decade of experience with boot camps, there are still many unanswered questions about their mode of operation and their effectiveness. However, as noted in chapter II, several federally funded research and program development efforts should contribute additional insights soon. These efforts include:

- A multisite study of boot camp programs in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas, under the direction of Doris MacKenzie, University of Maryland-College Park (results expected, fall 1994).
- An evaluation of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's boot camp program, by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, San Francisco, California (1993).
- The development of standards for adult and juvenile boot camps, by the American Correctional Association, Laurel, Maryland (1993).
- An evaluation of three OJJDP demonstrations of boot camps for juvenile offenders by American Institutes for Research, Washington, D.C. (1994).
- An evaluation of boot camps for young adult offenders funded under the Part 3 Correctional Options Program, by American Institutes for Research (1994).
- An evaluation of programs for young adult offenders, including some boot camp initiatives, funded under the Part 1 Correctional Options Program, by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (1994).
- A national assessment of substance abuse programming in boot camps and during boot camp aftercare, by Southern Illinois University (1994).
- The development of training and technical assistance materials for boot camps, by the Correctional Services Group, Kansas City, Missouri (1994).

In addition, some of the newer individual programs plan to evaluate their own efforts, although in some cases it will take considerable time to amass enough data to judge their effectiveness. For example, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (Klein-Saffran, 1991), the California Youth Authority (Bottcher & Isorena, 1993), and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (1992) all have evaluations in progress.

Critical research needs

While awaiting those results, several critical research needs are apparent. First, it is unlikely that researchers will learn much more about the impact of boot camps on recidivism, costs, and crowding without better research designs — specifically, *designs that randomly assign offenders to alternative forms of treatment*. However, the obstacles to carrying out these designs are enormous. Random assignment typically provokes resistance from judges and other system personnel; it costs a great deal to implement the design and follow up offenders for sufficient periods of time; and it imposes extra burdens on the program because they must screen both experimental and control group members. As a practical matter, some programs have enough trouble finding offenders who fit boot camp criteria, never mind supplying a control group.

There are no perfect solutions. However, the Federal Government should provide incentives for State and local programs to conduct random assignment studies and should enforce compliance with those designs. Unfortunately, applicants eager for funds often promise to comply with randomization without understanding the full ramifications. Randomization breaks down for many reasons, not all of them avoidable. But funders might consider providing prospective applicants with a resource pamphlet that describes randomization in very concrete terms. The pamphlet should cover what randomization typically requires in terms of numbers and procedures, what specific assurances are expected from the applicant in advance, and who ought to be consulted and involved in making these assurances.

A second critical need is for *mathematical models that States could use to estimate the effects of a boot camp program on their institutional bed space*. The Multisite Study mentioned earlier may soon provide such help. In any case, such models would prove valuable tools for States with programs in the planning stage, as well as States already operating programs.

A third critical need is for more *information about the relative merits of various forms of boot camp programming*. Now, each boot camp program is evaluated as a package — a complex mix of military structure and discipline and various forms of rehabilitative programming. But to what extent are the purported benefits of boot camps a function of their military structure and discipline or their rehabilitative components or even the aftercare supervision that is provided? Here is an area where evaluators and funding agencies ought to look for more opportunities to use random assignment. In larger programs, and those with multiple facilities, it is conceivable that planned variations in programming could occur and offenders could be randomly assigned to them.

A fourth critical need is for *more information about what actually happens in boot camp*. While most boot camps share a common rhetoric about military structure and

discipline, it may mask sizable differences in practice. For example, one program may encourage drill instructors to use an aggressive confrontational approach and others may actively discourage it. The same variation is likely to be present for other non-standard elements of boot camp such as drug counseling and education. At a minimum, more detailed descriptions of individual programs are needed. Even better would be cross-site observations of boot camp practices using uniform instruments and procedures. This kind of information is especially important, since some researchers have argued — in assessing the effectiveness of correctional strategies in general — that factors like the competence of the staff or the way they use their authority may explain more about a program's success than the label it wears (Palmer, 1992).

In addition to more detailed descriptions of boot camps, we need to know *more about the training programs that are in use*. In particular, it would be useful to have detailed descriptions of the New York State training program and the one offered by Fort McClellan, since it appears that many States are using these sites either to train staff directly or to provide ideas for their own training efforts. It would also be helpful to poll graduates of the various training programs who are now on the job about the strengths and weaknesses of their training experiences.

A fifth need is for *more and better assessments of how offenders change in boot camp*. According to the core rationale, the boot camp experience will ultimately reduce recidivism because it will alter knowledge, attitudes, competencies, and opportunity structures that predispose people to crime. Only a few programs have reported evidence that boot camp produces these changes. Yet if we are to persevere in our hope that boot camps reduce recidivism, it would be important to have information that these intermediate objectives are being achieved. This information would also pinpoint areas where programs need to improve. Simple before and after comparisons — of educational performance, for example — would indicate whether there have been any changes in the desired direction. Even better would be designs that include comparison groups to serve as a benchmark. If some programs already have such data but simply have not reported it, then it would be important to unearth it for wider distribution.

Finally, *more studies of subgroup differences are needed*. However, it may be that these will have to wait until programs have been in operation longer, are relatively stable in terms of eligibility and programming mix, and have more cases available for analysis.

One particularly interesting type of subgroup analysis has not been done at all, as far as we know: no one has looked at whether boot camps work best for offenders with a certain type of psychological profile, even though psychological hunches about which offenders will profit most from boot camp often may play a role in placement decisions. This type of analysis would require that offenders be "typed" psychologically, something which, to the authors' knowledge, no boot camp program has done. Even if certain psychological types are found to perform much better than others in boot camp, it is not clear how that finding would be applied in practice. Programs might resist denying offenders

could offer them another alternative with the same reward. The idea of matching offenders to treatment settings based on clinical judgments is hardly unprecedented, however (Palmer, 1992).

Implications for policy and programs

At this point, no definitive pronouncements can be made about the merits of boot camp programming. Given the right circumstances (this is a critical qualifier), it appears that boot camps can reduce institutional costs and crowding. But hopes for their rehabilitative potential are as yet unfulfilled. Whether boot camp programs are just, in terms of the punishment or retribution they provide, is a judgment more appropriately made by policymakers and their constituents. In the authors' view, however, that judgment needs to be informed by more research about the boot camp experience and its consequences for offenders.

Overall, the authors would counsel caution. Decisionmakers who choose to proceed with boot camps or expand the programs they already have should temper their expectations for them. There are several other recommendations that make sense, in the light of the findings to date:

1. As others have counseled before (Parent, 1989; Austin & Bolyard, 1992; MacKenzie & Parent, 1992), it is absolutely crucial for programs to *establish clear goals and priorities*. In designing the program, carefully *consider how each and every element of the program contributes to those goals*. For example, if the program seeks to reduce institutional crowding, does the selection process strictly target offenders who would otherwise have gone to prison? If the program seeks to build self-esteem, will the style of interaction between inmates and staff or the disciplinary procedures serve that goal? If the program tries to raise educational levels, what realistically can be done during the boot camp phase, and what program style best serves the purpose? If there will be an aftercare program, how will it build upon or reinforce the gains made in boot camp?
2. *Conduct a trial run of the eligibility criteria and screening process* before committing to them, in order to verify that the program will have the number of inmates that it needs and can handle.
3. *Develop written policies and procedures* governing admission to boot camp, the type and intensity of programming that will be provided, the disciplinary measures that are acceptable, and the grounds for expulsion. Establish a committee to review and formally approve modifications to these procedures as the program gains more experience, and closely *monitor compliance with procedures*.

formally approve modifications to these procedures as the program gains more experience, and closely *monitor compliance with procedures*.

4. In particular, anticipate that many offenders will have trouble complying with boot camp and aftercare regimens. *Establish policies for handling failures or potential failures* and set ground rules for giving people a "second chance," taking into consideration the effects on other offenders and on program objectives like reducing prison crowding.
5. *Invest in aftercare*, to capitalize on and preserve any gains made in boot camp. Even if a special aftercare program for boot camp graduates is not feasible, build strong relationships with standard aftercare services and urge that boot camp graduates be treated as high priority cases at least in the first few months after release. Ensure that graduates leave boot camp with an individualized plan, and follow up to see whether the plan is observed.
6. Again, as previous authors have recommended, *evaluate your program*, first to see whether it is being implemented as intended and to respond to problems, later to determine whether longer run objectives are being attained.

The National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention can continue to play a critical role in publicizing the latest information about boot camp performance and in encouraging programs to apply it.

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Appendix A

Survey of State Correctional Agencies: Adult Boot Camps

Survey of State Correctional Agencies: Adult Boot Camps

State _____

Contact Person for Further Information

Name _____

Agency _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Please provide the following information about boot camps for **adult** offenders in your State. Include programs operated directly by the State or operated by a contractor.

1. Does your State currently have a boot camp program for adult offenders?

1. Yes
2. No (If no, please skip to Question #27 on the last page.)

2. What year did your State's program begin? _____

Program Goals

3. Please indicate how important each of the following goals is for your boot camp program.

	Not a goal	Relatively unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
a. Reducing crowding	0	1	2	3	4
b. Reducing costs	0	1	2	3	4
c. Punishing the offender	0	1	2	3	4
d. Protecting the public	0	1	2	3	4
e. Deterring future crime	0	1	2	3	4
f. Rehabilitating the offender	0	1	2	3	4
g. Lowering recidivism	0	1	2	3	4
h. Addressing public dissatisfaction	0	1	2	3	4

Program Capacity

4. How many boot camps does your State operate?

- a. ___ camps for adult males
- b. ___ camps for adult females
- c. ___ co-ed camps

5. Counting all facilities, what is the total capacity of your program(s)?

_____ Females
_____ Males

Selection Criteria

6. Who has the authority to place participants in boot camp?

- 1. Judges
- 2. The Department of Corrections
- 3. The Department of Corrections, with concurrence of judge
- 4. Other, specify _____

7. What are the limits or requirements for boot camp participation?

Is the program limited to:	No	Yes	Clarifications
a. A certain age group?	0	1	What age group? _____
b. Nonviolent offenders?	0	1	Excluded offenses _____ _____
c. First offenders?	0	1	
d. First felony convictions?	0	1	
e. Offenders with sentences in a certain range?	0	1	What range? _____
f. Offenders without a prison record?	0	1	
g. Voluntary participants?	0	1	
h. Offenders without physical impairments?	0	1	
i. Offenders without mental impairments?	0	1	

8. In determining whether an offender qualifies for boot camp, does his or her juvenile record count?
1. No
 2. Yes
 3. Depends on the offender
 4. Not sure
9. Is the program intended to be (circle all that apply):
1. An alternative to prison
 2. A means of early release from prison
 3. An alternative to probation
 4. Other (specify) _____
10. Does the program specially target any of the following? (Circle all that apply.)
1. Drug-involved offenders
 2. Probation violators
 3. Parole violators
 4. Another special population, specify _____

Characteristics of the program

11. What is the usual length of the boot camp program? _____
12. Can a participant's stay be extended?
1. No
 2. Yes, for _____ days
13. Can a participant quit voluntarily?
1. No
 2. Yes
14. Where are the boot camp facilities located?
1. At a larger prison
 2. At a jail
 3. On their own
 4. Other, specify _____

15. What is the primary style of housing used in these facilities?

1. Barracks
2. Single-occupancy cells/rooms
3. Double-occupancy cells/rooms
4. Other, specify _____

16. What activities or treatment are part of the boot camp program? (Circle all that apply.)

1. Military drill and discipline
2. Physical labor
3. Physical fitness or exercise program
4. "Challenge" or "adventure" programming (e.g., ROPES course)
5. Drug/alcohol counseling
6. Other counseling/therapy
7. Education
8. Vocational training, job preparation
9. Other (specify) _____

17. About what percent of the typical program day is devoted to:

- a. Military drill, discipline, and physical labor _____%
- b. Fitness or exercise programs _____%
- c. Education, vocational education, and counseling activities (all types) _____%

18. Do your programs incorporate any of the following characteristics associated with real military boot camps? (Circle all that apply.)

1. Military-style uniforms (fatigues, etc.) for offenders
2. Military-style uniforms for staff
3. Drill instructors (DI's)
4. Military titles (captain, sergeant, etc.)
5. Use of military-style protocol ("Yes, sir"; standing at attention, etc.)
6. Grouping of participants in platoons (members enter as a group)
7. Rewards and punishments for the entire group, rather than individuals
8. Summary punishment (immediate punishment for infractions, e.g., in the form of push-ups or extra work detail)
9. Use of a brig or punishment cell
10. Public graduation ceremony

19. Do staff receive special training before going to work at boot camp?

1. No
2. Yes
3. It varies (specify) _____

20. Immediately after release from boot camp, what level of supervision will the offender receive (compared to the typical offender supervised in the community)?

1. No supervision
2. Less intensive supervision
3. About the same level of supervision
4. More intensive supervision
5. Varies, determined case-by-case

21. If an offender fails in the program, what usually happens?

1. He or she is sent to prison
2. Varies, no general rule
3. Something else (specify) _____

22. How has your program changed over time?

23. What have been the most significant obstacles to your program, if any?

24. What type of information about boot camp programs would be most useful to you?

25. Aside from the State programs, do you know of any boot camp programs for adults that are operated by agencies of local government in this State? If so, please list the counties or municipalities responsible.

26. Do you know of any boot camp programs for juveniles in this State? If so, please list the agency or jurisdiction responsible.

Complete this page only if your State does not operate any boot camps.

27. Is your state currently considering implementation of a boot camp program?

- 1. No
- 2. Yes (Skip to Question #29)

28. (If you answered no to #27) Is there any special reason why your State has not considered implementing boot camp programs? (Skip to Question #30)

29. What type of program are you considering? If possible at this stage, please indicate whether you plan to serve males or females, the approximate capacity of the program, and the estimated year of implementation.

30. What type of information about boot camp programs would be most useful to you?

31. Do you know of any boot camp programs for adults that are operated by agencies of local government in this State? If so, please list the county or municipality responsible.

32. Do you know of any boot camp programs for juveniles in this State? If so, please list the agency or jurisdiction responsible.

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:
National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850
800-851-3420

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