



Report of Findings

Colorado's Intensive Supervision Probation

September 1994

Colorado Division of Criminal Justice
Department of Public Safety
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted to determine the extent to which Colorado's Intensive Supervision Probation (ISP) program diverted offenders from prison while protecting the public. Further, treatment and surveillance components of ISP were examined to ascertain what programming seemed particularly relevant to successful program completion by ISP clients. To analyze these issues, ISP offenders were compared to probationers, community corrections clients and prisoners. The findings are summarized below.

Does ISP Divert Offenders From Prison?

Intensive Supervision Probation (ISP) was designed as an intermediate sanction intended to divert prison-bound offenders away from prison and into a community alternative. We found evidence to suggest ISP is, indeed, diverting certain offenders from prison. ISP offenders and prisoners were found to have similar backgrounds in terms of their juvenile arrest and incarceration records. The groups were also very similar in terms of past violent adult arrests. ISP, then, appears to be diverting certain offenders from prison -- those with lengthy juvenile records and violent adult arrests.

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Does ISP Protect the Public?

Public safety is a primary concern when offenders are sentenced to community-based sanctions. To address this issue of public safety, two measures were used: (1) unsuccessful termination from the ISP program and, (2) for those offenders who completed ISP, whether or not they had been rearrested 12 months after

leaving the ISP program. We found offenders in ISP were nearly six times more likely to terminate from the program due to technical violations than to a new crime. This can be attributed to the increase in surveillance that applies to ISP offenders, thus making it more likely for these offenders to get caught breaking the *rules* rather than the *law*.

What are the Successful Treatment / Surveillance Components of ISP?

There are several components of ISP that appear to contribute to an offender's successful completion of the ISP program. Participation in employment, counseling, and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) were statistically related to success in ISP, underscoring the importance of providing services to ISP clients. Most importantly, these factors overshadowed surveillance measures such as electronic monitoring and probation officer contacts as contributing to successful program completion. Specifically, the ability to hold a full-time job during participation in the program was critical to success. Further, offenders who received individual and group counseling, and those who attended Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, were more likely to successfully complete ISP. This finding suggests that working, counseling, and efforts to control alcohol problems were important for program success.

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Are There Cost Considerations of the Sanctions Studied?

The cost of ISP is \$6.07 per day compared to \$33.33 for community corrections, \$2.35 for probation, and \$52.68 for prison.¹ This study of offenders under supervision in 1990 indicates that approximately half of both the ISP and community corrections samples completed the program (see Table 6). However, when offenders were followed for 12 months after termination, nearly 9% of ISP offenders were rearrested for a crime or a technical violation compared to 23% of community corrections offenders (see Table 7). This study did not track offenders past the point of rearrest so post-arrest case process and placement data are unknown.

¹ Offenders serving time in community-based sanctions are required by statute to pay a portion of their supervision fees. These payments reduce the cost to the state.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Colorado's Intensive Supervision Probation program diverts offenders from prison, and it appears to do this while providing considerable protection to the public. To build on its current success, we recommend the following:

1. ISP officers should develop case management plans that prioritize the ability of an offender to complete the ISP program. This requires consideration of the following:
 - A. Half of ISP offenders failed the program, but of those who succeeded, over 90% (nine of every ten offenders) of ISP clients who completed ISP remained incident-free in the 12 months following termination from the program (see Table 7). This finding emphasizes the need for policies, procedures, and services that enhance an offender's probability of completing ISP.
 - B. ISP offenders were significantly more likely to have drug abuse problems compared to offenders sentenced to probation, community corrections, and prison. Case management plans that focus on drug treatment are essential to program success.
 - C. ISP offenders were, in general, one arrest away from prison. Given the findings reported here, providing services that focus on employment, individual/group counseling, and drug and alcohol treatment are critical to increasing the probability of program success.
2. Decision-makers might want to further consider implications regarding the cost of placement given the findings presented here. ISP is one-fifth the daily cost of community corrections and one-ninth the cost of prison. In the 12-month follow-up study, fewer than ten ISP offenders committed a new crime, and none of those who completed ISP committed a violent crime. These rates were more favorable than the outcome rates of community corrections clients (see Table 7).
3. This study examined offenders who received supervision in 1990, and the follow-up period occurred in 1991. Because ISP, community corrections, and regular probation programming could have been modified since that time, this study should be replicated from more recent data on offenders leaving these programs.

INTRODUCTION

Colorado's prison population has increased nearly 250% since 1985. Recent projections² indicate the need for an additional 2,700 prison beds by 1999. In Colorado, the prison population boom can be traced to several "get tough on crime" policies launched during the 1980's.³ Costs associated with prison expansion led to legislation in the late 1980's and early 1990's that attempted to reduce prison sentences for certain non-violent crimes.⁴ Intermediate sanctions were also expanded in the 1990's. Such programs impose penalties more severe than probation and less severe than incarceration. Examples include intensive supervision probation (ISP), halfway houses, and various types of day reporting centers.

ISP began as a pilot program in Colorado in 1984 and in 1988 was expanded statewide. This program was designed as an alternative placement to prison for certain high-risk offenders. The goal of ISP is "to protect the community in a cost effective manner by providing supervision, surveillance, and appropriate services to offenders who, without this program, would have been incarcerated in the Colorado Department of Corrections, or community corrections" (Fogg, Smith and Kester, 1992). ISP requires offenders to "do time" in their community, allowing them to work, pay taxes, support themselves and their families, and pay a portion of the costs associated with their correctional supervision.

ISP has received financial support from federal funds provided by the Drug Control and System Improvement Program (DCSIP), administered by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance.

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- 2 Colorado Division of Criminal Justice prison population projections released November 1, 1993, project that the prison population on January 1, 1999 will be 12,182. The prison population as of May 31, 1994 was 9,924.
- 3 Legislation that reflects a "tough on crime" stance includes: HB 79-1589 changed sentences from indeterminate to determinate; HB 81-1156 required the courts to sentence offenders above the maximum presumptive range for all statutorily defined crimes of violence and those with aggravating factors; HB 85-1320 doubled the penalties for the presumptive upper ranges for all felony classes and increased the aggravated range to double the maximum. Each of these legislative changes increased the overall length of stay for offenders in prison, thereby steadily increasing the prison population.
- 4 Sentence reducing legislation passed by the Colorado General Assembly include: HB 88-1200 and SB 88-148 reduced sentences by half for certain class 4 and 5 felonies; HB 89-1162 and SB 89-246 created an additional felony class at the low end (offenders convicted of offenses in this felony class were not intended to be prison bound); HB 90-1327 increased the amount of earned time an offender is eligible to receive from 5 to 10 days per month; HB 93-1302 reduced sentencing ranges by 25% for most non-violent class 3-6 felonies.

federal mandate to evaluate the impact of local projects supported by DCSIP. This report fulfills this evaluation effort.

The findings reported here are part of a three-question study of Colorado's adult ISP program and each of the following chapters addresses one of the research questions:

1. Does ISP divert offenders from prison?
2. Does ISP protect the public?
3. What are the successful treatment/surveillance components of ISP?

This report is organized as follows: Chapter One describes the programs and the profiles of the samples. Chapter Two addresses the question, "Does ISP divert offenders from prison?" Additionally, Chapter Three discusses the question, "Does ISP protect the public?" And finally, Chapter Four focuses on the question, "What are the successful treatment and/or surveillance components of ISP?"

chapter one PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS AND SAMPLE PROFILES

Program Descriptions

Probation, the oldest community sanction,⁵ has the largest caseload of any correctional placement in Colorado: more than 22,000 adult offenders serve time on probation each year.⁶ Probation allows offenders to serve a sentence in the community and is the least expensive of the three community alternatives studied, with a cost of \$2.35 per day, per offender.⁷ Offenders sentenced to probation can expect to find the following conditions applied to their placement:⁸

- contact standards determined by supervision level (from 1 to 8 contacts per month);
- prohibition of drug and alcohol use;
- community service and/or payment of restitution when ordered; and,
- monthly payments of \$20 in supervision fees.

Intensive Supervision Probation (ISP) began in the mid 1980's in Colorado. This program emphasizes close monitoring and clearly defined treatment plans for offenders. ISP is a modified version of probation, with smaller caseloads and more stringent program requirements, including frequent monitoring (both scheduled and random), and mandatory treatment participation for specific needs. On average, 600 offenders serve ISP sentences each year. The cost of \$6.07 per day⁹, per offender, is higher than

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5 State Probation was authorized by statute in all 48 states by 1925, and the National Probation Act was enacted the same year (Killingier, Kerper, and Cromwell, 1976:24).

6 The actual adult probation caseload on July 1, 1992 was 22,015, an increase of 6.6% from the previous year. Colorado Judicial Department. Annual Report 1992 Statistical Supplement: Colorado Judicial Department, 1992.

7 Cost and average caseload information was provided by the Colorado Judicial Branch in conjunction with the State Auditor for 1992.

8 The following standards are cited in the Probation Operations Manual, 1993.

9 Figure includes the state's cost of administering ISP. Additional costs for electronic monitoring, which is used as a sanctioning tool in response to offender violations, is \$4.35 per day. At any given time, roughly 15% of the ISP population is under supervision by electronic monitoring. Monitoring sanctions may also include short jail terms; this cost is not included in the present calculation.

probation but significantly lower than community corrections and prison (discussed in Chapter Two). Typical components of ISP include the following:

- a minimum of two scheduled contacts per week with an ISP officer;
- random contacts with an ISP officer;
- prohibition of drug and alcohol use;
- random drug and alcohol testing;
- participation in treatment as necessary; and,
- payments of \$20 in supervision fees each month.

Community Corrections in Colorado began in the 1970's. Community corrections is a system of more than 20 independently-run halfway houses providing a structured residential environment. At the "front end" of the system, diversion community corrections occurs between probation and prison; at the "tail end" of the system, transition community corrections occurs typically between prison and parole. This study focuses on diversion community corrections clients who are most comparable to ISP and regular probation clients.¹⁰

Community corrections allows offenders access to community resources, including treatment and employment opportunities, while residing in a non-secure correctional setting. Supervision is greater compared to probation and ISP given that the offender lives at the facility. According to statute, both violent and non-violent offenders may be sentenced to community corrections. The average annual population of diversion clients is 735 offenders, and the cost of this residential program is \$33.33 per day.¹¹ This group of offenders receives various counseling services inside and outside of the halfway house. Like ISP and probation, community corrections clients are usually required to find and maintain employment and pay restitution and other debts, if applicable. Interviews with halfway house directors and information from State Community Corrections administrators indicate that typical community corrections residents can expect to find the following conditions of their placement:

The average annual population of diversion clients is 735 offenders, and the cost to the state of this residential program is \$33.33 per day.

10 Direct court sentences to residential Community Corrections are often transferred to a nonresidential component to transition offenders from the halfway house setting back to their own living arrangement. These offenders are not included in this study.

11 Cost and average caseload information were provided by the Office of Community Corrections in the Division of Criminal Justice. Annual cost and, thus, caseload figures are set by the State Legislature.

- curfew requirements;
- prohibition of drug and alcohol use;
- random drug and alcohol testing;
- payment of a portion of their per diem (up to \$10 per day); and,
- employment.

Description of the Samples

Two different samples were used. For the question, "*Does ISP divert offenders from prison?*" we analyzed sentencing decisions from nine Colorado judicial districts contained in the Division of Criminal Justice's (DCJ) annually collected court data file.¹² The sampling unit is *cases reaching disposition in 1990*. The sample is comprised of 100% of offenders sentenced to prison (n=2,782) and community corrections (n=933) and 50% of offenders sentenced to probation (n=3,214), including sentences to ISP (n=200).

To answer the questions: "*Does ISP protect the public?*" and "*What are the successful treatment/surveillance components of ISP?*" data were obtained from three sources: the State Judicial Branch's ISP database, DCJ's 1990 court database (see Footnote 12), and the database of all offenders terminated from diversion community corrections in fiscal year 1990-91, maintained by DCJ's Office of Community Corrections. For all samples, we selected cases whose sentences were terminated by June 30, 1991 to allow for a twelve-month follow-up.

To avoid sampling and generalization problems described by Petersilia and Turner (1991), the sample used to answer the questions "*Does ISP protect the public?*" and "*What are the successful treatment / surveillance components of ISP?*" was stratified by conviction offense: theft, burglary, drug offenses, assault, sexual assault, and robbery.

To answer the research questions, data were obtained from three sources. For all samples, we selected cases whose sentences were terminated by June 30, 1991 to allow for a twelve-month follow-up.

12 Annually, DCJ collects the data on-site from district court files in nine of the state's 22 judicial districts. The nine judicial districts represented in the court database are: 1st (Jefferson County), 2nd (Denver County), 4th (El Paso County), 8th (Larimer County), 10th (Pueblo County), 17th (Adams County), 18th (Arapahoe County), 19th (Weld County), and the 21st (Mesa County). These cases represent 76% of Colorado's felony cases reaching disposition in one year.

To have comparable sample sizes, and because ISP was the smallest study group, the number of cases in ISP that met our selection criteria set the sample size for the other two study groups. In ISP, 263¹³ cases met the sampling criteria. For probation and community corrections, the stratified samples were reduced by computerized random sampling.

Additionally, to answer the public safety question, each offender was tracked for twelve months following program completion. Arrest data maintained by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation were used to determine if an offender was arrested in Colorado for a new misdemeanor or a felony during this twelve-month period. Arrest for either a new crime (misdemeanor or felony) or a technical violation served as the measure of public safety. For each offender, we collected data on all arrests during the twelve-month period and coded the most serious arrest as the outcome variable.

Arrest for either a new crime (misdemeanor or felony) or a technical violation served as the measure of public safety.

13 Of the ISP sample, the original number was 263-- 16 of the case files could not be located, resulting in a final number of 247.

chapter two DOES ISP DIVERT OFFENDERS FROM PRISON?

The statute mandating the development of ISP programs specifically states:

The General Assembly finds and declares that intensive supervision probation programs are an effective and desirable alternative to sentences to imprisonment... (C.R.S. 16.11.213).

Shrinking correctional resources, combined with escalating offender populations, compels policy makers and program administrators to consider the fiscal impact of correctional placement decisions. Prison costs an average of \$52.68 per day; the cost of prison construction for a medium security bed is \$57,000.¹⁴ Daily costs for ISP are \$6.07; electronic monitoring (applicable to an estimated 15% of ISP clients) adds a daily cost of \$4.35 (see Footnote 9). The offender frequently is required to assume a portion of the cost of electronic monitoring, reducing further the cost to the state. Prison, then, consumes approximately eight times the fiscal resources of ISP -- assuming that the prison cell has already been constructed.¹⁵ Additionally, the average length of time served on ISP is just over nine months,¹⁶ and these cases often transition to probation which costs \$2.35 per day (see Footnote 7).

Given these cost differences, we want to know if offenders who would normally have received a probation sentence, were sentenced to ISP. If this were the case, ISP would widen the net of control of probationers -- and so increase daily costs from \$2.35 to \$6.07. On the other hand, if ISP diverts would-be prisoners, costs decrease from \$52.68 to \$6.07. This section explores this issue by comparing characteristics of probationers, ISP clients and prisoners to determine if net widening is occurring (if this is true, the profiles between probationers and ISP clients will be similar). If ISP clients are prison-bound offenders, as planned

If ISP clients are prison-bound offenders, as planned by the General Assembly, then we would expect ISP offenders and prisoners to look similar on the profile analyses.

14 1992 average annual operating costs for Colorado prisoners was \$19,229, according to the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budget and the state Department of Corrections; the cost of constructing one medium security bed is \$57,000.

15 In 1992, the prison system operated above capacity. On December 31, 1993 614 offenders were backlogged in county jails awaiting transfer to the Department of Corrections. Construction of a medium security cell for these offenders would cost nearly \$35,000,000 (614 offenders x \$57,000).

16 Average length of stay on ISP was taken from the Colorado Judicial Branch's discharge database. This database contains data on offenders who terminated ISP between 1989 and 1991.

by the General Assembly, then we would expect ISP offenders and prisoners to look similar on the profile analyses. The Community Corrections sample is also included since this program is another intermediate sanction intended to divert offenders from prison.

This chapter describes offender profiles, current offense, demographics, and criminal history, and the various needs that are present among these offenders. Finally, we address the question of diversion and how ISP has affected prison-bound offenders.

Offender Profiles

Current Offense

Table 1 indicates that property and fraud crime accounted for nearly half (50.8%) of all crimes committed by offenders in this sample of 1990 felony dispositions. Offenders sentenced to ISP and probation had the highest proportion of drug-related crimes (35.0% and 25.9%, respectively) compared to community corrections and prison placements (22.3% and 17.5%, respectively). This is important since one of the objectives of ISP was to target drug offenders.¹⁷ Importantly, offenders sentenced to prison were two to nearly three times as likely as offenders sentenced to ISP and community corrections to have committed a violent crime¹⁸ (28.3% compared to 13.0% and 10.5%, respectively). Based on current criminal offense alone, offenders sentenced to ISP looked most similar to offenders sentenced to community corrections, suggesting that certain ISP offenders may have been diverted from community corrections.

Offenders sentenced to prison were twice to nearly three times as likely as offenders sentenced to ISP and community corrections to have committed a violent crime.

17 1990 Drug Control and System Improvement Program, Grant Number 90-DB-19s-13-1.

18 Violent crimes are defined according to Colorado Revised Statute 16-11-309: murder; first or second degree assault; robbery; first degree arson; first or second degree burglary (second degree only if a weapon is involved); escape; criminal extortion. Sexual Assault was removed from the Violent Crime category so that it could be reviewed as a separate category.

Table 1 Conviction Crime Type by Sentence Placement*

Current Crime	Probation	ISP	Community Corrections	Prison	Total
Property/Fraud	56.2% (1,808)	44.0% (88)	55.8% (521)	43.2% (1,204)	50.8% (3,621)
Drug Crimes	25.9% (832)	35.0% (70)	22.3% (208)	17.5% (486)	22.4% (1,596)
Sex Crimes	4.7% (152)	4.0% (8)	1.7% (16)	5.6% (155)	4.6% (331)
Violent Crimes	9.3% (298)	13.0% (26)	10.5% (98)	28.3% (786)	16.9% (1,208)
Other Crimes	3.9% (124)	4.0% (8)	9.7% (90)	5.4% (151)	5.3% (373)
Total	100% (3,214)	100% (200)	100% (933)	100% (2,782)	100% (7,129)

* Data were analyzed from DCJ's 1990 Court Database. This database contains annually collected dispositional data from nine Colorado judicial districts and includes 100% of those sentenced to prison and community corrections and 50% of those sentenced to probation, including ISP.

Demographics

Demographic descriptions of offenders, shown in Table 2, indicate that there were few differences among the offenders sentenced to probation, ISP, community corrections, and prison. However, probation had a significantly larger proportion of females (25.3%) compared to ISP (15.0%), community corrections (13.9%), and prison (8.5%). Prisoners are, on average, older compared to clients in the other three placements, with a mean age of 28.7 years, compared to means ranging from 26.8 to 28.3 years for the other sentencing sanctions. This finding is likely related to the fact that 66.4% of prisoners have prior adult felony convictions (See Table 3) and they have, on average, "aged" as they have "progressed" through a variety of prior court placements. Offenders sentenced to probation reported the highest level of education (11.1 years) compared to ISP, community corrections, and prison, where the mean education level was the tenth grade. An important difference between the groups relates to employment: 40.9% of probation clients were employed full time at arrest compared to 33.3% of ISP clients, 33.6% of community corrections clients, and 23.2% of prisoners. This indicates that probationers were more likely

40.9% of probation clients were employed full time at arrest compared to 33.3% of ISP clients, 33.6% of community corrections clients, and 23.2% of prisoners.

to be “established” in the community, as measured by employment, compared to the other groups, especially prisoners.

Table 2 Selected Demographic Variables

	Probation n=3,214	ISP n=200	Community Corrections n=933	Prison n=2,782	Total n=7,129
Gender:*					
Male	74.7%	85.0%	86.1%	91.5%	83.0%
Female	25.3%	15.0%	13.9%	8.5%	17.0%
Mean Age:*	28.3 years	26.8 years	27.8 years	28.7 years	28.3 years
Marital Status:					
Single	56.7%	57.0%	61.0%	56.7%	57.3%
Married	18.6%	17.0%	15.3%	17.6%	17.7%
Div/Sep	23.9%	25.0%	22.4%	24.9%	24.1%
Widowed	0.8%	1.0%	1.3%	0.8%	0.9%
Education:*					
Last grade completed (mean)	11.1	10.3	10.7	10.5	10.8
Education: Diploma or GED	59.0%	49.0%	53.5%	56.7%	57.0%
Employment (at arrest):					
Full-time*	40.9%	33.3%	33.6%	23.2%	32.8%
Part-time	9.8%	10.1%	8.2%	7.5%	8.7%
Unemployed*	44.6%	49.5%	48.9%	62.2%	52.1%
Sporadic	4.7%	7.1%	9.3%	7.1%	6.4%

*p<.05

Criminal History

We assume that criminal history is a proxy for “offender severity.” Also, we assume that the most serious offenders receive prison sentences. Therefore, we would expect that, if ISP is diverting offenders from prison confinement, ISP clients would have criminal histories that approximate those of prisoners.

Based on criminal history data presented in Table 3, we see that ISP clients are quite similar to prisoners and, not surprisingly, are statistically different (i.e. more serious) from offenders placed on probation. Offenders sentenced to prison and

ISP had similar average criminal history scores (CH scores) as measured by the Colorado Criminal History Scale (see Footnote 19). A score of "four" is the highest possible CH score, representing those with the most serious criminal history, whereas a CH score of "zero" indicates no prior felony criminal record. The average CH score for those sent to prison was 2.3 compared with 0.4 for those sentenced to probation, 1.5 for offenders sentenced to community corrections, and 1.8 for ISP placements. As expected, the prison sample had the highest proportion of offenders with a criminal history score of 4 (35.3%). This is much higher than ISP (19.0%), yet ISP is significantly higher than community corrections (13.8%) and probation (2.1%).

The prison sample had the highest proportion (35.3%) of offenders with a criminal history score of 4. This is much higher than ISP (19.0%), yet ISP is significantly higher than community corrections (13.8%) and probation (2.1%).

A significantly larger proportion of offenders in ISP and prison (46.9% and 43.1%, respectively) had juvenile records compared to those in probation (22.0%) and community corrections (36.9%). Specifically, higher proportions of both ISP clients and prisoners had a juvenile felony conviction compared to community corrections and probation, as well as more juvenile arrests, both non-violent and violent. As Table 3 indicates, offenders in ISP and prison were more likely to have had prior adult arrests for violent crimes compared to those placed on probation or in community corrections. In sum, then, in terms of recorded juvenile arrests and convictions, and adult violent arrests, offenders sentenced to ISP were statistically similar to offenders sentenced to prison. Also, larger proportions of the ISP and prisoner samples used a weapon in the commission of the current offense (16.0% and 17.8%, respectively) compared to probation (9.5%) and community corrections (10.6%).

Offenders in ISP and prison were more likely to have had prior adult arrests for violent crimes compared to those placed on probation or in community corrections.

Table 3 Criminal History Information by Placement for the Question "Does ISP Divert from Prison?"

Criminal History Element	Probation n=3,214	ISP n=200	Community Corrections n=933	Prison n=2,782	Total n=7,129
Criminal History Score:					
a. Mean score (range: 0 - 4)	0.4	1.8	1.5	2.3	1.3
b. % with highest possible score (4)	2.1%	19.0%	13.8%	35.3%	16.5%
c. % with no criminal history	78.3%	25.0%	37.8%	20.4%	49.8%
Percent with any juvenile record	22.0%	46.9%	36.9%	43.1%	33.3%
Prior adult violent arrests:	15.4%	42.1%	27.7%	39.7%	27.6%
Prior adult non-violent arrests	53.7%	80.9%	78.6%	84.5%	70.4%
Prior juvenile violent arrests	3.7%	9.5%	7.7%	10.3%	7.0%
Prior juvenile non-violent arrests	20.0%	42.1%	34.0%	39.2%	30.2%
Prior adult felony convictions	13.3%	50.5%	47.1%	66.4%	40.6%
Prior juvenile felony convictions	6.8%	21.1%	18.1%	22.4%	14.9%
Current offense involved weapon	9.5%	16.0%	10.6%	17.8%	13.1%

* Data were analyzed from DCJ's 1990 Court Database. This database contains annually collected dispositional data from nine Colorado judicial districts and includes 100% of those sentenced to prison and community corrections and 50% of those sentenced to probation, including ISP.

Offender Needs

A significantly higher proportion of offenders sentenced to ISP had drug treatment needs compared to offenders in the other three sentencing placements. This may be attributed to the possibility that judges may have perceived ISP to offer the

most effective sanction for coordinating treatment resources for chemically dependent offenders.

According to data from court files (see Table 4), over 86% of ISP clients exhibited drug treatment needs at the time of sentencing compared to 78.7% of offenders sentenced to prison, 75.0% of offenders sentenced to community corrections, and 65.3% of offenders placed on probation. Although the majority of offenders in each placement have a problem with drug abuse, the proportion of drug abusers on ISP was significantly higher compared to probation, community corrections, and prison. Given this information, drug programming -- assessment, case management and treatment -- should be considered a critical component of ISP.

Judges may have perceived ISP to offer the most effective sanction for coordinating treatment resources for chemically dependent offenders.

Table 4 Offender Needs

Offender Needs	Probation n=3,214	ISP n=200	Community Corrections n=933	Prison n=2,782	Total n=7,129
Mental health treatment:	36.7%	40.9%	38.3%	51.8%	56.9%
Alcohol treatment:	68.8%	76.5%	78.0%	79.4%	74.7%
Drug treatment:	65.3%	86.5%	75.0%	78.7%	72.8%

Offender pre-sentence investigation reports from court files revealed that three-fourths (76.5%-79.4%) of offenders sentenced to ISP, community corrections, and prison compared to 68.8% of offenders placed on probation, need alcohol treatment. It is interesting to note that the greatest need (of those described in Table 4) of offenders placed on ISP was for drug abuse treatment, while the greatest need of offenders sentenced to both community corrections and prison was for alcohol abuse treatment.

Three-fourths of offenders sentenced to ISP, community corrections, and prison needed alcohol treatment.

Does ISP Divert?

Yes, based on criminal history, the ISP program in Colorado appears to be serving as a means of diverting offenders who would otherwise be prison bound. It is noteworthy that on many factors, ISP clients appear more serious compared to community corrections clients. Policy makers and program administrators may want to consider whether this finding has implications for sentencing philosophies and resource allocation.

It is noteworthy that on many factors, ISP clients appear more serious compared to community corrections clients.

Differences in criminal history profiles of offenders placed on ISP and those sentenced to probation are clearly illustrated. All criminal history factors rated lower (except age at first arrest) for probationers compared to ISP clients. There are a number of similarities between offenders sentenced to community corrections and those sentenced to ISP. This is somewhat expected since community corrections is also a program that was designed to divert offenders from prison. Of particular interest is the similarity of ISP and community corrections offenders with prior adult arrests for both violent and non-violent offenses. The ISP sample actually had a slightly higher ratio of offenders with a history of adult violent and non-violent arrests, compared to community corrections, but the difference is not statistically significant. An important distinction, however, is that offenders in prison had, on average, only one more arrest on their rap sheet than offenders who were placed on ISP. It might be inferred then, that ISP offenders are "one arrest away" from prison.

It might be inferred that ISP offenders are "one arrest away" from prison.

Given that the profile of probationers clearly looks different from the profiles of ISP clients, community corrections clients, and prisoners, it appears that ISP is, on average, not widening the probation net, but is providing a placement alternative for would-be prison-bound offenders.

ISP is not widening the probation net, but is indeed providing a placement alternative for would-be prison-bound offenders.

chapter three **DOES ISP PROTECT THE PUBLIC?**

In the previous chapter, we presented data that indicated ISP is, as planned, diverting certain serious offenders from prison. In this chapter, we examine whether or not ISP protects the public. First, we compare program completion rates of offenders in three community placements: probation, ISP and community corrections. Then, we present the results of a 12-month follow-up for each offender released from their initial program.

Sample Profiles

The profile of ISP and community corrections offenders do not differ statistically from each other, however, as shown in Table 5, these two groups are quite different from probation clients on the criminal history variables we examined. We describe below the *probation* caseload and then, combining ISP and community corrections, the *intermediate sanctions* group -- showing the similarity between ISP and community corrections, and the difference between offenders in these programs compared to probation.

On the factors studied, the profile of ISP and community corrections offenders do not differ statistically from each other, however, these two groups are quite different from probation clients.

**Table 5 Demographic and Criminal History Profile Information:
Probation, Community Corrections and ISP**

	Probation n = 213	Intermediate Sanctions	
		ISP n = 247	Community Corrections n = 292
Gender:*			
Male	74.8%	85.0%	86.2%
Female	25.2%	15.0%	13.8%
Mean Age:	29.4 years	28.2 years	29.3 years
Education: Last grade completed (mean)	11.1	10.3	10.7
Employment (at arrest):			
Full-time*	41.0%	33.3%	33.4%
Part-time	9.8%	10.1%	8.3%
Unemployed	44.4%	49.5%	49.2%
Sporadic	4.8%	7.1%	9.1%
Offender Needs:			
Mental health treatment*	13.0%	24.0%	34.6%
Alcohol treatment	40.2%	59.6%	63.3%
Drug treatment	47.5%	49.3%	55.1%
Financial counseling*	51.2%	76.0%	51.8%
Criminal History Score:			
Mean score*	.50	1.90	1.50
Percent with highest possible score*	2.5%	20.4%	14.7%
Percent with any criminal history Score*	25.3%	78.5%	65.2%
Percent with a Juvenile Record:*	22.2%	46.9%	37.6%
Mean Age at First Arrest:*	23.9 years	20.3 years	20.9 years

* p < .05

NOTE: This information is based on a stratified -- not a random -- sample of clients in each program. This means that, to control for sample variation due to program selection criteria, only offenders convicted of theft, burglary, drugs, assault, sexual assault, and robbery were included. Note these data are from a sample different from the one described in Table 3.

Table 5 compares the samples of probationers, community corrections, and ISP clients. As mentioned above, the profiles of offenders sentenced to the three programs vary slightly.

Probation: Probation clients were less serious offenders than the intermediate sanctions groups on important criminal history and social needs variables. Specifically, three-fourths of probationers (74.7%) scored 0 on the Criminal History Score¹⁹ compared to 34.8% of offenders sentenced to community corrections and 21.5% of offenders sentenced to ISP. Over 40% (41.0%) of probationers were employed full-time at arrest compared to one-third of the intermediate sanctions clients (33.4% of community corrections and 33.3% of ISP cases). Only 13.0% of probationers had mental health problems (as noted in the case file) compared to 34.6% of community corrections offenders and 24.0% of ISP clients. Regarding age, probationers were older, on average (29.4 years of age), compared to community corrections clients (29.3 years), and ISP (28.2 years). Given this combination of (1) minimal criminal history, and (2) older age at intake, the data suggest that probationers are less serious offenders than community corrections and ISP clients in ways that could affect supervision, service, and treatment needs of this group. Specifically, we can infer that the probation sample may need less supervision, services, and treatment.

Intermediate Sanctions: As noted above, the fairly consistent similarities found between community corrections and ISP cases support our combining the groups for the purposes of this discussion. Despite the fact that we controlled for conviction crime, the ISP sample appeared more serious compared to the community corrections sample on the criminal history measures (see Table 5). Specifically, using the Colorado Criminal History Score (our composite measure of criminal history: See Footnote 19), the ISP group has a significantly higher proportion of cases with prior, serious criminal justice contacts compared to community corrections clients: 78.5% and 65.2%, respectively. Conversely, the sample that had the highest proportion of CH Scores of 4 -- the highest possible score -- was ISP (20.4%) compared to 14.7% of the community corrections sample. In general, then, while the "intermediate sanctions" group was significantly more serious than the probation group, differences between ISP and community corrections suggest that the ISP clientele tends to be more serious offenders, on average.

The community corrections sample has a higher proportion of cases with identified mental health, alcohol, and drug problems, while a higher proportion of ISP cases tend to have financial needs.

19 The Colorado Criminal History Score was developed by Mary Mande in 1988. It is an index derived from a weighted combination of the following data items (weights are shown in parentheses): number of juvenile adjudications (x .5); number of juvenile placements in secure institutions (x .75); number of prior adult felony convictions (x 1); number of prior adult violent felony convictions (x 1.5); number of adult probation revocations (x .75); and number of adult parole revocations (x 1.5). Scores are added and collapsed to form a five-point scale ranging from 0-4, with 0 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. Scores are combined in the following way: 0=0, .001-1.25=1, 1.26-2.25=2, 2.26-3.25=3, 3.26-high=4.

Further, there are important differences in offender needs among offenders in the two intermediate sanctions programs. Table 5 illustrates that the community corrections sample has a higher proportion of cases with identified mental health, alcohol, and drug problems, while a higher proportion of ISP cases tend to have financial needs. This difference reflects the variation (of certain problems) in the population of offenders who receive intermediate sanctions. This variation supports the notion that a variety of intermediate sanctions -- targeted to specific subpopulations of offenders -- may best address the diversity of treatment and supervision needs in the offender population.²⁰

A variety of intermediate sanctions -- targeted to specific subpopulations of offenders -- may best address the diversity of treatment and supervision needs in the offender population.

How Safe is the Public?

Two measures were used to answer this question: 1) program termination, and, for those who terminated the program successfully, 2) rearrest during the twelve months following program termination.

Program termination was categorized into five possible types:

- 1 normal completion (completing all program requirements);
- 2 absconson (escape or not returning to the program within a specified period of time);
- 3 new crime (commission of new misdemeanor or felony);
- 4 technical violation (violation of program *rules*); and,
- 5 other (any other termination type not listed, such as health problems or offender's death).

As illustrated in Table 6 below, probation had the highest proportion of normal program completions (68.5%), compared to community corrections (43.0%) and ISP (46.5%). Conversely, probationers had the highest failure rate for the commission of new crimes (10.8%), ISP was next (7.5%), and community corrections had the lowest rate of failures for the commission of new crimes (3.4%). This inverse relationship between successful program completion and the commission of a new crime has been found in previous research on Colorado offenders (English and Mande, 1991a). While offender behavior may vary by virtue of program selection procedures, it also seems likely that the closer offenders are supervised,

20 The extent to which ISP addresses the needs of specific populations is the topic of the next chapter.

the more likely officers are to catch clients violating program rules. As noted by MacKenzie and Shaw (1993), differences among groups in performance during community supervision may result from differences in intensity of supervision. Those who are supervised intensively may be caught more frequently for technical violations, whereas those who are supervised less intensively may not be caught until they become involved in criminal activities.

Thus, in programs with contact standards that are more stringent than traditional probation (for example, residential community corrections and ISP), an offender is more likely to be caught breaking the rules before he is caught breaking the law. Conversely, on probation, where surveillance is less stringent, an offender has a greater opportunity to not only break the rules, but also to commit new crimes. Empirical findings underscore the differences: terminations due to technical violations are nearly two-and-a-half times greater in ISP and three times greater in community corrections than they are on probation (43.5%, 46.7% and 16.9%, respectively). The variation in new crimes recorded, discussed above, also reflects program differences.²¹

Table 6 Program Termination Reasons: Probation, Community Corrections and ISP Clients (1991)*

Program Termination Type	Probation n=213	ISP n=198**	Community Corrections n=291**
Normal completion:	68.5%	46.5%	43.0%
Technical Violation During Program:***	16.9%	43.5%	46.7%
New Crime During Program:	10.8%	7.5%	3.4%
Other:	3.8%	2.5%	6.9%
Total:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* To control for sample variation due to program selection criteria, this is a stratified sample. Only those convicted of theft, burglary, drugs, assault, sex assault, and robbery were included.

** Data for termination type were missing for 49 ISP clients and 1 Community Corrections client, decreasing the total n of offenders for those groups in this table.

*** The technical violations category includes both program rule infractions and program

For the community corrections sample 20.7% absconded, and this accounts for nearly half (46.7%) of all technical violations. This warrants further discussion

21 Without a study that uses an experimental design, it is not possible to determine if these differences in technical violations are due to program variations or sample differences, or both.

since it is notably higher than the other two programs (7.1% for ISP and 4.2% for probationers) and because these "walkaways" have recently come to the attention of the media.²² According to a previous study conducted by the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice (English and Mande, 1991b: Figure 3.6), the fact that one-fifth of the community corrections clients abscond results primarily from two factors.

First, curfew violations are detectable 100% of the time because facilities are staffed round-the-clock. Again, we see the relationship between tight surveillance and program violations. However, the escape activity must be considered in the context of additional data: of the one-fifth who failed the program because they absconded, approximately 70% were "at large" for 24 hours or less; 16% were gone for more than 24 hours and, for nearly 13%, the duration was unknown or unrecorded in the case file (data not shown).

Secondly, 61% of those charged with escape also logged a drug infraction. Halfway houses submit residents to random urinalysis tests (UA's). Interview information suggests that many clients do not return to the facility before their curfew hour to avoid a random check and the possibility of getting caught with a "hot" UA after doing drugs. The client may delay returning to the facility, or abscond altogether. The offender's decision to run away to avoid the UA test results may have more serious consequences than if he or she tested positive for illegal drugs: escapees are charged with a new felony offense.

In sum, the three community sanctions studied appear to provide a reasonable degree of safety to the community. The probation group, despite a sample designed to minimize variation among the study groups, was considerably less serious compared to offenders placed in ISP and community corrections and would logically warrant fewer supervision resources. This explained its relatively low cost of \$2.35/day. Just over ten percent of the probation group committed a new crime while on probation. Nearly 8% of the ISP clients (at a cost of \$6.07/day) reoffended with a new crime, and community corrections -- the most restrictive and expensive (\$33.33/day) of the programs studied -- logged a new crime rate of less than 4%.

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22 In December 1993, the "60 Minutes" television program devoted a segment to "escapees" under community supervision in the State of New York.

12-Month Follow-up

To determine the differences in recidivism rates across programs, we began a 12-month follow-up after clients were released from each of the three study programs. Recidivating events were measured by new arrests posted electronically on rap sheets documented by the Colorado Crime Information Center. We recognize that this method of measuring recidivism omits crimes committed that are either undetected or unreported. However, it is a very common way of tapping recidivistic activity and, as such, assures comparability across studies. In addition, the conservative bias introduced when events are "missed" occurs consistently across each study group. Whatever error is introduced, then, remains random and affects each study group equally.

Only offenders who successfully completed their program were tracked for twelve months.²³ Note that offenders released from ISP typically are then placed on regular probation for varying amounts of time. Offenders released from residential community corrections often serve the remainder of their sentence on non-residential status or on probation, so they continue to receive at least a minimum level of contact with corrections staff. Therefore, the technical violation category of recidivism, displayed in Table 7, pertains to former ISP and community corrections clients and not to former probationers.

***Only offenders
who successfully
completed their
program were tracked
for twelve months.***

As indicated in Table 7, within 12 months of release, 99.3% of the former probationers were not rearrested; 91.3% of the prior ISP clients did not recidivate, and 77.6% of the "graduated" community corrections clients remained arrest-free. While community corrections clients did significantly less well than the probation groups (discussed later), it is nevertheless important to compare the recidivism rates of these three community programs with the success rate of the overall prisoner population. According to Department of Corrections data, 60% of the entire group of parolees remain arrest-free during the first three years of parole or discharge.²⁴ When comparing the three groups for violent felony arrests, it is interesting to note that of those offenders released from probation and ISP, there were no violent arrests recorded in the twelve months, after successful release from prison.

23 It was not possible in this study to "track" the 12-month outcome of program failures because these individuals are typically regressed to other correctional programs.

24 It is important to note that the prisoner population that the 60% figure is based is not stratified by crime type, as are the three community samples.

Of the offenders studied during the 12-month follow-up period, nearly 13% of former community corrections residents were arrested for a misdemeanor or felony (non-violent and violent). This compares to .7% of probation clients and 6.5% of ISP clients. Note that in the 12 months following program completion, less than 1% of the probationers received non-violent felony arrests, compared to 7.2% of the community corrections sample and 6.5% of the ISP clients. There are at least two plausible explanations for these differences. First, probation clients were, on average, less serious offenders compared to the other two placements (see Table 5), so we might assume that probationers were more likely to terminate or postpone their criminal careers in the year after supervision. Secondly, the ISP and community corrections samples were very similar; the significant difference between the groups is likely to be a program effect. Specifically, ISP offenders "transition" to regular probation and, so, during our 12-month observation period they continued under some degree of correctional supervision.²⁵ The 20 programs across the state have varying release policies and practices). Unlike ISP, systematic "continuity of care" across the halfway house system does not exist in the same manner as the statewide probation policies and procedures.

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ISP offenders "transition" to regular probation and, so, during our 12-month observation period they continued under some degree of correctional supervision.

25 Some community corrections clients progress to lesser forms of supervision.

**Table 7 12-Month Outcome* of Those Who Successfully completed:
Probation, ISP, and Community Corrections****

Recidivating Event	Probation n = 145	ISP n = 92	Community Corrections n = 125
No event	99.3%	91.3%	77.6%
Technical Violation:	0%***	2.2%	9.6%
Traffic:	0%	0%	0%
Misdemeanor:	0%	0%	1.6%
Non-violent Felony:	0.7%	6.5%	7.2%
Violent felony:	0%	0%	4.0%
Total:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* The sample consists of offenders convicted of burglary, theft, drug crimes, assault, robbery and sexual assault.

** Table refers to those offenders who completed each program: 145 (68.1%) probationers, 92 (37.2%) ISP offenders, and 125 (42.8%) Community Corrections clients.

*** The technical violation category of recidivism pertains to ISP and community corrections and not to probationers. Offenders released from residential community corrections often serve the remainder of their sentence on nonresidential status or on probation, likewise ISP offenders move on to probation so they continue to receive at least a minimum level of contact with corrections staff.

Summary: Pressing Issues

1. ISP Program Completion

The high failure rate (shown in Table 6) for ISP clients during program participation (53.5%) is largely due to the very high revocation rate for technical violations (43.5%). The remaining clients who failed ISP placement did so due to new arrests (7.5%) or for other reasons (2.5%).

Conversely, the high success rate of clients who completed ISP during the 12-month follow-up period may also be related to those who previously failed. That is, those clients at high-risk for program failure or recidivism tended to fail early in the program. Those who demonstrated successful completion of the program also tended to have a high success rate during the 12-month follow-up period.

We must question the high proportion of ISP offenders who fail the program due to technical violations. It is important to remember that technical infractions are not necessarily correlated with impending criminal behavior; practices that encourage "over-violating" offenders for technical infractions may not be in the best interests of either public safety or fiscal restraint (offenders who failed for technical violations are typically sentenced to more restrictive and costly programs).

Given these data, it seems clear that the at-risk period appears to be most crucial *during* ISP program participation. The relatively low 12-month follow-up failure rate (8.7% for technical violations and new crimes) suggests that completing the program may be an important component in remaining arrest-free the next year.

2. Continuum of Care

Given the design of the current study, most ISP and community corrections clients were placed on less restrictive but continued supervision during the 12-month follow-up period. Unfortunately, the role of "continuum of care" for clients successfully completing ISP cannot be statistically selected out. The possible value of this programming process deserves further empirical attention.

3. Technical Violations vs. New Crimes

Finally, despite the relatively low rearrest rates for ISP, program managers and supervising staff must continue to struggle with the dilemma of "over-violating" offenders. That is, while decisions related to program termination are, in general, quite effective for leaving a pool of clients who are unlikely to be rearrested in the following year, we do not -- and cannot -- know what proportion of the technical violators would not have committed a new crime had they remained in the program. Unless a client regressed for technical violations would have committed a new crime, public safety would not be jeopardized. There is no

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ISP program managers and supervising staff must continue to struggle with the dilemma of "over-violating" offenders.

empirical evidence to show that technical violations and public safety are linked. Technical violations reflect crimes against the criminal justice system. We do not know how many of these clients would present an actual danger to the community.

The positive "outcome" findings reported here, both *allow us* and *require us* to struggle with this fundamental concern: all decisions have costs.

Technical violations reflect crimes against the criminal justice system. We do not know how many of these clients would present an actual danger to the community.

WHAT ARE THE SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT / SURVEILLANCE COMPONENTS OF ISP?

Why is Successful Completion of ISP Important?

Nearly half of ISP clients successfully completed the program and of this group nearly all (91.3%) of the sample was crime-free 12 months later. If more offenders were successful on ISP -- say, 60% or 75% rather than 46.5% -- criminal justice system costs for processing and punishing failed participants would be greatly reduced. Below we discuss our analysis of factors that seem to contribute to successful completion of ISP.

If more offenders were successful on ISP, criminal justice system costs for processing and punishing failed participants would be greatly reduced.

Offender Profile

As Table 8 indicates, offenders sentenced to ISP had a substantial number of needs requiring services. According to case files, nearly all ISP offenders had alcohol and/or drug abuse needs (91.7%). File data also indicated that close to half (43.0%) of ISP offenders had some type of employment problem. These data are presented in Table 8.

According to case files, offenders sentenced to ISP had a substantial number of needs requiring services.

Table 8 Descriptive Summary of ISP Participants n= 247

Mean Age:	28.2 years
Mean Criminal History Score:	1.9
Percent with Substance Abuse Needs:	91.7%
Percent Employed Full-time During Majority of Program:	36.0%
Percent with Employment Problems:	43.0%

By looking at specific substance abuse needs of offenders, we found that alcohol was the substance most commonly abused: 87.0% of file data reported an alco-

hol problem. Marijuana and hashish followed, with almost two-thirds (64.7%) of offenders showing a strong need for treatment. This finding that the vast majority of ISP clients have strong needs for substance abuse treatment is very important given that ISP was founded to target offenders with substance abuse problems.

Focusing on employment problems, Table 8 above shows that 36.0% of offenders were employed during the majority of their participation in ISP, and 43.0% had problems with getting or holding a job. Table 9 illustrates the problems that offenders encountered when faced with employment. The most common problems that surfaced for offenders were a bad attitude (45.7%) and the lack of job skills (35.7%). Additionally, getting fired accounted for just over 11% of offenders (11.4%). This suggests that ISP programming should target work-related issues: social skills and "normative" behavior in the work environment, and vocational training.

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Table 9 Employment Problems* n= 70

Employment Problems	Percent
Bad attitude / not motivated:	45.7%
No or limited job skills:	35.7%
Got fired:	11.4%
Disabled:	15.7%
Absent or late:	12.9%
Local job market:	5.7%
ISP-related job problems:**	7.1%

* For each case studied, up to three employment problems could be identified. For that reason, employment problem categories are not mutually exclusive, so the percent across all categories will total more than 100%

** This refers to job problems that result from conflicts with ISP requirements. An example is work "shift" assignments that conflict with curfew violations. The program requirements are typically related to procedures designed to monitor offenders and protect public safety.

Program Components

From Table 8 we see that offenders sentenced to ISP are a "needy" group with a variety of problems that must be addressed. Given this, we wanted to know what program components (falling into categories of surveillance, services and/or treatment) statistically contributed to program success.

Program Components that Relate to Completion

To determine the components of ISP that might relate to successful program completion, we analyzed the following factors:

- psychological counseling;
- alcohol abuse counseling;
- Alcoholics Anonymous meetings;
- substance abuse educational sessions;
- vocational training;
- drug and alcohol detection tests;
- electronic monitoring;
- employment;
- frequency and type of contacts by an ISP officer;
- risk/needs of the offender;
- type of current offense;
- length of stay in ISP.

Most of these elements had some positive impact on the outcome of the offender. However, when we grouped the factors to control for "overlap" among items, data indicated that two important resources -- officer contact and sentence duration -- did not impact overall success rates in this study. While there may be individual exceptions to this finding, we found that these two program components (often central to the design of ISP) do not, in general, affect an offender's successful or unsuccessful completion of the program. Contrary to our common perceptions, these data indicate that, as far as program length of stay and officer contacts are concerned, more does not necessarily mean better.

Two important resources -- officer contact and sentence duration -- did not impact overall success rates in this study.

Three program components statistically improved an offender's probability of successfully completing ISP: full time employment, individual and/or group counseling, and participation in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Nearly three-fourths (73.0%) of offenders who held a full-time job while participating in ISP completed the program without a revocable incident. This is in considerable contrast to the 28.6% of unemployed ISP clients who successfully completed ISP. Further, less than half (46.0%) of offenders who worked part-time or sporadically completed ISP successfully. Full time employment clearly contributed to an offender's successful completion of ISP, a finding consistent with a previous study of community sanctions in Colorado (English and Mande, 1991a). Given this information, employment should be a major focus of ISP programming and case management.

Three program components statistically improved an offender's probability of successfully completing ISP: full time employment, individual and/or group counseling, and participation in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

Offenders who participated in individual and/or group psychological counseling were significantly more likely to succeed in ISP. As displayed in Table 10, seventy percent of those offenders who received individual counseling went on to successfully complete ISP. This compares with 30.0% for those who did not complete the ISP program. Additionally, for those who received group counseling, nearly 68% completed the program, compared to 32.6% who failed to successfully complete the program. It must be noted, however, that this finding may reflect a sampling bias that cannot be controlled. That is, offenders who obtain counseling may have more resources (employment, or family support, for example) compared to offenders who did not receive counseling. "Receiving counseling" may, in fact, be a proxy for identifying offenders who function better than those who do not receive counseling. Therefore, we cannot be sure that the finding is due to the counseling received, or if those who received counseling were already more likely to succeed in ISP.

Table 10 ISP Program Components and Offender Termination

Program Components	Offenders Who Completed ISP (n=92)	Offenders Who Failed ISP (n=106)	Total (n=198)
Had full-time employment:	73.0%	27.0%	100.0%
Had part-time / sporadic employment:	46.0%	54.0%	100.0%
Was unemployed:	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
Received individual counseling:	70.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Received group counseling:	67.4%	32.6%	100.0%
Received AA meetings:	73.9%	26.1%	100.0%

For this study group, participation in AA meetings significantly increased an offender's probability of successfully completing ISP. A significantly higher proportion of ISP clients who attended AA (73.9%) succeeded in ISP, compared to 26.1% of offenders who failed to complete the ISP program.

This is an interesting finding. Since this study did not focus on AA, we do not have data to explore how or why AA participation might influence program completion. Nevertheless, several questions deserve further study:

Since this study did not focus on AA, we do not have data to explore how or why AA participation might influence program completion.

Does AA increase the probability of successful ISP completion because:

1. Group support -- with or without an alcohol focus -- is important?
2. Participants are required to "own" his or her alcohol problem, thus encouraging participants to take personal responsibility for behavior?
3. Abstinence from alcohol (1) occurs, and (2) results in lowered propensity to break program rules and commit crimes?
4. Meetings are accessible: they occur frequently and at many locations?
5. The 12-step program can/does help offenders gain control of their alcohol abuse and/or their lives?
6. Offenders who participate in AA are, in some explainable, systematic way, different from offenders who do not participate in AA?
7. AA participation offers some constellation of "services," including but not limited to those described in 1-6 above, that significantly impact ISP offenders?

These and other questions pertaining to the impact of AA on ISP offenders should be explored. AA is free, it is accessible, and it focuses on personal responsibility -- issues of programming and philosophy that are of considerable importance within the criminal justice system. We strongly encourage further study of this important research finding.

A Word of Caution

As we discussed at the end of Chapter Three, ISP clients "progress" to regular probation. It is impossible to statistically separate the effect of this important continuity of care component from any ISP programming factor. Analyzing the impact of continuity of care would require an experimental research design where half of a matched sample received ISP in its current form and the other half would receive ISP with no probation follow-up. Any findings reported here must be considered in the context of the continuity of care provisions. It is possible, for example, that the progression from very strict monitoring and programming to regular probation -- a fairly unobtrusive sanction -- is the driving factor for program success and 12-month outcome success. Experimental designs are very costly and very difficult to implement in a "real life" setting like probation (see Petersilia and Turner, 1991). Nevertheless, we recommend policy makers endorse this type of research given the current findings: ISP diverts certain offenders from prison, protects the public, and delivers important services to offenders that contribute to successful program outcome.

ISP clients "progress" to regular probation. It is impossible to statistically separate the effect of this important continuity of care component from any ISP programming factor.

Summary

Our examination of what components of the ISP program relate to offender completion suggest that employment, counseling, and Alcoholics Anonymous each independently contribute to the probability of the sample of ISP offenders successfully completing the program. From a programmatic perspective, this suggests that the "service" or treatment component of ISP in Colorado is apparently significantly more important than the frequency of officer contacts, length of probation, the use of electronic monitoring, jail or community service -- certain various surveillance measures. This finding about the importance of treatment over surveillance concurs with

substantial work concerning evaluation of ISP in multiple sites across the country conducted by Joan Petersilia and Susan Turner of the Rand Corporation (1990).

According to court and program case files, offenders placed on ISP have a variety of serious personal problems. This overall level of need, combined with the importance of employment, counseling and AA participation in successfully completing ISP, lead us to conclude that program development in these areas should be a vital concern to justice policy makers. Although these findings are preliminary, given the lack of an experimental research design (discussed above), it is essential that the State Judicial Branch be supported in its efforts to address and treat client needs. For when offenders successfully complete ISP, public safety is enhanced (see Chapter Three) and certain offenders will have been diverted from prison (see Chapter Two) at substantial tax savings.

Efforts should focus on increasing the success rate of ISP clients. ISP officers should focus on getting/keeping offenders employed and in counseling. ISP offenders should terminate the program with new or enhanced job and/or social skills. Additionally, given the usefulness of AA participation and our limited ability to explain WHY this program works, we suggest -- based on the literature -- that efforts should be made to assist offenders in taking responsibility for their behavior and developing a positive support system, an incremental piece to remaining in the community and not reentering the system. Finally, although we cannot isolate and study the impact of continuity of care, the fact that ISP clients are "released" to regular probation and supervision and treatment continues during a period of decreased surveillance may contribute to successful 12-month outcome. The positive outcome effects presented here may be correlated with continuity of care rather than specific treatment/surveillance approaches. The impact of continuity of care on ISP clients was beyond the scope of the present study. However, we recommend that this be the topic of future research.

This finding about the importance of treatment over surveillance concurs with substantial work concerning evaluation of ISP in multiple sites across the country conducted by Joan Petersilia and Susan Turner of the Rand Corporation (1990).

It is essential that the State Judicial Branch be supported in its efforts to address and treat client needs.

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