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*The Dynamics of  
Deterrence:  
Youth Gun Violence in  
Portland*

**Portland STACS Project**

**Research Team Final Report**

**June, 2003**

# Portland STACS Project

## Research Team Final Report

June, 2003

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### FINAL REPORT

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## **Glossary of Abbreviations**

AAP.....	African American Project
CBS.....	Community Based Strategies
CG.....	Core Group (Main decision-making body in the STACS Project)
CJS.....	Criminal justice system
DSS-J.....	Decision Support System—Justice (Multnomah County’s data warehouse)
LEDS.....	Law Enforcement Data System (Oregon State Patrol database)
PPB.....	Portland Police Bureau
PPDS.....	Portland Police Data System (Portland Police database)
PPO.....	Parole or probation officer
PRE.....	Project Re-Entry
RFP.....	Request for Proposal
SACSI.....	Strategic Approaches to Community Safety (U.S. Department of Justice acronym for all project sites)
SIT.....	Strategic Intervention Team (Operational team for developing and implementing STACS strategy).
STACS.....	Strategic Approaches to Community Safety (Portland’s local acronym)
STV.....	Stop The Violence (meetings)
YGAT.....	Youth Gun Anti-Violence Task Force

## Executive Summary

The Portland STACS Project is one of five project sites in a national initiative of the U.S. Department of Justice titled "Strategic Approaches to Community Safety."<sup>1</sup> SACSI envisioned a partnership, between the U.S. Attorney in a new role of leadership in cooperation with local law enforcement designed to address the most serious crime problems as perceived and defined by local criminal justice and political officials known as the "Core Group" (CG). The emphasis was for short-term crime control by targeting specific crimes, analyzing them and the people involved (the "target population"), formulating intervention strategies, and measuring success in reducing crime or achieving other goals.

Portland selected gun violence among youths age 15-24.<sup>2</sup> While designed to be a data-driven project including the identification of the problem, Portland chose its target crime category before STACS was initiated and before any research was begun. Rather than selecting the target crime through data analysis, the project emerged out of a sense of crisis with youth gun violence after a particularly violent summer in 1997. Research team activities were confined to post-problem definition stages.

All of the Research Team activities and projects were based on close collaboration with the CG and the Strategic Intervention Team (SIT), and were responses to their expressed needs. A notable difference between the role of the researchers in all SACSI sites and the normal or usual researcher role is that the researchers were active participants in the process. The Research Team members attended and actively participated in all meetings, essentially merging the usually separate roles of actively engaged "consultants" and the more or less disengaged observer, and evaluator roles of "researchers."

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<sup>1</sup> The projects were known as SACSI or in Portland's case, as STACS. STACS was based upon the Boston Gun Project, described in David Kennedy, *Youth Violence in Boston: Gun Markets, Serious Youth Offenders and a Use-Reduction Strategy*, 59 Law and Contemporary Problems 147, (Winter, 1996) and David Kennedy, *Pulling Levers: Chronic Offenders, High-Crime Settings and a Theory of Prevention*, 31 Valparaiso Law Review 449 (Spring, 1997). See also, Kapsch, Stefan J. and Louis, Lyman, *The Dynamics of Deterrence: Youth Gun Violence in Portland*, in Pagon, Milan (ed), proceedings, The Fourth Biennial International Conference, Policing In Central And Eastern Europe: Deviance, Violence, and Victimization, Ljubljana, Slovenia, September 12-14, 2002. The literature on gun violence has been growing rapidly. Literature reviews are available in Zimring, Franklin and Hawkins, Gordon, Crime is Not the Problem: Lethal Violence in America, Oxford, New York: 1997 and in Tonry, Michael, and Moore, Mark, Youth Violence, Vol. 24, University of Chicago Crime and Justice Series, University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1998. See also, Promising Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence, U.S. Department of Justice, OJJDP, Washington: 2/99.

<sup>2</sup> With the notable exception of the Memphis site, all of the SACSI sites focused on youth gun violence. Memphis chose sex offenses as their target crime category.

Section 1 is data on crime trends prior to the beginning of the STACS Project in order to set some rough "benchmarks," which are then compared to the same data at the end of the STACS project in a version of a pre-post design.

The first substantive research project generated by the needs of the SIT was the identification of the "target group," i.e., the broadest category of subjects of the project, which were violent or violence-prone youths age 15-24 (Section 4). This was necessary since the goal of the STACS Project was strategic intervention, i.e., reducing youth gun violence by directly influencing those thought to be engaged in it, or at high risk of engaging in gun violence. The establishment of the target population was followed by several projects designed to get as much relevant information as possible about the subjects in order to devise strategies that would reduce gun violence among them. The Research Team attended all Core Group and Strategic Intervention Team meetings, and participated actively in the discussion to identify specifically what kinds of information these groups needed in order to plan effective interventions. This included:

- Open-ended interviews with a small sample of the population (Section 3).
- Survey research of a larger sample using structured interview instruments or questionnaires (Section 6).
- Evaluation of four "Stop The Violence Meetings" between gang members and SIT members (Section 2) which was the main intervention strategy.
- Evaluations of a transition program, Project Re-Entry (Section 5) which involved persons returning to the community from prison who could be assumed to meet the target population criteria.
- Evaluation of the African American Program (AAP), a parole and probation supervision program specifically for African American males.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Our specific conclusions are summarized below. In our opinion, it is fair to say that significant progress has been made in reducing gun violence with measurable drops in virtually all crime categories. However, it is also essential to point out that this is program based upon deterrence, i.e., based on the notion that a reduction in crime can be realized by identifying those likely to commit these crimes, and then telling them that (1) they are known to officials to be involved in the undesirable behavior; (2) that they will be watched carefully; (3) that any transgressions will result in immediate and strict enforcement including the possibilities of arrest and/or revocation of parole; and (4) that if they do desist, help is available to enable them to turn their lives around. In order to work, the relationship and contact between officials (i.e., police, parole and probation officers and outreach workers) must be maintained over time. This is because the "target population" keeps changing as new, younger violent youths who have never been exposed to the "stimulus" or intervention (the Stop the Violence Meetings), enter the risk group of 15-24. Also, deterrence works only if the threat of official action is real and present even when the target population remains stable. In sum, there is no reason to believe that violent or violence-prone individuals will cease to be violent if they have never been exposed to the threat of negative consequences, or if they perceive that the

threat has subsided. **The “quiet” Portland experienced on its streets during the STACS years will take constant, sustained, long-term effort to maintain.**

While it is important to keep in mind that STACS was never designed as an experimental project for which cause and effect could be validly and reliably ascertained, success for the STACS Project was attained on several levels. First, there was a significant reduction in all of the measured crimes as seen both in calls for service to 9-1-1 and in the incidence of person crimes. While attributing this overall drop in crime to STACS would be too broad of a claim to make (drive-by shootings, shots fired calls, etc.), the trend is in the right direction. It is reasonable to conclude that STACS had a positive impact. Alternative explanations are, of course, not eliminated, but STACS was a concerted and serious effort to achieve the observed results and there is no reason to think it did not play a significant role.

Second, during the STACS Project, none of the target population of the STV clients was involved in a homicide (either as perpetrator or victim). Since these clients were hand selected as the worst offenders by experienced and knowledgeable criminal justice experts, this is a triumph for the project. Furthermore, the recidivism rate among these same clients was substantially below that of clients who received no intervention and also less than the paroled population at large.

Third, the Project Re-Entry effort was also successful. Clients who were at a high risk of recidivism upon their return to the community, were much less likely to re-offend during their first year out of prison if they were participants in Project Re-Entry.

Of all the projects and initiatives implemented during the STACS tenure, there is convincing evidence that each played a part in reducing violence among the target population. Foremost among these initiatives was the appointment of a cross-designated prosecuting attorney capable of bringing charges in either state or federal court. The possibility of federal charges against youth was well known in the target population and the possibility of incarceration far away federal prisons, separated from friends and associates was widely feared. This is also linked to a key finding in Portland that the vast majority of the target population were either born here or are long-term residents, meaning that all or nearly all of their social ties are local. This is contrary to the assumption that it is immigrants from larger cities that make up the bulk of the target population. Many of the youths indicated a change in their gun carrying habits as a direct result of the cross-designated prosecutor policy. Furthermore, the cooperative effort of this cross-designation was noted and was also effective. Offenders are well aware of the difference between state and federal prosecution and that cross-designation was a new and serious development. What mattered in STACS was the new, cooperative relationship between levels of government. This made the threat of federal prosecution much more credible and produced the deterrent effect.

## Recommendations:

1. **The intended deterrent effect of the STV meetings was clearly accomplished.** There were no homicides involving any of the 41 subjects of the STV meetings and drive-by shootings declined markedly. In structured open-ended interviews after one year, both attendees and non-attendees understood the message and remembered it well. An important factor in the success of STACS was that it was based on “target general deterrence” and aimed at very carefully selected specific individuals.
2. **The deterrent effect was based on the multi-agency cooperation, including but not limited to the threat of “going federal” in gun cases.** Interviews revealed that this was because federal prosecution was perceived as meaning prison in a faraway place, without support of local peer groups.
3. **Federal-State cooperation in the form of cross-designation of state prosecutors as federal Assistant US Attorneys is not typical anywhere in the country, this constitutes a major achievement of the Portland STACS project.** Subjects clearly understood what this meant and distinguished this from simply serving more time by being sentenced to a federal prison.
4. **The incorporation of community outreach agencies into both the “carrot” and “stick” strategy is a key accomplishment of STACS.** This includes outreach as part of the surveillance and interdiction aspects of prevention and deterrence, and the strictly preventative approach of the “Community Based Initiatives” (CBS). CBS was a serious attempt to fulfill the “carrot” part of the strategy, but was not fulfillable in the short time frame of STACS. CBS established the groundwork for addressing the impediments to employment through marshalling community resources and needs to be revitalized to continue to fruition as a full “partner” to traditional methods of assisting target populations in reforming their lives. In the time period allowed (approximately one year), it is remarkable that so many programs were developed and implemented successfully. Both the tattoo and license renewal programs were fully developed, but it is premature to assess whether they led to desired outcomes (e.g., whether people with gang tattoos were able to have them removed resulting in employment). If so, the absence of the tattoos will undoubtedly be useful.
5. **Preventive programs require resources and commitment from agencies as much as the deterrence aspects of the project.** Adult Community Justice did commit to the CBS process, but CBS never had the resources to make it work in the short run. The service providers in the CBS effort were all non-profits who were cooperative and worked on the initiative, but lacked the resources to actually work with these subjects. Understaffed and under-budgeted non-profits cannot be expected to assume programs without additional resources, especially in the short run where they are already fully or over committed. CBS had no staff of its own or commitments of staff time from other agencies (such as the designation of specific staff from police and prosecution for the STV deterrence part of the project). Full implementation is impossible under these circumstances.

6. **Non-profits who are recruited to provide services must be paid for the services; at least their costs need to be covered.** Otherwise, they will see it as zero-sum. Whatever they put into CBS will have to come out of something else in their budget and programs.
7. **The key CBS programs that were established must be continued.** STACS provided the necessary groundwork for what is a long-term solution to problems of employability that were not previously addressed (e.g., driver license restoration and tattoo removal). Unless young people stop driving without licenses or tattoos become unfashionable, the need for these programs will be long-term. Recent resurgence of gang activity both inside Oregon prisons and on the streets suggest that the problem is under control, but not eliminated.
8. **Leadership at the highest levels is necessary, and it must be visible leadership.** High level visible political support for the deterrence part of the program was a key to its success, but was never a part of CBS, or at least not consistently and visibly a part of it.
9. **Deterrence is a short-term phenomenon.** It must be renewed to be effective. The STACS Project realized this after a year and had a second round of STV meetings. Also, a new generation of potential offenders is always emerging as juveniles enter the risk group or target population who have never been exposed to the deterrent.
10. **Project Re-Entry clients should be re-interviewed by the PRE parole officer at regular intervals.** New offenses occur most frequently during the period from 180-365 days after release. There should be significant efforts between 60 and 90 days prior to each client entering this period of heightened risk to improve the deterrent effect.
11. **Since most PRE clients re-offend in the PCS/DCS crime themes, extra efforts should be made to enroll PRE clients in drug and alcohol treatment programs.** Additionally, since many of these clients offend as sellers, not users of drugs, extra efforts should be made to enroll these clients in educational and employment programs such that illicit income opportunities are less appealing.
12. **In the event of a firearms charge, PRE clients should be prosecuted according to the PRE threat of increased scrutiny and federal prosecution.** As stated elsewhere, the deterrence model only works when the deterrent is consistent and sure.
13. **Better record keeping for PRE clients is necessary including the development of or access to databases.** The PRE parole officer is charged with a substantial workload and no additional tools with which to accomplish that work. Organization of information from the DOC and other agencies is required. Further, inclusion of specific variables not currently monitored would make future evaluations more valuable.

14. **Educational and employment opportunities are keys to reducing youth violence.** The absence of these, along with recreational opportunities, create both the free time and boredom which precipitate the violence associated with gang involved youth.
  
15. **Interventions to reduce weapons in the target population should be created based on the specific information garnered from the confidential and anonymous surveys.** Respondents gave researchers highly detailed information on gun usage and carrying habits. Further, a comparison between the types of guns carried and the types of guns seized may reveal a gap pointing toward other types of interventions and interdiction projects.
  - The results suggest that our participants could benefit from more education and more job opportunities. Such intervention (as CBS was designed to do) seems quite important.
  - Our results further illuminate the types of situations when respondents report actually carrying and using guns or report believing that it is appropriate to use guns. Such a detailed understanding of these places and times could be used to create interventions that reduce gun carrying and use in specific situations.
  - Our results reveal where survey respondents report acquiring guns and what qualities they prefer in handguns. Future research could explore both how acquisition patterns change and whether the preferred characteristics of handguns are similar to the characteristics of guns actually seized in Portland.

## **Section 1: Benchmark and Final Crime Trends**

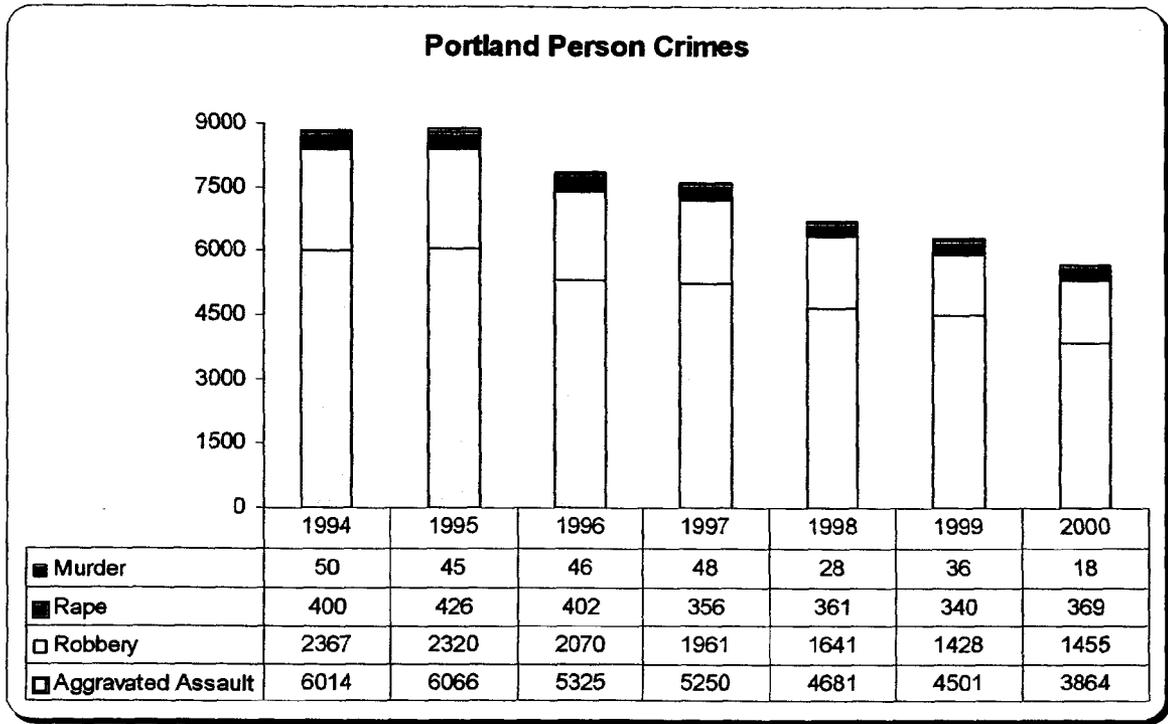
Our first opportunity to examine violent crimes in Portland came through a standardized report by the Portland Police Bureau allowing us to scrutinize pre-STACS violent crime. Person crimes from 1994 to 1997 saw a drop of 11% while murders fell by just 4%. However, from the inception of the STACS Project in 1998 through its conclusion in 2000, person crimes in Portland decreased by 29% and murders by nearly 36%.

An additional focus area for gang interventions is the tracking of 9-1-1 calls for “shots fired.” The STACS research team carefully followed these calls (Figure 4). In 1997,<sup>3</sup> Portland’s Bureau of Emergency Communications received 3,588 9-1-1 calls for shots fired averaging nearly 300 per month. The graph trend line shows these calls were on the increase in 1998, the year that STACS began its efforts. By the end of the STACS Project, there was an average of 155 calls per month, totaling 1,843 calls for 2000; a drop of 49%.

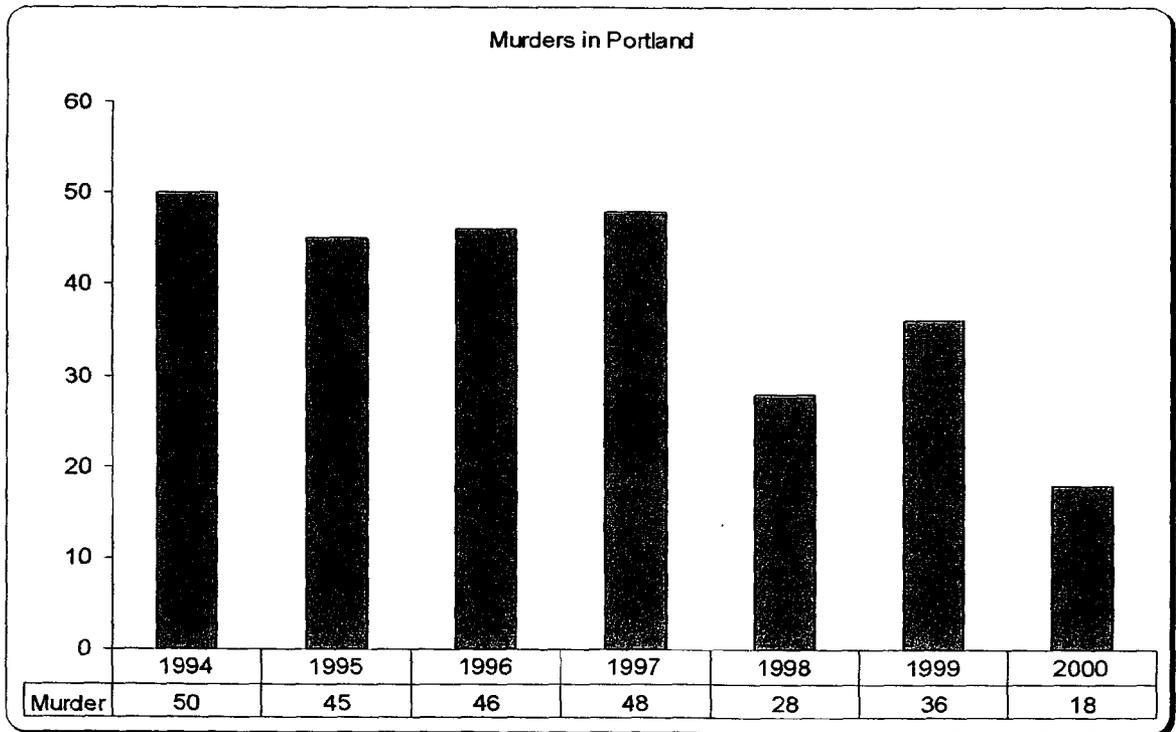
Similar declines were seen in other calls for service that are traditionally, albeit not exclusively, gang related. For example, 9-1-1 calls for assaults (including domestic and other assaults) fell by 8% from 1998 to 2000, while calls for shootings declined by 37%. Armed robberies dropped 31%, while calls for stabbings fell by 15% during the course of the project. Each of these crime categories also included non-gang and/or youth related crimes, but shows a significant downward trend in crimes that are popular among youths in the target population.

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<sup>3</sup> The earliest available data.



**Figure 1: PPB Person Crimes, 1994-2000**



**Figure 2: PPB Person Crimes – Murder, 1994-2000**

## Calls for Service

The following figures detail 9-1-1 calls for service for assault, stabbing, armed robbery shots fired, and shootings. Trend lines are included; all of which show a significant downward trend.

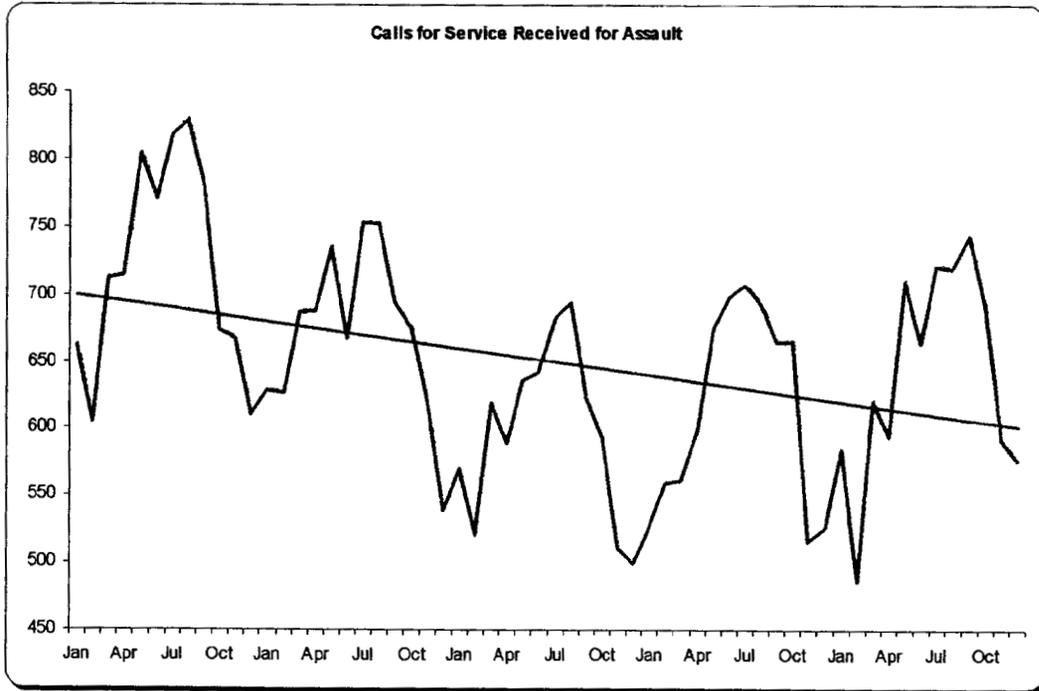


Figure 3: 9-1-1 Calls for Service Received for Assault, 1997-2001<sup>4</sup>

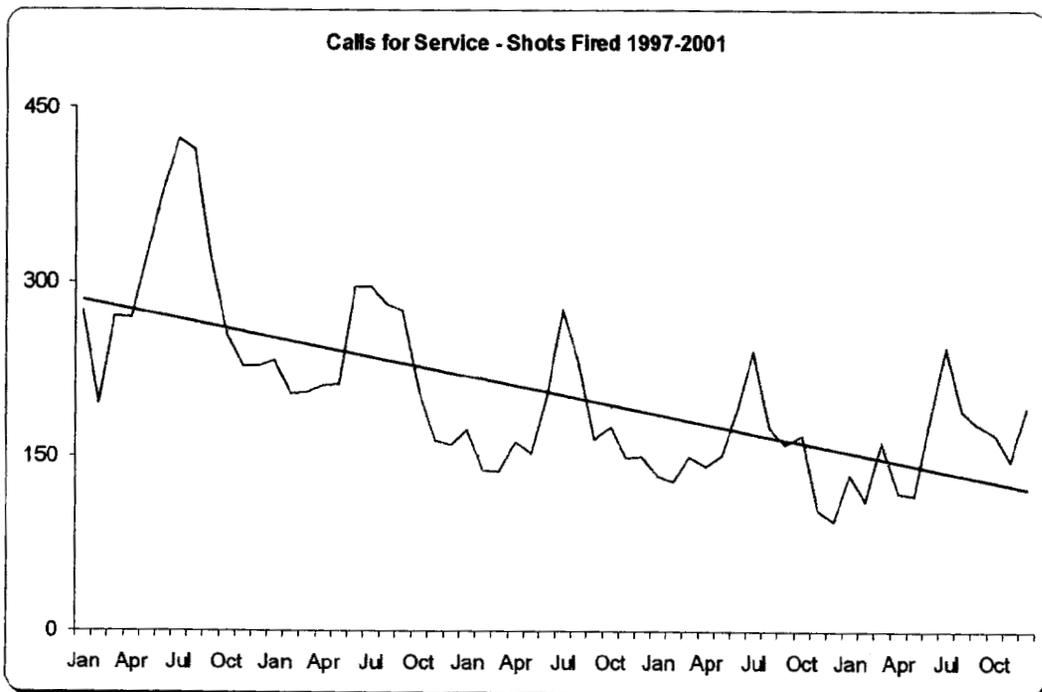
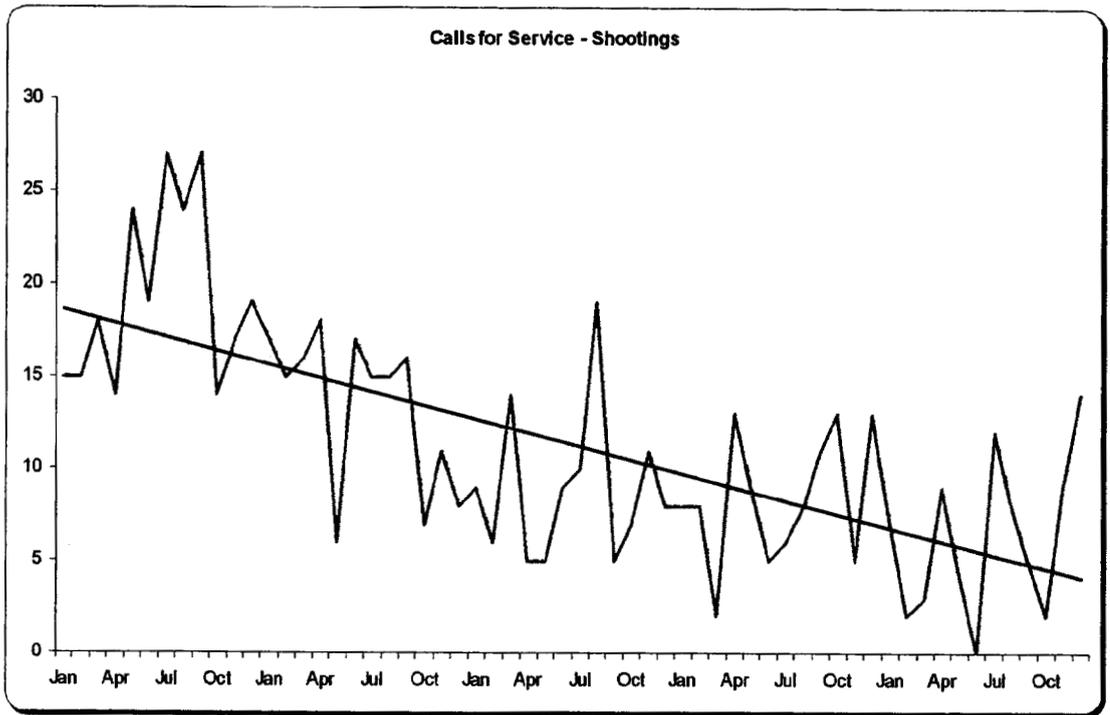
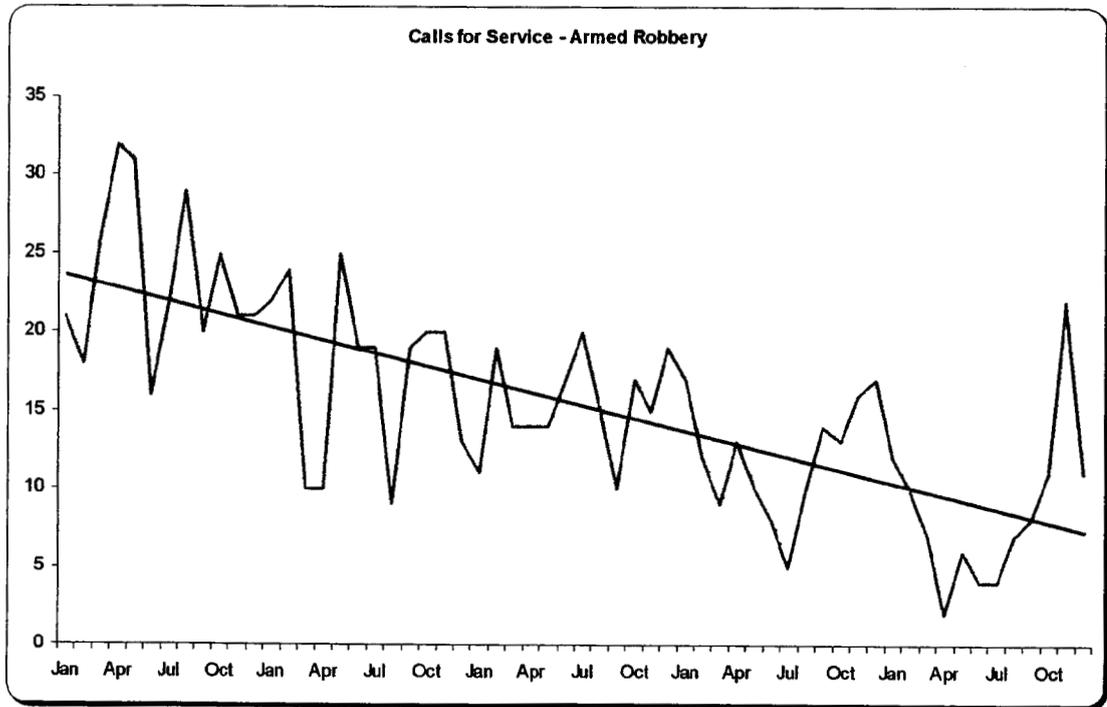


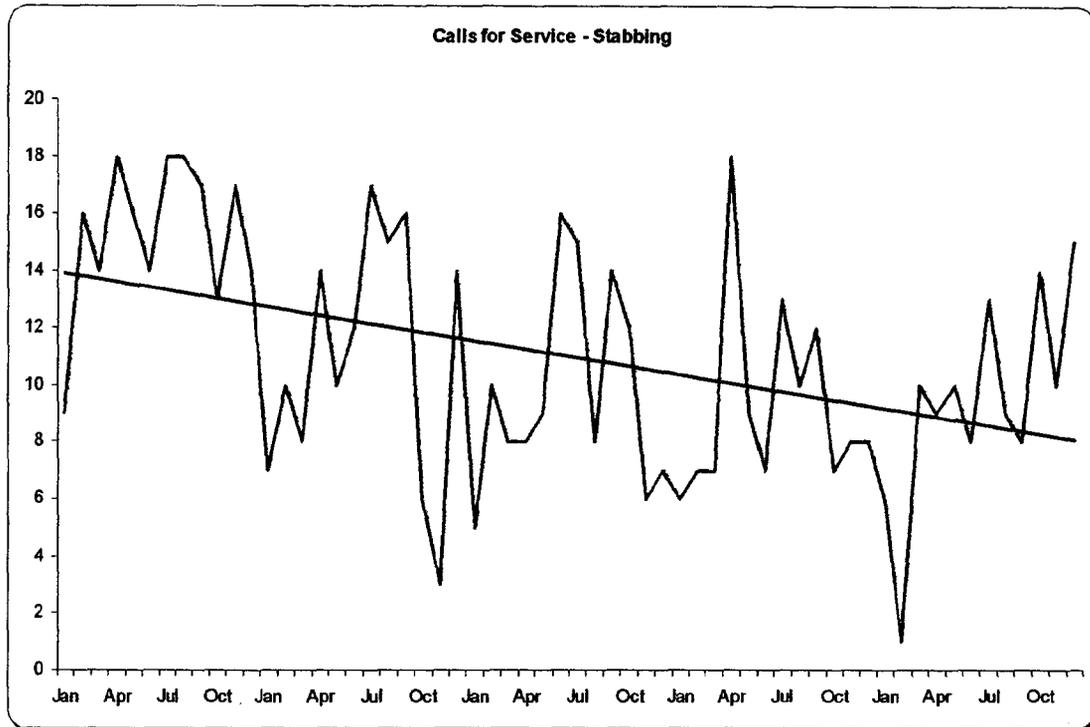
Figure 4: 9-1-1 Calls for Service Received for Shots Fired, 1997-2001<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 5: 9-1-1 Calls for Service Received for Shootings, 1997-2001<sup>4</sup>**



**Figure 6: 9-1-1 Calls for Service Received for Armed Robbery, 1997-2001<sup>4</sup>**



**Figure 7: 9-1-1 Calls for Service Received for Stabbing, 1997-2001<sup>4</sup>**

In every crime statistic measured, calls for service were reduced substantially during the STACS Project. Additionally, the Portland Police Bureau recorded a consistent and considerable reduction in overall person crimes during the same period (1997-2001) after having observed a nearly static trend previously (1994-1997). Perhaps most important, murders were down by 36% during the tenure of the STACS Project. It is also important to note that none of the subjects of the Stop The Violence meetings were involved in murders during this timeframe either as offenders or as victims.

<sup>4</sup> (NOTE: LEDS summary reports, PPDS Crime Data File and PPDS on-line CAD System. Report uses "Reported Date" for time placement of crime. STACS Project, January 2002.CFS codes used: ASSLT, SHOTS, SHOOT, ROBARM, and STAB.)

## Section 2: Evaluation: Stop the Violence Meetings

### Introduction

This section focuses on two integral parts of the Portland STACS Project on youth gun violence, the Stop the Violence Meetings (STV) and the Community Based Strategies initiative (CBS). The purpose of the STV meetings was to deter people identified as at risk for violent gun offences by informing them of the increased scrutiny of their activities which was already underway at the time of the meetings, and of the consequences of any violations of the "no violence" policy.<sup>5</sup> The CBS initiative was designed as the "carrot" of a carrot and stick approach by offering the subjects assistance in solving whatever problems they may have that were preventing them from pursuing legitimate objectives and becoming functional members of the community. This section describes these initiatives as they were conceived and implemented, and evaluates the outcomes.

### The STV Meetings

The STV meetings were adaptations of similar strategies used in Boston and in other SACSI sites, especially Indianapolis. The idea is based on deterrence theory,<sup>6</sup> in this case "targeted general deterrence." It was "targeted" in the sense that specific individuals thought to be active in gun violence, or leaders in that subsection of the population were selected for the direct (i.e., face-to-face) deterrence message. It was "general" deterrence in that the goal was both to deter individuals, but also to get out a general message that certain behaviors (gun violence) would be the focus of a massive prevention and response strategy.

The first step was to identify currently active people in the target problem (i.e., youth involved in a spate of gun violence Portland had just experienced). The second was to assemble them at meetings where they will be told (in no uncertain terms) that there would be a zero tolerance level for inappropriate behavior and, most importantly, that if they made the "right decisions," there would be whatever help they needed to turn around their lives. That help became institutionalized as the CBS program. The combination of the deterrence message of the STVs and the reformation message of CBS was essential in Portland. There was a consensus that both were necessary for long-term success, essential to the political unity of the Core Group; the ideological/crime control makeup of which was very broad. This approach was commonly referred to by SIT members as the "stick

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<sup>5</sup> The Portland Police Bureau's "YGAT" team (Youth Gun Anti-Violence Task Force) executed 100 search warrants and seized 439 guns from July 1998 through 2001. "Progress report: Community's Response to Youth Violence," Portland City Council Hearing, January 16, 2002, p.3.

<sup>6</sup> Deterrence theory commonly distinguishes between the "specific" deterrence (focusing on deterring specific individuals) and "general" deterrence such as a public information campaign. STACS involved the latter through a very compelling video of a funeral of a child killed by gunfire, which was set to rap music. The video was widely shown in the community and could reasonably be assumed to have been a factor in the strong community support for the STACS program. A broader general deterrence strategy using billboards and signs on public transportation was proposed, but was not adopted. For a general review and assessment of deterrence see, Nagin, Daniel S., "Criminal Deterrence Research at the Outset of the Twenty First Century," in Tonry, Michael, (ed), *Crime and Justice*, Vol. 23, University of Chicago Press, Chicago (1998), pp. 1-42.

followed by the carrot.” Deterrence through threat, followed by assistance to meet the expectations placed upon them.

There were four STV meetings for adults, two each in September and October, 1999 and 2000. Attendees were selected by an *ad hoc* working group of the SIT made up of law enforcement officers with gang and youth experience from the Portland Police Bureau, the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office, the Oregon State Police and people with similar experience from both Juvenile and Adult Community Justice (parole and probation).<sup>7</sup> Subjects attending the STV meetings were selected based on whether and to what degree meeting organizers knew them to have been active in gangs and were thought to be active in gun violence, and were leaders in their respective peer groups. In Boston, this strategy was termed “coerced use reduction.” It was based on some key findings that “...youth who kill and are killed are often known to police and probation officers, act with their fellows in groups, and tend to commit a variety of crimes, often in a rather public fashion....”<sup>8</sup>

The strategy targeted high rate offenders with “...all available legal enforcement levers....”<sup>9</sup> This included vigorous enforcement of laws, which may ordinarily not rank high enough to attract police attention, such as parking, disturbing the peace or public use of alcohol. Another part of the strategy was to communicate the message directly to the people involved through face-to-face contact with police, probation officers and other officials—essentially, to deter activity that could escalate into violence. Finally, community service providers (outreach) were mobilized to address problems which might lead to prevention. Public events, which had been trouble spots in the past or where intelligence information indicated potential trouble, were systematically covered by teams of POs, police officers, and outreach workers, and were easily identifiable.<sup>10</sup>

Forty-two subjects were identified for the Portland adult STV meetings. Parole or probation officers (POs) notified them formally of the meetings (time and location) and were advised that attendance was mandatory. Absence would be treated as a formal parole violation and treated accordingly.<sup>11</sup>

Speakers for the meetings were carefully selected after much discussion to maximize the impact of what would be said. For example, police officers well known to the attendees were selected to speak rather than higher-ranking officers that the attendees did not

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<sup>7</sup> Separate meetings were held for juveniles and also for Hispanics, but are not included here because of the difficulties of conducting research in these two groups.

<sup>8</sup> *Youth Violence in Boston....*, p. 164.

<sup>9</sup> The use of the term “lever” here is metaphorical, meaning that all means available to the authorities to monitor the activities of high risk individuals were used, consistent with norms and values of due process and constitutional procedure.

<sup>10</sup> Examples include high school athletic contests, the Rose Festival and Cinco de Mayo; in short, any event that interested people in the target population.

<sup>11</sup> Not all of the invitees were on parole or probation. One of them was arrested and sent to prison before the first meeting, leaving 41, 25 of whom actually attended one or more meetings. Those not on supervision were notified, but could not be required to attend. The fact that they were being included, with full knowledge of the purpose of the meetings, was probably a deterrent in itself. That is, there was a deterrent even if they did not attend.

necessarily know or recognize. Their demeanor was consistently stern, sometimes aggressively so, to make the point that this was something new and very serious.

Most importantly, the speakers included people from the broad range of agencies, both public and private, and the "convener" of the meetings was a very highly respected head of a community outreach organization. The purpose was to impress the attendees with the coalition that had been formed, and the degree of cooperation that would make it much more certain that any misbehavior would be noticed and acted upon thereby enhancing the credibility of the deterrent threat. Finally, the speakers crossed levels of government, a factor that later proved to be crucial. Representatives of the Multnomah County District Attorney's office and the U.S. Attorney's Office, as well as the FBI were present and spoke.

The mood of the subjects in the meeting rooms can be described as somber, albeit different from meeting-to-meeting. A deliberate decision was made by the SIT that none of the attendees would be allowed to ask any questions or make any statements. This was applied fairly rigorously at the first meeting. At the second meeting, however, the subjects in attendance were far more vocal, particularly making the point that "The wrong guys are here. We haven't been into gangs in a long time." To an onlooker, this might have had some surface validity since one of the subjects was clearly older and claimed to be married and working to support his family. Even if so, the subjects were chosen not only because they were believed to have been active recently, but also because many were known to be influential over younger people coming up through neighborhood networks. One of the October meetings had some similar feelings expressed, but with a greater degree of subject resentment. None of this was unduly disruptive or took away from the point of the meetings.<sup>12</sup> All of the meetings included outreach people who spoke regarding opportunities and assistance available to those who wanted to take advantage of them.

In sum, these were planned strictly as meetings where the message of zero tolerance for violent behavior would be delivered, along with the message that all elements of the system stood ready to help the subjects if they made good decisions. Attendees were told they were there because they had been involved or were suspected of being involved in activities connected with the spate of violence the community had experienced. They were told that they would be watched very closely and that any deviations from acceptable behavior of any kind would be dealt with immediately and emphatically.

Attendees were also told that the problems were so serious that an extraordinary step had been taken, and that was that an Assistant District Attorney had been cross-designated as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. In the future, any involvement with gun violence could result not only in state prosecution, but might also result in federal prosecution at the discretion of the cross-designated attorney's judgment depending on which jurisdiction would yield the harshest sentence. The message was explicit that the response to any gun-related

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<sup>12</sup> Later discussion indicated that the tension of the October meeting may have been caused by the fact that inadvertently, some members of rival gangs were required to attend the same meeting. This was despite great efforts to avoid having anyone cross turf to get to the meeting or creating any conditions which might reduce attendance. This meeting came the closest to getting out of hand, but the real danger was after the meeting, as subjects were leaving, not during the meeting.

behavior would remove them from the community for as long as possible. This later proved to be a crucially important facet of the deterrence message. It is notable that cross-designation is a fairly sophisticated idea, and one that might not be understood even by an audience of offenders well-versed by experience in the workings of the criminal justice system. Open-ended interviews conducted later with these people indicated not only that they understood what this means for them, but also that it was a critical factor of the meetings.

### **Community Based Strategies Initiative**

The "carrot" part of the "carrot and stick" strategy was considered so important that it was institutionalized in the STACS project through a separate working group. This was a critical part of the strategy because it gave standing and a forum for action to those who believed that a simple deterrence model with no reformative emphasis would be, at best, temporary and at worst, not work at all.

Officially, the purpose of CBS was "...to increase the health and safety of Portland's communities through practical focused strategies that address the threat and needs of high risk youthful offenders...[focusing] its efforts on the search for education, vocational training and gainful employment." Convicted offenders under supervision in the community often have numerous social and personal problems which interfere with their ability to function while under supervision and the probability of their reintegration and rehabilitation. It is important that supervisory programs address the client's social and personal needs to the extent that they affect readjustment and success (defined as the absence of future crime and the establishment and maintenance of productive citizenship). Problems which may affect attainment of these goals including alcohol and drug abuse, unemployability, domestic relations problems, lack of community ties and illiteracy.

CBS focused primarily on the following:

- **Mentoring:** Matching an offender with a person in the community very carefully selected and trained for the purpose—someone to maintain very close contact and provide a firm, guiding hand.
- **Job preparedness and access:** Not many employers are willing to hire ex-cons with serious crime records. CBS discussions with employers found that, in part, this is due to the frequent display of gang tattoos. Additionally, the lack of a driver license was a serious problem for STV participants, both because of the transportation needs to and from a job, but also because many jobs for which these individuals possess the skills require a driver license and insurance. Many of the subjects had a large mass of unpaid tickets, mostly for driving without a license before they were old enough for a license. State Motor Vehicle Division policies prohibit the issuance of a driver license when there are outstanding fines; many STV subjects had fines in the thousands of dollars.
- **Mobilizing community organizations:** This ranged from the traditional social service agencies to organizations such as the Rotary International (in Portland the Rotary has a program focusing on inner-city development).

By the fall of 1999, CBS had issued a "Call for Employment Opportunities" directed at employers. This document outlined the STACS project and the CBS initiative. It said that 10-15 individuals on probation or parole who have "...demonstrated a strong motivation to make positive changes in their lives..." had been identified by their PPO and outreach workers as "...candidates who are ready to benefit from STACS support." Each of these people would undergo an assessment with their PPO to determine their individual needs and design a plan for addressing them. Each plan would consist of three elements: (1) Education, training and support services; (2) Employment (part or full-time depending on the individual and (3) support, which would be provided by a mentor assigned to each individual. The *Call for Employment Opportunities* concluded by asking employers to accept CBS clients as employees with the assurance of the full cooperation of CBS.

The STACS project's Strategic Intervention Team and agencies working on the project had designed an RFP for an Outreach Consortium of five new juvenile outreach workers to coordinate their services with the STACS project. This new team of outreach workers began work on October 1, 1999 and was still an integral part of the Portland STACS project two years later.

### **Outcomes**

Most directly stated, this paper attempts to answer the question "what were the outcomes of the STV meetings and the CBS initiative?" Several sources of data are used to address these questions:

1. Observations of Research Team members who attended all meetings.
2. Minutes and other official documents.
3. In-depth interviews with 16 of the STV meeting attendees. These interviews were conducted in December 2000 and January 2001. A questionnaire was used with structured responses and follow-up questions by the interviewer to probe the responses.<sup>13</sup>
4. Data on criminal activity of each subject from the Portland Police Data System, the state Law Enforcement Data System and Multnomah County's Decision Support System-Justice data warehouse.
5. Interviews with key SIT and CBS members.
6. Data from Multnomah Adult Community Justice PPOs.

### **Did the STV Meetings Deter Crime?**

This question is simple enough to state, but difficult to measure. Overall, the general trend in crime during the period of the project was very positive. Drive-by shootings dropped from 168 in 1995 to 43 in 2000, a decrease of 74%.<sup>14</sup> Homicide victims age 24 or under dropped by 82% (22 to 4).<sup>15</sup> None of them involved subjects in the STACS target population.

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<sup>13</sup> The interviews were completely voluntary and only one subject declined to participate.

<sup>14</sup> "Progress Report: The Community's Response to Youth Violence," (January 16, 2002), p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

It is important to note that cause and effect is impossible to establish for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that an experimental design was not possible in principle. The principle is that this was an action project—one designed to address a particularly severe problem as defined by community consensus. If someone was thought to be involved in gun violence, it would have been ethically unacceptable, under the circumstances, to have assigned them to a control group. Also, as “targeted general deterrence,” (i.e., individuals were singled out for inclusion) there is no way to prevent or measure the general effect of the meetings. They were well-known in the community, partly because the community was so deeply involved in the process. What we can do with the data available to us is to make reasoned judgments on whether the data are consistent with the goals of the project. For example, continued gun violence and deaths would unambiguously indicate that the desired effect—an end to gun violence—was not achieved, even though the counterfactual is still there (i.e., we don’t know what would have happened in the absence of the effort to deal with the problem).<sup>16</sup> In sum, the analysis is primarily interpretive due to small sample sizes, the lack of an experimental design with a control group, the “real time” evolution of the STACS project, and because qualitative responses to questions in interviews cannot be standardized sufficiently well to avoid distortion.

### **Interview data**

To assess the effectiveness of the STV meetings, the research team gathered data by conducting interviews with 16 participants from the 41 subjects invited to the STV meetings. Every subject was an African American male. Each participant was either on parole or on probation at the time of the interviews. Twelve participants had completed a GED program, one completed the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and the remaining three subjects had completed the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The average age of the 16 participants was 23.4 years.<sup>17</sup>

Interviews were conducted in a private room at the Adult Community Justice facility and in a few cases, at the Multnomah County Inverness Jail. Researchers identified their affiliation with the STACS Project and explained their objective and the nature of the interview. Each participant signed a consent form and were told that they could terminate the interview at any point. The participants were emphatically reminded that the interviews were confidential and that their names would not be recorded on the survey instrument.<sup>18</sup> The participants’ responses were written on the interview schedule along with any follow-up inquiry. Audio and video recording devices were not utilized. The length of the interviews ranged from approximately 30 minutes to 90 minutes. The

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<sup>16</sup> Because the peer groups involved had not changed, there is no reason to believe that violence would have stopped in the absence of action. Moreover, by early 2000, offenders sentenced to prison under Oregon Ballot Measure 11 (November 1994) began to be released. Measure 11 set mandatory minimums for violent crimes beginning with five years. Separate legislation requires that Oregon prison releasees be returned to the sentencing jurisdictions. This means that they were returned to the very vulnerable communities from which they came, potentially adding to the volatility on the streets. As the first round of released prisoners under the mandatory sentences serving longer sentences than they otherwise would have, they were also thought to be extremely resentful and potentially troublesome. “Project Re-Entry” was conceived as a response. Project Re-Entry is detailed in a separate report.

<sup>17</sup> Sydney McKenzie, Research Assistant at Reed College, participated in the open-ended interviews and the analysis of the data.

<sup>18</sup> The survey instrument was a modification of one used in the Indianapolis SACS Project.

interviews were all guided by identical instruments, the length variation is indicative of how forthcoming the participants were with their responses. One subject terminated the interview and one subject who was asked, declined to participate. The participants received \$20 upon completion of the interview.

One of the compelling conclusions from these interviews is that after a year, the subjects had strong, unambiguous, and accurate memories of the STV meetings and what the message was. No probing was necessary to elicit the information; it was readily offered. When the subjects were asked, "What do you remember was the key message that was delivered at the meetings," every subject reported the key message that they heard was, "stop the violence." Every subject, except one, said that he interpreted the key message as a threat to stop the violence "or else." Most subjects understood the threat to mean tougher consequences, i.e., more prison time. Three of those subjects also interpreted the threat as a warning that they were being closely watched by police and other law enforcement agents. About 75% of subjects reported that the meetings made them aware that "other law enforcement agents" now included federal agents. The subjects interpreted the presence of the "the feds" and the idea of inter-agency cooperation as a new and potent threat. The subjects noted that they believed the meetings emphasized the role of "the feds" so that they (offenders) would take the threat of doing more time more seriously.

Over half of the subjects reported that they believed that law enforcement agencies were watching them more closely than before the offender meetings, and 83% of subjects thought that law enforcement agents were more serious (after the offender meetings) about reducing violent crime. While 70% of subjects reported that it was "easy" to get a gun illegally, only two subjects reported carrying a gun in the previous year.<sup>19</sup> One subject commented that only fools carry guns now if they do not expect to need them. He further clarified that "need them," meant a need for self-defense.

It is clear that to the extent that STV attendees are less likely to carry guns now, it is related to what they learned at the STV meetings.<sup>20</sup> This correlation is further suggested by observations made by SIT members. Police, parole and probation, and outreach workers who monitor the activities of the target population have all observed that before the STV meetings, large community events such as Cinco de Mayo and the Rose Festival were frequent occasions when gang members carried guns and serious violence resulted. Since 1998, there has been a conspicuous presence of the STV meeting attendees at these community events and illegal activities have been drastically reduced. Problems of gun related violence have also been reduced.

Inter-agency cooperation is a sophisticated notion. Initially, the research team was skeptical about the SIT's decision to make it a major point at the STV meetings. However, the subjects clearly understood how this new partnership could affect them. The original intention behind emphasizing this new local-federal cooperation was the threat that offenders would do more time if they were convicted in a federal court. Its deterrent effect is far more reaching than originally intended. In our opinion, the

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<sup>19</sup>These two respondents declined to answer the question, "have you carried a gun on the street since the first offender meeting?"

<sup>20</sup> Whether it is true that subjects were less likely to carry a gun has not been independently corroborated.

awareness and understanding of federal involvement are interpreted as a potent part of the threat the STV subjects heard at the meetings.

Paradoxically, despite awareness of the key messages of the STV meetings, the unambiguous interpretation of federal involvement as a threat and despite their belief that law enforcement is more serious now about stopping violent crime; about 80% of subjects do not think that increased surveillance and supervision by law enforcement will reduce violent crime. About 85% of subjects disagreed with the statement, "I am less likely to break the law because of the message that I heard at the offender meetings." When the subjects were asked if they thought the offender meetings would be effective to keep other attendees from committing crime, their responses were less conclusive: 44% of subjects said, "I do not know;" 21% said, "not very effective;" 14% said, "somewhat effective;" and 21% said, "effective." One possible reconciliation of this apparent conflict between the former and the latter data may be found by considering the subjects' view of law enforcement. Almost 88% of subjects reported that they had "very little" trust in police to treat them fairly, about 81% reported that they had "very little" or only "some" trust in PPOs to treat them fairly, and about 80% reported that they had "very little" trust in federal agencies to treat them fairly. The trust in institutions may explain why they did not feel less likely to commit crimes, but thought others might be. In any case, trust in law enforcement agencies was not what STACS was about. It was about respect for the threat and that seems to have been accomplished. Further, when subjects were asked who they did trust and respect, they typically named community outreach leaders, especially ministers, many of whom they mentioned by name. This suggests that the STACS strategy of including outreach in the project and, in particular, the STV meetings, was a good one; it lent credibility to the process.

Multiple subjects also stated that they believe the STV meetings were another form of the daily harassment and intimidation they experience, anyway. When the subjects were asked, "If there are more meetings like this in the future, should things be done differently at these meetings? If yes, in what way?" Several subjects suggested that the meetings should be about "helping, not harassing." One subject claimed that the negative message "made us [the attendees] feel worse." Another subject said that he did not like "to be made to feel stupid by the authorities," Another said that he "didn't like being humiliated in front of people he knew." A reasonable interpretation of the subjects' comments and concerns suggest that the subjects are very reluctant to associate any positive outcomes with the people they do not trust or with people they believe are only there to harass, intimidate and threaten them. None of this is surprising.

When asked for their own suggestions about what they believe will reduce violent crime, most STV subjects responded: provide constructive activities and community programs, provide good-paying jobs, and build trust with law enforcement. The subjects expressed concern for younger kids in their neighborhoods and expressed a belief that these kids would be helped not only by programs and activities, but also if they are given "hope" and "shown how to make changes." Not one subject said that he believed that deterrence measures would reduce violent crime or positively affect youthful offenders. When the subjects were asked about their future, every subject, except one, expressed it optimistically. Every subject, except one, said that he would remain crime-free over the next few years. Even though, at the time of the interviews, only one subject was

employed full-time, seven were working part-time, and eight were unemployed. Every subject, except one, said that he believed that his chances of finding a good job within the next few years was either, "very good" or "good." The subjects' optimism about finding gainful employment may be attributed to the fact that 100% of them believe that their chances of finishing their education are either "very good" or "good."

The interviews suggest that STV attendees do not see the future of a life of crime and that they have a desire for change and improvement. However, the subjects do not appear to have realistic ideas about how to change or what kinds of changes need to be made. Not one subject viewed change endogenously, rather the subjects expressed change as a product of exogenous factors like getting a good job, finishing their education, finding a better place to live, receiving respect from law enforcement, and staying out of prison. This may be interpreted as the subjects' denial of his personal accountability. They perceive outcomes as a product of exogenous actors (law enforcement, etc.). This belief further denies their individual volition, instead reinforcing their perceived lack of power to make choices and perpetuating their debilitating behavior. At least one Portland job program, Better People, uses a technique called "Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) to address the problem of denial of personal responsibility for problems.

When asked if anyone at the STV meetings stuck in their minds, a frequent response was "the feds." On probing, they explained that they understood the message of inter-agency cooperation, that this was new and was a threat to them particularly in regard to the cross-designated Deputy District Attorney. The original idea in STACS was that this would send a message of "more prison time" if the case was prosecuted in a federal court. But more importantly, interviews revealed that the deterrent effect was the fear of spending time in a prison far away from Oregon where they would not have the security of serving time with their peers from Portland and would effectively be a "little fish in a very big pond." Other parts of the STACS research program<sup>21</sup> showed that the target population of the STACS project was overwhelmingly "home grown." That is, they were either born in Oregon or had been living in Oregon for a considerable period of time. Their roots were well-established and they were dependent upon their peer support groups and knew the value of these support systems. Further, the interview subjects recognized that this support would be lost in a federal institution. In our opinion, this was a critical part of any deterrent effect the STV meetings had.

In addition to the effect this may have had on crime, it also appears to have had the effect of causing subjects to stop carrying weapons. When asked if they personally owned a gun, they often answered affirmatively. When asked if they carried guns, they responded that only fools carry guns if they do not expect to need them, and that they would not do so unless there was an expectation of a need for self-defense.

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<sup>21</sup> Highly structured interviews were supervised by Lyman Louis, and conducted by Louis, Stefan Kapsch, Jamee Foster, Steven Seal and Jared Pruitt analyzed by Kathryn Oleson and are reported separately. These interviews were part of a much larger target population assembled purely for research purposes. Of the original 42 invitees, 25 are listed in DSS-J as born in Oregon. Places of birth of 12 were unknown and only one was listed as born in California.

Can we establish a cause and effect relationship between the STV meetings and these conclusions? No, we cannot, at least not definitively. What we can say is that the boy," although a few had no records at all.<sup>22</sup> Most had extensive records of misbehavior, but nothing under Measure 11 despite the fact that all were under intense scrutiny.<sup>23</sup> interviews we conducted in December 2000 and January 2001; the interviews we conducted with STACS members (both of which are self-reported data) and the observations of the Research Team all coincide. We feel very comfortable, on the basis of this information, in concluding that: (1) The STV meetings made a strong and accurate (i.e., consistent with what was intended) impression on the STV attendees; (2) These impressions included notions of the possibility of federal prosecution and incarceration far away and that this was strongly negative; and (3) that while they still owned guns, they did not "pack" them without a strong self-defense reason.

### **Criminal History and Parole and Probation Surveys**

Table 1 below summarizes the data gathered from two sources: The state (LEDS) local (PPDS) and County (DSS-J) data systems. The Outcome dimension is an ordinal scale divided into five outcome types as noted below the table.

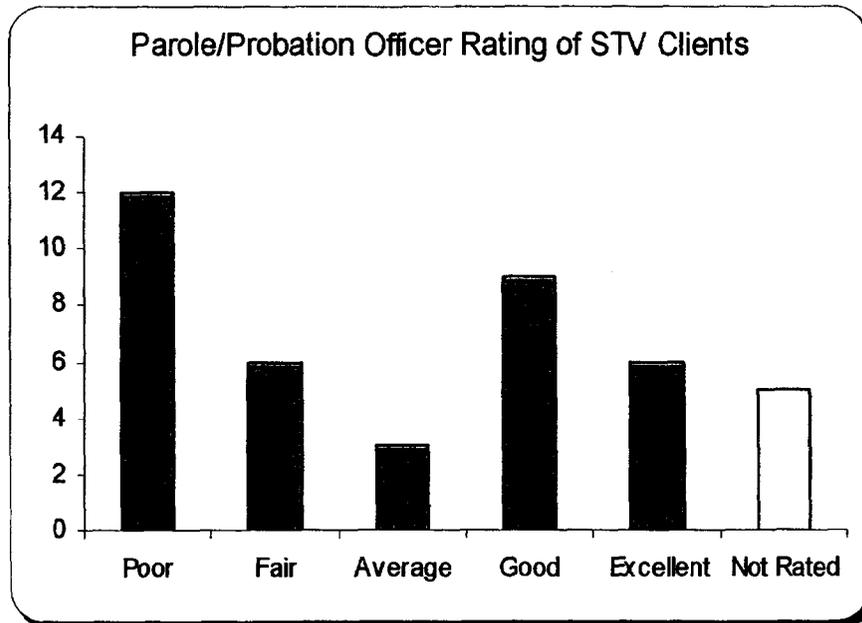
For each subject, the date of the first serious offense was recorded, and then classified according to this scale. Measure 11 was used as a convenient measure because it is based on the most serious crimes.<sup>24</sup> A Type 5 offender, for example, does not mean a "choir

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<sup>22</sup> It was not uncommon for PPOs to use short jail time or work camps for disciplinary or control purposes or even protective purposes, thus decreasing chances for misbehavior and arrest.

<sup>23</sup> False negatives are a possibility. That is, it is possible that subjects were engaging in serious misconduct and were simply not caught. The fact that there were being watched closely, were subject to unannounced home visits by PPOs and police, etc., makes false negatives less likely.

<sup>24</sup> Measure 11 crimes which occurred in this sample of subjects included Robbery I, Assault I and II. There were no instances of the Measure 11 sex crimes, murder or manslaughter. There were arrests, but charges were dropped for various reasons, usually failure to appear by witnesses or acquittals. Extensive drug offense records were not unusual, as well as misdemeanor assault, driving offenses, etc.



**Figure 8: Parole officer rating of Stop the Violence meeting attendees**

boy,” although a few had no records at all.<sup>23</sup> Most had extensive records of misbehavior, but nothing under Measure 11 despite the fact that all were under intense scrutiny.<sup>24</sup>

The parole and probation ratings were obtained by surveying the POs assigned to the subjects in March 2001 (Figure 8). Since not all the STV subjects were on supervision, not all of them have PO ratings. Arrests, charges, bookings or convictions are counted, unless they are dismissed or acquitted. PPOs were asked to rate each of their clients, exercising their own professional judgment based on their direct experience with them. This also is a crude ordinal scale ranging from “bad to better” as listed after the table below.

From the start, it was recognized that the subjects in this project were “the worst of the worst” and that, therefore, it was important to keep some perspective on what kinds of outcomes could be reasonably expected. Obviously, the most important was to stop deaths by gun violence in this age group, either as the offender (i.e., shooter) or the victim. On that score, STACS was undoubtedly successful: there were no deaths due to gun violence among the subjects from September 22, 1999 (the first STV meeting) through 2001.

Eight of the 41 subjects (20%) were “Type 1” –that is, they had a record of a Measure 11 offense with a firearm. One occurred within days of the first meeting (October 1, 1999)

<sup>25</sup> It was not uncommon for PPOs to use short jail time or work camps for disciplinary or control purposes or even protective purposes, thus decreasing chances for misbehavior and arrest.

<sup>26</sup> False negatives are a possibility. That is, it is possible that subjects were engaging in serious misconduct and were simply not caught. The fact that they were being watched closely, were subject to unannounced home visits by PPOs and police, etc., makes false negatives less likely.

and another a month later. The next was four months after the meetings, then six, then 11 and the others were all a year or more. This means that within one year, five of the 41 had a Type 1 outcome. How much of a failure is this overall? This is a matter of judgment, perhaps best made by the SIT itself. Eight of 41 subjects seems low, especially since there were no gun-related deaths or offenses among this population for more than three years after the initial STV meetings. By that measure, the most important goal was achieved—everything else, including the eight Type I events, is on a lesser scale.

Looking at Table 1, there is also a rough correlation between the PO ratings and the criminal history outcomes. A perfect relationship would put all of them on the diagonal from the upper left corner to the lower right. For this purpose, the lower left cell does not count since PPOs did not rate these people. Moreover, the first two cells of Outcome Type 4 are instances where the criminal history was better than the expectations of the POs.<sup>27</sup> Type 4 includes weapons, usually but not always, a firearm. These were weapon offenses that were crimes against statute such as felon in possession or attempted illegal purchase of a firearm rather than use of a firearm. Moreover, more than half of the subjects (54%) were Outcome Type 5, meaning that their records showed no instances of Measure 11 offenses or weapon offenses of any kind.

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<sup>27</sup> It needs to be noted that this could also be differences in the ratings by different POs. They were asked to rate the subjects based upon what they normally expect of offenders like them.

**Table 1: PO Performance Rating (1/15/01) by Criminal History Outcome**

	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 1</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 2</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 3</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 4</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 5 26</b>
<b>PO-1</b>	4/02/00 11/01/99 1/17/01 10/01/99			11/16/01 5/12/01 10/06/00	5
<b>PO-2</b>	1/22/00		6/01/01	5/26/01	3
<b>PO-3</b>			6/15/00		2
<b>PO-4</b>			11/04/01	1/13/90	7
<b>PO-5</b>				11/08/99	5
<b>NOS/ No Rec.</b>	10/18/01 8/15/00 12/22/00				2
<b>Totals</b>	8	0	3	6	24

**PO Performance ratings:**

- 1= Poor (in prison or jail on new charges, failure to report)
- 2= Fair (possibly "in the mix," but making minimal effort to change)
- 3= Average (typical client)
- 4= Good (making some effort to improve but still gray areas in behavior)
- 5= Excellent (working, reporting, not in the mix, etc.)

**Outcome Types (arrest, charge, or conviction):**

- 1= Any Measure 11 offense with a firearm
- 2= Any Measure 11 offense with a weapon other than firearm
- 3= Any Measure 11 offense with no weapon
- 4= Any weapon offense, including felon is possession
- 5= No record of measure 11 or weapons offenses

**Table 2: Outcome by Time Periods**

	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 1</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 2</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 3</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 4</b>	<b>OUTCOME TYPE 5</b>
<b>1 month or less</b>	10/01/99			10/06/00	NA
<b>1-2 months</b>	11/01/99			11/08/99	NA
<b>3-4 months</b>	1/22/00				NA
<b>5-6 months</b>	4/02/00			1/13/00	NA
<b>7-12 months</b>	8/15/00		6/15/00		NA
<b>13 months or more</b>	12/22/00 1/17/01 10/18/01		6/01/01 11/04/01	5/12/01 5/26/01 11/16/01	NA
<b>Totals</b>	8	0	3	6	24

**Outcomes of the CBS Initiative**

The outcomes of the CBS initiative are much more difficult to assess in terms of numbers of people who were actually served during this time period. We can say for sure that: (a) a tattoo removal facility was established through the work of CBS at Emmanuel Hospital in NE Portland; (b) a driver license renewal program was established; and (c) significant effort and some progress was achieved in finding jobs or educational programs for STV subjects.

Rigorous outcome evaluation is not possible because the CBS program developed later than other aspects of STACS for very good reasons. One was that the deterrence part of the strategy was most pressing— the need was to stop the violence, *then* deal with its presumed causes or prevention. Another was that a principal player in both the STV aspects of the project and CBS was adult and juvenile parole and probation, which was stretched very thin since their participation was with existing personnel rather than new personnel.<sup>28</sup> The CBS initiative was primarily the effort of parole and probation, plus private agencies already working in the field of youth development and employment. CBS was a remarkable achievement given the combination of people already working on other aspects of STACS (parole and probation) and private agencies which are

<sup>28</sup> This is true for all participants in the STACS project. The Project coordinator working out of the Office of the U.S. Attorney was the one agency FTE dedicated entirely to STACS. Others worked on STACS in addition to their normal duties.

perennially strapped for resources. Finally, some of the CBS programs required cooperation of other agencies, such as Emmanuel Hospital in the tattoo removal program, and the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

### **The Driver License Renewal Program**

Despite a nationally known public transportation system, finding a job that does not require private transportation is very difficult in Portland. Moreover, many jobs which might be available to subjects were also jobs that required a valid driver license.<sup>29</sup> Investigation by CBS showed that while sometimes the reasons for the lack of a driver license were serious (e.g., DWS), they were also very often due to a collection of unpaid fines for citations for driving without a license that were acquired while the subject was a juvenile too young for a license. However improper, these were “joy riding” citations which over time added up to considerable amounts of money—too much for the subjects to pay at once. However, state DMV rules prohibited the issuance of a driver license to anyone with unpaid fines. Thus, the subjects were in the position of needing a job to pay off the fines, and needing to pay off the fines in order to get a job. Moving a state agency to change its rules for reasons other than its mission is a tremendous achievement, as well as an illustration of the fact that the STACS project really did engender cooperation across multiple agencies and levels of government. Program participants had payment plans for accumulated traffic fines, which restored driving privileges under court supervision. In addition, CBS worked on job readiness, mentoring and on incorporating STACS clients in urban programs of the Rotary International.

### **The Tattoo Removal Program**

CBS also found that gang-related tattoos could be an impediment to employment since employers found them objectionable and potentially disruptive on the job. The technology for tattoo removal exists, but was not available and accessible in Portland. CBS worked to establish this service at Emmanuel Hospital, which is convenient to where the target population resides. We have included no assessment of whether subjects are taking advantage of the opportunity to remove tattoos because this has recently become operational.

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<sup>29</sup> For example, one subject who had been formally trained in prison as a janitor applied for a position for which he was well-qualified. However, the position required a driver license in order to be able to assist in moving furniture around the employer’s complex, which also required some driving on city streets. The driving may not be central to the job to require a license.

### **Section 3: Open-Ended Interviews**

Initially designed to give the Research Team a better understanding of the target population, the open-ended interviews were prompted by a conversation with David Kennedy of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. As part of his work with the Boston Gun Project, Kennedy had a handful of open-ended interviews with gang members. In retrospect, Kennedy indicated that these were probably the most useful aspect of his work there in terms of understanding the population he was studying.

Three interviewers had sessions with 13 offenders who were part of the target population and were also suggested as subjects by their PPOs. The participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to discuss the material in a confidential setting, as well as their backgrounds in violent crime and/or gang activities. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality and given \$20 to spend a minimum of 60 minutes with a researcher to discuss subjects ranging from home life and personal issues, to police contacts, gangs, drugs and guns.

The information we sought from these interviews was general. We outlined several specific topics we wanted to address including education, employment, relationships with police, relationships with PPOs, gangs and associations, family, violence, drugs and alcohol, neighborhood issues, and any community outreach service providers they had contact with. Participants were guaranteed anonymity because of the extremely sensitive nature of the information they were asked to provide. While non-structured, the interviewers strove to lead the participants through the topics by questioning based on previous answers. This was an attempt to get at information we sought while maximizing the subjects' comfort level by minimizing the potential for feelings of manipulation. For example, if a subject was discussing family issues and happened to mention a neighborhood issue, that opportunity would be used to open the door to other neighborhood topics. If an issue was never raised, the interviewer would prompt it by interjecting at an appropriate time, or by directly questioning the subject. The topics and questions were extremely sensitive, even incriminating.

In a general way, these interviews were enormously informative. While anecdotal, the information gathered strongly guided the remainder of our work. When given the opportunity, the subjects were eager to discuss their lives and their experiences in gangs. It is the consensus of the interviewers (and in his experience, David Kennedy agreed with the assessment) that these youth rarely have the opportunity to discuss their lives and concerns with people under circumstances where they had some confidence in the guarantee of confidentiality. The opportunity to "open up" is a rare and welcome one. What follows is a topical review of the interviews.

#### **Violence**

According to our open-ended interview subjects, shootings in this population are rarely the result of turf wars or other competitive issues. Rather they tend to fall into two categories: disrespect and girls. In the Portland experience, the latter is more transparent and many occasions arose in SIT meetings where shootings being analyzed included

lengthy conversations about the girls being dated by the shooter and victim or intended victim. However, for our interview subjects, the issue of disrespect came up more frequently. Respect for these individuals came from their reputation for violence. One subject referred to other gang members by name stating “s/he’s got a lot of stripes,” indicating a reputation for shooting or fighting another gang member.<sup>30</sup> There was also a strong indication of the need for mutual respect. If respect is shown, respect will be given. In particular, if you are in an opposing gang neighborhood and wear your gang’s colors openly, it is a problem. If you cover-up, you will likely not have any difficulties with the opposing gang.

Since respect is a critical issue in gang violence, it is important to intervene at events where large groups of opposing gang members might congregate (e.g., concerts, high school sporting events, etc.). The SIT made an early decision to saturate similar events with POs, police officers and outreach workers. While many of our subjects stated they avoided these types of events. Many who acknowledged ongoing gang affiliations, stated that this presence—and in particular, the presence of outreach workers—was definitely a calming one.

### **Guns and Gun Markets**

Most of the subjects denied having guns at the time of the interview. Since they were under supervision at the time, possession would be a serious violation of the terms of their parole and could result in revocation, so this was expected. However, at least three of the subjects indicated that they did currently own a gun and all of the subjects indicated they could get a gun for \$50 or less in 5-10 minutes should they need one. One subject indicated that guns were much harder to get now since his supplier had gone to prison for 10 years. In his case, that meant waiting a few more minutes to get what he wanted.

Guns are often purchased, but just as often subjects indicated, they could “borrow” whatever they needed. Some referred to their sources as street dealers, but others relied on other gang members who “found” them in the process of robbing homes or cars. None of the subjects had been to a gun show, though most had heard of them. More common were “hook-ups” where a relative, friend or friend of a friend provided the needed weapon. In most cases, they could get the gun they desired, but in some cases, would settle for other types. At least one subject mentioned the use of straw purchasers as a source for new guns. The most desirable guns were 9mm or .45s, but .380s, .357s, .38s, and other “big handguns” were also popular. That said, .22s and .25s are by far the most common weapons on the street according to the open-ended interview subjects. Prices were consistently given as \$50-\$100 for most, though a “clean” gun—that is, one that had never been used in a crime—came at a substantially higher price. Gun disposal is typically by dumping in the river. However, one subject stated that those guns were easily found and indicated a strong preference for burying his guns in the woods somewhere.

For all subjects, the mood “on the streets” was the greatest factor in the decision to have or carry a gun. Protection and self-defense were common issues in the decision-making

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<sup>30</sup> Quotes are taken directly from interviewer’s notes.

process. One subject indicated that he'd rather not go outside if he thought he would need a gun. While the self-defense position is probably self-serving, it is also consistent with information from other jurisdictions in the SACSI project, especially Boston.

Two of the subjects indicated a strong preference for knives over guns. In part, this was a personal preference, but these and other subjects also indicated that carrying knives was commonplace and one even indicated they were carrying their knife during the interview. Knives were considered an even higher priority weapon since they were useful in fights and did not carry the consequences of guns, including Measure 11 or federal charges.

All of the subjects had knowledge of Measure 11 and the strong possibility of prosecution under federal charges. This was considered a strong deterrent to carrying guns by each subject and they indicated that this was an opinion generally shared on the street. While Measure 11 was seen as a strong deterrent, there was also a near universal opinion that Measure 11 had done more harm than good pushing many to more violent crimes. As one subject stated, "if you're going to go away to prison for a long time, might as well have done something really bad." The collaboration between the federal and state prosecutors was something that was feared, since time in federal prison was a much worse prospect than state time. (While not specifically referred to, this is likely because of the notable absence of friends in the federal system creating a clear absence of alliances going in.)

#### **Relationship to Police and Parole Officers**

Several of the subjects had only been assigned to their current PO for a few weeks and thus, their judgment was reserved. This was in part due to the recent release from prison of a couple of the subjects. However, others who had been out for a year or two also indicated frequent changes in their POs. This may point to the need for more consistency in the PO caseload so stronger relationships can be developed.

Where comments were forthcoming, most subjects indicated an acknowledgement of the role of the PO. That is, both PO and subject have jobs to do and the PO is there to help the subject stay out of prison. Others, however, felt that there was an adverse relationship and that POs are "just there to lock you up—that's their motivation." Still others spoke highly about specific POs with whom they had worked. Many spoke of specific conversations as having been particularly useful. Others indicated that referring for jobs, giving rides to interviews or to school, and other "helping hand" sorts of activities, were strong indicators of the actual interest of the PO in their lives.

Police officers were seen in a similar light. That is, while there is a decided adversarial relationship, officers were generally seen as just doing their job. One subject stated, "they're just doing their jobs. Most are real cool except for a couple who are real assholes." Another stated that while he used to think of all police as "pigs," over time he had come to see them as doing a good job of controlling the crime in his neighborhood. Another subject commented that, "eight times out of ten, the guy [being stopped] has done something he shouldn't have been doing" and does not believe that police behavior is part of the problem.

However, one subject indicated that police are a serious part of the problem. While the subject's motivation may come into question, this individual indicated that the primary incentive for police is to "lock them up" (meaning gang members). Another subject saw interactions with the police as personal: "they don't like me." Still another indicated a lack of trust for the police because they had beaten his uncle unnecessarily. Yet another saw a distinction between most police officers and the Youth Gun Anti-Violence Task Force (YGAT) officers. It was no surprise that this subject thought that most officers, who generally leave him alone, were much better than the YGAT officers who stopped and frisked him at every opportunity.

### **Alcohol, Drugs and Drug Dealing**

From the outset, the STACS Core Group was particularly interested in the relationship between alcohol use and violence in the target population. Each of the subjects of the open-ended interviews were asked specifically about their alcohol use and their perceptions of its relationship to violence. One subject was extremely forthcoming regarding this relationship stating, "people get killed *over* drugs, but get killed *because* of alcohol."<sup>31</sup> That is, the issue may start because of a real beef between shooter and victim, but the use of alcohol emboldens the shooter due to a reduction in judgment. This same subject estimated that alcohol is involved in at least 75% of all gang shootings. While other subjects echoed this sentiment, it was not universal. For example, one interviewee indicated that alcohol and drugs would never be used before a shooting since you'd need to be sharp and alert, not only to carry out your business, but also to ensure flight afterward.

Alcohol and drugs may also be indirectly related to many instances of "dissing" (disrespecting), which then leads to shootings. The relaxed inhibitions induced by alcohol at a party where rival gang members are present, more easily lead to perceived honor offenses and potentially to gunplay. Many times this disrespect is not a direct "person-to-person" offense. For example, attempts to capture the attention of a rival's girlfriend are a key factor in many shootings.

Accessibility to alcohol was not an issue for any of our subjects. All indicated that most convenience stores in their neighborhoods do not check for identification. If identification is requested, a return with more friends either provides sufficient intimidation to sway the clerk or, more likely, will provide adequate distraction so that a quick theft will obtain the beer or wine of choice. Since liquor stores are professionally operated and closely regulated, liquor is rarely available and beer seems to be the beverage of choice. A notable exception to the convenience stores which fail to request identification, are those stores owned and operated by Asians. Many of our subjects commented that youth attempting to purchase alcohol will avoid Asian-owned stores since "they always card you." While speculative only, one possible explanation is the family-owned and operated factor that is more prevalent in Asian owned businesses. There is less staff turnover and training only has to be done once. Families depend heavily on the income their stores provide and they guard that capacity carefully.

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<sup>31</sup> Emphasis is the subject's.

While many of the subjects had sold drugs, most indicated they either did not use at all or only used marijuana. Many indicated they had parents who used "hard" drugs and that they did not want to emulate that behavior. However, the sale of drugs was another issue. Most sold while in their neighborhood or nearby, strictly to raise money. One subject indicated that since jobs were scarce in the "hood," the best way to raise money was dealing; up to \$2,000 per day could be raised selling drugs compared to "an \$8 an hour job that you won't get anyway." One subject was upset with his PO because he was not being allowed to visit or live with his mother since she was a heroin user and he had been arrested for selling drugs.

### **Gang Associations**

For nearly all of our subjects, gang membership was typically obtained through a relative (older sibling or cousin being most often mentioned) or friend. No initiation was mentioned and getting out of gangs was just as easy as getting in for most subjects. One subject, who had previously sworn allegiance to the Bloods, started wearing the opposing Crips color of blue. According to this subject, this was seen not as a change of gangs, but a denouncing of gang life altogether.

Another subject related the need to belong to a gang, if your friends became gang members. While staying friends is possible, the level of trust for a friend's fellow gang members is impossible to earn. This subject related a story where, being a non-gang member, a friend's fellow gang members pulled "15 guns" on the subject because they thought the subject was relating information to the police or a rival gang about them. This terminated the friendship and avoidance of these gang members became crucial. (It is important to restate that many subject statements must be seen as self-serving. This particular subject was known to POs and police as an active gang member, so his denials are not plausible. Still, the story recalls how much pressure is felt by the subjects to participate rather than remain an outsider.) For one subject, just living in a specific area made them gang affiliated. "Even my grandmother is in a gang since she lives on that block."

For many subjects, the discussion of past gang life was unpleasant. While involved in gangs as youngsters, that lifestyle was seen as the reason for their current problems with law enforcement and they did not want to return to those days. This was clearly pointed out by one interviewee who said it is better to think of us as "rejects of society" as opposed to gang members. This subject also denied the ability of getting out of a gang without moving from the neighborhood: "How can you get out, if you never wanted to get in?" For this subject, joining and leaving a gang are not clear decisions.

In stark contrast to the bulk of the interviewees, stood a parole transfer from a large out of state metropolitan area. As a member of the Gangster Disciples, this subject indicated that gang membership is a lifelong decision. It is not as simple for this subject as it is for the "naive" Portland gangsters. While not forthcoming about the requirements to join, the term being "blessed in" was used frequently in this context. "Once a Gangster Disciple, always a Gangster Disciple." For this subject, the notion of gang affiliation as a childhood phase, was literally laughable.

## **Outreach Workers**

It has been stated elsewhere that outreach workers are seen as hugely helpful in reducing tensions on the street after shootings. They are known by the subjects to have helped prevent retaliation shootings. While many of the subjects did not know any outreach workers by name, many talked, in general, about people who were on the streets helping to "keep things cool." Outreach also provides for alternatives to the boredom frequently associated with gang life. "They take you places and try to get you to do the right thing."

While most of these comments were non-specific, at least one subject went on at lengths about a well-known local outreach worker. "He's my father. We call him the Ghetto Jesus...Black Jesus." While not the subject's biological father, the sentiment shows just how effective and persuasive these workers can be on this population. This person continued to say, "some people are so numb...are mentally dead...you've done so much that you cannot go anywhere," and need outreach to show you what you could become. "I never wanted any of this...this [is because] of what your parents left you...grief, poverty, suffering." For this subject, outreach, in general, and this outreach worker, in particular, provided "a light out."

## **Other Topics**

All of the interviewees saw education as a viable alternative to gangs. With an education, employment opportunities would be better and "cooler." Two of the subjects were currently in high school and straight-A students (verified by their POs). Family was critically important to everyone though the composition of family varied dramatically. Nevertheless, mothers and grandmothers were most often mentioned as highly influential in the lives of these subjects. Employment goals were many and varied. Several of the subjects had aspirations toward a career in music or creative writing. At least two had written extensively while in prison and were hopeful of translating those writings into some sort of career. While work is seen as important, many restrictions on the willingness of subjects to conform to "traditional" work relationships were apparent. For example, showing up based on a set schedule was "impossible" for one, while others thought working downtown would be nice because the people there "dress cool." One subject expressed great interest in becoming an attorney because "they sit around all day and dress cool."

When asked about money goals, one subject waffled. The first response was \$5,000 per month would be enough. The subject had previously indicated an interest in working with kids, possibly as a mentor. When it was pointed out that employment such as that was not financially rewarding, the subject reversed himself and stated that "\$3,000 or even \$2,000 a month would be okay." As the subject was pressed further on this point, he stated that mostly he didn't want to have to spend too much time worrying about bills and to be able to take care of his family.

A recurring theme was the boredom that often precipitates shootings and other acts of violence. For these subjects, the most important thing that could reduce violent behavior was to give the kids something to do as an alternative. "Get 'em playing ball," said one.

“All I saw when I was young, was drugs and all that. Let them see more. All they see is the hood everyday. Young kids these days got it hard.”

In a general way, these interviews were hugely informative. While anecdotal, the information gathered strongly guided the remainder of our work.

## **Section 4: The Offender Target Population Data Base (PPO Survey)**

There were two identified target populations for the STACS project hereafter delineated as research and intervention. The research target population was defined as those individuals living in Multnomah County<sup>32</sup> who were between the ages of 15 and 24 years old and who had committed a violent act or were believed to be at a high risk for committing a violent act. The purpose in identifying the research target population was to provide a research population base for the surveys to be conducted later in the project. The intervention target population was separately identified for specific interventions discussed elsewhere (Section 2: Stop the Violence Evaluation).

Identification of the research target population was done through a survey of Multnomah County parole and probation officers (hereafter, PPOs). It was recognized that this method would not be absolutely inclusive (i.e., that some true positives would be overlooked), but there was a need to cast the widest possible net in the shortest, reasonable period of time.

The survey of all Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) and Multnomah County Community Justice parole and probation officers (PPOs) was completed in August and September of 1999. An 80% return yielded an initial research target population in excess of 1,100 who were either convicted of violent offenses or were at risk, in the judgment of the PPOs, of committing a future violent offense. This was reduced to 458 individuals who met the STACS age criterion of 15-24 years, thus producing the final research target population.

This research target population then became the groundwork for our open-ended interviews and two surveys (Sections 3 and 6 respectively). No interventions were specifically directed at this target population and at least one effort included narrowing the 458 to a more manageable number by identifying those who had been arrested more than once in the previous six months.<sup>33</sup>

Independently, the intervention target population was established by a cooperative effort of the Portland Police, Multnomah County parole and probation officers, and Oregon Youth Authority parole and probation officers. Selection was based on the perceptions of the professionals to the level of gang involvement of their clients and the likelihood of their participation in some specific recent events.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> While the actual address of the subjects was not specifically limited to being either to Portland or Multnomah County, in fact, the target population was almost exclusively located within these jurisdictions.

<sup>33</sup> Thirty-six members of the target population had been arrested more than once during the previous 12 months. The SIT made no specific effort to intervene with this sub-population.

<sup>34</sup> Many of the intervention target population did not meet the definition of the STACS population based on their ages. However, these individuals were selected because of their potential influence on younger gang members.

## Section 5: Evaluation: Project Re-Entry

Beginning in September 1999, the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ) began Project Re-Entry (PRE) as a function of their Gang Unit. Headed up by Supervisor Kate Desmond, the primary function was to extend the deterrent effect of prison on recently released offenders.

One Gang Unit parole officer (PO) would be assigned to PRE and given the following specific tasks:

1. Review Oregon Department of Corrections rosters of impending prisoner releases to Multnomah County and identify gang members;
2. Visit prisoners scheduled for release while still in the institution and establish a release plan with them including:
  - a. housing and family support system
  - b. employment and/or educational opportunities
  - c. supervision and court ordered restrictions
  - d. expectations and requirements upon release
  - e. need for and availability of special needs requirements (e.g., mental health, sex offender status, special programs);
3. Home visit with family prior to prisoner release;
4. Home visit with prisoner and family after prisoner's release, with a police officer when available;
5. Provide assistance to assigned PO in establishing and working the release plan.

All offenders assigned to PRE have an admitted or documented gang affiliation.

As of mid-2001, PRE had interviewed 86 clients according to the standards listed above. This report seeks to (1) assess the outcomes of this program in reducing the level of recidivism among this group of offenders and (2) offers suggestions for improvement of the program.

PRE was intended as a minimal cost intervention (1.0 FTE) that would let released offenders know that the level of gang activity acceptable in the community is significantly less than was acceptable when the prisoner was initially incarcerated. Many of the clients interviewed had been the first sentenced under Oregon's strict mandatory minimum sentencing requirements (Measure 11). Multnomah County had successfully prosecuted several gang members under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act (18 U.S.C. 1961 *et seq.*) and the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Project (STACS), a youth gun violence reduction effort based on the Boston Gun Project,<sup>35</sup> had combined the forces of federal, state and local law enforcement officials. In addition to strategic interventions designed and implemented by

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<sup>35</sup> David M. Kennedy, Anne M. Piehl, and Anthony A. Braga, "Youth Violence in Boston: Gun Markets, Serious Youth Offenders, and a Use-Reduction Strategy." *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol. 59, Winter 1996, pp. 147-196.

this broad based coalition, a Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney had been cross-designated and could, at his own discretion, take any offender as a federal case.<sup>36</sup>

For purposes of comparison, parole and post-prison supervision recidivism across the Multnomah County Community Justice system for the first-half of 2001 was 31%.<sup>37</sup> (Note that these comparison data are from the 1998 cohort and assume the definition of recidivism as any felony conviction from first release tracking for three years post release. One and two year recidivism measures are 15.3% and 25.9%, respectively for the same cohort.)

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<sup>36</sup> While a cross-designated prosecuting attorney is not unique, one that is both cross-designated and assigned primarily to youth gun cases is a Multnomah County and STACS project innovation. During the first two years of this project, there were approximately 35 cases that could have been prosecuted as state charges, that instead were prosecuted as federal by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office.

<sup>37</sup> Conversation with Charlene Rhyne, Senior Research and Evaluation Analyst, Multnomah County Department of Community Justice.

## Outcome Types

In evaluating the outcome of the PRE model, the reasonableness of the expectations of the project were critical. It may be reasonable to assume that a gang member recently released from prison might be at a higher risk for new criminal activity than other similarly situated offenders might. Project Re-Entry strives to minimize that propensity. Instead of expecting perfect behavior, a more reasonable standard of no violent behavior was adopted. Crimes were not ignored, but for the purposes of analyzing recidivism, they were "overlooked." This is a population that no one expects to be crime-free upon release.

It must be noted that the discounting of select crimes is neither an indication of their seriousness to the community or to any victims involved. It is, however, a concession—or a lowered expectation—that previously gang involved ex-convicts are unlikely to be crime-free on initial release. Further, it is unlikely that a limited contact program like Project Re-Entry will have a significant impact on overall criminality. While the ideal goal would be that all recently released prisoners would remain crime-free indefinitely, it is a more realistic goal that these gang-involved prisoners (a) do not commit violent crimes, (b) remain "out-of-the-mix" in terms of gang activities and (c) are not otherwise revoked for failure to meet the terms of their parole.

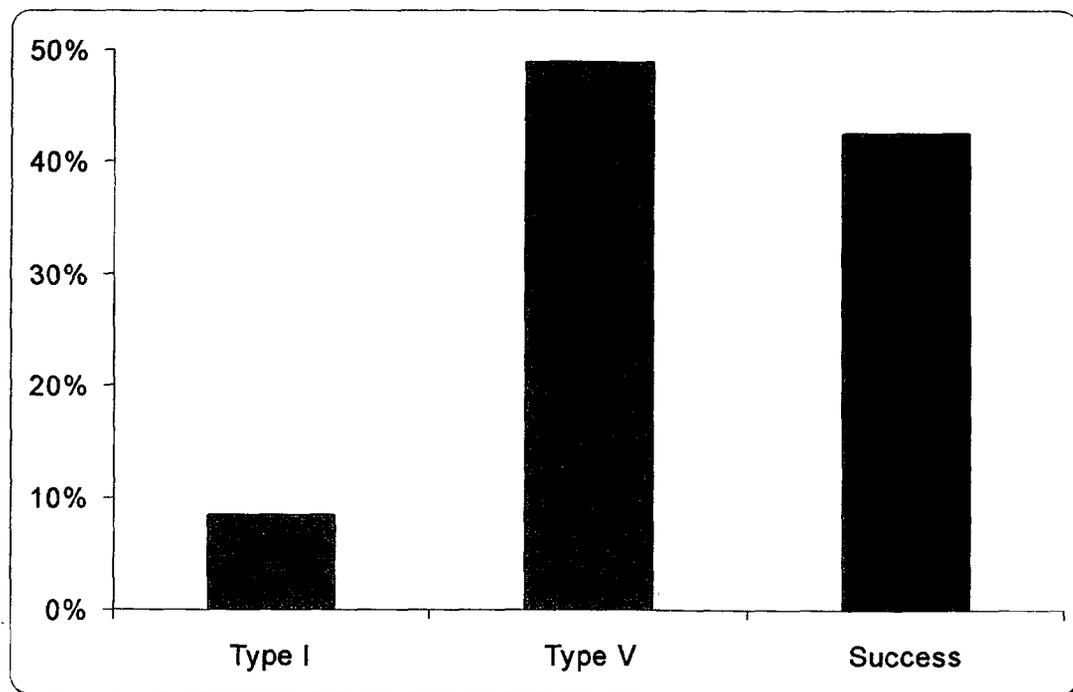
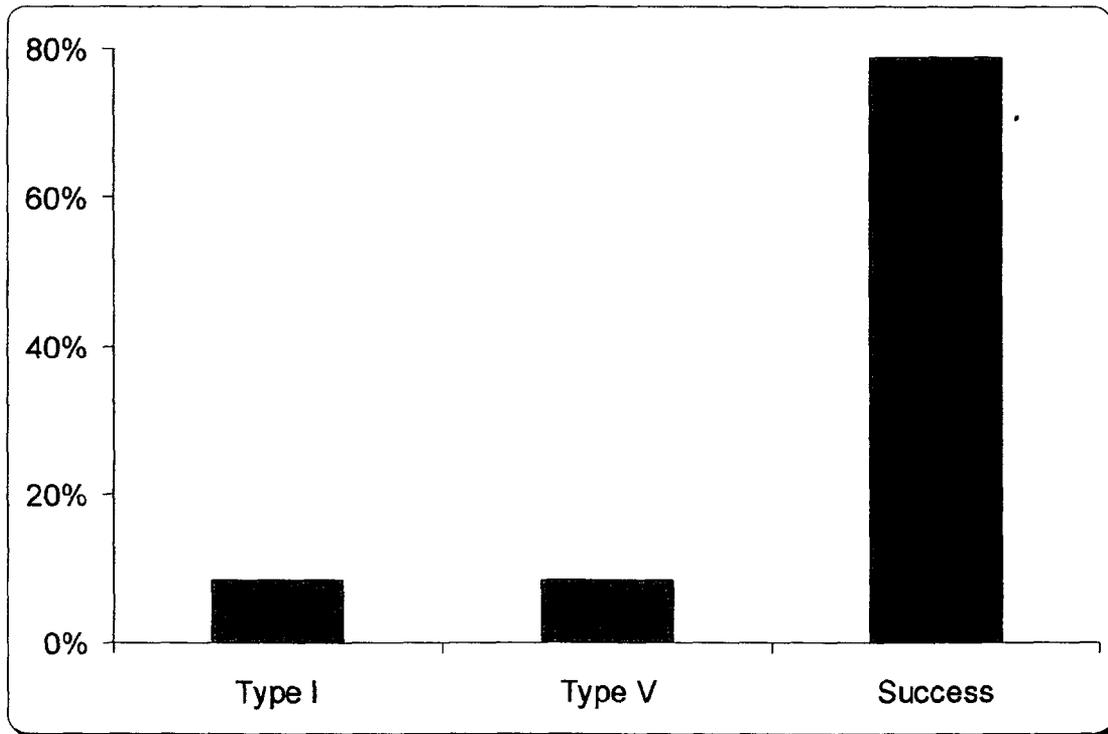


Figure 9: Recidivism by failure type; first failure only



**Figure 10: Recidivism by outcome type; first outcome only; discounting specific, minor crimes within first 180 days**

In Multnomah County, the transition issue is aggravated by the existence of Ballot Measure 11, a mandatory minimum sentencing law for offenders convicted of violent crimes. While well intentioned, one unintended consequence was the joint incarceration of prisoners sentenced for identical crimes with significantly differing sentences. A prisoner sentenced to 18 months prison for a robbery, might be housed with a prisoner sentenced to 70 months for a similar offense. This dichotomy is well-known to the offenders in question and many are seriously angered by the seeming unfairness of the situation.<sup>36</sup>

For PRE, outcomes are, therefore, made of slippery stuff. When examining the outcome of an individual offender, who has previously been convicted of a seriously violent crime, is it reasonable to consider an arrest for drinking in public a failure? Similarly, many of the PRE clients were convicted of other low-level offenses that constitute new crimes while not re-engaging with other gang behaviors or violent offenses. Should a PRE client who is involved in a domestic dispute and arrested for Assault IV, be considered a program failure?

<sup>36</sup> It is worth noting that the creation of a hierarchy of crimes is always problematic. In the case of Oregon's Sentencing Guidelines (SGL) for example, the crimes of Robbery and Rape 2 are, for purposes of sentencing, equivalent to some delivery of controlled substance charges. However, the existence of Measure 11 dictates the former receive sentences of 70 months in prison regardless of the offender's criminal history and the latter receives between 18 and 45 months depending on the offender's criminal history.

For the purposes of this evaluation, we have developed five outcome types to account for the relative success or failure of each client evaluated. The types indicate a willingness to consider the circumstances of each client individually rather than as an abstraction. Further, the length of time between release and failure has also been considered relevant. While a minor drug crime might be a technical failure, a minor drug crime committed within the first few days of release is a more serious failure than one that occurs after the first few months. Initially, we will look only at the first outcome.

### Outcomes

Type I includes any and all revocations. If at anytime during the first year a client's parole is revoked and they are returned to the state's Department of Corrections for additional prison time, they are considered a Type I outcome. Of the 47 clients evaluated, four had Type I outcomes within a year of release. The Type I outcomes were for attempted murder, theft, and DCS (2). An additional three clients were revoked after at least one year had passed.<sup>39</sup>

**Table 3: Type V outcome, crime types, first offense**

PCS	6
Assault IV (DV)	4
Fugitive	4
DWS	2
DCS	2
Parole Violation	2
Disorderly Conduct	1
DCS w/in 1000	1
Ex-con w/firearm	1
	23

Type II includes any Ballot Measure 11 crime with a firearm;<sup>40</sup> Type III includes any BM 11 crime with any other weapon; and Type IV includes any other BM 11 crime. For the clients evaluated, there were no Type II, III or IV outcomes.

Type V outcomes include any and all other new crimes. For the purposes of this evaluation, any new arrest, charge or conviction is included. Of the 47 clients evaluated,

<sup>39</sup> While these three revocations are not considered failures here, other charges for these individuals created Type V failures.

<sup>40</sup> BM 11 crimes include arson, assault, attempted aggravated murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, manslaughter, murder, rape, robbery, sexual abuse, sexual penetration, sodomy, using a child in a display of a sexual act and compelling prostitution.

23 or 49% had a Type V outcome in the first year. Those outcomes included both serious and less serious offenses as shown in Table 1.<sup>41</sup>

When minor crimes are disregarded, however, the success rate is markedly improved. For the purposes of this evaluation, minor crimes include traffic offenses (except elude and driving under the influence), controlled substance offenses (except any distribution or manufacturing of a controlled substance), fugitive and/or parole violations (except where new charges are involved), and other "quality of life" crimes. Not disregarded are any and all weapons offenses or any violent offenses (except domestic violence).

As shown in Figure 16, when minor, non-violent offenses occurring within the first 180 days are disregarded, the success rate reaches 72%. Given this standard, the Type I outcome rate is constant, while the Type V outcome rate drops from 49% to 19%.

**Table 4: Type V outcome crime types, serious offenses**

Rob I	2
Weapons Possession	1
Agg Assault	1
MCS w/in 1000	1
Ex-con w/firearm	1
Theft III	1
Assault III	1
	8

Obviously, there are risks to an analysis that "ignores" new crimes when considering recidivism. There are two strong reasons for doing so. First, the population under consideration are not "angels." That is, no one expects them to be crime-free upon release from prison. Still, there are high expectations that the level of crime will be much lower and that violent crime will be non-existent in this population. Second, this type of analysis illuminates specific areas where the greatest outcomes take place and, hopefully, will help guide policymakers to strategies to reduce those outcomes.

#### **Time to Outcome**

As previously mentioned, time to failure is also a factor. While a failure for a minor possession charge shortly after release might be expected, failures after several months have passed and access to programs has been established, might be viewed differently.

As Figures 11 and 12 show, 31% of Type V outcomes occurred within the first 180 days after release from incarceration, while 69% occurred between 180 and 365 days after release. The greatest number of failure outcomes occurred within the 180-365 days range, accounting for 70% of all failures. (Note that the rate of failures is relatively consistent across the year with only a slight increase after the first 90 days.)

The shortest time to a Type V outcome was two days; the longest was 359.

<sup>41</sup> PCS = possession of controlled substance; DV = domestic violence; DWS = driving while suspended; DCS = distribution of controlled substance.

## First Report

One unintended positive outcome of PRE was a 100% success rate in terms of first reporting requirements. Within 24 hours of release (or as ordered by their PPO), Community Justice clients are required to report to their PPO. While not generally tracked, it was noted there were no failures to report for the PRE clients. Since the PPO makes a point of ordering the client to report immediately upon release, this shows that such a minimal intervention can have a far reaching impact.

Days to first Type V failure

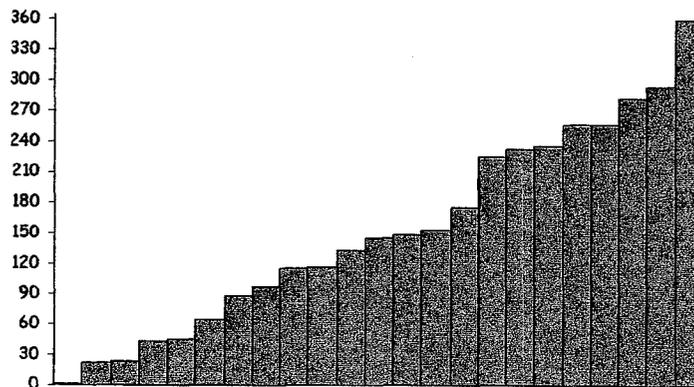


Figure 11: Days to first Type V failure

Time to first Type V failure

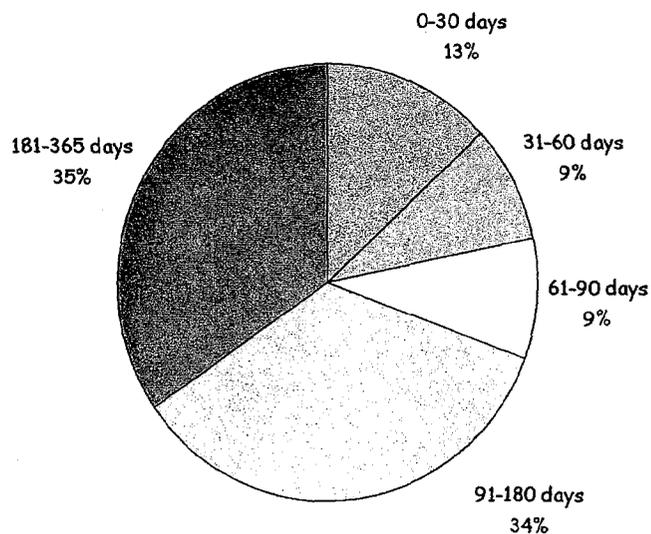


Figure 12: Days to first Type V failure as percentage

## Recommendations

It will probably always be the case that recently released offenders will re-offend at a rate higher than the general population. While Project Re-Entry has experienced many successes in reducing this rate, it is clear that there is room for improvement. Nationally, literature on transition programs like PRE and the African American Project is sparse at best.<sup>42</sup> However, all of the literature that is available indicates that some specific and addressable issues must be featured in these types of programs.

For example, prisoners returning to the community need strong, positive community and family ties that are not criminally oriented. Of prime importance, legitimate employment opportunities must be developed lest the offender will return to (or take up) criminal money making opportunities. Mental health issues are significant for incarcerated offenders, as are physical health problems. As these individuals transition to the community, those issues become community problems. Housing and homelessness are significant difficulties for many ex-convicts, and all of these issues are raised under the specter of political estrangement.

All of these myriad challenges facing recently released offenders are not currently being addressed by Project Re-Entry and probably cannot be without significant investment. However, some of the gaps illustrated above can be filled, likely without additional FTEs required. The following are offered as some possible opportunities.

1. Every client should be re-interviewed at specific intervals. We have identified the period from 180-365 days after release as a prime time for new offenses. The PRE parole officer should make significant efforts to do office and home visits with offender(s) at these times.
2. Since the largest group of failures exists within the PCS/DCS crime themes (Type V outcomes), extra efforts should be made to enroll PRE clients in treatment programs.
3. PRE clients are universally warned of the prospects and possibilities of federal firearms charges. Since several of the Type V outcomes and revocations were for firearms charges, following through on that "threat" seems appropriate and is consistent with the deterrence methodology of the STACS model.

Further recommendations are necessary with regard to future PRE evaluations. Much of the PRE record keeping is done on an Excel spreadsheet with little attention paid to capturing specific variables useful to the evaluation process. The following would require a small, one-time expenditure, but would result in better monitoring of the project.

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<sup>42</sup> See the following: Abramsky, Sasha, "When They Get Out," *Atlantic Monthly* 283 (6) (June 1999): 30-36; Petersilia, Joan, "Parole and Prisoner Reentry in the United States," in *Prisons*, ed. Michael Tonry and Joan Petersilia (*Crime and Justice: A review of Research*, Volume 26), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999; Petersilia, Joan, "Challenges of Prisoner Reentry and Parole in California," *CPRC Brief* 12 (3) (June 2000), Berkeley, CA: California Policy Research Center; Travis, Jeremy, *But They All Come Back: Rethinking Prisoner Reentry*, Research in Brief—Sentencing & Corrections: Issues for the 21st Century, Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, May 2000, NCJ 181413.

Primary among these is the development and maintenance of a database of PRE clients with the following variables (minimum):

- Demographics (age, race, gender, date of birth).
- In-prison programs that clients have completed.
- ID number(s) (e.g., SID, CRN).
- Date of any and all arrests including charge and disposition.
- Date of any and all sanctions imposed for parole violations.

## Section 6: Anonymous and Confidential Surveys

In order to determine the characteristics of the target population and fill the “gaps” in the official existing CJS databases, the Research Team wrote and implemented two surveys. These surveys are identified based on the level of security guaranteed to the participants: “anonymous” and “confidential.” The participants were selected from a random sample of the target population (see Section 4: Offender Target Population Data Base). The logistics of scheduling interviews in this population required substitutions. For the duration of both interview cycles, the PPOs were given a list of participants we were interested in interviewing (our random sample). However, they were also allowed to ask any of their clients to agree to an interview if they were in the target age group and, in the opinion of the PPO, were at a high risk for committing a violent act.<sup>43</sup>

The surveys included questions adapted from existing research and new questions designed by the Research Team and the SIT.<sup>44</sup> The existing items were adapted, formatted and tested according to our specific purpose. Questions internally developed or suggested by SIT members were added and tested.

The need for two surveys was based on the length of the final instrument and, more importantly, on the sensitive and potentially incriminating nature of some questions. The “anonymous” survey probed into areas of current gun possession and use, preferred gun characteristics, criminal habits and behaviors, as well as less sensitive questions such as demographic information. Consistent with Reed College’s Human Subjects Research Committee and with the guidance of the National Institute of Justice’s research rules, participants were guaranteed that their answers could not be matched back to their name at any time in the future.<sup>45</sup> It is impossible to merge the survey data with data from existing data bases, this limitation was thought necessary in order to increase the chances of participant candor and therefore, reliability and validity of the data.

Participants in the “confidential” survey were guaranteed confidentiality, but not anonymity. Data on participants’ name, date of birth, and other identifying information were entered so that the data could be supplemented with information from existing databases, including participants’ first police contact, and first criminal charge.<sup>46</sup> For example, it would be possible to compare participants’ own accounts of criminal activity with their official criminal history records. In this survey, questions about their criminal behaviors were of a less incriminating nature than in the anonymous survey, typically focusing on past rather than present activities. In addition, this survey examines behaviors

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<sup>43</sup> This also illustrates the “fluidity” of the target population since new people who fit the criteria constantly come into the system through population movements (i.e., they move within Oregon to Multnomah County or move from out of state) and through new crimes that bring them under official supervision.

<sup>44</sup> Sheley, J. F., & Wright, J. D. (1995). “In The Line of Fire: Youth, Guns, and Violence in Urban America.” New York: Aldine De Gruyter. Wechsler, H. (1997). College Alcohol Study. Harvard School of Public Health. Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Survey.

<sup>45</sup> Administrators of NIJ grants are prohibited from revealing participants’ specific information and are protected from revealing the source of confidential information.

<sup>46</sup> There are likely to be gaps in the data because some of the records are regularly purged by court order (juveniles and expungements) and for administrative reasons.

regarding drug and alcohol use, as well as any links between those experiences and criminal behavior.

### Combined Survey Results

There were 99 participants in the anonymous survey (92 males, 7 females). The sample was 64% African-American, with some representation of white, Hispanic, Asian and multi-ethnic gang members (Figure 13). There were 64 participants in the confidential survey (56 males, 8 females) including 63% African-Americans, smaller representations of white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and multi-ethnic gang members. These data include a disproportionate number of African-American individuals, when compared to either the percentage of African-Americans in Portland or compared to the percentage of African-Americans under supervision.<sup>45</sup>

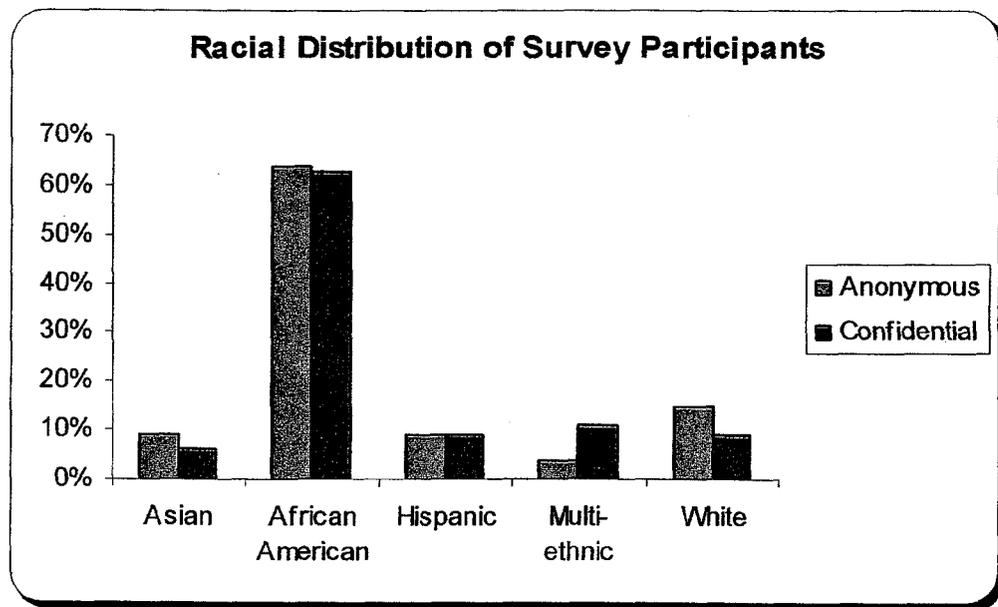


Figure 13: Race of survey participants

<sup>45</sup> For comparison, the 2000 US Census reports the following for Multnomah County: Asian, 5.7%; African American, 5.5%; Hispanic, 7.5%; Native American, 1.2%; White, 76.5%.

## Background Information

**Job Status.** In our sample, the majority (69%) of the respondents do not currently have a legal paying job and have not had such a job in the last six months. Of the 68 individuals who did not currently have a job, an additional 22 have had a legal paying job in the last six months. This finding suggests that job opportunities (like those that could be created by a group such as CBS) may be of key importance. The surveys conducted for CBS examined more closely why our respondents do not have jobs.

**Education.** In addition to not currently holding a job, our respondents have not achieved a high level of education. While younger gang members may still complete their education, of the older respondents (18 and older), 38 percent have graduated from high school, received their GED, or completed some education beyond high school. The majority of the respondents over 18 have not completed the equivalent of high school. Clearly, a place for intervention is in terms of education. Coupled with the earlier finding concerning jobs, we see a group of individuals who are not working and have not completed much education.

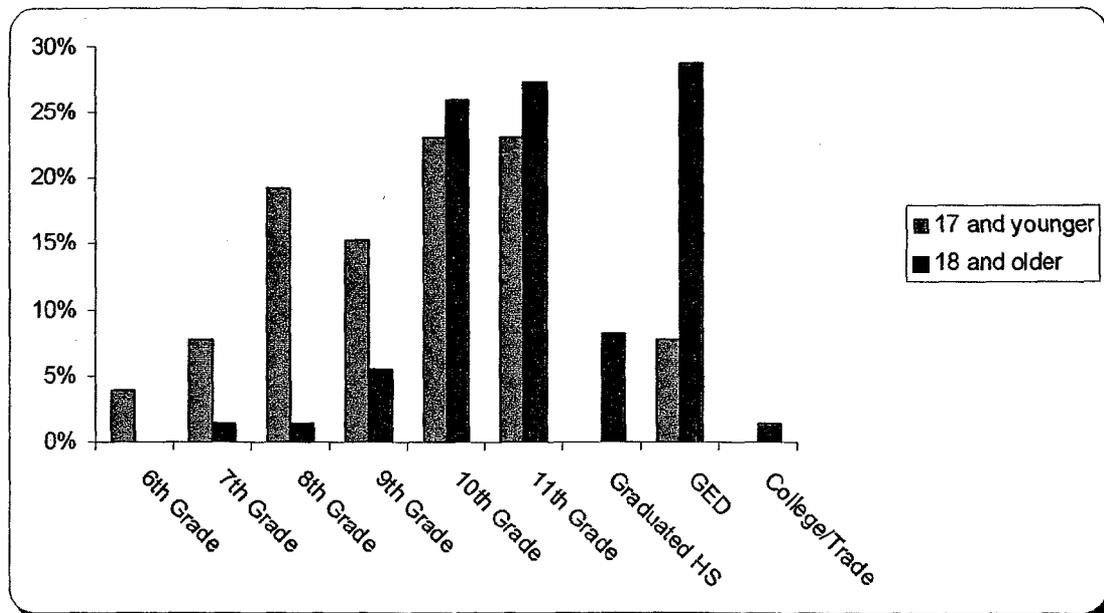
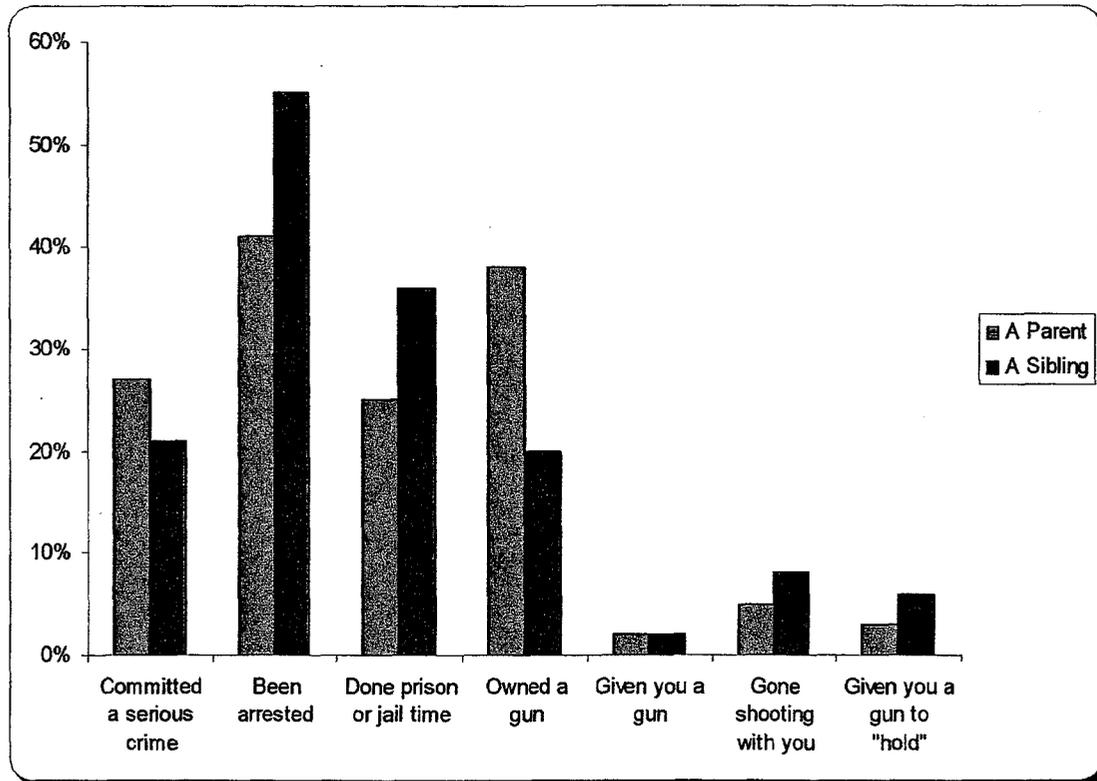


Figure 14: Education of anonymous survey participants

**Family Criminal History.** To assess the respondents' family criminal and gun histories, we asked a series of questions about whether, among other things, their parents and siblings had committed crimes, owned guns and had gone out shooting with the participants. Responses are presented in Figure 15. Many of our respondents had family members who had been arrested for crimes, had served time in prison and jail, and had owned guns. However, few respondents had other interactions with guns between family members.

First Experiences with Guns, Police, Drugs, and Alcohol. In addition to trying to capture our respondents' family histories with crime and guns, we also asked questions about individuals' own involvement, focusing on the age at which they first experienced a number of situations involving guns, police, drugs and alcohol. Respondents who had

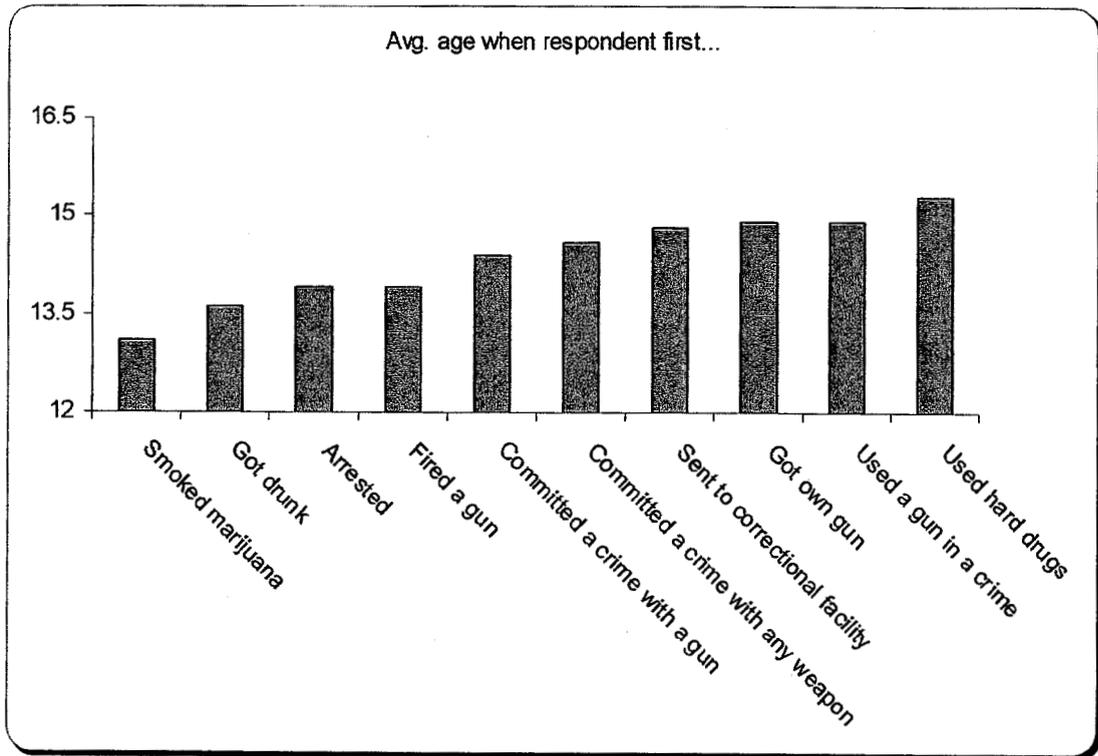


**Figure 15: Criminal and weapons history of family members**

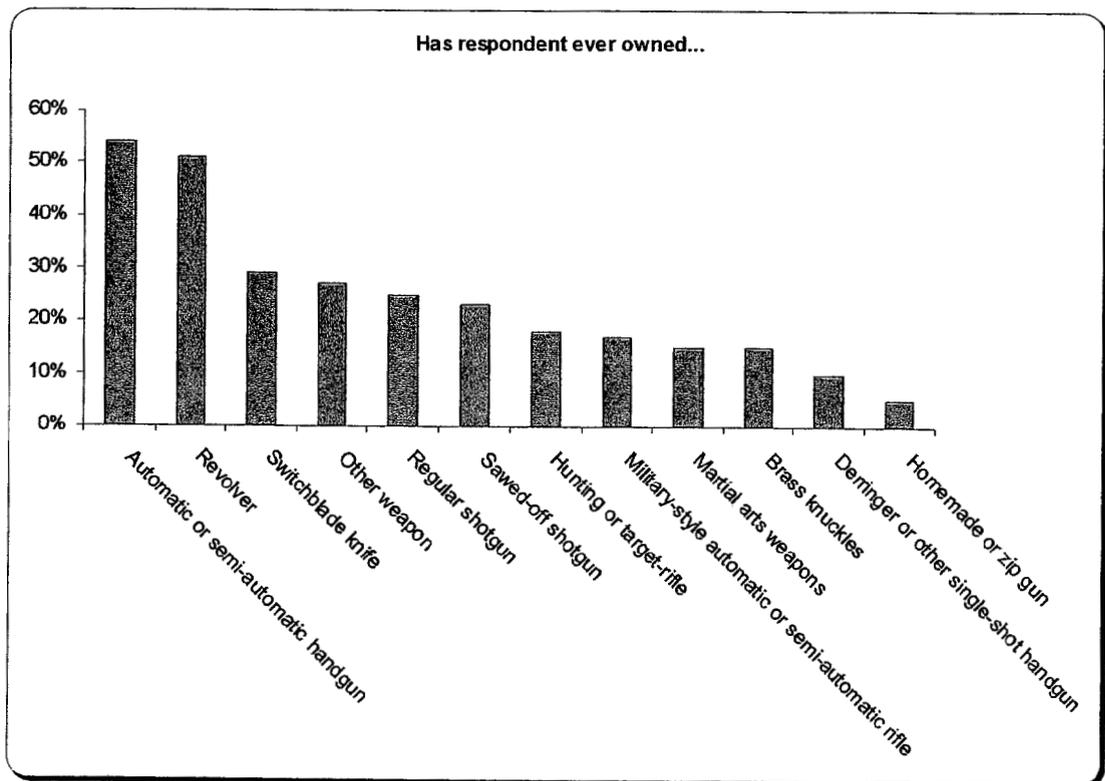
taken part in the various activities, tended to do them at a fairly young age, is represented in Figure 16. On average, they first got drunk and smoked marijuana younger than 14. They were arrested, on average, at around 14 years of age. However, many of the respondents report not taking part in some of the activities, particularly limited involvement with drugs other than alcohol and marijuana.

Guns and Gun Ownership. The majority of the anonymous survey focused on guns. We first sought to gain a sense of individuals' possession of a number of weapons. We asked them about a series of weapons; for each one, we asked them whether they had ever personally owned such a weapon or had such a weapon that they considered theirs even if they did not actually own it. Multiple answers were allowed.

Figure 17 presents the breakdown of how many participants indicated owning each type of weapon. In addition, we computed whether they had ever owned any weapon



**Figure 16: Age at which respondent participated in various activities**



**Figure 17: Weapons ownership**

(i.e., whether they said yes to owning any of the listed weapons); 82% of the sample reported having owned at least one of the weapons. The majority of this sample has, at one time, owned a weapon.

In our STACS projects, these weapons can be compared to those that have been seized in order to clarify what weapons are on the street. Switchblade knives and other weapons (e.g., bats, stun guns, bombs, crossbows and mace) are among the most commonly owned. Such findings help clarify our research question by suggesting that our focus on guns may be too narrow.

Participants were asked whether they currently owned or possessed a gun; the majority of the 99 respondents (70.7%) reported they did not currently own a gun. Our respondents, who are all currently under supervision, do not typically own or possess guns or at least do not report such ownership or possession.

Gun Carrying. To better understand the participants' gun ownership, we asked respondents about their carrying of guns. In particular, they were asked how likely they would be to carry a gun with them in 10 different situations. The 10 situations were: during a drug deal, out drinking, out raising hell, going to a strange part of town, at night, hanging with friends, with others who are carrying guns, when need to protect themselves, when planning to do crimes, and at all times.

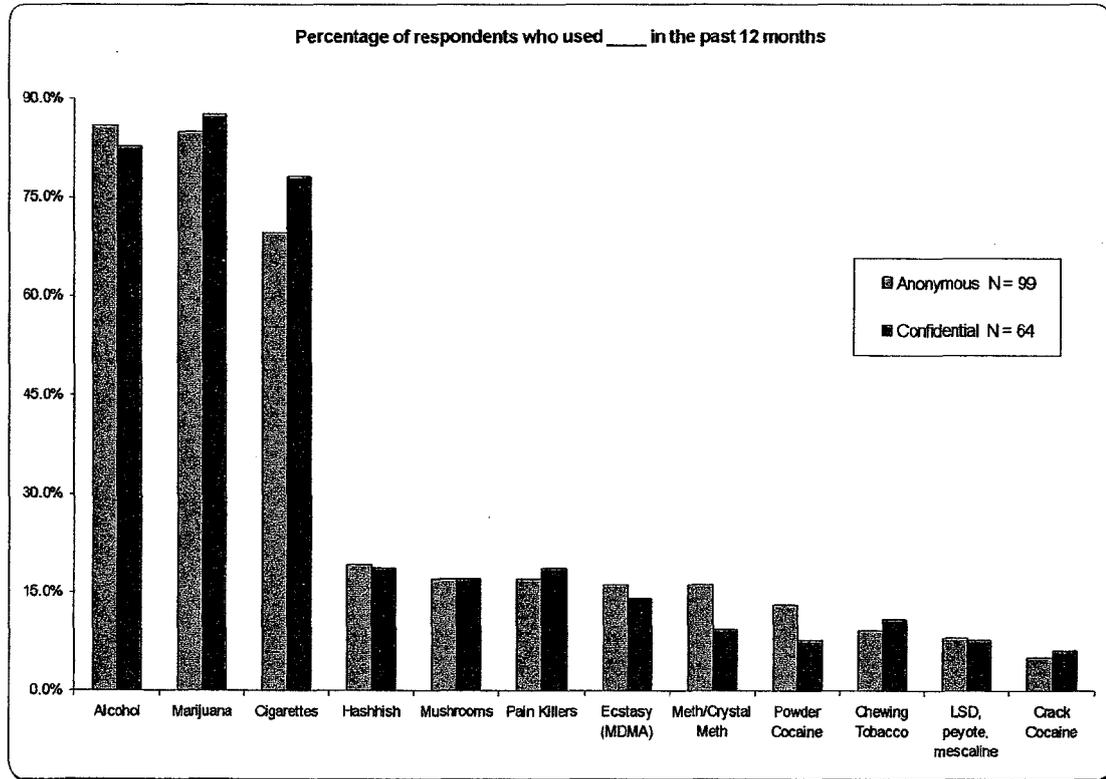
Twenty-two percent of the sample reported never carrying a gun; the majority of the sample did carry a gun at certain times. Three situations were clearly the highest in likelihood (presented in order of likelihood): when protecting themselves, when going to a strange part of town and at night. Sixty percent of the sample reported that they would be at least moderately likely (i.e., report either being moderately likely, quite likely or extremely likely) to carry a gun when they thought they might need to protect themselves. Forty-seven percent reported being at least moderately likely to carry a gun when going to a strange part of town; 42% reported carrying a gun at night.

It is important to note that for situations involving drug deals, drinking or raising hell, participants were less likely to report that they would carry a gun than in the situations when self-protection seems needed. Thirty-one percent report that they would be at least moderately likely to carry a gun when involved in a drug deal, 31% report at least a moderate likelihood for when they are raising hell, and only 11% report at least a moderate likelihood for when they are drinking.

Overall, our findings suggest that individuals report that they carry guns for self-protection, a finding consistent with previous results by Sheley and Wright. In addition, this set of findings does not provide support for a link between gun carrying and alcohol use.

Frequency of Taking Various Drugs During The Past Year. Participants were asked about the frequency with which they had taken a list of 25 different drugs during the last year. Figure 18 presents the drugs for which at least 5 % of the sample reported using at least once in the last year.<sup>46</sup>

In addition, for each of the following drugs, less than 5% of the confidential survey sample indicated that they had used the drug at least once during the last year: street methadone, heroin, dextromethorphan (Robitussin DM), barbiturates, quaaludes/ludes, amphetamines, PCP/Angel Dust, Nitrous Oxide (whippets), amyl nitrate (poppers), organic solvents (glue, etc.), Ritalin, steroids other drugs.



**Figure 18: Drug used among respondents**

From the above findings, several conclusions are clear. First, respondents in both surveys reported nearly the same levels of drug usage. Secondly, for the majority of the “hard drugs” (that is, drugs other than tobacco, alcohol and marijuana) participants overwhelmingly indicated that they had used them rarely, if at all, during the last year.

<sup>46</sup> This same question was asked in the Anonymous Survey with strikingly similar results.

## Survey Conclusions

Our findings reveal a number of places that one could intervene. First, the results suggest that our participants could benefit from more education and more job opportunities. Such intervention (as CBS was designed to do) seems quite important. Our results further illuminate the types of situations when respondents report actually carrying and using guns or report believing that it is appropriate to use guns. Such a detailed understanding of these places and times could be used to create interventions that reduce gun carrying and use in specific situations. Our results reveal where survey respondents report acquiring guns and what qualities they prefer in handguns. Future research could explore both how acquisition patterns and whether the preferred characteristics of handguns are similar to the characteristics of guns actually seized in Portland.

## Section 7: African-American Program Evaluation

As part of the STACS initiative, a post-prison transition program that was already in place was evaluated in order to gain ideas about what types of programs might be most effective. In particular the effectiveness of the African American program, a non-traditional parole program aimed to lower recidivism rates of post-prison African American males was evaluated. The African-American Program has been providing non-traditional parole since 1997, after undergoing a pilot phase in 1996.

This evaluation used two broad types of measures. First, it assessed effectiveness by examining the degree to which the program is implemented as designed. This assessment included a qualitative analysis of the degree to which the program design is implemented as designed (e.g., are the participants' eligibility requirements adhered to?). In addition, aspects of the program such as attendance at weekly meetings and monthly reporting were examined. Secondly, this evaluation assessed the outcomes of the program by comparing a sample of 70 AAP members to a comparable population of 70 non-program African American male offenders under supervision; outcomes across a 2-year period from January 1998 – December 1999 were examined. The outcome measures included sanctions, re-arrest, and reconviction across the time period. The evaluation also attempted to assess whether those individuals who were most closely following the program were most likely to be successful in terms of the outcome measures. Below we summarize the key findings from this evaluation. In addition, at the end of this evaluation, we note the ways that the current AAP staff in 2002 - 2003 are using the results of this evaluation.

*Sample.* First, to compare the two groups, it is essential that they are similar to each other. In this type of evaluation we are not able to randomly assign individuals to the AAP or comparison group, but we can at least try to equate the two groups. Recall that they are both comprised of African-American males. In addition, as can be seen in Table 5, the two samples are quite similar in terms of age, current status, risk assessment score supervision level, and community level of supervision. Reassured that the two groups are fairly similar, we now turn to assessing the effectiveness of the African American Program.

*Process Measures: Implementation of the African American Program.* First, the degree to which the program design was implemented as designed was examined. Discussion with AAP staff members suggested that the program seems to generally meet its eligibility requirements, although there were little available data to assess this question.

However, an analysis of attendance at weekly meetings after release from prison suggests that many AAP members do not attend meetings regularly. As can be seen in Table 6, there is not high attendance at the weekly meetings. On average, individuals attend .35 (out of a possible of 4, assuming that there are meetings every week) meetings per month. In addition, one sees the overall number of weekly meetings that individuals attended between January, 1998 – the middle of October 1999. The number of meeting attended range from 0 to 27, with nearly half (31 of 70) of the sample attending fewer than two meetings, 21 attended zero, 10 attended 1. Nearly half of the sample attended only 0 or

1 weekly meetings over the time of the evaluation. In addition, monthly reporting rates were low.

It is important to note several cautions when interpreting these data. First, it became clear in later discussions with AAP staff that these data were not always routinely recorded. Thus, the low numbers may underestimate actual attendance. The current staff is now quite consistent in keeping these records. Secondly, many AAP participants have quite legitimate, positive reasons for not attending the weekly meetings, such as jobs and school. These participants may be quite successful participants in the AAP, yet be unable to attend weekly meetings, thereby lowering the attendance numbers. The current datasources did not include information about whether the AAP participants were excused from attendance. Thirdly, the numbers may further underestimate participation because participants may be unable to attend because of sanctions, jail time, or other negative events that prevent them from attending the weekly meetings. Therefore, these numbers probably do not represent fully participants' attendance. However, the low numbers do suggest that many AAP members do not seem to be gaining the full benefit of the program.

**Table 5: Comparisons of AAP group and Comparison group: January 1998**

	<b>AAP participants (N=70)</b>	<b>Comparison group (N=70)</b>
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
Average	37	35
Range	22 - 61 years	19 - 64 years
<b>Current Status</b>		
Parole	10 (14%)	13 (19%)
Post-prison	46 (66%)	43 (61%)
Post-parole	14 (20%)	14 (20%)
<b>Risk assessment score supervision level</b>		
High	37 (53%)	27 (39%)
Medium	23 (33%)	21 (30%)
Low	3 ( 4%)	9 ( 13%)
Limited	1 ( 1%)	2 ( 3%)
Missing	6 ( 9%)	11 ( 16%)
<b>Community level supervision</b>		
High	41 (59%)	33 (47%)
Medium	19 (27%)	17 (24%)
Low	3 ( 4%)	6 ( 9%)
Limited	1 ( 1%)	3 ( 4%)
Missing	6 ( 9%)	11 ( 16%)

**Table 6: AAP Members' Participation in Elements of the Program, January 1998 – October 1999**

	AAP Sample (N = 70)
<b>Attendance at Weekly Meetings</b>	
Average Per Month	.35
Average Range Per Month	0 – 2.33
Standard Deviation	.53
<b>Total Number of Meetings Attended</b>	
Average	3.90
Range	0 - 27
Standard Deviation	5.28
0 Meetings	21
1 Meeting	10
2 Meetings	9
3 Meetings	4
4 Meetings	6
5 Meetings	3
6 Meetings	3
7 Meetings	2
8 Meetings	1
9 Meetings	1
10 Meetings	2
11 Meetings	3
12 Meetings	0
13 - 20 Meetings	3
21 – 30 Meetings	2
<b>Completion of Monthly Reporting</b>	
Average per month	.28
Average Range per month	0 - 1
Standard Deviation	.26

*Outcome Measures: Arrests*

New Arrests. To assess the impact of the African-American Program, whether individuals in each of the two groups (AAP vs Comparison) had a new arrest during the 2-year period from January 1998 – December 1999 was examined. All new arrests, not including parole violations, were taken from individuals' LEDS rapsheets. The 140

individuals were categorized into those who had a new arrest during the two-year period and those who did not. As can be see in Table 7, the percentages of individuals with new arrests did not differ across the two groups. The percentages are quite similar across the two groups, with the comparison group having slightly fewer individuals with new arrests.

**Table 7: Re-arrest and Re-convictions for AAP and Comparison Group, January 1998 – December 1999**

	AAP participants (N=70)	Comparison group (N=70)
New Arrest		
No New Arrest	33 (47%)	35 (50%)
New Arrest	37 (53%)	35 (50%)
Total Arrests	N = 98	N = 68
Average Number of Arrests	1.39	.93
Range	0 - 9	0 - 6
Standard Deviation	2.27	1.28
0 Arrests	33	35
1 Arrest	16	18
2 Arrests	12	11
3 Arrests	3	2
4 Arrests	0	2
5 Arrests	1	1
6 Arrests	0	1
7 Arrests	1	0
8 Arrests	0	0
9 Arrests	4	0
New Convictions		
No New Conviction	46 (66%)	48 (69%)
New Conviction	24 (34%)	22 (31%)

Total Numbers of Arrests. One can gain a more complete understanding by examining the total number of arrests within each group. The average number of arrests for each of the two groups were quite similar. The AAP participants had on average 1.39 arrests (97 total arrests for the group); the comparison group had .93 arrests on average (65 total arrests for the group). The patterns of arrest are fairly similar, except, as can be seen in Table 3, there is a group of 4 AAP participants who have 9 arrests each. These individuals all have many arrests for controlled substances.

Arrests Broken into Crime Categories. In addition, the types of new arrests for each of the 2 groups can be examined. The 162 total arrests have been broken into the four categories of person-to-person, property, controlled substances, and miscellaneous crimes for each group using the most serious charge for each arrest. These crime breakdowns are presented in Table 8. The pattern of crimes is very similar for the two groups. For both the AAP participants and the members of the comparison group, controlled substances crimes were the most prevalent, with over 50% of the crimes in this category. The remaining three categories were of similar percentages, ranging from 12% – 17%. AAP participants and members of the comparison group do not differ in the types of crimes for which they received new arrests.

**Table 8: AAP and Comparison Group LEDS Arrest Data Divided into Crime Categories, January 1998 – December 1999**

	AAP	Comparison Group	TOTAL
<b><u>Person-to-Person</u></b> e.g., Assault Robbery, Weapons	16 (16%)	9 (14%)	25 (16%)
<b><u>Property</u></b> e.g., Burglary Forgery, Theft	12 (12%)	11 (17%)	23 (15%)
Controlled Substances	57 (59%)	34 (52%)	91 (54%)
<b><u>Miscellaneous</u></b> e.g., Eluding Motor Vehicle	12 (12%)	11 (17%)	23 (15%)
<b><i>Total</i></b>	97 (99%)	65 (100%)	162 (100%)

*Outcome Measures: Re-conviction.*

In addition to considering new arrests across the two-year period, we examined whether individuals in each of the two groups (AAP vs Comparison) had a new conviction during the 2-year period. As can be seen in Table 7, the percentages of new convictions are quite similar across the two groups, with the comparison group having slightly fewer individuals with new convictions. These conviction data should be viewed with some caution, given that many arrests may not have a conviction because there had not been enough time for the process to unfold.

***Sanctions***

Next, the sanctions imposed on and served by each of the two groups (see Tables 9 and 10 below) were examined.

**Sanctions Imposed.** There were equal numbers of sanctions – 91 – imposed for each of the two groups. Many of these 91 sanctions involved more than one element; for instance, many of these sanctions combined jail time with an additional sanction or two. These 91 sanctions included 115 elements for the AAP participants and 116 for the comparison group members.

**Sanctions Served.** The two groups also do not differ in terms of the percentage of sanctions that they did and did not serve. Percentages are presented in Table 10. Both groups served the majority of their sanctions. The two groups also do not differ in terms of the numbers of days that they served in general, or in terms of days in jail that they served.

**Table 9: Imposed Sanctions for AAP and Comparison Groups, January 1998 – December 1999**

	<b>AAP participants (N=70)</b>	<b>Comparison group (N=70)</b>
<b>Sanctions Imposed</b>	<b>N = 91</b>	<b>N = 91</b>
Mean Number Imposed	1.30	1.30
Standard Deviation	1.79	1.89
0 Sanctions	28	37
1 Sanction	23	13
2 Sanctions	8	4
3 Sanctions	5	5
4 Sanctions	1	5
5 Sanctions	1	3
6 Sanctions	1	2
7 Sanctions	2	0
8 Sanctions	1	1
<b>Sanctions Imposed, including all elements of each sanction</b>	<b>N = 115</b>	<b>N = 116</b>
Mean Number Imposed	1.64	1.66
Standard Deviation	2.49	2.48
0 Sanctions	28	37
1 Sanction	18	10
2 Sanctions	12	5
3 Sanctions	4	5
4 Sanctions	2	2
5 Sanctions	0	2
6 Sanctions	0	5
7 Sanctions	2	2
8 Sanctions	0	0
9 Sanctions	2	1
10 Sanctions	1	1
11 Sanctions	1	0

**Table 10: Served Sanctions for AAP and Comparison Groups, January 1998 – December 1999**

	<i>AAP participants</i> (N=70)	<b>Comparison group</b> (N=70)
Served/Not Served		
Not served	33 (29%)	37 (32%)
Served	82 (71%)	79 (68%)
Served Sanctions	N = 78	N = 72
Minimum Days	2	3
Maximum Days	111	114
Average Number of Days	28.90	29.19
Standard Deviation	23.77	25.87
Jail Sanctions	N = 77	N = 66
Minimum Days	2	3
Maximum Days	111	90
Average Number of Days	28.01	27.79
Standard Deviation	2.58	2.97

**Outcome Measures Relationship with adherence to AAP Guidelines**

Previously, this evaluation summarized AAP members' adherence to the AAP guidelines, noting that many individuals do not attend weekly meetings regularly. One possibility is that those individuals who are most actively participating in the African American Program are the ones who are showing the best outcomes in terms of re-arrests, re-convictions, and sanctions. Therefore, it seems important to assess the arrests, convictions, and sanctions based on attendance at meetings.

*New Arrests*

As can be seen in Table 11, those with new arrests versus those without did not differ in terms of their attendance at weekly meetings or monthly reporting. However, the pattern of data was such those who had attended at least one weekly meeting (as opposed to those who had not attended any) tended to be less likely to have a new arrest. This is suggestive of weekly meetings being related to a lower likelihood of having a new arrest.

**Table 11: New Arrests Broken Down by Number of Weekly Meetings Attended per Month**

	<b>Not Arrested (N = 33)</b>	<b>Arrested (N = 37)</b>
<b># of Weekly Meetings per month</b>		
Mean Number	.408	.293
<b># of Monthly Meetings per month</b>		
Mean Number	.324	.245
<b>No Meetings</b>		
Frequency	7 (21%)	14 (38%)
<b>One or More Meetings</b>		
Frequency	26 (79%)	23 (62%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>33 (100%)</b>	<b>37 (100%)</b>

*New Convictions*

Interestingly, however, those without new convictions (compared to those with them) had a higher rate of attendance at weekly meetings and a trend toward higher rates of attendance at monthly reporting. In other words, these data suggest that those who are attending AAP weekly meetings and completing monthly reporting more are less likely to have a new conviction. Recall that the conviction data are not as reliable as the arrest data; this limitation should be kept in mind when interpreting this set of results. There is the additional confound for this analysis in that those are in prison for a conviction would be unable to attend meetings. In addition, the pattern of data was such those who had attended at least one weekly meeting (as opposed to those who had not attended any) tended to be less likely to have a new conviction.

**Table 12: New Convictions Broken Down by Number of Weekly Meetings Attended per Month**

	<b>Not Convicted (N = 46)</b>	<b>Convicted (N = 24)</b>
<b># of Weekly Meetings per month</b>		
Mean Number	.451	.149
<b># of Monthly Meetings per month</b>		
Mean Number	.323	.202
<b>No Meetings</b>		
Frequency	11 (24%)	10 (42%)
<b>One or More Meetings</b>		
Frequency	35 (76%)	14 (58%)
<b>Total</b>	46 ( 100%)	24 (100%)

*Sanctions*

One can additionally examine the relationship between the number of weekly meetings per month that participants attended and the number of sanctions that were imposed on them. There is a tendency toward a negative relationship between these two. In other words, as participants attend more weekly meetings per month, they receive fewer sanctions.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Recently, the African-American program was presented as best practices for parole for those who are working to reduce racial disparity in the criminal justice system. In addition, there is the important question of whether the African-American Program could be used as a model for other transition programs. The current evaluation was designed to be a first step toward understanding whether this program is aptly characterized as best practices. The answer is a complicated one.

In part, the African-American Program's effectiveness was evaluated by comparing the outcomes of 70 participants in the African American program in January 1998 to 70 randomly selected African-American male offenders from traditional caseloads in the January 1998 population file. These two groups were quite similar in terms of age, current status, risk assessment score supervision level, and community level supervision. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to compare the two groups. This evaluation suggests that the African American Program was indistinguishable from the comparison group in terms of many traditional recidivism measures: the two groups do not differ in terms of new arrests or new convictions. In addition, they do not differ in terms of imposed or served sanctions.

However, there are some important wrinkles in the conclusion that the African-American Program is not more effective than other types of supervision. This evaluation also assessed two other key elements: first, it assessed some aspects of how the program functions and it also assessed whether those individuals who are participating most in the program are most successful in terms of outcomes. These additional analyses suggest that many of the participants in the program do not seem to be taking full advantage of the program. The weekly attendance and monthly reporting rates are quite low. These rates are low even if one removes those individuals who transferred out of the African-American Program during the two-year period. There is some evidence that those individuals who are attending the weekly meetings tend to be more successful. Therefore, it may be that the two groups were not different on the outcome measures because AAP participants were not reaping the benefits of the program. Future evaluation that examines more data on how the African-American program functions may provide further insight into the successes of the AAP.

#### *CURRENT SITUATION: AAP STAFF'S USE OF THIS REPORT*

After the ending of the STACS project, the new AAP staff was quite interested in building on this evaluation to update and improve the functioning of the African-American Program. The current AAP staff includes all new members -- a new supervisor, 2 new POS, and 2 new corrections counselors. There are no staff members who were in place at the time of the evaluation conducted by STACS. One of the researchers involved with the STACS program met with the new AAP program supervisor in early March of 2002 to discuss ways to build on the evaluation presented above. AAP was in the process of undergoing a complete restructuring. They were developing a new curriculum; their curriculum development process included a series of meetings with current AAP staff and a two-day retreat where AAP's new curriculum and goals were discussed with current and prior AAP staff, as well as other staff of Adult and Community Justice.

Researchers may follow-up on this evaluation with another evaluation in 2 or 3 years to assess the effectiveness of the revised African-American Program. The revised African-American Program at its core includes many of the elements of the AAP evaluated here. However, there are a number of changes. For brevity, three key changes will be noted. First, the current staff members have made significant changes in their collection of data; the difficulties of this initial evaluation in terms of missing data concerning weekly

attendance are being rectified. One of the corrections counselors has developed an AAP database that will be invaluable for future evaluations. In addition, they also have put in place an updated curriculum. The new curriculum includes more information that AAP members are exposed to within prison. The new curriculum also includes a host of resources that AAP members are exposed to during the weekly meetings after they are released from prison. These resources (such as information about the Oregon Health plan, job placement information, and so on) were not a part of the AAP during the time of the STACS evaluation. The current AAP staff is seeking to provide a program that addresses more concretely the needs and challenges of the AAP members. Third, the updated African-American Program has begun including more positive ways for AAP members to interact with the community. Their first program was a Kids Back to School Fair instituted in the fall of 2002 where AAP members distributed free school supplies to local children and promoted messages about the value of education.

Overall, it will be important to assess the effectiveness of the AAP in several years to evaluate the impact of these changes. This evaluation can serve as an important baseline measure against which these future evaluations can be assessed.