

Offender Programs Report

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Why Victims Choose to Meet With Offenders

by Robert B. Coates, Heather Burns, and Mark S. Umbreit

Victim offender mediation and conferencing has been adopted in numerous criminal justice jurisdictions in the United States and abroad (Umbreit, 2001). It has become a popular programmatic option under the restorative justice banner. Increasingly, it is being used with victims of serious and violent crime (Umbreit, Vos, Coates, and Brown, 2003). While its proponents increase in number, there remains the question among supporters and detractors alike: "Why do crime victims choose to meet with offenders?"

This question is the focus of the current study. Policymakers wonder why victims would desire to meet with offenders since the popular view is that citizens want to be tough on crime and therefore on criminals. Program administrators struggle with how to best use scarce probation and corrections dollars and worry whether victims will consider these kinds of programs tough enough, or on the other hand, whether victims will use the meetings as an opportunity to "pay back" the offenders. And on the streets, in the neighborhoods, some individuals scratch their heads when they hear about victim offender mediation/conferencing and say, "Not me," while others light up and say, "Yes, I would try that."

Prior Studies

A few studies have attempted to address empirically the question of victim
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Parole Effectiveness

Providing and Measuring Parole Services on a Statewide Scale

by Sheldon Zhang, Robert Roberts, and Valerie Callanan

Study Background

Record high recidivism rates among California parolees in the late 1980s prompted a series of state legislative hearings, which concluded that increased investment was needed to promote and implement community-based services to help parolees successfully re-integrate into society. The California Department of Corrections (CDC) internal studies identified the four main barriers to successful reintegration as substance abuse, unemployment, illiteracy, and homelessness. In 1991, the CDC received funding to initiate a series of community-based programs to address these problems.

The Preventing Parolee Failure Program (PPFP) was implemented in a few select statewide locations to provide substance abuse education and treatment, employment readiness training and job placement assistance, literacy training, and multiple-services in a residential setting. In 1997, an internal CDC evaluation found that the PPFP reduced the rates of returns to prison among program participants, who were compared with parolees at comparable sites where such services were not available. The program was estimated to have saved 11,000 prison beds or savings of about \$74 million over the five-year study period (CDC Research Branch 1997).

Encouraged by these positive findings, the State Legislature provided funding in

1998 to expand the program, which was renamed the Preventing Parolee Crime Program (PPCP). The increased funding was almost three times the PPFP budget, and subsequent program expansion ensured over 80% of parole units access to at least one of the six service components (two employment programs, one multi-modality substance abuse treatment program, one substance education program, one computer assisted math and literacy training program, and one residential multi-services program).

Employment Programs. The two employment programs were the Jobs Plus (JP) and Offender Employment Continuum (OEC). JP was to help parolees obtain and retain full-time employment. Service providers were to develop job banks of local employers willing to hire parolees, and were paid for each successful job placement. To assist program participants, JP service providers also conducted one- or two-day workshops on employment seeking strategies, such as resume writing, dressing for an interview, and so forth. However, parolee participation in the workshops was voluntary and most program participants did not attend them.

In contrast, the focus of the OEC, was a 40-hour mandatory workshop that sought to improve parolees' interest and aptitude for work, identify and correct barriers to

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long-term employment, and encourage entry into vocational training. There were twelve JP subcontractors in nine counties during this study's observation period, and the program had an annual placement goal of approximately 3,900 parolees. OEC had six contractors in six counties during the observation period, and had about 4,000 workshop participants during this time.

Substance-Abuse Treatment Programs. The Parolee Services Network (PSN) was a substance-abuse treatment program with four major modalities of treatment: detoxification (usually the "social model" as opposed to in-hospital medical detoxification), residential drug treatment, primarily long-term (180 days), sober living environments that provided up to 90 days of drug and alcohol free community-based housing, and outpatient services. Not all sites had the complete range of services available. Statewide, the PSN operated in only eight counties with

a total of 500 treatment slots.

The Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery (STAR) was a four-week long education-based program designed to teach parolees how to recognize, acknowledge and prevent substance abuse problems. While the primary goal of the program was to resolve substance abuse problems, the program also aimed to change antisocial attitudes and behaviors, such as habitual lying, stealing and aggression, by teaching parolees how to increase self-control, and develop better problem-solving and conflict resolution skills. Classrooms were located in the parole units, and during the observation period they had 25 units with a capacity to serve over 550 parolees per month.

Computer Instruction Program. The Computerized Literacy Learning Center (CLLC) was a computer-assisted instructional program designed to increase parolees' literacy and mathematics skills. With the computer-assisted instruction students were able to work at their own pace. The main

goal of the program was to increase the math and reading skills of participating parolees by a minimum of two instructional levels. In addition to the more traditional curriculum, CLLC also had developed custom curricula designed to assist the parolee in obtaining and retaining employment. The program was open entry and exit; students could enroll and exit at any time. CLLC labs were also usually located in the parole offices, and during the observation period, there were over 200 computer workstations in 19 sites across the state.

The Residential Multi-Service Centers (RMSC) provided a residential therapeutic environment that allowed for the gradual transition of homeless parolees to independent living in the community. Parolees could stay in the centers for 180 days and were allowed to stay another 180 days with parole agent approval. The centers also provided aftercare (60 to 90 days in most cases). Residents had to save a portion of their earned

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Arizona Survey Reviews What Secure School Staff Know About the Juveniles They Supervise

by Kathie Putrow and John Vivian*

Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) staff who work with juveniles committed to state institutions have an extremely difficult job. These young people are among the most difficult teenagers that Arizona has to offer. A recent study (Research and Development and National Council on Crime & Delinquency, July 2003) found that 72% of them had four or more juvenile court adjudications, and many of the adjudications involved felony level offenses. Most are chronic delinquents with extensive histories of delinquency and substance abuse. Many of them come from dysfunctional families and present symptoms of severe emotional trauma. On average, juveniles spend nine months in an ADJC secure facility and six months under community supervision. During this time, ADJC staff face the daunting challenge of assessing and redirecting their delinquent thinking and behaviors.

In order to work effectively with these juveniles, we need to know them. At staff meetings and other venues between 2001 and 2003, ADJC Director David Gaspar challenged the agency's employees to relate to the juveniles committed to us as if they were our own children. Canadian researcher Paul Gendreau has identified eight principles of effective correctional intervention; two of them—responsivity and relating to offenders—pertain to staff familiarity with juveniles. "(T)herapists should relate to offenders in interpersonally sensitive and constructive ways and should be trained and supervised appropriately," says Gendreau (1996). The approach recommended by Gaspar and Gendreau is markedly different from the traditional adult corrections model in which prison staff are discouraged from becoming familiar with the personal histories of the inmates they supervise.

Purpose of Study

In March 2003, Joe Taylor, Assistant Director of ADJC Secure Schools, requested that the agency's Research and Development (R/D) Section undertake a project to identify what se-

cure school staff know about the juveniles they supervise. The purpose of the study was twofold. First, on an aggregate level, Taylor wanted baseline data on what secure school staff know about the juveniles they supervise. Second, presuming one facility has staff that are more knowledgeable than the others, we wanted to know why they were more knowledgeable.

This project presents ADJC with an opportunity to improve the specialized treatment given to the juveniles committed to us and to implement some groundbreaking research. If replicated, this project has the potential for paying long-term dividends to the juveniles committed to our care because "what gets measured gets done." ADJC is in the process of implementing a new classification system, and this new system will enhance our knowledge about juveniles committed to the department and how we treat them. As of August 2004, we have implemented the first 3 (of 12) Criminogenic and Protective Factors Assessment domains, including "youth risk to re-offend, behavioral health and medical and mental health, and school." The remaining domains (family, peer relationships, free time, skills, attitudes/behaviors, school, employment, alcohol/drugs, aggression, and sex offender) will be implemented by the end of the year.

This staff knowledge study was done using the existing ADJC measurements employed within the current classification system, which is less formal than the previous one. The type of information available to direct contact staff in the future will change in accordance with the implementation of the new classification system and other enhancements. Replication of this type of research should take advantage of the new data elements. This project is unique because we are unaware of any published research on how much juvenile correctional staff know about the personal histories of the juveniles in their care and custody.

The purpose of this article is to present the findings of our staff knowledge project. The results presented in this article would not have been possible without the kind assistance of all of the Secure School Superintendents and the full cooperation of numerous ADJC staff members.

Study Data and Research Methods

This staff knowledge research project was composed of seven different stages: ques-

tionnaire construction, sample selection, questionnaire administration, answer validation, data analysis, identification of best practices, and report preparation.

First, we developed a staff questionnaire, which was based on a review of the literature and the identification of ten criminogenic factors. We prepared questions and identified valid information sources for each of these factors. A pilot test of the questionnaire was performed using staff from the ADJC Community Corrections Division and appropriate modifications were made to the questionnaire. An analysis of information sources in the context of known criminogenic factors resulted in a questionnaire composed for the following 16 items:

- Gang membership;
- School attendance;
- Religious attendance;
- Problem solving skills;
- Level of responsibility;
- Medical issues;
- Family dynamics;
- Relationship with mother;
- Relationship with father;
- Suicide history;
- Impulse control;
- Judgment skills;
- Substance abuse history;
- Violent behavior history;
- Family environment; and
- Abuse history.

The next step was to select our sample. Since some secure school housing unit staff are assigned specific juveniles, we randomly selected the 102 staff that would receive the questionnaire first. Each staff member was given the opportunity to select the juveniles they would be asked about. We employed a stratified random sample design and selected four staff per housing unit with the results yielding 50% Youth Correctional Officer (YCO) Is, 30% YCO IIs, and the remaining 20% comprised of other direct contact staff, including Youth Program Supervisors, Psychology Associates and Youth Program Officer IIIs. (We excluded maintenance, separation, security, clerical and miscellaneous other staff

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in the ADJC institutions). We also excluded staff from the graveyard shift from our research because we felt they did not need to have as much knowledge about the juveniles.

The third stage of our research project involved administering the questionnaire. We tailored the administration method to each facility and its unique circumstances. Confidentiality was an important concern with this project. We wanted to ensure that the participating staff were not given an opportunity to prepare for the questionnaire before receiving it, thus biasing the results.

In the fourth stage of the project, we extracted information from the appropriate file sources for the respective juveniles. These sources were Youthbase, individual development plans, in-home evaluations, structured youth interviews, a mental status exam checklist, and our needs assessment conducted during the reception and classification process.

Next, a computer-based comparison of the two values for each juvenile on each of the 22 survey items was conducted. The results were coded as either a match, a non-match, or a unable to verify. The unable to verify codes were separated from the non-matches because they provided valuable data on the range of information that was unavailable.

During the sixth stage of the project, we met with the Superintendent from the facility that had the staff with the best overall knowledge of their juveniles to see what practices and procedures were used at that facility. After this stage, we prepared our report and conducted a briefing with Assistant Director Taylor and the superintendents at each facility in September 2003. We have retained the baseline data and hope to replicate the project in the future to measure progress in this area.

Findings

Approximately two-thirds of the staff knew the current school status (68.6%), substance abuse history (66.1%) and gang affiliation (65.7%) of the juveniles selected. Approximately half of the staff knew the suicide history (55.9%), medical history (52.9%) or nature of the juvenile's relationship with their mother (55.9%). Less than half of the staff knew the family dynamics (e.g. whether the juvenile lived with both natural parents, a parent and a step-parent, adoptive parents, were in a single parent home, or placed out of the home or with other relatives) (41.2%), or religious attendance (38.2%) of the juveniles. Approximately one-quarter of the staff knew the nature of the juvenile's relationship with their father (27.5%), and his or her problem

solving ability (27.5%), level of responsibility (26.5%) or level of violent behavior (25.5%). Approximately a fifth of the staff knew the family environment or the amount of conflict and disruption in the home (20.6%), history of abuse (19.6%), judgment skills (19.6%) or impulse control (15.7%) of the juveniles.

Five of the examined factors had a high proportion of data missing in the files, thus limiting staff knowledge. Those five factors and the proportion of missing data (unable to verify) were impulse control (60.8%), judgment skills (59.8%), religious attendance (23.5%), problem solving skills (23.5%), and level of responsibility (23.5 %).

The Catalina Mountain School (CMS) was found to have the highest staff knowledge score (52.2%, with the facility average being 48.6%), so we interviewed Vicki Bradley, the facility's Superintendent, to determine what programs, policies, or procedures were used at that facility to promote staff knowledge of juveniles. In our interview, Bradley attributed the knowledge of her staff to several factors, including the following:

- Lower staff attrition rates (experienced staff know how to relate to juveniles and obtain the needed information);
- Management avoids transferring staff among the different housing units, so the staff can get to know the juveniles better;
- Management has high expectations for transition meetings (participants are expected to attend the meetings prepared to present and discuss the relevant information);
- The appropriate staff, including teachers and recreation staff, regularly attend treatment teams;
- Management requires caseworkers to attend the Individual Education Planning (IEP) meetings; and
- Upper level staff are given the opportunity to work at least one visitation day, so they can become acquainted with families of the juveniles.

Discussion

Research has shown that an important component in redirecting juvenile delinquents is *responsivity* or the practice of properly assigning juveniles to the programs and staff that complement their unique blend of strengths and weaknesses. An accurate diagnosis of the background of each juvenile is the key to responsivity.

Our research indicates that ADJC staff are most knowledgeable about school attendance. Since we place considerable emphasis upon

education within our department, it is not surprising that school attendance rates were widely known (68.6%).

Quite a few ADJC staff (66.1 %) knew the substance abuse histories of the juveniles (i.e., specific substances the juvenile has used). While ADJC staff were also knowledgeable about the gang affiliation of the juveniles (65.7%), they were largely unaware of their history of violence (25.5%). The low level of knowledge about violence history could affect the safe management of our facilities.

ADJC has expended a considerable amount of time and energy preparing staff to deal with the trauma of juvenile suicide, and our research shows that 55.9% of the staff knew the suicidal history of the juveniles they were assigned.

Families are important partners in our effort to redirect the juveniles we receive, but ADJC staff have an incomplete picture of family backgrounds. Half (55.9%) of the staff knew the nature of the juvenile's relationship with his/her mother but only 27.5% knew the nature of the relationship with the father (measured as being good, bad, or no relationship). Meanwhile, 41.2% of the staff knew the family living arrangements of the juveniles, and 20.6% of the staff correctly identified the degree of conflict and disruption in the home (measured as the amount of conflicts, outside intervention, abuse and/or domestic violence present in the home).

President George W. Bush and others have advocated an enhanced role for religious organizations within corrections, and 38.2% of the staff in our study were able to identify the current religious attendance habits of juveniles.

Though a young person's judgment skills and impulse control are related to delinquency, only a few of the staff we contacted had information on these dimensions (19.6% and 15.7% respectively). Likewise, staff efforts to redirect delinquent habits and replace them with appropriate practices may be constrained by their limited knowledge of a juvenile's problem solving skills (27.5%) and level of responsibility (26.5%).

Half (52.9%) of the staff knew if their juveniles had significant medical issues in their past. Confidentiality of medical information may be an important impediment to full knowledge of this element, and may limit our ability to provide important medical assistance.

Conclusion

R/D was pleased to report that its effort to measure staff knowledge of juveniles committed to the ADJC was completed and confidentiality was not violated in the process. ADJC direct contact staff were found to know

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Worth Reading

by Frank Cesario*

Comparing Different Types of Child Abuse and Spouse Abuse Offenders

by Joe F. Pittman and Chih-Yuan S. Lee
19(2) Violence and Victimization 137
(2004)

The rates of child abuse and spouse abuse continue to grow each year. In this research article, Pittman and Lee focus on the different forms of abuse among the offender population. In particular, the authors review documentation from the United States Air Force's Family Advocacy Program, which includes 26,199 substantiated child abuse/neglect cases and 35,122 substantiated cases of spouse abuse. The researchers used a questionnaire based on information from

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the most about the juveniles school attendance, substance abuse history and gang membership. Staff were found to know the least about abuse history, judgment skills and impulse control of the juveniles. CMS was found to have the most knowledgeable staff, and the Superintendent of CMS identified six factors she believes contribute to the knowledge level of her staff.

R/D encourages readers to be cautious in the application of this information because the following factors may have a significant effect upon the findings:

- The staff included in the study may not believe what they read in the files or Youthbase, and/or the information they find there, may in fact, be inaccurate. ADJC is aggressively validating recorded information on the juveniles we receive and real progress has been achieved in this area. R/D staff have examined Youthbase data on an ongoing basis and have worked with other central office and institutional staff to correct the declining number of inaccuracies. We should continue these efforts to ensure recorded information is accurate.
- The best file sources for the various criminogenic factors used in this study may be different at different ADJC facilities and the scores we obtained may reflect those differences. If ADJC management chooses

clinical records. The Child Abuse Potential Inventory was also utilized to "identify inconsistent random responses, or tendencies to exaggerate responses." In the end, only a small sample was retained to complete the study.

In the realm of child abuse, the subgroups identified were psychological abuse and physical neglect. Spousal abuse was also divided into two categories, physical and psychological. Various demographic and economic factors were then compared and analyzed. The results were categorized to identify potential patterns and relationships.

Male offenders were most likely to physically abuse their children whereas female counterparts engaged in neglect. The authors found, "White offenders were over represented among neglectors and psychological abusers, while Black offenders were over represented in physical abuse." Married

offenders were more likely to be physical abusers than divorced or separated counterparts.

Older offenders were more likely to engage in physical and psychological child abuse whereas younger offenders used neglect. Definite patterns were identified for physical child abusers, who were often male, married, or Black. Neglectors were female, unmarried or White in most cases.

Very few research studies of abusers have examined the differences among abusers. Within the child abuse group, subtle differences were noted. The results "suggest that personal and interpersonal problems are not the foundation of these between-group differences." Rather, factors such as gender, marital status, and age played a role in the patterns of child abuse.

With regard to spousal abuse, most research finds that there is a progression from a physically abusive offender to a psycho-
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es to replicate this staff knowledge project in the future, we should convene a group of subject matter experts (SMEs) from the different facilities to ensure that we use a standard list of sources.

- Institutional staff may be encouraged to interact with the juveniles and to get the relevant criminogenic information directly from them and not rely upon department files or electronic records. While the dynamic nature of juveniles argues in favor of this approach, a considerable amount of time and effort is invested in creating the files and the department is not served by inaccurate file information and/or staff ignoring the files because they don't want to take the time to review it. Full implementation of the new classification system will yield additional important file information for direct contact staff to consider in their work, so this issue may assume greater importance in the future.
- Staff were randomly selected for this study and we don't know if there is a relationship between staff tenure and knowledge. Perhaps more senior staff know more about juveniles than staff fresh from the academy or vice versa. For this study, we felt that regardless of tenure, all staff should know a certain amount about the juveniles committed to our care and custody. If this project is replicated in the future, we would

like to collect tenure information from the staff in order to explore this question.

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From the Courts

Sarah Holmes

First Circuit Review of Mandatory Victim Restitution Act

The First Circuit Court of Appeals has considered the impact of the Mandatory Victim Restitution Act and its effect on the Federal Judiciary Delinquency Act (FJDA) in a decision that has broad interest for those involved with juvenile corrections. In *U.S. v. Patrick V.*, 359 F.3d 3 (1st Cir. 2004), the First Circuit concurred with the district court which had found that detention was justified, but sent the matter back to the lower court so that they could seek more information about both the location and the rehabilitative capabilities of an appropriate detention facility.

Patrick V. was a fifteen year old when he was charged with arson. In July of 2002 he and a 19-year-old companion broke into an industrial building that was part of Southern Maine Marine Services (SMMS), planning to steal a marine radio, but noticed surveillance cameras. In an attempt to avoid being caught, they spread gasoline and set the structure on fire. The next month a box located in another building and associated with the crime was traced to them and they were arrested. Patrick was charged with aiding, abetting and committing arson in a building used in interstate or foreign commerce, and authorities cited the FJDA, which gave them the authority to treat the matter on the federal level. The defendant confessed in a plea agreement presented at his arraignment in July 2003 and was moved to a treatment center in Utah for evaluation.

During the five months he spent at that treatment center, he was diagnosed as having a mood disorder, problems with his parents during an acrimonious divorce, poly-substance abuse and narcissistic traits. He was discharged after five months for not following the rules, interfering with computers, sexual misconduct and helping another resident obtain drugs to try to commit suicide. He was then transferred to a more secure facility in Texas for three weeks where it was reported he did well. They recommended a "significant order of restitution" but noted that the Mandatory Victims Restitution Act of 1996 would require full restitution, as a "crime of violence" had been committed.

At the disposition hearing, Patrick's attorney recommended that he be given three

A facility must provide a juvenile with the necessities of life, counseling, education, training and medical care, including necessary psychiatric, psychological and other care and treatment.

years of probation and be required to attend a therapeutic educational program. He suggested that if he were sentenced to a facility he would be exposed to hardened criminals. The lower court commended him for taking some responsibility for his actions (e.g., apologizing to the two victims), but concluded that "accepting responsibility for what you did requires some detention in addition to probation." The district court sentenced him to 30 months of detention, with 27 additional months of supervised release, and required that he and his codefendant pay restitution on a payment schedule, and that interest on the amount would be waived. Payments would become due following release from detention.

In this appeal to the First Circuit, counsel noted first that restitution under the FJDA is discretionary, even if the crime that had been committed was one of violence. Patrick's counsel also argued that the full

restitution required by the lower court would harm his rehabilitation; taking on such a large debt would be too difficult, especially when he had no work history and no financial resources. The First Circuit distinguished between two stages of restitution, threshold and mandatory, and looked at the repayment schedule, concluding appellant's premises were inflated. They noted that his financial circumstances would be reviewed at the end of his detention and that the repayment period would extend throughout the 27 months of supervised release, a period which they thought would not "doom all hopes of rehabilitation."

The First Circuit remanded the matter, noting a couple of areas for further questioning, including the type of facility that he had been assigned to. A facility must provide a juvenile with the necessities of life, counseling, education, training and medical care, including necessary psychiatric, psychological and other care and treatment. The statute also recommends that whenever possible, the attorney general should commit a juvenile to a foster home or community-based facility located in or near his home community. They requested continuing treatment equivalent to what he was receiving in the program in Texas. As there was no evidence that appropriate rehabilitative treatment is available, the court recommended that the district court assemble information from the parties about appropriate facilities.

Mandatory Drug Testing

The First Circuit also commented recently on mandatory drug testing in *U.S. v. Mesfin* and *U.S. v. Tulloch*, 380 F.3d 8 (1st Cir. 2004), as part of the supervised release conditions, and concluded that drug testing may be required and included in the written sentencing judgment without having been mentioned at sentencing.

The two defendants, Higinia Alejandro-Castillo and Mesfin Haile Tulloch, both had pled guilty to trying to enter the United States and were sentenced to terms of imprisonment and three-year terms of release. They appealed the decision contending that the sentences illegally allowed probation officers to determine how many drug tests would be required while they were on probation. They also claimed that the judge included conditions for parole that were not

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participation. Findings suggest that victims who refuse to participate believe the crime was too trivial to merit the time required, or fear meeting the offender, or want the offender to have a harsher punishment (Coates and Gehm, 1985; Umbreit, 1995; Templin, 2002). Several studies indicate that victim willingness to participate is initially driven by a desire for restitution, as a way of holding offenders accountable, to tell the offender about the pain caused, to hear why the crime was committed, to help the offenders change behavior, and to see that the offenders were adequately punished (Davis, 1980; Coates and Gehm, 1985; Perry, Lajeunesse, and Woods, 1987; Umbreit, 1989; Umbreit, 1995; Niemeyer and Shichor, 1996; Umbreit, Coates and Vos, 2001).

The idea of meeting the person who violated one's own space or person is troubling for many, ridiculous for some, and *a way of doing something* for others. Not surprisingly this study's findings reflect the common wisdom on the street: Some victims are quite willing to participate in victim offender mediation/conferencing and others are not. In this article, we attempt to ferret out some of the whys.

The Washington County Department of Court Services asked the University of Minnesota Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking to conduct a study of adult victims referred to its Community Justice Program's Victim Offender Conferencing Program, focusing on why victims choose to participate or not participate in the program.

In Minnesota, Washington County Court Services has a long community based tradition of attempting to adopt restorative justice principles involving offenders, victims, and communities as the basis for shaping their responses to crime. Conferencing may take place between a victim and an offender, within small groups that include family members, or in even larger groups including neighbors or other persons designated as significant. Cases, and thus conferences, may involve multiple victims and multiple offenders. Two staff members and over 60 volunteers carry out preparatory work and conference meetings. Most conference meetings take place in local churches or libraries.

How the Study Was Done

In order to address the primary question of who participates and why, we had to consider a number of related questions including the following:

- Who is referred and why;
- Who chooses to participate and who does not;
- What reasons lead to the decision to participate or not;
- How does pre-conference influence participation;
- How was the conference helpful or not helpful; and
- What other unmet needs do study participants identify.

Space limitations in this article allow us to focus only on the questions of who chooses (or does not) and what reasons determine their participation (for a fuller discussion of these questions, see Coates, Burns and Umbreit (2003)).

The sensitive nature of this research effort must be highlighted here since it affected how we went about contacting and interviewing adult victims referred to the program. In order to address the central question regarding choosing to participate or not, we needed access to persons who had opted not to seek a meeting with the offenders in their cases. It was expected that these individuals would be quite reluctant to participate in a research study aimed at understanding why they made the decision not to participate.

In order to enhance the likelihood of this group participating, it was decided to develop a very brief phone interview instrument with the idea that a short interruption in their lives might be more readily tolerated than a long one. With this in mind, three interview schedules were devised:

- One for those victims who did not have a face-to-face pre-conference;
- One for those victims who had a face-to-face pre-conference but did not meet with the offender; and
- One for those victims who had a face-to-face pre-conference and did meet with the offender.

The average length of time required for the interview ranged from 10 to 20 minutes.

The data collection period covered 10 months of program activity from January through October 2002. Cases with suits pending, in which offenders declined to participate, and those where the program was unable to reach the victim, were excluded from this study. Names of the 146 adult victims referred to the program were relayed to the research team and formed the referral pool from which our sample was obtained. Each victim received a letter inviting participation in the study.

The total return rate of completed interviews was 28%. Forty-one of the 146 adult victims in our referral pool were interviewed. Eighteen of these 41 study participants met in conference with their offenders. Twenty-three of them did not. Half of the victims who met with offenders during the ten-month study period participated in the study in contrast with 21% of those who had not met with their offenders.

It should be clear that the resulting group of persons interviewed does not represent a random selection of adult victims referred to the program. They are a collection of individuals who were referred to victim offender conferencing and who agreed to participate in this study. Individual and offense characteristics, between those who opted to participate in this study and those who did not, varied little with the exception of victim gender. While males make up slightly more than half of the referral pools, females comprise 57% of our study group. Perhaps this suggests that women are more willing to participate in this type of research effort.

In addition to these victim interviews, six probation officers responsible for intake and referral and nine mediators/facilitators were interviewed.

Deciding to Meet or Not Meet the Offender

We now direct our attention specifically to the question of factors that may influence whether or not victims meet with offenders in conference. We divide our sample into those victims who went through the conferencing process and met directly with their offenders and those who did not.

Twenty-six percent of those cases where victims did not meet offenders involved misdemeanors, 17% were gross misdemeanors, and 56% were felonies. Of the total cases that led to a meeting, only 6% involved misdemeanors, 28% were gross misdemeanors, and 67% were felonies.

Eighty-six percent of the cases in which victims did not meet were property offenses and 14% were crimes against persons. In contrast, half the cases in which victims did meet were property offenses and half were crimes against persons. Diversion cases represented 23% of the cases where a meeting was not held. Thirty-two percent of these cases originated at the point of pre-sentence investigation and 45% post-disposition. In contrast, none of the cases where victims met with their offenders were diversion cases. These cases were evenly divided between pre-sentence investigation and post-disposition.

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Although the number of study participants is small, there is a consistent pattern that those cases where victims met with offenders involved somewhat more serious offenses and with more offenders who had penetrated the system further. It is particularly striking that none of the cases that resulted in conferences within our sample were diversion cases.

Why this tendency for the "conferenced" cases to be more serious may be partially explained as we considered the reasons victims gave for desiring to meet or not meet with the offenders.

First, though, we should note that while the vast majority of study participants indicated that family members neither encouraged nor discouraged their participation in the program, 26% of those victims who did not meet reported that family did discourage their participation. None of those victims who met the offender said that family members acted to discourage their participation. Those who were discouraged to participate said, "My wife wasn't too interested in it." "My husband didn't agree with the sentence." "My husband and I felt like we had put in enough time." On the other hand, those who were encouraged to participate said, "My family and my boyfriend were supportive." "We and our neighbors agreed it was a good idea." "My husband thought it was a great opportunity. He was angry but supportive."

Participants in this study were asked directly to respond to a series of statements of reasons that victims often give for wanting to meet or not meet with offenders. Interviewees were asked to answer "Yes" if any of the reasons were true for them. The list of reasons has been gleaned from previous studies and from meetings held with administrative staff of the Washington County program.

We have rank ordered victims' reasons for wanting or not wanting to meet with offenders, that is, items receiving the most affirmative responses are ranked number one, number two, and so on. We begin this part of the analysis by considering first those victims who did not meet with offenders.

Reasons of Non-Participating Victims

Fifteen victims agreed that they had not wanted to meet the offenders because it was "not worth the time and trouble involved." The second ranked reason (nine responses) was "the matter had already been taken care of." The third ranked reason (six responses) was "too much time had already gone by since

the crime." It should be noted that for this group the median number of days from the offense to referral to the program was 115 days and the median number of days between the offense and contact with the program was 154 days. The fourth ranked reason (five responses) given was "I just wanted my money." The fifth (four responses) was "the system just wanted to slap the wrist of the offender." Two individuals indicated they "didn't want to help the offender" and two also said "family or friends said I shouldn't do it."

Study participants also had the opportunity to provide further explanation for their reasons. Other concerns included the safety of the meeting: "I didn't feel I could be civil;" "I would have been in jail;" "I didn't want to be recognized by the offender;" "I didn't want her to know it was me."

The issues of the offense not being worth the time and trouble involved and the belief that the matter had already been taken care of are fleshed out more in the following responses. One victim told us, "I just wanted to forget about it, not bring it up again." Another said, "I didn't see the value in it. The guy knew he was wrong." Other related comments include: "We knew the offender's mother. He was just acting out, I believe. We just said we want him to stay away from our house." "It would have been a waste of my time to talk to somebody about that." "It wasn't a big amount of money." "Boys that age do stuff like that. I didn't want to make a big deal out of it." "Time had gone by." "We all thought it was a lot of rigmarole for a mailbox, for something that seemed like not such a big deal. I work two jobs and it's not convenient for me to work things in." "It was basically so minor, that I didn't think it was worth my time."

Other victims who did not want to meet with the offenders were more focused on the offender and the system. Their comments included: "They didn't need me to testify in court. I thought if they can handle it, let them handle it." "The offenders never took the initiative to speak with me. I don't see why I should go out of my way to speak to them." "It was going to be beneficial to the other party if we met. It wasn't going to benefit me."

Two groups emerge from these data. The largest group consists of those persons who did not want to meet with offenders because the offense was not serious enough to merit their time or the trouble it would take to go through the conferencing process. And a smaller group consists of individuals who want to do nothing that may help the offender.

Reasons of Participating Victims

We will now look at the responses of those victims who did want to meet with offenders. In the first place, more of these victims selected many more reasons to explain why they wanted to meet. The highest ranked reason for wanting to meet with offenders with 17 of the 18 victims responding affirmatively was: "I hoped the offender/s would be helped by meeting with me." Two reasons were tied (16 responses) for the second most frequently mentioned reason ranking: "I wanted to hear why the offender did this to me," "I wanted the offender to know how his/her actions affected me." Fourteen respondents indicated they wanted to meet offenders because: "I wanted to be able to ask my questions," or "It (conferencing) sounded like an interesting process." The next most often cited reason (13) underscores concern for personal safety: "I wanted to be sure the offender(s) wouldn't come back and do it again." And ten study participants reported that they wanted to meet offenders because "I wanted a say in how and when the offender(s) will pay me back or make it right."

Fewer of these respondents had a need to elaborate on their reasons for wanting to meet with offenders than did those who did not want to meet, but we share excerpts from these explanations since they provide another lens onto the question of why victims choose to meet with offenders. Comments included: "I wanted to hear why he/she did this to me. Why us?" "I wanted to know why he did what he did." "I did it to give him a perspective, the other side of the coin." "I wanted to hear both sides of the story. I know what he did was wrong, but understood how things like that happen." "Our son had done some vandalism and we made him confront and talk to the person. It was probably the best thing in the world for him. We hope this would be helpful to the offenders."

Taken together, the reasons most often given by victims who want to meet with offenders form three clusters:

- One set of reasons revolve around wanting to receive an explanation of why the crime occurred, including having the opportunity to have one's questions answered;
- Another set of reasons are more focused on offenders, including that they understand the impact their acts have had and the hope that the offenders would be helped by meeting with victims; and
- A third set of reasons had more to do with a sense that victims are engaged in how

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offenders make things right so that they won't come back and do it again.

It is intriguing to us that 14 of the 17 respondents indicated that one reason they chose to participate is that the conferencing process sounded interesting. That certainly speaks to the importance of providing an overview of the steps of conferencing as early in the process as possible.

The two groups—those victims who did not want to meet with offenders and those who did—appear at first glance to be quite different in attitude and expectations. There likely are in fact differing philosophical bents between at least some of the persons in these two groups regarding the nature of justice and the role of the criminal justice system. While this issue was not a focus of the work done here, it certainly can be expected that such differences will exist among victims of crimes just as such philosophical differences exist across the broader society. Still, it also should be remembered that some of those who chose not to meet because of time and perceived trouble involved might have made a different choice if the matter at hand had been more serious. As noted earlier, those who did meet with offenders tended to have more serious cases and cases where the offenders had penetrated further into the justice system.

Conclusion

The results presented in this article are fairly consistent with the growing body of literature addressing the question of why crime victims choose to meet or not meet their offenders. Victim offender conferencing is clearly not for every victim. Some individuals will likely be philosophically and/or emotionally opposed to such meetings. Some will conclude that, given their losses, meeting with the offender is not worth the time and trouble. Other victims, however, welcome the opportunity to meet with the offenders who have violated them. Some of these will do so because they want to help the offenders change their behaviors; some want to tell their stories of the pain caused and see some remorse; some have questions for offenders; and some want a say in how repairing the harm is done and in holding offenders accountable for their actions.

Those victims who do meet with offenders are a highly self-selecting group. It is their choice, for whatever reason, to meet. We know from this study and from a broad range of other studies that victims who choose to meet their offenders come away from the

process with high levels of satisfaction (Latimer, Dowden, and Muise, 2001; Umbreit, Coates, and Vos, 2002). Nearly 90% of the victims who met with offenders in this study reported that meeting with the offender had been helpful.

Perhaps one of the more far-reaching findings of this study for the criminal justice system as a whole is that over 85% of those victims who met with offenders did not wish that the justice system had offered them more, while nearly half of those victims who did not meet their offenders wished that the justice system had offered more. It would appear that the second group of victims completed the justice process more frustrated and dissatisfied than the first group.

Nearly 90% of the victims who met with offenders in this study reported that meeting with the offender had been helpful.

This does not mean that crime victims should somehow be coerced or forced to participate. The voluntary nature of participation is crucial to the mediation/conferencing process because choice empowers individuals who have experienced loss due to the offense committed against them and who often feel powerless when facing the trappings of the formal justice process.

In Washington County Court Services, as in any jurisdiction providing mediation/conferencing as an option for crime victims, there is a constant winnowing of cases that may be appropriate for mediation/conferencing. Because the benefits for victims who meet their offenders are perceived by themselves as quite positive and because indirectly, at least, the criminal justice system as a whole is regarded in a positive light by these victims as an outcome of their participation, it behooves referral sources, program intake staff, and mediators to provide the most useful information about this option in as timely a way as possible so victims can make informed decisions about further participation.

The goal of the winnowing process, it seems to us, is to maximize the number of likely candidates for mediation/conferencing, while accepting the fact that many victims will opt out because the crime event was too minor or because they remain philosophically or emotionally opposed to such a meeting.

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income to provide a foundation for independent living. Typically, the centers organized activities that included literacy training, individual and group counseling for substance abuse, life skills such as communication and problem solving, and employment preparedness. Most centers also had a job specialist and a drug treatment counselor on-site; one had a CLLC lab. During the observation period, there were six multi-service centers in the state with approximately 225 beds.

Method

In this study, we attempted to assess the PPCP from three angles: the extent the PPCP as a whole was effective in reducing recidivism; the extent individual programs were effective in reducing recidivism; and the extent different levels of participation in the services were effective (i.e., incremental effects) in reducing recidivism.

In the context of this evaluation, we defined recidivism as any unfavorable movement of a parolee out of the actively supervised parole status. There are three basic movements that can happen to prisoners released to parole:

- Formal discharge from parole due to satisfactory completion of the parole term;
- Re-incarceration due to new convictions or parole violations; and
- Suspension from parole due to absconding.

Our evaluation focused on the latter two measures of recidivism: re-incarceration and absconding from parole supervision. Though parolees can be jailed at local jurisdictions for parole violations or other criminal offenses, in this study we only tracked re-incarcerations in the state prison system.

Data Sources

Data for this study came from two primary sources. The first was the official automated records maintained by the CDC, which include the Offender-Based Information System (OBIS) and Statewide Parole Data Base (SPDB). These data, which are routinely collected by CDC, track the movements of parolees throughout the California prison and parole complexes, and also contain some criminal history and background demographics about the parolees. The data supplied by CDC in this study covered approximately two decades and allowed us to conduct both historical and contemporaneous analyses.

The second data source was the service provider records. Service providers in the PPCP were under contract with the CDC to forward service utilization data to the CDC Research Branch on a regular basis. These data provided information about the numbers of parolees who used their services, the specific services used, and the outcomes of these service contacts.

Observation Period and Comparison Population

Although the PPCP received its funding in fiscal year 1998/99, the startup phase of the program's expansion took much of the first two years. Consequently, our observation period began during fiscal years 2000/01 and 2001/02 and ended on June 30, 2003. Although observations began at different times during the study period, all ended no later than June 30, 2003. Only those who had at least 12 months of observation time were included in this study. All parolees who fell within this observation period, and who were also enrolled in any of the PPCP services, were included in this study as the treatment group. All parolees in the state who were not enrolled in any of the PPCP services were used to form the comparison group.

Two methodological considerations determined our decision to use the state non-PPCP population for comparison purposes instead of following the common practice in evaluation research of using the case matching method to select a comparison group.

First, the case matching method can only provide some control over descriptive variables (e.g., race, gender, age, and prior incarcerations) that are related to recidivism. However, given sufficient sample sizes, these variables are easily controlled through multivariate statistical procedures. Moreover, the case matching method also tends to become exceedingly difficult and statistically unstable with each additional control variables.

Second, and more importantly, drawing samples (irrespective of the sampling techniques) means some loss of information about the population. Since we had the access to the entire state's parole and prison automated records as well as all PPCP service provider data, we opted to conduct parametric estimates by using the entire PPCP participant population and the entire non-PPCP parolee population. By using the population data, our estimates of the program impact should be more precise and stable.

Using all who were not part of the PPCP for comparison purposes raises the issue of

selection bias, that is, somehow those who were enrolled in PPCP services were qualitatively different (e.g., either due to self motivation or favorable prognosis by the parole agent) from those who were not. Although we cannot rule out the possibility of selection bias as a confounding factor of program outcomes, there were several mitigating factors.

First, the PPCP is not the only community-based correctional service available in California. Although the availability of programs may be inadequate to serve all the parolees in California (approximately 110,000), there are other state and locally funded programs available.

Second, there were relatively few PPCP services available and/or they were unevenly distributed across the state. For example, there were only six multi-service centers with a total of 233 slots in the entire state, while the substance abuse treatment component only operated in eight counties with a total of 500 treatment slots. More widely available services, such as the employment assistance and computer-assisted literacy labs, were not evenly distributed across the state. Access to these services varied widely from county to county.

Last, our analyses show that parolees enrolled in these services were not demographically different from the larger parole population.

Analyses and Findings

A total of 28,708 parolees were admitted into the PPCP services during the study period; 211,211 releases did not enroll in the PPCP program during the same time interval. Table 1 on page 59 presents demographic profiles of both the PPCP participants and the comparison population and indicates a high degree of similarity between the two groups. However, there were interesting gender and race differences in the composition of both groups. Although women comprised about 9% of the statewide parolee population, they made up 14% of the PPCP admissions, suggesting that women were more disposed to use PPCP services than men. Similarly, the percent of African-American PPCP participants was higher than the percent of parolees that were African American, although their participation in the PPCP varied considerably across programs. For example, African Americans enrolled at a higher rate in the OEC than in the Jobs Plus program; but they were far less likely to enroll in the PSN program relative to their participation in other

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PPCP services. On the other hand, white parolees were more likely to enroll in the PSN relative to their proportion in the statewide parolee population.

Most PPCP parolees were the same age as the statewide parolee population, about 35 to 36 years old. Parolees in the RMSC were the only exception; they were on average three years older than their counterparts in other PPCP service components as well as the statewide parolee population. On average, PPCP parolees had three prior incarcerations in the California state prison system, which mirrored the statewide parolee population. Those enrolled in the RMSCs, however, had more prior incarcerations on average than parolees enrolled in other PPCP programs and the statewide non-PPCP parolee population. Although principal commitment offenses of PPCP parolees were very similar to the non-PPCP parolees, there were significant differences in principal commitment offense category distributions within specific PPCP services, reflecting the needs of the program participants. For example, 44.5% of the parolees enrolled in STAR, the drug education program, had a drug-related principal commitment offense compared to 38.7% of the non-PPCP population.

Our analysis in this phase included three recidivism measures: return to prison within 12 months following release to parole; return to prison within 12 months following beginning of treatment; and absconding from parole within 12 months following beginning of treatment.

Jobs Plus. In strictest terms, the Jobs Plus program met its benchmark when a parolee completed a job development workshop and then began stable full-time employment. However, because the workshop was optional, a relatively low percentage of client outcomes fit this definition of success. Thus, we defined a successful Jobs Plus episode as one that resulted in a job placement. We divided participants enrolled in this service into three groups: those that enrolled but did not attend the workshop nor started employment; those that completed the workshop but did not start employment; and those that were placed in employment, irrespective of workshop attendance.

As shown in Table 2 on page 60, Jobs Plus participants who attended the workshop and/or were placed in employment were significantly less likely to recidivate or abscond than their counterparts who did not attend the workshop or find work. Parolees enrolled in this employment service were much less likely to be returned to prison within one year from release to pa-

role compared to both the non-Jobs Plus parolees and the non-PPCP population. The re-incarceration rate among those who found work was 31.4% compared to 52.8% of statewide non-PPCP parolees.

Offender Employment Continuum. We performed a similar analysis of recidivism among OEC clients. The primary goal of the OEC was defined as attending the job development workshop and obtaining employment. Because the OEC employment workshop was mandatory and a much more central aspect of its services, we divided the OEC participants into four different groups: those who enrolled but did not attend the workshop and did not start employment; those who attended the workshop but did not complete it; those who completed the workshop; and those who completed the workshop and began employment.

The OEC results parallel those of Jobs Plus. As shown in Table 2, only 26.6% of OEC clients who completed the workshop and obtained employment were re-incarcerated within one year of release to parole, compared to 52.8% of the statewide non-PPCP parolee population. Moreover, incremental benefits were clearly evident depending on the degrees of participation in the program services. As with Jobs Plus, those who met the program goal of completing the workshop and obtaining employment were also less likely to recidivate within one year from admission to OEC and were also less likely to abscond than the OEC participants that did not meet the program goal.

Residential Multi-Service Centers. Our analysis of the RMSC was hampered by the low numbers of participants who actually stayed the full 180 days at these centers. (Fewer than 10% of those enrolled stayed the entire length. Many parolees found the rules and regulations at these centers too restrictive and wanted to leave as soon as they could find an alternative living arrangement.) Consequently, we included data on the length of stay to gauge the incremental benefits. Those who completed the program benefited the most with only a 15.2% re-incarceration rate within the 12 months following release to parole, as shown in Table 2 on page 60. Although there were clear incremental benefits associated with increased lengths of stay, those who dropped out within the first 30 days were more likely to recidivate within the first twelve months of release from prison than the comparison group (56.3 versus 52.8%, respectively). Those who completed the program were also less likely to

Table 1. Demographic Profiles of Non-PPCP Parolee Population and PPCP Parolee Population*

	Individual Programs							
	Non-PPCP Parolee Population	All PPCP Admissions	CLLC	STAR	PSN	Jobs Plus	OEC	RMSC
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Gender								
Male	90.6	85.6	84.1	84.8	86.0	86.2	87.7	89.3
Female	9.4	14.2	15.9	15.2	14.0	13.8	12.3	10.7
Race/Ethnicity								
African American	30.0	36.7	40.2	33.4	22.4	35.2	52.6	58.6
Pacific Asian	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2	1.1	0.5	0.0
Latino	16.4	16.7	18.1	18.2	19.0	16.0	11.9	11.6
Mexican	16.2	12.5	12.6	10.4	11.6	14.9	13.8	6.7
White	34.1	31.0	26.6	35.5	44.4	29.9	18.7	21.2
Other	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.4	3.0	2.6	1.9
Age at Entry	35.8	35.8	35.7	36.5	36.8	35.0	35.2	39.3
Education								
< H.S. Graduate	n/a	45.9	63.0	44.4	41.9	36.0	39.5	43.6
H.S. Grad or GED	n/a	49.7	35.5	51.2	48.5	60.0	56.7	44.5
A.A. Degree	n/a	3.0	1.5	3.4	5.2	2.6	2.6	7.0
B.A. Degree	n/a	1.4	0.5	1.0	4.5	1.4	1.2	1.5
Avg. Prior Prison Incarcerations	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.5	2.8	2.9	4.3
Principal Commitment Offense								
Violent	21.9	21.6	21.3	16.1	11.8	26.3	30.1	14.2
Property	30.0	29.8	29.9	31.9	31.2	27.0	28.7	35.7
Drug	38.7	40.9	41.1	44.5	50.0	38.5	34.2	44.5
Other	9.4	7.7	7.8	7.6	5.9	8.2	7.1	5.6
Base Number	211,211*	28,708	8,221	7,843	3,646	8,713	3,686	1,390

* Note: PPCP parolees are only those parolees released to parole in FY's 00/01-01/02 and who were enrolled in PPCP.

* Because parolees could be released multiple times during the observation period, this number refers to total releases during the observation period and was larger than the actual population of parolees.

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recidivate or abscond within one year from admission to RMSC than the RMSC participants that did not meet the program goal, and longer periods in treatment were associated with the reduced likelihood of both.

Computerized Literacy Learning Centers. As we found with the other PPCP services, meaningful engagement with the CLLC services was associated with lower rates of recidivism, as shown in Table 2. In addition to examining the program effect among those who met the program goal of increasing the math and reading skills by a minimum of two instructional levels, we also divided the program participants into two additional groups to gauge the incremental effects of the literacy service—those who performed below the average learning gain, and those who performed at or above the average but fell short of the program goal. In total, we examined four groups of CLLC participants: those who were referred but did not begin instruction; those who

achieved less than the average skill gain in math and/or reading; those who met or exceeded the average math and/or reading skill gain, but did not reach the program goal; and those who met the program goal by increasing their math and/or reading skills at least two grade levels.

As shown in Table 2 below, the largest benefit accrued to those who increased their math and/or reading skills at least two instructional levels—only 24.1% were returned to custody within 12 months of release to parole. Moreover, with increased levels of educational attainment, the rate of re-incarceration dropped consistently. The same pattern of incremental benefits was also found on recidivism and absconding within one year of referral to the CLLC.

Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery. One unique aspect of the STAR program was that most parolees enrolled in this program had failed an Anti-Narcotics Test (ANT) and were referred to this service in lieu of incarceration for this parole violation. Because of their substance abuse

problems, and usually, an unwillingness to attend STAR, as a group, these parolees were at a particularly high risk of parole revocation; consequently, their recidivism rates were higher than their counterparts enrolled in other service components.

Despite the implied coercion in program participation, successful program completion was associated with lowered rates of recidivism. The rate of re-incarceration within one year of release to parole among those who managed to complete the program was 41.9% compared to 52.8% of non-PPCP parolees. Interestingly, those who completed at least 60 hours of instruction (half of the classroom instruction hours), but did not graduate, recidivated at about the same rate as those who completed less than 60 hours of instruction (65.4 and 68.6%, respectively). As with all other PPCP programs, those who graduated from STAR also recidivated and absconded at a much lower rate within one year from admission to the program than did parolees that did not graduate from STAR.

Parolee Services Network. Our analysis of the PSN clients was more detailed than other PPCP services because of the diversity in the treatment goals and outcomes across the multiple PSN modalities (detox, residential, outpatient and SLE). Because of differences in treatment modalities and entry points by parolees with different degrees of drug use problems, there were no standard processes by which clients would move from one treatment stage to the next and complete the entire course. As a result, we attempted to capture the essential features of these different treatment modalities and to gauge the effect of their singular services as well as the effects of using more than one modality of treatment.

We first provide the overall recidivism rates for all PSN clients, irrespective of the treatment modality, as shown in Table 3 on page 61. Increasing levels of participation and success in completing any PSN treatment were associated with declining recidivism rates. For example, PSN clients who met the goals of two or more treatment modalities recidivated at a rate of 12.5% compared to 41.7% among all PSN clients.

The data within each subsection correspond to different levels of participation or progression in the treatment modality. We assessed the effect of different treatment modalities by grouping the clients according to their initial service entry point. For example, if parolees entered the PSN by first receiving treatment in detoxification, they are listed in the “detoxification” section under the subheading “Initial Admis-

See PAROLE SERVICES, next page

Table 2. 12-Month Recidivism Rates Among Program Participants

	Re-incarcerated within 12 Months of Release to Parole		Re-incarcerated within 12 Months of Service Admission		Absconded within 12 Months of Service Admission	
	Base Number	Percent	Base Number	Percent	Base Number	Percent
All Jobs Plus Admissions*	8,713	37.7	8,713	44.0	8,713	13.7
Did Not Attend Workshop, Did Not Begin Employment	3,571	46.5	3,571	53.2	3,571	17.3
Completed Workshop, Did Not Begin Employment	377	33.4	377	41.4	377	13.8
Began Employment	4,765	31.4	4,765	37.2	4,765	11.0
All OEC Admissions	3,686	35.9	3,686	42.4	3,686	13.0
Enrolled, No Services Received	71	52.1	71	56.3	71	12.9
Attended Workshop, Did not Complete	1,127	45.2	1,127	52.0	1,127	17.7
Completed Workshop	2,492	31.3	2,492	37.6	2,492	10.8
Completed Workshop, Began Employment	1,507	26.6	1,507	31.6	1,507	8.4
All RMSC Admissions	1,390	43.1	1,390	48.4	1,390	25.9
Stayed Less than 30 Days	545	56.3	545	61.5	545	31.4
Stayed Between 30 and 90 Days	350	49.4	350	54.0	350	27.1
Stayed between 91 and 179 Days	318	29.2	318	35.8	318	22.6
Stayed 180 Days or More	177	15.2	177	19.8	177	12.4
All CLLC Admissions	8,221	41.3	8,221	48.1	8,221	17.5
Referred, Did Not Begin Instruction	929	48.6	929	53.4	929	21.8
Achieved Less Than Average Learning Gain	4,937	45.3	4,937	52.4	4,937	18.4
Achieved Greater than Average Learning Gain, but Did Not Reach Program Goal	1,160	36.4	1,160	43.9	1,160	15.8
Achieved Program Goal for Learning Gain	1,195	24.1	1,195	30.5	1,195	12.4
All STAR Admissions	7,843	57.0	7,843	67.6	7,843	23.4
Less Than 60 Hours of Instruction	3,580	68.6	3,580	78.2	3,580	30.3
At Least 60 Hours of Instruction, But Did Not Graduate	974	65.4	974	75.4	974	26.4
Graduated from Program	3,289	41.9	3,289	53.9	3,289	15.0
Non-PPCP Parolee Population*	211,211	52.8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*Note: Because parolees could be released multiple times during the observation period, these numbers refer to total releases during the observation period and are greater than the actual number of individual parolees

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sion Modality.” Within each initial admission modality, we compared the recidivism of parolees that completed the treatment goal to parolees that did not, as well as the recidivism of parolees that completed the treatment goal of another modality in which they subsequently enroll.

As seen in Table 3, meeting the treatment goal in any modality was again associated with a drop in recidivism. For example, among parolees that began treatment in the outpatient modality (ODF), only 14.2% recidivated within one year of release to parole if they met the ODF treatment goal, compared to 51.5% of those that did not meet the ODF goal. This beneficial pattern was amplified when the goals of at least two treatment goals were met. For example, of those parolees that initially enrolled in the ODF modality, those that completed two or more treatment goals were slightly less likely to recidivate within one year of release to parole (12.8%) than those that only achieved the ODF goal (14.2%). This pattern was also seen for return to custody and for absconding within one year of PSN program admission. In general, regardless of modality, those who met treatment goals

were less likely to recidivate or abscond than those that did not meet treatment goals.

Differences in re-incarceration rates were found across modalities. For example, parolees who entered the PSN via the detoxification or outpatient modalities were much more likely to recidivate or abscond than parolees who began treatment in a residential program or sober living environment. It appears participants who only enrolled in detoxification showed the least benefits unless they continued to receive additional treatment services.

Summary Findings

To summarize the detailed findings from the above-presented program effects, we aggregated the impact of all PPCP services on participants’ rate of returns to prison. As shown in Table 4 (page 62), the collective effect of the program was rather evident as the PPCP participants as a group had a recidivism rate of eight percentage points below that of the statewide non-PPCP parolees. Those who met at least one program’s treatment goal had a recidivism rate about 20 percentage points below that achieved by PPCP clients who met no program goals. Moreover, those who were able to meet more than one program goal were

re-incarcerated at a much lower rate than that of all other sub-groups presented in the table, indicating a compounding or cumulative effects of multiple services provided by the PPCP. PPCP participants who failed to achieve any program goals were re-incarcerated at the same rate as the statewide non-PPCP population. Overall, most of the positive effects of the PPCP accrued to those who completed their enrolled services.

The analyses presented for each service provider in this paper were further substantiated with multivariate logistic regression analyses that examined whether or not the observed patterns persisted after controlling for other known risk factors for which the data were available, such as the parolee’s age, gender, race, number of prior incarcerations, principal commitment offense (rank-ordered on likelihood of recidivism), and parole regions. In each case, the observed differences between those who met program goals and those who did not *persisted* when the effects of the control variables were considered. For example, PPCP participants as a group had the odds ratio of .714 ($p < .001$) when compared to their non-PPCP counterparts, indicating significantly reduced likelihood of recidivating within the 12-month observation period, after controlling for the differences between the two groups of subjects on factors related to recidivism. The differences in the odds ratios were even greater when we compared those who completed one program goal and then two or more program goals against the statewide non-PPCP population. In short, we are fairly confident that the patterns of findings on the PPCP effectiveness as described earlier in the contingency tables will remain in spite of the observed differences in a few demographic variables.

Discussion of Findings

Evaluation Design Issues and Data Limitations. We cannot rule out self-selection bias as a possible confounding factor, in which the successful outcomes discussed earlier are more of a function of participating parolees’ self-motivation and desire to improve their lives rather than of the services themselves. Nor can we rule out selection bias of the referring parolee agents, in which they refer only parolees they believe are most likely to succeed. The design of this evaluation was unable to answer the selection bias question. Without a true experimental study involving random assignment, selection bias will subject our findings to alternative interpretations. On the other hand, we did find significant treatment effects. See *PAROLE SERVICES, next page*

Table 3. 12-Month Recidivism Rates Among Parolees Admitted to PSN Services

	Returned To Custody within 12 Months of Release to Parole		Returned To Custody within 12 Months of PSN Admission		Absconded within 12 Months of PSN Admission	
	Base Number	Percent	Base Number	Percent	Base Number	Percent
Overall						
All PSN Admissions*	3,646	41.7	3,646	52.9	3,646	18.9
No Treatment	138	66.7	138	76.1	138	25.5
Treated: Met No Goals	2,456	48.1	2,456	60.8	2,456	21.9
Treated: Met One Treatment Goal	900	25.3	900	33.3	900	11.9
Treated: Met Two or More Goals	152	12.5	152	20.4	152	11.3
Initial Admission Modality						
<i>Detoxification (Detox)</i>						
All Admissions	373	49.3	373	59.8	373	26.8
Did Not Meet Detox Goal	167	55.1	167	65.9	167	24.6
Met Detox Goal	206	44.7	206	54.8	206	27.7
Met Two or More Goals	23	30.4	23	43.5	23	26.1
<i>Residential Treatment Facility (RDF)</i>						
All Admissions	1,300	35.5	1,300	45.1	1,300	20.2
Did Not Meet RDF Goal	893	42.1	893	52.3	893	25.5
Met RDF Goal	407	21.1	407	29.2	407	8.4
Met Two or More Goals	81	6.2	81	12.4	81	3.6
<i>Outpatient Treatment Facility (ODF)</i>						
All Admissions	1,822	46.0	1,822	58.6	1,822	17.1
Did Not Meet ODF Goal	1,554	51.5	1,554	65.0	1,554	19.2
Met ODF Goal	268	14.2	268	21.6	268	4.5
Met Two or More Goals	39	12.8	39	20.5	39	7.4
<i>Sober Living</i>						
All Admissions	151	23.8	151	34.4	151	11.9
Did Not Meet Sober Living Goal	98	32.6	98	54.8	98	16.3
Met Sober Living Goal	53	7.6	53	9.4	53	3.8
Met Two or More Goals	9	22.2	9	32.3	9	11.1
<i>Non-PPCP Parolee Population*</i>	211,211	52.8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*Note: Because parolees could be released multiple times during the observation period, these numbers refer to total releases during the observation period and are greater than the actual number of individual parolees.

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ment effects even in the STAR program. Recall that most parolees that entered this drug education program were referred in lieu of return to prison for a dirty drug test.

We argue that these parolees are not self-selecting into services because they want to change, but instead, are opting out of incarceration. If anything, parolees who violate drug conditions are probably more likely to recidivate yet again, compared to those that have not tested dirty. This supposition is supported by the higher recidivism rates for parolees that did not complete STAR, compared to the non-PPCP parolee population (over 65.0 versus 52.8%, respectively).

We also argue that at least the PPCP services appeared to help those who wanted to be helped. The unanswered, and perhaps unanswerable, question is whether the parolees who were sufficiently motivated to achieve their program goals by their desire to stay out of prison would have been able to do so without these services, especially given the paucity of available services for parolees.

Another limitation of this study was that the quality of the data gathered by the service providers was not of the same high quality as the CDC-maintained data. Although the service provider data improved dramatically in the most recent fiscal years, there was substantial inconsistency in the quality of data gathered in the earlier years of the PPCP. (The improvement in service provider data largely resulted from intensive interventions made by the CDC Research Branch into the data collection and coding employed by the service providers. PPCP staff also invested considerable efforts into salvaging and standardizing much of the early service provider data.) The most typical problems included inconsistency across service providers in the selection of information to record, data entry errors, and missing or inconsistent data for individual service recipients.

The complexity in coordinating and negotiating service provision caused complex data collection problems. Staff turnover, improper training or planning, as well as data system incompatibilities prevented some early service data from being properly cleaned and converted for us to analyze. Because of the many incomplete records and flawed data files during the startup phase of the program, a decision was made to omit data analysis of the first two fiscal years of the PPCP (i.e., 1998/1999 and 1999/2000). We initially included these first two years of data in our analysis and found the overall patterns largely unchanged; but we decided to use only the service data gathered in the most recent three years, believing that these data would provide a much more accurate picture of the PPCP's effectiveness.

Policy Implications. Two main policy implications can be derived from the findings in this study. First, since this study supports the argument that community-based correctional services, as implemented in the PPCP, can be effective in reducing parolees' re-incarcerations, such services should be further expanded to a greater proportion of the parolee population. Despite the fact that the current annual enrollment of parolees reached about 25,000, which was far more than the approximately 5,000 of its predecessor PFP, the proportion of the California parole population affected by this program was still small. Although parolees and parole agents alike resort to local resources when state funded services are unavailable, CDC remains the most effective as well as the largest correctional service contracting agency that can devise, contract, and deliver services to meet the needs of its parolee population.

Second, although incremental effects were evident for substantial involvement in the treatment services, the largest benefits accrued to those who finished their treatment. The longer parolees stay in a program the less likely they will be re-incarcerated. This

is particularly evident in residential treatment programs where any time spent in the secured environment directly reduces parolees' "at-risk" time. However, we have also found that program completion rates fell significantly short of program goals.

So what strategies can be deployed to encourage more program participants to complete their treatment? Possible strategies may include graduated incentives to those who stay in the program and sanctions against those who refuse to participate. These strategies may also include coerced treatment, which has been found to be effective, albeit controversial, in increasing participation and retention in substance abuse treatment (Farabee, Prendergast, and Anglin 1998; Polcin and Greenfield 2003) and in achieving treatment outcomes that are similar to or even better than those who voluntarily participate (Miller and Flaherty 2000). Because of the tremendous discretionary power of parole agents, coerced program participation (such as in lieu of filing for parole violations) can and probably should be used as a tool to encourage parolees to receive services.

As Sherman and his colleagues noted in their report to Congress (1997), most correctional programs are plagued by two problems: inadequate research methods that undermine the ability to ascertain with a great degree of certainty what actually works; and poor program implementations that significantly weaken and change the original design of the treatment services. The ideal scenario would be a true experimental design involving random assignment of the program participants and controlling for as many exogenous variables as possible. Although in recent years there have been increasing attempts at assessing correctional interventions through rigorous experimental designs using random assignment, most researchers must still adjust their designs to accommodate justice agencies and program administrators, thus rendering their findings vulnerable to alternative interpretations (Sherman et al. 1997; Lipsey and Cordray 2000).

In this study we were afforded a rare opportunity to assess the effectiveness of multiple correctional services in California by analyzing statewide population data. Although we were unable to pinpoint the specific ingredients of these programs that brought about the reduction in recidivism, the size of the operation and the data on the tens of thousands of participants allowed us to answer the ultimate question of whether this program was effective.

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Table 4. Summary of Re-Incarceration Rates for PPCP Participants and Statewide Non-PPCP Parolees 12 Months Following Release

	Base Number	Percent
All PPCP participants*	28,708	44.8
PPCP participants who met treatment goal of one or more programs	11,484	32.7
<i>PPCP participants who met treatment goal of one program</i>	11,004	33.6
<i>PPCP participants enrolled in multiple services who met two or more program goals</i>	480	13.8
PPCP participants who failed to meet any treatment program goals	17,224	52.8
Statewide non-PPCP re-incarceration rate*	211,211	52.8

*Note: Because parolees could be released multiple times during the observation period, these numbers refer to total releases during the observation period and are greater than the actual number of individual parolees.

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logically abusive offender. The current research did not support these findings and, to the contrary, found that younger offenders tended to have higher physically abusive scores than their older counterparts.

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Looking Inside the "Black Box" of Drug Court Treatment Services Using Direct Observations

by Jeff Bouffard and Faye Taxman

34(1) Journal of Drug Issues 195 (2004)

As a former member of a Florida drug court program, I am pleased that the programs continue to grow. The judicial and treatment communities' common goal of offender rehabilitation should be applauded. As always, continued success only occurs if areas of opportunity are identified and possible beneficial changes are implemented. In this research article, Bouffard and Taxman provide strong arguments for changes within drug court programs that would potentially increase the effectiveness of treatment.

Previous research has failed to focus on the "black box" of treatment. Even the most recent research from the federal Drug Court Program Office has not surveyed drug court treatment providers for their input.

The authors sampled two rural and two urban drug courts from different sections of the United States to complete their evaluation. As most of weekly treatment regimens focus on group meetings, the authors utilized these meetings as a focus of the study. Nearly all programs offer individual, group, general substance abuse, relapse prevention, social/coping skills, and self-help interventions. Other vocational and indirect counseling is also made available to clients.

Treatment within the groups usually lasts between one and two hours in most cases. The treatment program often ends as much as 30 minutes earlier than the time allotted. There appears to be a lack of accountability for the treatment provider for this "lost time" to the courts. The authors also found that most of the counselors surveyed were only high school graduates, with only one doctoral level and one master's level counselor among the group. Moreover, only 13 of 35 of those counselors who reported to the authors had any professional certification or licensure.

There were large differences among the groups regarding time allotted to discuss items such as vocation, drug education, health issues and other related topics. Each site varied in what focus would take precedence in the meetings.

common goals and treatment. The authors make a strong argument for both change and better controls within the system for drug courts.

Copies: Journal of Drug Issues, Florida State University, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Hecht House, 634 West Call St., Tallahassee, FL 32306-1127.

Estimating the Prevalence of Ecstasy Use Among Club Rave Attendees

by George S Yacoubian, Jr., Julia K. Deutsch and Elizabeth J. Schumacher
31(1) Contemporary Drug Problems
163 (2004)

Crack cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and marijuana have been a focus of both treatment and criminal justice inter-

In order for drug courts to continue to flourish, more stringent guidelines need to be put in place to reduce the fluctuation of treatment approaches.

All four study sites implemented the program differently, and used a broad range of therapeutic approaches within the groups. There appeared to be a lack of consistent process within the drug court programs. There was also a lack of gender or cultural specific programs available to assist the clients in their treatment plan. The level of treatment appeared to be higher when the court was directly involved with the treatment providers.

In order for drug courts to continue to flourish more stringent guidelines need to be put in place to reduce the fluctuation of treatment approaches. If stricter guidelines are not set forth in the near future, there may be large numbers of programs referring to themselves as drug courts, but not sharing

ventions. Unfortunately, as time was being devoted to these problems, a new trend began to emerge. Younger population groups began taking what has now become known as Ecstasy. Early on, this new drug gained a reputation for not being addictive or dangerous though research existed to the contrary. The popularity of this club drug continues to rise and is commonly abused at "rave" parties.

Little prior information is available within the United States. The authors cite three previous studies, all within the Baltimore-Washington area. There is also very little literature on other club drugs such as Ketamine, Rohypnol and GHB.

The researchers in this study approached rave participants as they were leaving a club

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to obtain both an oral sample for drug analysis and verbal survey to discuss the nature and frequency of their drug usage. The interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes and were conducted without obtaining personal data from the participants. A total of 192 participants took part in this study.

Seventy-two percent of the participants reported Ecstasy usage over the prior two days with approximately 30% testing positive through an oral specimen sample. Much as with other addictive drugs, respondents stated that they continued to use the drug even after realizing that it was causing life prob-

lems. Three items were addressed on the dependency scale dealing with frequency of use, desire to stop usage, and its continued usage despite causing social or legal problems.

The findings provide clear evidence that Ecstasy and other rave drugs need more focus by law enforcement and clinicians. Often drug testing within treatment programs fails to test for this drug. As prescription drug usage and rave drugs continue to grow in popularity, the treatment community must respond accordingly. This article provides a good basis of training for clinicians.

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mentioned at the time of the sentencing hearing, in violation of their right to be present at that hearing.

The court had not mentioned drug testing at all during Castillos' sentencing hearing but included a supervised release condition requiring him to submit to one test within 15 days of his release from prison and thereafter, whenever the U.S. probation officer required one. Tulloch was required to submit to three periodic drug tests, one within the first 15 days after his release and the other two as directed by a probation officer.

The First Circuit pointed to **U.S. v. York**, 359 F.3d 13, 21-22 (1st Cir., 2004), which says that the scheduling of tests to ensure compliance with programs is an administrative task that probation officers lawfully may perform. As to the defendants' claim that their right to be present at the sentencing hearing had not been observed, the court commented that appellants must show that the challenged conditions "conflict in a ma-

terial way" with the oral sentences. In both of these instances, no such conflict has been demonstrated.

The court considered whether the mandatory drug testing incurred any additional burden. Drug testing has been mandatory since 1994. According to the court, the defendants had sufficient notice that they will be required to undergo testing during their supervised release. The court also pointed to **U.S. v. Truscello**, 168 F.3d 61 (2d Cir. 1999), in which they held that there needed to be an "actual" or "real inconsistency" between an oral release plan and a written judgment in order for there to be an issue. One appellant claimed that he should have been able to be present at the hearing to explain that he had not used drugs for many years, but, according to the court the testing was a required part of a supervised release program. A court may streamline sentencing proceedings by "incorporating by reference such well-known, commonly used conditions of supervised release" as the drug tests without necessarily consulting with the defendants. ■

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