

Evaluation News is produced by BJA's Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement at the Justice Research and Statistics Association.

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Evaluation News provides information on the BJA Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement, promotes the exchange of information on evaluation and performance measurement, and publicizes criminal justice research and evaluation reports for use by state and local criminal justice agencies.

Substance Abuse

Guydish et al. conducted a randomized trial of a Probation Case Management (PCM) program tailored to the needs of drug-involved female offenders. PCM was designed to increase access to services. The following characteristics differentiate PCM from standard probation: clinical supervision of probation managers, use of uniform assessment procedures, a therapeutic and advocacy orientation, and referrals to needed services. A total of 183 women were randomly assigned to either the PCM or standard probation. The sample included mostly African American and White women. Cocaine and heroin were the most frequently reported abused drug. Participants were followed for 12 months after assignment to either PCM or standard probation. The results indicate that women in PCM and standard probation showed similar improvement over time on 7 of 10 measured outcomes including drug use, legal and psychological problem severity and measures of depressive and other psychiatric symptoms. The groups also did not differ at follow-up on the proportion currently incarcerated and for enrolled in drug treatment, or on the number and type of services received. Therefore, there is little evidence that PCM was responsible for better outcomes than traditional probation. The authors indicated that higher levels of exposure to PCM may be required to achieve improved outcomes compared to traditional probation. The article, *A Randomized Trial of Probation Case Management for Drug-Involved Women Offenders* was published in *Crime and Delinquency* and the abstract is available at: <http://cad.sagepub.com/content/57/2/167>.

Policing

Corsaro, Brunson, and McGarrell utilized a mixed-methodological approach to evaluate a strategic policing initiative that was implemented in a high crime neighborhood in Nashville, Tennessee. Specifically, they assessed whether the Nashville Drug Market Intervention (DMI) significantly reduced the number of offenses associated with illicit street-level drug dealing. DMI is modeled after a program in High Point, NC and involves a three-phase approach: targeting the most violent and dangerous individuals for immediate arrest and prosecution, notifying lower-level offenders that their activities are known and that failure to stop will result in arrest and prosecution, and providing social services to desisting low-level offenders. The mixed-methods approach included an assessment of program fidelity, a time-series analysis, and in-depth resident interviews. The data utilized in this evaluation were collected between March 2005 and April 2010. These included the

Useful resources for criminal justice program evaluation and performance measurement are available at the BJA Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/evaluation>.

monthly number of charges for illegal narcotics possession, drug equipment offenses, Part 1 Uniform Crime Report offenses, and calls for service. Additionally, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 44 residents of the targeted neighborhood. The results indicate that the initiative was associated with significant reductions in drug and narcotic incidents as well as perceived decreases in neighborhood disorder in the targeted neighborhood. Analyses revealed that these reductions were robust and sustained over the two-year post-intervention period. DMI did not appear to impact violent offenses, property offenses, or police calls for service. The report, *Evaluating a Policing Strategy Intended to Disrupt an Illicit Street-Level Drug Market* was published in Evaluation Review. The abstract is available at: <http://erx.sagepub.com/content/34/6/513>.

Lum et al. conducted a randomized controlled experiment to test whether license plate readers (LPR) deter general crime as well as automobile crime in crime hot spots. LPR technology, also known as automated number plate recognition (ANPR), is a scanning and information technology used by law enforcement agencies to detect, deter, and prevent crime. The program involved police using LPRs to scan all license plates and check them against a database of plates "of interest." Plates of interest included those associated with stolen vehicles or whose registered owners have open warrants, unpaid tickets, or are suspected of existing crimes. A total of 30 hot spots in Alexandria City and Fairfax County, Virginia, were randomly assigned to use LPR or standard policing. The authors examined the effects of the intervention during and in a 30-day period following the intervention, controlling for pre-intervention levels of crime, seasonal factors, and jurisdiction. The findings indicate that LPRs do not seem to deter general or automobile crimes (auto theft, theft from auto, and other auto-related crimes such as driving under the influence and reckless driving). The report, *License Plate reader (LPR) Police Patrols in Crime Hot Spots: An Experimental Evaluation in Two Adjacent Jurisdictions* was published in the Journal of Experimental Criminology. The abstract is available at: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/78h57l031816h851/>.

Other Reports

Esbensen, Matsuda, Taylor, and Peterson report on the results of the process evaluation of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program. The G.R.E.A.T. program is a gang and delinquency prevention program delivered by law enforcement officers in a school. The evaluation focuses on program fidelity in three primary areas: officer preparedness and commitment to the program (i.e., program provider training), support and involvement of educators, and program delivery (i.e., officers' actual ability to deliver the program in the schools as designed). Data were collected from four primary sources: observations of G.R.E.A.T. Officer Trainings (G.O.T.) to assess the quality of the training that officers receive; surveys and interviews of G.R.E.A.T.-trained officers and supervisors to determine their own perceptions of preparedness and commitment to delivering the program; surveys of school personnel to evaluate officers' abilities as instructors and educators' involvement in the program; and approximately 500 observations of officers delivering the program to determine the quality of program implementation. The results of this process evaluation indicate that the G.R.E.A.T. program was implemented with fidelity in most of the classrooms under current investigation. They also show that officers, even those with minimal experience in the classroom, are sufficiently trained and prepared to administer the program. The report, *Multimethod Strategy for Assessing Program Fidelity: the National Evaluation of the Revised G.R.E.A.T. Program*, was published in Evaluation Review. The abstract is available at: <http://erx.sagepub.com/content/35/1/14>.

Justice Reinvestment

As discussed in last month's newsletter, Justice Reinvestment is a data-driven approach to reducing corrections spending and reinvesting savings in evidence-based strategies that can increase public safety while holding offenders accountable. In the latest issue of *Criminology and Public Policy*, Todd Clear identifies some problems with the current justice reinvestment agenda and outlines an approach that focuses on the private sector. By creating incentives for private justice reinvestment, this approach could resolve some of these current limitations, including: the focus on reducing recidivism, savings are often re-invested in the government rather than communities, most plans focus on controlling costs rather than reducing them, and it is difficult to identify actual saving for reinvestment. Clear suggests that an incentives-based approach would require a set of financial incentives that simultaneously would create reasons for communities to want to keep felons locally, reinforce (and support) local service capacities, and provide a mechanism for community-infrastructure development. The proposed strategy has four main components. First, there is a voucher system that translates the savings from diversion from incarceration into dollars and creates the capacity for those dollars to be used for other purposes. Second, some community-based organizations (profit and nonprofit) use the vouchers as funding sources for their work. Third, an oversight function audits all activities under a justice reinvestment rationale. Fourth, a risk-based justice system rationale is used for each person processed via justice reinvestment. The report, *A Private-Sector, Incentives-Based Model for Justice Reinvestment* was published in *Criminology and Public Policy*. The abstract is available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1745-9133.2011.00730.x/abstract>. More information about the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Justice Reinvestment Initiative is available at: http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/topics/justice_reinvestment.html.

Tip of the Month

Is the problem of missing data adequately addressed?

Missing data are a common problem that researchers and evaluators must deal with. Consumers of research need to understand the impact of missing data on the overall quality of the research: 1) Missing data reduce statistical power, meaning that they reduce the chances of detecting a program effect when it exists. This problem is a particularly important issue with small samples. 2) Missing data can cause bias if they are not missing at random, which can lead to overestimating or underestimating a program effect. For example, if the evaluators of a reentry program were unaware that arrest data for most of the program participants were incomplete, they may incorrectly attribute the reduction in arrests to the program. When reviewing research with missing data, it is important that the consumer consider the amount of data that are missing and whether these data are missing at random. While there are no set rules regarding the amount of acceptable missing data, it is important to consider that as the amount of missing data increases, the amount of confidence a researcher has in the results decreases.

Treatment of Missing Data

- http://www.uvm.edu/~dhowell/StatPages/More_Stuff/Missing_Data/Missing.html

Guideline on Missing Data in Confirmatory Clinical Trials

- http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2010/09/WC500096793.pdf