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U.S. Department of Justice  
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Bureau of Justice Assistance

Critical Elements in the Planning, Development, and Implementation of  
Successful Correctional Options  
Monograph

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Monograph  
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### Introduction

In the fall of 1995, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) reported that the Nation's prisons and jails held nearly 1.6 million incarcerated inmates, compared with 1.5 million inmates in 1994. This correctional population explosion caught many jurisdictions by surprise and found them ill

equipped to handle the problem. In response, many States have begun and, in some cases, completed large-scale prison and jail construction projects. However, this massive construction effort has not been able to keep pace with burgeoning correctional populations. As capital and operational costs soar in a correctional system that is continually expanding, correctional officials are recognizing the need for more effective and less expensive approaches to sanction and supervise nonviolent offenders.

Recognizing this need, the U.S. Congress authorized the Correctional Options Amendments to the Crime Control Act of 1990. With that authorization, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) was charged with providing financial and technical assistance to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for the development and evaluation of cost-effective correctional options that reduce reliance on traditional models of incarceration while enhancing the reintegration of nonviolent offenders into the community. These interventions include community-based alternatives to incarceration, institution-based drug treatment or training programs, early release with intensive reentry services and supervision, or a combination of these and other programs.

This monograph introduces a set of activities and tasks involved in the design, implementation, and operation of correctional options based on the experience of nine correctional agencies funded under BJA's Correctional Options Demonstration Program. Although the experience of each of these correctional agencies has been unique, most have faced similar issues and challenges in developing and operating their programs. This monograph is a primer for creating effective programs based on the lessons learned by these agencies as they addressed these common problems. It is also a guide for both policymakers and practitioners interested in reducing their reliance on incarceration as the sole or primary means of sanctioning nonviolent offenders.

Some readers may question the wisdom of promoting correctional options at a time when much of the general public and many elected officials seem to support more punitive "get-tough-on-crime" approaches. Others may wonder why the current generation of correctional options should be supported when many earlier community-based correctional interventions failed to demonstrate positive results. However, the growing cost of constructing and maintaining correctional facilities in the face of shrinking State and local budgets lends strength to the argument that the public will support cost-effective correctional options aimed at promoting public safety.[1]

The challenges and opportunities facing today's correctional administrators are greater than ever. On one hand, the Nation is witnessing the greatest and most costly use of incarceration in history to solve its crime problem. On the other hand, State and local governments are hard pressed to finance this increased reliance on incarceration and other traditional forms of correctional supervision. These two conflicting trends--escalating demand and dwindling resources--offer correctional practitioners an unparalleled opportunity to be innovative and more effective. BJA's Correctional Options Demonstration Program is one vehicle that has enabled many States and counties to test new methods of supervising nonviolent offenders. The following pages present key lessons these jurisdictions learned in the process of planning, developing, operating, and evaluating a wide range of correctional options.

This introduction has presented broad criminal justice and societal trends that have influenced the emergence of correctional options and described BJA's Correctional Options Demonstration Program, which has provided

financial and technical support to State and local governments for implementing these types of programs. The remainder of the monograph consists of three chapters on program planning, development, and implementation. The information in each chapter is organized around a set of activities that are fundamental to the effective completion of the stage treated. The critical activities described in each stage are presented separately for instructive purposes only. In reality, the activities are typically dealt with in a coordinated, comprehensive manner.

Chapter 1, Program Planning, discusses the importance of building broad-based support from the outset for a proposed correctional option. This chapter encourages the active participation of key constituents in the criminal justice system and the community, presents the information planners need to make sound policy decisions about how the program should be structured, and suggests ways of measuring the program's value and effectiveness.

Chapter 2, Program Development, outlines a process for choosing program features and developing an administrative structure that will support the program. The chapter focuses on determining which offenders the program will target, selecting cost-effective services that will meet the target population's needs, recruiting and training staff, and building public support for the program.

Chapter 3, Program Implementation, identifies the tasks that program administrators must undertake to initiate the program and ensure its proper long-term operation. This chapter describes methods of establishing performance-based benchmarks and timetables to guide program operations, deciding who should deliver each program component, and providing continuing supervision and service delivery in the community. It also discusses the importance of monitoring and evaluation in determining program success.

1. Recent research indicates that the general public will support sentences that provide for offender accountability and continued supervision of nonviolent offenders in the community. For example, a 1991 poll by the Wirthlin Group for the International Association of Residential and Community Alternatives found that four out of five Americans support community punishment over prison for nonviolent offenders. Another study, conducted by the Public Agenda Foundation in 1989, found that informed citizens will support alternative sanctions when the punishments are applied appropriately.

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## Chapter 1

### Stage One: Program Planning

The planning process described in this document may seem daunting. However, BJA's Correctional Options Demonstration Program indicates that the result may be not only a successful correctional options program but also the beginning of a new way for the stakeholders involved to work together in the future. For example, in Orange County, California, the correctional options planning process enabled the Probation Department to actively involve key decisionmakers from other county agencies-- including the prosecutor's offices, the judiciary, the public defender, and law enforcement--in the design of the correctional options project. The process proved to be so effective and beneficial that the agencies have

continued to collaborate, not only on the implementation and operation of the correctional options project but on other criminal justice projects in the county as well. The process of planning a correctional options project can be at least as important as the result. This chapter describes critical activities in the planning process.

#### Involve Key Decisionmakers From the Outset

Obtaining the participation and support of key decisionmakers and other parties within the jurisdiction is an essential first step in planning a correctional program. A number of sites in the Correctional Options Demonstration Program accomplished this objective by forming a policy group to oversee the planning process.

The composition of the policy group is crucial in successfully planning the program. For example, the Vermont Department of Corrections undertook a complete restructuring of the State's sanctioning system but failed to include key members of the judiciary and prosecution in the planning process. As a result, program administrators later had to conduct extensive marketing activities to the courts to generate referrals for the newly created, nontraditional sanctions. Guidelines for selecting members can include the following:

- o List the agencies or persons whose participation in initiating the efforts is essential, such as the judiciary, prosecuting attorney, public defender, parole or probation administrators, policymakers, public or private service providers, and correctional institution officials.
- o Consider groups that will be affected by a correctional options program, such as victim advocacy groups and local law enforcement agencies.
- o Do not overlook groups that might be affected indirectly, such as neighborhood organizations.

The value of a broad-based policy group is threefold:

- o Participation builds commitment. People who are actively involved in planning develop a commitment to the results.
- o Different perspectives contribute to better solutions. Different elements of the justice system bring different perspectives and insights to the planning process as do groups from outside the system. Successful programs address the needs, interests, and concerns of the affected parties, not just those of the host agency.
- o Involvement ensures accountability. The involvement of representatives of all segments of the justice system ensures the accountability and careful direction of the planning process.

In some cases, the policy group may not be the appropriate entity to perform the detailed planning of a correctional options program. If so, it will be necessary to create a working group to carry out the daily tasks involved in planning the program. Policy level approval for action is necessary before the working group can begin its task, particularly when the policy group includes top-level personnel who may not be able to devote the time necessary to develop a detailed plan. In this case, a working group of staff-level personnel should prepare the plan under guidelines set by the policy group. However, the working group should maintain close contact with the policy group. One way to facilitate contact is to include one or more members of the policy group in the working

group. The policy group must be consulted regularly, kept informed about the working group's progress, and given ample opportunity to provide meaningful oversight and direction. The policy group should not simply be asked periodically to ratify working group decisions.

It may be necessary to foster team building within both the policy group and the working group. Any agency or personal rivalries or distrust will have to be overcome if the stakeholders are to work together effectively. The leaders of each group must be sensitive to group dynamics so that they can build upon each member's strengths while keeping focused on the tasks immediately at hand as well as the long-range objectives of the planning process.

#### Achieve Consensus on the Problem

Any new development that has the potential to affect incarceration rates in a significant manner--such as a new determinate sentencing statute or mandatory incarceration for drunk driving offenders--may precipitate an interest in correctional options among decisionmakers. An examination of a jurisdiction's correctional system generally is spurred by a problem such as an overcrowded jail, community concern about juvenile violence, a budgetary crisis, or changes in laws that would have a major impact on a correctional agency's operations.

The first task for the working group is to reach consensus on the nature and relevance of the problem at hand. At this point, it is not necessary to agree on the underlying cause of the problem; it is enough to agree that the problem has significant effects on both the community and the criminal justice system. It is also important to remember that the nature of the problem may change or be more accurately defined at later stages in the planning process. For example, the complex nature of Florida's prison crowding problem became more apparent when the State's correctional authorities demonstrated that a significant portion of State prison readmissions were caused by rule violations or nonviolent illicit drug use by parolees. This knowledge influenced Florida to initiate its Correctional Options Drug Treatment Community in Bradenton in an attempt to divert nonviolent, drug-dependent parolees away from State prisons and into treatment designed to address the causes of their drug dependency.

The policy and working groups should agree on the initial steps needed to resolve or reduce the problem. They should also agree on the nature and scope of the planning process and a tentative timetable for the completion of critical tasks.

#### Organize Information for Decisionmaking

The next major step in the process is to obtain and organize the information that will be needed for deciding how to structure the program. First, program planners need to decide what data can reasonably be obtained or developed in light of existing resources and the time available. This process includes identifying the kinds of information needed, the kinds of information available, and the location and form of available information.

When organizing information, it is important to consider factors affecting the correctional problem that the new option or options will be designed to address. Relevant questions in this regard include:

- o What are the decision points in the criminal justice system that ultimately affect the problem?

- o What kind of information about each of these decision points would contribute to understanding the problem?

- o What kind of information about the subject population is needed?

After these questions are answered, planners can assess the available data. Frequently, information is scattered among different government agencies and in different offices within an agency. It may exist in incompatible management information systems. It may be available only in manual form, or it may exist only in primary source documents such as individual case histories.

Whatever the state of the information, it is critical that the planning process be based on the available data. As an illustration of the need for data, consider the jurisdiction faced with jail overcrowding. On the surface, the overcrowding may appear to reflect an increase in illicit drug use. However, to determine the validity of this assumption, it is necessary to examine first the characteristics of the current jail population, including commitment offenses, preadjudication or postadjudication status, time served, and other relevant characteristics that, taken together, will provide a profile of the jail population. Based on this assessment, it may be necessary to examine data reflecting other factors such as demographic changes, arrest rates, police disposition policies, charging policies (including plea bargaining), bail policies, probation and parole revocation policies, sentencing policies or guidelines, and other decision points in the system that determine how the drug offender moves through and exits the system. Examination of these data should provide at least a likely explanation of the jail's population increase. Only with this type of information is it possible to develop a correctional options plan that will address the causes rather than the symptoms of the problem.

For example, the Los Angeles County Probation Department entered the Correctional Options Demonstration Program's planning process intending to develop a correctional boot camp. However, after analyzing data, the policy group changed its focus and ultimately determined that its target population's needs would be better addressed through the operation of a multifaceted, community-based service delivery program.

The organization and analysis of relevant research findings are also important parts of the information search. An emerging body of research in the criminal justice field indicates that certain kinds of correctional interventions are effective. Planners need to identify which interventions have worked with specific types of offenders and then determine if the interventions can be replicated in their own jurisdictions. It may be helpful for the working group to present the salient findings of relevant research in the field to the policy group (and possibly later to other key constituents).

The available criminal justice data and information often guide the essential task of targeting, discussed more fully below. Initial targeting questions with which the working group may be confronted at this early stage include the following:

- o For whom will the program(s), service(s), and sanction(s) that result from the planning process be designed?

- o What are the characteristics that define this targeted group of offenders and distinguish them from the broader offender population?

- o Are these characteristics sufficiently clear that guidelines can be

developed for easy determination of eligibility and uniform application?

#### Clarify the Jurisdiction's Criminal Justice Sanctioning Goals

Before deciding what type of correctional option is appropriate, planners need to examine the broad social, political, and economic environment in the jurisdiction, given the high level of public concern about crime. The policy group may want to explore these considerations by answering the following questions:

- o What is the public likely to think about correctional options?
- o What specific benefits of correctional options are most likely to appeal to the community and to the criminal justice system that will host the option?
- o How will the media depict a sanctioning approach aimed at reducing reliance on incarceration, saving funds for other needed services, and changing offenders' criminal lifestyles?
- o Will elected officials support the program?
- o Would it be desirable to pilot test the program?
- o Are there some groups of offenders for whom the public would perceive the options to be more politically acceptable than for other groups?
- o Are there individuals who could influence the public's perception of the program but are not currently participating in the planning?

In addition to the broad political environment, it is also important to consider the values and goals of the criminal justice system in which the option is being planned. A critical step in the process of designing any correctional program centers on the answer to the question: Why are offenders sanctioned? To deter, rehabilitate, incapacitate, restore, punish, or some combination of these goals? The answer will guide decisionmaking about the option throughout the planning and implementation stages by directly influencing such programmatic choices as selecting the offenders to be targeted for the program, the sanctions and services to be delivered to them, and the measures to be used to determine program effectiveness.

Finally, it is important to examine the "fit" between the proposed correctional option and the agency that will host it. The option should be compatible with the agency's mission, and agency members should have a clear understanding of the need for the option, either to address a recognized problem or to provide an opportunity for improved operations. Planners also need to examine the agency's capacity and authority to plan, develop, and implement the option, including performing a realistic assessment of the resources (i.e., money, staff, and community services) available in the jurisdiction.

#### Determine the Type of Option Best Suited for the Jurisdiction

Correctional options are of two types, depending on the point in the correctional process at which they are applied. The first type, often referred to as a "front-end" option, occurs before incarceration starts, when offenders who would otherwise have been sent to an institution are given an alternative sanction that includes enhanced services and community supervision. The second type of option, frequently called a "back-end"

option, takes place when offenders who are actually serving sentences are released from prison or jail early to enter some type of supervised but less restrictive program. Some programs include both types of options.

Vermont's correctional options program is an example of a front-end option. As noted above, eligible offenders are sentenced by the court to one of two community tracks. New Hampshire's program illustrates a back-end option in which offenders who complete an institutional program become eligible for early release. The correctional options programs operated by the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and the Maricopa County (Arizona) Adult Probation Department provide opportunities for both front-end and back-end options.

Whatever the design, to be successful, correctional options programs must seek to change young offenders' criminal lifestyles and reduce reliance on incarceration either by diverting nonviolent offenders otherwise scheduled for incarceration or by reducing their length of stay.

Another essential characteristic of successful correctional options programs is cost effectiveness. Generally, the key element in determining cost effectiveness is reduced use of institutional bedspace. However, correctional options programs tend to have relatively high per-client daily costs.

As a result, planners need to be able to document that the savings in bed space costs will more than offset the costs of the program. The Riverside County (California) Probation Department, for example, converted its entire camp program to a correctional boot camp emphasizing offender/cadet educational achievement. Enhanced educational programs added to the daily average cost of the boot camp. However, the county has been able to increase the camp's average daily population by reducing the average length of stay in the camp and increasing the number of offenders who successfully graduate from the camp, thereby offsetting the added costs of the enhanced programming.

The size of the target group is also a critical factor in determining cost effectiveness. Planners need to determine that the system can generate a sufficient number of offenders within the target group to produce the level of savings necessary to justify ongoing program operations. Much larger potential savings will result from an increase in the success rate of offenders completing options programs compared to inmates serving the traditional institutional sentence. However, these savings can be determined only by long-range cohort research studies, which are difficult and expensive to conduct. Nonetheless, correctional options programs in California, Connecticut, and Vermont have initiated such studies.

In California, the research was mandated by the legislature when the program was established. The California Youth Authority (CYA) research staff were involved with the options program from the outset. The staff created a rigorous research design involving random assignment of offenders to the boot camps and to a control group. Two process and two interim impact reports covering the two institutional sites were completed. The impact report completed at the end of the second year of program operation noted that the data are "still insufficient for a fair test of the program's effectiveness." Thus a longer term evaluation effort may be necessary to develop meaningful results. An illustration of the difficulties of such research occurred when the California Youthful Offenders Board changed its policy on releasing wards after the program was well under way, affecting the time served by members of the control group. As a result, the differences in time served by the boot camp participants and the

control group were less than had been anticipated and therefore adversely affected the cost effectiveness of the correctional options program.

#### Create Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation Capabilities

An often overlooked but important aspect of the planning process is the provision for ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Effective monitoring can ensure that the project is proceeding according to plan, that staff are doing what they are expected to do, and that timetables are being met. Monitoring also can be the basis for process evaluations. Outcome evaluation focuses on results, that is, what effect the program has had on offenders or the criminal justice system and how these achievements are measured. Monitoring answers the question, "Are we doing what we said we would do?" Evaluation answers the question, "What is the value of what we have done?"

Monitoring and evaluation must be initiated in the planning process to ensure that they take place. Obviously, each requires staff and money. Project staff or others can perform monitoring, but evaluation is best conducted by an objective outside resource such as a research institute or university. To facilitate monitoring, the program planning and timetable should be completed in detail before the project is implemented. For an evaluation to be done properly, planners must establish clear and concise program goals and objectives along with measures of achievement. It is important to identify at the planning stage the types of data that will be needed to measure outcomes, where the data may be found, how they will be obtained, and who will collect and enter them into an organized database. Researchers generally acknowledge that institutional and field staff are often faced with conflicting workload priorities and may not give the completion of data forms the same priority that researchers would. CYA's experience in evaluating its correctional options project illustrates some of the problems encountered by correctional researchers. Despite the early involvement of the CYA research staff in the correctional options project and CYA's relatively sophisticated data collection system, the agency's lead research analyst believes that the completeness of the data presented in the agency's reports has been due, in part, to her persistence in data collection and even, when necessary, her completion of the data forms herself. The topic of program monitoring and evaluation is discussed more fully in Chapter 3.

#### Establish Ongoing Technical Assistance Capabilities

Because the planning, implementation, and operation of correctional options are complex tasks, most jurisdictions have found that they benefit from external assistance. For example, successful program planning and development depend on the collection of reliable data and the ability of program planners to analyze and use the data. Unfortunately, many correctional agencies lack these skills and quickly discover that they require technical support and training in data collection, database management, and data analysis. As a result, it is important to identify sources of help in these areas early in the planning process by constructing an inventory of both national and local resources, including volunteer organizations.

In Maricopa County, Arizona, correctional options staff were frustrated with their inability to generate meaningful reports on various aspects of the program. They believed that data were available but felt they did not have the capability to compile and present the data in reports that would portray program results effectively. Program administrators addressed the problem by purchasing the Standard Package for Social Sciences computer

program and receiving technical assistance from BJA in the use of the program. Staff are now generating a variety of reports that provide them with current information about program participants, enabling them to manage the program more effectively.

When program planners or administrators need technical assistance, they need to clarify and specify in advance the exact nature of the difficulties that the technical assistance will be asked to solve. This process of problem identification is a critical component of successful technical assistance. Typically, planners and administrators need to distinguish between the problem and its symptoms along with identifying the scope of the issues the technical assistance will be expected to address. For example, it might appear that the program needs help with targeting its desired population. However, further investigation may reveal that the problem lies in the failure of referral sources to send appropriate offenders to the program. This situation may arise when referral sources have not been involved in the planning of the program and therefore lack an accurate understanding of the intended target population.

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## Chapter Two

### Stage Two: Program Development

Program planning and program development do not necessarily proceed in sequential order; more typically the two activities overlap and proceed simultaneously. Program development is an extension of the activities undertaken during the planning stage. As such, it is subject to continued review and possible modification by the policy group to ensure that the resulting program conforms to the intentions of the policymakers. This chapter outlines the activities involved in the development of successful correctional options.

#### Clarify and Refine Program Goals and Objectives

Program planners need to confirm that the program's goals and objectives are consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the criminal justice system within which it operates as well as with those of the host agency. The program goals and objectives identified during the initial planning stage should be reexamined during the program development stage to increase their specificity and clarity. To increase specificity, program developers should focus on clear and measurable written objectives. It is not sufficient, for example, to merely state that a proposed program will save money and reduce recidivism. These outcomes can be used as indicators of success, and will be most effective if they are clear, measurable, and if written terms have been used to define the exact amount of money expected to be saved, the expected decline in recidivism, and the timeframe for achieving these results. Only specific indicators can provide the basis against which the project's performance and effectiveness can be measured. For example, Florida's correctional options program established a goal that 60 percent of the program's residents would successfully complete Phase I of its three-phase drug treatment program. Florida expected 85 percent of those completing Phase I to complete Phase II of the program. Finally, 85 percent of those completing Phase II of the program were expected to complete Phase III of the program.

It is also important to focus on process measures that can be used to assess service delivery. In doing so, planners and administrators need to examine

all components of the program to identify their expected accomplishments and methods of measuring those accomplishments. For example, Florida's process measures included the development of individualized case management plans with measurable goals and objectives within 15 days of program enrollment for each offender.

The refinement of process and outcome goals and objectives during the program development stage will help enable program administrators to work closely with program evaluators to collect the data needed to assess program success, shape its direction, and gain support from policymakers and the general public.

#### Target Offenders To Reduce Bed Days and Lower Costs

To be cost effective, a correctional options program must be designed either to divert offenders from prison or jail or to reduce the length of stay of offenders already incarcerated. As a result, a correctional options program needs to identify its target population properly; it must examine offender groups by their profiles to choose appropriate correctional options for them. A well-organized targeting effort requires the following types of information:

- o Offense characteristics, offender characteristics, and case processing information for all sentenced offenders in the jurisdiction.
- o A profile of the offender group(s) eligible to participate in the proposed correctional option that distinguishes targeted offenders from the broader offender population.
- o A description of the types of supervision and services that offenders in the target group currently receive as a basis for comparing current practice with how the proposed correctional option will change existing practice and outcomes.
- o A description of how the program will be delivered to the correct target population.

Program planners should pilot test the proposed program's screening and selection procedures before starting the program to verify its cost effectiveness and to avoid logistical problems in the screening process. If not corrected, logistical problems could restrict the number of offenders admitted to the program or allow the admission of inappropriate offenders.

Typically, the pilot test consists of drawing a sample of 50 to 250 cases that would be eligible for the correctional options program if it were operational. Program staff and representatives from throughout the criminal justice system should participate in screening these cases to simulate each stage of the screening process. The results of the test will show the reasons that certain cases are rejected, the rate of rejection, the time needed to complete the screening process, a profile of offenders who will be entering the program under the proposed screening criteria, and the types of services and supervision the target population will require. More significantly, the pilot test will show the extent to which this pool of candidates would have been incarcerated or kept in prison or jail for their full sentences. For example, the target population of rearrested probation violators in the Florida correctional options program had exhibited an 80-percent chance of revocation of probation and sentencing to a prison term averaging 2 to 3 years. These data suggested that diversion of this group into an 18-month drug treatment program would be cost effective if enough of the offenders were to complete the program successfully.

Decreasing incarceration among this group would result in a net savings to the system.

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Issues To Be Addressed by the Targeting Pilot Test

1. Have you provided detailed information and pretested the screening system (the reason for the planning grants)?
2. What agencies or individuals will refer cases to the program (prosecutors, public defenders, pretrial service agencies, judges, probation officers, jail and prison personnel, juvenile corrections officers, parole officers, parole board)?
3. What is the legal status of the target population?

Pretrial

- (Jail)
- (Release)

Sentence

- (Probation)
- (Parole)
- (Jail)
- (Prison)

Other

- (Parole violators)
- (Probation violators)

4. What are the proposed selection criteria (age, offense, prior record, program needs, chance of being incarcerated, current length of sentence, other factors)?
5. How does the selection process work (referral, screening, admission, termination/failure, timeframes, organizational structure)?
6. Has the screening process been tested (pipeline study results, number of referrals tested, screening results, estimated program admissions, expected program terminations or attrition rates, projected cost savings)?
7. Has verification of participation been assured by all agencies involved in the screening process (especially referral and service delivery agencies)?
8. Will any pending policies or legislation affect the proposed screening process (sex offender notification legislation, mandatory minimum sentences)?

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Once planners have reviewed the pilot test results, they will probably need to revise the original screening criteria and process. By completing this analysis, correctional agencies will avoid common problems such as high program vacancy rates and inappropriate client selection.

### Design Program Features To Fit Offenders' Needs

Several recent classification studies and evaluations of intensive supervision programs have indicated that many offenders currently entering prisons and jails could be supervised successfully in well-administered and innovative community-based programs (Pearson, 1987; Baird and Wagner, 1990; Wagner and Baird, 1993). However, these studies have generally found that the treatment effects of these programs are modest. Nonetheless, planners who are developing correctional options programs should examine research findings about effective treatment interventions before choosing program features to meet offenders' needs.

### What the Research Shows

Considerable research shows that criminal careers for both adults and juveniles do not follow a predictable or stable pattern. Many nontreatment factors affect the likelihood of developing criminal behavior and its continuation. These factors can be categorized as structural influences that are largely static and cannot be modified and situational factors that are more dynamic and flexible in terms of their influence on criminal behavior.

**Structural Factors.** Sex and age are by far the most powerful factors associated with criminal behavior. The vast majority of crimes are committed by young males between ages 15 and 24. After about age 30, many youthful offenders have become "burned out" and are less likely to commit crimes.

**Situational Factors.** In addition to the structural factors of age and sex that affect the youthful offender's behavior are the following situational factors:

- o **Job Stability.** An ex-offender's ability to maintain any form of stable employment coupled with the aging process will significantly reduce that individual's tendency to reoffend (Braithwaite, 1989; Crutchfield, 1989; Sampson and Laub, 1993; and Shover, 1985).
- o **Stable Relationships.** Another major factor that reduces an offender's probability of reoffending is the ability to maintain a stable and supportive marriage (Sampson and Laub, 1993). However, it is not marriage per se that influences the likelihood of reoffending but the nature of that relationship as it serves to solidify other key life conditions such as job stability, sobriety, and stable residency (Gibbens, 1984; Knight, Osborn, and West, 1977; Rand, 1987).

**The Role of Incarceration.** There have been numerous studies of the relative effects of incarceration on crime rates in general and on individual offenders in particular. In their study of 880 juveniles from adolescence through adulthood, Sampson and Laub (1993) found that neither the number of incarcerations nor the length of incarceration had a direct impact on an individual's likelihood of reoffending. A review of studies of early release programs now operating throughout the country found that neither moderate increases nor decreases in prison terms (3 to 6 months) had an impact on either crime rates or on an individual offender's rate of reoffending.

National data offer little evidence to support the notion that adjustments in the use of incarceration have had an independent impact on crime rates. Analysis of historical fluctuations in crime rates and incarceration rates reveal no clear relationship between the two.

The Role of Correctional Treatment. A 1974 publication by Robert Martinson on treatment for juvenile and adult offenders concluded that "nothing works." The controversial paper was based on a review of existing evaluations of prison treatment programs by Martinson and his colleagues, Lipton and Wilks; it represented one of the first meta-analyses that summarized the findings of numerous experimental and quasi-experimental studies of rehabilitation programs (Lipton, Martinson, and Wilks, 1975). This pioneering work has been followed by several other major meta-analyses including Garrett (1985), Lipsey (1989, 1991), Davidson et al. (1984), Gottschalk et al. (1987), Whitehead and Lab (1989), Gendreau and Ross (1987), Andrews et al. (1990), and Palmer (1992). However, unlike Martinson's study, all these subsequent studies concluded that, under certain conditions, some treatment interventions can have a significant impact on recidivism rates.

Many other researchers have disagreed with these findings, arguing that meta-analyses are suspect and overstate the merits of rehabilitation. In particular, the studies reviewed in these meta-analyses have had small sample sizes (under 250 cases for experimental and control groups), and the differences between the control and experimental subjects' recidivism rates have been minimal. Furthermore, the recommended conditions necessary for treatment to succeed in the studies are difficult to define or to replicate in other sites.

#### Conclusions Based on the Research

These studies lead to several conclusions. In general, incarceration and crime rate data indicate that increases in the former do not necessarily ensure decreases in the latter. Consequently, the success or lack of success of prison-based treatment programs and/or punishment will have little impact on crime rates in general.

However, under certain circumstances, offenders can be treated with positive results. These positive results are strongest for programs that provide individualized supervision and treatment plans, deliver long-term aftercare, increase the offender's ability to secure employment, and improve long-term relationships, among other elements. Additional factors that may reduce the risk of reoffending are maturation, absence of a juvenile criminal career, absence of violence, sobriety, job stability, and the ability to maintain a meaningful marriage or other intimate relationship. It is critical, therefore, that any insight provided by current research on effective treatment interventions be considered and incorporated into correctional options programs.

#### Create an Effective Administrative Structure

Creation of an administrative structure and framework designed to ensure program integrity and effectiveness involves the formulation of written policies and procedures and the determination of who will be responsible for the operation of the program. Because participation builds commitment, it is especially important to invite individuals who will be running the program to help develop it.

#### Policies and Procedures

Clear policies and procedures set the stage for consistent operation, accountability, training, and program evaluation by reducing inconsistency, confusion, and conflict. Although the task of drafting policies and procedures is often delegated to the program administrator or

to special research or training units in large criminal justice agencies, several correctional options projects have found that they achieved better results when management and line staff worked together to develop program policies and procedures. This collegial approach facilitates contributions from staff and fosters a team approach to identifying and solving problems--factors that improve the subsequent operation of the program. The policy group should have the opportunity to review the policies and procedures to ensure consistency with the program's goals and objectives. If the correctional options projects will involve the participation of organizations from outside the criminal justice system, these groups should also be involved in reviewing, if not actually establishing, the policies and procedures. For example, New Hampshire's Pathways Program and Washington State's Reintegration Project included community colleges in their correctional options programs. In Connecticut, the day-to-day operation of the Fresh Start Program is contracted out to a community-based nonprofit service provider. These interdisciplinary approaches work best when the different parties in the partnership have a clear understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities and have reached agreement on the program's policies and procedures.

#### Administrative Structure

The administrative structure of the program should have clear lines of authority. A single administrator should be in charge and accountable for all operations. The administrator should have a direct line of communication to agency policymakers and the policy group. Planners should diagram the structure, coordination, and management of the program in an organizational chart that includes all program positions and makes clear who is responsible for program coordination and for each service delivery component. The program's administrative structure needs to be designed to facilitate ongoing data collection for timely and relevant information to assist project monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, it is important to address such questions as:

- o What specific data are required to support informed decisionmaking?
- o Do the required data currently exist within the agency hosting the correctional option? If so, where is the information kept? In what form do the data exist? (For example, are the data part of an automated information system or in manual records?) How can the data be retrieved and used? Who will retrieve the data?
- o If the required data do not currently exist in the host agency, what must be done to obtain them, who will obtain them, and how will the data be integrated into the decisionmaking process?

Based on the program's administrative structure, services, and supervision components, it is important to develop a realistic budget to support the level of activity envisioned, including sufficient funds for program management. Some of the initial jurisdictions participating in the Correctional Options Demonstration Program that relied on existing administrative staff to manage their projects quickly realized that this approach is not a dependable way to ensure strong program management. Program planners need to review the workloads of existing staff before assuming they will have the time to handle additional administrative responsibilities, particularly during the implementation phase of the correctional options program.

Planners should also pay close attention to the fiscal management of the

program, not only to demonstrate cost effectiveness but also to account for the expenditure of funds. Usually, if planners follow applicable Federal and local fiscal regulations and guidelines, sound fiscal management will be assured. Generally speaking, the agency receiving public funds is responsible for their disbursement, whether the money is spent inhouse or contracted out to other service providers.

#### Select and Train Staff

The success of any correctional options program depends on its staff. Extra time invested in staff selection and training during program development will result in fewer management problems during program implementation. Furthermore, having well-trained and knowledgeable staff is the best approach to gaining credibility for the correctional options project.

#### Personnel Selection

The first critical task facing the individual or group responsible for selecting project staff is to become familiar with and adhere to pertinent Federal, State, and parent agency guidelines that govern hiring and staffing. The first decision is whether to recruit project staff from within the ranks of the agency that will host the correctional options program or from the outside, should personnel regulations permit. Hiring from within the agency makes it possible to consider individuals whose abilities are well known and to reward valued employees with an exciting new assignment. It also simplifies the transfer of staff to implement the project. However, choosing from only in-house staff may significantly limit the selection pool and make it more difficult to find staff who have the important skills needed. By contrast, hiring from the outside makes it more difficult to integrate staff at the beginning of the project because they are unfamiliar with the agency. In either case, a careful delineation of the selection criteria, job duties, and performance standards for each available position is a required element of the selection process.

Each jurisdiction needs to consider many factors when determining how to proceed. Washington County (Oregon) originally planned to operate a day reporting center supported with BJA funds and to employ county personnel. After some consideration, however, the county decided to contract with a private service provider for the operation of the day reporting center. Future funding uncertainties prevented county administrators from making the long-term commitment necessary to hire full-time county employees.

There are always significant personnel issues, even when existing staff are employed. After the first CYA boot camp began operations, a State employees union filed a complaint that the agency had not observed contract provisions involving the bidding rights of employees. In response, CYA negotiated an agreement with the union that provides for some positions to be filled by management choice, while others must be filled through the union contract bidding process.

Riverside County, California, faced a staffing problem when correctional officials decided to convert an existing youth camp program into a boot camp. Unlike many boot camps, the one at Riverside is based on a Reserve Officers' Training Corps model in which military training and drill are just part and not the dominate characteristic of the overall camp program. When the camp was converted to a boot camp, some of the staff chose to become drill instructors and to wear military uniforms while others did not. In the intervening years, the number of staff in uniform has gradually

increased, although many staff still choose not to wear military garb.

Whenever recruited from inside or outside the organization, staff should volunteer for the task, be committed to the program's goals and objectives, and be flexible enough to adapt to the changing demands that the program may impose. When projects are created within an agency that has a unionized staff, it is important to discuss the selection process and criteria with union representatives as early as possible. It may be helpful to exempt as many positions as possible from the union bidding process to enhance management's discretion in the staffing process.

Because it requires planning, time, and money, new programs often neglect staff training or give it short shrift. However, training is crucial to staff performance and program success.

Generally, a training program should reflect the agency's needs and pertinent local issues. Whenever possible, training should be provided to all project staff and to staff from other parts of the criminal justice system and the treatment community who may be providing services to correctional options clients. Training provides an opportunity to develop and test proposed project procedures and, more important, to form a cohesive project team. Team building should be a basic element of training, not just a byproduct. Successful correctional options projects are generally marked by high staff morale, a sense of being different from traditional correctional programs, and pride in the work being done. A sound training program helps to create this team spirit, defines management's expectations, and encourages a common understanding of and commitment to the project's goals and objectives.

#### Build Public Support for the Program

Although a program concept may be sound, implementation may not succeed unless the criminal justice system and the community support the program. Building support requires developing ways to constantly inform and educate key decisionmakers and leaders in the system and the community. Each correctional options project operates in an environment that demands a unique strategy capable of generating and maintaining support. This process involves several stages.

First, program staff should identify the key stakeholders and constituencies whose support is critical to operating and funding the program. These may include political leaders, potential funders, local media, victims' organizations, business leaders, private social agencies, and citizens' groups. Some of the individuals identified as targets for a public awareness campaign may also have been identified as candidates for the previously discussed policy group or may already be serving on the group.

Second, staff need to develop mechanisms for communicating with these individuals and organizations on an ongoing basis. Approaches might include one-on-one meetings to explain the program or quarterly mailings with program updates. Ideally, this communication should begin before the program starts, so that significant feedback can be incorporated in the program design. Communication should continue after the program has begun operation.

Program staff should strive for two main goals in their communication efforts: (1) to enable key stakeholders and the community to become comfortable with and supportive of the program, and (2) to convey significant information about program operations and successes.

Information that can be most useful in describing program successes will usually include the following:

- o Cost savings. Planners and administrators should be cautious about overstating savings, because these savings are only theoretical unless the program actually reduces or eliminates the need for additional prison or jail space or enables the correctional agency to reduce the budget. However, in an era of fiscal constraint, any program that receives public funds will be expected to document its cost effectiveness.

- o Program success. Once a program's goals have been articulated, policymakers and the public have an interest in knowing whether the program has been successful in achieving its goals. Program administrators need to communicate their successes through periodic reports, meetings, presentations, and interviews. Any program failures also need to be described, along with an explanation for the failures and a plan for making program modifications to address identified problems.

- o Individual success stories. Corrections goals and terminology can often be confusing to people who are not criminal justice professionals. However, the story of an individual offender who has been changed by a correctional program or of a victim who has benefited from one can summarize the value of the program in a powerful manner. While respecting issues of confidentiality and the privacy of the individuals involved, program staff should seek opportunities to communicate their successes in this type of personalized manner.

- o Public safety. Public safety is a primary concern among all segments of any community. It is important for correctional options program managers to express understanding of this concern and to predict and demonstrate how their programs will enhance public safety. At a minimum, administrators of correctional options programs should be capable of demonstrating that their projects involve nonviolent offenders and that their clientele receive a combination of services and supervision designed to promote law-abiding behavior.

Promotion through the media is one of the most effective ways to develop broad community support. While some criminal justice practitioners shy away from media contact, many others have successfully promoted their programs and ideas through a carefully constructed publicity strategy. A major advantage of developing a relationship with the media is that a major problem--for example, an offender from the program absconding or committing a serious new offense--is more likely to be discounted or minimized in the context of an otherwise successful and well-regarded program.

When working with the media, program staff should:

- o Provide basic, easy-to-understand information about the program and its goals. A one- or two-page summary of accomplishments should be developed to convey basic messages.

- o Be proactive in thinking about "photo opportunities" and human interest stories. Television reporters are not very excited about interviewing professionals who sit behind a desk, but they are often interested in telling the stories of victims and offenders who can describe articulately how a criminal justice intervention affected them. The same type of human interest approach works with print media as well.

o Be available to media representatives as a resource. Many reporters and editors are all-purpose journalists who do not have the opportunity to become "experts" in a particular field. If program staff make themselves known and available to provide information and analysis of criminal justice issues, reporters will generally be more likely to consider doing a story on the program.

Communicating through the media also has its risks. Local media may not find the program of interest or, worse, may be hostile to any type of correctional programming that does not involve incarceration. Therefore, program administrators need to use the media selectively and should not devote all of their outreach efforts to the media.

Program staff should also develop outreach plans and communications strategies to work with other constituencies such as business groups, neighborhood residents, or churches. Information should be tailored to each specific group. Church groups, for example, may be most interested in client success stories, while a Rotary Club may find a combination of fiscal savings and case histories more compelling.

While communications activities can be time consuming and frustrating, they are crucial to a program's long-term success. As a result, program staff should remain receptive to opportunities to build support and initiate communications activities among a diverse group of local constituencies.

A successful communications strategy is one that is built into the design of a program and is incorporated during all phases of the program's operation. Although a skilled communications professional is certainly an asset to such a strategy, programs can achieve similar results with staff who understand the importance of information and regular communication.

Effective public relations may also include use of community service, establishment of local citizens' advisory boards, and other methods related to the unique environment of the correctional option. Staff and program participants of the Maricopa County, Arizona, day reporting center have cultivated a positive relationship with the neighborhood in which the program is located. Before starting the program, teams of probation officers and probationers canvassed the neighborhood to advise residents of the department's plans for the program and to solicit suggestions from the residents about ways the program could contribute to the neighborhood. Based on those surveys, the program regularly provides its facilities to the residents for neighborhood meetings, offers courses in English as a second language to the residents of the primarily Latino neighborhood, and conducts supervised community service activities in which program participants perform home repairs for elderly neighbors. The day reporting center has also designated a staff member who lives in the area to serve as a liaison with the neighbors. As a result of these steps, the department's day reporting center has become an integral part of the Garfield neighborhood in Phoenix. Finally, criminal justice practitioners at all levels need to be aware that their programmatic success is in part contingent on public attitudes regarding crime and punishment. As a result, practitioners should be open to opportunities to influence public attitudes even though this approach may not be directly related to generating support for the program.

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### Stage Three: Program Implementation

Program implementation can be only as good as the planning and development activities accomplished prior to startup. Furthermore, before the program becomes operational, planners and administrators should conduct a final review of the planning and development stages. This review should include identifying any important stakeholders who may not have been involved in the program planning or program development stages but who should be included in program implementation and any significant program elements that may now need modification.

#### Manage Key Implementation Tasks and Timeframes

When the working group is ready to implement the program, the first step is to involve key stakeholders, including project staff, in developing a realistic time and task responsibility chart for managing short-, interim-, and long-range goals and objectives. This activity is critical for clarifying project accountability, establishing timeframes, and delineating key implementation tasks and activities. Effective time and task responsibility charting also enables project management to document that objectives are being met and to use their achievement to keep staff motivated.

#### Manage Service and Supervision Components

Correctional options are intended to promote public safety by changing offenders' criminal behavior to law-abiding behavior. A variety of possible program components may help achieve this desired goal, depending on the risks and needs of the target population. These program features should be selected based on the planning and development work done earlier and should be reflected in the time and task responsibility chart.

#### Case Management Plan

The fundamental offender-based program component of any option should be the development of an individual case management plan. One framework for developing this plan is called the Risk-Need-Responsivity approach. This model is based on three principles:

- o Risk. More intensive services should be provided to higher risk offenders.
- o Need. Treatment should address the specific circumstances and characteristics that have been linked to each offender's criminal behavior.
- o Responsivity. Treatment should match the learning style of the offender.

The core elements of individual treatment plans focus on levels and types of supervision required and kinds and intensity of services needed by each offender in the program. When completed, these plans should be written documents with specific, measurable timeframes to reduce criminality. Risk and needs assessments, along with current and past offense histories and available resources, form the basis for individual case plans. For example, the Offender Case Management System employed by Vermont's correctional options project is a classification model based on risk of reoffense and the offender's needs. Each offender case management plan results in a recommendation to the court for institutional or community placement. Specific recommendations on the type of supervision and services required for public safety along with opportunities aimed at changing the offender's lifestyle are included in each plan.

The risk component of the Vermont Offender Case Management System considers the interaction between two primary variables: risk of reoffense based on testing and the severity of offenses committed. Risk prediction is based on the offender's personal characteristics and historic circumstances (static factors) and the severity of the offender's crimes, from low to high (also static factors).

Other elements central to the case management model describe the needs and responsiveness of the offender. Need factors--which are dynamic, theoretically changing with targeted interventions--include substance abuse, educational and vocational achievement, workplace maturity, and the ability to form and maintain relationships. Responsiveness factors include general approaches to classes of offenders and individual offenders' learning styles.

### Services

Program components offered in correctional options projects generally include drug treatment, life skills training, cognitive restructuring, family restoration and preservation, academic and vocational education leading to workplace readiness, job placement, mentoring, counseling and mental health services, and special needs services such as medical care for drug-dependent offenders or individuals with HIV or AIDS. Several correctional options programs include victim restitution and community service components as part of an overall approach to develop offender responsibility while building positive public relations. The visibility of offenders performing community service can be a powerful tool in promoting public involvement and support for the program. Enabling the community to have a voice in selecting community services can also build support for the program. During the planning of the community correctional center operated by Maricopa County's correctional options program, probation department staff canvassed the neighborhood in which the center was to be located to advise local residents of their plans and to solicit suggestions for possible community service projects that correctional options program participants could, and subsequently did, perform. Community service projects are also centerpieces of correctional options programs in Maryland, Riverside County (California), Washington State, and Vermont.

### Service Delivery Partnerships

Many correctional agencies participating in BJA's Correctional Options Demonstration Program have chosen to contract with outside service providers. Contracting has both advantages and disadvantages. Waiting lists can be reduced and services can be accessed when needed. The need to increase the size of a public agency's staff and to subsequently lay off staff after the program is concluded can be avoided. A wide range of expertise found in the community can be made available to the client population. The opportunity for positive public education about the program through the boards and staffs of community-based service providers is another advantage. By contrast, communications between correctional agencies and community-based service providers often can be difficult. For example, reporting back to the correctional agency is sometimes an issue, particularly with drug programs in which administrators may feel that confidentiality laws prevent them from reporting missed appointments or relapses. Because public safety and offender responsibility are prime concerns for any correctional options program, these issues should be clarified in the contract. When contracting for services, it may be necessary to overcome service provider resistance to working with offenders by reminding public and private community

agencies that the law often entitles offenders to services.

Before entering into a contract with a community-based service provider, correctional staff should obtain answers to the following questions:

- o Is the provider well-established in the community? If so, how is it involved in the community?
- o Is the service provider financially stable?
- o Does the organization have previous criminal justice system involvement?
- o Does the service provider possess the expertise and experience needed in the particular treatment modality to be used with correctional options clients?
- o Is the organization connected with a variety of community-based aftercare services?

It is better to pay service providers for outcome-based results than for process results. For example, the ideal contract with a service provider specializing in workplace readiness would focus on the number of jobs delivered to the client group, not just the number of job interviews arranged. However, it is often difficult to secure outcome-based contracts in areas such as drug treatment. As a result, a combination of outcome- and process-based contracts may have to be negotiated. Whatever the nature of the contract, the relationship of the contractor to the correctional agency hosting the option should be clearly outlined, and the outcomes of time and task responsibility charting discussed previously should be agreed on from the start.

#### Client Supervision

Client supervision may include electronic monitoring, urinalysis, house arrest, day reporting, day incarceration, or probation with special conditions. Different levels of supervision and services should be available as offenders move through the correctional options program. Each individual's case management plan needs to address this issue and reward positive behavior with increasing levels of responsibility. For example, day reporting centers using electronic monitoring and providing services should identify "graduation" points and reward offenders when they achieve and maintain previously determined benchmarks of success.

Similarly, it is important to respond swiftly, fairly, and consistently to rule infractions and relapses. Rule infractions, however, should be handled with flexibility based on written, disseminated standards. The importance of consistent application of standards should be stressed during staff training, and supervisors should monitor staff application of the standards to ensure consistency. Sanctions should correspond to the severity of the infraction. All sanctions should be given legal review before the program is started, and the rules and consequences should be provided in writing to all staff and offenders. Incarceration, as the ultimate sanction, may be the result of a serious new offense or accumulation of minor offenses. Generally, a limited period of incarceration is imposed to emphasize to offenders the seriousness of their transgressions and the program's willingness to revoke the privilege of program participation permanently if their misbehavior continues. Ultimately, of course, offenders who present serious or continuing problems should be referred to the committing authority for action.

### Community Reentry and Aftercare

For programs in which offenders spend an extended period of time incarcerated, continuity of care when releasing offenders to the community is crucial. Correctional programs suffer when they concentrate resources on the institutional phase and fail to focus adequately on community reentry. Often, services and supervision need to be increased at this juncture, and, indeed, most correctional options programs provide some form of intensive supervision at least initially on the offender's release from the institutional phase of the program.

Results of several boot camp evaluations have shown that offenders who do well during the residential phase of the program may demonstrate less success after returning to the community where newly learned behavior is more difficult to sustain. Once in the community, offenders no longer have the daily structure of the program to support law-abiding behavior. Developing a gradual community reentry process and providing aftercare support services are critical in helping an offender released from a residential program create a daily living environment that will be conducive to continuing the success experienced in the program.

### Ensure Program Integrity Through Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

As noted previously, ongoing monitoring provides the information necessary to determine whether programs are operating as planned and to conduct evaluations. Evaluation is necessary to inform policymakers, correctional administrators, criminal justice authorities, and other public officials about the successes and failures of program implementation. Evaluations also provide recommendations for replicating or modifying critical program elements and are of two types--process and impact.

#### Process Evaluation

Process evaluation involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data to describe how the program was designed and implemented. A process evaluation is intended to improve five key interrelated features of the current program:

- o Program context, which refers to the set of conditions and assumptions that operationally and conceptually define the distinctive features of the program. Included are the theoretical assumptions guiding offender selection criteria and intervention strategies (supervision and services), as well as the financial, historical, and organizational characteristics of the program.
- o Program goals, which are the measurable outcomes of the program's interventions that can be used to evaluate its effectiveness.
- o Offender selection, which is the combination of procedures and criteria employed to define program eligibility and select offenders for the program.
- o Program services, which include the activities and services the program provides to offenders.
- o Organizational linkages, which are the formal and informal conditions and relationships among organizations that may support or hinder program operations.

A wide array of quantitative (aggregate and individual) and qualitative data must be collected and analyzed to evaluate process-related program issues. The jurisdiction's criminal justice system must be characterized both before and after program implementation. Then any system changes that might have been responsible for improvements or declines in offender behavior can be identified. The extent to which similar outcomes are likely to occur in other jurisdictions in which the program might be replicated can also be assessed.

An assessment of the impact of the program on criminal justice system performance requires aggregate data, such as local demographic characteristics and arrest rates. Correctional system population data, such as admissions, releases, average daily population, and other pertinent attributes of offenders currently being sentenced to probation, jail, and prison, are also needed. These data may be collected by the working group as part of the targeting process. A program with a strong data collection component will find it easier to conduct an impact evaluation that compares program participants with a matched control group in terms of rearrests, reconvictions, recommitments to prison, and costs.

The correctional option program should implement a manual or automated management information system to ensure the delivery of effective and applicable services and the collection of accurate and complete data. As part of the process evaluation, data forms can be used to obtain:

- o Program screening information that will allow evaluators to compare the characteristics of offenders who have been screened and rejected with offenders accepted to the program.
- o Offender baseline information on variables such as education, employment, and drug use prior to program enrollment.
- o Information on program participation and program termination that will allow researchers to track the levels and types of services provided by the programs, the movement from institutional to community settings, and reasons for terminations from the program.

The evaluation process must ensure that forms and any automated data are received and coded in a timely manner and that the data received are complete and correct.

The quantitative data can only partially explain how the program is operating and whether it is adhering to its original design. Researchers should collect qualitative data for the process evaluation onsite, both to observe program activities and to interview key personnel. These activities will provide additional information that can improve understanding of program operation and explain specific trends suggested by the quantitative data. These observations and interviews should include questions that address:

- o Formal goals and objectives.
- o Identification processes.
- o Intervention programs.
- o Contextual characteristics.
- o Organizational linkages.

## Impact Evaluation

An impact evaluation uses an experimental design with random bias assignment. A true experimental design includes identifying a preproject group, statistically matching it with the program participants (the experimental group), and then assigning the individuals to a control group that will not receive program services. Another method for assigning cases to either experimental or control groups includes a "surplus" of offenders eligible to participate in the program. In this case, offenders may be randomly assigned to participate in the traditional correctional program rather than the correctional options program that is to be evaluated. A quasi-experimental design can be used to assess program impact when it is not feasible to conduct a true experimental design with random assignment. A quasi-experimental design could involve selecting a group of offenders who are similar to the program participants in terms of backgrounds (for example, offense history) and demographics (for example, age or gender) but who were not selected for the program because their processing into the criminal justice system preceded its existence. Quasi-experimental designs are being used to evaluate the correctional options programs in New Hampshire and Florida.

This proactive approach to monitoring and evaluation requires a high degree of interaction between evaluators and program staff. As a result, it is essential to establish a comprehensive system of evaluator-staff communication that includes assigning managers and technical assistance experts to assist and direct the correctional options project staff who have questions about the data.

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## Conclusion

Policymakers and practitioners responsible for creating alternatives to traditional forms of criminal punishment face daunting challenges. Regrettably, the first obstacle that such individuals all too often face is obtaining reliable information based on credible research or experience about what works best in controlling correctional population growth and about the rising cost of incarceration. This information gap reflects the paucity of well-administered, properly evaluated correctional programs with clearly specified, positive results that can be easily replicated in other sites.

Experience in BJA's Correctional Options Demonstration Program indicates that prudently managed, cost-conscious correctional interventions exhibit several similar characteristics. Although the experiences of the jurisdictions differ, each of them:

- o Involved key stakeholders in the program from the outset.
- o Targeted program services and supervision to a well-defined group of offenders.
- o Created case management plans aimed at addressing individual offender's risks, needs, and responsiveness to intervention.
- o Cultivated broad-based public support for the program.
- o Ensured program integrity through ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

This document has presented a number of lessons learned by correctional

practitioners in planning, developing, and evaluating correctional options programs. Readers who master the material presented here will be well prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

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Appendix A

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#### Appendix B

##### Sources for Further Information

Bureau of Justice Assistance  
810 Seventh Street NW.  
Washington, DC 20531  
202-514-6278

U. S. Department of Justice Response Center  
1-800-421-6770

Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 6000 Rockville, MD 20849-6000  
1-800-688-4252

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#### Appendix C

##### Correctional Options Demonstration Programs

The following programs are supported, in part, through grants provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Correctional Options Demonstration Program. When taken as a whole, these programs illustrate the critical elements discussed in this document.

California Youth Authority  
LEAD: A Boot Camp and Intensive Parole Program

The LEAD Program of the California Youth Authority (CYA) enhances a previously existing boot camp program for youthful offenders through an

interdepartmental partnership with the California National Guard and the California Employment Development Department. The LEAD Program is a 10-month program designed in two phases--a 4-month highly structured boot camp phase and a 6-month intensive parole phase (followed by standard parole for any remaining commitment time). The program has two major goals: to reduce recidivism and to provide a cost effective treatment option. National Guard staff oversee the military drills, discipline, and physical training. Employment Development staff provide employment readiness programs and assist with post-release job placement. The treatment modality encompasses an array of training, counseling, and physically challenging activities; military procedures; and intensive parole supervision activities, including relapse-management strategies. The California Innovative Military Projects and Career Training Program (IMPACT) develops strategies for the delivery of postrelease program services. Participants are youthful offenders between the ages of 14 and 23 who are juvenile court first commitments and juvenile court parole violators.

#### Connecticut Office of Alternative Sanctions

##### Fresh Start Program

Fresh Start, a residential treatment program based in Hartford, Connecticut, is designed to provide offenders who are mothers with drug treatment and parenting and living skills. The Fresh Start program also works toward reducing the offenders' involvement with the criminal justice system. The target population is prison-bound, substance-abusing mothers ages 16 to 30.

The program is composed of four tiers with an overall length of stay of 16 to 18 months. Tier 1, Assessment, includes a needs assessment and full medical examination. Tier 2, Intensive Drug Treatment, is a therapeutic community sensitive to women's issues. Tier 3, Community Re-Entry Preparation, emphasizes basic living skills such as parenting, budgeting, cooking, nutrition, family planning, recreation, and smoking cessation. Tier 4, Independent Living, provides subsidized apartments and develops supportive networks for Narcotics Anonymous/Alcoholics Anonymous entitlements, health care, and other services.

Fresh Start was designed to complement Connecticut's current efforts to respond to prison and jail overcrowding and high rates of recidivism. Because the State's existing intermediate sanctions do not adequately address the special needs of youthful female offenders, the following goals have been established for the project: (1) develop and implement a community-based sanction and treatment continuum for prison-bound, youthful female offenders that will serve as a State and nationwide model for intermediate sanctions; (2) provide judges with constructive, enforceable sentencing options at pretrial arraignment, sentencing, and parole/probation violation hearings; (3) provide counseling, treatment, education, and employment services that specifically address women's multiple needs and the needs and behavior of their children; and (4) form partnerships among public and private organizations to create an integrated service delivery network.

#### Florida Department of Corrections Drug Punishment Program

This program offers intervention and treatment for male and female drug-involved offenders age 21 or younger. The program is targeted to four Florida counties, three judicial circuits, and the cities of Tampa,

Sarasota, and St. Petersburg. Suitable offenders are diverted from prison to probation with the provision that they complete the three-phase program.

The program consists of 6 months of intensive residential treatment in a secure facility. Treatment includes diagnosis; development of an individual treatment plan with specific treatment interventions, measurable behavioral criteria, and group counseling; a 3-month transition to the community in a nonsecure bed supplied by a contracted community drug treatment provider; and 9 months of regular probation with employment and/or study supervised by a specially trained correctional probation officer with a 30 to 1 caseload. In each phase, the consequences for noncompliance with supervised conditions are clearly stated, as are the rewards for compliance. Urinalysis is conducted throughout the program.

Program candidates are subject to an initial screening followed by detailed professional assessment of their suitability and readiness for treatment. Judicial sentencing to the Drug Punishment Program is based on this assessment. It is anticipated that approximately 200 candidates will enter the program over an 18-month period.

Maricopa County (Arizona) Adult Probation and Parole Department  
Youthful Offender Program

The Youthful Offender Program (YOP) is designed to fill gaps in the existing continuum of sentencing options for youthful offenders (ages 18 to 25), the majority of whom have substance abuse problems as well as limited educational and vocational skills. The primary goals of YOP are to reduce jail crowding and recidivism of youthful offenders, who often fail to make a successful transition from incarceration to community living. The program is administered by the Maricopa County Adult Probation and Parole Department.

The program has two components: Day Reporting Center (DRC) Furlough, which is designed to divert jail inmates with at least 60 days remaining on their jail sentence, and After Shock Transition, which is designed to provide a smooth transition back into the community for offenders successfully exiting the Shock Incarceration Boot Camp program. Daily attendance at one of three DRCs is mandatory. Program interventions include community restitution, community service, educational and vocational activities, general and substance abuse counseling, and random urinalysis. (The After Shock component provides transitional housing for the neediest cases.)

DRC Furlough and After Shock Transition interventions are designed to realize the YOP goals of reduced jail crowding and reduced recidivism. The up-front diverted jail time for DRC Furlough clients, as well as the anticipated reduction in recidivism for both DRC Furlough and After Shock participants, is expected to have a significant impact on jail overcrowding. In addition, given the program population, the majority of whom are undereducated and underemployed youth with substance abuse histories, it is expected that program interventions will also help to reduce recidivism.

Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services  
Nonviolent Sanctions for Substance-Involved Offenders

This program provides an alternative to incarceration for nonviolent offenders with substance abuse problems. The program is under the management of the director of probation and parole within the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. It provides

intensive case management and treatment services for parolees as they leave prison and begin to experience problems during community supervision. The program incorporates a graduated series of sanctions (Community Supervision Controls), treatment, and other program assistance.

Supervision levels include specialized parole caseloads, day reporting, home detention, and a treatment center within a maximum security prison (Patuxent Institution). Specialized options are available for female offenders.

Several nonviolent populations are targeted for program participation: (1) detention center inmates who have sentences of more than 6 months, but less than 2 years; (2) inmates who have received a delayed release; (3) inmates with sentences of 10 years or less; (4) technical parole violators (including those parole violators who have committed minor, nonviolent offenses); and (5) boot camp offenders. Inmates are screened for eligibility by institutional case management staff according to criteria defined for each target population. Candidates must also indicate interest in the program and must voluntarily agree to participate in it. Currently, the program averages a monthly caseload of 45.

Upon acceptance, participants are administered two diagnostic instruments, the Addiction Severity Index and the Psychopathy Checklist--Revised, that assist in identifying treatment issues and needed program services for the participants. Individualized supervision and treatment plans are developed by program staff based on the results of these instruments.

The program's treatment philosophy is remediation. This approach identifies specific deficits in the offender that are directly related to crime and seeks to correct, modify, or minimize these deficits through focused treatment services. The intensity of offenders' participation depends on their needs. Participants attend formalized treatment modules such as social skills, moral problem solving, and relapse prevention and are assigned to the intensive supervision parole unit upon release from incarceration. They agree to adhere to the supervision and treatment plan and a structured urinalysis schedule.

New Hampshire Department of Corrections  
Correctional Pathways Program

This program provides youthful male and female offenders sentenced to the New Hampshire Department of Corrections with an increased range of services designed to enhance rehabilitation, reduce crowding, and improve chances for successful release. There are four program elements:

1. The 60-bed Bridge program, which provides intensive prerelease services and release planning. The length of stay is typically 3 months; however, the program is designed to allow for longer or shorter stays based on individual need.

2. The 50-bed Bypass program, which provides modified shock incarceration followed by intensive drug and alcohol treatment and education and vocational programming for medium security offenders. This program is an alternative to secure confinement. The length of stay is typically 10 to 12 months; however, longer or shorter stays are possible. Upon completion, program graduates may be placed in the Bridge program for continuing services.

3. A new, high-intensity supervision unit that provides statewide services for offenders with special release conditions.

4. Expanded prerelease and postrelease programming in the areas of substance abuse treatment, employment, and vocational training.

Program elements focus on the provision of intensive release planning, employment-focused education, and work opportunities for youthful offenders. All participants are sentenced to a program that is a multidisciplinary effort of the correctional agency, the Department of Post-Secondary Technical Education, the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, the Division of Employment Security, and the State Department of Justice.

These program features are intended to increase the range of services available to sentenced individuals and to provide an opportunity to reduce or, in some cases, eliminate the individuals' stay in a correctional facility. Inmates may be assigned directly to the Bypass program from system reception.

Riverside County (California) Probation Department  
Boot Camp at Twin Pines Ranch

This boot camp program uses traditional military basic training as a tool to teach young offenders self-discipline and self-confidence, providing motivation for participants in reaching their educational and vocational training goals while in the facility.

The program consists of a 6-month boot camp program followed by a 6-month community supervision phase. The program functions as an additional element of programming within Twin Pines Ranch, an established all-male juvenile facility. Because program activities are scheduled during evening hours, participants can still attend daytime academic classes and vocational training.

Special precautions are taken to ensure that there is no physical intimidation or verbal abuse during basic training, and military-like allegiance to authority is avoided.

The program has the capacity to serve 100 offenders. The program has an intermediate goal of increased rates of completion of educational and training programs within the highly structured environment of Twin Pines Ranch and the long-term goal of increased numbers of graduates reentering the community as productive and law-abiding citizens.

Vermont Department of Corrections  
Restructuring Corrections Program

Vermont is completely restructuring the Department of Corrections (DOC), including the ways in which offenders are classified and the sentencing options that are available. The restructuring program provides the courts with an increased range of sanctions and programs for youthful offenders ages 16 to 26. The primary goal of the restructuring is to reduce prison crowding by diverting nonviolent offenders from prison while maintaining public safety with intensive treatment and control. A secondary program goal is to address the factors that contribute to recidivism among younger offenders.

The program consists of two sentencing tracks: the Risk Management Service Track and the Court and Reparative Service Track. Each track

provides a range of options that can be assigned depending upon the offender's assessed level of risk and successful participation in assigned programming. For each track, the levels include probation, correctional options, and incarceration.

The Risk Management Service Track is designed for offenders who commit felony crimes and are highly likely to reoffend. Services within this track focus on key areas with demonstrated relationships to the likelihood of reoffending: life management skills, substance abuse treatment, and employability training. The primary emphasis is on development of appropriate decisionmaking abilities. Sanctions range from specialized probation caseloads to day treatment to incarceration in a correctional setting. Offenders are selected for this track through the DOC case management system. The June 1991 DOC population profile indicated a target population of 3,226 cases for this track.

The Court and Reparative Service Track is designed for offenders who commit nonviolent misdemeanor crimes and represent a relatively low risk of reoffending. The programs within this track focus exclusively on making retributions to the victim(s) and the community and instructing the offenders in the consequences of their criminal conduct. Sanctions range from reparative probation to community service and restitution sentencing (which may include an electronic monitoring or house arrest component) to community service camp. Offenders are chosen from probationers for this track through a community-based Reparation Board. The June 1991 DOC population profile indicated a target population of 6,951 cases for this track.

Washington Department of Corrections  
Reintegration Project

The Reintegration Project is a two-track program--a prison track and a community track--focusing on work, education, and employment readiness for youthful offenders. The mainstay of the program is the intensive involvement of the private sector in the provision of jobs, job training, and education, both in the community and in correctional facilities.

In the prison track, work and employment readiness services, integrated with education and vocational elements, are provided to inmates in an institution for males, an institution for females, and a newly created "work ethic camp." The camp was authorized by the Washington State Legislature as an alternative to prison for 18- to 28-year-old youth. In the community track, offenders under community supervision who violate the terms of their supervision are diverted to a work release center that offers a chemical dependency treatment program and an intensive work readiness program.

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Bureau of Justice Assistance Information

General Information

Callers may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center for general information or specific needs, such as assistance in submitting grants applications and information on training. To contact the Response Center, call 1-800-421-6770 or write to 1100 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005.

Indepth Information

For more indepth information about BJA, its programs, and its funding opportunities, requesters can call the BJA Clearinghouse. The BJA Clearinghouse, a component of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), shares BJA program information with State and local agencies and community groups across the country. Information specialists are available to provide reference and referral services, publication distribution, participation and support for conferences, and other networking and outreach activities. The Clearinghouse can be reached by:

o Mail

P.O. Box 6000  
Rockville, MD 20849-6000

o Visit

2277 Research Boulevard  
Rockville, MD 20850

o Telephone

1-800-688-4252  
Monday through Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. eastern time

o Fax

301-519-5212

o Fax on Demand

1-800-688-4252

o BJA Home Page

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA>

o NCJRS World Wide Web

<http://www.ncjrs.org>

o E-mail

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