Multistate Study Examines Factors Related to Parole Violations and Revocations

by Janice Iwama, Research Associate, and Stan Orchowsky, Director of Research, Justice Research and Statistics Association

Over the past 20 years, the number of offenders on community supervision in the United States has climbed steadily (see Figure 1). Offenders under community supervision include adults on probation (a court-ordered period of correctional supervision in the community) or on parole (a period of conditional supervised release in the community following a prison term). Having more offenders on community supervision creates the potential for greater numbers of offenders incarcerated in prison when they violate the terms of their probation or parole. Examining factors that affect revocations, and in particular revocations for technical violations, can provide critical information for cash-strapped states to avoid re-incarceration costs.

In 2008, JRSA received funding from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to coordinate a multistate assessment of parole revocations and violations. The goal of the project was to provide policy makers in selected states with specific information about the reasons for offender violations and recommendations for reducing the number of violators returned to incarceration. After issuing a solicitation

Figure 1: Adults on Community Supervision in the United States, 1977-2009
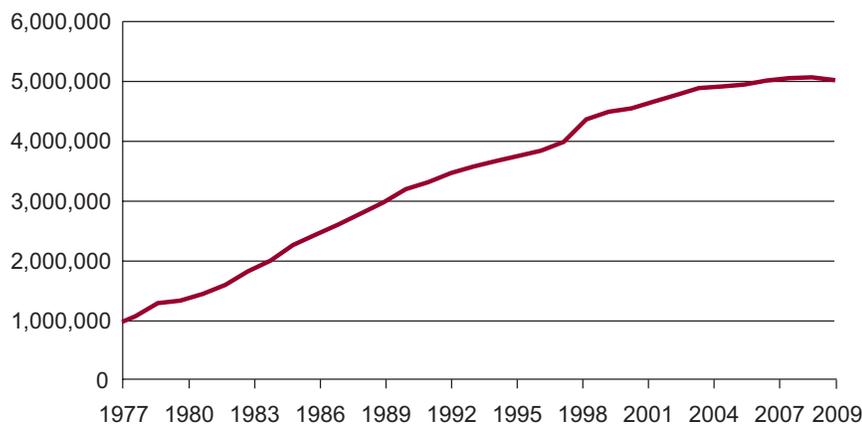
BJS Convenes Workshop on National Corrections Reporting Program Data

by E. Ann Carson, Statistician, Corrections Unit, Bureau of Justice Statistics

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) convened a workshop on March 22-23, 2011, in Baltimore, Maryland, to discuss the future of BJS' National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP). NCRP obtains records of inmate admissions, releases, the stock population at year-end, and parole releases to produce statistics on inmate characteristics such as demographic attributes (age, sex, race), offenses, time served, and admission and release types. BJS held the workshop to reinvigorate interest and encourage increased participation in NCRP, introduce its new NCRP data collection agent, and identify ways to make the data more

relevant and useful to state correctional researchers. A total of 55 representatives from 41 states attended the workshop, including research directors and analysts, information technology personnel, and statisticians. Most participants were from state departments of corrections (DOC), although several state Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) directors and representatives filled in when state DOC personnel were unavailable. The Justice Research and Statistics Association assisted BJS with the program logistics.

Participants were welcomed by Jim Lynch, the BJS Director, who described BJS' broader strategy for using adminis-

trative records for statistical purposes and talked about how the NCRP fit into BJS' approach to improving the federal statistical system's infrastructure. Allen Beck, Senior Statistical Advisor at BJS and former Chief of Corrections, provided historical context about the NCRP. BJS Deputy Director Bill Sabol established the relevance of the NCRP for national corrections policy by pointing out the varied uses of these data to address key issues related to prison population growth and its impacts on society. This provided a framework for describing the goals

Treating Homeless with Co-Occurring Disorders

A new resource is available from a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)-supported criminal justice workgroup of grantees providing treatment services to persons who are homeless with co-occurring disorders of substance abuse and mental health. The purpose of the brief paper is to contribute to the understanding—and to facilitate resolution—of problems related to the intersection of criminal justice, substance abuse, mental health, homelessness, trauma and physical abuse. The paper outlines lessons learned from working with this population and presents strategies that, if implemented, will enhance successful recovery of this vulnerable population. The authors welcome feedback on their ideas. The paper is available at http://chab.samhsa.gov/Resource/View.aspx?id=50574. ⚖

CONTENTS

SAC NEWS

Arizona

Children of Incarcerated Parents. Staff of the Arizona Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), in collaboration with the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University, completed a study of children of incarcerated parents. The project has two components: 1) original data collection during the intake process (males) and among the general population (females) that provides Arizona with the most recent and accurate estimates of the number of children living in Arizona who have a parent currently incarcerated in an Arizona Department of Corrections facility; and 2) development of a plan for institutionalizing the collection of this information in a reliable and comprehensive manner.

Drug Data Clearinghouse: Community Data Project. SAC staff are working on a project to enhance access to drug and crime data for policy makers and practitioners. The primary goal of the Community Data Project is to serve as a central repository for federal, state, and local data on drugs, drug use, and related activity. SAC staff are developing three mechanisms for enhancing access to these data: 1) an interactive website that allows users to select the types of data they would like to view or download; 2) an annual substance abuse coalition data book for all community coalitions addressing drug use in their jurisdictions; and 3) a series of drug data briefs that provide a foundational understanding of drug use in Arizona and summarize analyses of the research conducted by SAC staff and external collaborators. In October 2010, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's web-based tool titled "Community Data Project" was launched, giving users access to a variety of data on crime and substance use and abuse. The tool can be accessed at: *http://www.bach-harrison.com/arizona-dataproject/Indicators.aspx*.

Illinois

Study of Adult Probationers. Relatively little information is available on probationers in Illinois, and this report is an attempt to create a detailed and relevant snapshot of probationers that can help guide probation departments' policy and programming decisions. Data were collected on a sample of 3,519 offenders admitted to probation in 2006 from 17 probation departments in the state, including probationer demographics, probation sentences, monitoring, and recidivism. The final report is expected in summer 2011.

Study of Juvenile Recidivism Rates. Few studies have looked at recidivism for juveniles in Illinois or compared demographic and offense-type subgroups. This study, funded by the American Statistical Association/Bureau of Justice Statistics, will use various advanced statistical techniques, including multilevel modeling, survival analysis, and Markov modeling to examine juvenile recidivism rates. The report will be completed in summer 2011.

Sheridan Program Study. Sheridan Correctional Center National Model Drug Prison and Reentry Program (Sheridan) provides substance abuse treatment in prison. Prior research has shown reductions in recidivism among Sheridan graduates compared to other prisoners. Researchers interviewed 50 reincarcerated Sheridan graduates in an effort to obtain information and insights about what contributed to their reincarceration, as well as to learn their opinions about the multiple components of the Sheridan program, aftercare, and parole, in order to improve the program. The report will be completed by summer 2011.

Prescription Drug Study. This report provides information on illegal prescription drug use in Illinois using

existing statewide data to inform on the types of prescription drugs; the prevalence of illegal use; overdoses and deaths; and efforts to combat illegal use. The final publication will be completed in summer 2011.

Guide on Process and Procedures of Illinois Justice System. This guide provides an overview of how the state criminal justice system in Illinois typically operates. The purpose is to inform the public on the flow of an adult criminal case through the criminal justice system, including arrest procedures, the court system, pretrial activities, trial, sentencing, and the expungement process. The report will be completed by summer 2011.

Hate Crime Report. This report will compare hate crime in Illinois and the United States from 1997 to 2007 using Uniform Crime Report data. The purpose is to share information on hate crime trends, offenses, location, and victim and offender characteristics. The final report should be completed by summer 2011.

Louisiana

Crime in Louisiana 2009. The Louisiana SAC and the Louisiana Crime Reporting Program completed the latest edition of the state's annual report on crime. *Crime in Louisiana 2009* presents the number of offenses and arrests reported during 2009 from cities, parishes, universities and colleges, and other law enforcement entities. Changes in crime rates between the years of 2008 and 2009 are provided, as well as crime trends for the years 2000 through 2009. The report is available on the SAC website at http://www.lcle.la.gov/programs/SAC.asp#Links.

Maryland

SAC Administers Gang Program Survey. In response to the Safe Schools Act of 2010, the Maryland SAC (MSAC) was tasked with creating a survey to determine what youth gang prevention/intervention programs exist in each county throughout the state. Using the data gathered from more than 200 respondents throughout the state as well as its own research, MSAC is developing evidence-based criteria for gang prevention/intervention programs and will make recommendations for a pilot program to provide comprehensive gang intervention/prevention services for high schools and middle schools where gang activity is prevalent. These findings will be presented to the General Assembly by July 1, 2011.

"Voice for Victims" A Statewide Blueprint for Action. The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP), which is Maryland's State Administering Agency, coordinated four town hall meetings around the state in the summer and fall of 2010, where crime victims provided testimony about poor experiences with the criminal justice system. Following this testimony, MSAC assisted GOCCP with creating a blueprint to address the issues raised. MSAC conducted research and analysis on potential solutions to the problems identified, and organized a Blueprint Workgroup with victim advocates on May 23. In total, 60 stakeholders from various criminal justice agencies and nonprofits around the state came together to address these issues and offer recommendations to improve Maryland's criminal justice system. The workgroup will review the information gathered and organized by GOCCP and a final report that reflects the victims' recommendations as well as the feedback and discussion will be issued. The report, "*Voices for Victims": A Statewide Blueprint for Action,* will be released in the fall.

SWAT Deployment Data. MSAC is legislatively mandated to collect, analyze, and report data on SWAT deployment in the state on a biannual basis to the General Assembly and the Governor. The first report was submitted in August 2010.

New SAC Director Appointed in Maryland

Jeffrey Zuback was appointed Director of the Maryland Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), where he has worked for over a year and a half as the Statistical Analyst. While employed at the SAC, he compiled various statistical products, conducted policy research, managed the SAC website, completed numerous state reports, and analyzed the state's traffic stop data and SWAT deployment data. He also developed a statewide crime victimization survey and arrest-related deaths reporting for the state. Prior to coming to the SAC, Mr. Zuback was an intern in the FBI Violent Crimes Squad in Baltimore. His research interests include statistics/methodology, criminological theory, abnormal psychology, law enforcement, community corrections, and gang violence. He will receive his master's degree in criminal justice with a specialization in law enforcement from the University of Baltimore in June 2011. He earned his bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in sociology from McDaniel College.

Former Director **Christina Lentz** left the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP), which houses the SAC, to become Executive Director of the Office of Planning, Policy, Regulations, and Statistics with Maryland's Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services.

Massachusetts

SAC Works with Data Providers on Analyses. The Research and Policy Analysis Division of the Massachusetts Office of Public Safety and Security, which houses the SAC, recently worked with both the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) and the State Police Crime Reporting Unit to obtain data for crime analysis projects. CJIS is responsible for maintaining the Criminal Justice Information System, an extensive law enforcement database containing state and interstate criminal history record information, firearms licensing and gun sales transactions, and other critical criminal justice information.

Firearm-Related Offenses. The SAC utilized the CJIS data to examine 26,723 firearm-related offenses in the Commonwealth between 2006 and 2008. According to the data, 7,959 individuals were arraigned on firearms charges. Disposition data were analyzed to determine a final sentencing for each charge. Among the defendant characteristics were the following: The defendants ranged from 14 to 91 years of age, with 51% of those charged being ages 17 to 24; 91% of defendants charged with a firearm offense were male; 38% of defendants were white, 34 % black, 22% Hispanic, 2% Asian, and 4% unknown. The full report is available on the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security website at *http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eopshome page&L=1&L0=Home&sid=Eeops*.

Hate Crimes. The SAC is completing a report on hate crimes in the state between 2000 and 2009 using data from the State Police Crime Reporting Unit. The data analysis on incidents, offenses, victims, and offenders focuses on trends and patterns of these crimes for the 10-year period. The complete report will be available by late summer 2011.

Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. The SAC will also be working on sexual assault and domestic violence projects using a unique dataset created in 2000,

the Provider Sexual Crime Report (PSCR). Medical providers are required by law to fill out a PSCR for every sexual assault and rape where the victim seeks medical treatment, even when the victims do not report the crimes to police. As a result, the PSCR provides detailed data on sexual crimes that are commonly underreported and therefore not tracked in other law enforcement-based datasets. Plans are to use the PSCR data to also focus on elderly, teen, and disabled victims of sexual assault. The data set provides, among other things, information about whether the assault was reported to police, the types of weapons or force the assailant used, the nature of the assault and injuries sustained, as well as the prior relationship, if any, between victims and assailants.

In addition, the SAC will be studying domestic violence incidents in Massachusetts as reported in M-NIBRS. An increased demand for services provided by domestic violence service providers coupled with reduced resources has resulted in a growing shortage of shelter beds and core services. A survey done in fall 2010 found that in one day there were 766 unmet requests for services; of these, 619 were from victims seeking emergency shelter or transitional housing. The lack of complete crime data may be even more limited with respect to immigrant populations. Victims of refugee and immigrant populations may underreport domestic violence incidents to law enforcement for a variety of reasons (e.g., fear of deportation, cultural beliefs, experience with law enforcement in their native countries).

New Mexico

All completed reports and/ or the executive summaries are available on the NM SAC website: http://nmsac.unm.edu/contact_information/nmsac_publications/.

Parole Revocation. The NM SAC participated in a multistate assessment of parole revocations and violations funded

by JRSA (see article on pg. 1), resulting in a report entitled "Parole Revocation in New Mexico." The goals of the assessment were to understand how the parole system operates in New Mexico as well as its impact on, and response to, parolee misconduct. Findings suggest that parolees with violations were significantly more likely to experience a revocation. Parolees with pro-social ties, in particular those who were employed and who did not have active gang affiliations, were less likely to experience violations or revocations. Variables such as criminal history, property offending, minority, and age (inversely) were also associated with increases in technical violations and revocations. One of the notable findings is that even controlling for new arrests, absconding is the most salient predictor of revocation in New Mexico.

Effect of Place on Crime. The SAC completed a study (funded by JRSA) assessing the influence of three types of places—schools, alcohol establishments, and churches—on neighborhood crime patterns at the block group level. The results indicate that block groups that contain alcohol establishments and, to a lesser degree, block groups that contain high schools report more crime. No statistically significant relationship between the presence of religious places and crime at the block group level was found. By utilizing the block group level of analysis, the SAC was able to include measures to statistically control for structural disadvantage, residential instability, and demographic factors.

Parolee Dental Program. The SAC examined the short-term outcomes of a pilot dental repair program for parolees under New Mexico Corrections Department supervision. The intent was to reduce visible barriers to employment, thus increasing parolees chances of successful reentry. Approximately 72% of participants successfully completed dental treatment. Of those, 95% reported that they felt that their appearance had improved, 84% reported feelings of

confidence and self-esteem, and 84% reported that their interactions with other people improved. Overall, 74% of participants perceived some kind of positive relationship between receiving the dental treatment and employment. However, there was little change in the employment status of participants, possibly because of the short period between treatment and post-treatment interviews.

Reentry Reform. The SAC is completing a report describing the results of a gaps analysis of current reentry reform efforts within New Mexico's Corrections Department (NMCD). In March 2008, Gov. Richardson convened a task force to review current practices and make recommendations for prison reform, with the goal of improving reentry success among those released from correctional supervision. In June 2008, the Task Force on Prison Reform produced the first of two reports identifying the needs of the state's prisons and offering recommendations to improve reentry success among the state's prisoners. As a result of the recommendations, NMCD created a new division tasked with carrying out its reform efforts. The division modeled the prison reform efforts after the national Transition from Prisons to Community Initiative; New Mexico's version of reentry reform is called RIPS (Reentry Initiative for Public Safety). The primary purpose of the report is to highlight gaps in NMCD's progress toward the implementation of RIPS in the institutional setting.

Oregon

Cost-Benefit Tool. The Oregon Statistical Analysis Center is working with the Pew Center on the States and the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) to test and use a new cost-benefit model created by WSIPP. The tool allows states to plug in their own criminal justice data to estimate the impact of different policy choices, and displays the impact of both crime and costs from different invest-

ment strategies. For example, if a sentencing policy reduces the expected number of prison beds by 100, the tool calculates the estimated savings to the state general fund and allows the user to choose an amount of that savings to reinvest in evidence-based programs. The tool displays the direct savings from the reduction in prison beds and also displays the expected long-term savings from the estimated reduction in crime from investing in evidence-based programs. The tool also estimates the overall impact on crime as a result of the policy choice. The tool will simulate different outcomes based on crime and cost distributions and estimate how likely it is that the policy choice will result in an overall reduction in crime. Depending on the investment choice and a state's cost of crime, there are likely policy options that result in an estimated decrease in both crime and taxpayer costs. Oregon is the first state to begin using this tool and preliminary results are being presented to the legislature and other state decision makers. Pew is working with a handful of states to help them put their own data into the model and use it to help inform policy. The Oregon SAC has offered to help as needed based on its experience using the tool.

Application of Mandatory Minimums. The SAC recently completed a controversial report on the application of mandatory minimum prison sentences in Oregon. In the past few years, the SAC accessed records from the state courts that made it possible to follow offenders from indictment through conviction. Staff were able to examine prosecutorial discretion in greater detail and analyze mandatory minimum sentences in a new way. When the mandatory minimum measure was passed by the voters in 1994, there were four main arguments in favor of it: incapacitation, deterrence, predictability of sentences, and comparable sentences. The SAC examined whether the sentences produced these outcomes.

- *Incapacitation*. Measure 11 did increase the use of incarceration to

incapacitate offenders by requiring Oregon to grow its prison system to hold offenders for longer terms of prison. The increased need for prison beds was mitigated by the way the prosecution applied the measure and mandatory minimum sentencing in general.

- *Deterrence*. The effectiveness of the measure as a crime deterrent is indeterminate, but it is clear that many of those indicted and convicted for these offenses were not "career criminals" in that they had minimal or no prior felony records.

- *Predictability of Sentences*. The measure did provide predictability for the minority of cases in which the state sought a conviction for crimes that carried the sentence prescribed by the chief petitioner. It created this predictability by eliminating judicial discretion if the prosecution obtained a conviction. The SAC report focuses on the application of mandatory sentencing in Oregon in thousands of cases over more than a decade, and makes clear that the predictable sentence is arrived at only in the minority of cases in which a prosecutor, not a judge, decided it was appropriate and necessary. The report considers the factors that increase the likelihood a prosecutor will seek a conviction that calls for a mandatory minimum sentence and examines the broad disparity in sentences for the 70% of cases where the prosecutor uses the "leverage" of the mandatory sentence to obtain a plea bargain to a lesser charge.

- *Comparable Sentences*. The chief petitioner focused on requiring "soft" judges to impose the minimum sentence if a jury found the offender guilty. The SAC report shows that juries only hear about 15% of the cases involving mandatory minimum sentences, and in the other 85% of the cases there is broad disparity in the sentences arrived at by the plea negotiation process in Oregon's 36 counties.

Tennessee

Crime Reports Released. As part of the management/operation of the statewide incident-based reporting system program, the Tennessee SAC issued five annual crime reports from March through May. *Crime on Campus* provides crime statistics information on a statewide basis as well as data for each individual college and university. *Crime in Tennessee* includes statewide information on victims and arrestees as well as weapons used and the location categories of offenses. The report also includes a page for each reporting law enforcement agency depicting an overview of the crime in its jurisdiction. *Hate Crime* and *Law Enforcement Officers Killed or Assaulted* reports provide information based on federal reporting requirements for the state and local agencies. Finally, *School Crime Study* provides data for 2008–2010 for all reported crimes occurring at elementary or high schools in Tennessee. These reports are available online at http://www.tbi.tn.gov/tn_crime_stats/stats_analys.shtml.

N-DEx Training. The SAC facilitated training for local law enforcement agencies on the FBI's Law Enforcement National Data Exchange (N-DEx) program in March. The training was presented by FBI staff and provided a four-hour hands-on course for using the N-DEx system for investigative purposes.

Responses to Data Requests. Data from the state criminal history system were provided to researchers using the new system built to process bulk queries into the Tennessee Criminal History Repository (TCHR). The SAC has the capability of loading a spreadsheet of names and identifiers into a new utility that will provide individual criminal history files in a text or pdf format.

Virginia

Gang Research. The SAC is involved in several projects to support the Governor's Gang and Violent Crime Executive Committee. They are conducting an online, statewide survey of law enforcement, prosecutors, corrections (state and local) and schools to gather information on the prevalence, characteristics, and activities of gangs. This research will provide the first relatively comprehensive, uniform look at statewide gang activity in Virginia. SAC staff are also assisting the Department of Criminal Justice Services with developing gang-related training options for law enforcement and correctional personnel, and with statewide information sharing on gang members and activity.

Constituent Issues and Satisfaction Survey Research. The SAC is currently conducting an online, statewide survey of all major Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) constituent groups. These include law enforcement, prosecutors, state and local corrections, victims' services groups, recipients of state and federal public safety grants, and regulated private security services. The survey asks constituents what major issues/concerns face their professions, and how they rate the services they receive from DCJS. The research is designed to help DCJS better focus its limited resources and service provision.

Human Trafficking Research. The SAC is researching what is known about human trafficking in Virginia, and what can be done to advise law enforcement agencies and the Commonwealth's attorneys about identifying, investigating and prosecuting human trafficking crimes. Activities include identifying current statutes that can be used to charge human trafficking offenses, how often these statutes are used, how frequently law enforcement encounters human trafficking crimes, and what resources can be provided to help detect and attack human trafficking. The SAC is also researching current anti-trafficking efforts underway by other states (primarily along the southern U.S. border) that have more experience dealing with human trafficking offenses.

Law Enforcement Training Academy Research. The Department of Criminal Justice Services is Virginia's Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) organization, which is responsible for the oversight of all mandated law enforcement training in Virginia. The SAC is conducting an extensive study of the structure and operation of Virginia's law enforcement training academy system, with particular emphasis on the financial stability of the current system, to help determine how well the current structure is serving the state's law enforcement training needs.

Jail Inmate Population Forecasting. The SAC prepares Virginia's annual forecast of the statewide local-responsible jail inmate population to help guide jail planning and expenditures, and reviews forecasts by individual jail authorities seeking state funding for jail expansion. As part of its work to improve prisoner reentry, reduce recidivism, and control correctional costs, the SAC is also working with staff from adult and juvenile correctional agencies, the Sentencing Commission, and the Secretary of Public Safety to refine the tracking and reporting of recidivism rates in Virginia.

Calculating Public Safety Funding Distributions. The SAC calculates locality-level funding amounts for various grant programs operated by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, which is Virginia's State Administrative Agency. The largest such program is the "599" fund program, which annually distributes about $160 million in state money to localities with police departments. The "599" formula uses crime rates, social welfare rates, and population density to calculate funding amounts. SAC staff also calculate funding amounts for JAG Local Law Enforcement grants, John R. Justice grant program funds for prosecutors and public defenders, and staffing levels used in distributing funding to local victims' services programs.

Arrest-Related Deaths Reporting to Bureau of Justice Statistics. The Federal Deaths in Custody Reporting Act requires states to report to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) on all deaths that occur while someone is being arrested by law enforcement; the SAC is the reporting agency for Virginia. SAC staff work with Virginia's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and with involved law enforcement agencies, to identify reportable cases, collect the necessary data, and report them to BJS.

Community Profiles Database. The SAC maintains an online, comprehensive compilation of crime-related data for each Virginia locality. The profiles include data on crimes, arrests, demographics, crime risk and protective factors, court caseloads, correctional intakes and releases, and socioeconomic indicators. A primary purpose of the profiles is to provide information that localities can use to assess their public safety factors when preparing grant applications.

Domestic Violence Research. The SAC is completing a report that examines characteristics of all of the domestic violence incidents reported to Virginia law enforcement using the statewide incident-based reporting system during the period 2005–2010. More than 250,000 such cases were identified. This is the first statewide report on these incidents and will provide information to assist the work of the Governor's Domestic Violence Prevention and Response Advisory Board.

West Virginia

Evidence-Based Practice Unit. Following a major reorganization in 2010 of its parent organization, the West Virginia SAC established two new units: the Office of Research and Strategic Planning (ORSP) and the Justice Center for Evidence-Based Practice (JCEBP). The SAC recently hired Natalie Mills, who will play a central role in the development of JCEBP. Ms. Mills has research

experience with juvenile populations, domestic violence services, and mental health and community services, and worked as a supervisor for an evidence-based treatment foster care program for youth. Her work in the ORSP will center on the dissemination of information and research on evidence-based practices in criminal justice and the development of quality assurance processes for the statewide implementation of the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory. She is currently completing her dissertation research on domestic violence and housing problems and will be conducting research for the SAC in the areas of criminal history record management, domestic violence, and community corrections.

Wyoming

WYSAC Examines Prescription Drug Data. With funding from the Bureau of Justice Statstics State Justice Statistics program, the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) completed a large-scale analysis of data compiled by the state's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). The PDMP data covered nearly four million prescriptions filled for 477,515 unique Wyoming persons during the period 2004–2009. Almost one third of Wyoming's total population in each year of the study filled at least one prescription for a scheduled drug. By a broad margin, the scheduled drugs prescribed most were opioid analgesics, which alone accounted for over half of all prescriptions in the PDMP each year. Substantial differences were found in per capita prescriptions at the county level, with one Wyoming county in 2009 filling more than 3.5 times the number of prescriptions for opioid analgesics (per 1000 population) than the county with the lowest rate.

Zolpidem (a sleep aid drug sold under the trade name Ambien and others) and alprazolam (Xanax and others) were second and third in percent of all pre-

scriptions filled behind opiod analgesics. The average *per prescription tablet quantity* for zolpidem increased by 48% from 2004 to 2009, as did the average *per prescription days of supply*. Overall, during the period from 2005 to 2009, opioid analgesic prescriptions per 1000 population statewide were up 21%, sedative/hypnotics up 37%, and anxiolytic drugs were up 33%.

WYSAC presented results of the study to the U.S. Attorney's task force for Rx Abuse Stakeholders, to the state Pharmacy Board, and to the Governor's Substance Abuse and Violent Crime Advisory Board. The research was also featured as part of a statewide, four-day teleconference for healthcare professionals sponsored by the Wyoming Department of Health.

WYSAC Presents AEA Webinar on Report Automation. By invitation of the American Evaluation Association (AEA), the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) recently presented a webinar in the AEA's "coffee break" series. Based on an earlier presentation they gave at the AEA's annual conference, three WYSAC researchers summarized methods used at WYSAC to automate the production of tables and graphs for multiple reports.

Packaged reporting software such as SAP Crystal Solutions can be expensive to acquire and to master, and may create reports that too obviously come from a template. Instead, WYSAC's approach relies on familiar office software (MicroSoft Word and Excel), and generates customized reports that do not look cookie-cutter. The completed reports can also be distributed in formats that are widely available to policy makers and the public (.doc, .docx, .pdf). For example, all of the county-level materials for the statewide Prevention Needs Assessment survey of youth were produced this way (see *http://wysac.uwyo.edu/PNA/Reports.aspx*). ⚖

Multistate Study from page 1

to state Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) and reviewing their proposals, BJS and JRSA awarded funds to five states (Maine,[1] New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming) to gather data and information on parole practices in their states.

In September 2009, BJS and JRSA met with the five participating states to determine what sort of qualitative and quantitative information would be necessary to identify factors related to parole violations and revocations, as well as policy and organizational factors at the state and local levels. Following the meeting, the SACs were provided with a codebook of variables to be gathered as part of the study of factors that may influence violation and revocation outcomes of parolees.

---

[1] While Maine abolished parole in 1976, probation often acts as de facto parole. Therefore, Maine gathered data on probation practices for this project.

Methodology

The study targeted offenders released on parole from incarceration during the 2005 and 2006 calendar years. Each SAC was asked to collect data on the following: demographic background, prior criminal history, instant/initial offense, incarceration information, conditions of supervision, supervision status, violations of parole conditions, arrests while on parole, and revocation information. The SACs were asked to collect data on activity that occurred for up to 24 months after the offender was placed on parole, or as of December 31, 2008 (whichever was later).

In addition, the SACs were asked to review and analyze information regarding the policies, procedures, and practices related to parole revocation and sanctioning technical violators in their states. Using information collected from the qualitative and quantitative analyses, the SACs were also asked to produce a report describing the factors related to violations and revocations of parolees

in the state, and provide an SPSS database to JRSA for additional analysis.

Findings

Below is a summary of the findings from the qualitative and quantitative analyses conducted by the five participating states. The reader is cautioned when making comparisons among the states due to differences in sanctioning structures, procedures related to post-prison release and revocation, and data availability and coding.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Although only a few SACs were able to conduct surveys of parole officers, all provided detailed information on how parole operates in their state. While the Maine SAC found only a few formal revocation guidelines, efforts are being made to limit the use of incarceration for lower-risk offenders and to keep technical violators out of prison in order to reduce prison overcrowding, according to probation supervisors. The New Mexico SAC identified a standard set of

Table 1: Demographic Data on Offenders Released to Parole in 2005 and 2006

		Maine	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming
Average Age		33	35	34	34	35
Gender	Male	85.3%	85.8%	84.5%	83.9%	84.1%
	Female	14.7	14.2	15.5	16.1	15.9
Race	White	91.8	81.6	80.4	88.5	78.4
	Black	3.2	7.7	8.0	5.3	4.7
	Other	4.9	10.5	2.8	6.2	3.8
	Unknown/Missing	0.0	0.2	8.7	0.1	13.1
Ethnicity	Hispanic	1.3	57.1	8.7	17.8	13.1
	Non-Hispanic	98.7	42.7	91.2	82.1	86.9
Marital Status	Single	52.6	46.6	34.8	44.1	46.0
	Married/Living Together	15.4	25.6	8.7	19.7	21.1
	Separated	3.6	4.1	4.5	4.4	4.1
	Divorced	16.6	21.3	10.6	30.0	25.0
	Widowed	0.6	1.9	0.8	1.2	0.5
	Unknown/Missing	11.2	0.5	40.8	0.6	3.3
Criminal History	At Least One Prior Arrest	n/r	70.6	91.1	99.0	61.0
Total Number of Offenders		**4,725**	**4,419**	**16,262**	**4,318**	**611**

guidelines and procedures to be followed by the parolee and the parole officer, as well as procedures to be implemented in the case of technical violations. The Oregon SAC found that the community corrections system relied on evidence-based practices and programs intended to encourage cognitive and behavioral changes in the parolee. A structured sanctions system is used to determine the duration of the sanction for offenders who are discovered to be non-compliant with requirements and to allow for some consistency in sanctions made by the parole officers, while at the same time balancing these considerations with the seriousness of the violation. Utah is considered an indeterminate sentencing state, which allows the Board of Pardons and Paroles a great deal of authority and influence over the decision making with regard to parolees. While there was no consensus in the survey results on the presence of formal revocation guidelines in the state, most parole staff agreed that the predominant goals of the parole system were to protect public safety and hold the offender accountable with rehabilitation, with the offender's success playing a secondary role. Wyoming is also an indeterminate sentencing state, providing the Board of Parole with much leverage in decision making, and requires offenders to serve their minimum sentence before becoming eligible for parole.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Each SAC identified a sample of offenders released to parole from incarceration in 2005 and 2006. As shown in Table 1, the majority of offenders were white males, with an average age between 33 and 35. Most of the offenders with a marital status in their records were found to be single. Criminal history records show that most of the offenders had previously been arrested at least once prior to the offense that led to their release on parole. Prior to community supervision, offenders are assessed on their likelihood to recidivate using risk assessment instruments. Maine and Utah use an instrument called LSI-R while the other three states

reported using other local or in-house risk assessment instruments. Table 2 shows the risk level for the parolees in the study. Around half of the parolees in the study were scored at a medium-risk level in Maine and Wyoming, while Utah had over two thirds of their parolees identified as high-risk offenders. The New Mexico SAC reported that less than half of the parolees were either at a high- or medium-risk level, with the smallest percentage in the low-risk level. The Oregon SAC identified a third of their parolees to be either high-risk or low-risk offenders, with less than a quarter of the offenders at medium-risk level. Table 3

shows the category of the most serious conviction that resulted in incarceration. Most of the parolees in Maine and New Mexico were violent/sexual offenders, while the majority in Utah and Wyoming were property offenders, closely followed by drug offenders. About a third of the parolees in Oregon were drug offenders, with violent/sexual offenders representing a little less than a third of the study's population.

The majority of the offenders in all five states were not arrested while on parole during the study period (see Table 4). About a quarter of the

Table 2: Risk Level Score

	Maine	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming
High	14.8%	41.1%	36.3%	69.0%	18.0%
Medium	47.3	38.0	23.1	17.9	57.9
Low	23.6	18.4	36.9	4.2	10.8
Unknown/ Missing	14.3	2.5	3.7	8.8	13.3

Table 3: Current Commitment Offense

	Maine	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming
Violent/Sexual	35.0%	31.4%	29.3%	20.1%	22.7%
Property	22.3	29.7	24.8	27.3	40.3
Drug	29.3	20.8	33.3	26.9	33.2
Other	8.8	16.1	12.6	25.7	3.3
Unknown/Missing	4.5	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.5

Table 4: Total Number of Arrests While on Parole

	Maine	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming
None	64.2%	61.2%	53.2%	66.7%	84.9%
One Arrest	23.2	22.9	23.3	26.2	10.6
Two Arrests	10.4	5.1	11.4	5.4	2.5
Three or More Arrests	2.3	1.3	12.1	1.2	1.9
Unknown/Missing	0.0	9.4	0.0	0.5	0.0

Multistate Study from page 9

offenders in four of the five states (Maine, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah), and about 10% in Wyoming, were arrested once.

Table 5 shows the number of technical violations committed by the offenders while on parole during the study period. In three states (New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah), more than half of the offenders committed at least one technical violation during the study period, and almost half (45%) did in a fourth state (Maine). The three states that had the largest proportion of technical violators also had the largest proportions of offenders with two or more technical violations (New Mexico, 39.9%; Oregon, 38.2%; Utah, 47.2%).

Table 6 shows the number and percentage of offenders revoked from parole during the study period, along with the primary reason for the revocation. Parole revocation rates varied from 27% in Oregon to 61% in Utah. In New Mexico and Wyoming, the majority of the offenders whose parole was revoked during the study period were revoked for technical violations. The Maine and Utah SACs found that about half of the parolees were revoked for a new arrest and half were revoked for one or more technical violations. Most parolees in Oregon were revoked for a new arrest.

Using a variety of analytical methods to determine what factors influence violations and revocation outcomes, all state SACs found age to be a significant predictor of revocation outcomes, with younger offenders at higher risk. The Maine SAC found that violations were also influenced by lack of employment and risk as defined by Maine's risk assessment tool. Logistic regression analyses identified static factors having a significant effect on revocation outcomes such as age, gender, prior arrests, and the LSI-R domains of criminal history, education/employment, and companions. The New Mexico SAC found that social ties are important in predicting

technical violations and revocations, as well as demographic characteristics, criminal history, offense type, and discipline in prison. Through a series of multivariate analyses, they found that the biggest predictor of revocation is whether the offender had ever absconded during their parole. The Oregon SAC found male and African American offenders were more likely to be revoked, as well as violent and high-risk offenders. The Utah SAC found that only a few of the characteristics of the offender, mainly age and risk score, predicted violation and revocation outcomes. On the other hand, the Wyoming SAC found a variety of influential factors, including age, the location to which the offender was

paroled, race/ethnicity, the number of dependents, education level, alcohol/drug problems, and the amount of the incarceration sentence already served.

Summary

This project allows for an initial investigation into the circumstances surrounding parole revocations by analyzing offender characteristics and policies and practices that influence parole violations and revocations. Additional research across a larger number of states and examining other issues, such as the costs associated with violations and revocations, would provide for further information to make effective policy changes to reduce recidivism. ⚖

Table 5: Total Number of Technical Violations While on Parole

	Maine	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming
None	55.0%	32.0%	43.0%	25.5%	73.3%
One	26.3	26.5	18.7	25.3	24.9
Two	11.3	17.8	12.7	17.3	1.1
Three	4.6	10.3	8.1	12.9	0.7
Four	1.7	5.6	5.4	7.9	0.0
Five or More	1.1	6.2	12.0	9.1	0.0
Unknown/Missing	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 6: Number and Reasons for First Parole Revocation

	Maine	New Mexico	Oregon	Utah	Wyoming
Total Number of Offenders Revoked	2,330	2,274	4,386	2,649	183
Percentage of Offenders Revoked	49.3%	51.5%	27.0%	61.3%	29.9%
Reason for Revocation					
New arrest	49.7	20.1	73.1	54.2	29.5
Technical Violation(s)	50.3	70.2	26.9	45.8	70.5
Other	0.0	9.8	0.0	0.1	0.0

NCRP Workshop from page 1

of the workshop: contributing to the improvement of national correctional statistics; obtaining input from the state representatives on how to improve the NCRP data collection process while reducing the burden on data providers; and creating a vehicle for facilitating collaboration among state representatives. Dr. Sabol also introduced the BJS data collection agent for NCRP, Abt Associates.

The Co-Principal Investigators from Abt Associates, Bill Rhodes and Gerry Gaes, presented an approach to understanding the flow of offenders through the corrections process that could be used to help to assess the reliability of the NCRP data. They pointed out that the corrections system has become increasingly complex over the past few decades, with state prisoners being housed in local jails and serving part of their sentences in community programs, and it is necessary to understand the extent to which the NCRP covers these populations. To facilitate cross-state comparisons with NCRP

data, Dr. Rhodes and Dr. Gaes proposed the creation of corrections fact sheets for each state, which would detail sentencing laws and statutes, jurisdictional and facilities information for prison admissions, release and post-release supervision types and processes, and past participation in NCRP and the National Prisoner Statistics (NPS) data collection.

Through a series of breakout sessions, BJS and Abt staff engaged the state representatives in discussion groups that addressed the model of the corrections process that Abt presented, issues of cross-state comparisons, and future analytic uses of the NCRP data. These breakout sessions provided invaluable feedback on the issues identified by the Abt co-PIs. For example, new approaches to verifying NCRP data using online tools and quality assessment instruments were viewed as important steps in both improving data quality and reducing the burden on data suppliers. The fact sheets were discussed as providing information that could be used to develop indices to identify states with similar sentencing

and correctional structures. This idea was extremely well received by the state representatives, who felt that the small investment in time required to fact-check the initial drafts of the fact sheets would be well worth the effort if it resulted in the ability to determine comparability between states, which would make their jobs easier when responding to legislators' requests for comparative data. Several state representatives also suggested that it would be useful for BJS to provide county-level census data along with the NCRP analysis datasets so that states could conduct contextual analysis in evaluating prison and parole release programs.

To round out the first day of the meeting, Rhiana Kohl, Mike Connelly, Lettie Prell, and David Oldfield, representatives from Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Iowa, and Missouri, respectively, shared research findings on issues they were addressing in their states. Howard Snyder, Chief of the Recidivism, Reentry and Special Projects Unit at BJS, presented results of his current recidivism research, which demonstrated that released inmates from a single state reoffend in a large number of other states, underlining the need for states to understand the corrections systems of other states.
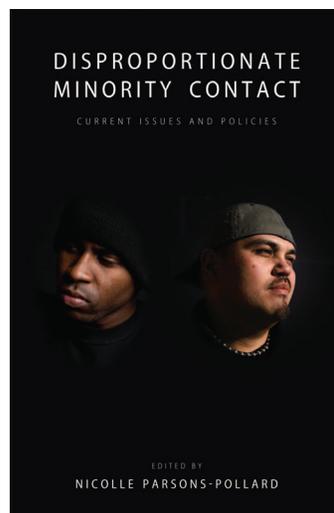
On the morning of the meeting's second day, an open forum of all state representatives addressed themes developed during the breakout sessions on the first day. Five themes were discussed: the development of state fact sheets and a comparability index to facilitate cross-state comparisons; the improvement of submitted NCRP data quality, including diagnostic tools to identify discrepancies from previous submissions; flexibility in the data submission timeline to make the process more convenient to states; the assurance that the issue of differences between state offense codes would be studied during the coming year by BJS and Abt in consultation with state data providers to increase confidence in cross-state comparability in the offense codes;

JRSA Staff Contribute to Book on DMC

JRSA staff Mary Poulin, Stan Orchowsky, and Janice Iwama wrote a chapter, "Assessing DMC Initiatives: A Case Study of Two States," for an edited volume on disproportionate minority contact (DMC) in the juvenile justice system entitled *Disproportionate Minority Contact: Current Issues and Policies*. The chapter is based on work that JRSA did with Iowa and Virginia under an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)-funded project completed in 2010 to examine strategies to reduce DMC in the juvenile justice system.

DISPROPORTIONATE
MINORITY CONTACT

CURRENT ISSUES AND POLICIES

EDITED BY
NICOLLE PARSONS-POLLARD

The chapter documents the implementation of strategies and, when possible, the impact of strategies. In addition, it offers recommendations to help OJJDP and the states with DMC efforts. The newly released book is available from Carolina Academic Press at http://www.cap-press.com/books/isbn/9781594608889/Disproportionate+Minority+Contact.

JRSA FORUM

Justice Research and Statistics Association
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Suite 801
Washington, DC 20002

---

and more detailed analysis of the NCRP data, including age-specific mortality rates, sentence length distributions, and the addition of county-level census data to the dataset. During the ensuing discussion, several state representatives noted that they would prefer delaying submission of their NCRP data for a few months, since the current deadline coincides with state legislative sessions. Participants also exchanged ideas on whether they should notify other states that their data would be included in cross-state comparisons that could potentially be distributed without their knowledge. Finally, members of the BJS Corrections Unit led break-out discussions on other BJS data collection programs, including deaths in custody, probation and parole,

and an upcoming survey of prison health care facilities and programs.

The National Institute of Correction's (NIC) Institutional Corrections Research Network (ICRN) sponsored a second workshop (following a joint lunch with NCRP participants) to discuss corrections research in general. This workshop rounded out the second day, and ran through the end of the following day. Participants contributed to round-table discussions on policy and sentencing reform, forecasting of corrections populations and costs, techniques for evaluating the effectiveness of programs in the corrections system, the challenges of reductions in corrections systems budgets, and strategies to reduce recidivism. These topics were chosen based on ICRN members' interests and to reflect the overall goal of ICRN to encourage

the use of evidence-based knowledge in the discussion and development of corrections policies.

BJS has received very positive feedback from its workshop, including an indication by researchers from several non-participating states that they would like to be part of the NCRP collection going forward. By engaging state data providers in a conversation to ease the burden on reporting and giving them new tools with which to compare their data to those of other states, BJS hopes that participation in and data quality of the NCRP increase in the coming years. Additional information on NCRP can be obtained by visiting the new NCRP website (www.ncrp.info) or by contacting Ann Carson at BJS (elizabeth.carson@ojp.usdoj.gov). ⚖