

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY EFFORTS TO COUNTER  
DRUG-RELATED CRIME IN RURAL AMERICA**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

**UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 22, 2010

**BARRE, VERMONT**

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COUNTER DRUG-RELATED CRIME IN RURAL  
AMERICA**

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**MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2010**

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,  
*Washington, D.C.*

The Committee met, Pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in Barre City Auditorium, Barre, Vermont, Hon. Patrick J. Leahy, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Leahy and Whitehouse.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICK J. LEAHY, A U.S.  
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT**

Chairman LEAHY. Good morning. I guess these microphone are live. Just so I can go over some of the rules. I'm Patrick Leahy and of course I say that knowing almost three-quarters of the people in this room. It is good to be in Barre. It is a special thrill to be here because my father was born here in Barre and it's always been a special place.

We have a number of very good witnesses here. We have Federal, state, and local law enforcement, elected officials, government experts, teachers, concerned parents and citizens. All of those who work in prevention and treatment.

What I am going to do is keep our record open for one week so people after the hearing, if they hear something they would like to add to, can submit further testimony and it will be made part of the record. And, of course, everybody who testifies, they will see the transcript of what they have to say and if they afterward wish to add to that, they will be able to.

This will be done under the normal rules of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I am fortunate to be joined by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island. Senator Whitehouse is no stranger to law enforcement. He was U.S. Attorney and Attorney General of his state; and is one of the most distinguished and knowledgeable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I have received written testimony from Chief Gary Taylor of St. Albans who detailed the significant new law enforcement and community efforts to combat drug-related crime in St. Albans which has already been translated into a large drop in crime in that community.

I have received testimony from Mayor Chris Louras of Rutland stating the real progress and community mobilization there as well. And the important thing, we held hearings of the Senate Judiciary Committee in both those communities. And, again, because I want to bring us out of Washington. We could have all kinds of hearings in Washington, and they are important, but I like everybody in law enforcement to remember that we have small cities and towns too, not just major urban areas and to know about this. And as a result we also have U.S. Marshal Dave Demag is here with us today and ATF resident agent in charge Jim Mostyn, and, of course, I mentioned Chris Laurus, the Mayor of Rutland and Kerry Taylor. I know that Ethan really is here representing Senator Sanders and Tom Tremblay.

And if I leave somebody out, don't worry, I will add to this in the record.

Tom Tremblay is the Commissioner of Public Safety and of course, Colonel L'Esperance, Tom L'Esperance, Jay Powell and the Executive Director of New England HIDTA. Roger Marcoux, the Memorial County Sheriff; Montpelier High School teacher Myles Chater. Where is Myles Chater? I see him. You have a lot of students here with you, Mr. Chader, and I'm glad to have them.

Representative MacDonald and Senator Cummings, James Lee, the U.S. Attorney's Office. Trevor Whipple, the Chief of the South Burlington Police who knows this community well having been chief of police here in the past. In fact, there's where Chief Whipple and I first met.

Mary Leahy who runs the Central Vermont Adult Basic Education is here. My favorite sister, I should say for the record.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEAHY. Well, it's my only sister, but she would still be my favorite one.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEAHY. But I think that in Vermont, Senator Whitehouse, I should tell you in Vermont we have this "all hands on deck" approach to dealing with serious problems. And we do this because in small cities and towns, as you know from Rhode Island, you have to all come together. There is no one group that can solve a problem. That is why I held these hearings in Rutland and in St. Albans. And we take this issue seriously.

I know Senator Whitehouse has been in so many of these hearings before in Washington on them and we will hear testimony today from President Obama's head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Director, Gil Kerlikowske.

And the director, I had the honor of presiding on his confirmation hearing before the U.S. Senate. And he was confirmed unanimously in the Senate. Not too many times recently have we been doing things unanimously.

And he knows, and we talked about this last night at dinner, that this is not just a big city issue. It's a serious and continuing problem in rural communities like Vermont and across the country. The problems here in Barre, like many other small communities are serious. But the good thing is the people in Barre aren't taking it lying down. They're fighting back. They've worked aggressively

with law enforcement, but they've also emphasized prevention and treatment matters.

I know very well from my own time as a State's Attorney prosecuting major drug cases, a strong and effective law enforcement is a very central piece of the puzzle in combating drugs, but I don't think enough was done during the past decade from the Federal Government to help hard-working state and local police. We saw cuts in Federal funding and economic difficulties led to vacancies in local police departments and state police departments.

But in trying to reverse this, last year's recovery legislation included a massive and much-needed infusion of Federal funds to fund state and local police. And I have talked and worked with many of you as we were preparing that legislation.

We have restored funding to the cops and burn grant programs which funds state and local law enforcement. We've brought back the rural drug enforcement assistance grant program. Again, the emphasis I brought that this is not just a big-city problem, but yet rural problems too.

So, with that, I think even in bad economic times to be able to hire police officers and use innovative programs. And I've heard from police here in Vermont that the assistance is making a real difference. Support for state and local police along with the funding for the Vermont Drug Task Force, the New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program again have helped. And I appreciate this very much.

But I also want—one of the things we will hear from the Mayor is that it can't just be law enforcement. The one thing I hear every single place I go, don't count just on law enforcement. The whole community has to be involved to solve these problems. Here we've had the problem of—in Barre and the surrounding area hit with drug networks from outside the state. Heroin imported by them. Then we see break-ins and other crimes that result from drug users looking for the money to pay for this. More and more people are becoming addicted to the prescription pain killers like OxyContin. And more what is most troubling is that more and more young children are turning to these drugs at a very early age.

Now, the good news is that Barre like a lot of other Vermont communities is addressing these problems. You're not hiding from it. You've worked with state and Federal partners, you also worked with schools and community groups that focus on mentoring and prevention to try to ensure that our children don't become involved with these drugs in the first place.

I mean, it's a lot more important if we can stop them from being involved to begin with than to try to figure out what to do after the fact.

We'll be hearing from Colonel L'Esperance later about this.

So I will put my whole statement in the record. Because I really want to hear from you. But it is mostly to be able to say that we need to hear what is going on in other parts of the country. Obviously I have a particular interest in Vermont. But other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee are panning out in other parts of the country to hear from state and local communities.

So let me yield to Senator Whitehouse, my colleague from—not only my colleague from Rhode Island, but a very, very good friend.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, A U.S. SENATOR  
FROM THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Well, thank you, Chairman. My name is Sheldon Whitehouse and unlike Chairman Leahy, I know almost no one here. Which actually is a bit of a surprise considering the number of people that Chairman Leahy brings down from Vermont to testify at our hearings and how often he talks about Vermont.

As many of you know, he's quite a good photographer and he's always showing photographs of Vermont, often with his grandchildren in the foreground. So, I feel a little bit on home turf here even though I'm from Rhode Island. But I appreciate his invitation to be here. It's wonderful to see him in his natural habitat. And it is important for states like Rhode Island and Vermont to have these hearings because a great deal of our law enforcement effort does take place in small communities where the structure of the community is different, where people can come together more effectively. And it's interesting to me to see how programs like the HIDTA program, which works very, very effectively in Rhode Island, at work in other small communities. So I look forward to the hearing.

I thank the Mayor and the other witnesses for their testimony. And it's a great pleasure to be with all of you.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you very much. I also noticed I should have mentioned the U.S. Attorney Chris Cofin is here. He came in with U.S. Marshal Dave Demag.

Our first witness is Mayor Thomas Lauzon. I always mispronounce that and I apologize. I usually call him Tom because when we see each others on the street. He was first elected in 2006. He's the 39th Mayor of Barre, Vermont. He's an active member of the community. He served as President of the Barre Lions Club, Chairman of the Barre City School Board, Treasurer and Board Member of the Barre Partnership, Board Member of the Barre Opera House, here in the great Saint Michaels College. Always happy to see somebody from Saint Mike's. He became a certified public accountant; currently a partner at Salvador and Babbick in Barre.

Please go ahead, Mr. Mayor.

**STATEMENT OF MAYOR THOMAS LAUZON, BARRE, VERMONT**

Mayor LAUZON. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Whitehouse, Director Kerlikowske, friends, on behalf of the city of Barre I extend a warm welcome and sincere thanks for the opportunity to discuss community efforts to counter drug-related crime in rural America.

I want to extend my thanks, also, Mr. Chairman, to your staff. From the very first phone call since I took office 4 years ago, they have been generous and sincere with their assistance and concern for Barre, for Vermont, and for America.

The offer to serve as host for this hearing was no exception. During our initial telephone conversation, Maggie Gendron asked me if I would mind hosting a hearing of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. She told me the hearing would focus on drug addiction and drug-related crimes in rural America. I was and remain grateful for the opportunity.



At the time it struck me as somewhat peculiar that the Chairman of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee would ask a mayor for permission to hold a hearing in his community. I thought at the time that you were simply being polite because that's in your nature. It took me a while to consider the possibility that perhaps some communities would rather not host a hearing on drug addiction and drug-related crimes in their town. That perhaps some believe that talking about drug problems in their communities will cast them unfavorably or is an admittance of failure. I do not subscribe to that theory.

We cannot solve a problem if we are not willing to identify it and talk about it openly. In order to solve our problems we need to be honest about their existence. We need to be accurate in our assessment, and we need to be expedient in our actions.

An addict in Burlington should be of concern to the citizens of Stowe. A victim in Woodstock should be of concern to the citizens of Brattleboro. As the fastest aging state in the nation, Vermont cannot afford to lose the unrealized potential of young lives to drug addiction and drug-related crimes. With increasing demands on our resources, we cannot afford policies that are not proactive.

Mr. Chairman, you have long advocated for and promoted a three-pronged approach to combating rising crime levels in America; prevention, treatment, and enforcement. I believe your approach is both sound and proven.

Of the three approaches, I am perhaps best known for my views on enforcement. And that's not by choice. As a society we have a fascination with enforcement and punishment. I've observed during my tenure in office that sound bytes relating to enforcement receive much more attention than sound bytes relating to prevention and treatment. In my opinion, that needs to change.

While enforcement is a necessary component in our efforts to reduce crime in America, it does not, in and of itself, solve the problem. Enforcement generally occurs after damage has occurred. My strong preference is to focus on prevention and treatment. Prevention and successful treatment are more cost effective and yield more desirable results.

Treatment, unlike—like enforcement, occurs after damage occurs. But unlike enforcement, treatment offers recovering addicts a positive end result.

In my opinion aggressive prevention is critical to mitigating the effects of drug addiction and drug crimes in America. While we were experiencing some positive trends within several categories of recreational drug use among our younger citizens, the sharp increase in prescription drug abuse has me especially concerned.

According to the 2009 Monitoring the Future Survey, non-medical use of Vicodin and OxyContin is increasing among those aged 12 or older and is roughly even with those who smoke marijuana. These drugs are highly addictive and create a dependence that is physiologically and psychologically very similar to heroin. Appropriately OxyContin is referred to as "killer" on the streets. Left unchecked, these trends will result in thousands of overdose deaths and millions of dollars in treatment and incarceration costs across America.

OxyContin is a pain management drug. While it mitigates the effect of pain and disease, it does not prevent or cure disease. It was first introduced by the manufacturer in 1995. In 2002, the Director of the Office of New Drugs for the FDA testified before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and recognized OxyContin as a valuable product when used properly.

The Director went on to testify that the FDA was working closely with the manufacturer to take appropriate action to curb the misuse and abuse of OxyContin.

In the 8 years since that testimony, the trends relating to misuse have become increasingly troubling. I believe we need to reexamine the cost benefit analysis of OxyContin manufacture and distribution as it relates to increased illegal use and distribution.

Last, I believe we need to be more vigilant in identifying young people at risk and more inclusive in our approach to prevention. I believe that in addition to our continued focus on an education of young people at risk, we need to focus on their families and offer additional counseling in support. We need to mitigate the factors that place our young people at risk. More appropriate, I believe family counseling and support should be a requirement rather than a choice.

In closing, the struggles we talk about today do not define Barre, or Vermont, or America. We are defined by our potential. We are defined by those who defy the odds and rise above challenging circumstances. Most importantly, we are defined by the exceptional people, many of whom you will hear from today and thousands more who are hard at work at this very second helping those who are struggling with addiction or crime.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mayor Thomas Lauzon appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. Well, thank you, Mr. Mayor. The request to come here was meant as more than a courtesy. Barre is a very special place as you know. Not only was my father born here, but it's a—it's always—growing up in Montpelier, it's always been a very special area. I recall going to the stone sheds with my grandfather, a stone carver, and it—and you have—we have talked about this a number of times and I'm glad to see the problems is being faced. I'm also glad to see what you said about it has to be an effort on a whole lot of levels.

Senator Whitehouse, did you have any?

Senator WHITEHOUSE. No, I just want to thank the Mayor for his statement. I think the matrix of honest assessment, accurate definition, and expedient response is a very good one to apply to, not only this, but other problems. And I wish you well.

Mayor LAUZON. Thank you, sir.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you.

As I might say, one of the events of having these hearings, we have a number of people from the Senate Judiciary Committee staff who get a chance to come up to Vermont. So I don't get all of the—I don't get to do it all by myself. And I love having them all here.

The next witness or if I can call forward Director Kerlikowske and Colonel L'Esperance, Barbara Floersch, Susan, and I'm—and

with Susan I intentionally left off the last name at her request, and Demartin Quadros.

I should tell you, we'll begin with Gil Kerlikowske. He was confirmed by the Senate in May 2009, one of the first members of the Obama administration to be confirmed and he was confirmed unanimously as the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. That means he coordinates all aspects of Federal drug control programs and implements the President's national drug control strategy. He is a 37-year veteran of law enforcement. He served for nearly a decade as chief of police in Seattle, Washington. He epitomizes law enforcement in my mind.

In addition to his extensive experience with state and local law enforcement, he served as the Deputy Director of the COPS Office at the U.S. Department of Justice. He was elected twice to be president of the major cities chiefs association. He was also elected president of the Police Executive Research Forum. He holds a BA and an MA in criminal justice from the University of South Florida, and is a graduate of the FBI National Executive Institute in Quantico, Virginia.

Director, please go ahead, sir.

**STATEMENT OF R. GIL KERLIKOWSKE, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL  
DRUG CONTROL POLICY**

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. Thank you Mr. Chairman and Senator Whitehouse for the invitation to come to Vermont and to participate in today's discussion on a very important issue. I look forward to learning more from the other witnesses that are here about the problems in Vermont. I applaud the Mayor and the city of Barre for taking this issue on and holding this hearing.

The Obama administration understands that addiction is a disease and that prevention, treatment and law enforcement must all be included as part of a comprehensive strategy to stop drug use, and to help those who need it, and to ensure public safety.

In the coming days we will release the administration's first national drug control strategy. It will set forth concrete goals to reduce drug use and its consequences and I look forward to working together as we implement the ambitious plans and achieve the specific goals that it contains.

Prevention will be a key focal point of our approach. And as you all know well, prevention is a critical component of curtailing drug use. In particular for this administration, programs at the community level are a key priority. It is well established that community-based efforts have the unique ability and perspective to identify local substance abuse problems. And, as has been demonstrated here and throughout New England, community leaders are well suited to design and implement solutions that is best suited to the local need.

Local problems demand locally driven solutions. And ONDCP's Drug Free Community support program is one of the leading local community prevention program efforts here in Vermont.

And I would like to acknowledge Senator Leahy's strong support of this program for a very long time. As well as the work of so many participating in these anti-drug coalitions.

Thanks to Congressional support, ONDCP'S drug-free communities program supports 14 different coalitions in Vermont that totals nearly \$1.3 million in fiscal year 2009. Bringing together youth, parents, schools, businesses, as well as law enforcement and volunteers, these coalitions depend upon the participation of these wide range of stakeholders to reduce substance abuse. While we must remain vigilant in our efforts, I am pleased to report that these programs have demonstrated promising results.

We made progress in our efforts to engage parents and change young people's perceptions of the risk of substance use while lowering alcohol and drug use rates. There has also been significant achievements in addressing methamphetamine production and prescription drug diversion through the task force approach.

In New England, high intensity drug trafficking area, the HIDTA program, provides drug intelligence and investigative training to Vermont state and local officers in ensuring the most effective use of resources to identify and disrupt drug trafficking in the state.

In addition the ONDCP HIDTA program supports regional prevention and treatment efforts. It's critical and it's to be commended to see state and local law enforcement engaging in effective collaboration with local partners while ensuring that individuals entering the criminal justice system can access needed treatment services when that is appropriate.

And for those struggling with drug addiction, the administration also supports alternatives to incarceration such as drug courts, probationary programs like Hawaii's HOPE program and others.

There are three drug courts for adults and one for juveniles that currently operate in Vermont. They have demonstrated remarkable results in reducing incarceration for drug offenders and improving treatment outcomes for their clients.

Rhode Island's four adult and four juvenile courts have shown similar success and we applaud these successful efforts and remain committed to their continued expansion.

Across the country rural America is facing a number of unique challenges related to the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs. The Obama administration is dedicated to identifying these problems, working closely with Federal, state, and local leaders to identify and implement the best solutions as quickly and as effectively as possible.

We know that substance abuse and addiction are in the background of so many of the other negative social consequences and no single approach will be effective alone. Instead, we must focus on prevention, treatment, enforcement, and interdiction as essential priorities in an overall strategy.

I look forward to working closely with you and your colleagues in Washington, those participating in today's hearing to address these important issues in our rural communities. And I thank you for the opportunity to join you today.

I request that my full written statement be included in the hearing record and I look forward to your questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of R. Gil Kerlikowske appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you, Director, and your full statement will be made part of the record. What we do here is meet the witnesses and then go to questions.

The next is Colonel Tom L'Esperance. The Colonel is a 23-year veteran of Vermont law enforcement. He was named commander of the Vermont State Police in May 2009. He and I worked together over the years on many, many issues. He has worked with both the uniformed and the criminal divisions of the force, specialized in narcotics investigations, in criminal highway interdiction. He's worked extensively with the multi-agency Vermont Drug Task Force including as an undercover officer and field supervisor.

You are not going to be able to be an undercover officer anymore, you understand that, don't you Colonel?

Col. L'ESPERANCE. Yes, sir; yes, I do.

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEAHY. And has his bachelors degree in criminal justice from Champlain College in Burlington. Please, go ahead, Colonel.

**STATEMENT OF COLONEL TOM L'ESPERANCE, DIRECTOR,  
VERMONT STATE POLICE, WATERBURY, VERMONT**

Col. L'ESPERANCE. Thank you, Senator. I would like to start with thanking Senator Leahy and Senator Whitehouse for the opportunity to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee to address drug-related crime in rural America, specifically in Vermont.

As part of my responsibilities as the director of the state police I oversee the administration of the Vermont Drug Task Force, a multi jurisdictional organization consisting of state, county, and local offices whose responsibility is to enforcement of our drug laws.

My perspective is unique not only because I see the tremendous work being done every day by the Drug Task Force, as director, but also because I spent a significant portion of my career assigned there as an investigative supervisor and commander. Throughout that time I can say without hesitation that the Drug Task Force and all of its achievements would not exist today without the unwavering support of Senator Leahy, the Douglas administration, and the Vermont legislature as a whole. For that support, Senator, I am deeply appreciative.

From a statewide law enforcement perspective, the impact drug abuse and drug-related crimes have had upon our community—communities is substantial. After looking at all the data, however, one thing is clear, if we do not focus on reducing the demand for drugs in Vermont, we will not be successful in reducing the associated violent crime.

As a rural state we face unique challenges in our efforts to curb drug crime and the effects they have on our citizens. We do not have the luxury of the vast resources that exist in urban cities or suburban regions. So to be effective we must pool our resources and collaborate together in order to solve these problems.

Although it can be difficult to find solutions in a rural state such as Vermont, the fundamentals of illegal drug markets are the same everywhere. Where there is demand there will always be a supply. We cannot ignore this fact and we must work to both disrupt the drug trade and reduce demand.

I can say unequivocally that the Vermont State Police and the Vermont Drug Task Force cannot solve this problem alone. Not only is it important to work with our partners in law enforcement, but we also must continue to build strong relationships with our governmental and nongovernmental organizations in our effort to drive down demand and reduce the influx of drugs into the state.

I strongly believe in and support the three-tiered approach to reducing drug-related crimes in Vermont. The first tier includes a continued effort by law enforcement to investigate and dismantle drug trafficking organizations; especially those that profit from the drug trade.

The second tier focuses on ensuring that drug users and drug addicts receive treatment by drug counselors in treatment centers. When we reduce the number of people with drug addictions, the demand for these drugs will decrease as well.

The third and final tier includes educating all people on the realities of drug abuse. Particularly, we must dispel many myths associated with the use of prescription drugs amongst the youngest members of our society.

The multi-tiered approach is not a new concept. It was implemented in Vermont with great success almost a decade ago after the state was hit hard with the emergence of heroin. Several years of widespread focus using this strategy resulted in substantial drops of heroin arrests and for a period of time the demand for the drug subsided.

Although we made great strides against heroin, we know that powerful pain medication, Oxycodone commonly found in the prescription drug OxyContin quickly moved in to take its place on the street. The diversion of prescription narcotics is one of the greatest challenges we now face in Vermont. OxyContin has become as widespread and available as heroin or crack cocaine.

With the increase in demand for narcotics such as OxyContin we also see a spike in the number of heroin arrests statewide. In the past 16 months there has been a 115 percent increase in the number of heroin cases conducted by the Drug Task Force. This can be contributed in part to the increase on OxyContin addictions in the state and the fact the comparatively street value of a bag of heroin is generally less than half the value of an 80 milligram OxyContin.

Approximately 4 months ago after this Committee held a field hearing in St. Albans, the Drug Task Force broke up one of the largest distribution rings that diverted OxyContin we've ever seen in this state. This group was responsible for bringing thousands of OxyContin pills into the state every week. Despite the challenges associated with prescription drug abuse, it continues to be my belief that if we maintain a strong focus on all highly addictive drugs, using the combined strategy of enforcement, treatment, and education we should be able to duplicate our successes from years ago.

Although we are seeing increases in specific categories such as prescription drugs and more recently a resurgence of heroin, we cannot forget the many achievements that law enforcement has made over the years. The work performed by the Drug Task Force has been instrumental in targeting mid- to high-level drug traffickers in the state. The Drug Task Force provides a specialized valuable resource to state and local enforcement agencies.

It uses a model that shares information and manpower resources to address a specific problem spanning all jurisdictions. Time and time again the task force more than proved to be one of the most successful management tools used by law enforcement today in Vermont and across the nation.

This model has worked so well with drug enforcement in the state, it is now being applied to the organizational structure of our special investigation units and special teams within the state police.

The mission of the state police and Drug Task Force is broad in scope. Because the nature of our work encompasses the entire state, we are not always involved in the day-to-day interactions the local police have with their communities. From our perspective, however, we continue to see strong local support after every large-scale enforcement operation we conduct. Communities like Barre, Rutland, and St. Albans which may at times feel overwhelmed by drug crimes come together after these enforcement operations to develop local solutions that help maintain the safety of this city.

Additionally, as part of our statewide drug enforcement strategy the state police have also been participating in the national criminal enforcement effort with the domestic highway enforcement project. The funding for this project has been made available through the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Last, our efforts to curtail the wave of methamphetamine production that has swept through most of the Nation appears to be working in Vermont. Although meth labs occasionally turn up, we were able to get ahead of this problem by working with our Department of Health and professionals who dedicate themselves to treatment to enact tough precursor laws that have been instrumental in slowing down the spread of methamphetamine.

We will continue to be vigilant in our efforts to control methamphetamine production by working closely with the United States Attorney's Office in the Drug Enforcement Administration to assure that the meth labs do not take hold.

As we move forward I will continue to rely on the tremendous support we received and continue to receive from the Federal Government. Without the funding secured by Senator Leahy over the years our ability to operate the Drug Task Force at the level of success it enjoys today would not be possible. Subsequently our ability—our ability to positively impact local communities in the rural sections of the state would be severely diminished. With your help we continue to focus on our mission of disrupting all drug trade throughout the state.

I would like to thank, again, Senator Leahy, and the entire Committee for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing.

[The prepared statement of Colonel Tom L'Esperance appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you, Colonel. One thing I should have asked before. Can everybody hear all right? How about you students up there? Raise your hand if you can hear?

[Showing of hands.]

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you. I always wonder about when we're having one of these things if somebody will say, "can everybody

hear all right" and obviously if they can't there's no way they're going to be able to answer. But—

[Laughter.]

Chairman LEAHY [continuing]. Thank you.

And thank you very much, Colonel. And we are going to go back to this, but I liked very much what you said about pooling the resources. If it was ever essential anywhere, it's essential in a small state. And I see the director shaking his head yes he understands from his own experience.

Our next witness is Barbara Floersch who has worked with the Washington County Youth Service Bureau and the Boys and Girls Club for the past 33 years. The Youth Service Bureau assists around 2,500 youth in Washington County each year, up to 10,000 youth through its statewide efforts. She is now the associate director of the organization. So she plans to implement the wide variety of programs and services to support young people as they go through that transition into being young adults. And she has her BA from Norwich University just a few miles away.

Please go ahead, Ms. Floersch.

**STATEMENT OF BARBARA FLOERSCH, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
WASHINGTON COUNTY YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU/BOYS &  
GIRLS CLUB, MONTPELIER, VT**

Ms. FLOERSCH. Senator Leahy, Senator Whitehouse, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. The Washington County Youth Service Bureau, Boys and Girls Club was established in 1974 and I joined the Bureau in 1977. For the past 33 years I have worked to develop services to meet the needs of young people in this county and throughout the state.

The Youth Service Bureau Boys and Girls Club is one of our community's effective efforts to combat drug-related crime.

Here in Washington County we serve about 2,500 young people and their families every year and through our statewide efforts we serve about 10,000 others. Locally we provide services to runaway youth and their families, temporary emergency shelter to youth in crisis, transitional living support to homeless youth, adolescent substance abuse prevention and treatment services that are funded partially through a grant from the Vermont Department of Health, SAMSA pass-through money. We provide assistance to teen parents and their children. We have a teen center and after-school program, a peer outreach program, a program to connect at-risk youth with green jobs, and a residential transitional living program for young men returning from Barre City jail. We also have a 24/7 crisis service for young people and families.

On a statewide basis, the Youth Service Bureau started and now administers the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs that involves 13 organizations throughout the state. We also operate the Vermont Coalition of Teen Centers that serves about 30 teen centers in Vermont and we have Americorp and Vista programs that place about 50 volunteers in youth-serving organizations throughout Vermont every year.

As I have done my work over the years, I have continually tracked research about why young people succeed or they don't. My testimony here today is based on my experience at the Youth Serv-



ice Bureau, but also research by people like J. D. Hawkins, and R. F. Catalano, Larry Brendtro, Stephen Benson of the (coughing) Institute. I have submitted a bibliography of that research along with my testimony.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you.

Ms. FLOERSCH. Basically preventing drug abuse, crime and other social ills can only be accomplished through actions that promote physical, mental, and spiritual health and well being. When young people do not perceive their own promise, are emotionally maimed, are estranged from their communities that creates crime. It creates wounded children who self-medicate with drugs and who have nothing to lose. The well-being of children and well-being of the community cannot be separated.

In Washington County we're fighting for our children which means we're also fighting for our communities.

New Directions coalitions in Barre, Cabot, and Montpelier are promoting a culture of community wellness that's free of substance abuse. These coalitions are also funded by the Vermont Department of Health through SAMSA funds from the Federal Government.

The Youth Service Bureau Cityscape After-school Program operates at Barre City Middle School. Cityscape is a Boys and Girls Club site and a 21st Century Community Learning Center. The state department of education's evaluation of 25th Century—21st Century Learning Center Programs shows that quality after-school activities help young people succeed in school, a powerful research-based protective factor against substance abuse.

The Community Connections Program operates in the Washington Central Supervisory Union and in Montpelier also to provide quality out-of-school time experiences to help kids succeed.

The Basement Teen Center in Montpelier and North field Teen Center are Boys & Girls Club sites. They're giving teens a safe, supervised, substance-free place to hang out, learn leadership skills, and have fun while forming good relationships with strong role models.

Community—Central Vermont Community Action Council educates teen parents, is providing funds to the Youth Service Bureau through a Department of Labor grant to prepare at-risk youth for green jobs and work fervently to address both the causes and effects of poverty.

Our Washington County Parent Child Center is working with young parents and their children—young children and their parents. The Community Justice Centers in Barre and in Montpelier are bringing restorative approaches to address conflicts and redress wrongs.

The Youth Service Bureau's Return House is a residential transitional living program for young male offenders age 18 to 22 who are returning to Barre City from jail. Return House is staffed 24/7 and in addition to supervision provides life-skills training, support in finding and retaining a job, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, positive leisure activities and community service opportunities. Return House is the only program of its kind in the state and in the past 4 years since it opened, not one of its participants has committed a new crime.

In spite of our successes, some young people are still falling through the cracks and living in a harsh and dangerous reality. At this time, the most porous spot in Vermont's safety net and the most perilous point in the long crossing to adulthood is for transition-age youth, those in the ages of 17 and 25.

At every point in a child's life, the opportunity for health and success is precariously balanced with the challenges that could snowball to produce alienation, hopelessness, substance abuse, and crime. There is a strong, committed service system for young children and school-age children. It needs more resources, but it does exist. But by the time kids are in their late teens or have become young adults, there aren't many people left to pick them up if they fall down. It's true that older teens and young adults who are troubled can be hard to help. They're pretty good at burning bridges. But as a community we can't give up on them.

The Youth Service Bureau works daily with young people between the ages of 17 and 25 who are in crisis and who have no supervisor system. Each year our transitional living program for homeless youth helps about 150 young people. But that program is dreadfully underfunded and the reality is, there are many pressing needs that we can't meet.

The words "homeless teen" are sobering. But if you take a moment to picture a pregnant 17-year-old sleeping in the hallway of an apartment building or an 18-year-old man sleeping in an abandoned car, then the real impact on young people and the impact on our community comes into sharper focus. Eighteen to 25-year-old men are the largest population under the supervision of the Vermont Department of Corrections. The majority of young men in jail today did not graduate from high school, and many have learning disorders. About 95 percent of them have substance abuse problems that have not been treated and are not now treated in jail. Most have backgrounds of abuse and neglect. Many were in foster care.

The number of women supervised by corrections, while lower, has grown. Almost 90 percent have been abused, 95 percent have substance abuse problems, and 60 percent have diagnosed mental health problems. There are young people—these are the young people who fell through the cracks in our support system. And helping them make a successful transition back into the community from jail is our best chance to help them move their lives onto a different track. Our best chance to help them become contributors to the community and our best chance to stop the in-jail/out-of-jail revolving door that can so easily become their life.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you.

Ms. FLOERSCH. Again, thank you.

[The prepared statement of Barbara Floersch appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you.

The next witness, Susan is a single mother. Her son Mark is currently serving in Afghanistan and I might say parenthetically, like all of the Vermonters who are serving there, we keep them in our prayers and our thoughts. It's a difficult time for that.

She participated in the modular home building program for 3 months while incarcerated at Northwest State Correctional Facil-

ity. She has recently started her own business. She was also involved in creating a drop-in support group for women being released from prison. And I might also add parenthetically, it took great courage for you to be here. And both Senator Whitehouse and I appreciate that. Please go ahead.

**STATEMENT OF SUSAN, VERMONT WORKS FOR WOMEN'S MODULAR HOME CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM AT NORTHWEST STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, BURLINGTON, VERMONT**

SUSAN. Thank you. So good morning and thanks for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Susan and I'm 42 and I'm a single mom. I come from a family with no criminal history and no background of substance abuse. But I have served time in prison because I have abused alcohol.

I started drinking and using other drugs when I was 17. I started bartending around this time. My use became normal and an expected part of my work and social life. I drove regularly under the influence and had my first DUI at the age of 19.

I stopped using all substances when I discovered I was pregnant with my son. I sought treatment from the UVM Treatment Center and stayed there for 4 years. I then left treatment and went back to bartending full time believing I had my use under control because I needed the income.

My son's father and I separated when Mark, my son, was 6 months old. His father was a huge presence in his life throughout his early childhood. Things changed when his father remarried and essentially abandoned his son for his new wife. Mark started getting in trouble after this and was left to deal with his behavior on his own. The emotional and financial stress led to a relapse. I was charged with a DUI twice in 1 year and eventually found myself incarcerated.

It was then, when I was incarcerated at St. Albans, that I found Vermont Works for Women and Building Homes and Building Lives, a training program that gave me a purpose and made me feel like a person again. I was not left out or forgotten. We built modular homes that were sold to affordable housing. Being on a crew helped me learn new skills and brush up on some old skills I had not used in a long time.

I was given the chance to learn and teach as well as get certified in areas that would later find out to help me find work when I had left. The program gave me structure and goals which I needed. I worked hard and I learned to trust the other women on the crew and build something that I could view every day and know that I had accomplished it.

The program also introduced me to resume and developing portfolios for the work we are doing and the skills we had learned. I was also supported and prepared by this program that I made a decision to start my own painting business with my sister when I got out.

I was released on October 15th of 2009. My son was then and is still in the Army serving our country in Afghanistan. Returning without him to care for was hard. I had a tendency to isolate and knew that would be bad for me. Well, I never had the chance because Vermont Works for Women supported me from the moment

I got out to this very day. If I needed stamps or if I needed a ride, or a phone call, support, information on some of the supports in the community, they were very helpful, to say the least.

It is really important that we reduce the isolation of people who return home from prison, especially those who have battled addiction. A lot of the people with whom we come into contact upon their release are state employees who have authority over our actions. It is very important to have the support and community organizations that could be an ally and connect me to the resources I need to move forward.

Because of my experience I recently started a group for women who are returning to the community and looking for peer support, a group that Vermont Works for Women has helped to support. This makes me proud and helps with my feelings of self worth and enables me to give back to the community.

I will close by saying that thanks to the help of all the staff of Vermont Works for Women I have launched my own business with my sister. We are fully licensed and insured and working so hard and so much that we are looking to hire some help this summer. I am making healthy choices and working out daily. I have changed my diet to reflect my focus on my health. I continue individual counseling and I am active in the community working for the United Way to do repairs for the elderly and facilitating the drop-in support group.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

Chairman LEAHY. I am really touched—

Susan. Thanks.

Chairman LEAHY [continuing]. By what you had to say, but also by your courage in being here. I could see my wife, Marcel, nodding the same behind you, but it's—we'll come back to this, but what you were talking about isolation and having the support group so you are not isolated. I can't emphasize how important that is in a rural state. It's extraordinarily important. But sometimes you can have isolation right in the middle of a city too.

SUSAN. Yeah.

Chairman LEAHY. So let's not forget that. Thank you very, very much.

SUSAN. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Susan appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. Our next witness is Demartin Quadros, the final witness. He's the owner and operator of Dunkin Donuts Shops in three Vermont locations including downtown Barre. I know that for a fact. As a small business owner in Barre he often collaborates with the Downtown Development Committee and local law enforcement on how to make Barre a safer place. Please, go ahead, sir.

**STATEMENT OF DAMARTIN QUADROS, BUSINESS OWNER,  
BARRE, VERMONT**

Mr. QUADROS. OK. First I would like to thank Senator Leahy and Senator Whitehouse for giving me the opportunity to speak. I co-own the business with my sister, Susan Covey. It has been a family business since 1996. And a lot of people don't know, but

Dunkin Donuts are all independently owned and operated. I have run the Barre location since that time. Over the past decade I have seen a lot of change in downtown, especially over the last couple of years.

The mayor and chief have focused their efforts in patrolling the downtown area more frequently and more visibly with foot patrol. This, I feel, has made a big difference in many instances of avoiding certain crime from my perspective; especially drug-related activities.

The biggest challenge we have had in downtown is the perceptions of the surrounding communities and our customers. Perception is something that takes a long time to change. And it's bad and really hurts downtown businesses, especially when it's bad.

Barre is centrally located along with Montpelier and is the meeting point, you know, for everything from shopping to employment, you know, for all the surrounding communities.

When it gets into the evening hours, I believe, people don't feel safe going downtown. Which from the changes that I have seen over the years I believe there has been much improvement but if people still perceive it not to be safe then that has to be changed. And the community has summer concert events and other things that go on which I think is really important in bringing the community together.

And the local law enforcement definitely need to have the resources to act as a deterrent and prevent crime from happening. Especially when a community like Barre sometimes has the added burden due just to where it's located in relation to the court system and other downtown businesses and services. And I believe being rural like has been addressed today, is one of the big reasons it makes it more difficult as far as having those resources.

So, again, to reiterate, it makes it really important that the surrounding communities get involved in coming up with solutions.

As a business owner I have taken steps to make my location safe and secure. I have added surveillance cameras to my parking lot, additionally with lighting for the evening hours and that has helped tremendously. And my surveillance system has already been used on a couple of occasions in collaboration with the local law enforcement to help solve some local crimes. And as businesses, I think we play a major part in helping deter drug-related crime by taking some of these steps and working with fellow businesses to make our downtown safe and drug free.

We depend on our community that's why we are in business to serve them, so I want them to feel safe and know that it is safe to visit downtown anytime of the day. I believe we are getting there and it takes involvement from all of us in the community as a whole to make it happen.

I would like to thank the Senators again for giving me this opportunity.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Don't be nervous.

Mr. QUADROS. It's kind of hard. I'm not too used to this.

[Laughter.]

[The prepared statement of Demartin Quadros appears as a submission for the record.]

Chairman LEAHY. Listen, this has been—I'm going to ask a few questions. This has been a superb panel. Again, one of the reasons for getting out of Washington when we can.

I'm going to start with a question for director Kerlikowske. And I want to thank you again. I know what your schedule is like and to come up here yesterday and meet with us and be here, I do appreciate it.

I'm glad to hear you say that both you and the Obama administration recognize what law enforcement officials like Colonel L'Esperance has been telling us and what communities have been proving for years, that law enforcement alone doesn't solve the problem. We have to work together. And do you agree that the Federal Government can and actually has to do more to support those communities that are tackling the problem with the unified approach that includes treatment and prevention and rehabilitation along with law enforcement?

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. Very much so. There's so much criticism right now of the Federal Government, and yet, I spent, as you know, the vast majority of my career at the local level. And I think as you and many other Senators also agree that the solution to the problems they're not always developed within the Beltway. I know that will be a surprise too—

[Laughter.]

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. But—

Chairman LEAHY. We'll accept that.

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. But I truly believe there is a gray rule for the Federal Government particularly in this and that is through the support of Drug Free Communities, it's a small amount of money, but it really helps people leverage those resources. And those Drug Free Communities require that the schools, that law enforcement, that community stakeholders all come together and that they develop those local solutions. So I could not be in more agreement that we can do more and we should do more about this problem in support and in leadership, but not in directing.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you. Well, you're going to be introducing the new national drug control strategy. Will that reflect some of these changes and priorities?

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. Very much so, Senator.

Chairman LEAHY. Good. I'm looking forward to that rollout.

Colonel L'Esperance, I know in the years I was a prosecutor we were effective when we had coordination and boy we were really hurting when we didn't. So you worked on the task force model with state and local county government, tell me why that's so important?

Col. L'ESPERANE. I think, Senator, that's the most effective tool we have in law enforcement, pooling our resources together and whether it's the drug task force or investigating crimes of a sexual nature against children or domestic violence, bringing our best police officers forward, men and women who are dedicated to this particular cause. Again, whether it's the drug task force or what have you.

The funding for this process is vital right now. As you know, state, county and local funding has dried up while we're facing probably the most difficult time I've seen in over 23 years of being

a state trooper. So the Federal funding that comes in allows us to continue with this drug task force model with this task force model for investigating crimes against children, just the task force model in general.

Chairman LEAHY. Well, we saw what it did in one of our more publicized and horrible murders here in Vermont a couple years ago. In fact, when the director of the FBI, Robert Muller, came to Vermont, he made it a point to talk to members of the task force and say how important that was.

I want to go, Susan, if you don't mind, if I could ask you a few questions. And, again, I applaud your willingness and your courage in testifying here today. You talked about the importance of community involvement and helping people escape substance abuse. I hope that when you're—what you said will give encouragement to others who try to escape substance abuse. There are people in this audience who know that you have to have people who work together and can help you when you have such problems.

Your experience with Vermont Works for Women really speaks to what I feel is important at the local level. I think you should be proud of what you've accomplished.

SUSAN. I am. Thank you.

Chairman LEAHY. Good for you. And I think Vermont Works for Women should be pretty proud.

If you had somebody and you probably will after this testimony, you'll have somebody coming to you with a similar story and talk about the situation you were in. What would you tell them?

SUSAN. Well, there are so many resources out there and every town has their resources. They're available, it's just a matter of hearing about them or knowing about them. I wouldn't have known about Vermont Works for Women, unfortunately, unless I was incarcerated. But taking advantage of the programs out there, a lot of people don't. I would tell them to look, you know, look outside of DOC and—you know.

Chairman LEAHY. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but would it be safe to say you could tell somebody who's been incarcerated, that's not the end of the world?

SUSAN. Exactly.

Chairman LEAHY. Good for you. I happen to agree with you on that. And I—

Sort of along the same way, Ms. Floersch, you're going to see, and you do see a lot of people going in the wrong direction. Do you give up, or do you have ways to get them back?

Ms. FLOERSCH. Never give up. When we give up that's when they do end up in corrections. And if we give up when they come out, and we keep giving up as they go in again and come out, then we will have no way to help them have the sort of successes as Susan has had. And so we've—the way we don't give up is we'll go find them. If they don't show up for a meeting, we go find them. And we keep welcoming them back even if they keep missing their appointments or doing wrong.

Chairman LEAHY. Well, I think of programs like AA. You have people that are sort of the lifeline people, somebody you can call, you go out, reach them, bring them back.

Mr. Quadros, let me ask you, I think this question probably answers itself. But, would you agree, No. 1, that law enforcement can't do this alone?

Mr. QUADROS. No. Definitely not.

Chairman LEAHY. And second, the business community has to be really part of the community in this; do they not?

Mr. QUADROS. They do. That's a big, big part of it.

Chairman LEAHY. I know I talked to the Mayor not only here, but in other cities in Vermont. They tell me that when the business community comes together with the education community, the rehab community, and law enforcement, that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. I mean, together they accomplish a great deal more. Would you agree with that?

Mr. QUADROS. Definitely do.

Chairman LEAHY. Thank you. Senator Whitehouse, let me—I don't mean to be—please go ahead.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Well, I've been very impressed by the testimony we've heard about these two programs, the Return House and Ms. Floersch, you said that that has a zero recidivism rate in 4 years.

Ms. FLOERSCH. None of the participants have committed new crimes. Some have gone back to jail for violation of conditions of release—

Senator WHITEHOUSE. OK.

Ms. FLOERSCH [continuing]. But have not committed a new crime. And so often they will go back and then come back into Return House and settle down because they realize—

Senator WHITEHOUSE. They realize—

Ms. FLOERSCH [continuing]. that they need to settle down.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Yeah. Well, the—it's one of the interesting quirks of our justice system that we put enormous resources out into patrolling the general community. And we put enormous resources into our departments of corrections patrolling the incarcerated folks. But when people leave the incarcerated environment and come back into the community, there is not ordinarily enough support for them. And they are usually the folks most likely to recidivate, most likely to commit new crimes, most challenging for the communities around them, so you would think that that would be an area for greater attention and support.

Clearly what Return House is doing is working. What would you describe as the main attributes or characteristics that have led to its success? And where does it find its financial support?

Ms. FLOERSCH. Return House would not have been possible without support from the U.S. Department of Justice, Senator Leahy, and the Department of Corrections here in Vermont. Additionally, the Youth Service Bureau, Boys and Girls Club raises private funds from foundations to support it. We also take all of those other varied services we have at our agency and plug in with the young people and Return House so there's sort of a wrap-around approach.

So I would say the success is that we knew we would not go into it without 24/7 supervision. Also, that we do, do wrap-around services with substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, trying to help young people learn good leisure skills use. And further—



more, just the collaboration and coordination with other agencies. We work with the Department of Corrections, we have support, and we have had from the city of Bare. And we work with Community Action Food Works, other organizations that—so we don't go it alone.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. How important is the focus on a particular age group?

Ms. FLOERSCH. This age—

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Could you expand it or do you feel it is better to leave it focused on young male adults?

Ms. FLOERSCH. We focused on young male adults because youth—that's the mission of the Youth Service Bureau Boys and Girls Club. So we stay within our mission. But specifically, young male adults because they are the largest group of people incarcerated in Vermont and because they're difficult. They are often, because of their life circumstances, when they get out they are very likely to recidivate and need a whole lot of support to figure out how to get their lives in order.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. The other program obviously is Vermont Works for Women which, Susan, you testified so wonderfully about. How did you find out about the program and what can you tell us about how it's funded and where it gets its support?

SUSAN. Well, I found out about it through when I was incarcerated in St. Albans. That's where the modular home program is at. So, they recruit people who are incarcerated there.

Their funding I'm not quite sure about because I don't work there. But I'm pretty sure it's a bunch of different organizations, I would have to—

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Have to find out?

SUSAN. Yeah.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. OK. Does anybody else know? Barbara, do you know?

Ms. FLOERSCH. No, I don't, but—

Audience Participant. [Off mic.] I'm with Vermont Works for Women.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Oh, wonderful.

Where do you get your money?

[Laughter.]

Audience Participant. [Off mic.] Well, it's a patchwork quilt that we've knit together with—we have some private support and the Department of Corrections helps to fund it, the Department of Labor's WEA program helps support participation, and—help provide support for the program.

Chairman LEAHY. I will have the staff meet with you after and get that full breakdown so we can have it in the record, name and everything else. Thank you.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Well, congratulations and clearly you have a wonderful Ambassador for your program here. I'll reveal an inter-senatorial courtesy. During Susan's testimony the Chairman passed me a little note saying, "she is amazing."

SUSAN. Thank you.

Chairman LEAHY. Director Kerlikowske, you've heard some of this testimony, you were chief of police at a large city on the west

coast. Did you hear some things that are not that unfamiliar from your own experience when you were a chief?

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. In many ways, you're absolutely correct, Senator. One of the—one of the great benefits of having been a police chief in both Buffalo and also in Seattle was getting to see the local communities come together and to make a difference, not only in crime, but what I truly believe is going to be a model for the future and that's the same level of collaboration and cooperation that can be put to the drug issue. Right now, as you well know, with health care and other issues, it's very difficult to get a lot of attention to the drug problem nationally. But we know that all of these families have been touched by this. We know that law enforcement is a big proponent of a collaborative effort. The President had instructed me to get as much input as I could from around the country. And this opportunity to be here in Vermont and to hear this just adds to my depth and store of knowledge about the problem. And I appreciate listening to all of the witnesses also.

Chairman LEAHY. You know, it was interesting when the other hearings we had I think the first of the series was down in Rutland. And the Senators who were there heard things they hadn't before. But also the staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee that has to work on the legislation got a chance.

I want to yield back to Senator Whitehouse. Go ahead.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Director Kerlikowske, the role of the medical community in addressing our national drug problem is one that has emerged recently. I think it's been a welcome attribute. I'd love to ask you a little bit about how you see that role and what you think the Office of National Drug Control Policy can do to encourage more engagement and support from the medical community for people who are facing what is a, very often, fundamentally medical issue of addiction.

And then if I could ask Colonel L'Esperance, I would be interested in your thoughts on your second tier, getting people into rehab and all of that. We started a drug court in Rhode Island when I was attorney general that was quite effective. And I would be interested in asking you what the means are that you think are most effective for transitioning people from their first exposure to the law enforcement system into that rehab and medical system.

If I could ask Director Kerlikowske to go first.

Mr. KERLIKOWSKE. I think the key is rolling treatment and addiction information into primary health care. As we had the opportunity to work through the administration on the health care issue, drug abuse and addiction should not be separate from other parts of primary health care. And there's a wonderful program called "screening brief intervention referral to treatment." It teaches every health care professional to be able to talk to their patients regardless of whether they're looking at a mole or treating a broken finger, to ask about that patient's alcohol and drug use. And through screening and brief intervention, if we make this kind of thing a part of primary health care, we will have a huge issue.

Educating physicians within medical school about either addiction or pain management is another key component.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. That's helpful.

Colonel L'Esperance.

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. Senator, a few years ago we were addressing the methamphetamine problem as it moved west to east. We formed the Committee with the Department of Health and a member of the Department of Health made a pretty profound statement to me, that from his perspective the No. 1 referral to drug rehab was law enforcement. Which indicated to me that certainly we play a vital role in transitioning that person, that addict, from the criminal justice system into the treatment—treatment arena. I don't think there are any addicts out there that say, today is the day I'm going to become a heroin addict. I think it takes time and over the course of time that they may become involved in the criminal justice system.

But our role, from an enforcement perspective, is to have that contact and be proponents of the diversion program here in Vermont and other programs that—

Senator WHITEHOUSE. You use the diversion program here?

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. There is a diversion program here. It has been challenged in the past. And whether it's related to legalization of marijuana or other drugs, the diversion program may be that first encounter that someone has with someone from the treatment side or counseling side. So that is a crucial component to not only law enforcement, but the state in general, to combat this scourge of drugs.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. And in your diversion program, if an individual is diverted toward a rehab program they remain under the supervision of law enforcement until they have successfully completed the program; do they not?

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. If they don't complete the program successfully, they get back into the criminal justice system.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Yeah.

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. So there is a component of oversight there.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. That strikes me as being very helpful. If you are dealing with nonviolent offenders, it's often in the community's best interest to get them through their issues with the drug that they are dependent on and back to being productive members of the community as rapidly as you can. And while I think the role of law enforcement is vital in this area, it has to be tempered with the knowledge that sometimes the best role of law enforcement is as a spur and a watchdog to keep people doing what they should be doing rather than to direct them right into the, for instance, the incarcerative system where they become a burden on the taxpayer, and if it's not necessary for people to be incarcerated, if they are capable of putting themselves into a helpful and effective role in the community more power to them.

I think we've seen an example of that today.

Chairman LEAHY. You know, Mayor Lauzon was delighted about the fact of bringing this in the community and bringing people together talk about it. Let me ask you a question, Colonel, because held a—one of these hearings we held, we had a pediatrician who came to testify and I remember some eyebrows that went up among some of the people in the hearing when he talked about the amount of addiction among young people with prescription drugs. And that it was not, you know, those people in that other neighbor-

hood, boy, have they got problem, but rather you may have a problem right at home.

Are you seeing that?

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. I think that we could have a task force created to just deal with prescription drug abuse, distribution, diversion across the state, across the country, for that matter. We have found that the Department of Health created a prescription drug monitoring program which will, as it continues to grow, be extremely effective. But what the people in the business to make money have realized is you can use the same routes or the same avenues to move cocaine that they did prescription drugs. So we found that our typical source, cities from outside of the state, are now heavily involved in moving prescription drugs into the state. So it has gone beyond the diverted drugs from doctor shopping and things like that.

Chairman LEAHY. Well, I think one of the—one of the things that concerns me is that some—you mentioned from out of state, that some may feel that because we are a small state that we won't respond. And I think the task force shows that we will. And we have to. Whether it's here in Barre, or Montpelier, or anywhere else in the state, we have to.

Senator.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. I'd love to hear a little bit more about HIDTA and how that's working. We have a very good HIDTA program in Rhode Island, it was one of the first. It took a lot of networking to get it together. In particular, at the time there was a certain amount of—suspicion is too strong a word, but there wasn't as strong and robust a working relationship between the state police and municipal law enforcement as has developed since. And I'm wondering, first of all, how is the HIDTA project going? What have been its main attributes of drawing people together, and has it been a force for improved joint effort in the Vermont law enforcement community?

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. I think that HIDTA was another unique entity that has broken down barriers between law enforcement agencies. We have a very robust HIDTA, relatively speaking, in the Burlington area managed by DEA. We have a trooper assigned to it. There are county deputy sheriffs assigned to it along with local police who have formed another task force who work in conjunction with the Drug Task Force.

The director of HIDTA was here in the audience, Jay Fallen, and he works very hard ensuring that information sharing is taking place, deconfliction across New England taking place through the HIDTA, the program has been up, if my numbers are correct, since the mid- to late 1980s—

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Uh-huh.

Colonel L'ESPERANCE [continuing]. In New England. And we have worked very closely with the HIDTA and it brought together the Agency heads from across New England to create strategies together that affect all of them. As I mentioned earlier, the source cities we find outside of the state of Vermont, Rhode Island, and bringing those agency heads together through the HIDTA program has been very effective.

The funding that comes from the HIDTA program is crucial to continue that task force environment in the Burlington area. In there is direct funding from the domestic highway enforcement arena that comes right into the state police. We're able to inundate crime as it crosses the border and work collectively with the Drug Task Force in our approaches to the Barre community and the St. Albans, and things like that. So, I can't say enough good things about the HIDTA program.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. And we've found that the prospect of resources which were fairly considerable through the HIDTA program was a significant attraction for the different agencies to work together as was the professional prospect of making big cases. People like to do that professionally and so they were happy to work together. Do you see that as well?

Colonel L'ESPERANCE. I do. I think that we learn from our mistakes over the years that individually we can't solve these problems. We have to work collectively across the board whether it's the interest border or across state—state lines that these strategies that are created across these state lines affect the rural communities of northern Vermont as much as they do the inner city of Holyoke and Springfield and places like that, bringing the agency heads together to create a long-term strategy has been very effective.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Very good. Well, thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman LEAHY. Well, thank you. And, again, I thank Mayor Lauzon for having us here. But I also am delighted to look around here at the number of people represented, whether it's the state police, local police, Federal authorities, others, educators, and so on. With the questions we've asked you today, did anybody here in the panel want to add anything to this? I mean, we could ask questions all day long, but is there something we missed? Anybody want to add anything?

Audience Participant. (Off mike.) Vermont like many states—

Chairman LEAHY. Ms. Floersch, would you like to add something?

Ms. FLOERSCH. Only to really thank the Department of Justice for the support for Boys and Girls Club Programs. When I think about prevention and what we do in prevention, the resources that come from DOJ for prevention through the Boys and Girls Club are much appreciated, as well as the intervention and treatment through Return House.

Chairman LEAHY. We have a couple of folks from the Boys and Girls Club who are smiling and nodding yes. I don't think they're asking to have a rebuttal to that.

Anybody else care to—

SUSAN. Yes, Senator Leahy.

Chairman LEAHY. Yes, please.

SUSAN. The diversion program—I just wanted to let you know my son went through that diversion program. He had some tagging issues downtown in Burlington and had to go through the diversion program and it really worked.

Chairman LEAHY. I'm glad to hear that because I know we had Chief Shirling, Mike Shirling testify in Washington recently and he

was talking about the diversion program and how—I know when I was state's attorney, we tried to do this on an ad hoc basis. I would have given anything to have had something that was set up all the time. Because there are so many cases where if you could have something structured short of putting a record that's going to follow somebody—

SUSAN. He wouldn't have made it into the military without the diversion program.

Chairman LEAHY. That's exactly what I was thinking. When you're talking about Mark and I—Mark wouldn't be in the military today without that.

SUSAN. That's right.

Chairman LEAHY. But, you know, there are a number of other Marks who are in that same case.

Without going into too many war stories, one of our major commanders overseas came to me, a four star general, told me he wanted me to speak with his aide who is not—who at that time was a major and will be a general. And a wonderful, wonderful soldier. He had been picked up for something that would have stopped him from going forward back years ago in Chittening County. I watched, I held off the prosecution, held the file, watched what he did in school and elsewhere. And after a year he came in to see me and wanted to know whether I was going to go forward with the case. He recalled and said to the general in talking with me, he remembers me tearing up the file and dropping it in the wastebasket. But, sometimes those are very necessary.

Anybody else want to add anything?

[No response.]

Chairman LEAHY. Let me thank all of you and let me also, for those who came in later, emphasize, we'll keep the record open for a week. That's something we normally don't do that long, but for every one of the witnesses, if you want to add anything to your testimony or respond to anything that was said, but also for any member of the community who would like to submit testimony, it will be part of the official Washington records.

I do want to thank my good friend, Sheldon Whitehouse, for coming to Vermont. He's done this before for us and he has connected so many hearings when unfortunately you are supposed to have been about five different places. In fact, I'm going back—we're both going back to Washington earlier today than we thought we would because of votes, votes tonight. The House of Representatives thinks it's time for the U.S. Senate to do some of these late-night sessions. And I have a feeling we will.

But I thank you for being here and I thank you for all the times you filled in as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee when I've been in other hearings.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. I'm delighted to have been here. I think it's been an excellent panel that has given a broad array of views. The one person I didn't ask a question of, I just want to take a moment and express my appreciation to Mr. Quadros.

The COPS program, the Community Policing Program, which Chairman Leahy had so much to do with establishing, stands on the principle that it's really important for the police to reach out to the community; not just to show up when a crime has been com-

mitted, but to be there on the beat day in and day out and have those relationships. And that would never work if it weren't reciprocal with the community members. So, for a community business owner like you to be as engaged is extraordinarily helpful and I just wanted to add that before I conclude.

Mr. QUADROS. Thank you.

Chairman LEAHY. Oh, I agree with that.

With that we stand in recess.

[Whereupon, at 11:02 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]

## SUBMISSIONS FOR THE RECORD

Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 02510

Testimony for the Record concerning legislation  
to combat drug use and trafficking.

March 24, 2010

Senator Leahy and others:

I attended your hearing in Barre and noted with interest the testimony of the panel. As a parent of a 21-year-old son who has struggled with drug use since the age of sixteen, and as someone who had heretofore been unaware of the failure of the existing educational, judicial, and social service systems to deal effectively with drug misuse by our juvenile population, I submit the following observations:

To put my personal experience in perspective, I offer the abridged history of my son's problems. I am still trying to understand why he is an addict, beyond whatever genetic predisposition he might have. My son earned a driver's license when he was sixteen, and shortly afterward was arrested for a juvenile DUI. Subsequently, he was expelled from school (as a junior) for bringing alcohol into the school. We found him a place at an excellent private school, from which he was expelled for arranging to provide hallucinatory mushrooms to interested fellow students. He continued to use and experiment with every available drug, prescription medication, and alcohol, despite counseling, involvement with mandated drug and alcohol remediation programs, fines, community service, and a great deal of conversation and counseling by both parents (we are divorced, but amicably share parentage) and friends (one of whom started the diversion program in Orleans county). His association with the local crowd of drug and alcohol users, dealers, and abusers, led him to develop habits of lying, stealing, and generally destroy a previously finely developed sense of integrity and responsibility. Side effects included several destroyed cars, exorbitant court and related costs, legal fees, and many hours of time given by both parents to try to help him through his personal crisis. It continues today as he is under release with curfew and travel restrictions as he has violated parole while under suspended sentence.

My experience with his travails has shown me that the current system, if you can call it a system, for helping young people who get involved with drugs and alcohol, is entirely broken. There is plenty of educational material available for these children, but for whatever reason (peer pressure, personal angst, willful parents, etc.) they *will* experiment, and many of them get in trouble. The first misstep in the "system" is to expel them from school if they demonstrate drug/alcohol related behavior on school property. The minute you remove the structure of school from their lives, they are surely lost. I recommend that every school have a program of education, counseling, and mandatory participation for offenders, which is part of the diversion and reparation programs. There must be peer groups and community service that is tied to the school, and the immediate locality in which the offender lives. It does no good to mandate community service that is located in some community 30 miles from his home. How can he get there unless he is given access to a vehicle (and can still legally drive) or if a family member takes time off from work to transport him? The cost of these programs must be included in the regular school budget, hopefully supplemented with grants from the department of corrections, the budget for which will be significantly reduced if these programs are mandatory. Additionally, there must be a permanent channel of communication between the graded schools, and the high school, so the high school can be alerted *beforehand* about children who are at risk, or who have already demonstrated alcohol or drug use.

When my son was under supervision by the Tri-county Drug and Alcohol agency, it became patently clear that the agency was not coordinated with the judicial system, CRASH, the State Police, the County Sheriffs, or the independent counselors who were available for the mandatory counseling. There is still far too much paper, and not sufficient IT communication. My son was required to pay fines, fees for counseling, and drive 30 miles each way from home, because none of the programs are available in his own community. Even community service was offered only at the remote site. How can you expect children who can only earn sub-minimum or minimum wages, or their parents who often earn a maximum of \$10 per hour, to sustain these expenses? I am not saying



that the offender should not be expected to pay for his transgressions, but a fee like \$80 an hour for counseling is counter-productive, and can be paid only with difficulty, if at all. If we are willing to pay for incarceration, and remove all of these offenders from the labor force or educational system, then we should pay for their treatment with public money. The object is to help them cure their disease, and become productive members of society as soon as possible. All we do now is stigmatize and warehouse them. Think what we could do with the tax money saved if we could reduce prison populations by half.

Lastly, I harshly criticize the judicial system in Vermont. Enormous waste of time and money is sustained by multiple required court appearances, with associated levies of court costs and fines. These minor drug offenses can be dealt with in one hearing, if the offender assents to accepting a mandated program of peer groups, community service and counseling. I can't tell you how many times I have traveled to the court, waited anywhere from 30 minutes to three hours, for a five minute hearing, with several over-weight county sheriffs standing around providing security(?), and then the accompanying levy of court costs, and postponement of final sanctions. The court acts like a judicial yo-yo, building accordion files of paper, without contributing efficiently to the process. Further, I am furious about the lack of bail standards. In one county an alleged rapist is released on \$5000, an alleged arsonist is let go on \$7000 in another. In my son's case, the judge required \$25000 for a teenager who was ultimately sentenced for a parole violation and a drug misdemeanor. This is either prejudicial or arbitrary. Vermont needs to develop deliberate guidelines for bail. The judges need to receive training in the implementation of those standards. I am all for an independent judiciary, but not for an irresponsible one.

In conclusion, I am convinced that if a comprehensive drug and alcohol program had been in place in the community, my son would have had the support necessary to help him conquer his addiction tendencies. He might not have succeeded, but he would have had a much better opportunity. As it was, he was in a position to destroy his own life, and materially assist in helping his peers to do the same. We need to change the system. Your help would be appreciated.

Nicholas Ecker-Racz (formerly Selectman, EMT, etc., now Town Moderator, Town of Glover, Vermont)  
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**U.S. Senate Judiciary Field Hearing  
Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug-Related Crime in Rural America  
March 22, 2010, Barre City Auditorium, Barre, Vermont**

**Testimony of Barbara A. Floersch  
Associate Director, Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club**

Senator Leahy, Senator Whitehouse, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

The Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club was established in 1974. I joined the Bureau in 1977 and for the past 33 years have developed services to meet the needs of young people in this county, and throughout the state. The Youth Service Bureau assists around 2,500 youth in Washington County each year, and through its statewide efforts, reaches up to 10,000 others. Locally, the Bureau provides services to runaway youth and their families, temporary emergency shelter for youth, transitional living support to homeless youth, adolescent substance abuse prevention and treatment, assistance to teen parents and their children, a teen center, an after-school program, a peer outreach program, a program to connect at-risk youth with training to obtain *green* jobs, a residential, transitional living program for young men returning to Barre City from jail (called Return House), and a 24/7 crisis response service.

On a statewide basis, the Youth Service Bureau started and now administers the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs (that includes 13 member organizations), the Vermont Coalition of Teen Centers (that serves around 30 teen centers), and AmeriCorps and Vista Programs that, combined, place around 50 volunteers in youth serving agencies each year.

To do my work, I have continually tracked research on why young people succeed, or don't. My testimony is based on my experience at the Youth Service Bureau, and is supported by the research of J.D. Hawkins and R.F. Catalano who defined risk and resiliency factors that affect young people, the research of Larry Brendtro who has written extensively on reclaiming youth who are at-risk of failure, and the research of Stephen Benson who identified 40 *assets* that increase the likelihood of a young person's success. Benson's research shows that the more *assets* a young person has, the more likely it is that he or she will avoid risky behaviors; and, conversely, the fewer *assets*, the more likely that the young person will get into trouble. These *assets* are basic: young people do best when they are valued by the community, treated with respect, have meaningful relationships with good role models, are engaged in creative activities, do well in school, and so forth. I have submitted a bibliography of this research with my written testimony.

Basically, preventing drug abuse, crime, and other social ills can only be accomplished through actions that promote physical, mental, and spiritual health and wholeness. When young people are belittled or abused, do not perceive their own promise, are emotionally maimed, are estranged from the community -- that creates crime. It creates wounded children who self-medicate with drugs, who have little experience of caring and responsibility, and who have nothing to lose. The well-being of children and well-being of the community cannot be separated.

Washington County Youth Service Bureau/  
Boys & Girls Club  
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*Youth  
Service  
Bureau*



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

P.O. Box 627 ~ 38 Elm Street  
Montpelier, VT 05601

E-Mail: WCYSB@youthservicebureau.info

In Washington County we're fighting for our children which means we're fighting for our communities:

- *New Directions* coalitions operating in Barre, Cabot, and Montpelier are promoting a culture of community wellness that's free of substance abuse.
- The Bureau's *Cityscape After-school Program* operates at Barre City Middle School. Cityscape is a Boys & Girls Club site and a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center. *Community Connections* provides high quality after-school programming in Montpelier and the 5 communities of the Washington Central Supervisory Union. The state's evaluation of Vermont's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center programs shows that quality afterschool activities help young people succeed academically, build skills, and establish positive, lasting relationships within the community.
- The *Basement Teen Center* and *Northfield Teen Center*, both Boys & Girls Club sites, give teens a safe, supervised, substance-free place to hang-out, learn leadership skills, and participate in activities.
- The *Washington County Parent Child Center* supports parents and young children.
- *Central Vermont Community Action Council* educates teen parents, is providing funds to the Youth Service Bureau to prepare at-risk youth for *green* jobs, operates the area's *Head Start Program*, and fervently works to address both the causes and effects of poverty.
- *Community Justice Centers* are bringing restorative justice practices into both Barre and Montpelier, and offering exciting, research-based approaches for addressing conflicts and redressing wrongs.
- The Youth Service Bureau's *Return House* is a residential transitional living program for young male offenders (age 18-22) who are returning to Barre City from jail. Return House is staffed 24/7 and in addition to supervision, provides life skills training, support in finding and retaining a job, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, positive leisure activities, and community service opportunities. Return House is the only program of its kind in the state, and in the almost 4 years since it opened not one of its participants has committed a new crime.

Along with my written testimony, I have submitted documentation on the effectiveness of these programs and services. There are many other efforts underway, but since testimony time is short I will direct my comments to an area where we need to do much better.

In spite of our successes some young people are still falling through the cracks and living in a harsh and dangerous reality. At this time, the most porous spot in Vermont's safety net and the most perilous point in the long crossing into adulthood is for transition-age youth, those between the ages of 17 and 25.

At every point in a child's life, the opportunity for health and success is precariously balanced with challenges that could snowball to produce alienation, hopelessness, substance abuse, and crime. There's a strong, committed service system for young children and school-age children. It needs more resources, but it does exist. But, by the time kids are in their late teens or have become young

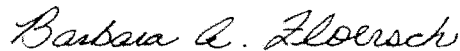
adults, there aren't many people left to help them if they fall down. It's true that older teens and young adults who are troubled can be hard to help. They're pretty good at burning bridges. But as a community, we can't give up on them.

A 2003 study found that of all 18 to 21 year olds incarcerated in Vermont, 36% had been in foster care. Although there is no more up-to-date data that's specific to Vermont, a national report in 2008 showed that young adults who had been in foster care experience high rates of homelessness, often struggle with depression, are usually without health insurance, and are likely to live below the poverty level.

The Youth Service Bureau works daily with young people between the ages of 17 and 25 who are in crisis and who have no support system. Each year, our Transitional Living Program for homeless youth helps about 150 young people, but that program is dreadfully under-funded and the heartbreaking reality is that there are many pressing needs we can't meet. The words "homeless teen" are sobering, but if you take a moment to picture a pregnant 17 year old sleeping in the hallway of an apartment building, an 18 year old man sleeping in an abandoned car, a 19 year old woman trading sex for shelter – then the real impact on the young people and impact on our community comes into sharper focus.

The largest population under the supervision of the Vermont Department of Corrections are 18 – 25 year old men. The majority of young men in jail did not graduate from high school and many have learning disorders. About 95% of them have substance abuse problems that have not been treated, and that aren't treated in jail. Most have backgrounds of abuse or neglect – many were placed in foster care because their homes were chaotic or worse. The number of women supervised by Corrections, while much lower has been growing. Almost 90% have been abused, 95% have substance abuse problems, and 60% have diagnosed mental health problems. These are the young people who fell through the cracks in our support system, and helping them make a successful transition back into the community from jail is our best chance to help them move their lives onto a different track, our best chance to help them become contributors to the community, our best chance to stop the in-jail/out-of-jail revolving door that can so easily become a life.

Again, thank you for the honor of speaking at this hearing.



Barbara A. Floersch  
Associate Director  
Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club

## Testimony

"Susan"

Barre, Vermont

Monday, March 22, 2010

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Susan. I'm 42 and a single mom. I come from a family with no criminal history, no family background of substance abuse. But I have served time in prison because of having abused alcohol. I started drinking alcohol and using other drugs when I was seventeen. I started bartending around this same time. My use became a normal and expected part of my work and social life and I regularly drove under the influence and had my first DUI at the age of 19.

I stopped using all substances when I discovered I was pregnant with my son. I sought treatment from UVM and stayed with them for 4 years. I then left treatment and went back to bartending full time, believing I had my use under control and because I needed the income.

My son's father and I separated when Mark was six months old. His father was a huge presence in his life throughout his early childhood. Things changed when his father remarried and essentially abandoned his son for his new wife. Mark started getting in trouble after this, and I was left to deal with his behavior on my own. This emotional and financial stress led to relapse. Things improved over the years with my son, but my use did not subside. I was charged with DUI twice in a year and eventually found myself incarcerated.

It was when I was incarcerated in St. Albans that I found Vermont Works for Women and *Building Homes, Building Lives*, a trades training program that gave me a purpose and made me feel like a person again and not left out or forgotten. We built modular homes that are sold as affordable housing. Being on the crew helped me learn new skills and brush up on some old skills I hadn't used in a long time. I was given the chance to learn and teach, as well as get certified in areas that I would later find out would help me in finding work when I left. The program gave me structure and goals, which I needed. I worked hard, learned to trust the other women on the crew, and built something I could view every day and know what I'd accomplished.

The program also included help with resumes and developing portfolios of the work we were doing and the skills we had learned. I was so well supported and prepared by this program that I made a decision to start my own painting business with my sister when I got out.

I was released on Oct 15th 2009. My son was then, and is still, in the Army and serving our country in Afghanistan. Returning home without him to care for was hard. I had a tendency to isolate and knew that would be bad for me. Well, I never had that chance because Vermont Works for Women supported me from the moment I got out to this very day. If I needed stamps or a ride or a phone call for support, information on some of the supports in the community -- they were very helpful, to say the least. It is really important that we reduce the isolation of people who return home from prison, especially those who have battled addiction. A lot of the people with whom we come into contact upon release are state employees who have authority over our actions. It was really important to have the support of a community organization that could be an ally and connect me to the resources I needed to move forward.

Because of my experience I recently started a group for women who are returning to the community and are looking for peer support, a group that Vermont Works for Women has helped to support. This makes me proud and helps me with my feelings of self worth, and enables me to give back to the community.

I will close by saying that thanks to the help of all the staff at Vermont Works for Women. I have launched my own business with my sister. We are fully licensed and insured and working so much that we are looking to hire more help. I am making healthy choices, work out daily, and have changed my diet to reflect my focus on health. I continue individual counseling and am active in the community, working with the United Way to do repairs for the elderly, and facilitating the drop-in support group.

I feel like a reborn person with a life worth living.

Thank you.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY  
Washington, D.C. 20503

**Testimony  
Of  
R. Gil Kerlikowske  
Director  
National Drug Control Policy**

Senate Committee on the Judiciary

***“Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug-  
Related Crime in Rural America”***

March 22, 2010  
9:30 A.M.  
Barre City Auditorium, Barre, Vermont

**Senate Committee on the Judiciary**  
**Field Hearing**  
**“Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug-Related Crime in Rural America”**  
**March 22, 2010**

**Statement of R. Gil Kerlikowske**  
**Director, National Drug Control Policy**

Thank you very much Chairman Leahy and Senator Whitehouse for the opportunity to testify on this important subject. I look forward to today’s discussion and also working closely with both of you on drug issues both here in the Northeastern United States and across the country.

The Obama Administration understands that addiction is a disease, and that prevention, treatment, and law enforcement must all be included as part of a comprehensive strategy to stop drug use, get help to those who need it, and ensure public safety. In the coming days, we will release the 2010 National Drug Control Strategy. This inaugural Strategy commits the Obama Administration to reduce drug use and its consequences. It reflects a nine-month consultative effort with Congress, Federal agencies, State, local, and tribal partners, and hundreds of concerned citizens. It serves as a bold call to action for all Americans who share in the desire and the responsibility to keep our citizens, especially our youth, safe, healthy and protected from the terrible costs of substance abuse.

This Strategy sets specific goals by which we will measure the progress we are making. Over the next five years, working with dozens of agencies, departments, Members of Congress, State and local organizations, Indian tribes, and the American people, we intend to make significant reductions in drug use and its consequences.

Our efforts are balanced and incorporate new research and smarter strategies to better align policy with the realities of drug use in communities throughout this country. Research shows addiction is a complex, biological, and psychological disorder. It is chronic and progressive, and negatively affects individuals, families, communities, and our society as a whole. In 2008, over 23 million Americans ages 12 or older needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem. However, less than 10% received the necessary treatment for their disorders.<sup>1</sup>

Treatment is effective and recovery is possible. Three decades of scientific research and clinical practice have proven that treatment for drug addiction is as effective as treatment for most other chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma. We need to change the conversation in this country to emphasize the importance and effectiveness of treatment and recovery in overcoming this disease, and each of us must take personal responsibility for not using drugs, for seeking treatment if we have a problem, and for committing to recovery from substance abuse.

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<sup>1</sup> Results from the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2008, <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k8nsduh/2k8Results.cfm>



Thousands of Americans lose their lives each year because of illicit drug use. I am deeply troubled by the recent sharp increases in drug-related deaths. In 2006, the latest year for which data are available, drug-induced deaths surpassed gun-shot wounds and now rank second only to motor vehicle crashes as a cause of injury deaths in our country. Reducing fatal drug overdoses – particularly deaths involving controlled, prescription drugs – is an urgent challenge, and one that we all recognize requires the attention of leaders at all levels of our government.

### **Drug Use in Rural America**

Drug use and addiction affects millions of Americans, many living in rural communities across the Nation. Rural Americans are confronted with a host of challenges related to drug use and addiction. Some of these challenges are shared by urban and suburban communities and many others are unique to rural communities. The latest research into drug use patterns and demographics presents a complex picture of these challenges. In 2008, Americans living in rural areas used illicit drugs at lower overall levels of current use (approximately 6%) than their counterparts in suburban and metropolitan areas (8-9%). Rural Americans also show lower rates of diagnosable drug abuse and dependence.<sup>2</sup> However, closer inspection of the data reveals some concerns about rural drug use.

Youth in rural America show higher rates of use, particularly for methamphetamines, prescription pain killers, and alcohol.<sup>3</sup> Data show that 2.9% of young adults, ages of 18 to 25, use methamphetamine in the most rural areas. That rate is nearly double the 1.5% of young adults using meth in urban areas.<sup>4</sup> This pattern is similar for OxyContin, with 2.8% of young adults in the most rural areas abusing these drugs, compared to 1.7% of urban young adults. The latest data also show that youth in the smallest rural areas binge drink at higher rates than their peers in suburban and metropolitan areas. Additionally, children aged 12 to 17 from the most rural areas are more likely to have used alcohol, engaged in heavy drinking, and driven under the influence (DUI).<sup>5</sup> These differences are significant and pose unique challenges to rural communities.

Among American Indians and Alaskan Natives (AI/ANs) data show the urgency of their alcohol and drug problems. Although these data do not separate out the problems in rural areas, many AI/ANs live on rural reservations or in rural states. The alcohol-related age-adjusted mortality for AI/ANs in service areas of the Indian Health Service was over six times higher than the rates for all other U.S. races for the year 2003. For the same year, the drug-related death rate was 50% percent greater for AI/ANs than for all races in the U.S.

One of the most alarming issues in rural areas is the rate of overdose deaths. Rural communities have experienced significant increases in overdose death rates, rapidly outpacing the rate increases in urban and suburban communities. These deaths are largely attributed to the rise in

<sup>2</sup> SAMHSA, "Results from the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [2009] Available <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/2k8nsduh/2k8Rresults.cfm>

<sup>3</sup> SAMHSA, "Study Helps Dispel Substance Use Myth: Rural Communities at Risk," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [March/April 2008] Available [http://www.samhsa.gov/SAMHSA\\_News/VolumeXVI\\_2/article17.htm](http://www.samhsa.gov/SAMHSA_News/VolumeXVI_2/article17.htm)

<sup>4</sup> Muskie School of Public Service, "Substance Abuse Among Rural Youth: A Little Meth and a Lot of Boozc," Maine Rural Health Research Center/University of Southern Maine, [June 2007] Available <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/Publications/rural/ph35a.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Muskie School of Public Service, "Substance Abuse Among Rural Youth: A Little Meth and a Lot of Boozc," Maine Rural Health Research Center/University of Southern Maine, [June 2007] Available <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/Publications/rural/ph35a.pdf>

misuse of prescription painkillers. The latest study available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) examining data from 1999-2004 shows that overdose death rates in predominantly rural States are higher than in more metropolitan States. Vermont, Maine and West Virginia all experienced significant increases in overdose death rates during this time: 164%, 210%, and 550% respectively. Increases of 100% or more occurred in 23 States, the vast majority of which are highly rural. These figures paint a picture of the human costs of drug use in rural communities across the Nation.<sup>6</sup>

The Administration recognizes the need to address these issues as rapidly and effectively as possible, and has taken a number of steps to do so. We emphasize proven prevention methods, treatment expansion, and smart enforcement strategies, for maximum impact in rural communities.

### **Prevention in Rural Communities**

A number of prevention tools have demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in reducing youth drug and alcohol use. This Administration recognizes the unique ability of community-based efforts to identify the local substance use problems and implement evidence-based solutions best suited to address their local challenges. ONDCP's Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC), created by the Drug Free Communities Act of 1997 (P.L. 105-20), is one of the leading community prevention efforts. Based on the understanding that local problems need local solutions, DFC-funded coalitions involve multiple sectors of the community to implement proven strategies to address their specific local drug problems. Coalition volunteers work together across service and professional disciplines to determine which drug problems should be priorities for short-term and long-term efforts in their community and then work to involve the community in implementing the planned strategies. With a focus on comprehensive prevention strategies, DFC coalitions are designed to reach youth, parents, teachers, law enforcement, and other leaders to improve the environments within these communities. This broad approach reduces collective risk, making these coalitions one of the most effective and efficient prevention efforts in our Nation. This comprehensive approach makes DFC-funded communities well-suited for rural, suburban, and metropolitan communities.

Currently, the DFC Program supports 14 coalitions in Vermont, totaling nearly \$1.3 million in Fiscal Year 2009 funds. These Vermont coalitions typically work in rural communities, often reaching out to cover several towns in wide geographical areas. By collaborating with a broad cross-section of sectors within their community, including law enforcement, health care, education, the media, youth, and others, the coalitions are implementing a number of prevention and early intervention efforts.

Vermont's DFC grantees have been using survey data to plan and implement prevention efforts since approximately 2005, and are working to improve parent attitudes, young people's perceptions of the risks of substance use, and lower alcohol and drug use rates. These surveys also enable the grantees to target the most current, relevant challenges facing the members of their communities. These coalitions cite alcohol and binge drinking, marijuana, tobacco,

<sup>6</sup> Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: "Unintentional Poisoning Deaths - United States, 1999-2004." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [February 2007] Available <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5605a1.htm>

prescription drugs, and cocaine as their main concerns, and are tailoring their prevention and intervention tools to address these challenges. The DFC Program continues to support the efforts of coalitions in Vermont and in rural communities nationwide, as these coalitions represent one of the most effective prevention strategies available today. I'd like to acknowledge Senator Leahy's strong support of this Program for so long, as well as the work of so many participating in these anti-drug coalitions.

### **Improving Treatment Delivery in Rural Areas**

High rates of alcohol, prescription drug, and methamphetamine abuse and dependence in rural areas necessitate a well-developed treatment infrastructure. While treatment availability is a challenge facing much of the country, it is particularly pronounced in rural regions, further intensifying the substance use problems in these areas.

The geographic dispersion of rural populations poses a unique challenge to treatment providers. The most recent study on rural substance abuse treatment availability was completed in 2004 and found that, of more than 13,000 treatment facilities across the United States, 91.1% were located in either metropolitan or metro-adjacent counties, leaving a very small number of providers for very large areas of rural America. While rural facilities typically have much smaller populations to serve, these populations are highly dispersed, hindering easy access to treatment services and dramatically hindering treatment initiation and outcomes.<sup>7</sup>

Intensive treatment services are particularly scarce in rural areas. A recent survey of rural treatment availability found that there are only 28 beds per 100,000 people in non-metropolitan areas, compared to approximately 43 in metropolitan areas. The same study found that opioid treatment programs (OTPs), which use methadone and other medications to treat severe heroin and other addictions, are extremely rare in rural settings. Of the over 1,000 facilities offering OTPs nationwide, only about 5.0% are located in non-metropolitan counties.<sup>8</sup>

Combining state funds with nearly \$6 million in Federal resources for treatment in FY 2009 and 2010, approximately 40 treatment programs in Vermont are providing critical intervention, treatment, and recovery services to patients in need.<sup>9</sup> This funding enables State leadership to enhance performance standards and improve treatment outcomes for these patients.<sup>10</sup> However, difficult State budget cuts pose a challenge for treatment providers in Vermont. At the Federal level, we are exploring ways to support state leadership in Vermont and other states with large rural populations, to ensure that critical treatment services are available for those in need.

The Administration is taking a number of steps to improve access to substance abuse treatment in rural areas. To quickly improve intervention and treatment services, the Administration is exploring ways to enhance services delivered by primary health care providers in rural areas.

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer Lenardon and John Gale. "Distribution of Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities Across the Rural-Urban Continuum." Maine Rural Health Research Center/University of Southern Maine. [February 2008]. Available <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/Publications/rural/pb358SubstAbuseTreatmentFacilities.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Lenardon and Gale. "Distribution of Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities Across the Rural-Urban Continuum."

<sup>9</sup> SAMHSA. "Grant Awards by State: State Summaries FY 2009/2010: Vermont." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [October 2009]. Available: <http://www.samhsa.gov/Statesummaries/StateSummaries.aspx>

<sup>10</sup> Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs. "Treatment Goals and Key Activities." Vermont Department of Health. [2010]. Available: <http://healthvermont.gov/adap/treatment/treatment.aspx>

One current efforts involve improving and expanding addiction care in two systems receiving Federal support: community health centers supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HIRSA), along with centers supported by the Indian Health Service (IHS). Upgrading these systems will improve substance abuse intervention and treatment services and attract currently un-served or under-served rural populations, including American Indian/Alaska Native populations. Key to this effort will be training of physicians, nurses and social workers, and the hiring and training of new behavioral health counselors. In addition, it will be important to modernize clinical information systems, and increase the availability of evidence-based medications, therapies, and other interventions in both of these healthcare systems.<sup>11</sup>

Ongoing treatment and recovery support is critical to assist patients in maintaining sobriety upon completion of a treatment program. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services' Administration's Access to Recovery (ATR) program is a voucher-based system that provides patients with access to a large pool of service providers, including mental health clinics, social services, and housing agencies, as well as faith-based and community organizations. By providing additional options for treatment and recovery support, these vouchers enable individuals to obtain care that is convenient and effective for them, helping address some of the obstacles of limited rural treatment availability. Already implemented in 24 States and tribal organizations, many ATR grantees have focused on methamphetamine and prescription drug addiction in rural areas, and are providing critical support services for those in recovery.<sup>12</sup>

The Administration is committed to increasing treatment capacity and improving access for those in need of substance abuse services. We will continue to seek out and support the development of promising new models and technologies with potential to improve the care available to citizens in rural areas of the Nation.

#### **Improving the Effectiveness of Rural Drug Enforcement**

Rural law enforcement organizations are often under-resourced when tasked with addressing methamphetamine production and prescription drug diversion. State task forces and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTAs) augment rural agencies' capabilities, and have demonstrated success. Across the country, the HIDTA program is also assisting small cities and rural areas affected by methamphetamine production and abuse. In particular, HIDTAs in California, Florida and Michigan are focused on fighting methamphetamine production in rural areas through the task force approach. Nationwide, methamphetamine supplies continue to depend on local production by small clandestine laboratories, facilitated by precursor chemical dealers, and pseudoephedrine smurfing operations<sup>13</sup>. HIDTAs provide funding to rural law enforcement agencies to support multi-agency task forces. In addition to critical financial resources, HIDTAs also provide training, intelligence, and investigative support. Partnerships between Federal and State task forces and rural agencies must continue to ensure recent reductions in rural methamphetamine lab production persist and effectively target sophisticated prescription drug diversion networks.

<sup>11</sup> Lenardson and Gale, "Distribution of Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities Across the Rural-Urban Continuum."

<sup>12</sup> SAMHSA, "State ATR Program Descriptions," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [September 2007]. Available: <http://atr.samhsa.gov/stateprograms.aspx>

<sup>13</sup> "smurfing": numerous individuals going from store to store purchasing the maximum limit of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine products at each store and then pooling their purchases.

The task force approach is working well in Vermont. We are well aware of Chairman Leahy's support of the Vermont Drug Task Force, as evidenced by its consistent funding levels of approximately \$1 million per year in recent years. Similarly, we appreciate Chairman Leahy's consistent support of the New England HIDTA and its efforts to combat drug trafficking, especially across state lines. The Vermont Drug Task Force, consisting of State, county, and local law enforcement, under the direction of the Vermont State Police, works closely with the New England HIDTA. Uniformed State and local law enforcement agencies can target resources to high threat areas as identified by intelligence from the HIDTA. New England HIDTA funding also provides drug intelligence and investigative training to Vermont State and local officers, ensuring the most effective use of resources to identify and disrupt drug trafficking in the State. The New England HIDTA also provides continuous support to drug enforcement operations in rural Vermont by funding year round State police patrols. These patrols are instrumental in interdicting drugs as they are transported into Vermont, and gathering intelligence on drug, cash, and weapons couriers for follow-up investigation by the Vermont Task Force and HIDTA Task Force personnel. Additionally, the HIDTA and Vermont Task Force are supporting prevention and treatment efforts in the State by collaborating with leaders in these areas and ensuring individuals entering the criminal justice system can access needed treatment services, when appropriate.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) have the potential to enable health care providers and law enforcement to more effectively track prescriptions within their States and identify patients who may be abusing their medications. PDMPs can also help State medical leadership examine prescribing practices and aid in law enforcement investigations into prescription drug diversion.<sup>14</sup> As of February 2009, 33 States, including Vermont and Rhode Island, have operational PDMPs, with five more States in the planning stages.<sup>15</sup> The Administration seeks to ensure new and existing PDMPs are effectively utilizing the data they acquire, and are bridging the gap between law enforcement and health care providers to utilize accurate data and patient tracking to reduce diversion of prescription drugs.

#### **Expanding Alternatives to Incarceration**

In addition to identifying ways to improve law enforcement operations in rural areas, the Administration is exploring and expanding alternatives to incarceration, such as drug courts and probationary programs like Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE). HOPE and other programs that emphasize testing and swift sanctions have received considerable attention for their effectiveness in reducing recidivism and substance use for drug offenders. While treatment-focused programs like drug courts require training, technical assistance, and support from local treatment providers, studies have demonstrated they are cost effective, when compared to traditional incarceration of non-violent drug offenders.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Nathaniel Katz, "U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Manage Prescription Opioid Abuse," Analgesic Research, [2009] Memorandum.

<sup>15</sup> "Status of State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs," National Alliance for Model State Drug Laws, [February 2010]. Available: <http://www.namsdl.org/documents/StatusofStates2-17-10.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Adult Drug Courts: Evidence Indicates Recidivism Reductions and Mixed Results for Other Outcomes," GAO, [February 2005]. Available <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05219.pdf>

There are three drug courts for adults and one for juveniles currently operating in Vermont, and they have demonstrated remarkable results in reducing incarceration for drug offenders and improving treatment outcomes for their clients.<sup>17</sup> Rhode Island's four adult and four juvenile courts have shown similar success.<sup>18</sup> HOPE has also demonstrated success in reducing jail time and recidivism, and significant improvements in abstinence rates, and has shown significant promise in methamphetamine-using populations, a traditionally difficult to treat population.<sup>19</sup> These probation programs have displayed significant cost-offsets compared to jail and prison systems, and demonstrate positive outcomes with reduced need for intensive treatment services, which are frequently lacking in rural areas. The Administration is committed to supporting and expanding drug courts and is currently supporting research into probation programs like HOPE to ensure these promising alternatives are available to break the cycle of incarceration for drug offenders.

#### **Improving Collaboration at the Federal Level**

To better ensure collaboration with our Federal partners, ONDCP recently re-established the Drug Demand Reduction Interagency Working Group (IWG). This Working Group is tasked with clarifying Federal programs and strategies, and informing our priorities moving forward. The Working Group has established several subgroups focused around the most critical drug issues in the country today. These groups, consisting of representatives from over 30 Federal agencies, play a critical role in coordinating Federal drug prevention and treatment strategies. The IWG ensures particularly challenging issue areas receive the attention of Federal stakeholders. The members of this Working Group are well aware of the unique challenges facing rural communities, and are currently examining ways to utilize Federal resources and capabilities to identify and implement solutions.

#### **Conclusion**

Rural America is facing a number of unique challenges related to the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs. The Obama Administration is dedicated to identifying those problems, and working closely with other Federal, State, local, and tribal leaders to identify and implement the best solutions as quickly and effectively as possible. We know substance abuse and addiction are in the background of so many other negative social consequences, but no single approach will be effective alone. Instead, we must focus on prevention, treatment, enforcement, interdiction, and international partnerships as essential priorities in an overall strategy. Policies and strategies that augment existing infrastructures, which are cost-effective and can be rapidly implemented, are best suited for this task.

I look forward to working closely with you and the other Committee members to address these important issues in our rural communities. I fully recognize the critical role of Congress and the many other leaders and stakeholders here today, and I look forward to future opportunities to partner with all of you. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify here today and for your support on this vital issue.

<sup>17</sup> Karen Gennette, "State Drug Coordinator's Meeting: Vermont," Vermont Judiciary, [October 2009], Memorandum.

<sup>18</sup> Matthew Weldon, "State Drug Coordinator's Meeting: Rhode Island," Rhode Island Superior Court, [October 2009], Memorandum.

<sup>19</sup> Mark Kleiman, "Managing Substance Abuse Disorders In Criminally-Active Populations," [Presentation delivered November 2009].



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**U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Field Hearing Testimony  
March 22, 2010 – Barre, VT  
“Effective Community Efforts to Counter  
Drug-Related Crime in Rural America”**

Chairman Leahy and Senator Whitehouse,

Thank you for once again highlighting the need to never rest in our collective efforts to effectively counter the scourge of drug abuse that is crippling our country. The residents of the greater Rutland region sincerely appreciate your first-hand understanding of the challenges that face the nation's communities and value your leadership in this matter.

As you have stated many times before, more eloquently than I, the specter of drug-related crime is not endemic to urban centers, but has had devastating impacts on rural cities and towns as well. Though all communities have their own unique challenges based on demographics, location and local resources, there are lessons to be learned from similarly situated municipalities across the country. Just as we in the Rutland area consider those successful remedies and undertakings that have been pursued elsewhere, we feel fortunate that we can offer our own thoughts on successful strategies that have been put into practice here.

The key tenet to any effective strategy enjoyed by Rutland over the past several years has been collaboration. And this collaboration is defined and practiced both within and across the “three legs of the stool” in effective anti-drug measures: Education/Prevention; Enforcement; and Treatment. In Rutland City our School Resource Officer Program, Downtown Foot Beat Officers and our Community Policing partnership with Rutland United Neighborhoods (RUN), Rutland Community Justice Center, and the Boys & Girls Club helps with prevention and the Rutland Drug Court helps with treatment. The Rutland City Public Schools, in addition to their engagement with the Police Department, work closely with Rutland Mental Health and the Rutland Regional Medical Center on issues of prevention/education and treatment. Its after-school tapestry and co-curricular activities are regarded as essential components in drug use prevention rather than “nice-to-have” programming.

On the enforcement side, Rutland City is a strong believer in the regional approach with the Vermont Drug Task Force. Rutland City currently has two officers assigned to the Vermont Drug Task Force and this model has proved to be a highly successful for the State of Vermont, therefore federal funding at the state and local level is of paramount importance in order to allow law enforcement to accomplish its mission. Additionally, Rutland City has a proactive community policing approach, with uniform officers using the knock and talk approach with some suspected drug houses. And the City has a unique and positive relationship with the Department of Corrections to ensure that its community members who are reintegrating into society have an effective prevention and treatment environment to return to.

U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Field Hearing  
Chairman, Senator Patrick Leahy  
Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug-Related Crime in Rural America  
Monday, March 22, 2010  
Barre City, Vermont

Prepared Testimony – Colonel Thomas L’Esperance

I would like to start by thanking Senator Leahy and Senator Whitehouse for the opportunity to appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee to address drug related crime in rural America, and specifically in the State of Vermont. As part of my responsibilities as the Director of the State Police I oversee the administration of the Vermont Drug Task Force, a multijurisdictional organization consisting of state, county and local officers whose responsibility it is to enforce our drug laws. My perspective is unique not only because I see the tremendous work being done every day by the Drug Task Force as Director, but also because I spent a significant portion of my career assigned there as an investigator, supervisor and commander. Throughout that time I can say without hesitation that the Drug Task Force and all its achievements would not exist today without the unwavering support of Senator Leahy and his staff over the years. For that support Senator I am deeply appreciative.

From a state wide law enforcement perspective the impact drug abuse and drug related crimes have had on our communities is substantial. We have seen increases in the number drug arrests and drug related crimes in both our rural towns and our larger cities. After looking at all the data however one thing is clear, if we do not focus on reducing the demand for drugs in Vermont we will not be successful in reducing associated violent crime. As a rural state, we face unique challenges in our efforts to curb drug crimes and the effects they have on our citizens. We do not have the luxury of the vast resources that exist in urban cities or suburban regions, so to be effective we must pool our resources and collaborate together in order solve these problems. Although it can be difficult to find solutions in a rural state such as Vermont, the fundamentals of illegal drug markets are the same everywhere. Where there is a demand, there will always be a supply. We cannot ignore this fact and we must work to both disrupt drug trade and reduce demand.

I can say unequivocally that the Vermont State Police and the Vermont Drug Task Force cannot solve this problem alone. Not only is it important to work with our partners in law enforcement but we must also continue to build strong relationships with other governmental and non-governmental organizations in our effort to drive down demand and reduce the influx of drugs into the state. I strongly believe in, and support a three tiered approach to reducing drug related crimes in Vermont. The first tier includes a continuous effort by law enforcement to investigate and dismantle drug trafficking organizations, especially those that profit from the drug trade. The second tier focuses on ensuring that drug users and drug addicts receive treatment by drug counselors and treatment centers. When we reduce the number of people with drug addictions, the demand for these drugs will decrease as well. The third and final tier includes educating all people on the realities of drug abuse. In particular we must dispel many myths associated with the use of prescription drugs among the youngest members of our society.

This multi-tiered approach is not a new concept. It was implemented in Vermont with great success almost a decade ago after the state was hit hard with the insurgence of heroin. Several years of wide spread focus using this strategy resulted in substantial drops in heroin arrests and for a period of time the demand for the drug subsided. Although we made great strides against heroin we know now that



the powerful pain medication Oxycodone, commonly found in the prescription drug OxyContin, quickly moved in to take its place on the street. The diversion of prescription narcotics is one of the greatest challenges we now face in Vermont. OxyContin has become as widespread and available as heroin or crack cocaine. With the increase in demand for narcotics such as OxyContin we are also seeing a spike in the number of heroin cases state wide. In the past 16 months there has been a 115% increase in the number of heroin cases conducted by the Drug Task Force. This can be attributed in part to the increase in OxyContin addictions in the state and the fact that comparatively the street value of a bag of heroin is generally less than half the value of one 80mg OxyContin pill.

Approximately four months after this committee held a field hearing in St. Albans, the Drug Task Force broke up one of the largest distribution rings of diverted OxyContin we have ever seen operating in Vermont. This group was responsible for bringing thousands of OxyContin pills into the state every week. Despite the challenges associated with prescription drug abuse, it continues to be my belief that if we maintain a strong focus on all highly addictive drugs using the combined strategy of enforcement, treatment and education we should be able to duplicate our successes from years ago.

Although we are seeing increases in specific categories such as prescription drugs and more recently a resurgence of heroin, we cannot forget the many achievements that law enforcement has made over the years. The work performed by the Drug Task Force has been instrumental in targeting mid to high level drug traffickers in the state. The Drug Task Force provides a specialized and valuable resource to state and local law enforcement agencies. It uses a model that shares information and manpower resources to address a specific problem spanning all jurisdictions. Time and time again the task force model proves to be one of the most successful management tools used by law enforcement today in Vermont and across the nation. This model has worked so well with drug enforcement in the state, it is now being applied to the organizational structure of our special investigation units.

Three years ago the Drug Task Force was instrumental in developing a drug enforcement operation in the Barre City known as Operation Granite Streets. This operation came at a time when drug crimes were at an all time high in the city and the region. The Drug Task Force, in cooperation with many local law enforcement agencies was able to identify and arrest three dozen people who were responsible for selling everything from crack cocaine to heroin. The operation provided immediate relief to the city and was so successful in reducing street level drug crimes that two other similar operations followed. Within two months of the very first field hearing of the Judiciary Committee in Rutland the Drug Task Force, in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies in Rutland County, conducted Operation Marble Valley. Less than one year later they were at it again in St. Albans to conduct Operation Rail City. These types of high impact enforcement operations are an important tool and will continue to be part of the overall strategy the Drug Task Force uses to assist local agencies with spikes in drug related crimes.

The mission of the State Police and the Drug Task Force is much broader in scope than that of local police departments in Vermont. Because the nature of our work encompasses the entire state we are not always involved in the day to day interactions that local police have with their communities. From our perspective however we continue to see strong local support after every large scale enforcement operation we conduct. Communities like Barre, which may at times feel overwhelmed by drug crimes come together after these enforcement operations to develop local solutions that help maintain the safety of their city. The Vermont State Police and the Drug Task Force will continue to work closely with our local, county and federal partners to ensure that we utilize our resources in a responsible and efficient manner.

Additionally, as part of our statewide drug enforcement strategy the State Police has also been participating in a national criminal enforcement effort through the Domestic Highway Enforcement project. Funding for this project has been made available through the Office of National Drug Control Policy. This program has enabled us to train and deploy troopers in areas where there may be increased criminal activity. It also provides for unprecedented information sharing both regionally and nationally which allows for a greater flow of information specific to individuals and organizations that traffic drugs into the state. This funding has allowed us to increase our traffic safety efforts through motor vehicle enforcement and has become a valuable resource to disrupting the flow of drugs into Vermont.

Lastly, our effort to curtail the wave of methamphetamine production that has swept through most of the nation appears to be working in Vermont. Although meth labs occasionally turn up, we were able to get ahead of this problem by working to enact tough pre-cursor laws that have been instrumental in slowing the spread of methamphetamine. We will continue to be vigilant in our efforts to control methamphetamine production by working closely with both the United States Attorney's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration to ensure that meth labs do not take hold here.

As we move forward I will continue to rely on the tremendous support we have received, and continue to receive from the federal government. Without the funding secured by Senator Leahy over the years our ability to operate the Drug Task Force at the level of success it enjoys today would not be possible. Subsequently our ability to positively impact local communities and rural sections of the state would be severely diminished. With your help, we will continue to focus on our mission of disrupting all drug trades throughout the state and ensuring that our communities are free of drug related violent crimes. I would again like to thank Senator Leahy and the entire committee for the opportunity to participate in today's hearing.

**Statement By:**

Thomas J. Lauzon, Mayor  
City of Barre, Vermont

**before:**

United States Senate Judiciary Committee  
Field Hearing  
Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug Related Crime in Rural America  
Barre, Vermont

**March 22, 2010**

Mr. Chairman, Senator Whitehouse, Director Kerlikowske, on behalf of the city of Barre, I extend a warm welcome and sincere thanks for the opportunity to discuss community efforts to counter drug-related crime in rural America.

I want to extend my thanks also, Mr. Chairman, to your staff. From the very first phone call since I took office four years ago they have been generous and sincere with their assistance and concern for Barre, for Vermont and for America. The offer to serve as host for this hearing was no exception. During our initial telephone conversation, Maggie Gendron asked me if I would mind hosting a hearing of the United States Senate Judiciary Committee. She told me the hearing would focus on drug addiction and drug related crimes in rural America. I was, and remain, grateful for the opportunity.

At the time, it struck me as somewhat peculiar that the Chairman of the United States Senate Judiciary Committee would ask the mayor of Barre, Vermont for permission to hold a hearing in his community. I thought at the time that you were simply being polite, because that's in your nature. It took me a while to consider the possibility that perhaps some communities would rather not host a hearing on drug addiction and drug related crimes. That perhaps some believe that talking about drug problems in their communities will cast them unfavorably or is an admittance of failure. I do not subscribe to that theory. We cannot solve problems that we're not willing to identify and talk about openly. In order to solve our problems, we need to be honest about their existence, accurate in our assessment and expedient in our actions. An addict in Burlington should be of concern to the citizens of Stowe. A victim in Woodstock should be of concern to the citizens of Brattleboro. As the fastest aging state in the nation, Vermont cannot afford to lose the unrealized potential of young lives to drug addiction and

drug related crimes. With increasing demands on our resources, we cannot afford policies that are not proactive.

Mr. Chairman, you have long advocated for and promoted a three-pronged approach to combating rising crime levels in America – prevention, treatment and enforcement. I believe that approach is both sound and proven.

Of the three approaches, I am perhaps best known for my views on enforcement. And that is not by choice. As a society, we have a fascination with enforcement and punishment. I have observed during my tenure in office that sound bites relating to enforcement receive much more attention than sound bites relating to prevention and treatment. That needs to change.

While enforcement is a necessary component in our efforts to reduce crime in America, it does not, in and of itself, solve the problem. Enforcement generally occurs after damage has occurred. My strong preference is to focus on prevention and treatment. Prevention and successful treatment are more cost effective and yield more desirable results.

Treatment, like enforcement, occurs after damage occurs. But unlike enforcement, treatment offers recovering addicts a positive end result.

In my opinion, aggressive prevention is critical to mitigating the effects of drug addiction and drug crimes in America. While we are experiencing some positive trends within several categories of recreational drug use among our younger citizens, the sharp increase in prescription drug abuse has me especially concerned. According to the *2009 Monitoring the Future* survey, non-medical use Vicodin and OxyContin is increasing among those aged twelve or older and is roughly even with those who smoke marijuana. These drugs are highly addictive and create a dependence that is physiologically and psychologically very similar to heroin. Appropriately, OxyContin is referred to as “killer” on the streets. Left unchecked, these trends will result in thousands of overdose deaths and millions of dollars in treatment and incarceration costs across America.

OxyContin is a pain management drug. While it mitigates the effect of pain and disease, it does not prevent or cure disease. It was first introduced by the manufacturer in 1995. In 2002, the Director of the Office of New Drugs for the FDA testified before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and recognized OxyContin as a valuable product when used properly. The Director went on to testify that the FDA was working closely with the manufacturer to take appropriate action to curb the misuse and abuse of OxyContin. In the eight years since that testimony, the trends relating to misuse have become increasing troubling. I believe we need to re-examine the cost benefit analysis of OxyContin manufacture and distribution as it relates to increased illegal use and distribution.

Lastly, I believe we need to be more vigilant in identifying young people at risk and more inclusive in our approach to prevention. I believe that in addition to our continued focus on and education of young people at risk, we need to focus on their families and offer additional counseling and support. We need to mitigate the factors that place our young people at risk. Where appropriate, I believe family counseling and support should be a requirement, rather than a choice.

In closing, the struggles we talk about today do not define Barre or Vermont or America. We are defined by our potential. We are defined by those who defy the odds and rise above challenging circumstances. Most importantly, we are defined by the exceptional people, many of whom you will hear from today and thousands more who are hard at work at this very second, helping those who are struggling with addiction or crime. Thank you.

TO: DOC Housing Grantees  
FROM: Karen Lawson, Housing Coordinator *KL*  
DATE: November 28, 2006  
RE: **Housing Study**

Attached please find an outcome study that underscores the need for supportive, structured housing for offenders upon release from a correctional facility. Three cohorts of offenders were chosen at random to compare recidivism rates and length of stay in the community by type of housing assistance received.

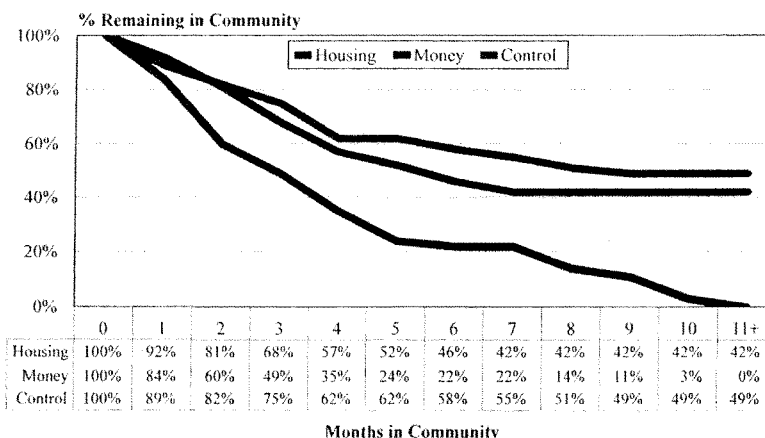
POPULATION IN STUDY: 37 release money recipients (i.e. security deposit and first months rent); 77 offenders who resided in a bed funded by a DOC housing grant (i.e. Dismas House, Phoenix House); and 55 control group offenders who received no release money or assistance by a housing program funded by DOC.

All offenders were released from a facility during 7/05 through 4/06, and may have been serving time for a sanction or a new crime. The attached graph shows the percentage of offenders who remained in the community by the number of months post release. For example, 35% of release money recipients were still in the community 4 months post release, whereas 57% of housing grant recipients were still in the community within the same time frame. All cohorts experienced a dramatic drop in successful reentry within 4 months post release (which, as you know, can be a stressful time for offenders maintaining employment and housing).

CONCLUSION: All offenders who received release money were returned to a facility within 11 months of being in the community, whereas almost half of both the control group and housing grant recipients remained in the community within 11 months post release. This underscores the need for offenders to receive supported and structured housing upon reentry, especially for those offenders who may not necessarily have the support of family and friends.

THANK YOU for all of the work you do to assist offenders in their successful reentry into Vermont communities. The Department appreciates your dedication and willingness to work with an often complex population.

Survival Curve: Length Of Stay in Community  
 Release Money Recipients, Structured Housing Grant Recipients, and Control Group



Release Money Recipients, N = 211; Structured Housing Grant Recipients, N = 111; and Control Group, N = 437 and in community. N=111. Release data is based upon receipt of State Bar Services. Facilities identified in the above chart are not necessarily the same. Facility data is based on receipt of State Bar Services. Facility data analysis was completed in 10/01 and data shown is for 10/01 to 10/01 in the community.

Statement of

**The Honorable Patrick Leahy**United States Senator  
Vermont  
March 22, 2010

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Statement Of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),  
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee,  
Hearing On "Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug-Related Crime in Rural America"  
Barre, Vermont  
March 22, 2010

Today the Senate Judiciary Committee returns to Vermont to hear from the people of Barre about the community's efforts to combat the persistent problems of drug-related crime in rural America. Vermont's civic-minded, all-hands-on-deck approach to dealing with this serious problem continues to help advance a dialogue throughout the country about what solutions work best to address drug-related crime in rural areas.

I have held similar hearings in Rutland and St. Albans in recent years to discuss this issue, and I will keep focusing on it and working with you as long as drugs and the crime they bring continue to hurt the people of small towns and small cities in Vermont and across America.

The Senate Judiciary Committee takes this issue seriously. I am glad to have with me today Senator Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island, a leading thinker in the Senate on criminal justice issues. The fact that we will hear testimony today from President Obama's "drug czar," Director Gil Kerlikowske of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, is a sign that drug-related crime in rural areas is a national priority. I know Director Kerlikowske will take the lessons from today's hearing very much to heart as he moves toward unveiling a National Drug Control Strategy.

Drug-related crime is not just a big-city issue. It is a serious and continuing problem in rural communities in Vermont and across the country. The problems here in Barre, as in so many other small communities, are serious, but the people of Barre are not taking them lying down. They are fighting back and joining together as a community to find innovative, community-based solutions to these complex problems, working aggressively with law enforcement, but also emphasizing prevention and treatment efforts, which are crucial.

I know well from my time as a State's Attorney prosecuting major drug cases that strong and effective law enforcement is one essential piece of the puzzle in combating the scourge of drugs. Unfortunately, for much of the last decade, the Federal Government did too little to support hard-working state and local police. Cuts in Federal funding and economic difficulties led to



unacceptable vacancies in the Vermont State Police, and in local police departments here and around the country.

I have been working hard with the new administration to reverse this trend. Last year's recovery legislation included a massive and much-needed infusion of Federal funds to state and local police, and we have continued to raise support levels since then. We have restored funding to the COPS and Byrne grant programs, which fund state and local law enforcement, and brought back the Rural Drug Enforcement Assistance grant program. These steps mean that, in this time of economic difficulty, state and local police are able to keep or even hire officers, implement new and innovative programs, and better coordinate their work at the local, state, and Federal levels.

Here in Vermont, I have heard from police that this Federal assistance is making a real difference. Support for state and local police, together with consistent funding for the Vermont Drug Task Force and the New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program, has yielded real results. Cooperation at all levels, and substantial participation from the Vermont Drug Task Force, were crucial to recent law enforcement successes including the bust of a major cocaine-dealing ring in South Burlington last month.

Even as we appropriately strengthen law enforcement and push for vigorous punishment of those who commit serious crimes, we have to recognize that law enforcement cannot and should not solve these problems alone. Again and again, police chiefs here in Vermont and across the country tell me that we cannot arrest our way out of the problem. Instead, more and more cities and towns like Barre are finding that the best solutions involve all segments of the community coming together with law enforcement to find meaningful, community-based solutions that address the underlying causes of these problems. Solving these problems as they arise is essential, but preventing them is even better, and less expensive.

Drug-related crime in Barre and the surrounding area has been a serious and growing problem. Heroin, imported by drug networks outside of the state, has torn apart lives and led to related crimes and violence. Too often, break-ins and other crimes can result from drug users looking for money or drugs to feed their addictions. More and more people are also becoming addicted to prescription painkillers like Oxycontin. Perhaps most disturbing is the fact that more and more of our children than ever before are turning to these drugs at an early age.

The good news is that Barre, like other Vermont cities, is showing leadership in responding to these problems. Local law enforcement has joined with state and Federal partners to target those who bring drugs to Vermont from big cities and urban areas. Equally important, local law enforcement is working with schools and community groups to focus on mentoring and prevention and try to ensure that our children do not become involved with these terribly destructive drugs in the first place. I look forward to hearing from Colonel L'Esperance about these successful partnerships.

Combating drug use and crime requires equal attention to enforcement, prevention, and treatment. The best way to prevent crime is often to provide young people with opportunities and constructive activities, so they stay away from drugs and crime altogether. If young people do get involved with drugs, treatment in many cases can work better than punishment to help them

to turn their lives around. Good prevention and treatment programs have been shown again and again to reduce crime.

Regrettably, the Bush administration consistently sought to reduce funding for these important programs, but I am glad to see that the current administration, under Director Kerlikowske's leadership, has restored the emphasis on prevention and treatment. It is vital that we continue support community prevention-based programs like the Drug Free Communities grant program and the Boys and Girls Clubs and that we continue to seek new and innovative ways to bring communities together to tackle these intractable problems.

The Senate held a very valuable hearing earlier this month on innovative and cost-effective crime reduction strategies, where Chief Mike Schirling of Burlington, along with other national leaders in this area, got us thinking about better and smarter ways to make our communities safer. But it is important for the Senate Judiciary Committee to hold hearings not just in Washington, but also in the communities that face these problems day in and day out so we can learn from those on the front lines about the strategies that work.

We of course want to hear about what the Federal Government can do to help. But I have also learned from speaking to the people who tackle these problems every day that the most important element to successfully addressing drugs and crime can be for the communities themselves to work together to find solutions that work for them. That is what is happening in Barre, and that is what I look forward to hearing about from our distinguished witnesses today.

I look forward today to hearing from community leaders like Barbara Floersch, who will tell us about vital youth programs that keep children away from crime and drugs, Damartin Quadros, who will talk about the mobilization of the business community to help make Barre a safer and better place, and of course Mayor Lauzon, who has shown great leadership in encouraging the whole community to work together on these problems. I also look forward to hearing the inspiring story of someone who herself overcame her demons and turned her life around. There is no single solution to eliminating drugs and related crime, but these witnesses and others like them recognize that we all need to work together to turn our communities around.

I am glad to welcome so many Vermonters to the hearing today who care about and work on these issues. We have Federal, state, and city officials, state and local law enforcement, educators, experts in prevention and treatment, concerned parents and citizens. In the great tradition of this state, Vermonters come together in times of hardship, and I am proud to see all of you here once again today, ready and willing to work together on this problem.

I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses and to working with you all long after this hearing is over.

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Drug Control Policy: W. M. Kowalski

testimonial: <sup>to the court</sup> 3/23/2010

There are many issues but one that prevails, seems to be the prohibition of marijuana and most importantly it's classification in the same category as Heroin and cocaine.

I recently attended a drug summit held in 3/22/2010 Banu, Vermont. I wanted to speak but I felt outgunned and though there were a handful of Citizens, it was definitely a back slapping, money fishing event as well as a field trip for bored youth. Given all that it was also an event of political posturing. It wasn't an atmosphere to speak in though I was tempted to offer bearing testimony from a recovered alcoholic in reference to a Drug Summit - I do wish I could have spoken and ~~perhaps~~ <sup>perhaps</sup> we shall.

I'm a recovered cocaine/Heroin addict who has reformed my life. I went to federal prison. My family are still one unit and now I give it back to my Community.

I was gladened to hear you speak of how addiction and treatment were under the Health Care umbrella.

The Issue I was hoping to raise was on the classification of marijuana in or at a similar level as Heroin and Cocaine. I raise this issue with you because the big push on marijuana is focused on ~~medical and~~ <sup>medical</sup> ~~medical marijuana~~ <sup>medical marijuana</sup>. Alcohol is legal and kills and ruins lives - marijuana has killed no one - and is a perfect stress reliever but because it retains its federal classification →

Can I interrupt You? a rewrite 3/21/2010

I've been contemplating the high cost of prescription drugs and as I attempt to watch the evening news I am inundated with lengthy prescription commercials. Often they are two part in that the first tells what it can do for you and the second part tell what it could do to you.

I know that when I have a health issue, I will call my doctor for direct advice for a specific problem. I do not discuss any of the drug's advertising, do you?

I feel that the pharmaceutical companies have become the cigarette commercials of yester year.

My concerns are several, the first being the costs. I reference the cost with the pharmaceutical commercials in that they cannot be inexpensive in so much as their mere air time is lengthy. These costs, you know are passed onto any consumer.

My second concern being, the annoyance and interrupt of shows.

Perhaps the world could become a better place if in controlling the commercials that and reigning them in would reduce the costs <sup>of prescriptions</sup> to those that need them.

And in mentioning that of those who need and depend on medication. I'd like to speak to the underground illegal market of pharmaceutical swappings.

I've heard it said by top officials that one of the larger problems on the Streets are illegal activity of prescription drugs. No Wonder!!; When that's all you see on TV.

rewrite 3/21/2010 -

the News and other shows are so chopped up  
that its no wonder we all can speak or think  
without commercial interruption. Though I am aware  
of visual and subliminal ads as well.

What to do, what to do...

We all have a part in changing things and  
the smallness of our State empowers a person to act as  
its smallness allows one to see the ripple of their  
actions.

When the vote to change direction on Vt. Yankee  
was just about to happen I thought about Vermont's  
Crede - "Freedom and Unity" then I thought how  
it would be better said "Unity and then Freedom" because  
when Vermonters really unite .. things do change.

Scott D. Manning

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#### Head Start study finds long-term impact

Despite doubts cast by previous studies of Head Start, a long-term study shows that a Head Start program of the 1970s, which was part of the National Planned Variation Head Start Project, helped participating young children achieve greater school success and avoid crime as they grew up. Earlier studies of the federal Head Start preschool program for low-income children and families, which began in 1965, found short-lived effects on children's test scores, prompting the government to make program improvements.

#### *Into Adulthood: A Study of the Effects of*

► **Principal investigator Sherri Oden** noted, "These findings confirm that Head Start programs can have important long-term effects on the lives of the children they serve."

#### *Head Start,*

by Sherri Oden, Lawrence Schweinhart, and David Weikart with Sue Marcus and Yu Xie (2000), presents encouraging findings from a 17-year follow-up study of 622 young adults 22 years old in Colorado and Florida, who were born in poverty and did or did not attend Head Start as young children. The researchers located and interviewed 77 percent of the original sample of children.

The study found evidence of important effects on school success and crime. For females (but not males) at one study site after adjusting for background differences, only about one-fourth as many Head Start participants as nonparticipants (5% versus 19%) failed to obtain a high school or GED diploma, and only one-third as many (5% versus 15%) were arrested for crimes.

#### HighScope's approach has a positive effect in Head Start programs

The study also examined the effects of a Head Start program that used a proven curriculum, the [HighScope educational approach](#). Using this approach, teachers set up the classroom and the daily routine to encourage children to initiate their own learning activities. Children who attended Head Start classes that used this approach rather than the standard Head Start Curriculum of the time had a significantly higher grade point average throughout their schooling and experienced fewer than half as many criminal convictions by age 22. A recent national survey found that 37 percent of today's Head Start programs use the HighScope approach.

Principal investigator Sherri Oden said, "These findings confirm that Head Start programs can have important long-term effects on the lives of the children they serve." Said study coauthor Lawrence Schweinhart, "The findings of this large-scale Head Start study point to effects on school success and crime similar to those found in the more intensive HighScope Perry Preschool Study." Study coauthor and HighScope president David Weikart added, "This study strengthens the evidence that early childhood programs need a high-quality, educational approach to have positive effects on children's lives."

Selected outside experts contributed to the study's analysis and interpretation of findings. Analyses by Sue Marcus of the University of Pennsylvania and Yu Xie of the University of Michigan adjusted for the backgrounds of the Head Start participants, who started out slightly worse off than those who did not participate in Head Start. The book also includes commentaries by leading scholars. Harvard University professor Sheldon White, who chaired the study's advisory panel, commented that "this report offers recommendations for future Head Start research that seem like excellent rubrics of a program of such studies." Yale University's Edward Zigler and Sally Styfco noted "A prize from [this] study is the encouragement it provides. The investigators show us that the obstacles to longitudinal research can be overcome and enough good data collected to allow reasonable conclusions. The findings confirm that we are on the right track in deploying comprehensive interventions and advocating for high-quality services."

Overall, *Into Adulthood* provides a pattern of findings, a system of data collection methods, and an array of statistical analysis models that provide useful guidance and direction to future Head Start research.

**New Directions Outcome Evaluation: Based on the VT Youth Risk Behavior Survey 1997 to 2001**

*What opportunities did the New Directions Initiative provide to Vermont communities?*

- Funding to community coalitions as opposed to individual programs
- Encouraged communities to actively engage youth in change initiatives
- Required communities to implement and/or adapt strategies that had been researched and shown to be effective in reducing substance use and abuse in other communities
- Intensive local and statewide technical assistance to community coalitions, including training, evaluation support and regular feedback to the community on their progress
- Bi-monthly meetings with grantees as a whole group so that they could share ideas, successes and challenges with each other
- Steady funding to all 23 coalitions over 3 years with considerable attention paid to future sustainability strategies.
- Collaborative involvement of multiple state agencies in the oversight of the project

*What did the VT Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) measure?*

The YRBS measures changes in community-wide rates of substance use among 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade youth, as opposed to changes for selected subgroups or individuals. Even small rates of change observed at the community level translate into substantial numbers of students who are successfully prevented from initiating or continuing substance use.

*Overall, what did we learn about the impact of the New Directions?*

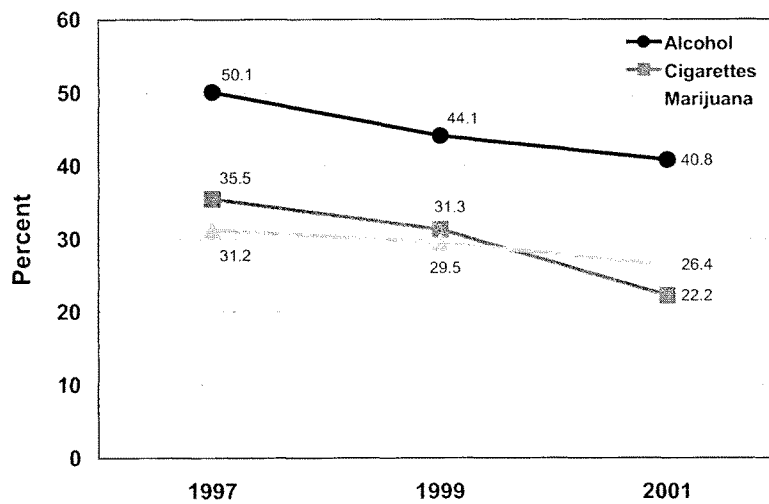
- From 1999 to 2001, when the bulk of funded activities took place, New Directions communities collectively achieved greater reductions in rates of student substance use, relative to the remainder of the state, on nine substance use measures examined through the YRBS.
- The greatest relative reductions were observed for marijuana and cigarettes.
- In general, the greater the percentage of youth served, and the more years that each program component was provided, the greater the reductions in substance use.



*What were the outcomes?*

- As a whole, the 23 New Directions communities achieved noteworthy reductions in past 30 day prevalence in alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana use for 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders

**Figure 1. Percent of Students Grades 8-12 in New Directions Communities Reporting Alcohol, Cigarette, and Marijuana Use During the Past 30 Days**

*How did New Directions communities compare with the rest of the state?*

While New Directions communities achieved reductions in past 30 day use, prevalence rates for alcohol, tobacco and marijuana also declined statewide. This is not surprising, since many communities who were not awarded a New Directions grant frequently carried out multiple prevention strategies with other resources. Therefore, those communities are not considered to be a true control group. However, New Directions communities, as a whole, achieved greater reductions in student substance use relative to the remainder of the state on the following nine substance use measures examined through the YRBS from 1999 to 2001:

- Marijuana use past 30 days
- Alcohol use past 30 days
- Binge drank past 30 days
- Cigarette use past 30 days
- Ever used marijuana
- Ever used alcohol
- Ever smoked cigarettes
- Ever used inhalants
- Ever used other drugs

This consistent pattern of greater reductions in substance use among New Directions communities was not found for the previous interval from 1997 to 1999, which occurred before New Directions activities were fully underway.

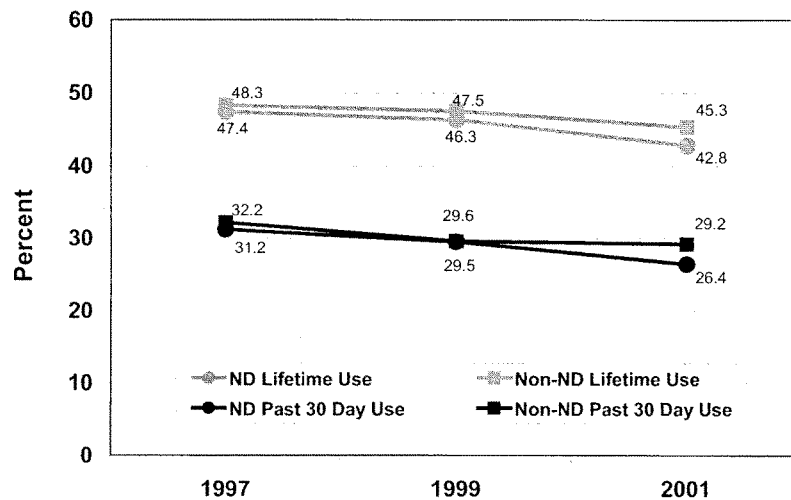
(Note: This analysis is based only on schools that participated in the '97, '99 and '01 YRBS)

*Did the outcomes attain statistical significance?*

- The relatively greater declines in substance use among 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students experienced by New Directions communities, when compared with the rest of the state, were statistically significant for past 30-day use of marijuana and cigarettes and lifetime use of marijuana and tobacco.

Example: The figure on the following page shows changes in the prevalence of past month use and lifetime use of marijuana from 1997 to 2001 among Vermont students in grades 8 through 12. Based on the timing of the New Directions sponsored activities in most communities, program effects were expected primarily during the 1999 to 2001 period. Past month use of marijuana use declined 2.7 percentage points MORE in the New Directions communities than the rest of the state. These declines represent hundreds of students who may have been averted from using substances in New Directions communities.

**Figure 2. Percent of Students Grades 8-12 in New Directions and Non-New Directions Communities Reporting Lifetime and Past 30-day Use of Marijuana Use, 1997-2001**



*Were there differences related to student grade levels?*

- In general, the pattern of greater reductions in substance use in New Directions communities was seen across all grade levels. This finding may reflect the multi-faceted and community-wide approach adopted by the coalitions, rather than the effects of any one program or activity.
- Effects on initiation of alcohol use (as measured by any use in the lifetime), however, were especially prominent for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Further analysis showed that New Directions communities that implemented Project Northlands, a school and family based prevention program with a focus on transitioning through middle school alcohol-free, showed a 15 percentage point decrease (from 60 to 45) in the percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders who had initiated alcohol use. This compares to a 10 percentage point decrease for all New Directions communities and a 5 percentage point decrease for the rest of the state. This is important because the mixed messages youth receive in our culture about youth alcohol use may make it more difficult to reduce than other forms of substance use.

- Relatedly, New Directions coalitions that implemented middle school classroom curricula proven effective in helping to reduce alcohol, tobacco and/or marijuana use had considerably greater success in preventing initiation of substance use by 8<sup>th</sup> graders than New Directions coalitions that did not implement such curricula. This is important because early first use of substance use has been linked to greater likelihood of developing abuse or addiction problems later on.

Were other coalition characteristics linked to outcomes in youth substance use?

Coalitions varied widely in the levels of change they experienced. Analyses were conducted to identify coalition characteristics most highly associated with change in substance use prevalence measures. The YRBS tells us what the trends are but not why they are happening. Greater declines in use of most substances were associated with coalitions that:

- Provided more opportunities for youth to participate in student assistance programs, drug-free social and recreational programs, and projects designed to change or improve the community message discouraging alcohol and drug use, such as media and community awareness projects
- Served smaller populations, and were able to offer more contact and services per capita.

Programs such as mentoring and family education programs that are designed to have a very strong impact on a small group of people in the community did not appear to impact substance use levels as determined by the YRBS. That does not mean that those programs had no effect. It does suggest that impacts of these programs should be measured using tools other than the YRBS, which is designed to measure community-wide trends in rates of student use. When programs, particularly those targeted to a smaller group of high risk youth, are implemented, change needs to be captured either by conducting evaluations with those youth specifically, or by using community-wide measures that will be more sensitive to the impact that such programs might have on the community.

Conclusion:

These findings suggest that collaborative community-based efforts implemented within a supportive framework such as New Directions can have an impact on the prevalence of substance use by students who live in these communities.

**Vermont Department of Health, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, 2003**

School Readiness Depends on the Quality of a Child's Early Care and Learning Environment

**High-quality care and early childhood education services help ensure that even the most at-risk children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn.**

Children living in poverty who have access to high-quality care, beginning in infancy and continuing until they reach kindergarten age, perform better on measures of cognitive, social, emotional, and language development than peers who did not receive services.

***Hart and Risley***

University of Kansas child psychologists Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley found that the way parents and caregivers talk to kids has a significant effect on the child's I.Q., literacy and academic success later in life.

Hart and Risley observed 42 one- and two-year olds and their families for more than two years. Their study found that the frequency and quality of words a child hears during her first three years of life are critically important in shaping language development. Based on hourly differences, Hart and Risley estimate that children in professional families hear approximately 11 million words per year; children in working class families hear approximately 6 million words; and children in welfare families hear approximately 3 million words annually.

For more information about the Hart and Risley study, go to:

[http://www.strategiesforchildren.org/cea/6research\\_summaries/05\\_MeaningfulDifferences.pdf](http://www.strategiesforchildren.org/cea/6research_summaries/05_MeaningfulDifferences.pdf)

**High-quality care and early childhood education services lead to better academic performance and longer stays in school.**

***The Abecedarian Project***

The Abecedarian Project demonstrated that young children who receive high-quality early education from infancy to age five do better in school academically, and are more likely to stay in school longer and graduate. Children who participated in the early intervention program had higher cognitive test scores from the toddler years to age 21. What's more, children who receive high-quality early education were, on average, older when their first child was born.

Conducted by Dr. Craig Ramey, one of the nation's leading early childhood researchers, this was the first study to track participants in an early education program from infancy to age 21. This study tracked 111 low-income African-American families in North Carolina. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to receive full-time educational intervention services in day care in infancy; the other half did not receive educational services.

To read the executive summary online, go to: <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~abc/>

**High-quality care and early childhood education services improve cognitive, social, emotional, and language skills.**

***The Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project***

Major findings from the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project include: Children and families who participated in **both** Early Head Start (from birth to age three) and formal programs (from age three to age five) had the most positive outcomes. Overall, EHS children performed better on measures of cognition, social and emotional, and language functioning than did their

peers who did not receive EHS.

This evaluation project examines the implementation and impact of the Federal Early Head Start program on 17 diverse sites across the country. More than 3,000 children and families in these sites were randomly assigned to receive Early Head Start services or to be in a control group in 1996. Researchers assessed child care and family arrangements and collected evaluations on each child's language, cognitive, and social and emotional skills three times.

Damartin Quadros  
Dunkin Donuts

**Effective Community Efforts to counter drug related crime.**

My name is Damartin Quadros I am a small business owner in central VT which is Co-owned by my sister Susan Quadros-Covey. Our family bought the Dunkin Donuts franchisee in 1996 . They are all independently owned and operated. I have run the Barre location since then. Over the past Decade I have seen a lot of change in down town especially over the last couple of years. The mayor and chief of police have focused there efforts in patrolling down town area more frequently and more visibly with a foot patrol officer. This has made a good impact on instances that avoid certain crime from my prospective. Especially drug related activities.

The biggest challenge we have had in down town is the perceptions of the surrounding community especially our customers. Perception is something that can take long to change. And if its bad then it really hurts downtown business. Barre is centrally located along with Montpelier and is the meeting point from everything to shopping and employment for the surrounding rural communities.

When it gets into the evening hours people don't feel safe going down town. Which from the changes that I have seen over the years I believe there has been much improvement but if people perceive it as not safe then that has to be changed. The community has summer concert events this is a great way to have the community enjoy the summer months her downtown along with many other events that go on.

Local law enforcement needs to have the resources to act as a deterrent and prevent crime from happening. Especially when a community like Barre sometimes has an added burden due just to its location in relation to the court system and other downtown businesses. I believe it is easier in rural communities for drug related crime because sometimes it's easier to get away with more due to less law enforcement and larger geographical areas to cover. That makes it even more important for all of the surrounding communities to get involved in coming up with solutions.

As a business owner I have taken steps to make my location secure and safe by adding surveillance cameras to my parking lot as well as additional lighting so that it is bright and it has helped tremendously. It has already been used on a couple of occasions in collaboration with local law enforcement. To solve or help solve local crimes, as business we can do our a part of helping deter drug related crime by taking some of these steps and working with fellow businesses to make our downtowns safe and drug free.

We depend on our community that's why we are in business to serve them so I want them to feel safe and know that it is safe to visit down town anytime of the day. I believe we are getting there and it takes involvement from the community as a whole to make it

happen. If we all do our part I think we can make even more changes to make it almost none existent.

Thank you, Mr. Senator for letting me be a part of this



U.S. Senate Judiciary Field Hearing  
Chairman Senator Patrick Leahy  
Effective Community Efforts to Counter Drug-Related Crime in Rural America  
March 22, 2010  
Barre, Vermont

Testimony by Judy Rex  
Executive Director  
Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services

The Center's Victim Compensation Program has seen an increase in the number of drug-related crimes resulting in serious injury or death. In many of these cases, the victim was buying drugs and during the course of that transaction was beaten, raped or even murdered. We have also seen cases in which a drug dealer's home was invaded and family members were assaulted and/or robbed. There has also been an increase in incidents of burglary/robbery targeting drugstores to obtain prescription medications.

The Victim Compensation Board initially struggled with these cases because of the fact the victim was engaging in a criminal act at the time of their victimization. But after much discussion, the Board felt that in the cases involving murder, the surviving family members are victims, and we do provide compensation to the family, including paying for the funeral. We have also provided counseling to these victims in cases where there was a physical or sexual assault.

Obviously, the impact on the victim and their family is significant. The aftermath of an assault or rape is the same for people regardless of whether or not they have a substance abuse problem. This is an area where prevention is really critical. Because people with addictions engage in very risky behaviors to support their drug habits, we need to address their drug problem before they become victimized. We also know that many crime victims turn to drugs after being victimized, especially if they don't receive the support and counseling needed to recover from their victimization. For these reasons, it is critical for rural areas to have the resources needed for both drug enforcement and drug treatment programs as a means of prevention. Comprehensive services for crime victims are also essential, to lessen the risk of their turning to alcohol/drugs as a means of self-medication.

There are many challenges for rural areas, not only for drug-related crimes, but for crime in general. There is the lack of reliable cell phone services in order to call 911 and the lack of public transportation needed to access services. For those Vermonters who live in remote areas, even if they witness suspicious activity or behaviors, the length of time it takes law enforcement to physically drive there acts as a deterrent to reporting. Because rural areas are made up of little towns and villages with small populations, many criminals target the elderly or persons known to have life-threatening diseases and rob their homes of the drugs and painkillers they need to survive. In some cases, caregivers with substance abuse problems give less than the prescribed dosage to their patient and use it for their drug addiction.

Another challenge for victims of drug-related crimes in rural areas is that the perpetrators are not often caught. Many of these crimes involve burglary or theft of property, and victims are not able to access restitution through the court system when there is no criminal case to prosecute. While they may be eligible for the Victim Compensation Program, our program doesn't cover property loss. The impact on the victim can be huge. One example that stands out in my mind was a case where a woman living in an apartment complex wasn't able to park her car in her usual spot and parked her car in front of another apartment that apparently was a drug dealer's. Someone torched her car, thinking it was the drug dealer's car. While the Compensation Program was able to provide her and her son with counseling (both witnessed the fire in the middle of the night, which was very scary), the program couldn't compensate her for her car. She still owed money on the car. She was a single parent and needed the car to get to work. The bank wouldn't approve a new loan because she still had an outstanding car loan. She was at risk of losing her job, possibly her housing, worried she would have to go back on welfare - all of which turned her life upside down.

The most rural communities of Vermont have very few resources available to crime victims. Some Victim Advocates have small emergency funds that accept donations, and sometimes they can help. The Compensation Program will fix broken doors, locks and windows so families can be safe. But the program can't replace cars, computers, cell phones and other electronics that often get stolen.

One creative resource in Vermont that shows promise is the Parallel Justice Project in Burlington, which operates out of the Burlington Community Justice Center and the Burlington Police Department. Two Specialists reach out to every victim who reports a crime to find out what they need or want, regardless of whether there is an arrest. So far this fiscal year they have contacted 1,471 victims of crime. They have developed a resource bank that provides cash, goods and services to help victims. Probably the most successful service is the free replacement of car windows that get smashed when cars are broken into. For someone who can't afford the deductible or may not have insurance, it can make all the difference in the world. The project has also engaged local businesses to offer victims the option of buying objects at cost that were stolen, which is a nice gesture from the business community. They also have gift certificates from restaurants, spas and even the Flynn Theatre to give to crime victims to let them know that the community cares and wants to help in whatever way they can. Residents of Burlington who have been victimized are really touched by these gestures, and it helps to mitigate their anger and reinforces their feeling of community support.

The Project also has a Parallel Justice Commission, which is made up of city, state and local community leaders that meet quarterly to address the needs of victims. Victims are invited to share their stories with the Commission in order to identify the barriers they faced; the Commission then works to bring about systemic change. For a victim of a drug-related crime that does not result in an arrest or prosecution, it is the only opportunity for the victim to tell their story before a group of officials who hold a leadership role within the criminal justice system.

Testimonial from Crime Victims Served by the Parallel Justice Project

“Being a victim of domestic abuse can leave a person destitute – my financial losses were extensive. [Parallel Justice] helped repair my car, which helped me get to court, go to work and take care of my children – for me, there were no other options for this help. Having [Parallel Justice Specialists] at the Community Justice Center built on my positive impressions of our local law enforcement. It just seemed that they were paying attention to my specific needs. I have nothing but good things to say about the help I received, thank you!”

“Both the emotional and financial support was invaluable. I had been stretched to the limit before the vandalism both financially and emotionally, after caring for my mother through her chemotherapy. Coming out to find my truck window shot out on a day I needed to get [my mother] to her doctor’s appointment was a bit much!”

“The coordination and arranging was so helpful, I was overwhelmed by the move and not familiar with my new city, so having Clark [Parallel Justice Specialist at the Burlington Police Department] arrange the response with Acme Glass to replace the window, was great!”

TESTIMONY OF ST. ALBANS CITY POLICE  
 CHIEF GARY L. TAYLOR  
 SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING ON  
 “COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS  
 TO DRUG-RELATED CRIME IN RURAL AMERICA”

March 22, 2010

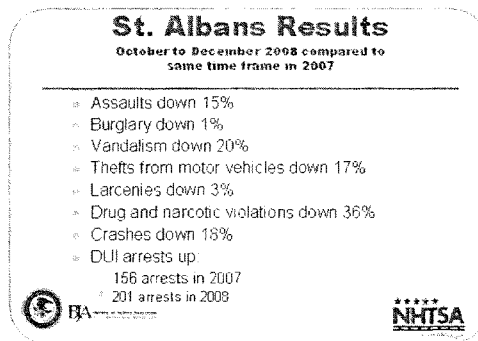
I would like to thank you (Senator Leahy) and the other distinguished members of the Senate Judiciary Committee for providing me with the privilege and opportunity to appear before you to discuss law enforcement efforts undertaken in St. Albans and the collaborative efforts of the Police Department with our Community Partners since the December 5, 2008 Senate Committee Hearing on “Community-Based Solutions to Drug-Related Crime in Rural America” that was held in St. Albans.

Since the December 5, 2008 Senate Hearing held in St. Albans, Vermont we have made significant reductions in the growing crime issues faced by the City.

Crime Data from Vermont Crime on Line reveals that:

- The offense rate for the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2009 totaled 49.14 offenses per 1000 population.
- With the decreases realized the rate went to 98.18 offenses per 1000 population.
- The lowest since 2005. 2004 offense rate was 97.51

In an independent review of the City’s accomplishments in the area of reducing crime and traffic issues in our community (a copy of which I am including with my written testimony) we have reduced the serious crime rate by 34% to numbers comparable to 2004.



At the December 2005 Senate Hearing I testified about the significant rise in drug-related violent crime experienced in St. Albans, Vermont. My testimony focused on the increased violent crime rate, increased criminal drug activity and the law enforcement responses.

VIOLENT CRIME TRENDS AND FORECAST IN 2008

Over a 7 year period the City of St. Albans had experienced:

- Overall increase of 36% for police incidents
- 87% increase in Property Crimes
- 125% increase in Assaults and Robberies.
- 186% increase in Drug Investigations and Search Warrants

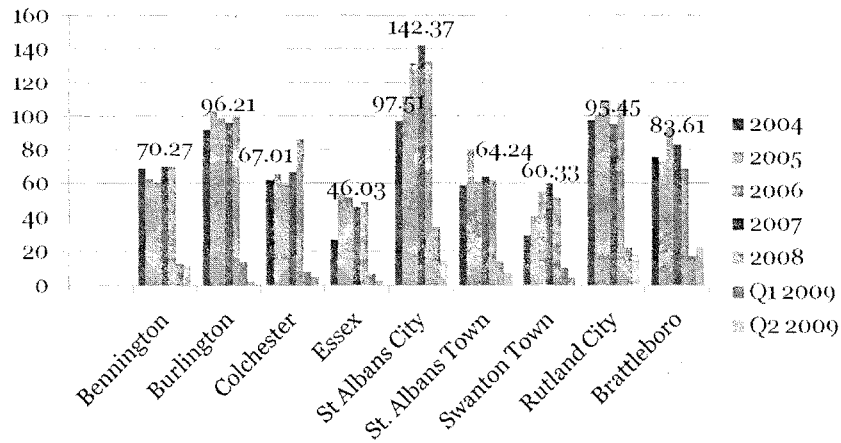
ILLCIT DRUG ACTIVITY:

Cocaine, both powder and rock (Crack), Marijuana, and diverted prescription drugs including; OxyContin, Valium, Percoset, Vicadin, Morphine, Suboxone and Dilladid were at that time and continue to be abundantly available in our community and throughout the region. We have recently uncovered Methamphetamine activity in our community as well.

While addressing the illicit drug problem our community found itself struggling with quasi-gang organization issues in St. Albans also.

We independently confirmed the presence of a small number of individuals previously associated with: Los Solidos, Latin Kings, Hash Kings, Bloods living in our community or frequenting our region.

At that point and time the City of St. Albans had the unenviable distinction of having the highest serious crime rate, per capita, in the State of Vermont.



**Since that hearing:**

We have developed some in-house expertise in the area of gangs through training, and partnering with state and regional gang investigators. We have intervened at every opportunity to prevent the proliferation of gang activity and have thus far managed to prevent and dissuade those individuals from gaining any significant foothold in our community.

We are continuing to work hand in hand with our law enforcement partners in the region, and throughout the State to stem the violent crime and criminal drug issues in our city and throughout the county.

This collaborative effort took on a new dimension when we joined forces with the joint initiative of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) as one of six (6) national pilot projects using Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS). With assistance from these partners the Vermont State Police and the St. Albans Police Department organized, trained and upgraded our "real time" criminal and traffic safety intelligence, developed new strategies, deployed resources based on gathered data and reaffirmed collaboration efforts with our other law enforcement partners in the region.

Through a collaborative effort between Vermont's Governor Highway Safety Program, NHTSA, the Vermont State Police and the City of St. Albans we obtained partial funding that allowed us to purchase a License Plate Reader to assist Officers in the field with identifying potential criminal and MV offenders.

With your assistance we secured a \$131,000.000 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Justice Assistance Grant (ARRA JAG) from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) which allowed us to enhance, upgrade and acquire additional technical equipment and resources to aid us in our law enforcement efforts in our region.

You also helped us to secure a US DOJ COPS Hiring Recovery Program Grant that allowed us to add an additional Police Officer.

St. Albans citizens and community leaders actively engaged in efforts to realign law enforcement pay and benefits, recruiting efforts and marketing strategies and we have successfully filled longstanding police vacancies in a very competitive job market. We have continued to increase our street presence (black and whites) and criminal highway interdiction efforts.

With the assistance of this committee, and more specifically your (Senator Leahy's) efforts we have added an alternatively funded (Byrne Pass Thru Funding-VT. Drug Task Force), full time drug investigator who is assigned to the Vermont Drug Task Force to help address the serious drug problems faced by our community. As you are well aware Sir the Vermont Drug Task Force initiative has a demonstrated and proven record that works in Vermont.

We have implemented Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) program which is comprised of the St. Albans Neighborhood Watch as well as a host of initiatives that we are utilizing to educate citizens about all types of criminal activities and conduct.

We created a Prescription Drug Take-Back Partnership Program with the Northwest Medical Center that is managed by the St. Albans Police Department. Since June 2008 we have collected more than 43,000 prescription pills.

The St. Albans City Police Department continues to hold an annual "Community Graffiti Clean-Up Day" which partners citizens and police as they clean up the blight of graffiti around the City.

There have been a myriad of other collaborative efforts undertaken to address the crime issues in St. Albans, but most important to this testimony is the collective results of these efforts.

There are no easy answers and no single strategy outlined in my testimony here today that could ever be expected to have the same dramatic impact on reducing crime and addressing all of the attendant issues that we have been able to achieve in St. Albans, and we are not resting on our laurels.

However, St. Albans is proof positive that: when an entire community, its community leaders, its Citizens, the State and Federal Government, and their elected officials join forces with their Law Enforcement Partners we can turn the tide on crime and improve the quality of life in our communities.

**Vermont Afterschool** Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence

**The Value of High-quality Afterschool Programs**

### Serving Children and Youth

High-quality afterschool programs play an important role in providing safe and supportive environments for children and youth and in creating engaging and enriching learning experiences that extend beyond the school day and throughout the year.

#### Did you know?

- An analysis of 73 studies concluded that high-quality afterschool programs that promote personal and social skills were consistently successful in producing multiple benefits for youth including improvements in children's personal, social, and academic skills. [1]
- Other studies have found that when compared with their peers, children and youth who attend high-quality afterschool programs report good relations with friends, healthy emotional adjustment, stronger conflict resolution skills, and better grades and behavior in school. [2]
- According to Corporate Voices for Working Families, "Quality after school programs provide a unique venue in which young people can develop the range of skills they need to enter the 21st century workplace." [3]



### Supporting and Enhancing Learning

Studies show that students involved in high-quality afterschool programs have:

- Improved school attendance, including fewer absences and less tardiness
- More engagement in learning and better grades
- More time spent on homework and higher rates of homework completion
- Increased rates of family involvement in school
- Greater sense of the relevance of curriculum
- Enhanced problem solving and conflict management skills
- Increase responsibility and improved effort in school [4]

In addition, afterschool programs play an important role in reconnecting schools and communities. Programs offer children and youth the opportunity to move beyond traditional classroom activity and engage with their surrounding neighborhoods, organizations, businesses, and individuals. [5]

#### Did you know?

- 41% of Vermont children and youth regularly spend time after school unsupervised. An additional 11% regularly spend their afternoons in the care of siblings. [6]
- Regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs is linked to significant gains in standardized test scores, significantly improved work habits, and reduced behavior problems in school. [7]
- The Burlington School District recently reported that at-risk students who regularly participate in the afterschool program outperformed their non-afterschool classmates in a comparison of standardized test scores from 2007 to 2008. The number of regular afterschool attendees scoring proficient or higher in math increased by almost 12% (compared to a decrease of -5.26 for non-regular and non-attendees). The number of regular afterschool attendees scoring proficient or higher in reading increased by 17% (compared to an increase of 1.86% for non-regular and non-attendees). [8]
- \$1.7 to \$2.3 million is saved by helping one high-risk youth to get on the path to success in career, college, and community. [9]



## Keeping Kids Healthy and Safe

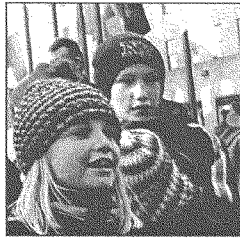
### Did you know?

- The Food Research and Action Council identifies after-school programs as effective venues for improving nutrition, nutrition education, and physical activity. [10]
- The American Academy of Pediatrics' Committees on Sports Medicine and on Fitness and School Health recommend that schools provide extra-curricular and out-of-school-time physical activity programs that are inclusive of the needs and interests of the students. [11]
- A study of afterschool program participants in three elementary schools found that the afterschool participants were significantly less likely to be obese at the follow-up and were more likely to have increased acceptance among their peers. [12]
- On school days, 3-6pm are the peak hours for teens to commit crimes, be in or cause an automobile accident, be victims of crime, smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs. [13]
- Teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes at school, experiment with drugs, and engage in sexual activity than teens who do participate. [14] In one study, 12-17 year olds who were left unsupervised three or more days per week were three times as likely to be engaged in criminal behavior and more than three times as likely to use illegal drugs. [15]
- Every dollar invested in afterschool programs will save taxpayers approximately \$3, not including the savings from reduced crime. [16]
- In a survey of police chiefs, 86% agreed that expanding afterschool programs would greatly reduce youth crime and violence, and 91% think that if we do not make greater investments in afterschool and educational child-care programs to help children and youth now, we will pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs. [15]

## Helping Working Families

### Did you know?

- For most families there is an "after school gap" of 15-25 hours per week when parents are still at work while children are out of school. [18]
- According to polls, 87% of working mothers say the hours after school are when they are most concerned about their children's safety. This "after school stress" often can lead to distraction causing lower productivity, high turnover in jobs, and absences from work. [19]
- Researchers at Brandeis University have identified that the stress parents experience regarding their children's after school arrangements costs companies between \$50-\$300 billion per year in healthcare and lost job productivity. [18]



The Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence is a statewide public-private partnership dedicated to supporting and sustaining innovative learning opportunities beyond the school day for all Vermont's children and youth. The Center's activities are directed toward building the capacity and commitment of communities to increase the quality and availability of programs during non-school hours.

For more information about the Vermont Center for Afterschool Excellence visit:  
[www.vermontafterschool.org](http://www.vermontafterschool.org)



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This flyer is modeled on an earlier paper developed and distributed by the CT Afterschool Network.

**DATA-DRIVEN APPROACHES TO CRIME AND TRAFFIC SAFETY (DDACTS)**

**CASE STUDY OF THE  
VERMONT STATE POLICE / ST. ALBANS CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT  
DDACTS PROGRAM**



**FINAL DRAFT: 9 NOVEMBER 2009**

**PREPARED FOR THE**

**NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION  
ENFORCEMENT AND JUSTICE SERVICES DIVISION**

**BY**

**ANACAPA SCIENCES, INC.  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA**

## CITY OF ST. ALBANS, VERMONT

### DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

For most Americans, the phrase "illegal drug problem," evokes images of urban heroin, crack cocaine, and methamphetamine users. However, in many areas of the country the drug problem has little to do with illicit substances that are smuggled from abroad or produced in secret. Rather, for increasing numbers of Americans, the most salient local problem involves prescription drugs that are produced in large quantities by pharmaceutical companies and distributed through legitimate networks. Abrupt increases in crime and vehicle crashes in rural Vermont were linked by alert law enforcement personnel to a jump in the illegal use of prescription drugs. Law enforcement managers responded by studying the crime and crash data and then implementing a special enforcement program to counter the drug, crime, and traffic safety issues together.

### SETTING

The City of St. Albans occupies two square miles of land adjacent to Lake Champlain near the northwestern corner of Vermont, only 17 miles from the Canadian border. With fewer than 8,000 residents, St. Albans is the most populous of the 15 small communities in Franklin County; the "city" is surrounded by 37 square miles of St. Albans Township, with a population of 5,000. Burlington, home to the University of Vermont, is located 30 miles to the south and boasts a population of almost 40,000, which makes it the largest city in the state and more than five times the size of the capital, Montpelier.<sup>1</sup> Of all 50 states, only Wyoming has fewer residents than Vermont's 621,000. In other words, St. Albans is a medium-sized community in a small, predominantly rural state.<sup>2</sup>



Vermont is known for its breathtaking scenery, dairy farms, and maple syrup, all of which are evident in the St. Albans area: weathered mountains, alfalfa fields, and the Vermont Maple Festival, which attracts thousands of tourists each year. The City of St. Albans hosts a regional hospital, a railroad switching and maintenance facility, a battery factory, county and state offices, and one of only

four Immigration and Naturalization Service Processing Centers in the U.S. These and other employers contribute to a daytime service population of about 18,000.

Vermont also is known for an independence of spirit that can be traced to the state's origins. Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys fought in the Revolutionary War, but in 1777, residents declared the region to be a sovereign nation, with its name derived from the words used by French explorer, Samuel de Champlain, in 1609 to describe the dominant topographic feature, *les monts verts*, or the Green Mountains. The Independent Republic of Vermont minted its own coins and provided postal and other government services until 1791 when it became the first state to join the original 13, which most historians believe was the intention all along. The independent streak that borders on quirkiness has continued with a blend of conservative and liberal laws and customs and an anti-establishment approach that has earned the play on words (and history), The People's Republic of Vermont. The residents' traditional emphases on personal freedom and skepticism concerning government have in the past been obstacles to well-intentioned efforts to improve public safety.

<sup>1</sup> Burlington is the "smallest largest city" of any state in the U.S. and Montpelier is the smallest state capital.

<sup>2</sup> Population density is about the same in the cities of Burlington and St. Albans (3,682 and 3,768 per sq mi, respectively; 1,422 and 1,455 per sq km), according to the 2000 Census.

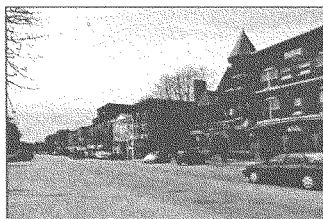
**BACKGROUND**

A serious problem emerged in St. Albans in 2005. The first indication was an abrupt increase in residential burglaries during which medicine cabinets were the primary objectives; in some cases it appeared as if homes were targeted soon after the resident had obtained certain prescription drugs from a pharmacy, primarily OxyContin.<sup>3</sup> These crimes were accompanied by an increase in thefts from motor vehicles and a doubling of aggravated assaults and arrests for narcotics violations. Soon after the crime increase was noticed, nurses at the regional hospital contacted the police department to report a sudden increase in patients with head injuries that were consistent with those received in beatings, and the victims were reluctant to discuss the causes. Law enforcement officers speculated that the injuries were the results of robberies among drug dealers and drug deals turned bad.

St. Albans pediatrician, Fred Holmes, first noticed the problem in 2006 when a patient sought his help for a dependence on prescription drugs. Since then, Dr. Holmes has treated more than 100 local residents, mostly teenagers, for their addictions. He reported in 2008 that "Oxy 80s" (80 milligram OxyContin pills) is the drug of choice, with each pill costing about \$100 when purchased illegally; most of his patients were taking two to four pills each day.<sup>4</sup> Some adults become addicted after taking the drug to alleviate mild or severe pain, while younger users almost always are introduced to OxyContin by a friend in the context of peer pressure, as is the pattern with alcohol and other drugs. Unlike the others, however, physiological addiction to OxyContin can occur within two weeks.<sup>5</sup>

Special enforcement efforts that were implemented to counter the illegal drug trade in other cities unintentionally contributed to the problems in St. Albans. For example, Burlington police identified individuals who had shifted their drug dealing operations north to St. Albans, and St. Albans Police Chief, Gary Taylor, reported that, "Several males from New York City established a crack house three doors from the St. Albans City Police Department. They actually parked in our parking lot to walk to the drug house."

As the local crime and drug problems continued to grow, law enforcement officers encountered increasing numbers of alcohol and drug-impaired drivers during crash investigations and routine enforcement stops. Combining two powerful central nervous system depressants, such as alcohol and OxyContin, severely degrades driving performance; the apparent trend alarmed local officers and troopers.



<sup>3</sup> OxyContin is the brand name of a time-release formula of oxycodone that is produced by Purdue Pharma. It was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1995 and first introduced to the U.S. market one year later. By 2001, OxyContin was the best-selling non-generic narcotic pain reliever in the U.S.; more than 7.2 million prescriptions were written for OxyContin in 2002, with sales totaling \$1.5 billion.

<sup>4</sup> Slang terms for OxyContin include "Hillbilly Heroin," "Killers," "OC," "Oxy," "Oxies," and "Oxycotton."

<sup>5</sup> In May 2007 Purdue Pharma agreed to pay \$19.5 million in fines relating to aggressive marketing practices of OxyContin, primarily for encouraging more frequent dosing than the recommended interval of 12 hours, but also for distributing beach hats, music CDs, and other promotional items associated with recreation rather than medical treatment. In the same month, Purdue Pharma and three of its top executives pleaded guilty in a Virginia federal court to charges that they misrepresented OxyContin as having "less euphoric effect and less abuse potential" than it actually has, and by claiming that people taking the drug at low doses could stop taking it without symptoms of withdrawal. The company and the executives were ordered to pay \$634 million in fines for felony misbranding. Other cases against the manufacturer are pending.

### PLANNING PROCESS

St. Albans was becoming the "drug capital" of Vermont and the resulting increases in robberies, assaults, health problems, and impaired driving were rapidly destroying the quality of life throughout the area. The dramatic jump in calls for police services led to several investigations and arrests, but the magnitude and combination of problems were beyond the capabilities of the 19-officer St. Albans Police Department. It was at about this time that Lieutenant Robert Evans of the St. Albans Station of the Vermont State Police (VSP) learned of the Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS), a joint initiative of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). DDACTS is a method for systematically identifying public safety problems and enhancing the effectiveness of countermeasures. Focusing law enforcement effort on the locations and behaviors that are common to both crime and traffic safety problems is at the heart of DDACTS.

Cooperation is another fundamental component of the DDACTS method. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to establish partnerships with a broad range of relevant organizations, including other law enforcement and government agencies, citizens' groups, and non-traditional participants, such as hospitals and health care providers. Lieutenant Evans began by forming a steering committee and then a "working group" composed of the NHTSA Law Enforcement Liaison, a representative of the Vermont Governor's Highway Safety Program, the St. Albans and Swanton Police Chiefs, the Franklin County and Grand Isle County Sheriffs, the Commander of the local VSP station, and several additional VSP personnel, including managers of the criminal and patrol (i.e., traffic) divisions, and civilian crime and traffic analysts from the Vermont Fusion Center. Recruiting the police chief, county sheriff and his own boss to serve on the steering committee were particularly wise moves because the participation of these managers provided the command emphasis necessary to plan and implement the new special enforcement program. Three subgroups were formed from the membership of the working group to address specific program requirements.

- The Problem Identification and Evaluation subgroup was tasked with assembling and analyzing crime and traffic safety data with the objective of identifying problems and locations of disproportionate crime and crash incidence. This subgroup also is responsible for coordinating the sharing of tactical intelligence among the participants and collecting, analyzing, and evaluating outcome measures.
- The Operations subgroup is composed of law enforcement personnel from the participating agencies and is responsible for identifying appropriate tactics and developing the operational plans to guide the special enforcement efforts. The members of this subgroup also are responsible for obtaining "buy in" from their colleagues in the participating law enforcement agencies.
- The Coordination subgroup was assigned the job of working with non-law enforcement organizations to achieve the goals of the DDACTS program. Additional responsibilities include generating publicity to maximize the general deterrence effects of the special enforcement, documenting the activities of the working group and participating organizations, and obtaining grants to help fund a sustained program.

Vermont law enforcement agencies have a long tradition of cooperation and mutual aid. However, cooperative programs usually have been implemented as part of national campaigns or in response to news coverage of crime problems and citizens' concerns, rather than the systematic analysis of crime and crash data. Gathering the information was problematic at first, because there was no place to archive the data before the DDACTS initiative. After considerable effort, the preliminary analysis verified that the crime rate in St. Albans City was, indeed, higher than in comparable Vermont communities and the rate was increasing.

**Crime Data**

Table 1 presents the crime rate per 1,000 residents for St. Albans City and four additional Vermont communities. The table shows that the crime rate in St. Albans is the highest in the state and has increased steadily between 2005 and 2007, while the rates have declined in the other communities listed, most notably in Burlington and Rutland City. The data verify that St. Albans has experienced a substantial increase in the crime rate during this period and suggest that at least some of the increase is the result of displacement from neighboring communities where special enforcement efforts have been effective, at least locally.

TABLE 1  
CRIMES PER 1,000 OF POPULATION IN SELECTED VERMONT COMMUNITIES: 2005 - 2007

Community	2005	2006	2007
St. Albans City	111.82	131.33	140.37
Burlington	103.01	98.96	96.64
Rutland City	100.73	109.17	94.67
Brattleboro	73.17	92.84	82.53
Essex	53.95	51.60	46.51

Source: Vermont Crime on Line Database

Table 2 presents the numbers of serious crimes that occurred in St. Albans City during the years 2001 through 2007. The data show that the number of crimes nearly doubled during this period, with the increases in assault, burglary, and larceny confirming the earlier suspicions about the emergent patterns and ultimate cause of the crimes. The data also reveal that the local crime problem began to emerge in 2004 with a 30 percent increase over the previous year, rather than in 2005, as had been generally believed.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER OF SERIOUS CRIMES IN ST. ALBANS CITY: 2001 - 2007

Type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rape	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Robbery	1	1	0	0	3	9	1
Assault	9	8	2	3	11	44	32
Burglary	35	28	26	75	68	55	46
Larceny Theft	211	181	219	245	271	325	444
Vehicle Theft	10	6	6	8	9	11	9
Arson	3	0	0	2	0	0	0
<i>Annual Totals</i>	<i>269</i>	<i>244</i>	<i>253</i>	<i>330</i>	<i>362</i>	<i>447</i>	<i>532</i>
<i>Change</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>-20 %</i>	<i>+4%</i>	<i>+30%</i>	<i>+10%</i>	<i>+24%</i>	<i>+19%</i>

Source: Citymelt.com

**Crash Data**

The Working Group's review of traffic safety data found that the annual crash totals declined between 2005 and 2007 in all Franklin County communities, including St. Albans City, which declined by 25 percent during this period, compared to 21 percent for the county as a

whole. Despite this decline, approximately 30 percent of all crashes in the county have occurred each year within the two square miles of St. Albans City. The combined totals for St. Albans City and St. Albans Township account for nearly half of all crashes that occur in Franklin County. Also, Franklin County usually leads the state in the number and proportion of alcohol-involved crashes.

TABLE 3  
CRASHES IN FRANKLIN COUNTY VT COMMUNITIES: 2005 - 2007

Community	2005	2006	2007
St. Albans City	280	230	211
St. Albans Town	166	131	136
Swanton	103	93	82
Georgia	91	66	66
Fairfax	52	57	47
Sheldon	41	30	28
Enosberg	34	32	25
Fairfield	22	33	24
All Other Communities	126	107	106
<i>County Total</i>	<i>915</i>	<i>779</i>	<i>725</i>

Source: Vermont State Police

TABLE 4  
TRAFFIC FATALITIES IN FRANKLIN COUNTY VT: 2003 - 2007

Fatality Type	Fatalities					Fatalities Per 100K Pop				
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alcohol-Impaired Driving (BAC=.08+)	3	3	2	9	3	6.41	6.35	4.21	18.83	6.26
Single Vehicle Crash	6	6	3	10	5	12.82	12.70	6.31	20.93	10.43
Large Truck Involved Crash	0	1	0	1	0	0.00	2.12	0.00	2.09	0.00
Speeding Involved Crash	7	2	3	7	8	14.96	4.23	6.31	14.65	16.69
Rollover Involved Crash	2	1	1	7	4	4.27	2.12	2.10	14.65	8.34
Roadway Departure Involved Crash	8	6	3	12	6	17.09	12.70	6.31	25.11	12.52
Intersection Related Crash	3	2	0	1	2	6.41	4.23	0.00	2.09	4.17
Passenger Car Occupant	6	4	1	9	3	12.82	8.47	2.10	18.83	6.26
Light Truck Occupant	2	0	0	2	5	4.27	0.00	0.00	4.19	10.43
Motorcyclist	0	2	1	0	0	0.00	4.23	2.10	0.00	0.00
Pedestrian	1	1	1	0	0	2.14	2.12	2.10	0.00	0.00
Bicyclist (or Other Cyclist)	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Fatalities	9	9	4	12	10	19.23	19.05	8.41	25.11	20.86

Source: NHTSA/NCSA

Fatalities can be more than one type.

The next step in the process was to plot the locations of the crimes and crashes. Figure 1 illustrates the results of this effort for Franklin County during the period from August 2007 through July 2008. Figure 2 illustrates the locations of crimes and crashes in St. Albans City during the same period.

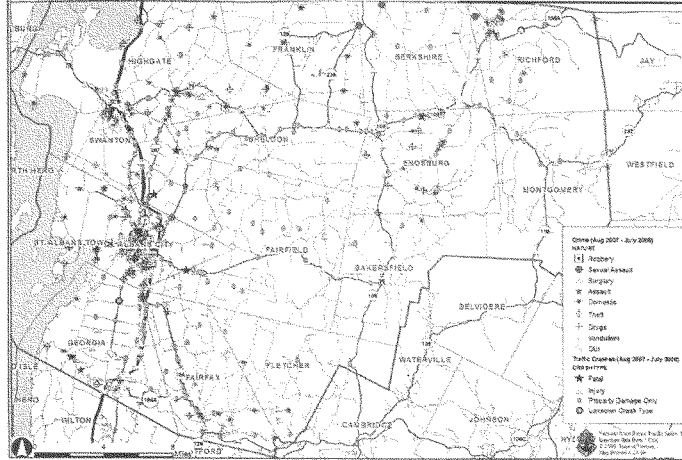


Figure 1. Locations of crimes and crashes in Franklin County, August 2007 – July 2008.

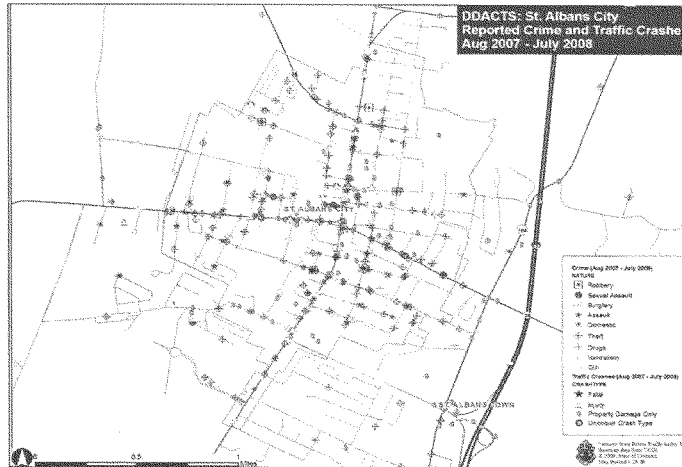


Figure 2. Locations of crimes and crashes in St. Albans City, August 2007 – July 2008.



### Mission Statement and Goals

The Working Group developed the following mission statement and goals.

*A high-intensity enforcement program coupled with targeted motor vehicle enforcement will be conducted within the greater St. Albans City area and Franklin County for the next 12 months for the purpose of reducing crime and improving the quality of life within this area.*

- By the end of calendar year 2009, reduce the overall offense rate per 1,000 population in St. Albans City to a rate that is the same or below the level that it was in 2005 (836 offenses; 111.82 per 1,000 population).
- By the end of calendar year 2009 reduce drug/narcotics violations to a rate that is the same or below the 2005 rate (39 violations; 5.22 offenses per 1,000 of population).
- Monitor the enforcement efforts and identify any displacement of crime resulting from the intensified enforcement efforts.
- Reduce violent crime by 10 – 20 percent or to 2005 levels.
- Reduce the crash rates in St. Albans City and St. Albans Township to the 2005 – 2007 annual mean rates.
- Reduce the alcohol-related crash rate per 100 million miles traveled in Franklin County to below 10.

### Operational Plan

Members of the Operations Subgroup determined that a key component of their approach to DDACTS would be to empower local law enforcement personnel to develop the operations plan. It also was determined that statistical and intelligence information must be developed at both the strategic and tactical levels, with the regional Fusion Center providing this service. The resulting plan, which was signed by the managers of all area law enforcement agencies, is summarized below.

- Perform at least 10 high-intensity enforcement efforts within St. Albans City and the surrounding area during the 12 months beginning in September 2008.
- Maximize the use of all federal, state, county, and local law enforcement personnel to focus efforts on the crime and crash problems identified by the analyses of data.
- Create an impression of police "omnipresence" during the 12-month period by coordinating all law enforcement efforts within Franklin County through the Commander of the St. Albans Station of the Vermont State Police.
- Utilize all traffic enforcement teams to target crash areas, ensuring that the teams are briefed on the crime control efforts being undertaken.
- Utilize uniformed and undercover personnel in a coordinated effort to reduce crime in St. Albans City and the surrounding area.
- Conduct briefings once each week with area law enforcement and Fusion Center personnel for the purpose of exchanging intelligence and data.
- Evaluate the performance of law enforcement effort at three-month intervals, comparing measured progress to the established goals.



**SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT METHODS**

The following special enforcement and programmatic activities have been conducted by the cooperating agencies since implementing the locally-developed DDACTS plan in mid-2008.

**Prescription Drug Repository**

A container was secured near the entrance to the St. Albans City Police Department building for residents to dispose of unused prescription drugs. More than 29,000 pills have been deposited in the container since June 2008.

**Neighborhood Watch**

A neighborhood watch program was implemented by the St. Albans City Police Department to deter crime, facilitate the timely collection of intelligence, and increase public awareness of the special enforcement activities.

**Town Hall Meetings**

Citizens, elected officials, and law enforcement authorities have gathered three times in the St. Albans City Hall since mid-2008 to discuss the city's drug-related crime problems, which were described as "break-ins, armed robberies, and thefts of every kind--driven by ever-younger addicts." Senator Patrick Leahy convened a special hearing in St. Albans in December 2008, titled, Community-Based Solutions to Drug-Related Crime in Rural America, to explore the problems and consider solutions. The St. Albans City mayor appointed a citizen advisory group, which recommended increasing the city's police force from 19 to 24 sworn officers and acquiring non-lethal weapons and protective equipment for officers engaged in drug raids.



Town Hall Meeting



Senator Patrick Leahy



St. Albans Police Chief Gary Taylor

**Graffiti Clean-Up Day**

More than 50 citizens and law enforcement officers participated in a community effort to "improve the quality of life in St. Albans" by eliminating graffiti at more than a dozen locations within the city limits.

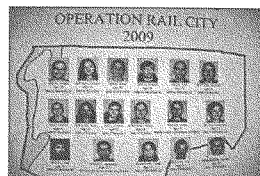
**Impact Details**

City, county, and state law enforcement personnel ride together (two officers per vehicle) to conduct aggressive traffic enforcement in areas identified as crime and crash hot spots by Vermont State Police traffic analysts. Between 20 and 40 officers saturate the city and surrounding arterials during these operations to provide high-visibility enforcement. New crime and crash hot spot maps are created by Fusion Center and VSP analysts and distributed to the officers prior to each Impact Detail. Individuals who are cited or arrested are offered the opportunity to provide actionable information concerning crimes committed in the area. Impact Details guided by maps of crime and crash hot spots are the primary special enforcement tactic of the program.



#### **Operation Rail City**

A drug investigation led to a "sweep" in March 2009 by 50 uniformed officers from the VSP, and the St. Albans and Swanton City Police Departments, among others, which resulted in 17 arrests, primarily for sales of prescription drugs; suspects ranged from 17 to 37 years of age. Within three days of the arrests, emergency room personnel at the Northwestern Regional Medical Center reported "an influx of patients with drug withdrawal."



#### **Alcohol-Impaired Driving Special Enforcement**

VSP troopers conduct targeted DUI patrols at bar closing times throughout Franklin and Grand Isle Counties and provide information to the Vermont Department of Health as part of a larger, innovative collaboration to address mutual concerns of law enforcement and public health agencies.

#### **FREQUENCY OF OPERATIONS/DURATION OF PROGRAM**

Planning and programmatic activities began in June 2008; Impact Details began in September and will continue through September 2009. Impact Details will be conducted approximately once each month for the duration of the DDACTS program; 30 hours each month are devoted to the special DUI enforcement. Also, four troopers from the Vermont State Police Traffic Section are deployed to the St. Albans area on a weekly basis to perform special enforcement patrols in the crime and crash locations identified by the Fusion Center analysts. The troopers are provided with the latest criminal intelligence, local wanted persons bulletins, and "hot spot" maps before deploying each week.

#### **PARTICIPATION**

In addition to the city, county, and state law enforcement agencies represented in the Working Group, participation in the DDACTS program now includes the Vermont State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigations; the VSP's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Team; Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles; Vermont Agency of Transportation; Vermont Department of Liquor Control; Vermont Department of Health; U.S. Border Patrol; and U.S. Marshall's Service.

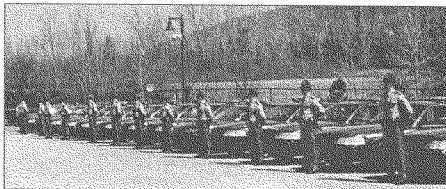
#### **PUBLIC AWARENESS/PROGRAM VISIBILITY**

The public has been informed of the drug and crime problems in the St. Albans area by frequent news coverage and the problems continue to be the biggest news story in the county. Public awareness of the problems contributed to the high attendance at the town hall meetings that were held in 2008 and a conference concerning the risks of prescription drug abuse conducted in St. Albans in May 2009. Chief Taylor and Lieutenant Evans held the first in a series of press conferences in January 2009 to present crime and crash data to the public and to describe the new DDACTS program. The press conferences always receive front page coverage in the *St. Albans Messenger*, which is distributed throughout Franklin County and is Vermont's oldest evening newspaper.

Vermont State Police and Vermont Department of Health personnel discuss the program during their presentations to community organizations throughout Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. The schedule of presentations includes mandatory meetings with all high school students who participate in sports and other extracurricular activities; this collaborative effort is intended to reduce drinking and driving among the high risk 18-25 year age group. Also, the VSP coordinates the deployment of Vermont Agency of Transportation variable message signs to warn motorists of hazards and advise the public of the special enforcement efforts.

**FUNDING**

The Vermont Governor's Highway Safety Program and NHTSA helped provide two automated license plate readers, which are used during DDACTS Impact Details and other operations. However, external funding for the program has been limited to a \$20,000 grant from the Vermont Governor's Highway Safety Program and a \$30,000 grant to support impaired driving enforcement and data collection from the Vermont Department of Health. Nearly all of the special enforcement effort is being conducted during normal "shift coverage."

**LESSONS LEARNED**

The primary lessons learned so far by the organizers of the St. Albans DDACTS program are listed below.

- Obtain the "buy in" of the participating law enforcement agencies as one of the first steps in developing a program.
- Develop community buy in next.
- Develop good relations with local news personnel; you cannot buy advertising at any price that is as effective as objective news coverage of a good program.
- Inform the participating agencies and communities of your progress.
- Develop relationships with non-traditional partners.

**OBSTACLES**

The largest obstacle confronted during the planning process was the lack of accurate and timely data to determine the extent of the local crime and crash problems and to identify the "hot spots" for targeted enforcement actions. The personnel responsible for the CAD system, web based crash network, and Fusion Center worked hard to integrate the sources of data in order to develop the capability to produce information products on a weekly basis that are immediately useful to the participating law enforcement agencies. This cooperative effort has resulted in a system that generates confidence in the timeliness and accuracy of the information that is used to direct DDACTS enforcement efforts. Examples of the information products are appended to this case study report.

**PROGRAM STRENGTHS**

The organizers believe the primary strengths of the St. Albans DDACTS program are:

- It is a "common sense" approach to focus law enforcement effort on demonstrable problems.
- The program was developed and is controlled locally.
- The special enforcement is being conducted with existing resources, which means that it can be sustained in the absence of extraordinary funding if it proves to be successful.
- Reasonable goals were set at the beginning of the project.
- The working relationships among the participating agencies have improved throughout the planning and program periods.

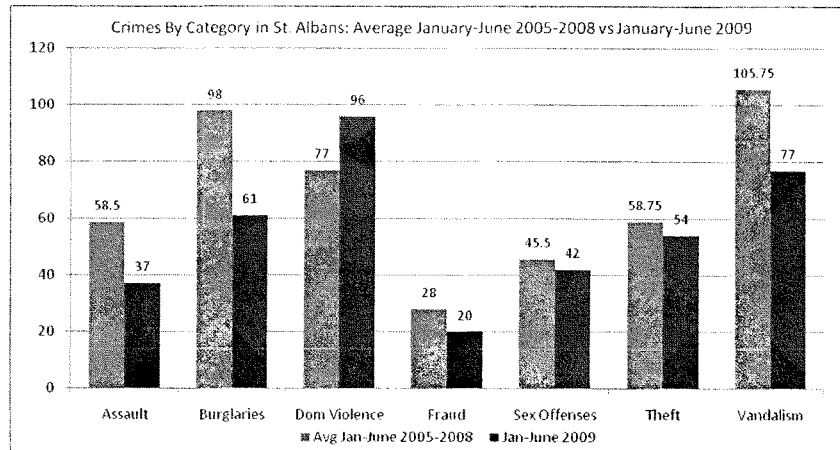
**SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PROGRAM ORGANIZERS**

Lieutenant Rob Evans offers the following suggestions to law enforcement managers who are considering development of a DDACTS program.

- Identify achievable goals for the program.
- Obtain early "buy in" from local, county, and state law enforcement agencies.
- Remain open to creative solutions to existing problem areas.
- Consider initiatives that will be sustainable with existing resources and funding options.

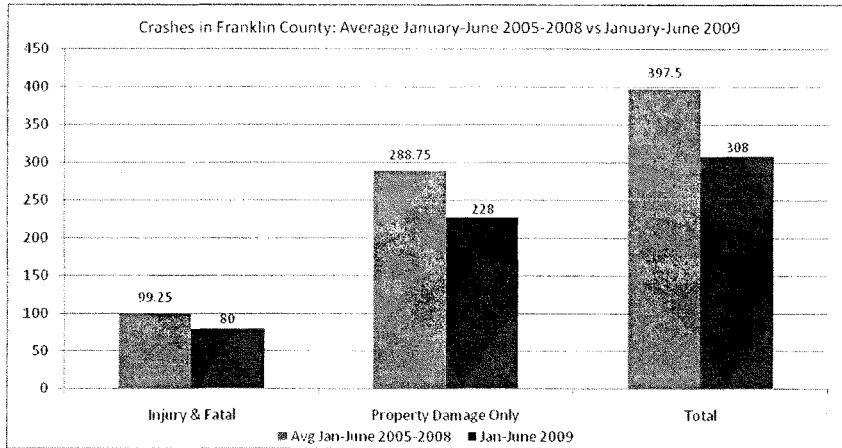
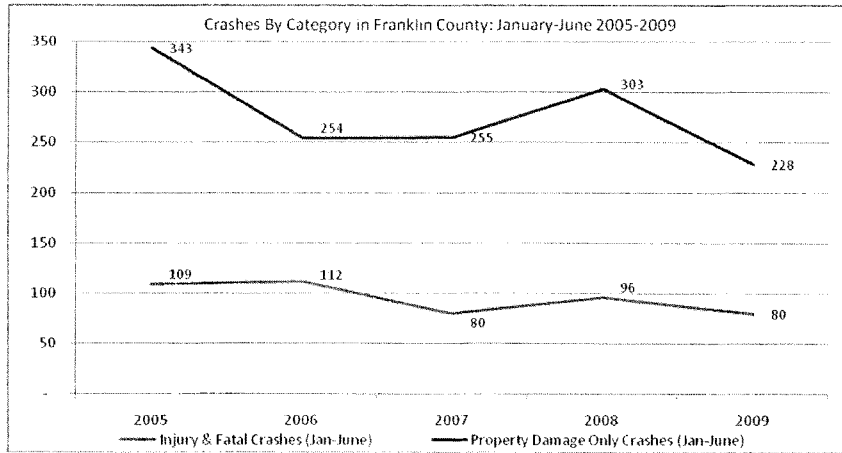
**EVIDENCE OF PROGRAM EFFECTS**

The Impact Details and other special enforcement patrols routinely result in large numbers of citations issued, DUI arrests, and both civil violations and criminal arrests for driving with license suspensions. This high visibility effort appears to have had a substantial effect on crime in St. Albans, as illustrated in the following figure.



The figure compares the numbers of crimes reported during January through June 2009, while the St. Albans DDACTS program was underway, to the average of the same six-month periods during the preceding four years (2005-2008). The figure shows declines in all categories of crimes that might be influenced by a special enforcement program, including 27 and 29 percent declines in vandalism and fraud, respectively, and 37 and 38 percent declines in assaults and burglaries, the two categories in which sudden increases previously alerted law enforcement and public health professionals to the underlying prescription drug problem.

The following two figures present the numbers of crashes in St. Albans and the surrounding Franklin County during the years 2005-2009. Data again are presented for the first six months of each of the preceding years to compare to the January through June program period in 2009. The figures show that injury and fatal crashes (combined) declined during the program period by 17 percent from the number in 2008 and by 19 percent from the average of the years 2005-2008. Property Damage Only (PDO) crashes declined by 25 percent from 2008 and by 21 percent from the average of the four preceding years.





**FINAL NOTE**

The program organizers are very pleased with the progress made thus far in the St. Albans area and are encouraged with the results of the DDACTS initiative. Lieutenant Evans reports that this project could not have been such a success without the assistance of the many agencies involved, which include: the St. Albans Police Department, the Vermont Department of Health, the community coalition partnerships, NHTSA and the Vermont's Governor's Highway Safety Office. Senior Command leadership of the Vermont State Police is currently considering introducing the DDACTS method at other barracks locations around the state.



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**DDACTS - VERMONT / FRANKLIN COUNTY**

**WEEKLY ACTIVITY SUMMARY**

May 18<sup>th</sup> - May 24<sup>th</sup>

**Summary of Patrols:**

**Vermont State Police Traffic Operations** had team members patrolling in Franklin County on May 18<sup>th</sup>. The routes patrolled consisted of I-89 in the St. Albans and Georgia areas, U.S. Rt. 7 in St. Albans. No arrests or significant events reported.

**Calls for Service:**

Spillman records indicated there were **38 DDACTS observed offenses** reported during this time frame. The majority of the offenses **16 occurred in St. Albans City, 6 in St. Albans Town, 5 in Swanton, 2 in Highgate, 2 in Georgia, 2 in Richford, 2 in Bakersfield, 1 in Fairfax, 1 in Enosburg, and 1 in Montgomery.**

**Arrests:**

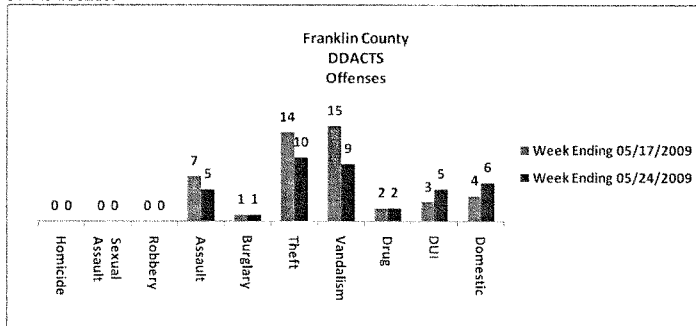
**Vermont State Police** reported 11 arrests: 5 DUI offenses, 5 Driving while License Suspended offenses, and 1 Possession of Marijuana offense.

**St. Albans Police** reported 9 arrests: 3 Domestic offenses, 2 DUI offenses, 1 Disorderly Conduct Offense, 1 Restraining Oder offense, 1 Leaving the Scene of an Accident, and 1 Driving while License Suspended offense.

**Franklin County Sheriff's Department** Spillman records showed 2 arrests: 1DUI offense, and 1 Assault offense.

**Swanton Police Department** No arrest reported.

**Crime Trends:**

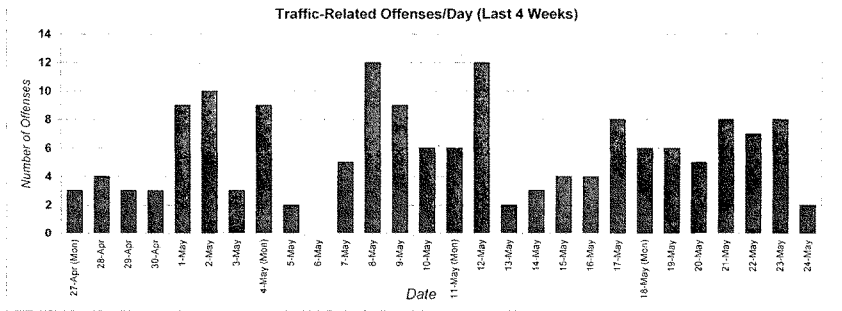


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DDACTS Weekly Traffic Summary - 05/25/2009

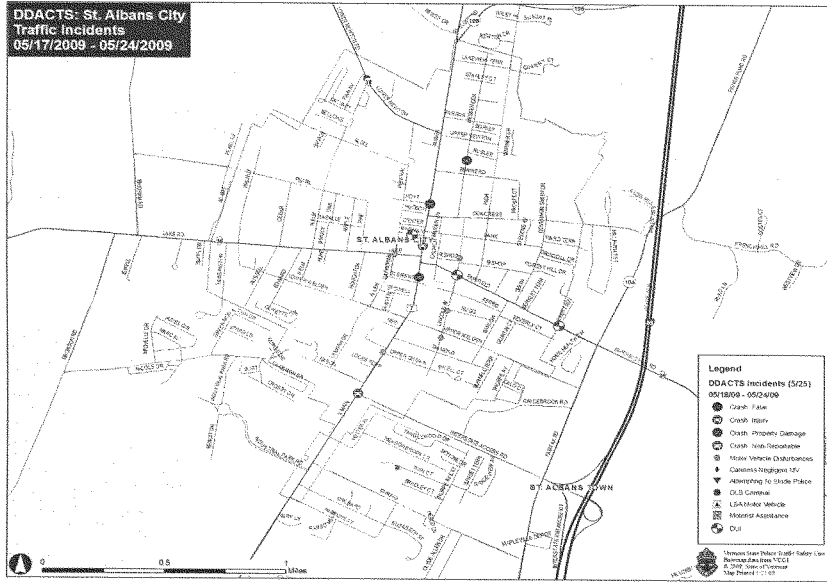
Traffic-Related Offenses		FRANKLIN COUNTY				ST. ALBANS CITY	
Code	Description	Current Week	Prior Week	YTD* 2009	YTD* 2008	Current Week	Prior Week
		5/18/2009 - 5/24/2009	5/11/2009 - 5/17/2009			5/18/2009 - 5/24/2009	5/11/2009 - 5/17/2009
3000	Crash: Fatal	0	0	3	1	0	0
3100	Crash: Injury	3	4	56	67	2	0
3200	Crash: Property Damage	10	9	221	308	4	6
TCNR	Crash: Not Reportable	0	1	2	N/A	0	0
3607	Motor Vehicle Disturbances	12	12	369	311	7	3
3617	Careless Negligent MV	0	1	10	20	0	0
3618	Attempting to Elude Police	0	0	8	16	0	0
3619	DLS Criminal	7	7	134	88	1	2
3620	I SA MV	2	0	22	13	1	0
MAST	Motorist Assist	1	1	30	49	0	0
2115	DUI	7	4	110	121	3	3
TOTAL MV Incidents		42	39	965	994	18	14
Total Crash Reports Submitted**				211	206		



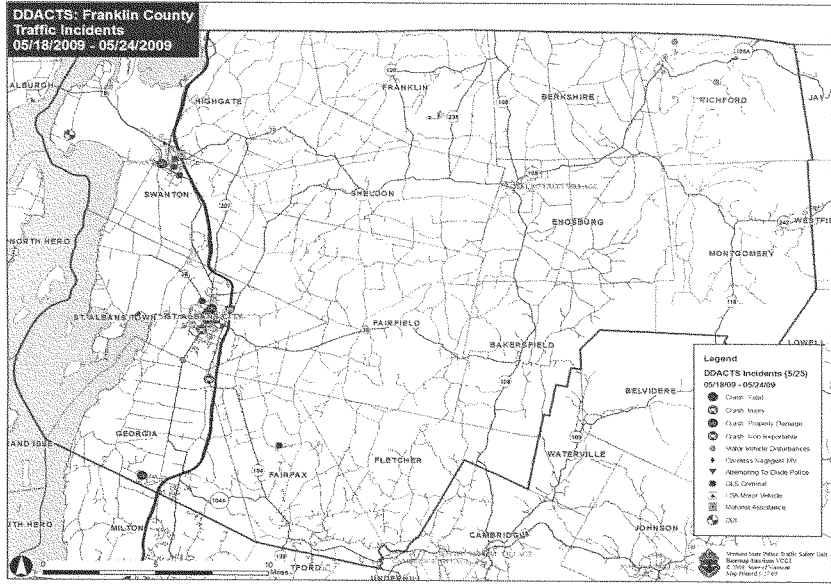
\*YTD = Year-to-Date offense counts (1/1 through last date of this report)  
 \*\*Total Crash Reports Submitted based on data entered into VTrans WebCRS.

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DDACTS Weekly Traffic Summary - 05/25/2009



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**21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)  
Analytic Support for Evaluation and Program Monitoring**

**Vermont 21st CCLC 2008 Annual Performance  
Report**

Generated March 2009



U.S. Department of Education  
21st Century Community Learning Centers Program  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20202-6175

**Disseminated by:**



1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200  
Naperville, Illinois 60563-1486

**For Technical Support (toll-free): 866-356-2711  
E-Mail: 21stcclc@contact.learningpt.org**

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## Introduction

Vermont has granted 44 awards in its 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. Of these 44, 35 were active during the 2007- 2008 school year and thus required to fill out the 2008 Annual Performance Report (APR). The following pages give a summary of the results of the 2008 APR for Vermont's grantees.

**Table 1. State Overview**

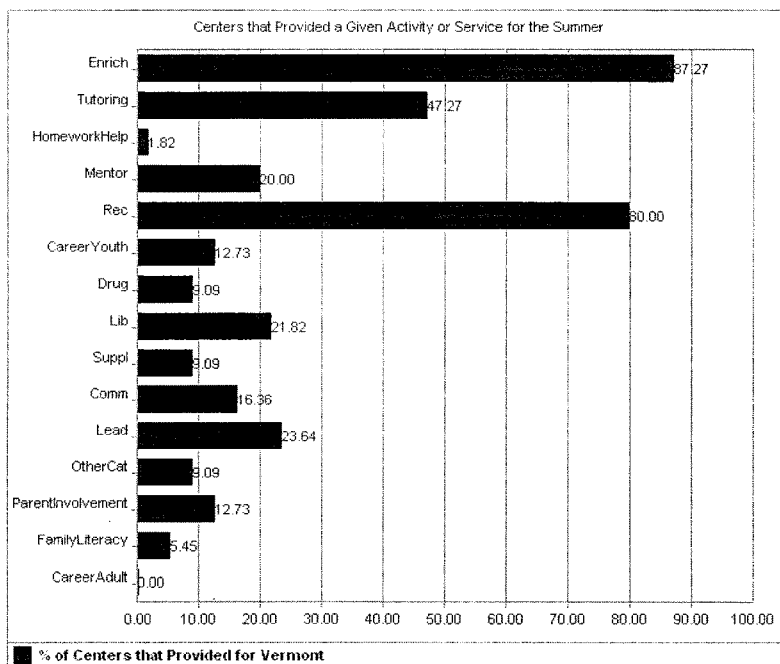
Category	Total Number for 2008 APR
Grantees	35
Centers	99
Feeder Schools	175
Total Students Served	12108
Regular Attendees Served	3948
Total Adult Participants	56
Paid Staff	1720
Volunteer Staff	432

**Services Offered**

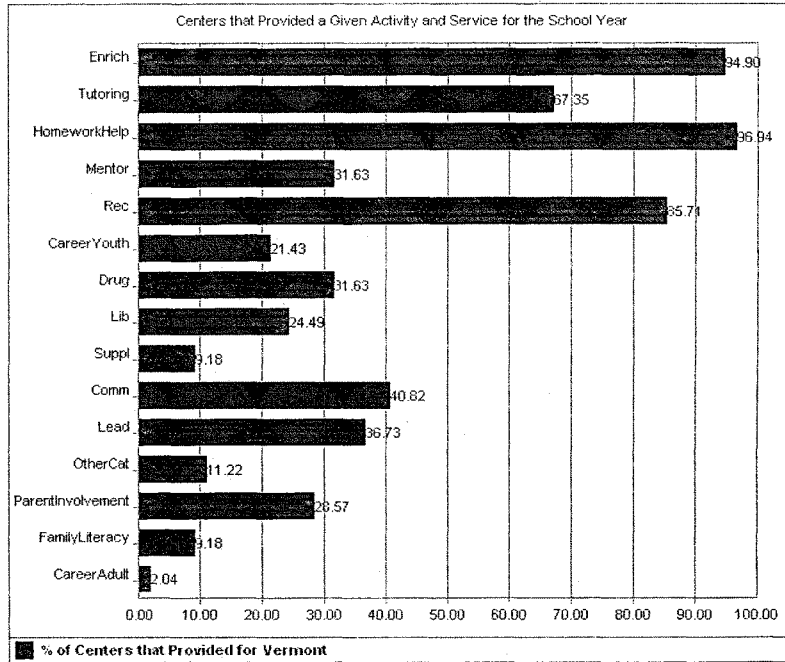
On average, centers in Vermont were open for 12.26 hours and 3.37 days per week. During these hours centers offered numerous different types of activities and services. It is important to point out that activity information collected as part of the 2007-08 APR allowed respondents to classify a single activity both by category and subject area. For example, a center may have offered a rocketry club during the 2007-08 school year where participants learn to build and launch rockets while also studying astronomy. In this case, this activity would be classifiable as an Academic Enrichment Learning Program (category) and as a Science Educational Activity (subject area).

**Category of Activity or Service.** The common categories of activities offered during 21st CCLC programming undertaken during the 2007-08 school year are listed in the chart below. These categories of activities reflect the mandate of the 21st CCLC program to promote academic achievement while at the same time providing access to enrichment and other youth development and support activities. The following chart shows the proportion of centers offering different categories of activities and services, first for summer and then for the school year:

**Figure 1: Percent of Centers Providing Given Categories of Activities - Summer 2007**



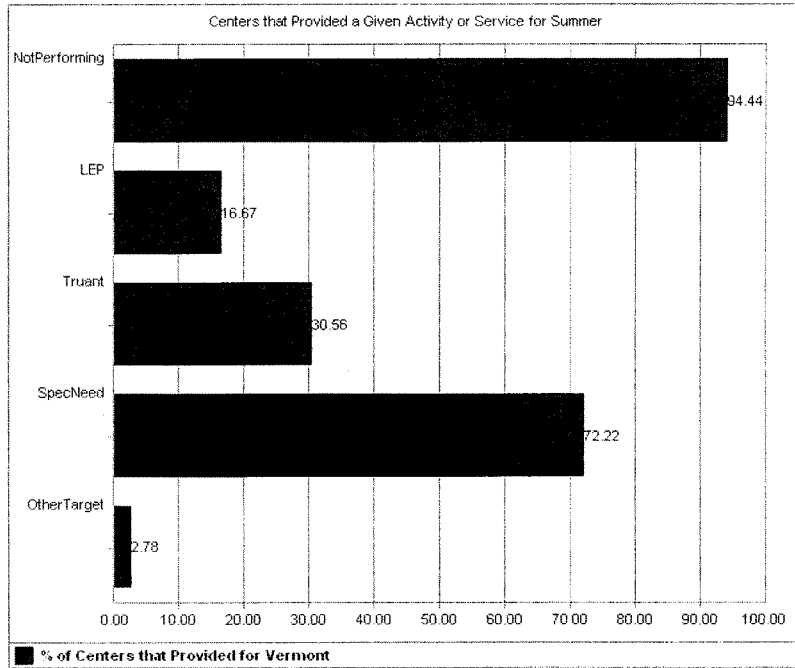
**Figure 2: Percent of Centers Providing Given Categories of Activities - School Year 2007-08**



Label	Category of Activity
Enrich	Academic enrichment learning program
Tutoring	Tutoring
HomeworkHelp	Homework Help
Mentoring	Mentoring
Rec	Recreational Activities
CareerYouth	Career/Job training for Youth
Drug	Drug and violence prevention, counseling, and character education programs
Lib	Expanded library service hours
Suppl	Supplemental Educational Services
Comm	Community service/service learning program
Lead	Activities that promote youth leadership
Other	Other activities
Family	Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy
CareerAdult	Career/job training for adults

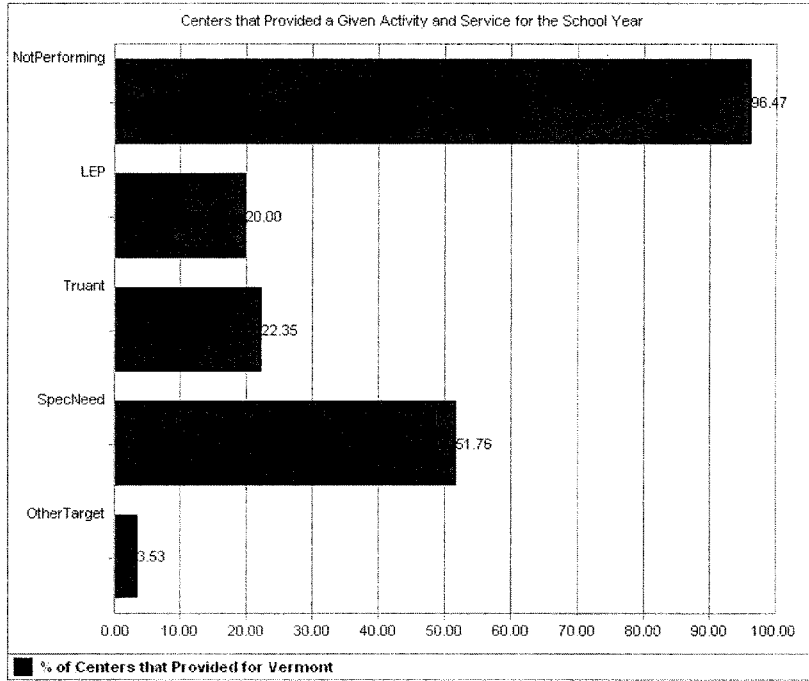
**Activities or Services Offered that Target a Given Population.** The following chart shows the percentage of centers offering activities and services targeting the given populations of students:

**Figure 3: Percent of Centers with Activities or Services Targeting a Given Population - Summer 2007**





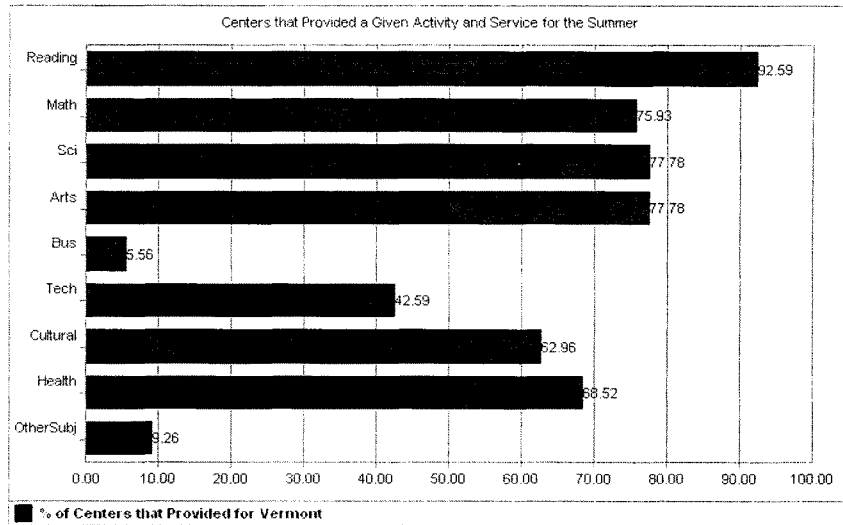
**Figure 4: Percent of Centers with Activities or Services Targeting a Given Population - School Year 2007-08**



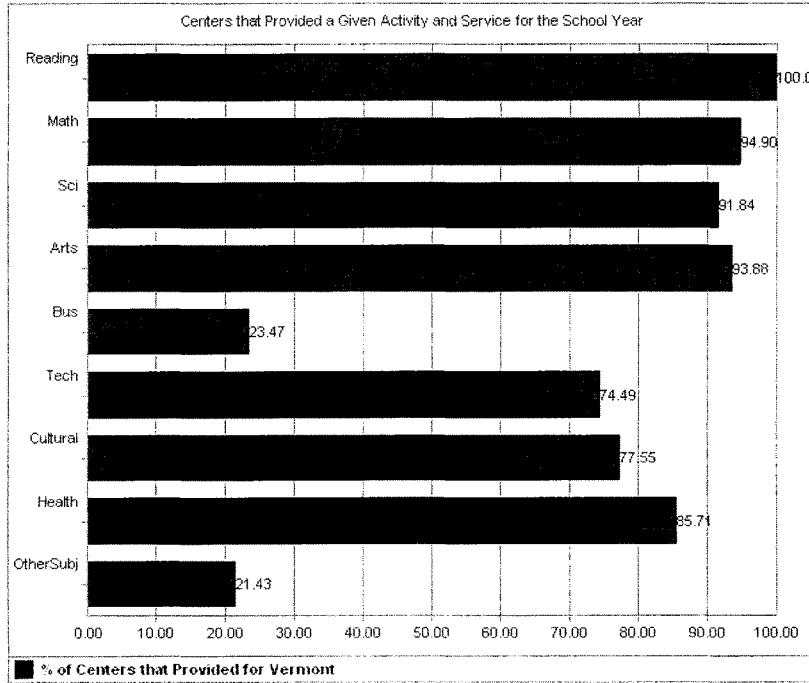
Label	Category of Activity
NotPerforming	Students not performing at grade level
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
Truant	Truant students
SpecNeed	Students with special needs
OtherTarget	Other student population targeted

**Subject Area of Activity or Service.** The following chart depicts the percentage of centers offering activities and services in each academic subject area for the 2007–08 school year.

**Figure 5: Percent of Centers Offering Activities or Services Focusing on a Given Academic Subject - Summer 2007**



**Figure 6: Percent of Centers Offering Activities or Services Focusing on a Given Academic Subject - School Year 2007-08**



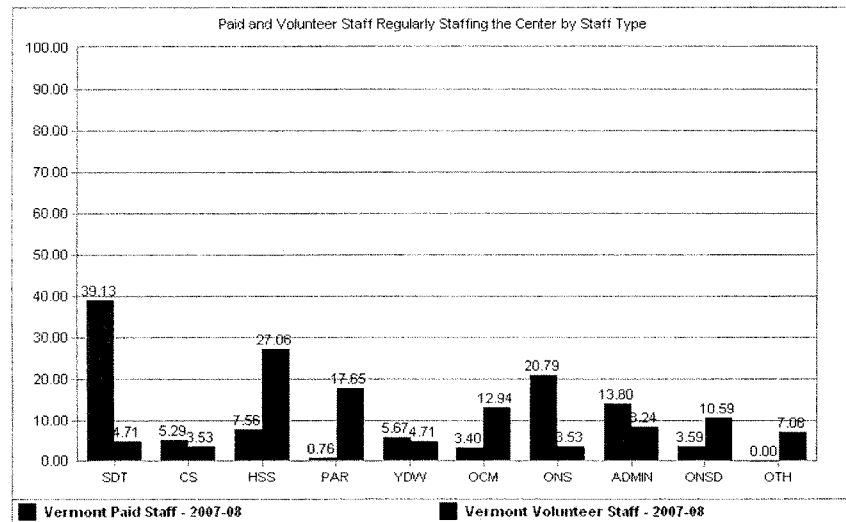
Label	Subject
ReadingWriting	Reading/literacy education activities
Mathematics	Mathematics education activities
Science	Science education activities
ArtsMusic	Arts and music education activities
Enterpeneurial	Entrepreneurial education programs
Technology	Telecommunications and technology education programs
Cultural	Cultural activities/social studies
Health	Health/nutrition-related activities
OtherSubj	Other

**Staffing**

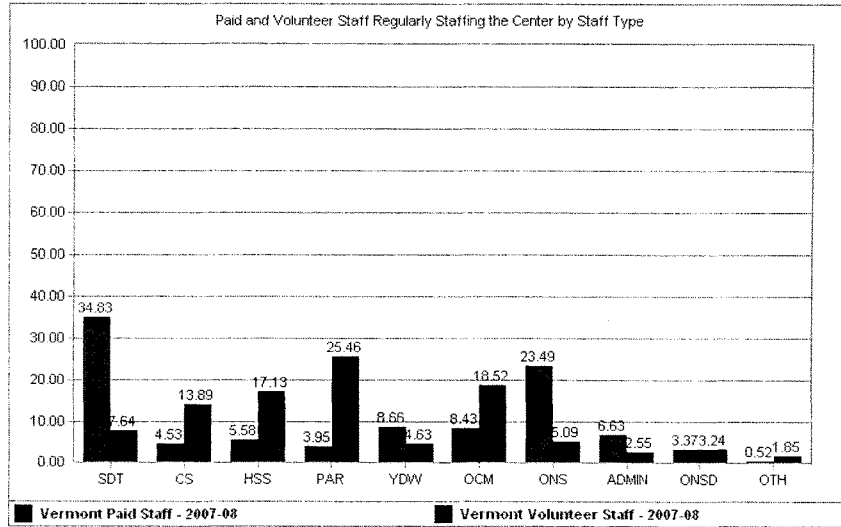
As part of the Annual Performance Report, information was obtained on the number of various types of 21st CCLC staff that regularly staffed centers during the summer of 2007 and the 2007-08 school year. These types reflected the background and training of the staff. Moreover, centers indicated what number of each type were paid staff and what number were volunteer. The typical center in Vermont reported having 5.34 paid and 0.86 volunteer staff during the summer 2008, and 17.37 paid and 4.36 volunteer staff during the 2007-08 school year. The chart below indicates the total number of staff across all centers nationwide in a given category, divided into paid and volunteer staff<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The category "Non-teaching school staff" is defined as "any school employee who is not a teacher."

**Figure 7: Staff by Type in Percent of Paid or Volunteer Staff for All Centers - Summer 2007**



**Figure 8: Staff by Type in Percent of Paid or Volunteer Staff for All Centers - School Year 2007-08**



Label	Staff Type
SDT	School-day teachers
CS	College students
HSS	High school students
PAR	Parents
YDW	Youth development workers
OCM	Other community members
ONS	Other nonteaching school staff
ADMIN	Center administrators and coordinators
ONSD	Other nonschool-day staff with some or no college
OTH	Other

### Attendance

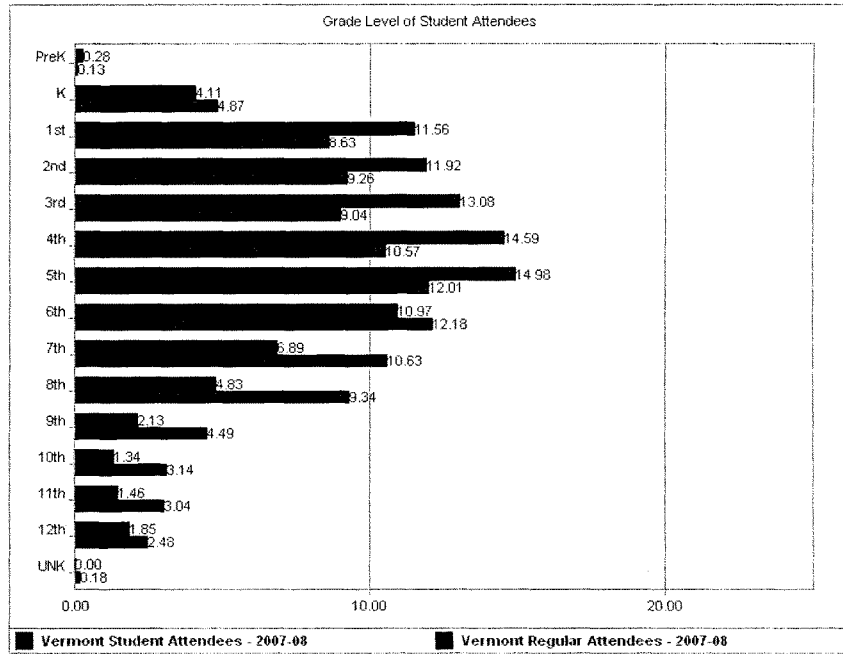
Attendance, as an intermediate outcome indicator, reflects the breadth and depth of exposure to afterschool programming. Grantees completing the APR for the 2007-08 school year were asked to both identify (1) the total number of students who participated in the center's programming over the course of the year and (2) the number of students meeting the definition of regular attendee by participating in 30-days or more of activity at a center during the 2007-08 school year. The former figure can be utilized as a measure of the breadth of a center's reach, whereas the latter can be construed as a partial measure of how successful the center was in retaining students in center-provided services and activities across the reporting period. It is reasonable to assume that regular attendees are more likely to represent those participating students who have received a sufficient "dose" of the programming for it to have an impact on academic or behavioral outcomes.

**Table 2. Attendance**

Total Students Served	12108
Total Regular Attendees (30 days or more)	3948
Total Adults Served	56
Average Students per Center	122.30
Average Regular Attendees per Center	39.88

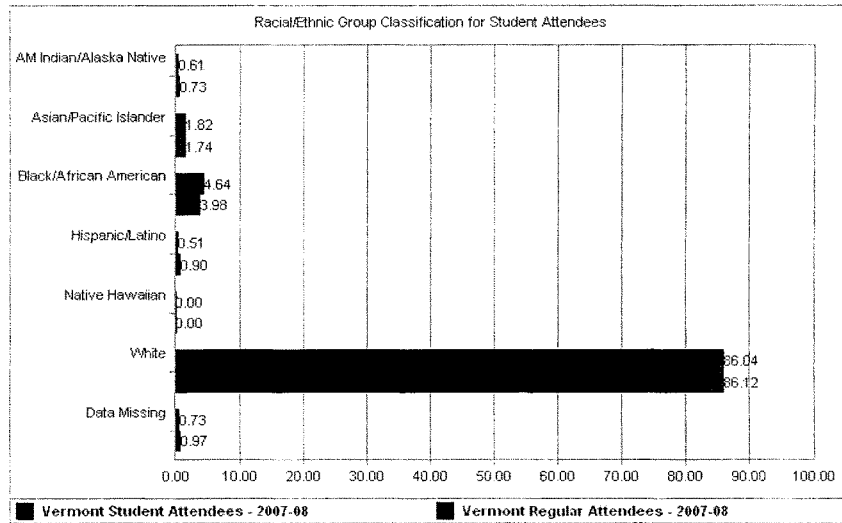
The 21st CCLC program can be targeted towards students at all grade levels. The attendance data displayed in the chart below depicts the number of students in various grade levels participating in a 21st CCLC during the 2007-08 reporting period.

**Figure 9. Attendance by Grade Levels Served**



One way of examining the reach of the 21st CCLC program is to examine the participation of students with different needs and backgrounds. The three analyses that follow examine attendance as a function of ethnicity, participation in special services, and gender. To begin with, the chart below shows the proportion of program attendees during the reporting period who belong to different racial and ethnic categories.

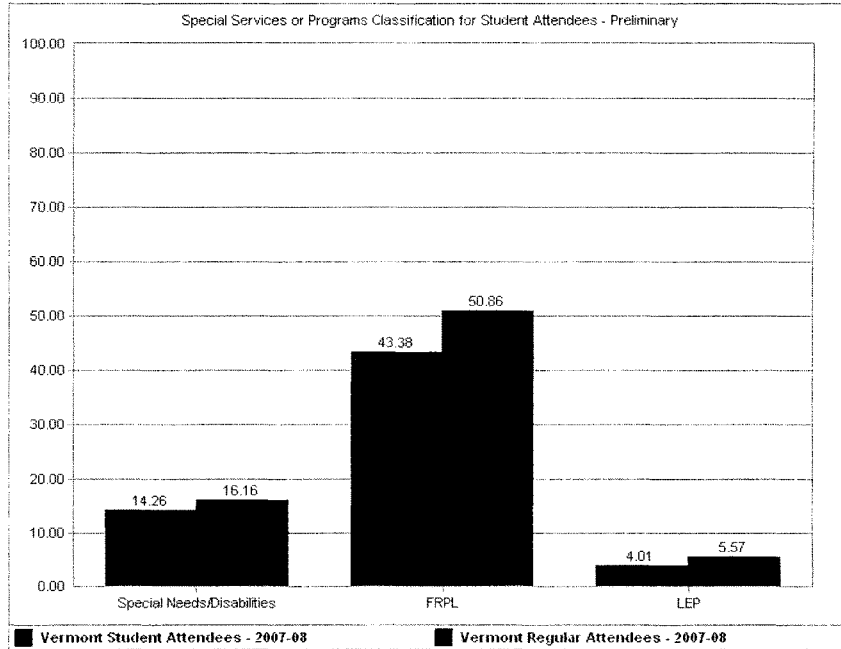
**Figure 10. Attendance by Racial/Ethnic Groups**





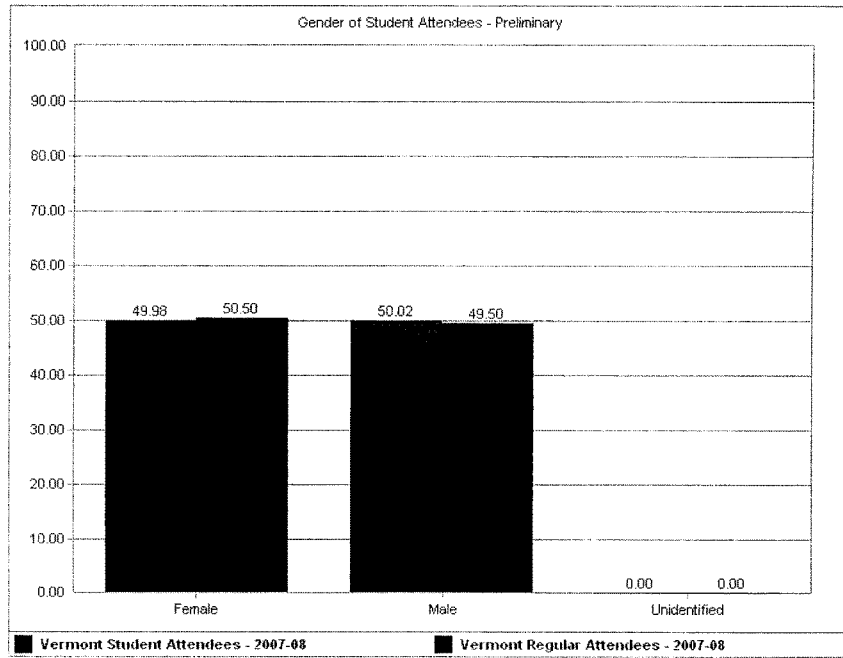
Centers in Vermont reported the following number of school year attendees in their program who participated in the special services or programs listed. The participation in these programs indicates likelihood that a student may be disadvantaged or academically at-risk.

**Figure 11. Percent of All Students Served also Participating in Special Services or Programs**



It is also important to understand the degree to which the program achieves gender equity. For the 2007-08 reporting period, 50.23 % of regular attendees were identified as female and 49.24 % were identified as male (0.53% were not identified).

**Figure 12. Attendance by Gender**

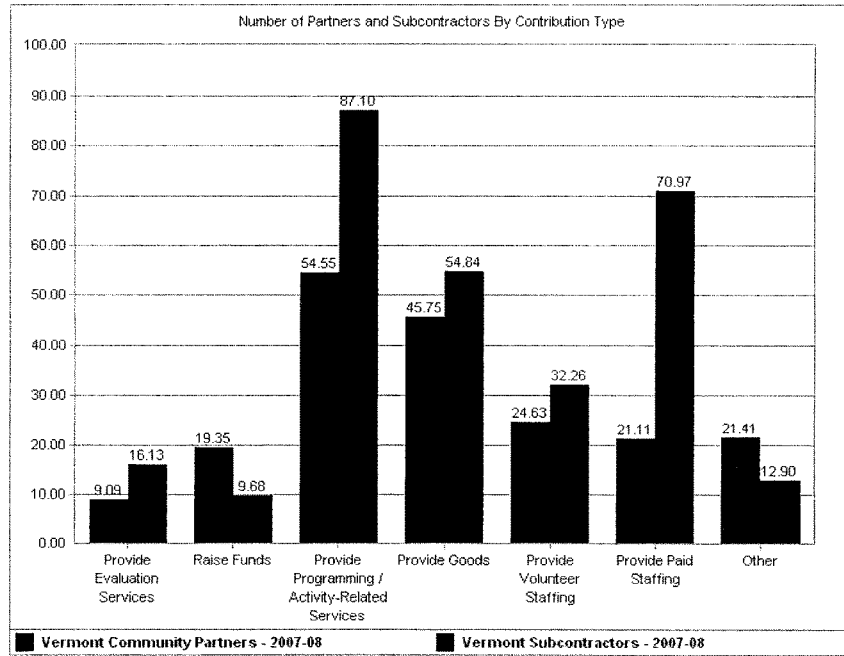


**Partners / Subcontractors**

Encouraging partnerships between schools and other organizations is an important component of the 21st CCLC program. Many states required their grantees to have a letter of commitment from at least one partner in order to submit a proposal for funding. Partnerships provide grantees connections to the community and additional resources that may not otherwise be available to the program. This section examines the characteristics of the partners with whom grantees work.

Partner contributions vary greatly depending on the resources they have available and on the program's needs. In any given program, one partner may deliver services directly to participants, while another may provide goods or materials, evaluation services, or paid staffing. This chart displays the percentage of subcontractors and non-subcontracting partners providing each contribution type. A subcontractor is any organization that is under contract with the grantee to provide 21st CCLC grant-funded activities or services.

**Figure 13. Partners / Subcontractor Contribution Type**



**Impact Categories**

For the 2006 APR, Vermont selected the following impact category to report on:

**Cross-Year Change in Proficiency Level (Disaggregated)**

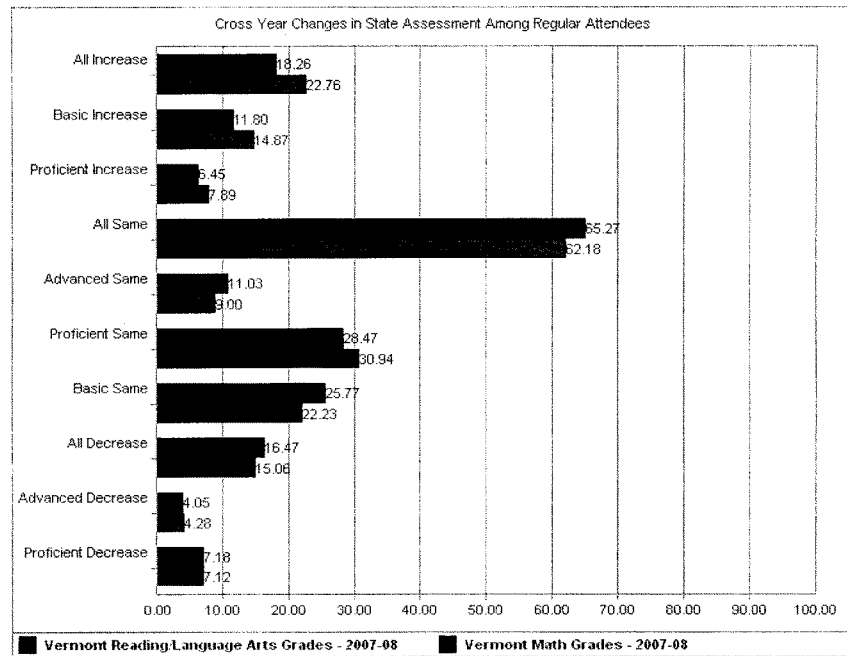
Centers report change in proficiency level disaggregated by the student's previous proficiency level (e.g., the number of students that tested at a basic level last year who increased their proficiency level this year or stayed the same).

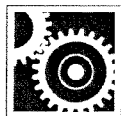
Each center was required to complete the sections of PPICS that correspond to each of the impact categories chosen. The purpose of the analyses that follow is to provide a preliminary look at the outcomes of the program on student academic success.

**Cross-Year Change in Proficiency Level (Disaggregated)**

Centers reported on the extent to which regular attendees witnessed a change in proficiency levels in math or reading/language arts on state assessments taken during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years. The following chart indicates students' previous scores and whether they increased, stayed the same, or decreased.

**Figure 14. Cross Year Changes in State Assessment among Regular Attendees**





Vermont  
Works  
Women

## VERMONT WORKS FOR WOMEN

### GENDER-RESPONSIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING, PLACEMENT & MENTORING PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN

For nearly a decade, Vermont Works for Women has developed and offered programs for incarcerated women that build skills and capacities that are critical to meaningful, long-term employment. It is strength-based in its approach; it encourages self-efficacy. It is holistic in its structure and challenges cultural biases that serve to limit women's aspirations and achievement. It is designed to meet women where they are – and to challenge them to become who they can be.

#### OUTCOMES

- **75%** of program graduates released from prison and eligible for work over the past two years **found work**. Three quarters of those graduates were still employed by the end of the year.
- **Recidivism of program graduates in their first year of release (6%) is one-sixth** the state recidivism rate for the general female population (29%).

#### PROGRAMS

##### SKILLS TRAINING

In July 2001, Vermont Works for Women piloted Vermont's first vocational training program for incarcerated women. Since then, it has worked with over four hundred women and provided them with programming that combines technical training, soft-skills development, employment support, and mentoring upon their release.

##### Step Up for Women

Step Up for Women is a nine-week program consisting of three main components: trades instruction, physical conditioning, and Women's Resources, the job-readiness element crucial to the success of the program. Trades instruction generally consists of three weeks of carpentry, three weeks of electrical wiring, and two weeks of plumbing and pipefitting (288 hours).

##### Auto CAD

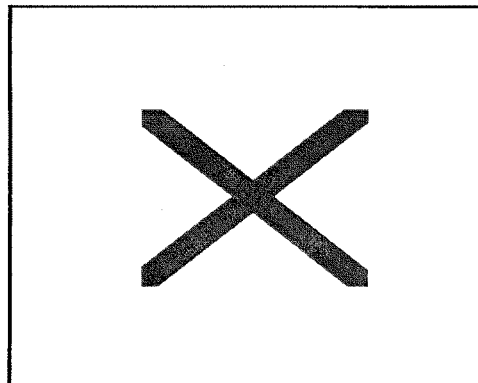
A five-week ten-session introduction to AutoCAD skills. Includes creating architectural floor plans and elevations using coordinate grid entry, ASME dimensioning standards as well as editing drawings and plotting scale. (160 hours)

##### Painting

Instruction related to facility projects requiring resident labor. Training included worksite safety and paint chemistry; choosing paint; mixing and choosing colors; surface cleaning and preparation; preventing paint problems (chipping, peeling, moisture, adhesion); using spray equipment; texturizing; using or installing alternative wall coverings (paper, wood, plastics, or fabric). 100 hours.

**BUILDING HOMES/BUILDING LIVES**

In January 2005, VWW piloted a year-round trades training program at Southeast State Correctional Facility. Over a six-month period, trainees develop skills in finish and frame



carpentry, electrical wiring, plumbing, weatherization and roofing through building modular homes that will be installed as affordable housing units in Vermont communities. The program meets two important goals: 1) providing offenders with work-based training in fields that pay a livable wage and; 2) helping to meet affordable housing needs.

**PROGRAM BENEFITS:**

- ✓ An opportunity for incarcerated women to **learn marketable skills** in fields that pay a living wage
- ✓ Training that **develops both frame and finish construction skills**, providing access to a range of trades positions
- ✓ Project that allows residents to **develop and practice "soft skills"** in problem-solving, communication, and teamwork
- ✓ **Training that is year-round**, allowing us to involve women on an ongoing basis as they enter the prison
- ✓ Project offers a **solid introduction to the realities of working** in the field
- ✓ Project that offers participants an opportunity to **develop a portfolio of work** to show to prospective employers
- ✓ Project that **results in affordable housing** without competing with private industry (as only one to two units can be produced per year)

**SOFT SKILLS AND JOB SEARCH & PLACEMENT**

Soft skills classes are offered as part of all VWW programs. VWW works with participants to develop work habit and communication skills, upgrading math skills; time and stress management; interviewing and resume writing; and preventing sexual harassment. Sessions help participants identify concerns and barriers to successful completion of the program or employment. Instructors will work closely with participants and business representatives to facilitate employment upon release from prison.

**Job-related counseling:** Participants meet with VWW staff to explore job opportunities and identify potential employers. These sessions identify participant concerns and barriers to finding employment, and identify and explore potential job opportunities.

**Employer outreach and post-release support:** VWW provides participants with opportunities to meet employers, representatives of the Agency of Transportation, and the state apprenticeship program at the facility. Upon a participant's release, VWW continues to provide employment support through regular phone calls, one-on-one meetings, and site visits to a participant's work site.

**MENTORING**

VT Works for Women and Mercy Connections have partnered to create a mentoring program to support women making the transition from Vermont's correctional facilities. These women face significant barriers in finding appropriate and affordable housing and employment, key elements of successful reintegration. Mentors can have a profound influence on supporting individual women as they work to rebuild their lives (*a video on this program may be viewed on our website at [www.vtworksforwomen.org](http://www.vtworksforwomen.org)*.)

**WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT VWW PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN**

"I'm thrilled to be at the ribbon cutting for this modular home constructed by Women inmates at Southeast State Correctional Facility in Windsor. This project was 18 months in the making, and addresses several issues which are near and dear to my heart - supporting incarcerated women and helping them turn their lives around, and helping to make Vermont more affordable for our families, by building affordable housing for a family in Springfield. This innovative project was spear-headed by Vermont Works for Women and on behalf of everyone here today I'd like to say thank you to this outstanding non-profit."

**Jim Douglas**  
Governor, State of Vermont

"I'm the perfect example of why Vermont women need this program. It's changed the course of my life. Without it I would have had to settle for \$800 a month, doing something that I don't find fulfilling. I feel confident, I know I have the skills I need to do this."

**Robin**, program participant

"The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board is thrilled to support the work of VWW at the Windsor prison. Visiting the program and meeting the participants is to witness hope over-coming despair. The training program will add skills and self-confidence that can lead to self-sufficiency for the participants. It is also building much needed affordable homes for Vermonters and deepening the pool of skilled workers for the construction trades."

**Gus Seelig**  
Executive Director, VT Housing and Conservation Board

"This project has been such a consistent, positive initiative in an environment where that is where that is such a special thing. There is no other project here, where I have witnessed such marked growth in both the women's skill and confidence."

Thank you! For all you've done for the many women who have worked on the project, and the sense of hope and accomplishment you offer for all the women at Windsor."

**Kathy Astemborski**  
Deputy Superintendent, Southeast State Correctional Facility

"Being in this program has helped me with my self-esteem. Coming back to jail after 5 years was rough. Modular Homes has given me the chance to work on myself and learn a trade for my future. I feel real confident about going back out into the community and finally live a healthy life. This program helped me realize there is still hope and I have a lot to offer the community."

**Amanda**, Program graduate



# Women, Girls & Criminal Justice™

ADJUDICATION • CORRECTIONS • SUPPORT SERVICES

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*Building Homes, Building Lives*

## Gender-Responsive Approach to Vocational Programming for Incarcerated Women

In July 2001, Vermont Works for Women (VWW) established the state's first vocational training program for incarcerated women. Since then, VWW has developed a range of education programs for women incarcerated in Vermont prisons. The programs that have emerged since the initial pilot include:

- A construction trades training program that builds modular homes at the state's women's prison in Windsor;
- A mentoring program for women exiting prison;
- Prerelease employment support for women at two of the state's correctional facilities; and
- Post-release placement for the residents at a transitional home for women re-entering the community.

The organization is recognized in corrections- and community-based organizations as pioneering and effective. Over seven years, it has worked with nearly 300 women and provided them with significant employment support upon their release.

See PROGRAMMING, next page

*Researching Complex Factors of Offending*

## Examining the Connection Between Women, Employment, and Incarceration in Vermont

by Tiffany Bluemle

Most women offenders are poor, undereducated, and unskilled. Many have never worked, have sporadic work histories, or have lived on public assistance. When the educational and work experiences of women under correctional supervision are examined, the data show that these women have been marginalized from the conventional world of work. (Bloom, Owen, and Covington, 2001.)

### Trades Training Program

In 2001, Vermont Works for Women (VWW) piloted a trades training program at the new women's prison in Waterbury. In some ways, the terrain we negotiated was familiar: We have worked with thousands of Vermont women, some of them with prior criminal records, many of them with histories of physical or substance abuse, and most of them living at or near poverty. What was new for us was taking power tools into a correctional facility and encouraging women, whose every movement was supervised and prescribed, to work with these tools.

Before we launched the trades program, we phoned a dozen correctional agencies throughout the country, following leads from the Internet or from

conversations with public officials or practitioners in the field. Our goal was to identify and talk with others who had run prison-based training programs for women. Our conversations turned up few programs that enjoyed a long or sustained history, or that focused on teaching skills that would be marketable on the outside.

Today, Vermont Works for Women operates a year-round program building modular homes that are sold as affordable housing. It is an unusual collaboration that engages the energy, goodwill, and financial investment of scores of partners—the Vermont Departments of Labor, Corrections, and Economic Services; personnel at Southeast State Correctional Facility (SESCF) in Windsor; private contractors and suppliers; affordable housing agencies; individual and corporate funders; and community-based organizations.

Over the past two and one-half years, the program has produced two five-star energy-rated homes for first-time homebuyers and graduated over 50 participants. Program graduates eligible for earning time off their sentences through work have shaved more than 1,557 days off their minimum sentences—with a

See INCARCERATION, page 58

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*PROGRAMMING, from page 49*

In 2005, VWW launched a year-round training program at the Southeast State Correctional Facility in Windsor, VT. This program provides hands-on instruction in finish and frame carpentry, electrical wiring, plumbing, weatherization, and roofing through building modular homes that are installed as affordable housing units in Vermont communities. Since then, the program has trained over 54 women.

- An opportunity for incarcerated women to learn marketable skills in fields that pay a livable wage;
- Training in both frame and finish construction skills, providing access to a range of jobs in the industry;
- Real and meaningful opportunities for participants to develop and practice "soft skills" in problem solving, communication, and teamwork;
- Continuous training that enables women to enter the program year-round;

two years—19%—is less than half the recidivism rate for the general female population (51%). Of those released from prison and eligible for work over the past two years, 75% found work. Seventy-six percent of those who found work maintained employment through the end of the fiscal year.

Because some crew members are eligible to earn time off their sentences for time worked, participants in the program earned a total of 1,557 days off their minimum sentences. This not only helped to ease prison overcrowding; it saved the state a total of \$195,000 in daily bed fees.

Over the past year, several states interested in the program have approached VWW for help in developing their own programs. Building Homes, Building Lives will be replicated in Maine this summer (see related article in this issue). Through seed grants from the John Merck Fund and Jane's Trust, VWW has developed technical and soft skills curricula, administrative materials, and an approach to technical assistance that addresses the needs and concerns of partners who are diverse and who operate under different mandates or ideals. The needs and interests of security personnel, for example, are different from those of adult educators—but the buy-in of both groups is critical to the program's ultimate success.

***The recidivism rate for program graduates over the past two years—19%—is less than half the recidivism rate for the general female population (51%).***

Building Homes, Building Lives is a gender-responsive strategy to developing skills and capacities that are critical to meaningful, long-term employment. It is strength-based in its approach and encourages self-efficacy. It is holistic in its structure and challenges cultural biases that serve to limit women's aspirations and achievement. It is designed to meet women where they are—and to challenge them to become who they can be.

**Program Benefits**

The program's benefits to individual participants, correctional facilities, and local communities include the following:

- An opportunity for participants to develop a track record of employment and a portfolio of work;
- A reduction in the number of disciplinary actions issued against participants by corrections personnel; and
- New affordable housing units that are produced without competing with private industry (as only one to two units can be produced per year).

**Promising Outcomes**

The program's outcomes for the past two years are promising. The recidivism rate for program graduates over the past

*For more information about Building Homes, Building Lives or technical assistance opportunities, please contact Tiffany Bluemel, executive director of Vermont Works for Women, at (800) 639-1472; TBluemel@vtworksforwomen.org.*

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*Literature Review***Women, Employment, and Incarceration: A Vermont Case Study**

by Judy Harden, Ph.D.

Unemployment and related indicators of financial status are consistently associated with criminal activity and incarceration of women. (Bloom et al., 2003; Wolf, 2006; Steffensmeier and Allen, 1996; and Renzetti, Goodstein, and Miller, 2006.) However, very few of the studies addressing this relationship suggest interventions that might provide better opportunities for economic self-sufficiency among currently and formerly incarcerated women. The literature tells us little about how job training and better employment opportunities can make a difference in lowering women's rates of incarceration.

This article is a companion to Tiffany Bluemle's article in this issue that reports the results of a project that explores the relationship between job training and employment opportunities for currently and formerly incarcerated women in Vermont. This project also addresses questions about the nature of the relationship between economic marginality and incarceration, that is:

- What were the financial challenges existing prior to incarceration;
- What were the familial/community resources available for these women (especially in terms of education and employment); and
- What can the educational and employment histories of these women tell us about interventions needed to prevent future criminal activity.

**Gender Specificity**

Because there are multiple intersecting issues that result in a woman's incarceration, and because it is impossible to isolate any one factor, this project explores questions about the nature of the relationship between unemployment, underemployment, and other pathways to crime, including substance abuse, difficult relationships, child caring responsibilities, mental illness, and

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family instability. A literature review of these topics will provide a context for understanding how increased economic self-sufficiency might ameliorate other factors associated with incarceration, such as a reduction in pressure to commit consumer-based crimes, the most prevalent category of crime among women.

In addressing these questions, special attention will be paid to gender-specific factors, such as the particular challenges that confront women's economic self-sufficiency in light of their role as primary caretakers of children, or the gender-related needs of women for job training opportunities. Finally, a primary goal of this project is to identify gender-specific job training and employment opportunities for increasing economic self-sufficiency among currently and formerly incarcerated women.

We will review the research that has been done on the circumstances under which women have been incarcerated, with special focus on the economic pathway to crime. Since there are multiple pathways to crime among women, none of which can be singled out as a primary causal factor, we will also review some studies in areas that form, with economic marginality, a web of concerns and stressors (Richie, 2001), including family instability, abuse history, and substance addiction. We will end this section with a review of studies that discuss approaches and programs that have been implemented, especially ones that focus on education and employment.

**Economic Pathway to Crime**

When the educational and work experiences of women under correctional supervision are examined, the data show that these women have been marginalized from the conventional world of work. (Bloom et al., 2003, at 48.)

Women who have been involved in criminal activity face challenges and pressures, such as poverty-related deficits in education, employment history, and income, which marginalize them from

conventional employment. Moreover, nationally, an increase in the number of female-headed households, with a subsequent increase in child-rearing responsibilities for mothers, and economic policies that negatively affect women (especially mothers) disproportionately, have resulted in declining opportunities for mainstream living, let alone economic self-sufficiency. In this context, crime can become a means to survive.

**Low Educational Level.** Typical profiles of women involved in the criminal justice system indicate they have a very low level of educational attainment and few employment-related skills. (Anderson, 2006; Bloom et al., 2003.) In 1999, statistics compiled by the Bureau of Justice Statistics show that nationwide, and in Vermont as well, only about half of the incarcerated women in state or local jails had a high school degree. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999.) Among those who do become incarcerated, there is limited access to post-secondary education, and this access is further limited through Pell Grant eligibility criteria that prohibit grant awards for student loans to convicted felons. Drug offenses further limit women's access to education; those convicted are not eligible for educational opportunities through the Higher Education Act of 1998.

**Underemployment.** Lack of education has many far-reaching effects, one of which is underemployment and unemployment. At the time of arrest, well over half (60%) of the women in state prisons nationally reported that they were unemployed in the year prior to arrest, one-third of whom were not seeking employment. (Taxman and Cropsey, 2006.) In Vermont, an alarming finding was that half of the women in our incarcerated sample (again, see Tiffany Bluemle's article in this issue) had never worked at any time. In addition to the low wages earned by these women, most of the jobs required low levels of skills, leading nowhere. (Owen and Bloom, 1995.)

*See VEIRONT, next page*

VERMONT, from page 51

Further, among those who reported employment, \$6.50 was the top wage earned by two-thirds of the women; most incomes fell below \$600 per month. The other sources of income among incarcerated women, according to researchers in California (Bloom et al., 1994) were largely illegal (81%), or some kind of public support (22%); only 37% were working at a legitimate job. Even women who have better-than-low-wage jobs earn less than men do historically. (Anderson, 2002.)

In comparing social backgrounds of male and female offenders (Chesney-Lind and Shelden, 1998; Steffensmeier and Allan, 1996), it is true that both tend to come from low socioeconomic status, are disproportionately from minority groups, are poorly educated, and under- or unemployed. The big difference between men and women is the greater extent to which women are responsible for dependent children (Bloom et al., 2003), which frequently limits their ability to pursue further education or full-time employment. In Vermont alone, 80% of the women in prison are mothers, and 75% were the primary caregivers at the time of arrest. (Baegge et al., 2007.) Steffensmeier (1993) concurs that growing economic pressures on women stem from an increase in rates of divorce, illegitimacy, and resultant female-headed households, along with greater responsibility for children. He argues that these factors, among others, have resulted in an increase in property crimes and other consumer-based crimes, such as shoplifting, check fraud, welfare fraud.

**Primary Caretakers.** Most women involved in the criminal justice system are heads of households or the primary caretakers of their children (Baegge et al., 2007), and in 1997, 32% of all female heads of households lived below the poverty line. (Bloom et al., 2003.) Welfare reform legislation in the 1990s has made it much more difficult for women to support themselves and their children. Other legislation has added to the burden of these women through making them ineligible for benefits if they have been convicted of drug offenses—which the great majority have been—until their involvement with the criminal justice system has ended. Further, convictions may make

them ineligible for public housing or Section 8 subsidies.

**Effects of Economic Policy Changes.** Because women appear disproportionately among the poor, changes in economic policy affect them more directly than men. For example, Haney (2004) cites studies in the United States (Sutton, 2000; Beckett and Western, 2001) that point to a negative correlation between welfare spending and rates of incarceration, so that the less money spent on welfare benefits, the higher the rate of incarceration in that state. This negative correlation has also been found to hold in cross-national studies. (Sutton, 2000.) Countries which do not care for the economically marginalized through welfare spending tend to rely on imprisonment of those people unable to sustain themselves through legal means. Imprisonment, especially for drug-related crimes, further limits their opportunities for becoming economically self-sufficient.

Thus, most incarcerated women come from backgrounds of little experience in the world of mainstream employment, with few educational or job skills to enable them to join that mainstream. Moreover, recent changes in some legislative or regulatory policies have unintended consequences which further marginalize these women economically, and which increase their vulnerability to alternative means of obtaining money, including crime.

#### Other Pathways

Women who have become involved with the criminal justice system have experienced marginalization in other areas as well, most of which interact with low educational attainment and under- or unemployment to result in criminal involvement. Studies adopting the "pathways to crime" perspective, as described in Bloom et al. (2003), show the relationship between certain histories (personal abuse and trauma, family instability, mental illness, substance addiction, troubled or inadequate relationships, and criminal involvement) and economic and social marginality. Many of these factors are associated with poverty. According to these authors, "Among women, the most common pathways to crime are based on survival (of abuse and poverty) and substance abuse." (Bloom et al., 2003, at 52.) This perspective attempts to take a whole life perspective when seeking to understand

causes of crime. These factors are not necessarily causal in a linear way, but they intersect with each other to create a web of stressors that impede movement towards adult independence and autonomy, especially economic autonomy.

#### Substance Abuse

Drug and alcohol addiction are pervasive among incarcerated women and are directly or indirectly connected to the other pathways to crime. Women convicted of drug- and alcohol-related crimes comprise a large percentage of the incarcerated population and, historically as well as currently, female drug offenders have come from unstable families in communities lacking basic economic and social resources; these are poor women, and often poor women of color. (Martin, 2006.) According to Bloom et al. (2003), women's involvement with drugs begins later in life than men's because of tears in the social fabric of resources at the individual, familial, and environmental levels. This breakdown of protective factors is associated with:

an increase in childhood fears, anxieties, phobias, and failed relationships. The roots of female drug use often lie in psychiatric disorders that began prior to the drug use. (Bloom et al., 2003, at 42.)

The drug use frequently begins within the context of a relationship with a male sexual partner and becomes part of the sustaining fabric of that relationship.

**Not Necessary Connection.** Martin (2006) describes an interesting twist in the history of women's drug use and criminality: It is an example of how criminality is sometimes related to shifts at the social-contextual or policy level, rather than simply changes in individual behavior. Martin's historical review shows that white, middle-class women formed the majority of the opiate addict population at the beginning of the twentieth century because they were the heaviest users of medications that contained opiates. Thus, Martin argues, the connection between drug use and crime is not a necessary one, but one that is affected by factors such as the increasing availability of drugs like crack cocaine, scientific information showing the dangers of certain drugs, and, perhaps most importantly, the policy responses to drug

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use among women. The latter involves the major policy shift in viewing drug use as a criminal justice issue rather than as a health issue, and the shift in control of narcotics from physicians to law enforcement. The culmination of these shifts was Nixon's "war on drugs," which started in 1972, with associated punitive measures to control drug use, partly in response to increasing social disorder and rising crime rates in general. The accessibility of cheap crack cocaine (and ease of noninjection use) paved the way for an increase in involvement of poor women in the drug world, as well as an increase in the overall number of users and dealers. The policy response to this increase was ever-increasing punitiveness regarding the use and sale of drugs, and a subsequent development of an underground drug economy, including an increasing number and proportion of women under the control of the criminal justice system.

Thus, Martin's argument is that some women always used drugs and had addiction problems, but they were not related to crime until drug control policies shifted drug control to the criminal justice system. A link between drug use and crime was forged, an underground economy developed in order to supply need for now-illegal drugs, and addicts, already a vulnerable and needy population, turned to crime for income. The women who became involved in this underground drug economy were women who came from communities of extreme poverty and from families that were often involved in the drug culture, with associated levels of incarceration and fragmented family life.

**Mandatory Minimum Sentencing.** Another example of how policy changes in the legal system can affect the rate of incarceration is the "war on drugs," which was associated with an 888% increase in the number of women incarcerated for drug offenses in a 10-year period. (Mauer et al., 1999.) Mandatory minimum sentencing structures removed judicial discretion in considering women's child-caring responsibilities when formulating a sentence, so that a significant increase in incarceration of women rather than probation or diversionary programs resulted. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999.) These laws also did not allow for distinctions among

levels of involvement in drug crimes, so that women who actually played minor or supporting roles in drug crimes were given severe sentences.

#### Family Instability

Approximately 42% of incarcerated women come from a single-parent home (NIMH, 2001), a factor that is associated with a high rate of poverty (Anderson, 2002), and 17% lived in foster care or in a group home at some point during childhood. A study in Vermont among incarcerated women (Steele, 2006) showed that the great majority of 96 incarcerated women had had similar family fragmentation: 70% lived outside their home as a teen, 34% were placed in protective custody as a minor, and 30% lived in multiple foster homes. Among those living in foster homes, the range was from one to 45 different homes, with half of those living in more than six different homes. In addition, an astonishing 50% of women had an immediate family member who had been in prison. (Bloom et al., 2003.) This kind of background is one more indicator of the absence of conventional resources at the center of women's lives, resources that could support education and other means to employability.

#### Abuse

Another aspect of family instability is the presence of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, which is estimated to characterize anywhere from 40% to 80% of women in prisons across the country. (Owen and Bloom, 1995; Browne et al., 1999; Chesney-Lind, 1989.) Women involved in the criminal justice system are more likely than men to be victims as children or adults. Experiences of abuse in unstable family situations can lead to running away from home; efforts to survive on the street, a struggle for money that can easily lead to illegal sources of income given a paucity of conventional means. This can also undermine stability of or even access to education, personal self-respect and sense of integrity, personal sense of power in the world to achieve a goal, and emotional connections in the world. It is not surprising that women in prison have a much higher incidence of mental disorders than women in the community (and than men) and that this incidence is correlated with a history

of physical or sexual abuse. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999.)

Women who have been subject to domestic violence need material and economic resources for housing, educational and vocational training, and job development skills to increase their likelihood of being able to begin new lives, independent of abusive partners. Without these resources, women are stuck in a dependent and vulnerable position, and are more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system.

#### Gender Inequality

Steffensmeier and Allan (1996) observe that economic marginality and related criminal activity are also affected by gender inequality. They argue that patriarchal power relations affect women through victimization. Traditional gender roles are prevalent among both male and female offenders. For women, this contributes to lowered expectations of economic self-sufficiency and a corresponding reduction of motivation. Combine this kind of role entrapment with increased primary care-taking responsibilities and female-headed households through divorce and illegitimacy (Steffensmeier, 1993) and increased economic pressure occurs. Similarly, Richie (1996) argues that women and girls' vulnerability to male violence forces some out of the home prematurely, with negative effects on education and an increased need for money through any means possible.

All of these factors (limited educational attainment, under- and unemployment, gender inequality in the workplace, reduced assistance for those in need through social welfare policy, increasing involvement in the drug subculture, changes in the drug policies which disproportionately and negatively affected women, and a background of family instability and fragmentation, including various forms of abuse) have the net effect of disconnecting these women from conventional community resources like school, work, and stable family life, resources that protect most of us from ongoing struggles for economic sufficiency and support us in leading independent, productive lives. The absence of such resources and buffers in the lives of women leave them vulnerable to criminal activity as a way to survive.

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### Interventions

"Policies, programs, and services need to respond specifically to women's pathways in and out of crime and to the contexts of their lives that support criminal behavior." (Bloom et al., 2003, at 85.)

What is needed is:

Access to a full range of work and programs designed to expand economic and social roles for women, with an emphasis on education, career counseling, and exploration of nontraditional training; relevant life skills, including parenting and social and economic assertiveness; and prerelease and work/education release programs. (American Correctional Association, 1995, at 2.)

Policy shifts in the early 1970s resulted in the harsh and punitive sentencing of women. The current call for gender-specific programming, rather than haphazard and minor modifications of interventions essentially designed for men, is a refreshing change from the historical reality of interventions with women involved with the criminal justice system. One important aspect of gender-specific programming is that the complexity of pathways to women's criminal activity is approached through a continuum-of-care model that addresses issues beyond job training alone.

**Gender-Specific Programming and Continuum-of-Care Model.** Bloom and Covington define gender-specific programming as:

multidimensional and based on theoretical perspectives that acknowledge women's pathways into the criminal justice system. These approaches address social (e.g., poverty, race, class, and gender inequality) and cultural factors. These interventions address such issues as abuse, violence, family relationships, substance abuse, and co-occurring disorders. They provide a strength-based approach to treatment and skill building. The emphasis is on self-efficacy. (Bloom and Covington, 2000, at 11.)

Belknap (2000) suggests that such programs must include an orientation to women that goes beyond making them good wives and mothers to helping them become financially independent.

This means that interventions must go beyond parenting classes, for example, educational goals must go beyond the GED, and vocational programs must go beyond traditional feminine skills like cosmetology and cooking.

To take into account women's specific pathways to crime and the ways in which their involvement with crime is different from that of men, some authors (Bloom et al., 2003; Jacobs, 2001; Leadership Champlain, 2007; O'Brien, 2006) have emphasized the need for a model of "continuum-of-care" or integrated services to support women's advancement toward economic viability. Martin's (2006) discussion of the need for a comprehensive approach to drug treatment seems applicable to programs for increasing employability. She argues that focusing on one problem alone, such as drug addiction, is insufficient, in view of gender issues—women need support for increasing their belief in themselves and what they can accomplish, they need treatment for mental disorders resulting from histories of abuse and trauma, and they need support for their primary care-taking responsibilities. A review of case studies of successful programs for incarcerated women suggested that even education or job training itself is not enough, and should be combined with additional supports such as "educational programs that can help women critically examine their lives in relation to social structures framed by race, class, and gender" (Baege et al., 2007, at 52), and programs teaching practical social skills needed in successful employment (how to deal with racism on the job, how to deal with a difficult boss, etc.). O'Brien (2006) concluded that women need to have support for a gradual re-entry into the labor market in such a way that they can also meet the sometimes complex and demanding post-release program requirements. This study also calls for a comprehensive approach to the multiple needs of women prior to their release.

**Same Resources Needed as Before Incarceration.** This call for a comprehensive approach to programming is echoed in a proposal based upon a review of national employment programs serving ex-offenders and upon interviews with formerly incarcerated women in Vermont. (Leadership Champlain, 2007.) Recommendations for a program for women in transition from prison

included job readiness skills, life skills that enhance a woman's ability to govern her own life, job placement assistance, child-care support, affordable housing, and flexible hours (to accommodate probation/parole requirements).

Richie (2001) provides another call for a comprehensive approach to the complexity of pathways to crime among women. She argues that most of the women re-entering their communities following incarceration need the same resources and supports they needed before they went to prison. These include:

- Substance abuse treatment;
- Physical and mental health care;
- Adequate, accessible, and affordable child care;
- Transportation;
- Safe and secure housing; and
- Educational and employment training and supports.

Family members are frequently limited in their own resources, public agencies have limiting eligibility requirements for their services, and women can easily become discouraged and pulled back toward illegal activity. Richie describes these needs as forming:

[a] complex web of concerns and stressors that often compete with and exacerbate one another. The woman will need an apartment to regain custody of her children, she will need a job to get an apartment, she will need to get treatment for her addiction to be able to work, and initial contact with her children may only be possible during business hours if they are in custody of the state. (Richie, 2001, at 380-81.)

**Broadening Base of Support.** Several studies give concrete examples of successful programs that involve a comprehensive approach to education, or preparation for employment, and which involve members of the community in addressing some of the needs of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women in moving forward with their lives.

Several studies in the literature (Luke, 2002; Fine et al., 2001; Torre and Fine, 2005) reviewed in Baege et al. (2007)

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identified successful components of educational programs for incarcerated women, including the involvement of community volunteers and professionals, creating "a community of learners," which provided mentors and role models. Other components were voluntary participation in the program, an emphasis on completion of the program requirements for the resulting sense of mastery, and the development of critical thinking skills of benefit to the women making decisions toward getting their lives back together.

One example of an innovative program underway in Vermont that is based upon training by professional tradeswomen from the community is the Modular Home Project. (Vermont Works for Women, 2007.) This program combines job training with training in some of the "soft skills" related to successful employment. Training in nontraditional work for women occurs on-site, in the women's prison, through the building of a modular home that is later transported to a home-site, available for purchase through local land trusts or housing agencies. Incarcerated women learn all the skills necessary for building a house—plumbing, electricity, construction, etc.—with the help of female professionals in these areas. An important component of this training is one full day (out of four days per week) devoted to the development of skills such as teamwork and the ability to function as part of a group working towards a larger goal; self-confidence in the face of new, unfamiliar tasks; problem solving; math competence; leadership abilities and learning to teach; good work ethics, commitment, and forbearance.

Further support for a broad base of participation in interventions for incarcerated women comes from studies described by Fine et al. (2001) and Flavin (2004). They found that programs that include the participation of families and community members in the planning and implementation of training seem to be more successful than those involving the individual woman alone. Participation of people with no history with the individual women can help support family members or friends who are frustrated in their own sometimes long-term efforts to help and can help illuminate the way to more options.

Mentoring is one way for community members to be closely involved in helping women address the multiple challenges they face when re-entering the community. Mentors can play a critical role for women as they begin job training and seeking employment. (Hale, 2001.) They can offer a caring, continuous, stable relationship, and that relationship can be a model of how to establish and develop a healthy support system—something that is sorely missing for most women who become incarcerated—and can help them navigate the challenges of moving into the world of work. Since so much of the social fabric of these women's lives is torn, successful programs must help to restore this; Flavin (2004) refers to this as mobilizing social capital. O'Brien (2002), in a study of formerly incarcerated African-American women in a residential program, found that those who had employment, housing, and an assigned mentor were the most successful.

Preliminary data from a small mentoring program in Vermont indicate a reduced rate of recidivism among women who worked closely with a mentor within the context of an active mentoring group. (Mercy Connections, 2007.) This program provides intensive training of mentors, with regular meetings of all mentors and mentees to discuss common issues, and the use of former inmates among the mentors.

#### Policy Interventions

In addition to interventions described above that focus on the needs of individual women in regard to employment and job training, interventions at the policy level must be considered as well. The problems of unemployment, economic marginality, and related criminal activity must be defined beyond individual difficulties or "shortcomings." That is, interventions must address the social-contextual factors that lead to and support criminal activity among women, including gender inequality in wages, sentencing laws and social policies that consistently disadvantage poor and minority women, and the growing disparity in income and opportunity that results in poverty and hopelessness. In addition, interventions should be based upon and commensurate with expanded social and cultural expectations of women's

roles and work to include nontraditional avenues of work. (Martin, 2006.)

**Agency Partnerships.** One kind of response at this level is described by Berman at the Center for Effective Public Policy in her comprehensive study on gender-responsive approaches to transitioning women offenders from prison to community. She calls for partnerships with local or statewide workforce development agencies "in order to ensure that institutional education, job readiness, and employment training match the opportunities available to women on the outside." (Berman, n.d., at 16.) It is also important to make sure that the job skills acquired will lead to jobs with wages sufficient for them to support themselves and their children, and that the job skills will be ones they can legally use (not for jobs which require a license their incarceration makes them ineligible for). Although subsidized employment and minimum wage work may be necessary as a beginning, this kind of work should be supported by mentors, family, and job training programs as a first step, with identifiable means and resources towards the goal of meaningful employment and sufficient wages.

**Role of Community.** In a similar vein, Richie points to the necessity for looking beyond individual women to the communities from which the women came, and to which most of them will return, and the importance of designing programs that strengthen the capacity of the community to work with this population. Through building linkages between community-based organizations and other services, prevention of incarceration could more easily be accomplished. Among other things, services would need to be close to where the women live, they would need to be gender and culturally appropriate, and would need to begin while the women are incarcerated. "A community-development approach would incorporate policy-level work, community organizing, and social-change strategies to increase the quality of community life overall and for women specifically." (Richie, 2001, at 384.) This call for coordinated services for women returning to their communities is echoed by several studies. (Bloom et al., 2003; Jacobs, 2001; Martin, 2006.)

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### Alternatives Can Mitigate Speed, Frequency of Revolving Door

We continue to put more and more women behind bars despite the fact that most do not present a risk to public safety. Most of these women are mothers, and their families suffer greatly. We know that drug treatment and alternatives to incarceration are a much better investment of taxpayer dollars, and, unlike incarceration, these programs equip women to live self-sufficient, law-abiding lives in the community. (Anne Jacobs, Women's Prison Association.)

Rehabilitative interventions must also take into account the fact that some of the original pathways to crime become exacerbated by imprisonment: loss of employment, housing, and frequently reduced access to public assistance, educational and employment opportunities, and sometimes, even familial support. (Bloom et al., 2003; Baege et al., 2007; O'Brien, 2006.) Many of the social policies enacted in the nineties aimed at drug-related crimes had a heightened negative impact on women, in part because of their unique vulnerabilities: low levels of education with limited job skills, high rates of unemployment, subsequent high needs for public assistance, and primary child care-taking responsibilities. One example is Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, which makes women who are convicted of a drug-related felony offense ineligible for cash assistance and food stamps. Another example is ineligibility for tuition assistance for higher education. Public housing assistance restrictions can limit options for women, which in turn can limit options for safe (nonabusive), affordable housing in areas which would allow her to reconnect with the supportive resources and people she needs to begin a crime-free life with her children. Finally, the Adoption and Safe Families Act, which calls for hearings regarding custody of children after only a year of separation, can jeopardize a mother's parental rights and her movement towards family stability before she has even left prison. (Bloom et al., 2003; Jacobs, 2001.)

These added economic and emotional stressors often lead women back into reoffending, often through substance abuse relapse. Thus, incarceration itself can keep the revolving door going, without appropriate interventions that can lead to alternatives.

Alternatives to incarceration for non-violent nonfelony offenders (Jacobs, 2001; Bloom et al., 2003) have the potential to mitigate the speed and frequency of that revolving door for women and would in fact support a woman's efforts to get drug treatment, reconnect with her family and especially her children, and reduce the likelihood of reincarceration. In addition, some alternatives to incarceration could allow a woman to maintain continuity in job training and employment. The Vermont pilot study (Baege et al., 2007) of a sampling of women inmates and staff suggested that both groups questioned the appropriateness of prison as a place for many of the women, particularly first-time nonviolent offenders. Instead, this report called for the development of alternatives to incarceration through a collaboration among various facets of the criminal justice system including alternative correctional system responses, such as provision of livable wage job training during their incarceration, and the development of community supports, such as mentors, and programs that support job skill development and that increase job placement and educational opportunities.

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*Program Replication***Maine's Experience With Replicating Vermont Works for Women**

by Becky Hayes Boober, Ph.D.

If, as the proverb suggests, "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," then Maine flatters Vermont's Building Homes, Building Lives program by replicating it through an interagency, collaborative effort. Program replication necessitates a process of engaging appropriate partners and stakeholders, developing a strategic plan, mobilizing resources, implementing, evaluating, and celebrating. Currently, Maine's Department of Corrections is using this process to modify and implement the groundbreaking Building Homes, Building Lives program that was developed by Vermont Works for Women (VWW), a not-for-profit agency that teaches incarcerated women the skills necessary to build modular homes and other construction projects.

**Background**

In 2002, Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) opened its Women's Center at the Maine Correctional Center in Windham and instituted a gender-responsive, therapeutic community designed to empower its female residents with the skills and supports they need to live a thriving, crime-free life after release. In developing the Women's Center programming, Maine adhered to the research-based principle that women's pathways to offending differ from and are often more complex than men's. Their criminogenic needs are confounded by multiple, interconnected problems that reflect individuals, family systems, and micro and macro environmental factors, such as social stratification of privilege. (Sydney, 2005.) Bloom, Owen, and Covington (2005) point out that women's offending behaviors are often linked to factors such as the struggle to support themselves and their children in a society that gives fewer economic privileges to women, a history

of trauma and victimization, substance abuse issues, mental illness often tied to early abuse, economic and social marginality, homelessness, low self-efficacy, and relationship issues or pressures. Because their pathways to offending are different, women's recidivism risks and transition needs vary from those of their male counterparts and require a different approach. (Boober and Fortuin, 2006.)

The Women's Unit at the Maine Correctional Center integrates gender-responsive theories into its programming, release planning, and community follow up by adhering to the research-based principles of gender responsiveness. The unit, which houses 77 minimum and medium custody women, maintains a daily emphasis on people, not programs, as recommended by Jeremy Travis (2004). It recognizes the fact that humans are complex and their behavior results from an elaborate web of influences, and not just their recidivism risk factors. Therefore, the center is a strengths-based (Graybeal, 2001) therapeutic community environment with an emphasis on skill building, treatment, relationships, and self-efficacy. Transition planning is multidimensional and addresses social, cultural, and therapeutic issues, including gender-responsive factors such as relational violence, family and natural support relationships, substance abuse, co-occurring disorders, poverty, cultural norms, and nonprivileged status. (Bloom et al., 2005.) As a result, it boasts a recidivism rate of less than 10% (7.5%) for its SVORI clients and 20% for the entire women's prison population.

**Continuous Evaluation, Improvement.** Dedicated to these principles of gender-responsive and evidence-based practices, MDOC also engages in a process of continuous improvement and evaluation. Internal reviews revealed that a program deficit was the lack of vocational skill-building opportunities to prepare women for socioeconomic stability after release, a key need identified in gender-responsive literature as the fifth principle: Women need to be empowered to improve their individual self-sufficiency and the social

socioeconomic conditions for women. (Bloom et al., 2005, 2003.) This program deficit was confirmed when Patricia Van Voorhis, sponsored by the National Institute of Corrections, conducted an evaluation of the Women's Center in summer 2005. While Van Voorhis recognized the Women's Center for its gender-responsive, relational community that addresses the fact that "many women offenders have life experiences that diminish their feelings of personal effectiveness and value" (Van Voorhis, 2005, at 2), she also noted:

Women will need more opportunities for vocational training . . . while incarcerated if they are to: a) improve employment prospects upon prison release; and b) increase their likelihood of achieving educational and vocational advancement, since post-release training (while still valuable) must compete with other demands. (Van Voorhis, 2005, at 9.)

She also recommended the establishment of a prerelease center with work release opportunities, which was in fact accomplished with the opening of the Women's Re-entry Center in Bangor in November 2007.

**Vocational Programming.** Because MDOC is committed to providing vocational training at both the Women's Center and the Women's Re-entry Center that will prepare women for careers in high demand/high growth industries and will reduce their economic marginalization, it consulted with the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) to align the development of vocational programming with labor market statistics and with MDOL's insights into industries most receptive to hiring persons with criminal convictions. Construction was identified as a rapidly growing industry paying livable wages and committed to hiring women, often due to contractual incentives. Specifically, construction of modular homes incorporating environmentally friendly concepts was targeted as a growing Maine industry.

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dollar value of \$195,000. The savings generated by the program are even greater when one considers that program graduates recidivate at less than half the rate of the state's average rate of 51%.

VWV's work with incarcerated women has been motivated by the belief that women's criminal activity results, at least in part, from their financial vulnerability and their inability to envision a way out of poverty and dependence—a belief affirmed by years of conversations with women incarcerated in Vermont.

#### **Integrate Interventions With Training, Employment Opportunities**

It is only in recent years, when the number of women in prisons across the country has increased at an alarming rate, that correctional research has begun to specifically focus on incarcerated women and their pathways to crime. Public debate about what can be done to reduce the number of women cycling in and out of prison has often tended to focus on the need for increased residential and outpatient programs for treating alcohol and other drug dependency issues. Often left out of the discussion—or reduced to a passing reference in research on incarcerated women—is the role that stable employment plays in a woman's successful transition out of prison, in her ability to resist relapse, and in her success in avoiding reincarceration.

This article describes the work-related experiences of Vermont's incarcerated female population as reported by the women through surveys and interviews. In the aggregate, their stories point to a conclusion that, while treating women for addiction or trauma is critical to helping women avoid recidivism, interventions are more likely to be successful when integrated with training and employment opportunities.

Battling addiction and trauma, which for many women is a life-long struggle, requires developing a full set of resources—both internal and external—that are cultivated through individual relationships, through counseling or participation in support groups, and, we believe, through work. Affirmed by our interviews with some of Vermont's incarcerated women, work can provide an arena in which one can develop

confidence through meeting goals or discovering new talents, establish new social networks, and find connection to a broader purpose. Work is also critical to achieving financial independence. For those in abusive relationships—relationships that are often linked to women's entry in the criminal justice system as offenders (Browne, Miller, and Maguin, 1999)—work often plays a central role in helping a woman escape patterns of isolation and dependence.

Until now, Vermont Works for Women staff could only support this view with the anecdotal evidence and placement rates of program graduates. Last spring, VWV was one of three organizations chosen by the Vermont Women's Fund to participate in a new grant program focused on economic justice and independence. The grant's flexibility and the Fund's clear interest in women's economic independence allowed us to conduct research to learn more about women's pathways to prison; develop an understanding of their past employment histories, attitudes towards work, and plans for the future; and to take note of their suggestions for interventions that could prevent future criminal activity, encourage self-direction, and support independence.

We are hopeful that this article offers a fuller picture of the histories, hopes, and possibilities for Vermont's incarcerated women, and that it can provide grist for current debates about ways to support incarcerated women in their efforts to achieve economic and emotional self-sufficiency.

#### **What the Women Told Us**

The purpose of this research was to describe the employment preparation and work experiences of women currently under the supervision of the Vermont Department of Corrections. During fall 2007, data were collected in two ways: through a written survey completed by 58 women and through one-on-one interviews with 19 women. Randomly selected participants at both the Southeast State and Dale correctional facilities voluntarily completed surveys or participated in interviews. Any distinction between survey or interview participants is noted in the results when relevant; in most cases, percentages refer to survey results, while quotes are from the interviews. When no distinction is made, the results apply to the group of

women as a whole. Overall, interview participants shared similar demographic, criminal histories, and work experiences with survey participants.

**Demographics and Pathways to Crime.** In our interviews and surveys, women described significant financial challenges, including limited access to financial resources. For varied reasons, few of the women viewed employment as a means of addressing these challenges.

**Children.** The women who participated in this study were comparable to incarcerated women throughout the country: About half were under 30, almost three-quarters had children under 12, half had preschool-aged children, and nearly two-thirds were primary caregivers at the time of their arrest.

**Education.** Over half had a high school degree or less, with about 10% of the women completing less than an eighth grade education. About one-third of the women had completed some college coursework, with only 10% completing an AA or BA degree.

**Family Background.** Many of the women interviewed told stories about growing up in families where a parent's work, sickness, or substance abuse resulted in limited parental support. Over half reported that their families were either somewhat poor or very poor. Over 33% of the women surveyed were in foster care at some point in their childhood.

A majority of the women said that their criminal activity began between the ages of nine and 15:

I got suspended from school in the 4th grade for having alcohol.

I started getting in trouble at 12, 13-years-old. At 14 I tried heroin, by 15 I had a habit. At 16 I was on juvenile probation for writing bad checks.

I did a burglary when I was 14.

I started drinking with my grandmother at nine or 10.

**Crimes.** Nearly half of the women who participated in the study had been incarcerated for drug- or alcohol-related crimes, and nearly half for money-related crimes (embezzlement, forging checks, shoplifting). It is important to note that there was some overlap in these two categories: Some drug-related crimes (drug dealing) were related to getting money,

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and some money-related crimes were related to drug addiction. Nonviolent crimes included embezzlement, driving under the influence (DUI), drug possession, petty larceny, credit card fraud, retail theft, bad checks, and violations of probation. Only 10% of those surveyed were incarcerated for violent crimes.

Among those surveyed that said their crimes were related to a need for money, many told us that a drug habit or child support issues contributed to this need. Among the things women told us:

I needed money to take care of my son and rent, bills.

My bills kept piling up so I had to [steal].

I lost my job, unemployment ran out . . . went on welfare but [it was] not enough money to pay the bills.

[There were] no good jobs so I sold drugs.

[I] could never get by [and] needed to feed my children.

I had left my husband and [writing bad checks] was the only means of living that I had.

Most of the women in this study reported serious financial difficulties prior to their arrest—whether or not their crime was related to getting money. These difficulties included outstanding bills ranging from \$2,500 to over \$45,000 (in two cases). These bills were for back rent, credit cards, restitution, utilities, medical expenses (70% did not have medical insurance), motor vehicle fines (75%), and loans.

**Employment Histories.** Two-thirds of the women surveyed indicated that they were unemployed at the time of arrest, and only half had ever supported themselves through employment. Of the third that had been employed at the time of their arrest, well over 50% had been employed less than a year, 30% had been employed for fewer than three months. Almost half had relied on public assistance, and half reported income from illegal activities. Ten percent reported supplementing this income with child support or family loans.

Although some women were financially stable prior to engaging in criminal behaviors, many of the interviewed

women reported never having thought about how they might support themselves. Some had no idea what it would take to be self-sufficient, and many interviewees noted that they had never experienced earning enough money to be so. In addition, many commented that they never had the kind of familial or peer encouragement that would enable them to see themselves as competent and capable of finding and keeping a job.

[When growing up] I didn't think about [work]. I always thought, "I am never going to work, never. I'm just going to marry a rich man."

Dad sold drugs. That was my model for getting money. It seemed to work. We always had stuff. He looked like he was enjoying it.

I never had a lot of stability. When I do get stability, it's not my own. [I'm] dependent too much on others . . . [I] live with my sister, [depend on] my boyfriend to drive me.

I never had anyone at home who showed me how to work . . . I don't do well on my own.

[I think] a lot of women only know the most minimum way to live, to think about jobs. That's what they grew up with and that's what is all around them.

I've never lived alone. I've never really had to pay my bills on my own, none of that kind of stuff. And when I think about doing it, or when I got out there, obviously, I panic. And I think I can't do this.

Part of the difficulty these women had in seeing work as a meaningful part of their lives was that many started having children before they finished school or entered the world of full time work.

I never had a grasp of what I wanted to be when I grew up but then I became a young mother, so I never really had a chance to fulfill dreams I wanted to as far as my work and that sort of thing.

I never thought about a career or work ethic . . . I got pregnant at 16 and only made it through ninth grade, and dropped out of high school . . . I have mostly been raising kids.

**Prison's Opportunity.** Interestingly, prison can offer many women new-

found time and unique opportunities to build marketable skills. Residents at Southeast State Correctional Facility in Windsor, for example, can participate in building modular homes or working in the plate and print shop.

Commented one participant in the modular home program at SESCOF:

I'm really, really enjoying building houses. I never thought that as old as I am that this would be an option for me . . . I feel like I'm accomplishing something and the fact that these homes are going to low income families makes me feel even better about what we are doing. Seventy-five cents an hour is what we make here and it doesn't pay for anything, it barely pays for phone calls home, but it's the fact that we're doing it, and we're learning something, I feel good about it. It's helped a lot with my recovery.

But a third of the women we surveyed said they were not currently preparing for a job in any way, and half the women skipped our question about this altogether. The ones who said they were preparing described activities (writing resumes and cover letters) that are limited in their potential to lead to employment. Only a few were practicing interview skills or getting direct help.

Many women who recognized the value of educational and work opportunities also noted that their options in prison to build skills or take courses were limited.

I'd like to see [prison be] more like a work camp where everybody was able to have a job . . . because women just wait and wait and wait to get a job here . . . it took me seven weeks before there was an opening . . . I went out of my mind . . . I watched a lot of women who had trouble being inside the dorms and then start a job and there's a whole change in them . . . they're not having as many problems inside because they're out in the field all day . . . doing work.

One woman commented that she is scared to be on her own on the outside, having never had role models or other support for working. She advocated for increasing work opportunities within

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jail—if only to give women the experience of doing something every day.

We need to have practice with having a job. We can't just go from sitting in here all day to working every day.

Another woman noted that job opportunities within prison walls ought to be relevant to job prospects on the outside:

[Right now] the jobs only relate to what we do here (i.e., cooking, cleaning). It would be better to have jobs where you can transfer the skills to jobs outside. VCI (the license plate and sign making shop at Windsor) is great, but how do you transfer those skills?

In addition to the importance women ascribed to being able to work while incarcerated, many expressed a hunger to learn more in general—through computer or college-level courses or classes in financial management, business, accounting, or parenting.

I think more classes would be awesome . . . A lot of women don't know computer skills . . . you need that in any kind of business training . . . the basics that would help somebody get in the door, entry level.

Women just make cards (on the computers). I do crossword puzzles. We could learn Excel and how to do PowerPoint but no one comes in to teach us . . . Many women here do mom-mail and that's great but it's crafts. Many women here need an education. We need more than high school classes.

While some expressed high expectations for themselves upon their release—starting a small business, for example, or building their own home—many confessed later in their interview a deep-seated sense of hopelessness about actually achieving their goals.

They worried about not having the resources to cope with complex and overlapping transitional challenges: financial responsibilities, childcare, finding safe and affordable housing, employment (even having the right clothes to wear when looking for work), and meeting requirements of probation and parole.

I will need to work and will have to do my education at night but I also don't want to leave my son alone. I worry I will have a harder time getting a job because of my criminal past.

I've been here for almost a year now. And I hate to admit it but I am institutionalized. It scares me to death because everything here is not perfect, but it's structured. I need that stepping piece to go back out in the community.

Most of the women interviewed did not feel that they could shape the direction of their lives. When asked in the survey to name the one thing that would make the difference in being able to get a job upon release, nearly a third cited the need for the "support of [my] boyfriend or family." While this response can be interpreted in a number of different ways, it is striking in its basic implication: that the women we surveyed and interviewed viewed their success as dependent upon somebody else.

#### Implications for Policy and Practice

The women in this study had little or no education, little or no work experience, not much opportunity to address either in prison, and no sense that a good job would help them out of the severe financial difficulties that in many cases contributed to their incarceration. These results and the role of women's economic marginality in behaviors that lead to incarceration suggest a need for a more comprehensive approach to develop their capacity to be financially independent.

The recommendations that follow incorporate our belief that employment should be a key part of the way policymakers and practitioners think about women's pathways to crime and various approaches to rehabilitation, transition, substance abuse, and trauma treatment.

**Activities.** Broaden training, education, and placement activities of women serving time in prison or in the community. While there are more options today than existed for incarcerated women eight years ago, more must be done to prepare women for the economic realities they will face upon release. Suggestions presented by interviewed women included strategies such as providing access to college-level courses, work opportunities that build marketable skills, personal

financial management training, computer skills development, and placement efforts that commence long before a woman leaves a facility. Such programs should harness the resources of organizations and employers outside correctional facilities whose connections to the community are key to transition.

We must view work not simply as one among many requirements of probation or parole, but as a critical component of transitional planning. For many of us, work builds confidence, offers structure, helps us set and meet goals, exposes us to new social networks, and connects us to a broader purpose—in addition to allowing us to pay our own bills.

**Employment Opportunities.** Develop part-time and flexible employment opportunities for women transitioning from prison to work. We must recognize that women released to the community might not be able or ready to assume full-time work right away. We should also consider the role that supported employment could play as an alternative to incarceration for nonviolent offenders with limited work histories. By providing both structure and job experience, transitional part-time employment that is connected to regional employers and supported by classroom work and counseling has enormous potential to stabilize women in the first critical months post-release and to encourage their development as long-term, law-abiding contributing members of society.

Transitional employment models targeting men and women transitioning from welfare to work or ex-offenders have been piloted across the country—in regions as diverse as Minnesota (Lifetrack Resources), Philadelphia (Transitional Work Corporation), Illinois (Heartland Alliance), and Georgia (GoodWorks!)—and enjoyed significant success.

**Community-Based Providers.** Draw upon and support the talent and resources of community-based organizations and educate women about these resources. Many of the women who were interviewed in the study were unfamiliar with the supportive resources upon which they could draw after their release—or confused about eligibility requirements. Women must be better prepared to explore and access these resources before they return home.

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## Worth Reading

by Russ Inmarigeon

### Parenting

#### An Intermediate Sanction That Fosters the Mother-Child Bond: A Process Evaluation of Summit House

by Pauline K. Brennan  
18 (3) Women & Criminal Justice 47-80 (2007)

In this research article, Pauline Brennan, who teaches in the criminal justice department at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, conducts a process evaluation of the treatment of women in a mother-child residential program located at three sites in North Carolina (Charlotte, Greensboro, and Raleigh). In particular, she interviews 15 women to assess "how that program builds competency in the relationships that [the women] have with their children." Women are eligible for the program if they are charged with a felony drug or drug-related offense and face a possible jail sentence.

Brennan opens the article with a description of the program's purpose and intake process. She also provides a review of the theoretical and empirical literature, including strong evidence that children matter to incarcerated mothers and parenting programs are valuable to them. Brennan notes:

Research on "best practices" indicates that more effective programs for female offenders with children are designed to preserve the family unit, foster the mother-child bond, and provide parenting skills, including discipline techniques without abuse.

Later, the article assesses the program's impact in terms of these three issues.

For this study, Brennan reviewed a complete range of program-related documents from intake forms to client prog-

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ress notes. She made two visits to each site (six visits in all), which occurred in July, August, and September 2004. She also conducted 29 face-to-face interviews with program administrators and staff and 15 similar interviews with mothers in the program. Finally, three program graduates were interviewed.

Brennan reports that mothers in the Summit House program value the ability the program provides for them to be with their children. This ability to be with their children, the author suggests, motivates the mothers to comply with program components. Brennan states:

While at the Summit House, the resident mother acts as the primary caretaker of her child(ren), and she agrees to two alternative discipline techniques—time out and redirection. Moreover, residents are expected to participate in all in-house parenting groups, complete assignments in the nurturing and child development curriculum, work toward attainment of set parenting goals, cook nutritionally balanced meals, and attend to their children's health needs.

Summit House is a behavior modification-based program and its day-to-day activities include writing journal entries and receiving "point reminders." Mothers in the program are given information and lessons about child safety, supervision, development, nutrition, and discipline. Significant emphasis is also given to health and dental care. Overall, the mothers view the program positively because it grants them time with their children, both those who live with them at Summit House and those who reside elsewhere outside Summit House. Still, while there was much routine mother-child contact, not all moth-

ers saw their children daily. Residents reported anxieties about reconnecting with their children, especially outside the confines of Summit House.

Interestingly, Brennan gives rare attention to assessing whether the program actually serves as an alternative to incarceration for women. She suggests three questions that may measure "the likelihood that the female offender would have been given a jail or prison sentence if not for the Summit House option." The three questions concern previous arrests not related to current offenses, violations of probation conditions, and self-perceptions of the consequences of not completing the Summit House program. These questions are suggestive: 10 of the 15 residents were, in fact, in the program because of probation violations, but this does not appear to be an inherent or particularly strong indicator of "alternativeness." Undoubtedly, some of the mothers may have ended up in jail or prison, but improved methods are needed to adequately measure this important, and rarely raised, question.

Brennan concludes with several recommendations:

- Staff should more closely examine the long-term effects of mother-child separation;
- Staff should provide additional methods for facilitating the mother-child-family reunification process;
- Staff should improve mothers' access to community-based mental health services;
- Staff should expand prereunification counseling; and
- The program should hire a parenting expert as a regular staff member.

*Available from: The Haworth Press, 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904-1580; (607) 722-5857; www.HaworthPress.com. ■*

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#### Fact Finding in Vermont

In Maine, corrections and labor departmental staff researched evidence-based and promising practices in construction training programs for women

in correctional settings and quickly became interested in the Vermont Works for Women program. Initial partners were identified and asked to participate in a fact-finding tour in July 2006 at VWW's invitation. Visiting representatives of agencies working together on

this project included the Maine Correctional Center's deputy superintendents of security and of programming and the Women's Center unit manager, MDOC central office directors, executives from

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the Volunteers of America Northern New England (VOANNE), MDOL assistant to the commissioner, Maine Housing's executive director and program director, and Women Unlimited's executive director. We learned early on that involving persons in key leadership roles in these organizations from the program's inception helped to solidify the interagency partnership critical for successful replication.

VWW staff members and representatives of Vermont's Department of Corrections were extraordinarily helpful and candid with their descriptions of their experience and of the curricula they had developed in building life and employment skills and in the technical aspects of building a modular home within a correctional facility.

Following the tour, the fact-finding committee concluded that the program was an effective model for Maine to replicate. The Maine project was named Women Building Futures (WBF): An Opportunity to "Retool Lives." Like the program in Vermont, WBF decided to build on Maine's tradition of strong, interagency collaborations to incorporate a social justice component. As part of their training, the program participants would build modular homes sold with Maine Housing financial subsidies to homeless or low-income families and individuals throughout Maine.

Maine Housing agreed to provide funds for the materials to build the first house and to distribute the homes built by WBF to families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Maine Housing's home ownership loan programs would provide resources for the families to purchase the modular homes, land, and land preparation. The vocational program would use proceeds from the sale of each home to purchase the materials needed to build the next home. Additionally, Maine Housing agreed to work with Women Unlimited to insure that the modular homes built complied with Maine Housing's "Green Standards." These energy-efficient standards would make the homes more economic for low-income families to heat and maintain.

**Partnership**

A critical step in the model replication was development of the partnership. Additional stakeholders were invited into

the collaboration and roles were clarified. VOANNE agreed to mobilize the needed resources for the project. Within a few months, they had solicited \$200,000 in foundational funds. MDOC provided \$25,000 toward site preparation and budgeted for all facility operations (classroom heating, for example) and security-related costs to run the vocational education program. Women Unlimited was selected as instructors for the modular home construction National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) certification program. WU had provided instruction for Vermont Works and began conducting NCCER certification construction basic courses in the Women's Center and the Maine State Prison. Later, they offered the courses for women at the Women's Re-entry Center. They also worked closely with MDOL to design strategies to place women in post-release career opportunities or apprenticeships. Women, Work, and Community provided other needed supports for the women, such as Individual Development Accounts. Trades groups and specific construction corporations joined the partnership and donated \$150,000 worth of expertise and materials for the site development and construction of a 3,680-square-foot training building. In hindsight, a group Maine should have included was representation of the Women's Center residents.

The partnership developed a strategic plan for implementation and established subcommittees. A budget of almost \$250,000 was developed. Later, the budget was increased by over \$276,400 to reflect both increasing construction materials costs and a larger training building site. The final plan includes operating annual budgets of around \$600,000 and will be self-sufficient by the fourth year through the sale of the homes. The average home selling price will be \$95,000. Twelve women will be in the training and production program at any given time and will be paid a work stipend. As part of the strategic plan, partners' roles and contributions were clarified.

**Challenges**

A challenge in maintaining an effective collaboration during a long-term project such as this is keeping all partners engaged throughout the process. During the initial phase, all partners were actively involved in establishing the project's strategic plan, budget, Maine-specific modifications, and "branding" of the

project. Subcommittees were assigned and began working. However, keeping all partners engaged was more difficult during the start-up phase when fundraising activities became a main focus and were dominated by the partner charged with that responsibility. Because members of other subcommittees had less time-sensitive tasks, they could have easily become less engaged with the process. Therefore, frequent communication was needed to stimulate their ongoing interest.

Other factors delayed the start-up phase. For example, MDOC began experiencing dramatic women's population overcrowding conditions and had to focus on developing immediate responses. Legislative support and funding for a system of re-entry supports for women, including the construction of a 38-bed Women's Re-entry Center, prompted the need for MDOC energy and attention to be diverted temporarily from the WBF project. This new continuum of women's services also created the need to change the focus on which residents would be targeted for participation in the WBF vocational training. Additionally, the city planning board review process took longer than initially anticipated. Frequent email communications kept all partners informed of progress and informal conversations among the membership continued to assure all partners of the value of their contributions to the project's success, even if their roles would be prevalent in later phases of the project.

Currently, Maine is poised to fully implement Women Building Futures with ground breaking scheduled to occur with the spring thaw. Women Unlimited will conduct the NCCER construction basics courses for interested women this spring. Women completing that series will then be eligible for the full energy-efficient modular home construction curriculum when the training building is completed this summer. Both process and outcome measures for evaluating the program have been established and a data tracking program is developed.

**Replicating Programs: Key Steps**

The Maine WBF collaboration is grateful for the ongoing support of Vermont and for those who are funding this important opportunity to expand its women's programming. For other jurisdictions interested in replicating good ideas for

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Community-based providers can play a pivotal role in supporting state efforts to reduce incarceration and recidivism rates by facilitating connections among community service providers. Because they do not carry the authority to punish, such organizations are sometimes in a better position to provide the immediate, front-line support and continuum of care that will help a woman avoid sanction or reincarceration. (Richie, 2001.)

**Measure Intervention Impact.** Improve the ability to measure the impact of interventions through regular data collection. This study was undertaken and privately funded because currently no system adequately tracks employment data on women entering and leaving state correctional supervision. The capacity to collect and analyze a continuum of data on women entering and exiting state prisons is necessary in order to measure the impact of particular employment initiatives. Intake surveys could be developed to help identify upon entry into the Department of Corrections

system a woman's prior employment history, wages earned, and sources of supplemental income. In addition, the DOC could track any courses or work activities a woman pursued while in prison. Following release and until parole, the DOC could also track job-search activities and employment information (employer, position, wages, and benefits).

**Programs for Girls.** Support and broaden access to programs for girls and teens that develop self-esteem, promote career awareness, and improve financial literacy. The majority of the women in the study indicated that as children and teens they had not thought much about work, careers, or about how they might support themselves. Because many interviewees noted that their path to criminal activity often began by their early teens, early intervention and prevention programs are necessary for this vulnerable population.

While in prison, many women described feelings of diminished self-esteem and hopelessness. An investment on the front end, when girls are still developing a sense of who they are and

who they can become, could reap dividends that have both social and financial rewards over the long term.

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quality programs with proven results, the following key steps are essential:

- Identify your unique needs, challenges, opportunities, and strengths. Data-driven decisions need to address underlying challenges rather than surface symptoms.
- Select and engage a leadership team with broad representation of stakeholders, including potential funders, interagency partners with diverse perspectives and resources, and program participants.
- Integrate evidence-based practices and gender responsiveness into the existing or emerging infrastructure, using other sites' experiences as a guide. Ask many questions.
- Develop a strategic action and evaluation plan and timeline, carefully clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- Mobilize resources (funding, human resources, site and site development, training curriculum, etc.).
- Keep partners engaged through transparent activities and communication, shared decisionmaking and contributions, intermediate successes, and celebrations.
- Modify the plan to accommodate emerging opportunities and unanticipated challenges.
- Implement.

- Evaluate and improve implementation.
- Celebrate!

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