



Youth Violence in Anchorage

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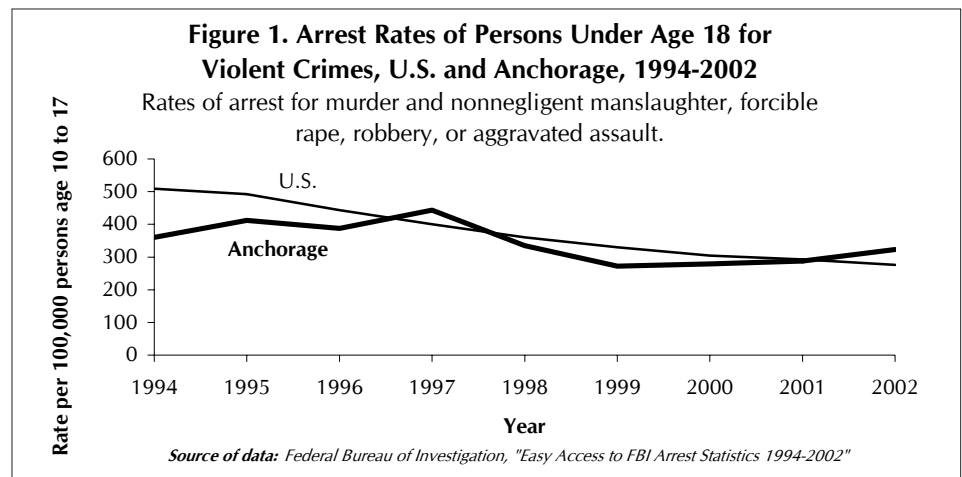
A flurry of violence in Anchorage in 2003 involving juveniles with guns has led to a study of youth violence by the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage. The study, now in its final stages, can help with placing and seeing the 2003 incidents—and those which have happened since—in the broader perspective presented by available data on youth violence in Anchorage, Alaska, and the nation as a whole.

The shootings at the end of 2003 followed one another fairly rapidly within a few weeks. Some of the incidents involved homicide, and some incidents were characterized by an unwillingness of victims or witnesses to share information with the police. This cluster of events created apprehension among some Anchorage residents that youth violence was increasing, was out of control and needed to be dealt with immediately.

In response to this concern, Mayor Mark Begich asked the Anchorage Public Safety Advisory Commission (PSAC) to explore the issue of youth violence in greater depth. PSAC responded by holding a variety of community meetings with public officials, agency representatives, concerned parents, and youths on December 4, 2003 and March 10, 2004. The purpose of these meetings was to assess community concerns about youth violence. More specifically, meeting participants attempted to specify the problem, identify its causes, and develop recommendations. In the absence of hard data or facts on youth violence, however, recommendations were difficult to develop. Although there was substantial anecdotal evidence on youth violence, the lack of hard data made it impossible to develop sensible recommendations.

As a result, the PSAC recommended that the UAA Justice Center study the issue. The PSAC identified four key questions for the Center:

(1) What are the statistics of youth violence in Anchorage?



(2) Where is youth violence concentrated?

(3) How does youth violence in Anchorage compare to that in other cities of the same size?

(4) How does youth violence in Anchorage today compare with youth violence 10 years ago? 5 years ago?

The Center agreed to undertake the study as part of its research mission within the Alaska community. It established a partner-

ship with the Anchorage Police Department (APD) to conduct the study.

In summer 2004, a team of researchers collected information about youth incidents of homicide, nonnegligent manslaughter, assault, rape, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, and vandalism reported to the Anchorage Police Department in 2002 and 2003. Although information from the

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Table 1. Arrest Rates of Persons Under Age 18 for Violent Crimes, U.S. and Anchorage, 1994-2002

Rate of arrests per 100,000 persons age 10 to 17

Year	Violent crime (total)		Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter		Forcible rape		Robbery		Aggravated assault	
	U.S.	Anchorage	U.S.	Anchorage	U.S.	Anchorage	U.S.	Anchorage	U.S.	Anchorage
1994	509	360	13	26	20	32	187	91	289	211
1995	492	412	11	6	18	23	185	156	278	227
1996	443	388	9	10	18	35	164	137	251	207
1997	400	443	8	15	18	43	128	124	246	260
1998	360	335	7	9	17	6	104	113	232	207
1999	330	272	4	6	16	12	89	84	221	170
2000	304	279	4	0	14	9	82	62	204	208
2001	293	288	4	0	14	9	78	66	197	213
2002	276	323	4	6	14	14	73	93	185	209

Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2002"

Therapeutic Justice in Action: An Evaluation of Three Therapeutic Courts

Teresa W. Carns

Imagine the following scenario: The defendant has seven prior misdemeanor convictions—three petty thefts, two drunk driving, a disorderly conduct, and an assault. He served a brief stint in a treatment program for alcoholism. Now the defendant is before the court again charged with a felony count of driving while intoxicated. A judge reviewing this defendant's record sees that the defendant must spend at least the mandatory minimum of 120 days incarcerated. But the judge also notes that the defendant has spent most of that time incarcerated while waiting for trial, along with many other days of jail time in recent years. At other appearances, the defendant was referred for alcohol treatment but he didn't go. What else is possible? More jail? It didn't work before to protect the public, except for the brief time that the defendant was actually incarcerated. More treatment? That didn't seem to work either.

In response to questions like these asked by hundreds of judges about thousands of defendants throughout the country, courts have begun to develop new approaches to chronic offenders whose criminal activity appeared to be primarily fueled by alcohol

and drug abuse. These new drug courts, drunk-driving courts, and others have been grouped under the general heading of "therapeutic courts." Therapeutic justice courts screen defendants using standard assessments for levels of substance abuse, review prior criminal histories, and carefully discuss with defendants the commitments they must make. Once the defendants "opt-in" to the programs, they are sent to outpatient treatment, tested frequently for drug or alcohol use, required to obtain work or education, make restitution to victims, and appear before the judge regularly. As defendants progress through the phases of the programs, they become more independent and receive less intense supervision. Judges use incentives and sanctions to encourage defendants to stay with their plans.

Alaska now has several therapeutic courts in Anchorage and Bethel. Existing courts include the Anchorage Municipal Wellness Court, the Anchorage State Wellness Court (both handle misdemeanor offenders with alcohol problems), and the Family Care Court (for parents with substance abuse problems whose children are in state custody). Major new funding has been obtained for the extension of therapeutic concepts to district courts in Ketchikan, Juneau, Fairbanks,

Palmer and other sites during 2005.

The Alaska Judicial Council looked at the three courts that handle felony cases: the Anchorage Felony Drug Court ("Drug Court"), the Anchorage Felony DUI Court ("DUI Court"), and the Bethel Therapeutic Court. With funding from the state's Department of Health and Social Services, the Council evaluated the effectiveness of the programs, comparing days of incarceration, convictions and numbers of remands for participants to those of similar defendants who did not take part in the programs.

The three therapeutic courts evaluated were created between 2001 and 2002. The Drug Court began in June 2001, and the DUI Court started work in December 2001. The Bethel Therapeutic Court accepted its first participants on June 25, 2002. At the time the Judicial Council's evaluation began in March 2004, all of the courts had been taking defendants for at least eighteen months.

The Drug Court was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice as part of a nationwide program to create and support drug courts, while the DUI and Bethel Therapeutic Courts were created and funded by the Alaska legislature. The funding sources for each of the courts required them to be evaluated.

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The Typical Criminal Justice Process

An earlier Judicial Council study, *Alaska Felony Process: 1999*, has described the usual felony court process in some depth. Felony defendants not participating in the therapeutic court typically enter into a plea agreement with the state and are sentenced before a superior court judge. Most felony defendants are sentenced to and serve some period of time incarcerated, followed by a period of one to ten years on probation or parole. Judges can require treatment as a condition of the defendant's release and can impose other conditions related to the defendant's crime (including fines, restitution, limits on movement or associations, community service hours, and requirements for work or education efforts). Defendants are supervised by felony probation or parole officers. Because the probation and parole officers carry caseloads of one hundred or more defendants at a time, typical offenders see a probation officer relatively infrequently.

The procedures in place for the therapeutic courts differ from this typical process.

Anchorage Felony Drug Court

The Anchorage Felony Drug Court, the first of the felony therapeutic courts, opened in June 2001 after nearly two years of grant-writing, planning and training. Each of the agencies involved—the courts, the district attorneys, the defense bar (generally represented by the Public Defender Agency), the Department of Corrections, the Judicial Council (as evaluator) and the Department of Health and Social Services (as the funder of the treatment providers)—worked through issues related to plea agreements, incentives and sanctions, eligibility criteria, treatment, program structure, and evaluation. Despite intensive efforts to base the Drug Court on a national and well-tested model, many issues still confronted the court with its first participants. Remarkably, despite continuing challenges, the Drug Court structure in 2004 still closely resembled the original model used by the court.

At the time of data collection in March 2004, the Drug Court had had thirty participants, including graduates, people active in the program, and those who had started the program but had left for various reasons. The court and prosecutor had also identified twenty persons as a comparison group, all of whom had considered participation but had not opted-in to the program. Superior Court Judge Stephanie Joannides, who started with the program, continued as the judge. Most of the other team members,

prosecutors, defense attorneys, and treatment staff had changed.

One major component of the program did change around the time data collection began in March 2004. The Department of Corrections began winding down its participation, eventually withdrawing the probation officers who had been providing case coordination in all three felony therapeutic courts. As of December 2004, the court had negotiated an agreement with the Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) in Anchorage and Bethel to provide case coordination services for the Drug Court and the other two felony therapeutic courts. At press time for the *Forum*, the Bethel Therapeutic Court had taken in a number of new participants, but the two Anchorage felony courts were still working out detailed agreements with the Departments of Corrections and Law. The Anchorage courts will resume taking new participants this summer.

Basic components of the Drug Court included:

1. Eligibility decisions based on grantor/funder requirements, other program standards, standard assessments of substance and alcohol abuse, and interviews. For the Drug Court in particular, federal funding restrictions did not allow the participation of offenders with any prior record of violence, or a current violent or sexual offense, or a series of other offenses. The prosecutor made the first decision about eligibility. At a minimum, the defendant had to have committed the offense while using or possessing illegal drugs, or while addicted to drugs, with some connection between the addiction and the offense;

2. A written plea agreement entered with the court that detailed the conditions of the program, and included the provision that when the participant completed the program, the charges against him or her would be dismissed;

3. A program with three phases: Phase I of intensive treatment, testing, and frequent court appearances; Phase II with fewer required meetings and more emphasis on maintaining a job or education; Phase III with occasional court appearances and emphasis on independence and accountability;

4. Random mandatory drug testing, diminishing in frequency as the participant moved through the program;

5. Outpatient treatment combined with support groups (such as Alcoholics Anonymous), with required attendance, again diminishing in frequency as the participants gained more independence;

6. Regular meetings with the judge and Drug Court team, which included a prosecutor, defense attorney, case coordinator/manager, and treatment person. Attendance at

the court hearings was mandatory for participants. At the hearings, the judge considered progress reported by the team members and participant, offered incentives (praise, encouragement, and occasionally, small tokens donated to the program, such as tickets to events), and imposed sanctions, if warranted;

7. Immediate sanctions for failed drug tests or other violations of the program's requirements that could include extra time sitting in court, jail time, increased frequency of testing, and other measures intended to increase compliance with the program and protect public safety;

8. A requirement for safe and sober housing;

9. Twelve to eighteen months of participation for most defendants.

Anchorage Felony DUI Court

In Anchorage, nearly all of the participants in the Felony DUI Court were convicted of felony charges of driving under the influence. This offense was defined as a third DUI offense within the past ten years under AS 28.35.030(n). Some of the defendants in the program may have been convicted under earlier versions of the law that required the third DUI to have occurred within the previous five years. The law has changed several times in the past five years, generally lengthening the period during which the prior offenses could have occurred. Because the program was funded by the state rather than under federal grants and guidelines, the criteria for admission were broader than for the Anchorage Felony Drug Court. Team members considered each applicant and agreed on suitability for the program. There were many more DUI Court participants than Drug Court participants. The evaluation included seventy-four defendants who had graduated, were active, or had opted-out of the program, as compared to a total of thirty Drug Court participants. The comparison group for the DUI Court included 54 defendants, 34 of whom had considered DUI Court but never opted-in and twenty randomly chosen felony DUI defendants from the same time-frame who had not considered the therapeutic court option.

The DUI Court closely resembled the Drug Court in many ways. DUI Court participants appeared before the same judge, attended the same treatment program, had many of the same team members and were largely indistinguishable from the Drug Court participants. However, consequences for the defendants differed. Drug Court

Therapeutic Courts

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graduates had their charges dismissed by the prosecutor upon successful completion of the program, while DUI Court graduates remained on probation for two full years following graduation, with supervision by DOC probation officers.

Bethel Therapeutic Court

The Bethel Therapeutic Court developed differently than the Anchorage courts because of both the different resources available and the different demographics in Bethel. A new superior court position was added to Bethel by the enabling legislation, and the judge was appointed in part because of his interest in therapeutic courts. Because the Bethel Therapeutic Court began work later than the Anchorage therapeutic courts, it had only 51 participants to evaluate, with 30 defendants in the comparison group in March 2004.

Only one treatment provider was available in Bethel who met the program requirements, and that treatment provider used a different treatment model than the therapeutic community model chosen in Anchorage. Because of the treatment provider's needs, the Bethel Therapeutic Court started defendants in small groups, rather than singly (as in the Anchorage courts). The Bethel court took only defendants whose primary prob-

lem was alcohol abuse and included some chronic misdemeanor offenders in addition to felony defendants. This court referred most defendants for naltrexone therapy, along with the same components and most of the same procedures described above in the Drug Court section. (Naltrexone is prescribed to reduce alcohol cravings and is typically taken for 90 to 120 days. It was used by some, but not all, Alaska therapeutic justice programs as one component of the program.)

Additionally, full-time employment or an approved combination of school and work was a requirement for graduation from each of the programs.

Methods of Evaluation

The Council collected data on all of the graduates, participants and former participants in the three therapeutic courts. In addition, staff collected the same information about comparison groups for each of the three programs, making it possible to show where participation in the program might have been associated with different outcomes. The detailed data from the case files were comparable to the data collected for the Council report on 1999 felony cases, with added information about the therapeutic court processes. The Department of Corrections provided information about remands and days of incarceration, and the Department of Public

Safety and the Court System provided data about convictions.

The Council staff prepared the data set for analysis. Council staff also provided much of the descriptive information about the participants and comparison groups. The Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska Anchorage conducted the multivariate analysis, and consulted on the descriptive data.

Summary of Differences Between Court Participants and Comparison Groups

Perhaps the most significant difference between the court participants and the comparison groups in all three therapeutic courts was that prior records for the comparison groups were noticeably less serious than for the participants in the therapeutic courts. For the most part, defendants in the comparison groups were those who had expressed an interest in the court, but who had decided not to opt in or who had not been accepted. Interviews suggested that, especially in Anchorage, it was perceived that defendants not facing substantial jail time did not have enough incentive to complete an arduous 12 to 18-month long program. The difference held true for Bethel too, although the need for incentives to participate was not emphasized in the few Bethel interviews.

Although the fairly small numbers of participants in all of the groups suggested caution in drawing conclusions, the differences

Table 1. Mean Number of Convictions by Therapeutic Court Participants, by Group and Status

	N	Mean number of convictions ^a		Probability ^b
		2 years prior	2 years post	
Anchorage Felony Drug Court				
Graduated	10	1.0	0.5	0.030
Active	6	1.7	0.4	0.036
Opted out/dropped out	13	2.1	1.4	0.433
Not in program	20	1.3	1.6	0.520
Anchorage Felony DUI Court				
Graduated	15	0.7	0.1	0.070
Active	33	1.5	0.1	<0.001
Opted out/dropped out	23	2.0	1.0	0.083
Not in program	53	1.4	0.3	<0.001
Bethel Therapeutic Court				
Graduated	7	0.7	0.2	0.101
Active	21	2.3	0.2	<0.001
Opted out/dropped out	22	2.7	0.7	0.001
Not in program	30	1.3	0.6	0.140

a. For all groups including the "not in program" comparison groups, the offense that brought the defendant to court was excluded from the analysis.

b. Statistically significant if probability is .05 or less. Significant findings are in boldface.

Source: Alaska Judicial Council

Table 2. Mean Number of Remands to Custody by Therapeutic Court Participants, by Group and Status

	N	Mean number of remands ^a		Probability ^b
		2 years prior	2 years post	
Anchorage Felony Drug Court				
Graduated	10	2.5	0.8	0.022
Active	7	2.7	2.4	0.779
Opted out/dropped out	13	2.9	3.9	0.164
Not in program	19	2.4	1.9	0.552
Anchorage Felony DUI Court				
Graduated	15	2.0	0.8	0.002
Active	34	2.7	1.2	0.001
Opted out/dropped out	24	3.4	3.3	0.873
Not in program	53	3.1	2.1	0.106
Bethel Therapeutic Court				
Graduated	7	7.7	1.0	0.248
Active	22	5.2	3.9	0.422
Opted out/dropped out	20	4.1	5.8	0.093
Not in program	30	3.3	3.6	0.767

a. For all groups including the "not in program" comparison groups, the offense that brought the defendant to court was excluded from the analysis.

b. Statistically significant if probability is .05 or less. Significant findings are in boldface.

Source: Alaska Judicial Council

between the test defendants and the comparison defendants were small enough to give a basis for discussion. The most important difference, the less serious prior criminal histories for the comparison groups, suggested that if the comparison defendants had been more closely matched, their outcomes would have been even less positive, and by contrast, the improvements noted in the therapeutic courts would have been more noticeable.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the data tended to show that defendants who had graduated from the court programs and those who were active in the programs had fewer days of incarceration, fewer remands to custody, and fewer convictions after they began the program than during the two years before entering the program. These findings were consistent with findings from a number of studies in other therapeutic courts across the country.

Defendants who were in the comparison groups had significantly more mean days of incarceration after their convictions for the evaluated offense than they did in the two years before. The mean number of remands to custody for the comparison defendants did not change significantly between the before and after periods.

Although further evaluation can be done, and data should be collected over longer

periods of time, the present data fully support the hypothesis that therapeutic court participants show improvement in two ways: their outcome measures improved during and after the programs; and their performance measures were demonstrably better than a matched set of comparison defendants.

Qualitative improvements for participants in the Drug and DUI Courts included marked improvements in family stability, employment, education, and financial status. Two drug-free babies were born to participants during the period evaluated. Some of participants also reported improvements in child support and child custody situations and reduced domestic violence during or after participation in the programs.

The felony therapeutic courts that were evaluated served sizable numbers of ethnic minorities. In Bethel, most of the defendants were Alaska Natives, and in the DUI Court, 24 percent were Native. Some Blacks also participated in the DUI and Drug Courts, at about the same rate that they appeared in the general felony defendant population. This finding was important because it suggested that the therapeutic courts were useful with diverse demographic groups and their utility was not limited by demographic considerations.

Analysis by the status of the defendants in the program showed no significant differences by mean age, gender or ethnicity. The Bethel Therapeutic Court had disproportionately large numbers of Natives, and the Felony Drug Court had disproportionately large numbers of women. This further reinforced the finding that therapeutic court effectiveness was not limited by demographics and suggested that the programs could benefit a wide variety of defendants.

About half or more of all participants in the courts evaluated had a record of one or more prior felony convictions. This indicated that the programs were serving many defendants for whom other efforts at rehabilitation had failed and any improvements

for these defendants would also serve the criminal justice system.

Most defendants in the program were represented by the Public Defender Agency. Private attorneys did not seem to use the programs as frequently as public attorneys. Type of attorney was not associated with success or opt-out from the program.

About half of Felony Drug Court defendants were charged with property offenses; most of the remainder were charged with drug offenses. All of the felony DUI defendants were charged with felony DUI. Bethel Therapeutic Court participants had a mix of felony DUI charges, a few petitions to revoke probation, and some violent offenses.

Participants in the program and the comparison defendants tended to be older than the baseline group of defendants from the 1999 Judicial Council report on felonies. The mean ages ranged from 32 to 37, with the younger defendants in Bethel and the older defendants in the DUI Court.

Graduates from each of the courts had spent a mean of about 452 days (fifteen months) in the court before graduating. The typical graduate had a mean of 43 hearings in the therapeutic court, and opted-out defendants had a mean of 29 hearings before leaving the program.

These findings suggest further steps that the courts, legislature and participating agencies may wish to consider. The therapeutic courts have demonstrated some notable successes, both in qualitative and in quantitative ways. There have been clear reductions in days of incarceration for participants of programs, and reductions in the numbers of remands and in subsequent convictions. Probation officers noted improvements for participants in jobs, education, family stability and many other areas.

The data support continuation and possibly expansion of the therapeutic court programs. The evaluations also need to continue for several reasons. First, long periods of follow-up are needed to demonstrate the continued effectiveness of the programs. (The legislation creating the therapeutic courts (HB 172) set a deadline for this evaluation of July 1, 2005. To get the report to the legislature for its use during the 2005 session, the Council had to complete its data collection by May 2004.) In addition to the measures of outcomes discussed here, in a future evaluation the Council would compare the numbers of incarceration days, remands and convictions for graduates after they finished the program with comparison defendants (and opted-out defendants) after they had served their

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Table 3. Mean Days of Incarceration by Therapeutic Court Participants, by Group and Status

	N	Mean days incarcerated ^a		Probability ^b
		2 years prior	2 years post	
Anchorage Felony Drug Court				
Graduated	10	142	66	0.115
Active	7	100	60	0.620
Opted out/dropped out	13	187	249	0.369
Not in program	20	104	208	0.028
Anchorage Felony DUI Court				
Graduated	15	71	31	0.001
Active	34	177	88	0.008
Opted out/dropped out	24	233	313	0.068
Not in program	50	158	311	<0.001
Bethel Therapeutic Court				
Graduated	7	140	7	0.070
Active	22	124	22	<0.001
Opted out/dropped out	22	243	155	0.079
Not in program	30	115	182	0.012

a. The days of incarceration for the comparison group and opted-out defendants include the time imposed during the two-year "followup" or "after" period for their sentences.

b. Statistically significant if probability is .05 or less. Significant findings are in boldface.

Source: Alaska Judicial Council

Therapeutic Courts (continued from page 5)

sentences. In this proposed analysis, the Council would not include time during the program and thus could better demonstrate the long-term outcomes of the programs. The Council hopes to carry out this analysis during the next two years.

Second, baseline recidivism data for all felony defendants need to be established. Although the participants in the programs generally do better than the comparison groups included in the evaluation, a broader assessment of recidivism for all defendants would give a more solid basis for comparison.

Third, the agencies involved in these programs (primarily the courts, prosecutors, defense attorneys and treatment programs) need to provide data to evaluators that can be used to assess the detailed costs and benefits of the programs. Without more detailed information about the actual in-court and out-of-court time spent by the professionals carrying out the therapeutic court work, it is impossible to compare the real costs and benefits.

Based on previous information available

to people around the state, several new misdemeanor programs have been funded with federal and state monies. In considering the usefulness of expanding the scope of the felony therapeutic courts to other communities, professionals involved in the misdemeanor courts should share their perspectives with policymakers for the felony courts. Policymakers also can consider similar programs that could provide many of the therapeutic court benefits at lower costs, or could serve groups of defendants that do not qualify now for the therapeutic courts. They should also keep in mind that program staff believed that continuing support groups and safe, sober housing were chief among the needs for continued success of the program participants.

Finally, each successful graduate of a therapeutic court program has become an employed, sober citizen with tools to help prevent relapse and to remain accountable to the community. If defendants owed restitution to victims, payment was a part of the therapeutic court program. Sustaining and building on the work done by defendants in the therapeutic court programs will help maintain these benefits to the community in the long term.

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SAC Coordinates Data Sharing

The Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), which is part of the Justice Center, is leading an effort to make access to the various criminal justice agency data bases easier for researchers and administrators who need data from across the entire justice process. Until recently, it has been almost impossible to coordinate record-matching among the various data bases, so it has been very difficult to follow individual cases from arrest through disposition.

The SAC, working with other agencies, has established a multi-agency-based database on a new server, including records from law enforcement agencies, the Alaska Department of Law, and the Alaska Court System. Records from other agencies will be added in the future. Work is in progress to establish public data subsets from which confidential information, or other protected information, has been removed. A cross-indexing capability will permit users to coordinate records from the different components of the criminal justice process, linking the disparate data items that each agency maintains on individual cases.

At present, the database is not accessible except by special permission from the agencies whose records are involved. The agencies contributing records are currently working on the memoranda of agreement necessary to establish the protocols for wider use.

The new database will be accessible through the SAC website at www.ajsac.state.ak.us. (This website is also linked with the main Justice Center site at justice.uaa.alaska.edu.)



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Research Associate Joins Justice Center

The Justice Center is pleased to welcome Greg Postle as a research associate. Postle is a doctoral student at the University of Delaware. He will be working with André Rosay on various studies of violence against women in Alaska.

Justice Center Releases Sourcebook

The Justice Center at the University of Alaska has released *The Anchorage Community Survey, 2005: Sourcebook*. The publication contains the data compiled through a citywide telephone survey conducted by the Center in late 2004 and early 2005. Nearly 2500 Anchorage residents participated in the survey, providing one of the most detailed pictures of Anchorage community attitudes available. The sourcebook contains information on the demographics of city residents, their perceptions of the

social cohesion in their community, and their satisfaction with various municipal and government functions, including policing. These survey results are organized by demographic measures and by community council area. The work is intended to be a resource for everyone interested in the functioning of Anchorage as a community. Robert Langworthy and Brad Myrstol of the Justice Center served as project coordinators. The publication is available online at <http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/>.

Drugs and Crime in Anchorage: A Note

Robert H. Langworthy and
Alan R. McKelvie

Data from the 2003 Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program in Anchorage indicate that 66 percent of male arrestees booked into the Anchorage Correctional Complex tested positive for an illegal drug—cocaine, marijuana, opiates, methamphetamine or PCP. Marijuana and cocaine were the most frequently detected drugs among arrestees.

The data here represent 259 arrestees from the second and third quarters of 2003 who agreed to be interviewed and provide urine samples. Table 1 presents the number and percentage of these arrestees who tested positive for either marijuana or cocaine. The analysis was restricted to those using marijuana or cocaine because other drugs were detected so infrequently that analysis of their relation to the charged offense would be meaningless. The results are grouped by charge category—violent, property and other offenses. (Though specific charges are also presented in the table, the number of entries for some individual charges are also too few for meaningful analysis.)

The most striking findings were:

- the high incidence of marijuana use among the arrestee population, with 44 percent testing positive;
- the consistency in rates of marijuana detection across categories of charges, with approximately 45 percent of offenders across all offense types testing positive for this drug;
- the variability in rates of cocaine detection across charge categories, ranging from 20 percent positive with violent offense charges to 43 percent with property offense charges.

Table 1. Percent of Arrestees Testing Positive for Marijuana or Cocaine by Type of Offense, Anchorage, Alaska, 2003

	Number tested	Marijuana			Cocaine		
		Negative	Positive		Negative	Positive	
		N	N	Percent	N	N	Percent
Violent offenses, total	86	49	37	43.0 %	69	17	19.8 %
Domestic violence	25	14	11	44.0	19	6	24.0
Robbery	4	1	3	75.0	1	3	75.0
Other person	18	14	4	22.2	18	0	0.0
Felony assault	27	14	13	48.1	21	6	22.2
Misdemeanor assault	12	6	6	50.0	10	2	16.7
Property offenses, total	72	40	32	44.4 %	41	31	43.1 %
Burglary	5	1	4	80.0	4	1	20.0
Auto theft	19	11	8	42.1	13	6	31.6
Other property	12	9	3	25.0	10	2	16.7
Shoplifting	8	6	2	25.0	5	3	37.5
Felony theft	20	9	11	55.0	6	14	70.0
Misdemeanor theft	8	4	4	50.0	3	5	62.5
Other offenses, total	221	120	101	45.7 %	160	61	27.6 %
Failure to appear	32	15	17	53.1	23	9	28.1
Contempt of court	16	9	7	43.8	13	3	18.8
Driving—suspended license	31	13	18	58.1	23	8	25.8
DWI	43	27	16	37.2	33	10	23.3
Drug	15	6	9	60.0	9	6	40.0
Public order	17	13	4	23.5	15	2	11.8
Administrative	67	37	30	44.8	44	23	34.3
Total charges	379	209	170	44.9 %	270	109	28.8 %
Total individuals	259	145	114	44.0 %	187	72	27.8 %

Note: Data were compiled by the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center through grants from the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

The ADAM program was conducted by the Justice Center in conjunction with the Alaska Department of Corrections from 1998 through 2003.

Robert Langworthy is director of the Justice Center. Alan McKelvie is director of the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center, which is part of the Justice Center.

Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM)

Further information about ADAM and findings from the Anchorage ADAM effort can be found in the following articles:

- Atwell, Cassie and Giblin, Matthew J. (Spring 2000). "Drug Use Among Arrestees in Anchorage." *Alaska Justice Forum* 17(1): 1, 7-8. (http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/17/1spring2000/a_adam.html).
- Giblin, Matthew J. (Fall 2001). "Aspects of Drug Use: Arrestees in Anchorage, 2000." *Alaska Justice Forum* 18(3): 1, 6-8. (http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/18/3fall2001/a_adam.html).
- Justice Center, University of Alaska Anchorage. (Winter 2003). "ADAM in an International Context." *Alaska Justice Forum* 19(4): 2. (http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/19/4winter2003/b_adamintl.html).
- Langworthy, Robert H. and McKelvie, Alan R. (May 2005). "Drugs and Crime in Anchorage, Alaska: A Note." *Justice Center Working Papers* 3. (<http://justicepapers.uaa.alaska.edu/paper3.htm>).
- . (May 2005). "Seasonal Use of Marijuana and Cocaine by Arrestees in Anchorage, Alaska." *Justice Center Working Papers* 2. (<http://justicepapers.uaa.alaska.edu/paper2.htm>).
- Myrstol, Brad A. (Winter 2003). "Drug Use Trends Among Anchorage Arrestees: 1999-2001." *Alaska Justice Forum* 19(4): 1, 10-12. (http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/19/4winter2003/a_adamdrug.html).
- . (Winter 2003). "Alcohol Use Among Anchorage Arrestees." *Alaska Justice Forum* 19(4): 3-4. (http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/19/4winter2003/c_adamalk.html).
- . (Spring 2003). "Non-Citizens Among Anchorage Arrestees." *Alaska Justice Forum* 20(1): 7-10. (http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/forum/20/1spring2003/e_noncitarrest.html).
- Wood, Darryl S. (Fall 2005). "Criterion Validity of Self-Reported Drug-Use Among Alaska Native and Non-Native Arrestees in Anchorage, Alaska." *Criminal Justice Studies* (forthcoming).

Youth Violence

(continued from page 1)

whole study is not yet available for dissemination, in this article we can answer several of the PSAC questions. First, we examine statistics of youth violence to show how Anchorage compares to other cities and to show how Alaska today compares to 5 and 10 years ago. We also examine community residents' perceptions of youth violence. After presenting these data, we discuss the importance of data in the formulation of public policy.

How does Anchorage Compare to the Country as a Whole?

To answer this question, we rely on data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. From these data, we can obtain the arrest rates of persons under age 18 (per 100,000 juveniles age 10 to 17) from 1994 to 2002 for four violent crimes—murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, robbery, forcible rape, and aggravated assault (Table 1 and Figure 1). More specifically, Figure 1 depicts the juvenile arrest rate for violent crimes in Anchorage and the U.S. from 1994 to 2002. In this figure, we can see that the Anchorage juvenile arrest rate for violent crime—albeit more volatile—was similar to the U.S. rate: both rates have been declining and the average rates from 1994 to 2002 were very similar. The average Anchorage juvenile arrest rate for violent crime per 100,000 juveniles (age 10 to 17) was below the U.S. rate (i.e., 379 in the U.S. versus 344 in Anchorage). From 1994 to 2002, the U.S. rate declined significantly more precipitously than the Anchorage rate (84% versus 11%), but this difference is attributable to the inherent volatility of the Anchorage rate compared to the inherent stability of the U.S. rate. Overall, these data do not indicate that there is a serious problem with youth violence in Anchorage; rather, the level of youth violence in Anchorage is comparable to the national average.

Do these comparisons mask any important differences in the composition of violent crime? In Table 2, we compare the composition of violent crime in Anchorage to that in the U.S. in 2002. Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter represented 1.5 percent of the juvenile violent crime in the U.S. and 1.7 percent of the juvenile violent crime in Anchorage. Forcible rape represents 5 percent of the juvenile violent crime in the U.S. and 4 percent of it in Anchorage. Robbery represented 27 percent and 29 percent of the juvenile violent crime in the U.S. and Anchorage, respectively. Finally, 67

percent of the juvenile violent crime in the U.S. was attributable to aggravated assault whereas 65 percent of it in Anchorage was attributable to aggravated assault. Although small differences did exist, the compositions of violent crime in Anchorage and the U.S. was essentially identical.

To further investigate how Anchorage compares to the U.S., we disaggregated the 1994 to 2002 trend shown in Figure 1 by offense type in Figures 2 through 5. Respectively, Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5 show the Anchorage and U.S. juvenile arrest rates for murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, robbery, forcible rape, and aggravated assault per 100,000 juveniles (age 10 to 17) from 1994 to 2002. In no graph is there a substantial difference between the Anchorage

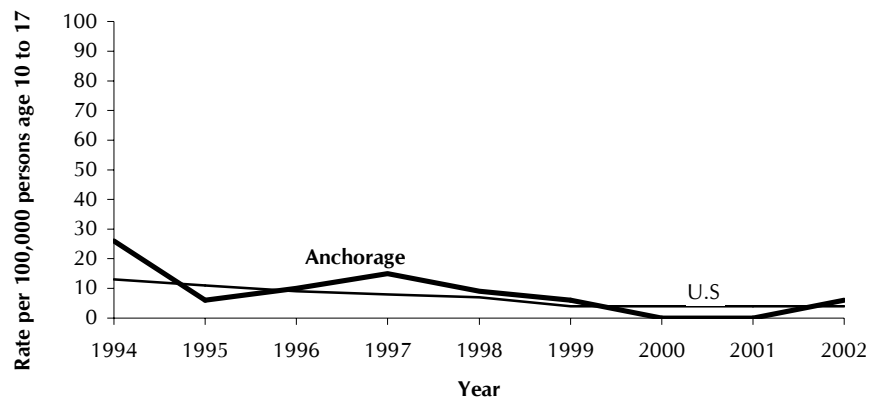
rates and the U.S. rates. The juvenile murder rate has been low in both Anchorage and the U.S., averaging 9 per 100,000 in Anchorage and 7 per 100,000 in the U.S. Although the Anchorage rate of forcible rape was higher, peaking in 1997, it has since declined to levels below the U.S. rate. Both the robbery rate and the aggravated assault rate have

Table 2. Composition of Violent Crime, U.S. and Anchorage, 2002

	Number of arrests of persons under age 18			
	U.S.		Anchorage	
	Arrests	Percent	Arrests	Percent
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	1,360	1.5 %	2	1.7 %
Forcible rape	4,720	5.1	5	4.4
Robbery	24,500	26.6	33	28.9
Aggravated assault	61,600	66.8	74	64.9
Total	92,160		114	

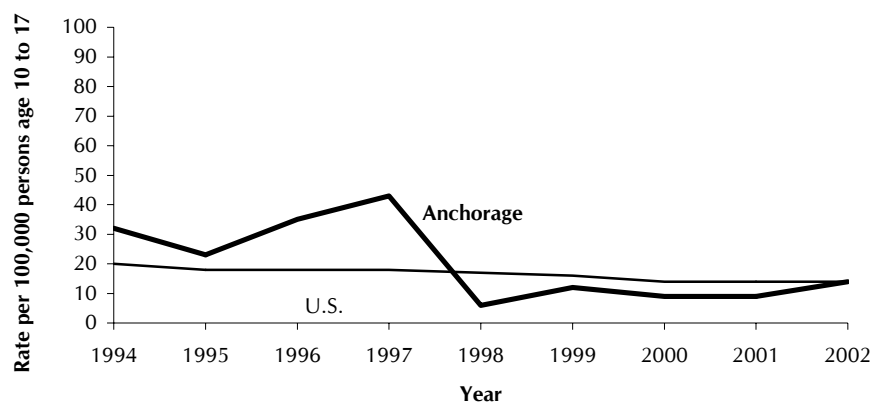
Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2002"

Figure 2. Arrest Rates of Persons Under Age 18 for Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter, U.S. and Anchorage, 1994-2002



Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2002"

Figure 3. Arrest Rates of Persons Under Age 18 for Forcible Rape, U.S. and Anchorage, 1994-2002



Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2002"

slowly declined in both Anchorage and the U.S. The average robbery rates were 121 per 100,000 in the U.S. and 103 in Anchorage, while the average aggravated assault rates were 234 per 100,000 in the U.S. and 212 in Anchorage.

Overall, the data suggest that juvenile violent crime in Anchorage is identical to juvenile violent crime elsewhere. Few significant or substantively important differences were found in the level, trend, or nature of juvenile violent crime. When differences exist, they are solely attributable to the volatility or instability of rates in smaller locales (e.g., Anchorage) relative to larger ones (e.g., U.S.). In general, the trends in Anchorage are similar to the trends in the U.S.

How does Alaska Compare to 5 and 10 Years Ago?

Anchorage data on youth violence from 5 and 10 years ago are not easily available, so it was not possible to compare the recent situation with earlier periods. Instead, in this

section, we compare the current levels of youth violence in the entire state to those of 5 and 10 years ago. Table 3 shows the number of juveniles arrested in Alaska for murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault in 1993, 1998, and 2003. Overall, the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes in Alaska has declined by 22 percent over the last five years and 14 percent over the last 10 years.

Changes over the past 5 and 10 years do vary by offense type. While the number of juveniles arrested for murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, robbery, and aggravated assault has declined over the past five and 10 years, the number of juveniles arrested for forcible rape has increased. More specifically, the number of juveniles arrested for forcible rape in Alaska has increased by 56 percent over the last five years and by 40 percent over the last 10. Although these are large percentage increases, the number of arrests for forcible rape in Alaska has only increased by 10 arrests over the last

5 years and by 8 arrests over the last 10 years. Furthermore, this increase may reflect an increase in public and official awareness of forcible rape as a punishable offense rather than a true increase in offending. Unfortunately, the true number of forcible rapes is unknown, as forcible rape is one of the least likely offenses to be reported to police.

With the exception of forcible rape, for which a small increase in the number of arrests has been noted, youth violence is declining in Alaska, as it is elsewhere. Again, these data suggest that youth violence is a less serious problem than it was 5 or 10 years ago.

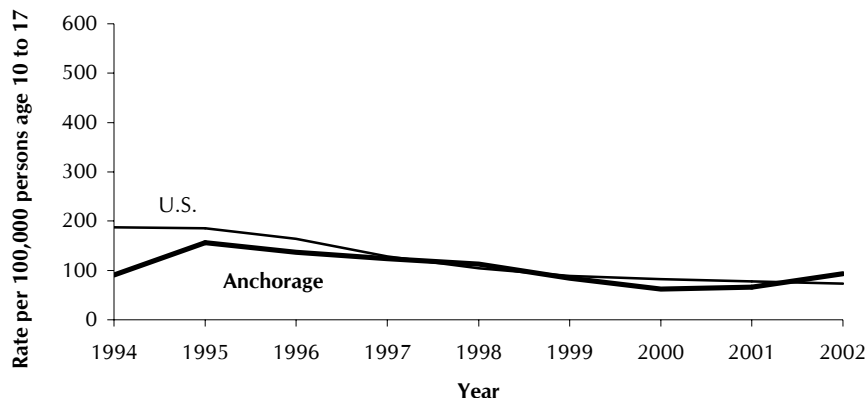
Public Perceptions of Youth Violence

Data on public perceptions of youth violence are available from the 2005 Anchorage Community Survey. The Anchorage Community Survey is a telephone survey of randomly-selected adult residents in the Municipality of Anchorage conducted every two years by the Justice Center. There were 2,485 participants in the most recent survey conducted from October 2004 to February 2005. About one-quarter (n=596) of the respondents in this survey were asked a series of eight questions measuring their perceptions of youth violence in Anchorage. Here we examine the results from the three questions concerning how much of a problem youth violence is perceived to be, fear of victimization by youth, and perceptions of change in levels of youth violence. Data from the first question—"How much of a problem would you say youth violence is in your neighborhood?"—are shown in Table 4. This table indicates that only a very small portion of respondents, fewer than 3 percent, considered youth violence in their neighborhoods to be either a very big or a big problem. Close to 70 percent replied that youth violence in their neighborhood was not a problem at all, while 28 percent answered that it is somewhat of a problem.

The second question (Table 5) was "Please tell me how much concern you, yourself, have of being victimized by someone under the age of 18." A large majority of respondents had no concern or very little concern (28% and 49% respectively). Only 3 percent reported a great deal of concern, and 2 percent said they had quite a lot of concern. Fewer than one in five (18%) claimed to have some concern of being victimized by someone under the age of 18.

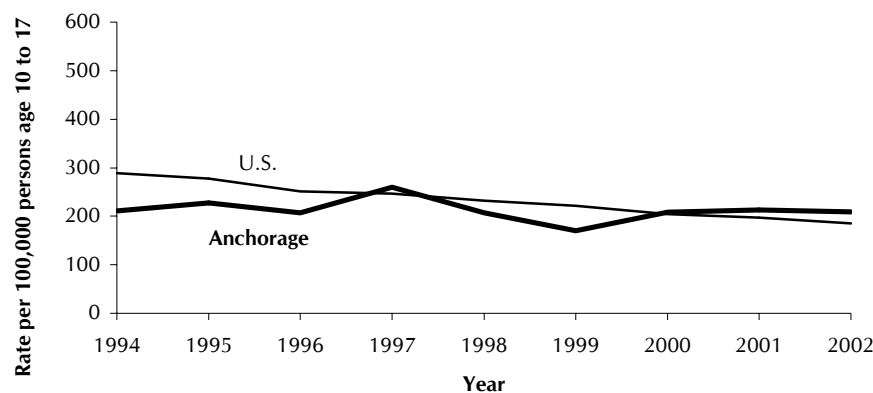
Table 6 shows the data from the final question, "In general, would you say there is more or less youth violence in your neighborhood than there was at this time one year

Figure 4. Arrest Rates of Persons Under Age 18 for Robbery, U.S. and Anchorage, 1994-2002



Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2002"

Figure 5. Arrest Rates of Persons Under Age 18 for Aggravated Assault, U.S. and Anchorage, 1994-2002



Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2002"

Table 3. Number of Juvenile Arrests for Violent Crime in Alaska, 1993, 1998, and 2003

Arrests of persons under 18 years old

	Number of arrests			Percent change	
	1993	1998	2003	1998 to 2003	1993 to 2003
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	5	9	3	-66.7 %	-40.0 %
Forcible rape	20	18	28	+55.6	+40.0
Robbery	55	57	25	-56.1	-54.5
Aggravated assault	170	191	159	-16.8	-6.5
Total	250	275	215	-21.8 %	-14.0 %

Source of data: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*

Table 4. Perceptions of Youth Violence in Anchorage, 2005

"How much of a problem would you say youth violence is in your neighborhood?"

	N	Percent
Very big problem	6	1.0 %
Big problem	8	1.4
Somewhat of a problem	165	28.2
Not a problem at all	407	69.5
Total	586	

Note: Table excludes "don't know" and missing/refused responses.

Source of data: Anchorage Community Survey, 2005

Youth Violence

(continued from page 9)

ago?" A small percentage of respondents, 8 percent, thought there was more youth violence in their neighborhoods, while 29 percent thought there was less. Close to two-thirds, or 63 percent, said there was the same amount of youth violence in their neighborhood in comparison to a year ago.

Overall, the Anchorage community does not perceive youth violence to be a serious problem, and most residents did not believe that youth violence was a serious problem in their particular neighborhoods. Most Anchorage residents were not concerned about being victimized by someone under the age of 18, and most residents believed that youth violence in their neighborhood had declined over the past year. The official statistics presented earlier corroborate these perceptions.

Conclusions

Serious crime is a relatively rare event, and violent crime involving youth is far rarer still, yet when a number of these highly unusual incidents occur very close together in time, as happened in late 2003, it is not sur-

prising that some residents become concerned that an epidemic of youth violence has been unleashed. However, as the data from the Anchorage Community Survey very clearly show, this concern is not shared by the general population.

Furthermore, if we look beyond people's perceptions and examine official data, there is no evidence of a surge of youth violence in Anchorage. As we have shown, youth arrest rates in Anchorage are comparable to those of the country as a whole. There is also little indication that Anchorage youth commit significantly different types of violent crimes in comparison to American youth. Not only is the nature of youth violence essentially the same in Anchorage as it is in the rest of the United States, the actual rates of reported youth violence (with the exception of forcible rape) are declining nationally and in the city as well. In comparison with 5 and 10 years ago, fewer youth crimes have been reported in Alaska.

We must be careful not to react hastily in times of apparent crisis, even if it means ignoring cries for immediate action. Good programs and policies develop not out of fear and demands for quick solutions to complex problems, but out of careful examination of the evidence and consideration of what has been effectively done elsewhere. We should use the concerns of well-intentioned residents to energize the community to support the good programs that are already in place in Anchorage and proven to reduce youth violence. If additional programs must be developed, we need not reinvent the wheel: there are already many kinds of youth violence prevention initiatives whose effectiveness has been empirically demonstrated. Any new efforts should not result from episodic clamors in response to rare incidents. Instead, they must be based on careful analyses of the facts.

This conclusion does not imply that youth violence is not a problem. Clearly, youth violence does occur in Anchorage, often with devastating consequences. Youth violence,

however, is not a serious problem. Consequently, there is no urgent need to react. For now, we should continue efforts to curtail the levels of youth violence, and new initiatives can be both data driven and empirically supported.

Future Research

In order to provide a more detailed empirical description of youth violence in Anchorage, the Justice Center is continuing its analyses of the data collected from the case files of the Anchorage Police Department. This empirical description will serve as a solid foundation from which to build new initiatives. The initial goal is to prepare a descriptive report providing in-depth information on suspects, victims, and incident characteristics. Incident characteristics will include information on time, place, the use of weapons, and the extent of co-offending or offending in groups. Other more detailed analyses will examine the spatial patterning of youth violence and the social networks that may exist among young offenders and their victims. This descriptive report will be released in late 2005.

André Rosay and Sharon Chamard are assistant professors with the Justice Center.

Table 5. Fear of Victimization by Youth Violence in Anchorage, 2005

"Please tell me how much concern you, yourself, have of being victimized by someone under the age of 18."

	N	Percent
A great deal	18	3.1 %
Quite a lot	14	2.4
Some	105	17.9
Very little	286	48.7
None	164	27.9
Total	587	

Note: Table excludes "don't know" and missing/refused responses.

Source of data: Anchorage Community Survey, 2005

Table 6. Perception of Change in Level of Youth Violence in Anchorage, 2005

"In general, would you say there is more or less youth violence in your neighborhood than there was at this time one year ago?"

	N	Percent
More	40	7.7 %
Same	326	63.1
Less	151	29.2
Total	517	

Note: Table excludes "don't know" and missing/refused responses.

Source of data: Anchorage Community Survey, 2005

Victimization of Native Americans

According to a statistical profile released by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in late 2004, "American Indians and Crime," Alaska Natives and American Indians are more likely than people of other races to be victims of violent crimes. From 1992 through 2002, this group experienced a per capita rate of violence twice that of the

general U.S. resident population. This disparity in rates of exposure to violence occurred across age groups, by gender, and by location. In addition, Alaska Natives and American Indians were more likely than people of other races to experience violence from someone of another race, and the criminal victimizer was more likely to have

consumed alcohol preceding the offense.

This article was derived from the Bureau of Justice Statistics report "American Indians and Crime: A BJS Statistical Profile, 1992-2002," NCJ-203097. Copies of the entire report may be obtained from the Bureau of Justice Statistics web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/aic02.htm>.

Table 1. U.S. Population by Race, 2000

Race	Population	Percent
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,475,956	0.9 %
White	211,460,626	75.1
Black or African	34,658,190	12.3
Asian	10,242,998	3.6
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	398,835	0.1
Some other race	15,359,073	5.5
Two or more races	6,826,228	2.4
Total	281,421,906	

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data

Table 2. Annual Average Violent Victimization Rates for Persons Age 12 or Older, by Race, 1992-2001

Race	Annual average, 1992-2001		
	Population age 12 or older	Number of violent victimizations	Rate of violent victimization per 1,000 persons age 12 or older
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,144,600	116,050	101
White	184,342,110	7,484,760	41
Black or African	26,625,810	1,336,620	50
Asian	7,288,340	163,520	22
Total	219,400,860	9,100,950	41

Note: National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) estimates of the racial distribution of the resident population age 12 or older for the period 1992-2002 correspond to the estimates reported by the Census Bureau in *The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2000*. NCVS estimates show that American Indians/Alaska Natives represented 0.5% of those interviewed, while Census 2000 shows that American Indians/Alaska Natives account for 0.9% of the resident population, age 12 or older.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

Table 3. States with the 10 Largest American Indian/Alaska Native Populations, Census 2000

Race	Population	Percent of state total population
California	333,346	1.0 %
Oklahoma	273,230	7.9
Arizona	255,879	5.0
New Mexico	173,483	9.5
Texas	118,362	0.6
North Carolina	99,551	1.2
Alaska	98,043	15.6
Washington	93,301	1.6
New York	82,461	0.4
Michigan	58,479	0.6
Total	1,586,135	

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on Stella U. Ogunwole, 2002, The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2000, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Brief, C2KBR/01-15

Table 4. Violent Crime Rates for Persons Age 12 or Older, by Race, Age, Gender, and Location of Residence, 1992-2001

Victim characteristic	Annual average rate of violent victimization per 1,000 residents				
	American Indian/Alaska Native	White	Black	Asian	All races
Gender					
Male	118	48	55	28	49
Female	86	34	46	17	35
Age					
12 to 17	146	95	97	45	94
18 to 24	155	85	88	38	84
25 to 34	140	50	53	24	50
35 to 44	93	36	41	17	36
45 to 54	45	24	27	14	24
55 or older	22	7	9	5	8
Location					
Urban	130	53	60	22	53
Suburban	111	39	44	23	39
Rural	81	31	27	24	31
Total	101	41	50	22	41

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics



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