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Alternatives to Incarceration: Suggestions from the Past

N.E. Schafer and Amy B. Dellinger

Crowded prisons and a runaway corrections budget have led many in Alaska to call for alternatives to incarceration. Before an alternative sentencing program is initiated certain questions about it should be addressed: 1) Is it a genuine alternative to incarceration? 2) Is it fair? 3) Is it good for the community, the offender and the victim? We use data from a previous alternative program, the Alaska Pre-Trial Intervention Program (PTI), as a basis for discussing these questions, in the belief that this may prove instructive in establishing new alternatives.

Background

The Alaska Pre-Trial Intervention Program was a diversion program intended as a cost-efficient alternative disposition for non-dangerous offenders. Eligible offenders were offered a chance to participate before their trials; if they successfully completed the program, charges against them were dropped and the state was saved the time, effort and cost of further processing for this offense. The program required

offenders to get help for identified personal problems, engage in community service activities and pay restitution to those who incurred losses as a result of the criminal behavior.

Serving as outside evaluator, the Justice Center worked with the Department of Law to collect and maintain a complete data base on the Pre-Trial Intervention Program, which was in operation statewide in 1983, 1984 and 1985. (In 1986 it was phased out for lack of funding.) During the data collection period, a total of 1865 Alaskans entered the PTI program.

Is the program a genuine alternative to incarceration?

Evaluations of alternative programs in other states have shown that many are not genuine alternatives to incarceration. Because they cost less than incarceration they seem to save money, but because they draw their populations from offenders who would not be headed for prison anyway, they actually *add* to the overall cost of the system—a result referred to as *netwidening* because it increases the number of persons held in the criminal justice “net.”

In diversion programs elsewhere, prosecutors were found likely to refer persons whose cases were so weak that they would not have been carried forward. Thus, the programs added people to the system rather than subtracting them. However, the Alaska PTI program guidelines directed prosecutors to refer to the program only those offenders whom they would have charged and thus further processed.

The PTI data suggest that the

**Table 1. PTI Clients:
Legal Characteristics**

N = 1865

INTAKE OFFENSE CATEGORY (IN RANK ORDER)	N	%
Theft	530	28.4
Drugs	227	12.2
Burglary/trespass	206	11.0
Assault	205	11.0
Minor consuming	204	10.9
Criminal mischief	141	7.6
Forgery (check/credit card)	77	4.1
Weapons misconduct	49	2.6
Disorderly conduct	33	1.8
Fraud	31	1.7
Contributing to delinquency of minor	29	1.6
Perjury/false swearing	25	1.3
Other offense	108	5.8
TYPE OF OFFENSE		
Felony	685	36.7
Misdemeanor	1178	63.2
Unknown	2	0.1
PRIOR RECORD		
Yes (adult)	443	23.8
Yes (juvenile)	235	12.6
No	1187	63.6
TYPE OF ATTORNEY		
None	522	28.1
Private	463	24.8
Public	766	41.1
Court-appointed	114	6.1

program was, for the most part, a genuine alternative to incarceration. Both the types of offenses and the prior records of the clients indicate that the program involved offenders who would otherwise have continued in the system (see Table 1). However, one Class A misdemeanor which is rarely treated with a formal charge appeared regularly at one PTI location. The charge of minor consuming is usually treated informally, without processing, but

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HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- The Bureau of Justice Statistics examines drug interdiction and testing in the nation's prisons (page 2).
- An in-depth discussion of community policing (page 3).
- The Justice Center re-releases "Coming to Anchorage: A Guide for Rural Alaskans" (page 4).

A BJS Report

Drug Enforcement and Treatment in Prisons, 1990

About 7 of every 8 prisons in the nation tested an estimated total of 565,500 inmates for one or more illegal drugs between July 1, 1989, and June 30, 1990. In state facilities, 3.6 per cent of the tests for cocaine, 1.3 per cent for heroin, 2.0 per cent for methamphetamines, and 6.3 per cent for marijuana found evidence of drug use. In federal prisons, 0.4 per cent of the tests for cocaine, 0.4 per cent for heroin, 0.1 per cent for methamphetamines, and 1.1 per cent for marijuana were positive.

This report uses information provided to the Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities. Data were collected from 957 state prison facilities, 250 state community-based facilities, and 80 federal prisons operating on June 29, 1990. Censuses were also conducted in 1984, 1979, and 1974, but the 1990 census was the first to gather information on drug interdiction practices, drug testing of inmates and staff, and inmate drug treatment programs.

Findings

Other findings from the 1990 census include the following:

- Ninety-eight per cent of state community-based facilities—those in which at least half of the residents

Recent BJS Reports

In addition to the report summarized in the accompanying article, the following recent study from the Bureau of Justice Statistics is available from the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit:

"Pretrial Release of Felony Defendants, 1990," an examination of a national sample of felony defendants release prior to case disposition, NCJ-139560.

Table 1. Number of Facilities Testing for Specific Drugs, Number of Tests Given, and Per Cent Positive, from July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1990

Type of drug	Tests		Facilities	
	Number given	Per cent positive	Number testing	Per cent positive
All facilities				
Amphetamines	256,946	0.9%	513	32.6%
Barbituates	225,855	0.8	472	34.1
Cocaine	379,970	3.1	712	60.0
Heroin	283,281	1.2	454	38.3
LSD	137,362	0.6	275	9.8
Marijuana/hashish	396,993	5.6%	764	79.7%
Methadone	150,725	0.6	304	8.6
Methamphetamines	176,300	1.5	327	21.4
Unspecified drug	124,815	0.7	235	24.3
Other	83,608	1.4	162	60.5
Federal facilities				
Amphetamines	51,874	0.2%	55	30.9%
Barbituates	51,274	0.1	54	33.3
Cocaine	55,393	0.4	59	59.3
Heroin	45,496	0.4	51	31.4
LSD	40,297	0.0*	45	4.4
Marijuana/hashish	53,809	1.1%	57	77.2%
Methadone	43,338	0.0*	48	6.3
Methamphetamines	49,191	0.1	54	24.1
Unspecified drug	39,225	0.1	42	14.3
Other	12,840	0.4	13	92.3
State facilities				
Amphetamines	205,072	1.1%	458	32.8%
Barbituates	174,581	1.0	418	34.2
Cocaine	324,577	3.6	653	60.0
Heroin	237,785	1.3	403	39.2
LSD	97,065	0.8	230	10.9
Marijuana/hashish	343,184	6.3%	707	79.9%
Methadone	107,387	0.8	256	9.0
Methamphetamines	127,109	2.0	273	20.9
Unspecified drug	85,590	1.0	193	26.4
Other	70,768	1.6	149	57.7

Note: Data are for 61 federal facilities and 776 state facilities with data on all variables.

* Less than 0.05%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

may leave the facility daily—tested residents. All federal prisons and 83 per cent of state prisons reported that they tested inmates for drugs.

- Seventy-six per cent of institutions reported testing inmates for drugs when drug use was suspected. Twenty per cent tested all inmates at least once during confinement.

- At state confinement facilities 1.4 per cent of tests for cocaine, 1.0 per cent for heroin, 2.3 per cent for methamphetamines, and 5.8 per cent for marijuana indicated drug use.

- At state community-based facilities 8.9 per cent of tests for cocaine confirmed the presence of the drug, as did 2.2 per cent for heroin, 1.1 per cent for methamphetamines, and

8.1 per cent for marijuana.

- State confinement facilities that only tested inmates suspected of drug use had higher positive rates than facilities that tested all or random groups of inmates (6% for cocaine and 14% for marijuana versus 1.5% for cocaine and 5% for marijuana).

- State and federal facilities used a variety of methods to prevent drugs from being brought into the institution, including questioning, patdowns, clothing exchanges, and body cavity searches.

- At admission inmates were required to exchange clothing in 88 per cent of the federal prisons and 58 per cent of state prisons; inmates were patted down in 88 per cent of

federal prisons and 78 per cent of the state prisons.

- In the facilities using the most intrusive interdiction technique, body cavity searches, positive drug test results among inmates tested were lower than in facilities using other methods of interdiction.

- Questioning and search of belongings were widely used for visitors to both federal and state facilities.

- Federal confinement facilities reported that they could provide drug treatment for an estimated 7,800 inmates; state confinement facilities, for 114,000; and state community-based facilities, for 9,400.

- Federal facilities were using an estimated 62 per cent of total drug treatment capacity on June 29, 1990; state confinement facilities, 78 per cent; and community-based facilities, 66 per cent.

Interpreting Measures of Drug Testing

Prevalence of drug use in prisons is difficult to estimate. Part of the difficulty occurs with record-keeping and reporting. A drug test determines the presence of a specific drug at a specific level. A single urine sample can be used for a single drug

test or for multiple tests for different drugs. Correctional authorities were asked to report the number of tests for each drug and the number of positive tests. However, some authorities may have reported the number of urine samples taken if their records included only those figures.

Other difficulties in estimating the amount of drug use in prison include the following:

- Prisons differ in the selection of whom to test. Most facilities do not choose inmates for testing using a sample with a known probability of selection: one cannot say that the selected inmates represent all inmates in the institution.

- Prisons differ in what drugs they test for. Prison authorities may not suspect the use of a drug and not test for it, even though the drug is used in their facility. Other prisons may conduct repeated tests for a drug seldom used.

- A single urine specimen can have more than one positive drug test from an individual using multiple drugs. Describing positive rates by type of drug will overstate the number of inmates with at least one positive test.

- Prisons differ in how often they

test inmates. Drug testing may be rare in some prisons and frequent in others.

- Urine tests only detect the presence of most drugs 48 to 72 hours after use, except for PCP and marijuana, which may be detected up to 30 days after use. This varying span, when combined with lack of random sampling, distorts any estimation of overall drug use.

- Depending on various factors, the presence of methamphetamines may not be distinguished from amphetamines; therefore, the test results for these two drugs should be considered together.

- Prisons may differ in the types of tests used. Some types are more accurate than others, producing lower numbers of false positives and false negatives. Facilities may or may not perform confirmatory tests, and they were not asked to estimate the number of false positives and false negatives.

This article was based on the Bureau of Justice Statistics report "Drug Enforcement and Treatment in Prisons, 1990," NCJ-134724. Copies of the complete report are available through the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit of the Justice Center.

Community Policing

John E. Angell and Roger C. Miller

Community policing has become everyone's rhetorical solution for policing problems. Federal policies support it; several states are providing funds for communities to implement it; progressive police officials and scholars compete for credit for developing it; and residents of inner city neighborhoods demand that their police adopt it. Even the new president has made it a cornerstone of his urban crime package.

Despite the nearly universal support for this "new" policing approach, few people can provide a clear operational definition of the term. Even fewer can identify significant differences between traditional arrangements and those of community police operations. Some view it as simply a public relations strategy; some see it as involving saturation of

high crime neighborhoods with police officers; some think it involves the institution of foot patrols in neighborhoods; some conceive of it as the establishment of offices for police in neighborhoods. Others have the notion it includes all of the above and perhaps anything else which can be defined as having police/community implications. Many people, including some in academia, do not understand community policing for what it is—a significant crime prevention, community problem-solving, structural and operational alternative to the traditional bureaucratic criminal apprehension arrangements used in urban policing.

Community policing is not achieved by simply tinkering with a few operational strategies. It involves fundamental changes in the philosophy of urban police and related modifications in traditional

police organizational structure, personnel systems and practices, management and supervisory systems, and the activities performed by police personnel. Its effectiveness can be enhanced by complementary changes in other components of the criminal justice system—especially prosecution, judicial, and correctional operations—and in the social service system.

Although it is possible to launch experimental community policing efforts which will reduce the fear of crime and heighten the quality of police efforts in limited geographic areas within short time frames, full conversion of a large police agency to a true community police alternative has yet to be achieved. Lee Brown, as police chief in Houston, established a seven to ten-year

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Policing (continued from page 3)

timeline for such implementation, but left to assume the New York City Commissioner's job before the implementation was complete. Subsequent changes in Houston's top police management have resulted in the effort being abandoned in all but political rhetoric and police public relations materials. Experiences with implementation across the nation reveal that achievement of full community policing requires complete understanding of the concept and tenacious, long-term commitment by public and police officials.

Philosophy

How do the primary philosophical and administrative tenets of community policing differ from those underlying more traditional policing arrangements? Policing since the mid-1930s has been based on a classic philosophy of crime control: a conspicuous show of police force, crime detection, and criminal apprehension accompanied by vigorous prosecution and "just deserts" sentencing. Because it views police as corruptible, this philosophy requires officers to remain aloof from the citizens they serve. Such a crime control approach is assumed to result in deterrence of criminal behavior and to reduce crime. With low crime, communities are safe and

residents feel secure.

In contrast to the classic perspective, community policing is based on an assumption that police can best ensure safe communities through preventing crime by identifying and addressing the problems which cause it. This philosophy requires police to be a part of, rather than apart from, the community. Officers must thoroughly understand their community and its problems, and they must be able to define and implement appropriate actions to correct the problems which affect public safety. Problem-solving actions may entail initiating arrests, but they may also involve organizing recreational opportunities for children, ensuring that zoning conditions are observed, or getting economic or psychological assistance for families who need it.

Organization and Management

The organization and management arrangements of full-service community policing are based on the same research findings which underlie the ongoing restructuring of American industry. They differ substantially from those authoritarian, hierarchical arrangements traditionally used in policing. Community policing reflects a professional model similar to that used by medical or computer engineering teams. A primary structural modification for a

community policing arrangement involves decentralization of police service delivery operations along recognized neighborhood lines, and the investment of personnel assigned to these community areas with responsibility and authority for providing all police services in the community area. To further communication and operational flexibility, each community cadre of police consists of approximately 16 to 20 officers for 24-hour, seven-day operations. Each team also has responsibility for working with community residents and organizations in identifying public safety problems and developing methods for addressing them. These duties include ensuring that other governmental and social organizations provide appropriate services in the community.

The individual officer's obligations in community policing entail both job enlargement and job enrichment. Enrichment of the community police officer's job involves a vertical job loading which increases the officer's responsibility for the total job cycle from planning and organizing to evaluating results. Although police managers and staff service units continue to coordinate all teams and to provide statistical data and analysis to the community officers, the community officers collectively have responsibility for many of the functions traditionally performed by managers, including organizing themselves and perhaps scheduling

Coming to Anchorage Video Available

The Justice Center is again releasing its video "Coming to Anchorage: A Guide for Rural Alaskans." The program examines the personal experiences of several residents of rural Alaska who have made the cultural transition between living in the bush and living in or visiting the city. The video presents some of the problems involved in adjusting to the city and makes suggestions for a successful transition.

The video is suitable for use by schools, community organizations, social service agencies and other educational groups. In addition to providing a practical preparation for persons visiting Anchorage, the video can be used as part of a cross-cultural curriculum to stimulate discussions of different cultural systems.

"Coming to Anchorage: A Guide for Rural Alaskans" was produced in 1990 by the Justice Center with the special cooperation of the Anchorage Police Department, through the Instructional Development Production Services at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Antonia Moras served as producer-writer; Lisa Jamieson as director-writer and Kim Daehnke as principal videographer. The program was funded in part by grants from the Alaska Humanities Forum and the National Endowment for the Humanities; Carr-Gottstein, Inc.; Nana Regional Corporation; Cook Inlet Regional Corporation; and the University of Alaska President's Special Projects Fund.

Copies of the video are available for the cost of duplication and postage. They may be obtained through the Justice Center, (907) 786-1810.

their work hours. Consequently, the police agency needs fewer managers and supervisors under community policing, as the management role moves toward conducting planning, evaluation, and coordination of the community police teams. Police managers' duties also include a greater responsibility than under classical policing for ensuring other social service agencies support their efforts.

Job enlargement or horizontal loading involves expansion of the officer's responsibilities to include many of the functions (such as major traffic accident investigation and follow-up investigative jobs) performed by police specialists in a traditional police agency. If officers are given complete responsibility for cases, inefficiency stemming from communication problems related to passing cases from patrol officers to records to specialists is reduced, and field officers develop a greater commitment to quality performance.

Although implementation of community policing requires an initial investment in planning and restructuring, the approach ultimately provides higher quality police services at lower costs. This increase in cost-effectiveness stems from: 1) shifting police from a concentration on apprehending and prosecuting arrestees to solving community public safety problems in a fashion which reduces crime; 2) increasing the police/community cooperation and quality of officer performance; 3) reducing the number of supervisors and middle managers as the team of field officers assume many self-management responsibilities; and 4) transferring specialist responsibilities to field officers, thereby increasing the number of personnel actually providing police services in the communities of the jurisdiction.

The adoption of community policing has significant implications for other components of the justice system and agencies of government. Managers of these operations must be consulted throughout the planning and implementation process. It may facilitate understanding of the community policing concept to review some possible implications for prosecution, courts and corrections.

Prosecution

Prosecutorial operations cannot avoid being affected by implementation of community policing. The shift of police emphasis to problem solving and crime prevention results in police officers working with community residents to resolve public safety problems. Police referrals to mental health, dispute mediation and social service agencies will be higher. As community policing achieves effectiveness in reducing crime, the cases referred for prosecution should decrease in number.

The prosecutor's case management and training role will become more difficult as the community patrol officers assume full responsibility for the preparation of cases. Rather than having the support of a limited number of investigators, the prosecutors will have to deal directly with all field officers. In jurisdictions where these changes were not addressed during the implementation process, prosecutors often joined police investigators in becoming the most significant group to oppose community policing.

Courts

Although courts are more removed from direct impact during the implementation of community policing, they may need to adjust their operations over the long term. They should consider problems associated with the reduction in specialized investigators and the assumption of these duties by neighborhood-based field officers. The scheduling of hearings and trials may require greater effort, and the placement of facilities and lower courts at some community locations may be justified.

The judiciary can also support the community policing emphasis on problem solving by assisting with the organization of support programs, such as community mediation and dispute resolution in areas served by community police.

Ultimately, judges may have more options for sentencing and disposing of cases as the community and social service agencies adjust to a community-based philosophy for addressing crime and public safety problems.

Corrections

The potential for improving the effectiveness of corrections is enhanced by the implementation of community policing. The closer police and community arrangements might justify restructuring and decentralization of probation, parole and other community corrections operations to achieve a greater match between the community needs and available correctional services. Stable assignment of probation and parole officers to handle caseloads in specific communities might contribute to developing sounder programs and to enhancing officers' ability to support the rehabilitation of offenders assigned to their custody. It should also enhance their capacity to protect community residents.

Conclusion

Community policing is a substantive alternative to classical policing arrangements. It entails increasing police responsibility for improving the neighborhoods served, increasing public safety, and preventing criminality. It is accomplished by fixing responsibility for policing with generalist police officers who are assigned to police teams to work exclusively in designated communities with the people and organizations of the communities.

Despite the slow progress in achieving widespread understanding and use of the concept and characteristics of community policing, such an approach will ultimately result in more effective policing. Experience in those communities that have experimented with it provides sound evidence of its potential for reducing crime and enhancing the quality of life. The federal government's commitment of substantial funding to stimulate further implementation guarantees a continuation of experimentation with the concept.

John Angell is Director of the Justice Center; over the past twenty years he has been involved in the implementation of community policing experiments in Holyoke, Massachusetts; Dayton, Ohio; and Portland, Oregon. Roger Miller is an instructor with the Justice Center; he specializes in the area of crime prevention.

Table 2. Distribution of Race by PTI Location

	PTI Clients				PTI Clients				PTI Clients		
	N	%	Total pop.*		N	%	Total pop.*		N	%	Total pop.*
Anchorage	N = 365			Kenai	N = 114			Palmer	N = 122		
White	270	74.0%	85.2%	White	105	92.1%	91.0%	White	108	88.5%	93.3%
Native	33	9.0	5.1	Native	6	5.3	6.1	Native	7	5.7	3.5
Black	46	12.6	5.3	Black	2	1.8	0.1	Black	5	4.1	1.9
Other	16	4.4	4.3	Other	1	0.9	2.7	Other	2	1.6	1.3
Barrow	N = 15			Ketchikan	N = 65			Sitka	N = 20		
White	2	13.3%	20.6%	White	49	75.4%	80.8%	White	8	40.0%	73.9%
Native	11	73.3	77.9	Native	14	21.5	14.6	Native	11	55.0	21.4
Black	1	6.7	0.5	Black	-	-	0.5	Black	-	-	0.6
Other	1	6.7	1.0	Other	2	3.1	4.1	Other	1	5.0	4.1
Bethel	N = 39			Kodiak	N = 101			Valdez	N = 13		
White	4	10.3%	31.0%	White	74	73.3%	70.2%	White	9	69.2%	89.2%
Native	32	82.1	67.6	Native	18	17.8	14.0	Native	3	23.1	5.7
Black	-	-	0.4	Black	-	-	0.5	Black	1	7.7	1.2
Other	3	7.7	1.0	Other	9	8.9	15.3	Other	-	-	3.9
Fairbanks	N = 619			Kotzebue	N = 43						
White	460	74.3%	79.9%	White	1	2.3%	22.9%		PTI Clients		
Native	100	16.2	7.0	Native	42	97.7	76.6	White	1297	69.5%	
Black	34	5.5	8.8	Black	-	-	0.1	Native	398	21.3	
Other	25	4.0	4.3	Other	-	-	0.3	Black	94	5.0	
Juneau	N = 265			Nome	N = 84			Total	N = 1865		
White	192	72.5%	84.3%	White	15	17.9%	39.1%	White	1297	69.5%	
Native	55	20.8	11.2	Native	66	78.6	58.5	Native	398	21.3	
Black	4	1.5	0.7	Black	1	1.2	0.6	Black	94	5.0	
Other	14	5.3	3.8	Other	2	2.4	1.7	Other	76	4.1	

Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

* Total population percentages based on city population from 1980 census.

Alternatives

(continued from page 1)

appeared as 11.6 per cent of all offenses in the total PTI program sample. The Fairbanks office accounted for 89.1 per cent of these charges, suggesting that in one location people were being added to the system, not subtracted from it. While alternatives to incarceration should accommodate local concerns, they should include continuous monitoring and a means of intervening if netwidening occurs.

Is the program fair?

Assignment to alternative sentencing programs should be fair. Ongoing monitoring of participants should include such factors as socioeconomic level, age, race and sex in order to assure that such sentences have not been inappropriately distributed. Fairness requires that participation in an alternative program not be limited to specific segments of the society, particularly if the offender benefits from participation.

Because PTI offered offenders a means of avoiding the stigma of a

criminal conviction, it was a desirable disposition. The data show that the program was broadly available: it was offered in thirteen locations across the state and not limited to urban offenders, as many alternatives might be. We used type of attorney as a measure of income to conclude that diversion was offered to offenders regardless of socioeconomic level. Only 25 per cent of the PTI clients had private attorneys, while 47.2 per cent had either a public defender (41.1%) or a court-appointed attorney (6.1%). A substantial portion (28.1%) entered the program without consulting an attorney.

Alaska minorities tend to be overrepresented in prison populations. Alaska Natives, for example, regularly constitute slightly more than 33 per cent of Alaska prisoners, but only 16 per cent of the general population. A program which offers an alternative to prison should at least approximate such percentages of minority inclusion. We compared the racial distribution of PTI clients with the racial distribution of the general population to conclude that the program was broadly available to a

wide spectrum of Alaskans (see Table 2).

Is the program good for offenders?

Avoiding the stigma of conviction is one benefit to offenders, but there were other benefits to PTI participation as well. Participants could live at home and keep their jobs and continue family and community activities. In addition, there were requirements that clients deal with personal problems, particularly those related to their offense behavior. While a variety of treatment activities were required of PTI clients, we use alcohol treatment as our example. Forty per cent of offenders were under the influence of alcohol, alone or in combination with other drugs, at the time of their offense, and 33.6 per cent were identified as having problems with alcohol. Alcohol counseling was a condition of the PTI contracts of 32.8 per cent of PTI clients (N=611) and a treatment goal of an additional 1.4 per cent (see Table 3). A total of 383 clients completed an alcohol counseling program, 109 partially completed one, and 15 had more alcohol counseling than was required.

**Table 3. PTI Clients:
Alcohol Characteristics**

N = 1865

UNDER INFLUENCE AT TIME OF OFFENSE			
	N	%	
Yes	745	40.0 %	
No	1120	60.0	
IDENTIFIED ALCOHOL PROBLEM			
Yes	626	33.6 %	
No	1233	66.1	
Unknown	6	0.3	
ALCOHOL COUNSELING REQUIRED			
Yes	637	34.2 %	
No	1228	65.9	
ALCOHOL COUNSELING COMPLETED			
None	104	5.6 %	
Part	113	6.1	
All	391	21.0	
More than required	15	0.8	
Counseling not required	1242	66.7	



Alaska Justice Forum

Editor: Antonia Moras
 Editorial Board: John Angell, Allan Barnes, Robert Congdon, Richard Curtis, Amy Dellinger, Roger Miller, Lisa Rieger, Nancy Schafer, Lawrence Trosle
 Typesetting and Layout: Melissa S. Green

Justice Center, John Angell, Director

Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit, Allan Barnes, Director

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The University of Alaska provides equal education and employment opportunities for all, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or status as a Vietnam-era or disabled veteran.

Thus, 85 per cent of the clients who needed it received help with their alcohol problem.

Alternative sentences should take into consideration the problems behind the offense behavior, include these in offender treatment, and monitor compliance with these treatment conditions.

Is the program good for the community?

Alternative sentencing programs should not pose a risk to the members of the community in which they are located. PTI clients, because of the non-dangerous nature of their offenses, were deemed not to pose a danger to the members of the communities in which they lived. PTI participants remained in their communities, where they could assume their obligations and responsibilities. Forty per cent of the PTI clients were employed at intake. They were able to keep their jobs, which not only contributed to their local economies, but also enabled them to support their dependents. The community benefited by avoiding one of the hidden costs of incarceration—the need to expend resources on the families of the incarcerated.

Communities also benefited from the community service activities required of PTI clients. Community service could be provided only to governmental or nonprofit agencies and could not be used to replace paid workers. A total of 66,063 hours of community service activities were completed by 1534 clients during the three years of data collection. The distribution by PTI

location is shown in Table 4. These activities, which involved tasks that might otherwise have gone undone, contributed to improving the community.

Does the program benefit victims?

Many of the offenses with which PTI clients were charged were public order crimes with no identifiable victims (e.g., minor consuming, drug possession, disorderly conduct, etc.), but clients charged with property crimes were required to pay restitution wherever it was appropriate. Altogether, 583 PTI clients paid \$376,864 in monetary restitution during the three years studied—an average \$646.42 per client. Clearly, many individuals and entities recovered at least some of the losses they incurred. Here, too, the program met a major objective.

While new alternative sentencing options may not benefit victims as directly as PTI did, the needs and concerns of victims should be considered in the establishment of alternatives and in the assignment of offenders to them.

Using the past to plan for the future

There is little doubt that Alaska will soon establish mechanisms to make alternative sentences possible. Goals should be established for them and steps should be taken to assure that specific goals are met. The PTI model, which incorporated an independent, outside evaluation, might be considered for assessing whether the program is meeting its

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Table 4. Restitution and Community Service by PTI Location

	Restitution		Community Service	
	Required	Paid	Required	Served
Anchorage	\$ 197,169	\$ 78,370	22,163 hours	13,586 hours
Barrow	4,686	1,300	492	138
Bethel	18,017	5,049	1,891	1,280
Fairbanks	158,796	146,518	20,966	18,275
Juneau	108,829	28,132	11,774	8,571
Kenai	11,704	7,191	4,995	4,200
Ketchikan	50,920	39,923	4,877	3,804
Kodiak	22,905	10,360	3,747	3,028
Kotzebue	12,581	9,862	3,713	2,870
Nome	37,827	27,743	4,230	3,692
Palmer	35,695	18,379	7,264	5,579
Sitka	6,591	3,481	1,177	647
Valdez	1,059	556	680	393
Total	\$ 666,779	\$ 376,864	87,969 hours	66,063 hours

Alternatives
(continued from page 7)

goals. If the goal is to reduce the number of people in prison, then the program must draw its population from those who are headed for, or are already in, prison. If the goal is

to find a sanction which is more punitive than probation but which will not add to the prison population, then increased expenditures, rather than cost savings, will result. In either case the programs should be monitored to ensure that they are imposed in an equitable fashion, that

they offer benefits to the community and to victims, and that they make it possible for offenders to address the problems that led to the offense. *Nancy Schafer is a professor with the Justice Center; Amy B. Dellinger is a research associate with the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit.*

Alaska Justice Forum
Justice Center
University of Alaska Anchorage
3211 Providence Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

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