Evaluation of a JAIBG-Funded Project:
Voice and Location Telephone Monitoring of Juveniles

Report for the
Bureau of Justice Statistics

by

N.E. Schafer
Pamela Martin

Justice Center
University of Alaska Anchorage

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Evaluation of a JAIBG-Funded Project:
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Monitoring of Juveniles

In 1999 the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Unit (SAC) applied to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) for designated funds to evaluate JAIBG-funded programs. One of the programs funded through the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants in Alaska was a variant of, or an alternative to, traditional electronic monitoring. Instead of hardware requiring a telephone connection, this program involved telephone voice recognition. VALUE (Voice And Location Update Evaluation) eliminates both a telephone base unit and an ankle bracelet and relies on voice recognition to verify an offender’s location.

In general, electronic monitoring programs, regardless of hardware type, have two goals: they are meant to reduce the costs of incarceration by providing an alternative to both detention and institutionalization; they are intended to prevent recidivism through this extended supervision.

Studies of electronic monitoring have not verified the success of these goals. In a study of adults in Canada, Bonta, et al. (1999) assessed both cost effectiveness and recidivism among both inmates and probationers and a prison comparison sample. They found that electronic monitoring programs tended to have a net-widening effect. These programs were therefore more costly since they were not used to keep people out of institutions, but instead added people to the system. Bonta, et al. (1999) found no significant difference between probationers and persons on electronic monitoring, although there were variations among the three participating Canadian provinces. The study did find, however, that when an intensive treatment program was included those on electronic monitoring had a significantly higher success rate. They suggested that the treatment program was responsible for the success of the clients rather than the electronic monitoring program.

Because electronic monitoring involves considerably more supervision than traditional probation or parole, studies of intensive supervision programs (ISPs) are relevant. Petersilia and Turner (1990) compared adult probationers in three counties and found no evidence that those on ISP had lower recidivism rates than the control groups on traditional probation.

Barton and Butts (1990) studied an experimental program where adjudicated delinquents were randomly assigned to at-home programs as alternatives to incarceration or were incarcerated. They found no significant differences in recidivism between youths on ISP and youth who had been incarcerated.

Research on an intensive supervision program studied by Wiebush (1993) compared two groups of juvenile felony offenders, both of whom were originally assigned for institutionalization to the Ohio Department of Youth Services. The test group was diverted into an ISP program while the controls (who did not meet selection criteria) were institutionalized and placed on traditional probation upon their release. There were no significant differences between the two groups on recidivism measures over eighteen months, but the ISP group accumulated more technical violations (violations...
of the conditions of probation). He concluded that electronic monitoring is a form of intensive supervision which can be cost effective if used as an alternative to incarceration. It may be a more costly method of supervising offenders if it is used to supplement traditional supervision.

**Background of the Study**

In Alaska, electronic monitoring seems a particularly useful program for supervising and controlling juvenile offenders on probation. For youth from remote areas, a voice recognition system could substitute for institutionalization or face-to-face supervision by a probation officer. There are more than 200 Alaska villages ranging in size from fewer than 100 people to more than a thousand. Direct supervision of juvenile probationers in these villages is seldom possible, so alternative supervision strategies are desirable.

The state of Alaska is geographically large but very small in population. All justice services, except for law enforcement, are centralized at the state level. Juvenile justice services are under the aegis of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. They were formerly part of the Division of Family and Youth Services, but have recently become a separate division within the department. Juvenile Probation is divided into three regions: Southeast, Southcentral, and Northern regions (the city of Anchorage is an administratively separate unit, although it is located in the Southcentral region). The Southcentral region covers a large portion of the state (Figure 1) and includes distant communities accessible only by air as well as communities on Alaska’s road system. This large region includes four district offices: Dillingham, Kenai, Kodiak, and Mat-Su. The Mat-Su office was the primary site of the JAIBG grant under study, although the private, non-profit agency which applied for the grant serves other areas as well.

The federal Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) program provided funds to the states for support of programs which would enhance accountability among juvenile offenders. A portion of the funds was set aside for evaluation research, and distribution of these funds was overseen by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).

In Alaska in 1999, competitive applications for JAIBG funds were made to the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage, which is Alaska’s Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), worked closely with staff from DJJ to determine which programs funded under JAIBG were most in need of evaluation. Two programs were selected from this list and two proposals were submitted to BJS, one of which was to evaluate a variant of electronic monitoring. VALUE (Voice and Location Update Evaluation), which involves telephonic voice recognition to determine probationers’ whereabouts, has promise as an accountability vehicle for juveniles in rural communities where direct probation services are not readily available. The SAC began an evaluation of VALUE as it was operated by a private contractor for the Mat-Su Youth Corrections Office.

The Mat-Su Youth Corrections Office, under the supervision of the Division of Juvenile Justice, serves an area that reaches from Palmer to Cantwell in the north, to Glennallen in the east, and to
Figure 1. Southcentral Region of the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice

The Anchorage Region is a separate administrative unit, but is located geographically within the Southcentral Region.

Cordova in the south – an area of nearly 19,000 square miles. This area includes some small towns and some fairly large ones. School enrollment figures for these towns can provide an idea of the number of juveniles who might be seen by the office. Cantwell, population 166, has one school with 39 students. Valdez, population 4,555, has three schools with 868 students. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (Palmer, Wasilla, Willow, Sutton) includes 30 schools and serves 12,735 students.

One probation officer covers probationers in Glennallen, Valdez, and Cordova. The remainder of the Mat-Su district is served by four probation officers who work out of the Mat-Su Youth Detention Facility. Caseloads for individual probation officers vary by location.

The duties of the probation officer include, but are not limited to, preliminary investigations as intake officers determine legal sufficiency for formal court action, providing diversionary services, developing rehabilitation plans, making disposition recommendations, implementing case plans, investigating probation violations, evaluating cases, and making recommendations to the court and Regional Classification Committee for foster home, residential care, and institutional placement.

Since 1997, probation officers in the Mat-Su Valley have made use of electronic monitoring as a tool to assist them in their supervisory duties. These services have been provided to the Mat-Su Youth Corrections Office by Kids Are People, Inc. (KAP). KAP is a charitable private nonprofit agency incorporated to address the needs of at-risk youth. The Saxton Youth Shelter is a major
KAP program and the organization also provides substance abuse group counseling, family mediation services, and, since 1997, electronic monitoring services for the Mat-Su Youth Corrections Office.

The KAP electronic monitoring program requires that a base unit be placed in the probationer’s home connected to a telephone line. The offender is then fitted with an ankle bracelet that serves as a transmitter to a receiving computer. At pre-programmed stages throughout the day, indicator lights will trigger offender reporting/response actions in order to provide information on the offender’s location. Allowances for offender activities such as school and work can be programmed into the receiving computer. When a referral is received by KAP from Youth Corrections, a case manager will review the file, determine if the client meets eligibility requirements, and schedule a meeting with the youth and his or her family. The monitoring project includes additional supervision through home visitations, calls to schools or employers, etc. Aftercare is also provided for up to sixty days after program completion.

Voice verification was originally used to assure that youth on house arrest were remaining in place. This system involved random calls to the home, which required a pattern of responses to verify the voice of the client. When the program was first initiated, a random calling assignment was in place; however, due to calls at inconvenient hours, the program was modified to place calls during specified time intervals.

VALUE (Voice and Location Update Evaluation) has essentially replaced the voice verification system. Voice recognition is an important component of VALUE and it requires a reliable template for recognition. However, VALUE is a two-way calling system which permits the client to telephone in from non-home locations. For example, a client who is required to attend counseling may be required to telephone from his counselor’s office. A combination of voice template and caller ID allows the computer to verify the client’s location (at the required office.)

The VALUE system supports a variety of schedules for call times and provides considerable flexibility. Early problems with it were related to establishing a good voice template. In one case, for instance, long distance interference was identified as the cause of violations logged by the computer.

Kids Are People, Inc., viewed VALUE as a family intervention program which would include frequent face-to-face family support contacts as well as contacts with individual clients. These contacts included home and community visits as well as telephone calls (for other than monitoring purposes). The intent was to develop, in concert with the youth’s probation officer, an individual treatment plan which would incorporate family concerns, mental health concerns, etc.

In their initial application for JAIBG funds, KAP presented the VALUE program as an alternative to electronic monitoring and as a possible transition from electronic monitoring. In fact, VALUE was primarily used as a transition period so clients could “step down” from EM to release from supervision. The decision to move an EM client to step-down status is made by the probation officer and KAP staff together. Either can initiate the process, but the probation officer is the final authority.
Research Methodology

The evaluation of the VALUE program took a two-pronged approach. First, information about the youth was collected from client files maintained by the probation office and data maintained by Kids Are People, Inc. The information included basic demographic and legal data as well as data about electronic monitoring and/or VALUE periods. The second part of the evaluation was an effort to assess level of satisfaction with both EM and VALUE programs through structured interviews with clients and their parents as well as probation officers and KAP staff. In addition, we collected program satisfaction forms distributed to clients and their parents by KAP, Inc.

Our earliest understanding of the program was that clients placed on VALUE would differ from clients on traditional electronic monitoring using ankle bracelets, although some VALUE clients would be placed on VALUE after being on EM, in effect “graduating” to a system which did not require wearing hardware to school or work. In fact, VALUE was used almost exclusively as a transition from EM. Only one Mat-Su probationer was placed on VALUE without having been on traditional electronic monitoring. This youth lived in a temporary shelter without electricity and was telephoned at a restaurant phone nearby. We expanded our sample base to another southcentral office in an effort to increase information on VALUE-only clients. Adding Kodiak to the sample provided two additional VALUE-only probationers.

The initial evaluation plan also assumed that probationers on EM and/or VALUE could be compared with juveniles who were on regular probation during the year studied. In fact, no probationers were identified by the Mat-Su Office who had not been assigned to electronic monitoring.

Data on VALUE and EM clients were collected from two sources: Kids Are People, Inc. and the files of the Mat-Su probation office. KAP provided a list of clients who had been on EM and/or VALUE for the 1999 fiscal year. This list included the following information: name, date of birth, dates beginning and ending electronic monitoring, total number of days on EM, VALUE beginning and ending dates, and total number of days on VALUE. Additional information included the total numbers of service violations, new crimes, probation violations, face-to-face youth contacts, face-to-face parent contacts, home visits, phone contacts, curfew violations, and curfew exceptions for EM and/or VALUE clients. This information was then compared to the data gathered in the manual examination of each juvenile’s file at the probation office. From the probation files, the following information was collected: gender, race, family status, dates of the current and previous offenses, the outcomes of these offenses, and any treatment programs attended. Information regarding both EM and VALUE was collected from the probation files and compared to the information provided by KAP. However, the probation files did not always contain complete information. Information on the dates of supervision was particularly uneven in the files.

Manual collection of data was limited by several factors. Information provided by KAP did not always correlate with information collected from the probation files. For example, repeat times on electronic monitoring were not reflected in the KAP data. In addition, a majority of the information gathered from the probation files was collected from the hand-written chronological logs written by
individual officers, and the thoroughness with which they made entries varied among the officers, and even among files maintained by the same officer.

In addition to social and legal information retrieved from client files, structured interviews were conducted with clients, their parents, and the probation officers. A letter from the Mat-Su office of the Division of Juvenile Justice prepared clients and their parents for our calls. Separate interviews were devised for the juveniles who had been placed on VALUE and those placed only on EM. A separate interview was also constructed for the parents of the juveniles. The surveys were voluntary and were conducted by telephone; phone numbers for all of the families were acquired from the probation files. Of the 35 clients in the FY 2000 sample, 21 were interviewed. The low response rate can be attributed to several factors. In three cases, the family had moved out of the state after the juvenile completed probation. In four instances, the juvenile was placed in an drug/alcohol treatment program and could not be reached. Two juveniles had run away from placement during the study period and the remaining non-responses were because the families refused to participate. The interview questions focused on the level of satisfaction clients and their parents had with EM/V ALUE, what they liked and disliked about each program, and how they felt the juvenile justice system treated them during their experience. Interviews with probation officers focused on their level of satisfaction with VALUE compared to that with EM and their likes and dislikes with the VALUE and EM programs.

Information About the Sample

The sample consisted of all juveniles under electronic monitoring between June 1999 and August 2000. There were 35 juveniles in all: 14 were on EM only, 4 were on VALUE only, and 17 experienced a combination of EM and VALUE. All 17 “stepped down” from EM to the greater freedom and responsibility of VALUE as a transition toward release from supervision.

Thirty of the youth in the sample were male and five were female. Most of the clients were white (N=30). Four were listed in the files as Alaska Native and for one information on race was missing.

The average age of the youth at his or her initial entry into the system was 14.2 years (range 10.1 to 17.5 years. Their entry years ranged from 1994 to 1999, but most entered the system in 1997 (N=5), 1998 (N=9), or 1999 (N=15). Electronic monitoring programs were not available for the five who entered the system before 1997, but all five were ultimately placed on one of the two programs.

We examined the charges that brought the youth into the system in the first instance. For simplicity’s sake, these were categorized as crimes against persons, theft (including shoplifting), burglary (including one charge of criminal trespass), and criminal mischief (including one instance of arson). The “other” category included two charges of motor vehicle theft, one charge of drug possession, and one weapons violation charge. (See Table 1.)
Although the stereotype about female offenders has them most likely to be involved in theft, especially shoplifting, the five young women in this sample accounted for two of the assault charges and two of the vandalism charges—behaviors that do not fit the feminine stereotype. The four Alaska Natives, all of whom were male, entered the Alaska juvenile justice system on four different charges: theft, motor vehicle theft, drug possession, and criminal mischief.

For these first offenses outcomes varied considerably. For some youth the charges were adjusted with a letter or a conference, some were placed on informal probation (conditions of conduct were imposed, but no delinquency petition was filed). Eight of them were placed on formal probation. Ten of the clients were placed on some form of electronic monitoring following their first offense (two of these were on VALUE), either as an alternative to detention (house arrest) or as a condition of probation. Ultimately, of course, all of the youth in the sample experienced some type of electronic monitoring (including a precursor of VALUE which involved voice identification).

During the entire period of study, 29 of the youth were charged with a second offense and 23 of these were charged a third time (seven for technical violations). Thirteen were charged a fourth time, seven for technical violations. Some of the youth were assigned to electronic monitoring more than once. One was assigned four times, at least two of which were post-detention, i.e., he was on EM as a condition of release from detention at McLaughlin Youth Center in Anchorage. He experienced VALUE as a step-down transition from electronic monitoring.

VALUE was used primarily as a transition from the more restrictive supervision of the bracelet. Clients would have more freedom and more responsibility and as they proved capable could, perhaps, be released from supervision. The four youth who were placed directly on VALUE were people for whom electronic monitoring was difficult. One was living in a tent and had no telephone. The youth could (and did) call in from the telephone in a nearby lodge. The others lived on Kodiak Island where special equipment could not easily be used, but calling out could be arranged.

Of the 17 who did step down to VALUE as a transition from EM, six returned to the bracelet, five because of numerous violations of VALUE rules or of probation conditions. One individual logged in 114 verification violations. Staff at KAP believed that most of these were tied to problems with the voice template; however, some youth took advantage of the false positive readings and violated deliberately. One of the step-down youth committed a new crime and was assigned to EM as a result of this behavior. Eleven completed their VALUE experience satisfactorily. The step-down group had spent on average 79.5 days on EM. Those who did not have VALUE as a transition

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had a mean of 91.7 days on electronic monitoring. The range for the step-down group was eight to 186; the range for the non-VALUE group was 29 to 156. Their VALUE period ranged from six to 92 days, with an average length of stay on VALUE of 35.9 days. One of the step-down group was still on VALUE when the follow-up period was ended (August 31, 2000).

The status of all clients at the end of August is shown in Table 2. Most had either been released from probation as of August 31 (N=10) or were still on probation (N=13). Ten were in residential settings—four institutionalized at the training school, the remainder in various treatment programs.

### Program Satisfaction

#### Youth and Parents

The evaluation tried to determine level of satisfaction with the program on the part of both the youth and their parents. The Mat-Su Valley probation office helped to prepare clients and their parents for interview calls by sending letters to them introducing the project and requesting their cooperation. (See Appendix A.) Despite the efforts of the probation office, there were very few completed interviews. Many clients could not be reached (one was AWOL; two had left the state) and some refused to participate (rather, their parents refused to permit them to). We therefore interviewed a total of eleven youth: two had been only on VALUE; three had been only on electronic monitoring; and six were step-down youth who had been on VALUE as a transition from EM. Five parents agreed to interviews as well.

The interviews consisted of 21 statements with Likert scale responses as well as several questions, some of which were open-ended. (See Appendix B.) The step-down youth were generally positive about VALUE, apparently viewing it as a relief from the more restrictive electronic monitoring.

Step-down youth were in unanimous agreement on some of the items. All responded that they understood VALUE and their required roles. All agreed that they understood that their behavior had had effects on their families and communities, and all agreed that they had continued to receive
Neither of the two respondents who had only experienced VALUE agreed that they understood VALUE or their required roles. One did not believe he had received services he needed. Since neither of these respondents was supervised from the Mat-Su probation office, it is possible that KAP personnel were hampered by distance from providing services. It is also possible that fewer outpatient services are available in Kodiak than are available in the Matanuska-Susitna area. KAP records show nine phone contacts with these clients. These were service contacts, not monitoring calls.

KAP personnel provide a variety of services to clients, both those on electronic monitoring and those on VALUE. They maintain records of contacts with the youth and with his or her parents. Their records include counts of face-to-face contacts with clients and their parents, number of home visits, number of phone contacts, and number of community contacts.

These records were made available to us with the proviso that they might not be current. We used them as an indicator of services provided with the understanding that the information may not be complete. In Table 3 we compare numbers and kinds of KAP contacts for step-down clients while on EM with contacts while on VALUE. Because of the nature of the records, we used cumulative totals in our count of EM contacts.

Six step-down clients were on EM more than once, and their numbers include all their EM periods as available from KAP records. Since their days on EM were cumulative, their contact

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counts were higher during their EM periods than during their VALUE periods. Two of the five accumulated more than 200 days in EM and two more than 100. One person whose time on VALUE was very short was still on VALUE at the project’s end. Another whose time was short had run away.

Table 3 does not include counts of program sessions (anger management, mediation, etc.), just the number of face-to-face contacts KAP had with both youth and parents, home visits, and phone and community contacts. Counts are shown for step-down youth during their time under electronic monitoring as well as during periods on VALUE. The table certainly suggests that services were provided by KAP staff.

A related item dealt with the youths’ probation officers: “I felt that my probation officer worked with me.” The VALUE-only clients agreed with this statement, but responses from the step-down clients were mixed. Two disagreed with the statement, two agreed, and two strongly agreed.

Other items that drew mixed responses were whether or not VALUE was an appropriate transition from electronic monitoring and whether the youth was taking more responsibility for his/her behavior. All but one of the six step-down respondents agreed that he/she was satisfied with the way the juvenile justice system handled his case. One item that drew an even number of positive and negative responses was the statement “I believe electronic monitoring was easier on my family.” Three respondents agreed with this statement, three disagreed.

Although there were only four parent respondents, it is interesting to compare their responses on some parallel items with those of the clients. Clients were asked to respond to the statement “My parents were more satisfied with EM (than with VALUE).” Four of them disagreed with this statement, two of the four strongly disagreeing. Parents were asked to respond to the reverse statement: “I preferred the VALUE program.” One liked both, one did prefer VALUE, and two strongly disagreed with the statement. We added a related item to the parent interview: “I feel EM was a more effective monitoring tool.” The parents unanimously (and strongly) agreed with that statement. Parents whose adolescent children get into trouble often feel that they cannot control their child. Electronic monitoring exerts considerably more control than VALUE and may better serve the parents’ needs in this area. The one parent whose child had only experienced electronic monitoring responded with strong agreement to nearly all the items, reflecting great satisfaction with EM and underscoring the control aspect.

All of the parent respondents of step-down clients agreed that their children were treated fairly, that they were adequately held accountable for their behavior, and that they were satisfied with the handling of their child’s case. All agreed that their child’s probation officer worked with the family on the child’s behalf. Comparisons of parent and child responses are presented in graphic form in Figure 2.

The three clients who experienced only electronic monitoring were not as positive about EM as step-down clients were about VALUE or as positive as one of their parents. None felt that they had received needed services. Two were not satisfied with the efforts of their probation officers; two were dissatisfied with the handling of their case; and one did not believe he had been treated fairly. One strongly disagreed that his relationships with his parents had improved while on the
bracelet. Interestingly, both of the VALUE-only clients strongly disagreed with this statement, though both agreed that they were making more of an effort in this area.

Of all eleven youth respondents, only one, a VALUE-only client, disagreed with the statement “I don’t think I will get into trouble with the law again.” All four parent respondents were in agreement with the corresponding statement from their interview. How much of this is wishful thinking on the part of both parents and children cannot be determined.

Kids Are People, Inc. was also concerned with parent/minor satisfaction with their programs. To this end they mailed surveys to all client families (see Appendix C). Some of these were shared with the Justice Center. The return rate was not high. Some of the forms were completed by the juvenile and some were completed by caregivers. The five juvenile respondents were generally positive in their responses. On one item, “How would you describe your monitor?” one replied “it’s a black box,” another “black and gray.” The rest seemed to understand that the item referred to KAP staff and answered “very nice,” “no answer at this time,” “direct,” and “supportive.” None of them thought he/she would reoffend while under supervision. Only one had a suggestion for improvement – make it “easier to hook up.”
Probation Officers

We also attempted to measure, in a structured way, the level of satisfaction with VALUE on the part of those who placed clients in the program. Interviews with the four probation officers who had placed clients on both EM and VALUE were conducted in person or over the telephone. The interview instrument consisted of 15 statements and requested Likert scale responses for these. Additional questions were asked and comments solicited. (See Appendix D.)

There was unanimous strong agreement among probation staff that electronic monitoring is effective and that it is preferred to VALUE. There was agreement that EM is fair for most offenders and that clients on EM and VALUE are more accountable than those who are not monitored. All four agreed that they would place more clients on electronic monitoring if more hardware were available.

The VALUE program did not fare particularly well with the probation officers. Two of them strongly agreed that it constituted a good transition from the bracelet, one disagreed, and one was undecided. One item asked for responses to the statement “I would place more youth on VALUE if more could be accommodated.” Only one probation officer agreed; one disagreed, one strongly disagreed, and one was undecided.

We asked if the respondents believed VALUE was a good program for their clients and we asked them to justify their answer. One officer said yes, one said no, and two were undecided. The one responding positively said it was good for transition only; the one responding negatively said it wasn’t as serious as a bracelet. Those who were undecided mentioned its value as a transition but one said there were more client complaints and one mentioned the lack of structure.

They were asked to list the three things they liked most about VALUE and the three things they liked least. No one was able to list three positive characteristics, and only one probation officer was able to list three negative ones. There was considerable overlap in the reasons. The things probation officers liked most about VALUE were:

- its use as a transition tool;
- its availability as a substitute when bracelets aren’t available;
- simplicity/less structure;
- it holds clients responsible;
- it tracks clients’ whereabouts;
- continuity of monitors.

Probation officers said that the things they liked least about VALUE were:

- not as accountable;
- not as restrictive;
- easier to circumvent;
- kids don’t take it seriously;
- glitches in system;
• phone calls at late hours;
• complaints from parents.

No probation officer would happily place a child on VALUE if another monitoring system were available. There was some agreement that it was a good step-down vehicle, but the probation officers seemed to be in substantial agreement with parents about the importance of control. One item on which probation officers did not agree with parents (or clients) was the statement “After completing EM/VALUE programs youth are less likely to reoffend.” Two officers disagreed with this statement, one agreed, and one was uncertain.

These responses lack the enthusiasm of the responses on the EM interview. The things probation officers valued most about EM were:

• peer group counseling, alternative to detention;
• supervision, counseling, the supervision staff;
• closer supervision, recreational activities, therapeutic support for clients/parents;
• tighter supervision, accountability, counseling;
• structure, added adult supervision, less restrictive than detention;
• in the home, accountability, forces minor to be with his/her parents;
• it’s always on, direct supervision and home visits, group and family counseling.

The things they liked least about EM were:

• lack of consistent court enforcement of violations;
• wait lists;
• time period is too short, technology and money concerns, GPS system would be better, needs a higher level of counseling;
• technology—GPS would be better, wait lists, not enough bracelets for all the kids who need to be on it.
• not enough people supervising, not enough bracelets available, wait lists

KAP also sent an interagency satisfaction survey to probation officers and others who were involved with the clients (school officials). The response rate was minimal (N=4) but all expressed considerable satisfaction with the program. On the item “How satisfied were you?” all checked the “very” satisfied box. Open-ended comments were also very positive; no one had suggestions for improvement. (See Appendix C.)

Conclusion

JAIBG funds were made available to Kids Are People, Inc. to add a special voice program to the electronic monitoring services already provided to the Mat-Su office of the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice. A special program known as VALUE would be used to assure youths’ locations
Evaluation of Voice and Location Telephone Monitoring of Juveniles

without a requirement that they be at home to receive calls. In this VALUE provides fewer restrictions
but requires more responsibility than traditional (bracelet) electronic monitoring.

KAP intended to provide supervision and services to up to four VALUE-assigned clients at a
time. Clients might be directly assigned to VALUE or assigned to it after a period on EM. KAP
would provide services to clients including: client visits, visits with client parents, family (and
other) mediation services, counseling, etc.

Our evaluation shows that KAP more than fulfilled these intentions. A total of 21 minors were
assigned to VALUE during the study period, most of them (17) after a period on the ankle bracelet.
The “step-down” clients were, by and large, on VALUE for shorter periods of time than they served
on traditional electronic monitoring; only six of them were on VALUE for more than one month.
Six of the 17 were returned to the bracelet for violating the rules or for new charges. Some of them
returned to VALUE later.

Sixteen of the youth received services from KAP staff. A total of 311 service contacts were
logged in for these 16 youth. Most were telephone contacts. (These did not include monitoring
calls.)

Both “step-down” youth and their parents seemed satisfied with VALUE, but the three youth
surveyed who had been on VALUE at the start did not register satisfaction with the program. The
probation officers whose cases were on VALUE viewed the program as an appropriate transition
from the ankle bracelet, but were not enthusiastic about it as a direct intervention strategy.

Feedback about VALUE from all sources suggests that the program may not be effective as an
alternative to electronic monitoring. Its use in remote sites where supervision and services are not
available may be appropriate, but consideration should be given to a form of bracelet monitoring
for a few weeks in order to increase the youth’s willingness to comply with the program’s
requirements.

The numbers reported here are too small for definitive conclusions, but we need to note that
the VALUE clients who did not receive direct KAP services were negative about VALUE. They
also were more likely to be institutionalized after their VALUE experience. It may be that supervision
and services from two sources (KAP staff and probation officers) were as influential in making the
VALUE experience positive for the step-down clients as was the VALUE program itself.
References


Appendices
Appendix A. Letter from Mat-Su District Office, Division of Juvenile Justice, Introducing Project

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

March 6, 2000

Probation Client and Parents
Division of Juvenile Justice
268 E. Fireweed #5
Palmer, AK 99645

Dear Parent and Minor,

The University of Alaska School of Justice, located in Anchorage is doing an ongoing study of the Electronic Monitoring and V.A.L.U.E. Programs here in the Mat-Su Valley. Since your probation case involved your participation in one or both of these programs your input is needed by the University. Soon, you will be receiving a phone call from Pam Martin from the U.A.A Justice Center who will be setting up interviews with you as part of the study. Please arrange your schedule with Ms. Martin to meet with her at the probation office at a convenient time.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

Ray Michaelson
Division of Juvenile Justice
Appendix B. Client and Parent Questionnaires

Client Questionnaire: Electronic Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>My participation in the electronic monitoring program was an appropriate consequence for my behavior.</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I understand what electronic monitoring was and what my role was.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>As a result of this program, I have received counseling and/or other services that I need.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>As a result of being placed on E.M. I feel that I am taking more responsibility for my behavior.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I felt that my probation officer worked with me</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I believe being placed on E.M. was fair.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>I understand the effect my behavior had on the community and on my family.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>My parents were satisfied that I was placed on E.M.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Being on E.M. was disruptive to my family routine.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Since I’ve been on E.M., I felt that I was placed on E.M.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>I believe that youth who participate in E.M. will be more accountable for their actions.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Since I’ve been on E.M., my relationship with my parents has improved.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>I understand what electronic monitoring is a good idea? Why or why not?</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>As a result of my participation in the electronic monitoring program, my attitudes toward crime and the juvenile justice system have changed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Given my understanding of fairness, I experienced fair treatment in my case.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Why did you get placed on electronic monitoring?</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>When you committed your offense, were you alone?</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>In your own words, what is the purpose of the electronic monitoring program?</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>What have you learned as a result of being adjudicated through the juvenile justice system?</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Do you think that electronic monitoring is a good idea? Why or why not?</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>What three things did you find most satisfying about the electronic monitoring program?</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>What three things did you find least satisfying about the electronic monitoring program?</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>How did you spend your time at home?</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Did being on electronic monitoring have any effects on school?</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Of the following items, which is the most important to your thinking about fairness in the justice system?</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to say about the way your case was handled?</td>
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18
Client Questionnaire: VALUE Program (Step-Down Clients)

1. The VALUE program was an appropriate transition from electronic monitoring.
2. I understood what VALUE was and what my role was.
3. Since I’ve been on VALUE, I have continued to receive counseling and/or other services that I need.
4. Since being placed on VALUE I feel that I am continuing to take more responsibility for my behavior.
5. I felt that my probation officer worked with me
6. I believe being placed on VALUE was fair.
7. I understand the effect my behavior had/has on the community and on my family.
8. I understand what my obligations are while I am on VALUE
9. My parents were satisfied that I was placed on VALUE
10. My parents were more satisfied with the E.M. program.
11. Being on VALUE was disruptive to my family routine.
12. I feel that E.M. was easier on my family.
13. I believe that youth who participate in VALUE will be more accountable for their actions.
14. Since I’ve been on VALUE, my relationship with my parents has improved.
15. As a result of being on VALUE, I am making more of an effort to respect and follow the rules of my parents/guardians and teachers.
16. Since I’ve been on VALUE, my attendance at school has improved.
17. Since I’ve been on VALUE, my grades have improved.
18. I don’t think I will get in trouble with the law again.
19. I was satisfied with the way the juvenile justice system handled my case.
20. I was adequately held accountable for my behavior.
21. I would recommend VALUE for friends who might get into trouble.
22. As a result of my participation in the VALUE program, my attitudes toward crime and the juvenile justice system have changed.
23. Given my understanding of fairness, I experienced fair treatment in my case.
24. Why did you get placed on electronic monitoring?
25. When you committed your offense, were you alone?
26. How long were you on E.M.?
27. How long have you been on VALUE?
28. In your own words, what is the purpose of the VALUE program?
29. What have you learned as a result of being adjudicated through the juvenile justice system?
30. Do you think that VALUE is a good idea? Why or why not?
31. What three things did you find most satisfying about the VALUE program?
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32. What three things did you find least satisfying about the VALUE program?
   1
   2
   3
33. How did you spend your time at home?
34. Did being on VALUE have any effects on school?
   □ Yes  □ No
   If yes, what were the effects?
35. Of the following items, which is the most important to your thinking about fairness in the justice system?
   □ Punishing the offender
   □ Paying back the victim
   □ Having the offender personally make things right
   □ Allowing the offender to apologize to the victim
36. Is there anything else you would like to say about the way your case was handled?
## Parent Questionnaire: Electronic Monitoring

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<td>How did your child spend his/her time at home?</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Of the following items, which is the most important to your thinking about fairness in the justice system?</td>
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<td>□ Punishing the offender</td>
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<td>□ Paying back the victim</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to say about the way your child’s case was handled?</td>
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Parent Questionnaire: VALUE Program (Step-Down Clients)

1. My child’s participation in the VALUE program was an appropriate transition from electronic monitoring.
2. I understood what VALUE was and what my role was.
3. My child is continuing to receive counseling and/or other services that he/she needs while on VALUE.
4. Since being placed on VALUE I feel that my child is continuing to take more responsibility for his/her behavior.
5. I felt that my child’s probation officer worked with my family and me.
6. I believe that my child being placed on VALUE was fair.
7. I feel that my child understands the effect his/her behavior had/has on the community and on our family.
8. I felt that my child’s probation officer worked with my family and me.
9. I was satisfied that my child was placed on VALUE.
10. Since being on VALUE, I feel that my child is making more of an effort to respect and follow our rules and the rules of his/her teachers.
11. Since my child has been on VALUE, his/her attendance at school has improved.
12. Since being on VALUE, my child’s grades have improved.
13. I don’t think my child will get in trouble again.
14. I was satisfied with the way the juvenile justice system handled my child’s case.
15. My child was adequately held accountable for his/her behavior.
16. As a result of my child’s participation in the VALUE program, my attitudes toward crime and the juvenile justice system have changed.
17. Given my understanding of fairness, my child experienced fair treatment in his/her case.
18. In your own words, what is the purpose of the VALUE program?

24. Do you think that electronic monitoring is a good idea? Why or why not?

25. What three things did you find most satisfying about the VALUE program?
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

26. What three things did you find least satisfying about the VALUE program?
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

27. How did your child spend his/her time at home?

28. Of the following items, which is the most important to your thinking about fairness in the justice system?
   - [ ] Punishing the offender
   - [ ] Paying back the victim
   - [ ] Having the offender personally make things right
   - [ ] Allowing the offender to apologize to the victim

29. Is there anything else you would like to say about the way your child’s case was handled?
Appendix C. Kids Are People Electronic Monitoring Satisfaction Surveys

Client

Kids Are People, Inc.
P.O. Box 4223
Palmer, AK 99645
Phone (907) 746-7567
Fax (907) 746-0286

Electronic Monitoring Satisfaction Survey #1

Date __________

How satisfied are you with the program and our services at this point?
Not at all ________ Somewhat ________ Very ________

Do you think that this program will be of help to you and your family? Yes or No
Comments: Yes ________

How would you describe your Monitor? ________

Do you feel your Monitor will follow through with commitments within an agreed time frame? Yes or No
Comments: Yes ________

Do you think that you/your youth will re-offend while participating in the Electronic Monitoring Program? Yes or No
Comments: ________

Do you think that you/your youth will complete their Community Work Service while participating in the Electronic Monitoring Program? Yes or No

What do you think is the best thing about the Electronic Monitoring Program? ________

How could the services of the Electronic Monitoring Program be improved? ________

Other comments, questions or concerns? ________

Optional:
Name __________________________
Address _________________________
City __________________ Phone # ________
Probation Officer

Kids Are People, Inc.
P.O. Box 4323
Palmer, AK 99645
Phone (907) 746-7587
Fax (907) 746-0266

Inter-Agency Electronic Monitoring Satisfaction Survey

How satisfied were you with the program and our services?
Not at all ___________ Somewhat ___________ Very ___________

How satisfied with the outcome of our services?
Not at all ___________ Somewhat ___________ Very ___________

How would you describe our Monitors?
__________ dedicaeted, responsible

Did our Monitors follow through with commitments within agreed time frame?
Yes or No

Comments:

Did your client re-offend while participating in the Electronic Monitoring Program?
Yes or No

Comments: Some have

Did your client complete their Community Work Service while participating in the Electronic Monitoring Program?
Yes or No

What do you think is the best thing about the Electronic Monitoring Program?

How could the services of the Electronic Monitoring Program be improved?

Other comments, questions or concerns?

Optional:
Name
Address
City_____ State____ Phone#
## Appendix D. Probation Officer Questionnaire

### Probation Officer Questionnaire: Electronic Monitoring and VALUE Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>E.M. is an effective tool for monitoring clients.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VALUE is an effective tool for monitoring clients.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I prefer to place clients on E.M. instead of VALUE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I feel that E.M. is a fair program for most offenders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>VALUE is a good transitional tool to use after E.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>E.M. and/or VALUE are appropriate consequences for the actions of most offenders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I feel that VALUE is not a restrictive enough measure for my clients.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I feel that there could be more restrictive measures in place for some offenders.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I believe that youths who participate in E.M. and/or VALUE will be more accountable for their actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>After completing the E.M./VALUE program(s), youths are less likely to reoffend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I would place more youth on VALUE if more could be accommodated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I would place more youth on E.M. if more could be accommodated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>VALUE clients take more of my time than I expected them to.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I received more complaints from parents regarding VALUE than E.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I received more complaints from clients regarding VALUE than E.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Do you believe that VALUE is a good program for your clients? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>What three things do you like most about the VALUE program?</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>What three things do you like least about the VALUE program?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. Probation Officer Questionnaire: Electronic Monitoring and VALUE Programs

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