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The State of Knowledge in the United States

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Drugs

There is some evidence of progress in North America in the drug problem. Reports of hospital emergency room visits for cocaine-related treatment passed their peak in January, 1989, and have been trending downward since that time. National studies of self-reported drug use indicate that drug use has been trending down, most sharply among persons under 26 years of age and since 1985. However, there is also disturbing evidence that drug use has become even more concentrated among hard-core users, and that their levels of drug use have been increasing rather than decreasing. This has been paralleled by a large jump in the drug-related homicide count in many cities. Also, while self-reported drug use has declined among all racial groups since 1985, these declines recently have slowed for blacks. Drug use rates are also higher among blacks than whites, and perhaps as a result, drug **arrests** have become increasingly concentrated in black communities. In 1989, FBI figures indicate that 41 percent of those arrested on drug charges were black, up from 38 percent in 1988.

American research on drug policy has focused on two broad policy alternatives: demand reduction and supply reduction. **Demand reduction** strategies are aimed at reducing the size of the market for drugs by limiting the desire for drugs among potential consumers. **Supply reduction** strategies, on the other hand, are aimed at reducing the availability of drugs, driving up their cost and making it more difficult for potential users to find a market outlet.

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Demand Reduction: Primary Prevention

Demand reduction strategies can usefully be divided into two further subcate- gories: (a) those targeted at the general population of non-users ("primary prevention"), and (b) those aimed at rehabilitating known users.

Most research on primary prevention has focused on school-based pro- grams. There are 3 major types of these programs. The first **disseminate information** on the harmful effects of involvement in drugs, and sometimes appeal to moral or religious objections to illicit drug use. These programs stress the health and social hazards of drug use. They are based on the assumption that if people know what the dangers of drug use are, they will act lawfully out of self-interest. Many of these programs aim at enhancing the fears of potential users by dramatizing the potential dangers of drug use. Some programs focus on moral objections to drug use, especially in schools organ- ized along religious lines. Evaluations indicate that informational campaigns can be very successful at communicating new and accurate information; however, there is no evidence that they prevent or even reduce substance abuse. Knowledge has no impact on self-reports of drug use, nor on stated intentions to avoid drug use.

A second group of primary prevention programs involve **affective edu- cation**. They assume that substance abuse is encouraged by low self-esteem and poor personal decision-making skills. These programs attempt to enrich the personal lives of participants by helping them develop interpersonal skills, self-understanding, and supportive friendships. They emphasize helping par- ticipants think about their own attitudes and values, and encouraging them to act upon these standards of personal conduct. Although they seem attractive, evaluations of these programs also indicate that they do not affect substance abuse. They can improve self-esteem, personal confidence, and knowledge about drug risks, but they do not change self-reported behavior patterns.

A third group of programs focus on a factor that research indicates lies at the heart of drug-related activity, peer groups. These **social pressures com- petence** programs teach participants how to evaluate peer and media pressures to become involved in drugs, the importance of building friendship networks of like-minded people, how to recognize situations in which they will be expected by peers to use drugs, and how to counter those social pressures. These have been the most successful programs. Evaluations indicate that they can reduce levels of participation in drug use and that those effects persist over time. They have also proved effective among special groups of particularly high-risk youths.

Demand Reduction: Rehabilitation

Programs in this area are aimed at identifying drug users and intervening in this behavior pattern. They have been thoroughly evaluated in terms of their success in treating heroin addiction, and a number of successful approaches have been identified. **Drug detoxification** programs medically manage the initial withdrawl of addicts. Their effects are short term if they are not combined with further treatment, but they are a first step in any heroin program. **Drug education and counselling** programs are best used in combi- nation with other efforts; they are inexpensive and easy to organize, but have no evaluated effectiveness on their own. **Methadone maintenance** programs distribute this controlled opiate as a substitute for heroin. This is the most common way of treating addicts. **Therapeutic residential centers** are com- munity-based facilities where addicts engage in group and individual treat- ment exercises aimed at building their self-control. These centers are increas- ingly popular, and are being used to deal with cocaine addiction.

Combinations of these programs have been shown to inhibit drug use, reduce the likelihood that participants will be rearrested, and increase their ability to find and hold a job. The longer patients are involved in these programs the more successful they are, but the programs are plagued by high drop-out rates. Later relapse into drug use is common, but both methadone maintenance (in conjunction with drug education, counselling, and other social services) and residential treatment is more successful than traditional incarceration in treating underlying addiction problems.

Supply Reduction: Enforcement Strategies

There are a number of specific enforcement strategies that can be brought to bear on drug markets, but is useful to categorize them by their role in the "program theory" underlying the enforcement approach. One element of the program theory is that enforcement may **increase the real and perceived risk of punishment** that is associated with involvement in drugs; another is that enforcement may **increase the price and decrease the availability of drugs**. Finally, enforcement may play a role in **breaking the cycle of peer and role-model support** for drug involvement that plagues too many communi- ties.

The **real and perceived risk** associated with drug involvement can be enhanced by several enforcement tactics. One tactic is **high visibility patrol**. In addition to frequent motor and foot patrols, police conduct sweeping stop-and-search operations, set up car-research roadblocks, vigorously en-

force nuisance ordinances (for example, laws against blocking the sidewalk), and make disorderly conduct arrests. Highly visible drug arrests during raids on apartments involved in dealing and by "jump-out" teams also help communicate that drug dealing is a risky enterprise. The stakes involved may be further enhanced by a program of vigorous prosecution of drug arrestees.

Drug involvement also is presumably made more expensive and difficult by enforcement programs that **increase the price and decrease the availability** of illicit drugs. This can be partially accomplished by an aggressive campaign against street-level drug retailers. It can be accomplished via "buy-bust" arrests by undercover officers, "controlled buys" by informants, and by residential searches made on the basis of evidence gathered in these operations. In addition to making drugs more expensive, enforcement presumably increase the aggravation and time involved in finding suppliers; this is most likely to deter casual users without deep roots in the drug culture. Finally, the police can make efforts to assemble intelligence files on suspected drug traffickers, in order to identify their place of residence, sources of supply, and mode of doing business.

The **cycle of support for drug involvement** touches upon the cultural and peer group norms that characterize a community. Research on adolescent involvement in drugs suggests the importance of intervening in local cultures which appear to support drug involvement. This research suggest several conclusions. The onset of drug use is "contagious"; that is, it flows through the community via social contacts with current users. Patterns of substance abuse onset (for example, how youths may move from cigarettes and alcohol to marijuana or cocaine) depend upon the structure of local drug markets. The perceived standards and behaviors of other youths are the strongest predictor of the nature and extent of drug involvement. Youths mimic behavior that they see being rewarded in others, both peers and adults.

These findings all suggest that aggressive enforcement efforts may help break the self-reinforcing cycle by which apparently rewarding involvement with drugs begets further abuse. This will not be easy, for the drug economy can permeate a community. The most affluent adult males may be involved with drugs. Mothers lend their apartment to shelter dealers. Youths find it easy to make money as order-takers, runners and drug holders. Dealers distribute sports jackets and athletic shoes to younger children, to build popularity and cooperation. Finally, the threat of retaliation holds back potential informants and witnesses, and makes people fearful of cooperating with the authorities. to be sure, most efforts to break this self-reinforcing cycle probably will not involve the police at all; they are more properly the domain of schools, families, youth and treatment programs, and social welfare agencies.

Supply Reduction: Research Findings

Research on the efficacy of these enforcement tactics is mixed. In general, research on police "crackdowns" suggests that they can successfully deter target behaviors during the special enforcement period; there is also some evidence of residual deterrence which persists after the program ends or those special efforts are shifted elsewhere. However, evaluations of drug crackdowns suggest that they have some limits. At first drug sweeps generally push up arrest rates and lower crime rates in target areas. However, there is evidence that the initial deterrent effect of drug crackdowns subsides fairly rapidly, even while the programs are still in operation. Where levels of street sale continue to be low, it is not clear whether this is because there is less drug activity, or if it is because dealers and their potential customers have adapted successfully to new conditions. Second, it appears that drug activity quickly reverts to normal at the conclusion of special enforcement programs, and the strength of the drug market is such that there is no apparent residual deterrence.

There is also evidence that drug crackdowns may increase levels of predatory crime. This is one foreseeable effect of successfully increasing the market price of drugs, for very large proportions of those arrested for predatory street crimes are drug users. An increase in burglary and robbery rates has been observed in several evaluations of drug crackdowns, while others have found the opposite. In addition, police disruption of established distribution systems may have sparked some of the wave of drug-related homicide that has swept many large cities; some of the most visible of these killings reflect wars between drug dealers to recapture control of lucrative sales areas.

Police departments historically have wavered between aggressive campaigns against sales and long-term investigations aimed at wholesale and importer-level operators. However, it appears that the drug business is much more heterogeneous and decentralized than past policies assumed; the business is not dominated by drug czars whose arrest would cause large scale distribution networks to fall apart. Most drugs are supplied by numerous, small, and transitory groups. It is very difficult to conduct the kind of extensive (and expensive) surveillance operations that would be required to prosecute them successfully. Many local police departments find attempts to penetrate higher-level drug operations expensive, time consuming, and not very productive of arrest.

This implies that enforcement operations should be aimed at street-level dealers. Enforcement work at this level can generate large numbers of easy arrests. However, street dealers are very numerous and quick-moving, and hope to temporarily disrupt local supply lines, end perhaps largely by displac-

ing sales elsewhere. Some researchers argue that aggressive street-level enforcement do increase the expense and inconvenience involved in the business sufficiently to deter casual users, and that drug enforcement programs may have "spill-over" effects that help reduce on other kinds of street crime and disorder. *Mark Kleiman* has argued that targeting drug networks may reduce other kinds of crime as a side-effect of incapacitating high-rate property criminals, although this runs counter to some evaluation findings. The mixed results of evaluations of enforcement programs to date do not enable us to make firm judgments about any of these claims.

It is also clear that the operation of the rest of the criminal justice system plays an important role in enhancing or limiting the impact of special crackdowns. In many American jurisdictions prosecutors are overwhelmed with cases, and the jails are so full that arrestees for non-violent offenses cannot be held until their case is disposed of. These factors also limit the effectiveness of the "arrest-prosecute-convict" model of deterrence which underlies crackdown strategies for controlling drug markets. Drug treatment programs are at least as overloaded as the criminal justice system, and it is unlikely that large numbers of arrestees produced by enforcement programs will be diverted there, whatever their real needs. In addition, the issue of corruption plagues drug enforcement efforts. Plainclothes operations draw police officers into close and potentially corrupting association with drug distributors. The business is awash with cash, and some of the most vigorous arguments of the proponents of a policy of drug legalization have focused on the corrosive effects of corruption on law enforcement and the political system.

Finally, police drug enforcement in poor neighborhoods takes place in an emotionally charged and potentially volatile environment. Even if they are conducted in strictly legal fashion, street sweeps, aggressive stop-and-frisk operations, car stops, apartment searches, and other enforcement tactics involve abrasive contacts between area residents and police. They take place in an environment where people too frequently believe that they are already not getting fair treatment by police, and where the police often come expecting trouble. Tactics like these triggered riots in American cities during the 1970s, and in Britain in the 1980s. A balance must be maintained between the apparent law abidingness that the police can hope to impose on a community and the disturbance they may create while doing so.

Community Mobilization

During the 1980s, there has been increased interest in the role that voluntary efforts can play in dealing with crime problems. The community approach to

crime prevention emphasizes collaboration between the criminal justice system and community organizations. It assumes that the police and other elements of the criminal justice system cannot effectively deal with crime and fear on their own. In this view, voluntary, organized community efforts to control crime and alleviate excessive levels of fear must parallel government action if safety is to be achieved within realistic budgetary constraints and without sacrificing civil liberties.

Types of Activities and Organizations

These organizing efforts range from narrow, technical approaches to prevention to broader, social change strategies for rebuilding communities. Some efforts involve collective action (activities carried out by groups), while others call for individual initiative, which can also be encouraged and facilitated by groups. Some programs aim at reducing opportunities for crime; they encourage people to install window bars and alarms and stronger doors and locks. Groups also offer escort services to older persons, and produce and distribute newsletters identifying actions that individuals can take to protect themselves from harm. Other programs focus on collective surveillance and crime reporting. Groups attempt to mobilize neighbors to watch one another's homes or be alert from suspicious circumstances, and to call the police when problem arise. Thoroughgoing surveillance programs can also involve active citizen patrols, which are frequently tied together by citizen's band (CB) radios. Organizations also push for the sanctioning of offenders through crime-tip hotlines that help to identify troublemakers and by court watch programs that attempt to ensure that offenders get tough treatment from judges. Finally, organizations mount programs aimed at attacking the causes of crime. What these causes are perceived to be varies from area to area, but the programs frequently involve recreational activities for youths, anti-drug and anti-gang efforts, and campaigns to improve neighborhood conditions and foster youth employment.

Many kinds of organizations are involved in these anti-crime activities. In addition to traditional community organizations, they include condominium associations and community development corporations, groups of neighborhood business owners, and "umbrella" organizations that serve other organizations rather than individuals or neighborhoods. In almost every case groups do something else as well. Community studies suggest that few groups initially form around crime, and those that attempt to get started by addressing crime problems have neither long lives nor much success at recruiting members; further, anti-crime groups that survive do so by adopting other issues or

changing their function entirely, and most strong community organizations have complex, multi-issue agendas. Many successful groups are "preservationist" in character. They are concerned with maintenance of established local interests, customs, and values. Such groups typically arise in stable, better-off areas. They represent the interests of long-term residents, home owners, small business, and local institutions in preserving the status quo. Insurgent groups representing poor neighborhoods, by contrast, have a stake in upsetting the current distribution of status and property. Leaders of insurgent groups necessarily are critical of society's institutions.

There is a great deal of evidence that neighborhood organizations emerge and endure more easily in better-off areas, and that voluntary participation cannot as easily be initiated or sustained in poorer, higher-crime areas. This lends a substantial "preservationist bias" to the benefits of voluntary action. Surveys indicate that better off, more educated, home-owning, and long-term community residents more frequently know of opportunities to participate in anti-crime organizations and are more likely to participate in them when they have the opportunity. Studies of the geographical distribution of community organizations focusing on crime problems indicate that they are less common in poorer, renting, high-turnover, high-crime areas. The irony, of course, is that better-off, racially dominant city neighborhoods usually enjoy the lowest rates of crime, and crime drops off even more subtantially in the suburbs. Affluent areas are not those that are beset with the worst crime problems.

Successful neighborhood organizations also are more common in homogeneous areas. Neighborhoods featuring a mix of life-styles may need organizations in order to identify residents' common interests, but more frequently they do not have them. In racially and culturally homogeneous areas, residents more readily share a definition of what their problems are and who is responsible for them. They share similar experiences and living conditions, and they have the same broad conception of their public and private responsibilities. The empirical evidence is that in homogeneous areas, residents exercise more informal control and are more likely to intervene when they see problems, more residents feel positively about their neighbors and feel personally responsible for events and conditions in the area, and there are more active crime-prevention programs. In multi-cultural areas, by contrast they often are conflicting views of both the causes of crime and the solutions to it. Where neighborhoods are divided by race and class, concern about crime can be an expression of conflict between groups.

Faced with crime problems, the first resource to which organizations lay claim is policing. They demand more policing in the form of more intensive patrols in high crime locations. They often want foot patrols as well, and

perhaps recognition in the form of a new or reactivated precinct station house or store-front office. Preservationist groups are likely to form civilian patrols and Neighorhood Watch groups, and post signs indicating their new wachtfulness, for they are trying to promote the image that theirs is "defended" area. The constituents of insurgent groups often fear the police and resent the way they exercise their authority, so they may be as interested in monitoring police misconduct and pressing for police accountability as they are in increasing police presence on the streets. The problem for American cities is that residents of poor and minority neighborhoods with serious crime problems often have antagonistic relationships with the police. The police are another of their problems; they frequently are perceived to be arrogant, brutal, racist, and corrupt. Groups representing these neighborhoods will not automatically look to the police for legitimacy and guidance. Their constituents typically are concerned about a host of pressing problems, including unemployment, housing, health care, and discrimination. However, researchers have noted that crime-focused groups begin and persist more easily when they operate in cooperation with the police. The police provided training, information, technical support, and equipment. They also can lend visibility and apparent legitimacy to organizing efforts, depending upon the neighborhood.

Evidence of Impact

There is little solid evidence concerning the effects of any of these efforts on changes in neighborhood crime. Research on neighborhood development concludes that positive effects of programs attacking the economic roots of crime have yet to be demonstrated. Several summaries of community crime prevention have concluded that target hardening, Neighborhood Watch, and other tactics pursued by local organizations **probably** can have an effect on crime. This conclusion is suggested by the sheer weight of dozens of studies (usually lacking even a control area) showing declines in official crime counts, testimonials by activists, the enthusiasm of grant proposal writers, and a few statistical studies suggesting that crime is lower in organized areas even when numerous demographic and economic factors are taken into account. However, more sophisticated evaluations of community crime-prevention efforts do not support this optimistic assessment. Evaluation that meet high standards by and large have failed to find clear-cut evidence of the effectiveness of community crime-prevention programs.

There is also little evidence that formal programs can enhance the informal social control capacity of communities. Groups have tried initiating and supporting activities that should enhance residents' feelings of efficacy about

individual and collective action, as well as increase their sense of personal responsibility for these actions. These programs hoped to stimulate attempts to regulate social behavior by enhancing residents' feelings of territoriality and willingness to intervene in suspicious circumstances, and to facilitate neighboring, social interaction, and mutual helpfulness to enhance solidarity and build commitment to the community. However, there is only a very tenuous link between the processes and levels of area crime and disorder. Such behaviors activate very subtle social processes; they exert control by spreading norms about appropriate behavior and teaching new residents how to behave; their sanctions are gossip, social exclusion, and, at most, embarrassing threats. It appears that these aspects of social life are too causally distant and difficult to measure for researchers to link them with measures of crime. They may also be causally distant from crime for governments to sponsor. Whatever the reason, research does not suggest that theories emphasizing informal social control will steer crime-prevention programs in the right direction.

Crime, Fear and Mass Media

Systematic analyses of the image of crime presented by newspapers and television suggest that the effects of the media could lead to excessive levels of fear. Crime is more often in the news when it involves white and better-off victims, and when it occurs in locations that usually are low in crime. Crimes featuring bizarre motives or perverse family relationships are overrepresented as well. There is an inverse relationship between the true frequency of victimization and the extent to which it is presented to the public, focusing attention on violent crime. Further, there are many examples of how the media create local "crime waves" that are unrelated to actual fluctuation in the rate of victimization. On the other hand, the police are presented as more effective than they actually are, for crimes that are solved by arrest (or the death of the offender) are far more likely to be reported.

There is some evidence that the version of crime presented in the mass media (known as "TV Reality") shapes the impression the public has of the reality of crime. Heavy consumers of television systematically misperceive many facts about everyday life that err in the direction of TV Reality, and they think the police are more effective than they really are. However, a large body of research on the relationship between media consumption and fear of crime indicate that the impact of television and newspapers on people's views of the world are complex.

It appears that heavy consumers of mass media (including both television and newspapers) are more likely to take the general view of society that is

presented in the media - that it is a "mean world" - but that their views of their own behavior and their personal risk of victimization are not affected. The media have "impersonal impact". For example, heavy exposure to television leads people to believe that crime rates for the nation as a whole, and in other cities, are high and rising rapidly. On the other hand, media exposure is not related to their beliefs about crime in their immediate neighborhood, and is not related to their perceived vulnerability to crime. It is also not related to many behaviors that reflect fear, such as avoiding particular places near home because of the risk of crime. Media involvement is linked to the stereotypes that people hold about the causes of crime and who commits crime, but these factors are not related to fear of crime.

The evidence is that, instead, people differentiate between judgments about the world. The more direct, personal experience they have with a subject, the less their opinions are influenced by the media; when they have first-hand knowledge about a topic, their experiences prevail. Newspapers and television affect judgments they make about general conditions and far-away places. These impersonal effects are important, for most people do not have recent, direct experiences with crime, so they have to rely on media messages. However, they do not necessarily make inferences about their personal situation form these general judgments.

These findings are reinforced by specific exceptions to them. For example, in experiments in which news stories concern local crime, people's judgments about their own risks are affected. Likewise, they are more likely to be affected when they hear about victims who are like them in terms of gender, age, and social background. In these cases, information from the media is germane to their own situation, and their views of their own risk of victimization are affected. In addition, there is some evidence that residents of particularly high-crime areas are especially affected by media reports of crime, perhaps because the bad news on television is in accord with their own experiences.

Does mass media have any effects? Research on media effects suggest that its most powerful effect in terms of social is a political one. Media coverage has an "agenda-setting" effect on the public. People's rating of how important various issues are, and even which issues they have heard of, is strongly affected by the extent to which they are covered in the newspapers and on television. Even in this case, however, the effects of the media are limited; what people think about the issues is not affected, only ranking of their importance.

There is evidence that the media can be used to stimulate involvement in crime prevention, but that the campaign must be carefully planned. A number of studies have found that attempts to frighten people into taking steps to

protect their homes from crime will fail, and that simple information campaigns do not stimulate involvement. Successful campaigns must deliver a **plausible, positive message.** They must tell people what they can do that will actually reduce their risk of victimization, and what its benefits will be. These messages must be practical, and believable. In this regard, research findings on the role of the media in stimulating crime prevention are similar to studies of smoking and other health-related behaviors, the use of safety seat belts, and contraception. Like crime prevention, these behaviors are more easily influenced by social communications from friends, family and neighbors, and there are important "modeling" effects when people learn about others adopting these precautions.

Communities and Recidivism

Linkages between offenders and the community play an important role in understanding patterns of recidivism. Studies of recidivism among individuals paroled early from prison indicate that community ties are among the most important predictor of who gets in trouble again. Controlling for evidence of past patterns of criminal activity (which is the most important factor), recidivists typically have less stable marital arrangements, move a great deal, have few friends, are unlikely to join organizations, and break their ties with their relatives. Community linkages are also related to the bail-setting process, because they have been found to be highly related to the willingness of released offenders to appear for trial. In the United States, persons who have been charged with a crime can be released while they wait for trial if they deposit an appropriate amount of bail money with the court. Bail setting typically is done on the basis of a rating system based on research on past patterns of appearance in court for trial. Among the strongest predictors of dependability (following measures of past criminal involvement) also turn out to be family attachment, residential stability, and employment. As a result, persons who are tightly linked to the community on these dimensions are allowed to deposit a smaller money bond.

In light of these findings, it is easy to speculate that the **kind of community** to which offenders are released also will make a difference in their rehabilitation. Some kinds of communities reinforce deviance, by facilitating contact with other trouble-makers and association with drug cultures; others may speed the successful readjustment of ex-offenders. For example, *Stephen Gottfredson* and *Ralph Taylor* examined three hypotheses in this regard. They expected that neighborhoods characterized by stronger informal social networks and dense ties among community residents would provide a

more successful home for ex-offenders (note, for example, that in the US fully one-half of all job seekers find a position through family members and friends). They also hypothesized that recidivism would be lower among former offenders in communities where residents felt responsible for local events, intervened in suspicious situations, and exercised more informal social control. Finally, they thought that the extent and nature of local services (such health clinics), organizations (churches), and other community institutions would be related to the frequency of recidivism among released offenders.

While these expectations all seem reasonable, research to date has produced no support for them. Once individual factors that predict recidivism are controlled for, there is no evidence that "community" makes a difference in the chances that former offenders will get into trouble again. *Gottfredson* and *Taylor* found some support for the conclusion that releasing individuals into communities where there are already **concentrations** of former offenders is a bad idea, but otherwise only individual criminal histories and personal background factors seem to make a difference. However, there is only a limited amount of research on community factors in controlling recidivism. In contrast to individual-level studies of recidivism (of which there are hundreds), we know relatively little about this topic. The proposition that "community makes a difference" remains an appealing one, and it should be investigated more thoroughly.

Community-Based Corrections

There is also a great deal of interest in the United States in a related issue, community-based corrections. The US faces a crisis - there now are well over 1,000,000 persons in prisons and jails, and that number is increasing each week. We cannot afford to maintain this current rate of prisonization, and neither is it a desirably social policy. A number of experiments are now being conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of alternatives to incarceration, most of which involve maintaining the linkage between offenders and the community. These are known as "intermediate sanctions", and research and policy innovation in this field is one of the most important criminological issues of the early 1990s.

The most extreme example of this is **home detention.** Everywhere, states are experimenting with procedures and technological devices that punish offenders by making them stay at home. Some programs require that they never leave home, and remain close to an electronic device in a telephone that senses their presence. More programs allow offenders to go to work each day, and impose a home curfew. Most states are now using some form of **intensive**

supervision probation as an alternative to incarceration as well. These programs involve frequent (sometimes daily) checks by probation workers, mandatory attendance of therapy or training sessions, and continual urine testing. There is also renewed interest in **residential treatment facilities**, especially for dealing with offenders whose principal problem is drug addiction. These offer opportunities for supervised living and day-time-work-release. Finally, sentencing to **community service** or **restitution** programs require the smallest break between offenders and the community.

Some of these programs have been adopted because they are inexpensive yet politically palatable alternatives to incarceration. However, they are also widely applauded because they promise to provide humane and less severe forms of punishment that are more appropriate for many kinds of offenses and offenders. They are also less likely to lead to a permanent break between offenders and their families, and most are compatible with keeping or finding a job, or being enrolled in a job training program. This is particularly important, for among the "community linkage" factors that predict recidivism, employment clearly is the one most suited to government intervention. While officially it is hard to even encourage people to get married, jobs and job training are clearly the objects of government policy. The Eisenhower Foundation (located in Washington, DC) is but one example of private groups in the US which have focused on this issue. The Eisenhower Foundation supports community organizing and community economic development programs aimed at increasing the employability of poor, inner-city residents and bringing new jobs into their communities. Randomized experiments have demonstrated that these kinds of job training and other job-related interventions can significantly reduce the extent of recidivism, as well as being related to patterns of first-time offending.

Delinquency Prevention

To achieve the maximum impact on crime, special delinquency programs need to be carefully targeted at high-risk populations. There is good reason for focusing on youths and young adults, for they are responsible for a large proportion of all criminal offenses - perhaps one-third of the total. In the US, the typical age of arrest lies between 15 and 21, depending upon the type of crime; those arrested for theft are most frequently 16 years of age, and for serious assault the most at-risk group is males who are 18 years of age. Even among youths, there is still a great deal of variation in criminal involvement. The 1945 Philadelphia birth cohort study found that only 6 percent of boys contributed 53 percent of all arrests of that age group. A follow-up study of

Philadelphians born in 1958 indicates that the total contribution of the highest-rate youthful offenders has since increased. In addition, when they got into trouble, males in the 1958 birth cohort committed more serious violent offenses, their use of guns in crime increased, and they were more likely to harm or kill their victims.

The best evidence is that some of this is predictable at a very early age. If at age 7 or 8, children are asked to rate the aggressiveness of their playmates, those ratings are highly predictive of later offending; the same holds true of predictions from ratings of aggressive play made by adults conducting concealed observations. Further, later criminality is highly related to poor performance in school among children not much older. *David Farrington's* London study identified seven variables that at age 10 successfully predicted later heavy criminal involvement.

Many of the factors that predict later misfortune are school or family related. They include poverty and child abuse. Parental factors are very important; later criminality is related to neglect and lack of parental supervision, poor nurturing, family disruption and marital discord, and having criminal parents. Doing badly and misbehaving in school is also symptomatic of later difficulties.

The policy implications of these findings are both fairly clear and untested. All of them call for an emphasis on primary prevention rather than later intervention by the criminal justice system. An incomes policy aimed at ensuring a basic level of support for children's families could alleviate some of the risk factors. It would be especially important to combine this with parenthood education programs targeted at families with poor child rearing skills. Counseling to assist parents who are experiencing crises with their children could be important. Likewise, special schooling programs aimed at large groups of high risk youths could - without seemingly selecting for special attention "the criminally inclined" - have positive benefits. None of these approaches have been rigorously validated in terms of their impact on later criminal offending. Further experimentation is needed to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of interventions in parenting practices, in particular, however, their general social benefits seem clear enough that impediments to them in the United States clearly are political rather than substantive. Findings like these on the consequences - and predictability - of youthful deprivation of have been available for years.