

SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH, PLANNING AND COORDINATION

The Authority, through its Research and Analysis Unit (R&A), identifies and explores current or emerging criminal and juvenile justice issues that affect the Illinois justice system. Research and analyses are made available to state, county, and local governmental criminal justice decision-makers to assist them in their policy discussions and planning; and reports are also available to the general public. The Authority provides timely and objective information on key issues so that policy, program, and funding decisions are based on the most current data and evidence-based information available rather than general perceptions.

The research carried out by the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit takes several forms.

- ***Legislative Directives*** are policy impact studies that are directed to the Authority by the Illinois Legislature or the Office of the Illinois Governor, or that support those initiatives.
- ***Program Evaluation and Assessment Studies*** are program profiles, program implementation studies, program impact evaluations – often in partnership with the Authority's Federal and State Grants Unit.
- ***Policy Analysis/Applied Research*** are comprehensive studies that focus on particular criminal justice system issues that have implications for policy, program development, or improved criminal justice practices.
- ***Statistical Portraits/Informational Reports*** contain tabular, graphical, and mapping presentations of criminal justice, juvenile justice, and risk factor data or descriptions of criminal justice processes.
- ***Management/Improvement of Criminal Justice Data*** are reports and services that provide data services and inform practitioners, researchers, and other audiences about criminal justice data sets, including discussions of data quality, and other data usage issues.

All publications are available via the Authority's website. Authority's web address is www.icjia.state.il.us.

Briefings/presentations

Authority staff are frequently called on to deliver presentations of program evaluation or research findings at dozens of local, state, and national venues including conferences of

various professional associations, meetings of governmental task forces and special commissions, committee hearings, and other settings.

Key findings

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Victimization among Female Prisoners in Illinois

This research study involved interviews with 163 randomly-selected female inmates in the general population at Illinois Department of Corrections' facilities. Prevalence of and types of prior victimization among study respondents was explored. Study participants were asked questions on prior victimization in their lives and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were gauged with the PTSD Symptoms Checklist (PCL). The study found:

- Eighty-three percent of the female prisoners in the sample were bothered by a PTSD symptom in the past month.
- Three-fourths of the sample was bothered in the past 30 days by the PTSD symptom of feeling very upset when something reminded them of a stressful past experience.
- Seventy-one percent of the sample was bothered by repeated, disturbing memories, thoughts, or images of a stressful experience from the past, and avoided thinking about or talking about a stressful past experience to avoid having feelings related to it.
- Sixty percent of the sample could potentially be diagnosed as having PTSD.
- About one-fourth of the sample experienced trauma symptoms in childhood; 41 percent as teenagers; and 84 percent in adulthood.
- More types of abuse and more severe abuse were associated with greater levels of PTSD symptoms.
- Those who experienced childhood sexual abuse, as well as those who experienced more types of abuse (physical and sexual) in childhood were more likely to have greater levels of PTSD symptoms.
- Those who experienced sexual abuse were more likely to have greater PTSD symptoms.
- Those who sought more types of help were more likely to have greater PTSD symptoms.
- Overall, these findings indicate that many female prisoners have currently or previously experienced PTSD symptoms. Those who experienced any childhood abuse, more severe abuse, and sexual abuse may be more likely to experience PTSD

or greater levels of PTSD. These findings indicate service needs for PTSD for female prisoners.

Victimization and Help-Seeking Behaviors among Female Prisoners in Illinois

Researchers interviewed inmates at three female-only Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) facilities—Dwight (maximum security), Lincoln (medium security), and Decatur (minimum security). A random sample of 163 inmates was interviewed. Interview questions concentrated on participants' histories of substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, stalking and emotional abuse, trauma, and help-seeking strategies related to these issues. The study incorporated a life history calendar to record events that happened over the life course of each woman interviewed.

- Almost all (99 percent) of the incarcerated women interviewed experienced emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse at some point in their lives.
- Many (85 percent) of the female prisoners in the sample were victims of stalking or emotional abuse by an intimate partner.
- The majority (98 percent) of the female inmates interviewed for this study had experienced physical abuse in their lives. Eighty-nine percent had been pushed or shoved and 81 percent had been slapped. Many (77 percent) of the women were abused by intimate partners, 73 percent by family members, and 31 percent by strangers.
- Many (75 percent) of the women in the sample experienced sexual abuse in their lives. Thirty-seven percent were victimized by family members, 33 percent were victimized by a person known to them, and 31 percent were sexually victimized by strangers.
- Many (83 percent) of the women sought help after incidents of violence including talking to friends, consulting an agency or counselor, seeking medical help, or contacting the police.
- Over one-third contacted a hospital or doctor after an incident of physical and sexual violence.
- Women who experienced sexual abuse in childhood were more likely to experience sexual abuse later in life. Those with severe sexual abuse in childhood were more likely to have a current incarceration for an offense against another person.
- The women who sought medical help after victimization were more likely to notify the police. Women who sought services from a counselor for abuse were more likely to seek medical help.

Mental Health Screening and Assessment in the Illinois Juvenile Justice System

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (Authority) surveyed practitioners in various components of the juvenile justice system between November 2008 and March 2009 to determine mental health screening and assessment practices.

- Overall, less than 6 percent of counties in Illinois are served by probation and court services departments that use standardized mental health screening instruments, and even fewer departments used standardized mental health assessments (3 percent). While many probation and court services departments refer youth to outside agencies for mental health screening and assessment, referral decision criteria is unclear.
- Detention centers were more likely than probation and court services to conduct mental health screening and assessments. Overall, about one-third of Illinois counties are served by detention centers that employ standardized mental health screening instruments. An additional 10 percent of counties are served by detention centers that use the MH-JJ referral screen. The MH-JJ initiative only screens for psychotic or affective disorders.
- Most survey respondents indicated that mental health is increasingly becoming an issue facing their agencies and the juvenile justice system in Illinois as a whole. Most respondents indicated a need for more standardized practices of screening and assessment, more comprehensive services that continue after a youth is no longer involved with the juvenile justice system, and better quality services.
- There is a disturbing dearth of quality evaluation and validation of the tools used as mental health screening and assessment instruments. Many of the instruments lacked rigorous study into their reliability and validity, particularly lacking in the number of peer-reviewed study results and evaluations beyond the initial sample on which the instrument was developed.
- Many of the tools have not been studied for their appropriateness for juvenile justice involved youth. Risk assessment tools, such as the YASI, are frequently employed in case planning. However, the YASI is not designed for mental health screen or assessment.
- There appears to be considerable, and understandable, confusion on difference between a screen and assessment, and the difference between a general mental health tool and other instruments, such as intelligence testing and substance use and abuse testing.

Projects

Legislative directives

Sentencing Policy Advisory Council (SPAC) Technical Assistance

SPAC, which was created by Public Act 96-0711, draws on criminal justice information collected by state and local justice agencies and use that information to explore sentencing issues and how these practices impact the criminal justice system as a whole. The Council consists of a nonpartisan group of 18 key stakeholders from across the state and local criminal justice systems, including members from all three branches of government: legislators (from both political parties and houses), retired judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, corrections and administrators of the court officials, law enforcement, victim's rights advocates and academics. There are also ex-officio members from the agencies providing data to SPAC (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, and Illinois Department of Corrections).

ICJIA staff contributed to an Illinois "portrait" of historic trends in criminal justice indicators produced by researchers at Loyola University. This report aims to inform SPAC of how previous sentencing laws have contributed to the current corrections populations.

Adult Redeploy Illinois Utilization-Focused Evaluation

The Crime Reduction Act (Public Act 96-0761 effective on January 1, 2010) establishes the Adult Redeploy Illinois program, which provides financial incentives to local jurisdictions for designing community-based programs to treat offenders in the community instead of sending them to state prisons. Under the Act, financial incentives will be offered to counties/groups of counties/judicial circuits to increase programming in their areas, in exchange for reducing the number of people they send to the Illinois Department of Corrections (with penalties if they do not meet the reduction goal).

The goal of Adult Redeploy is to establish pilot sites to increase access to community-based services and decrease commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections. In Phase I, counties or judicial circuits craft local program plans that specify how to reduce commitments of non-violent offenders to prison and implement these plans in Phase II. The counties or judicial circuits must negotiate an agreement with the Adult Redeploy Illinois Oversight Board (AROIB) to limit the number of Adult Redeploy Illinois eligible commitments from that area to 75% of the average number of commitments of the three previous calendar years.

ICJIA Research and Analysis Staff have worked closely with the AROIB and IDOC and IDHS staff to track the policy implementation process, to guide the development of performance and outcome measures, and to provide relevant technical assistance toward

insuring the program model aligns with the language describing the initiative in the Crime Reduction Act.

Additionally, ICJIA worked with the AROIB to draft the required standard planning document and ensured the incorporation of existing legislated alternatives to incarceration programs in Illinois. Based on the program performance measures, staff crafted an implementation analysis in partnership with the AROIB. The evaluation of Adult Redeploy will consist of an overall assessment of each site's progress toward a 25% reduction in commitments to IDOC and site-specific performance measures related to caseload sizes, types of services offered to participants, the use of evidence-based practices, and other measures relevant to each site's program model.

Program evaluation and assessment studies

Multidisciplinary Team Evaluations

ICJIA has identified the operation of multidisciplinary team (MDT) programs as potentially promising programs and that an evaluation of such programs is consistent with the current need to identify evidence based programming and practices in the criminal justice system. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was released in February to accept proposals that address the evaluation of the MDT programs currently operating in McLean, Kankakee, St. Clair and Peoria counties in Illinois. The topics of evidence based programming and collaborative approaches are areas of continuing interest within the criminal justice system in Illinois and the evaluation of such approaches will assist in guiding ICJIA policy and practices. Multidisciplinary teams aim to bring together several components of the criminal justice and victim service systems in a coordinated approach to effectively process cases and provide support and service to victims. Three of the MDTs were formed to address domestic violence and one to address sexual assault cases.

Policy analysis/applied research

Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice Recidivism Study

Staff conducted research study on recidivism for juveniles admitted to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice which was funded for \$19,575 by the American Statistical Association/Bureau of Justice Statistics Small Grants program. This study will employ various statistical techniques including multilevel modeling, survival analysis, and markov modeling to examine recidivism in-depth. Further, recidivism will be measured through readmission to either juvenile or adult correctional custody (derived from IDJJ and IDOC admissions data) and through re-arrest (derived from criminal history record information). Recidivism will be compared across various demographic and offense-type subgroups, with special attention paid to neighborhood of release indicators using U.S. Bureau of the Census data.

A Study of Co-occurring Conditions and Treatment Coordination of Jail Detainees

Conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago, this study included interviews of approximately 300 adult male and 150 adult female detainees in the psychiatric residential treatment units at the Cook County Department of Corrections jail facility. The project identified ways to better understand the needs of this high-risk and resource-intensive population and provide a basis for developing better coordinated systems of care within the jail, community and transition to prison for those sentenced detainees.

Growth of Illinois Prison Population and Assessment of Risk and Recidivism Among Prison Releasees

Conducted by Loyola University, this multi-tiered project examined trends in prison admissions, end of year populations, and prison exits. Using existing data available from IDOC and the CHRI system, the research examined, in detail: 1) trends in admissions, exits and the end-of-year populations within prison and 2) the post-release recidivism of those released from prison. For both of these research activities, there was emphasis on the similarities and differences between female versus male inmates and releasees. The research sought to increase knowledge regarding the risk and recidivism of those released from prison, and assess the utility of existing information collected by IDOC for determining post-release risk. It extends the potential predictive validity of risk assessment by examining community-level risk factors such as indicators of social disadvantage, social cohesion, and police surveillance as well as individual level characteristics, such as age, criminal history, substance abuse, and other factors. The research also examined post-prison recidivism of offenders using the most current statistical techniques and ensuring that the findings and results are useful to practitioners and policy makers.

Statistical portraits/reports

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Ad Hoc Data Connection Partnership

The Authority shares data in partnership with the Illinois State Police, whereby CHRI data is made available to staff via a permanent online connection. All data entered on state “rap sheets,” as housed on the State Police Computerized Criminal History system, are accessible to staff in electronic format. These data provide a unique resource for answering information requests from legislators, the media, and other interested parties, in-house research projects and studies being conducted by others around the country. A CHRI Ad Hoc Data Archive of all criminal history records from 1990-2013 has been created in formats that can be readily shared with researchers. This Archive currently holds close to a million records for each year of data.

The Authority is now considered the sole source for electronic CHRI data for research purposes. (The State Police still generate paper versions for a fee.) Outside researchers can enter into a User Agreement to gain access to CHRI data which is distributed through the Authority. The process incorporates verification of bona fide research and appropriate

protection of confidential data. The unified user agreement facilitates accountability for the research use of criminal history data records.

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Audit

The unit's Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Audit Center is a Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funded in-house effort to continuously examine the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of the criminal history record information reported to the state repository maintained by the Illinois State Police, and to recommend strategies for improvement.