



# ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION

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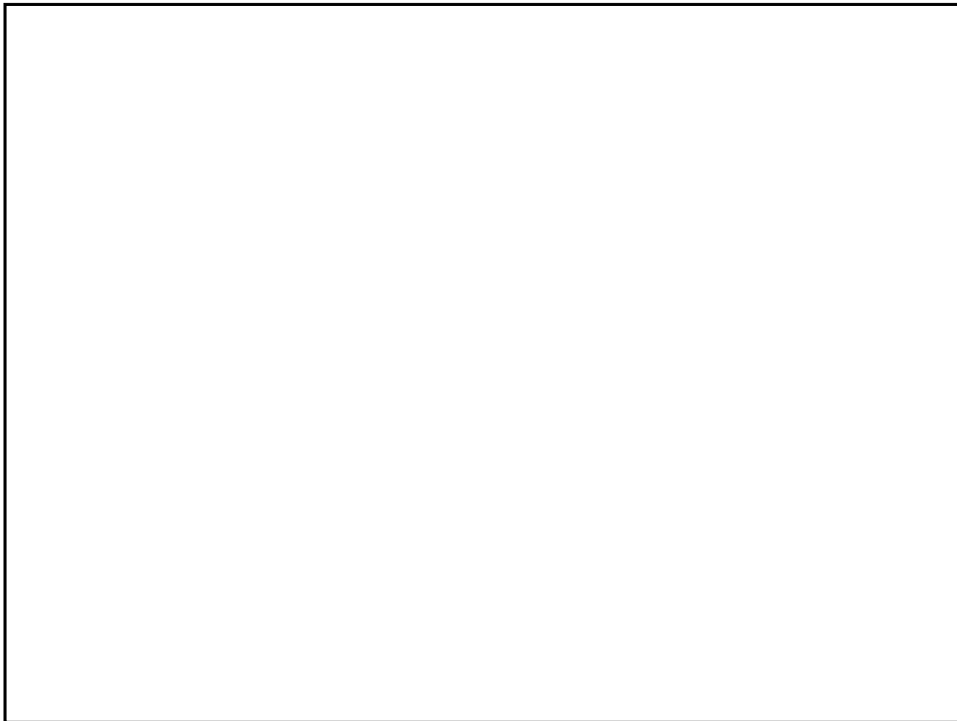
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## THE IMPACT OF DRUG COURTS ON CRIME

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# The Impact of Drug Courts on Crime

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## Drug Courts: A Review

- n Established in Miami, Florida, in 1989
- n Combine the justice system, treatment, and supervision
- n Use evidence-based interventions
- n Have grown to over 2200 programs, plus another 1000 programs using the drug court model
- n Have demonstrated success including dramatic reductions in recidivism and cost savings

## Drug Court: The Process

- n Mary is arrested for shoplifting
- n The officer who arrested Mary suspects she may have a drug problem
- n The officer recommends to the prosecutor that Mary be considered for drug court
- n The prosecutor and defense attorney review Mary's case using the program's eligibility guidelines

## Considerations in Mary's Case

- n Mary was arrested for a property crime, so the victim (the store where she shoplifted) may be due restitution for the shoplifting
- n Mary is manic depressive
- n Mary has four prior convictions for shoplifting, so an additional conviction may mean a lengthy prison sentence
- n Mary is addicted to methamphetamine

## How will Mary's Case be Handled if She Chooses Drug Court?

- n Diversion
- n Post-Plea, Probation
- n Post-Plea, Deferred Sentence
- n Depends on the jurisdiction, her criminal record, the prosecutor

## After Referral

- n After consulting with her attorney, Mary accepts the prosecutor's offer for drug court
- n Mary is sent for a clinical assessment
- n Mary assesses as addicted
- n Mary immediately begins treatment at the level of care indicated by her assessment
- n Mary reports to the next drug court session and appears before the judge for further orientation

## After Referral

- n Mary's case manager sees her regularly, assisting her with her schedule of mental health treatment and drug treatment
- n Mary's case manager, in cooperation with her treatment providers and the rest of the drug court team, review her case
- n Mary has a case plan designed specifically for her, including (once she is able) job training and or obtaining a high school diploma

## Supervision

- n Mary drops urine screens each week
- n Every urine drop is random and observed
- n Test results are processed as soon as possible
- n The drug court team, including Mary's attorney, receive the results
- n In case of a positive test, Mary can insist on a confirmation

## Court

- n Before each court session, the drug court team reviews Mary's progress and makes recommendations to the drug court judge
- n Recommendations can include incentives or sanctions to motivate Mary to succeed

## Incentives and Sanctions

- n Incentives may include small tokens, such as chips recognizing clean time or applause or special recognition from the judge or a variety of other options
- n Sanctions may include community service, short periods of incarceration, or a variety of other options

## To Successfully Complete

- n Mary must remain in the drug court for at least one year
- n Mary must pay restitution (if applicable)
- n Mary must have a period of clean time
- n Mary must complete a long-term recovery plan

## Upon Mary's Success

- n Mary's charge may be dropped
- n If she pled guilty, she may have her period of probation reduced
- n She has achieved a long period of sobriety
- n She has a connection to a recovery community and a long-term recovery plan
- n Her chances for returning to the criminal justice system have significantly diminished

## How Successful Will Mary be?

- n Four independent meta-analyses have concluded that drug courts significantly reduce crime rates an average of approximately 7 to 14 percentage points
- n In some evaluations the effects on crime were as high as 35 percentage points
- n (see *Painting the Current Picture* included in your materials)

## How Will Mary's Success Further Benefit Her Community?

- n Mary's success will save her community money
  - Several economic analyses of drug courts demonstrate dramatic cost savings, including
    - n In California, costs of each client of about \$3000 with a savings each of \$11,000
    - n In Multnomah County (Portland, Oregon), savings of \$6744 per client, and \$12, 218 when victimization included
    - n (see *Painting the Current Picture*)



## Plus...

- n Mary may pay restitution to her victim
- n Mary may complete high school and receive job training
- n Mary may learn parenting skills (if applicable)

## Resources

- n [http://www.ndci.org/publications/PC\\_PII1\\_web.pdf](http://www.ndci.org/publications/PC_PII1_web.pdf) (*Painting the Current Picture*)
- n <http://www.nadcp.org/docs/dkeypdf.pdf> (*Defining Drug Courts: The Key Components*)