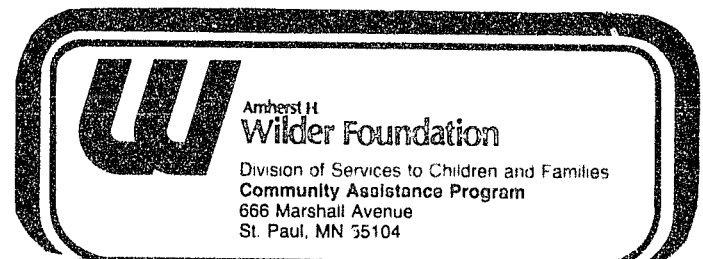


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COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Results of a Controlled Study
Of the Effects of Non-Residential
Corrections Services on Adult Offenders
in Ramsey County

Greg Owen, Ph.D.
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Wilder Research Center

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Submitted to Jack G. Young
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August, 1987

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Between 1978 and 1980, the Ramsey County Adult Probation and Parole Division and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation developed the Community Assistance Program as a response to a variety of difficulties in service delivery to adult misdemeanor offenders through general community services. The program, which began in April, 1981, was designed to provide a set of flexible non-residential services at one centrally located community based center. The services offered were intended to improve community life and to promote public safety by facilitating the adjustment of adult offenders and their families in the community and by preventing their further involvement in criminal activity.

Program Goals and Results

The overall goal of the Community Assistance Program is to facilitate the community adjustment of adult offenders by providing specialized services to meet individual needs. Long-range goals established in 1981 for the five-year period 1981-1986 were:

Goal 1: To serve 1,300 adult clients.

Result: By the end of June 1986, 2,380 clients had been served by one or more components of the Community Assistance Program. The majority of these clients were referred from the Ramsey County courts following one or more criminal convictions.

Goal 2: To improve the system of service delivery to adult misdemeanor offenders.

Result: The development of the Community Assistance Program has directly resulted in two changes within the service delivery system. First, it led to a change in the way in which probation officers are assigned to misdemeanor cases. Prior to CAP's existence, the supervision of misdemeanor clients held a secondary priority with court unit probation officers because of the attention given to felony cases and the large number of clients to be supervised. After the CAP program began, however, many misdemeanor cases were assigned to a single probation officer. This resulted in a more highly focused and specialized service, which ensured increased

compliance with the judge's expectations for treatment. Second, the program led to the permanent placement of probation officers within the CAP facility itself, so that the services offered to CAP clients could be complete and well coordinated. Probation officers now indicate that misdemeanor offenders receive closer supervision and more adequate treatment than prior to the existence of the Community Assistance Program.

Goal 3: To demonstrate through careful research that offenders served in the program have a lower recidivism rate than offenders not receiving program services.

Result: The follow-up study of misdemeanor offenders randomly assigned to a treatment condition, (the Community Assistance Program), or no treatment, (the Comparison Group participants), shows a tendency for less recidivism among CAP clients than among comparison group participants, although this tendency does not reach statistically significant levels. It is possible that a longer period of follow-up would detect greater differences in criminal behavior between the treatment and the control group. Percentage differences show that 10 percent fewer CAP clients than comparison group participants are convicted of additional offenses during the two-year follow-up period.

Goal 4: To demonstrate through careful research that offenders served in the program function better in the community than offenders not receiving program services by comparing their educational and employment achievements.

Result: Data related to community functioning show that persons receiving Community Assistance Program's services are more likely than those in the control group to get additional educational or vocational training and somewhat more likely to increase their wages or get and maintain jobs. Differences in other areas show trends in the predicted direction, although these differences are not statistically significant. CAP clients may be less likely to use welfare and more likely to maintain responsible relationships with probation officers than are persons in the control group. Findings suggest that the Community Assistance Program has some effectiveness

in enhancing the educational development of correctional clients, and increasing the employability of previously convicted misdemeanor offenders and in promoting lifestyle changes that may later have an impact on criminal behavior.

Goal 5: To provide a substantial proportion (70 percent) of service hours in group treatment or multiple treatment units.

Result: During the period from April 1981 to June 1986, the Community Assistance Program provided 52,517 hours of client service. Of that total number of hours, 41,488 hours were provided in group or multiple treatment units. Thus, the percentage of total service hours provided in group or multiple treatment modes represents approximately 79 percent of all program service hours. This is 9 percent greater than the stated program goal specified at the beginning of the program.

Goal 6: To provide services to women and minority correction's clients in at least the same proportion to their presence in the adult probation system.

Result: During the past five years, the Ramsey County Adult Corrections Programs have, on average, included 21 percent women and 31 percent minority clients. During the same time period, 30 percent of the Community Assistance Program Clients were women and 37 percent of all clients served were minority. The minority composition includes 24 percent Black, 9 percent Hispanic, 1 1/2 percent Asian, 1 1/2 percent Native American and 1 percent other minorities.

Goal 7: To provide services at flexible times to accommodate as many correction's clients as possible with at least one-third of client service hours after 5 p.m. or on weekends.

Result: Of the 52,517 service hours provided by the Community Assistance Program between April 1981 and June 30, 1986, 22,950 hours of service (43.7 percent) were provided after 5 p.m.

Goal 8: To develop the program facility as a community corrections center by providing space for groups and individual participants for corrections related training, meetings and programs.

Result: Information on facility usage by outside groups was examined for fiscal year 1982-1983, 1983-1984, and 1984-1985. During the time period July, 1982 through June, 1983, 1,700 people were served through 291 meetings representing 25 different correctional service groups. Between the period July, 1983 and June, 1984, 2,823 individuals were provided with meeting areas for 561 meetings, representing 18 different agencies. During the period July, 1984 through June, 1985, 3,787 individuals attended 804 meetings, representing 20 different correctional groups.

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Results of a Controlled Study of the Effects of Non-Residential Corrections Services on Adult Offenders in Ramsey County

Introduction

Between 1978 and 1980, the Ramsey County Adult Probation and Parole Division and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation developed the Community Assistance Program as a response to a variety of difficulties in service delivery to adult misdemeanor offenders through general community services. The program, which began in April, 1981, was designed to provide a set of flexible, non-residential services at one, centrally located, community-based center. The services offered were intended to improve community life and to promote public safety by facilitating the adjustment of adult offenders and their families in the community and by preventing their further involvement in criminal activity.

Background

The idea for such a program grew out of a 1978 review of the needs of Ramsey County adult corrections clients. At that time, a major concern of the Ramsey County Adult Probation and Parole Division was the lack of available resources to help corrections clients remain in the community. As adult corrections caseloads increased, the need for effective resources for working with resistive, high risk corrections clients became more important. Problems targeted for attention included: unemployment, personal problem solving skills, communications, education, budgeting, chemical abuse, marital difficulties, civil contract disputes, and traffic law violations.

The Community Assistance Program was envisioned as a cooperative effort between the Ramsey County Adult Probation and Parole Division and the Wilder Foundation that would become a focus for community corrections activities in Ramsey County. The two agencies have worked cooperatively to develop programs tailored to the needs of offenders being supervised in the community. Since the inception of the program in 1981, it has shared a facility with a Ramsey County Adult Probation and Parole office.

Related Literature

The Community Assistance Program is not the first correctional service to ask, "What is the likelihood that rehabilitative efforts will prove successful in reducing recidivism?" Most researchers in the area have not been optimistic in responding to this question.

Following a review of correctional literature published between 1945 and 1967, Martinson (1974) concluded that, "with few and isolated exceptions the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far have had no appreciable effect on recidivism."¹ Other writers point out, however, that correctional research is almost exclusively concerned with the most serious offenders. A recent (1986) computer search of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service files identified only four references to studies examining recidivism among misdemeanor offenders.

In one study, conducted in King County, Washington during 1978 and 1979, researchers found that significant problems with inaccurate, missing, or unverifiable case data prevented the development of an accurate predictive model regarding recidivism among misdemeanor offenders. The available data suggested that young, single males with revoked drivers licenses and a record of other criminal behaviors were most likely to recidivate. The recidivism rates for persons included in the study varied according to the type of offense initially committed. Researchers found a recidivism rate of 44 percent for persons convicted of driving while their license was suspended compared to a rate of 17 percent for those convicted of driving while intoxicated. The combined recidivism rate for all misdemeanants was 27 percent. The authors recommended an analysis and improvement of current information deficiencies in order to better track the records of misdemeanor offenders.²

In a 1976 study of misdemeanants in Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska, clients were randomly assigned to either an experimental group subject to close supervision or a control group, sentenced to probation with little supervision. The researchers concluded that, in terms of recidivism, there

¹ Robert Martinson, "What Works? Questions and Answers about Prison Reform," Public Interest 35 (1974): 22-54.

² King County District Courts, "Recidivism Study Final Report" National Institute of Justice, 1979, 100 pages. (document accession # 059526).

was no difference between the experimental and control groups in either the Anchorage or Fairbanks project during the two year study period.³

Another study of persons convicted of misdemeanor crimes was carried out in Salt Lake County, Utah between 1968 and 1972. A time series design was utilized to compare the recidivism rate of misdemeanants convicted prior to the expansion of probation services with the recidivism rate of a similar group following service expansion. The researchers attempted to answer the question, "Does an increase in misdemeanor services result in decreased recidivism?" The study found that (1) increased services had little impact on the more established criminal and (2) the recidivism rate for persons convicted only of misdemeanors declined significantly during the period of expanded service. Approximately 37 percent of misdemeanor clients served prior to service expansion recidivated compared to 22 percent who recidivated following the expansion of services. The author concludes that, "corrections does have an impact on the rehabilitation of clients, at least the ones who are not deeply ingrained in a life of crime."⁴

A study conducted by the Northern California Service League found a recidivism rate of 56 percent for misdemeanor clients seen regularly by case workers compared to a rate of 73 percent for a comparable group of non-treated offenders.⁵

A study of the Volunteer Probation Counselor Project at Lincoln, Nebraska reports on the potential value of one-to-one relationships between misdemeanor offenders and volunteer probation counselors. The project found that the recidivism rate for clients randomly assigned to the volunteer staffed experimental program was 15 percent compared to 64 percent for those randomly assigned to regular probation officer caseloads.⁶

³ W. B. Jones, "Alaska Misdemeanant Probation Project-Final Report," Alaska Department of Corrections, 1976, 33 pages (Also available from NIJ, document accession # 039450).

⁴ Richard Oldroyd, "Some Correctional Programs Do Reduce Recidivism," Offender Rehabilitation, Vol. 1 (2), Winter 1976-1977: 137-141.

⁵ Northern California Service League, Final Report of the San Francisco Rehabilitation Project for Offenders (San Francisco: NCSL, 1968).

⁶ United States Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, The Volunteer Probation Counselor Program (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1975).

Although these studies do not show consistent results across programs, there is an indication that misdemeanor offenders without long-term patterns of criminal behavior may be amendable to intervention efforts that emphasize close supervision following arrest and conviction. The results also suggest that the overall recidivism rate of 27 percent for CAP clients compares favorably to findings reported in other studies.

Program Goals

The overall goal of the Community Assistance Program is to facilitate the community adjustment of adult offenders by providing specialized services to meet identified needs. Specifically, the long range goals established in 1981 for the 5 year period, 1981 to 1986, were:

1. To serve 1,300 adult clients.
2. To improve the system of service delivery to adult misdemeanor offenders.
3. To demonstrate through careful research that offenders served in the program have a lower recidivism rate than offenders not receiving program services.
4. To demonstrate that offenders served in the program are functioning better in the community than offenders not receiving program services by comparing their educational and employment achievements.
5. To provide a substantial proportion (70 percent) of service hours in group treatment or multiple treatment units.
6. To provide services to women and minority corrections clients in at least the same proportion to their presence in the adult probation system.
7. To provide services at flexible times to accommodate as many corrections clients as possible with at least one-third of client service hours after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends.
8. To develop the program facility as a community corrections center by providing space for groups and individual participants for corrections related training, meetings and programs.

The overall success of the program in achieving each goal specified above is summarized in the final section of the report. What follows is a detailed examination of the effectiveness of the Community Assistance Program in lowering recidivism (goal 3) and promoting improved community functioning (goal 4) among a particular study population.

Outline of Study

A unique feature of the program involved an experimental research design that was incorporated into the program design. Between April, 1981 and July, 1983, all clients referred to the Community Assistance Program from the Ramsey County Municipal Court PSI (pre-sentence investigation) Unit and Project Remand, (a pretrial diversion agency), were randomly assigned to either a program participation group or a comparison group.⁷ Approximately two-thirds of the cases assigned in this manner were placed into the program participation group and were eligible for services from the Community Assistance Program. The remaining one-third of all cases were placed into a comparison group and asked to participate in the study. This group was not, however, eligible for services from the Community Assistance Program. Random assignment to the treatment or control conditions was made possible with the approval and cooperation of the Ramsey County Municipal Court judges.

Data were systematically collected from the program participation group and the comparison group. Information was collected from all study participants at intake. For the program participation group, "intake" was considered their intake into the Community Assistance Program. For the comparison group, "intake" was considered their contact with the program researcher after sentencing.

All study participants were asked to participate in interviews at 6 and 12 months following their intake date in order to collect follow-up information. A probation officer assessment was conducted at 6 and 12 months following intake. In addition, a criminal record check was done at one and two years following intake. The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the Community Assistance Program in lowering recidivism rates and improving community functioning among program participants.

Description of Services

The study participants assigned to the program participation group were eligible for a variety of services offered by the Community Assistance Program. These services included: Individual and Group Counseling. Counseling services were available to both men and women who needed to improve

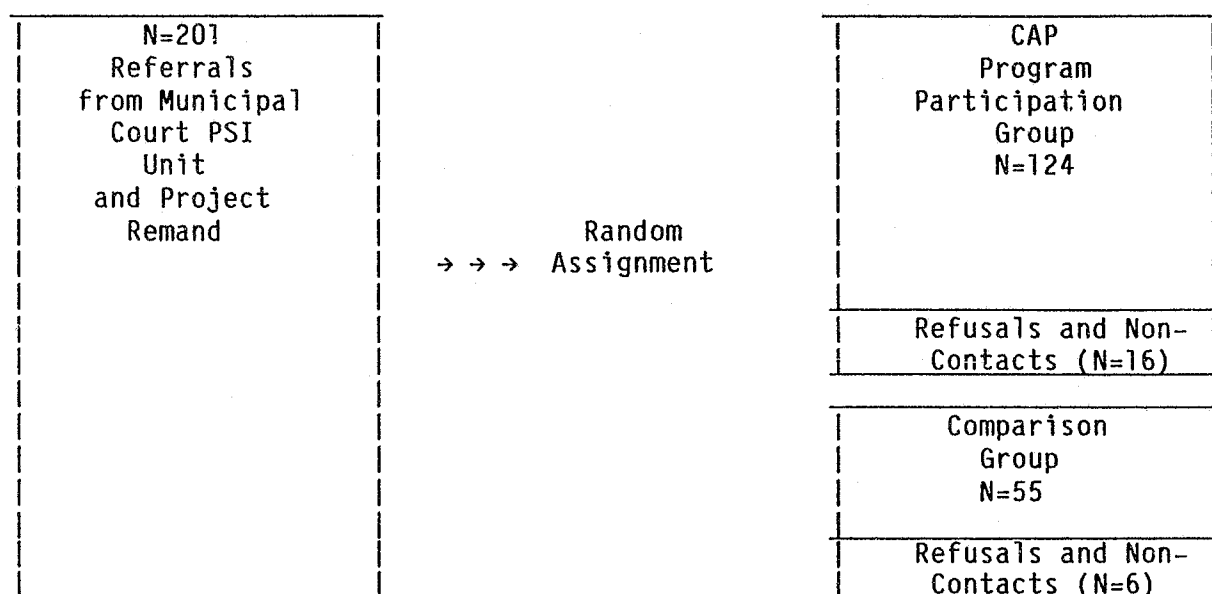
⁷ Several groups were excluded from this study including petit theft group referrals, traffic offender referrals from traffic court and other social service agencies, family members, and all referrals from existing probation officer caseloads.

their problem solving skills, build self-esteem, and develop law-abiding alternatives to criminal behavior. Education. An educational program was available to meet the unique needs of corrections clients who had demonstrated difficulty with learning in traditional school settings. The program focused on basic educational skills and helped clients prepare for the General Education Development Test (GED). Financial Management. This service was available to assist clients to develop financial management skills and to teach them how to meet their financial obligations. Employment Counseling. Clients with poor work histories, limited skills, and/or poor work habits were assessed for vocational aptitude, counselled in preparing for job interviews, and assisted in finding and maintaining employment. Services were tailored to meet the individual needs of each client. Traffic Offenders Assistance. Clients who exhibited difficulty in obtaining or maintaining a driver's license received help in preparing for written examinations and road tests, resolving insurance problems and meeting Department of Public Safety requirements.

Characteristics of Study Participants

During the study period April, 1981 to July, 1983, two hundred and one of 819 referrals made to the Community Assistance Program were referred from the Municipal Court Pre-sentence Investigation Unit and Project Remand following misdemeanor convictions. From these referrals, 140 individuals were randomly assigned to a program participation group (CAP services) and 61 were randomly assigned to a comparison group (no CAP services). Sixteen potential CAP clients and six comparison cases could not be contacted following assignment to the study. This usually occurred when clients decided not to comply with the conditions of their sentence. Figure I shows the distribution of cases. The remaining 618 referrals from other sources received C.A.P. services but are not included in this study.

Figure I



The figure shows that 124 potential clients were eligible to receive CAP services and 55 were assigned to the comparison group. It should be noted, however, that there was some variation in the amount of treatment received by those who were eligible for CAP services. CAP clients were not prescreened and, once assigned to the program participation group, their attendance could not be enforced. Therefore, while some clients complied fully with the terms of their treatment program, others did not participate to the extent prescribed by staff. Interviewers conducting 6 month telephone follow-up surveys were able to locate 86 percent of the CAP clients and 87 percent of the comparison group participants. At 12 months, interviewers contacted 70 percent of the original CAP group and 64 percent of the comparison group. This decline in the number of participants, however, did not significantly affect the distribution of sex, age, racial and marital status characteristics of the total sample from intake to 12 month follow-up, as shown in the following table.

TABLE 1
CAP Study
Characteristics of Participants

Characteristic		Intake				6 months				12 months			
		N = 124 CAP		N = 55 Comparison		N = 107 CAP		N = 48 Comparison		N = 87 CAP		N = 35 Comparison	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Sex</u>	Male	92	74	37	67	78	73	32	67	64	74	24	69
	Female	32	26	18	33	29	27	16	33	23	26	11	31
<u>Marital Status</u>	Never Married	72	58	30	55	60	56	25	52	48	55	18	51
	Now Married	19	15	9	16	19	18	9	19	15	17	7	20
	Separated	18	14	8	15	13	12	8	17	11	13	6	17
	Divorced	15	12	8	15	15	14	6	13	13	15	4	11
<u>Race</u>	White	88	71	38	69	78	73	37	77	65	75	28	80
	Black	26	21	10	18	21	20	5	10	17	20	4	11
	Hispanic	4	3	5	9	3	3	4	8	3	3	2	6
	Native American	4	3	2	4	4	4	2	4	1	1	1	3
	Other	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
<u>Age</u>	18-19	27	22	12	22	25	23	12	25	21	24	10	29
	20-24	41	33	17	31	36	34	14	29	28	32	7	20
	25-29	35	28	9	16	26	24	8	17	21	24	6	17
	30-34	14	11	9	16	13	12	6	13	10	12	5	14
	35-39	3	2	3	6	3	3	3	6	3	3	2	6
	40-44	3	2	4	7	3	3	4	8	3	3	4	11
	45-49	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3

Table 1 shows that the distribution of demographic characteristics within the CAP group and the comparison group is quite similar. While the comparison group is slightly older, and in the 6 and 12-month sample, shows a somewhat smaller percentage of blacks, these differences are not statistically significant.

Information from the initial six month follow-up was reported in a previous newsletter (Report #1, June 1984). This report provides information from the entire study.

One Year Client Interview Follow-Up Results

One year follow-up information on program participants and comparison group participants was obtained through face-to-face and telephone interviews. One hundred and twenty four Community Assistance Program clients and fifty-five comparison group participants were eligible for follow-up. In cases where the intended respondent could not be contacted after repeated attempts, family members or others who were knowledgeable of the clients' activities were asked to serve as informants to complete the interview. Table 2 presents detailed information on respondents and response rates.

TABLE 2
Respondents and Response Rates
12 Months Following Intake Interview

STATUS	CAP Service Clients		Non-CAP Comparison Group	
	N	%	N	%
Eligible for Follow-up	124	100	55	100
Able to Contact Household	89	72	37	67
Completed Interviews				
Clients Themselves	83	67	32	58
Non-client Informants	4	3	3	6
Total Completed Interviews	87	70	35	64

Table 2 shows that 67 percent of CAP clients and 58 percent of the comparison group participants could be located for interviews 12 months following the intake interview. Non-client respondents completed the interview for 3 percent of the CAP clients and 6 percent of the comparison group participants. The overall response rates, 70 percent for CAP clients and 64 percent for comparison group participants, do not significantly differ.

Educational Enrollment

A primary objective of CAP is to provide educational programs that can assist clients in developing basic educational and employment related skills. At the time of intake, the average number of years of education for both CAP clients and the comparison group was eleven years. Table 3 presents information on the subsequent enrollment of both CAP and comparison respondents in General Educational Development (GED) programs, high schools, community adult education courses and vocational-technical programs.

TABLE 3
Educational Enrollment of Respondents During First Year After Intake⁸

STATUS	CAP Service Clients N=87		Non-CAP Comparison Group N=35	
	N	%	N	%
GED Program	16	18.4	1	2.9
High School	1	1.1	0	.0
Community Adult Education	2	2.3	1	2.9
Vo-Tech Program	8	9.2	2	5.7
Total Enrollment	27	31.0	4	11.5

⁸ Chi Square test of Significance = 5.05 with 1 df. P=.025.

Table 3 shows that about one-third (31 percent) of the CAP clients, compared to 11.5 percent of the comparison group respondents, were enrolled in some kind of educational program during the first 12 month follow-up period. Enrollments in GED and vo-tech programs were most common. GED programs were available to CAP clients on-site. Overall differences between the two groups on educational enrollment are statistically significant.

Employment

The Community Assistance Program offers a variety of employment services. These include employment counseling, job readiness training, vocational assessment, job seeking assistance and employer follow-up. At the time of intake, thirty-four CAP clients (32 percent) and eighteen comparison group participants (38 percent) were gainfully employed. Seventeen (16 percent) of the CAP clients and 13 (27 percent) of the comparison group participants were out of the work force at intake. Fifty-six (52 percent) of the CAP clients compared to 17 (35 percent) of the comparison group participants were unemployed but eligible for work. Thus, the CAP group had 17 percent more persons unemployed but eligible for employment at intake than did the comparison group. Table 4 describes employment status during the last half of the initial 12 month follow-up period.

TABLE 4
Work History During The Last Half Of The
Twelve Month Follow-Up Period⁹

STATUS	CAP Service Clients N=87		Non-CAP Comparison Group N=35	
	N	%	N	%
Worked during last 6 months of Follow-up period	66	75.9	24	68.6
Unemployed but eligible for employment during last 6 months of follow-up period	14	16.1	7	20.0
Out of work force during last 6 months of follow-up period	7	8.0	4	11.4
Total	87	100.0	35	100.0

⁹ Chi Square Test of Significance = .72 with 2 df. P=NS.

The table shows that 75 percent of CAP clients, compared to 69 percent of the comparison group participants, worked during the second half (the last 6 months) of the follow-up period. In addition, only 16 percent of the CAP clients and 20 percent of the comparison group participants were unemployed but eligible for work. These differences, although in the predicted direction, were not statistically significant.

Study participants who were employed were also asked to report on their wages during the follow-up period. For those who were employed both at intake and at one year, the following table describes changes in wages.

TABLE 5
Changes in Wages From Intake to 12 Months After Intake
(Persons employed at both times only)¹⁰

STATUS	CAP Service Clients N=23		Non-CAP Comparison Group N=13	
	N	%	N	%
Wages increased	15	65	5	38
Wages stayed the same	2	9	4	31
Wages decreased	1	4	3	23
Missing	5	22	1	8
Total	23	100	13	100

Table 5 shows that among those employed at both intake and follow-up, a larger percentage of CAP clients than of comparison group participants had an increase in wages after 12 months. While these percentage differences appear large, the small number of respondents who were employed at both intake and follow-up does not allow these differences to reach statistically significant levels.

¹⁰ Chi Square test of significance = 4.71 with 2 df. p=N.S.

TABLE 6
Employment Status Twelve Months After Intake¹¹

STATUS	CAP Service Clients N=87		Non-CAP Comparison Group N=35	
	N	%	N	%
Employed full time	36	41	12	34
Employed part-time	13	15	5	14
Unemployed	25	29	11	31
Unable to work	12	14	6	17
Missing	1	1	1	3

Table 6 shows that 41 percent of CAP clients, compared to 34 percent of Comparison group participants, were employed full time at the end of the follow-up period. Although the differences are not statistically significant, the relationship is in the predicted direction.

Two Year Court Record Follow-up Results

During the first and second years following the last admission of an individual to the study group (both CAP and comparison group respondents), a court record search was conducted through the files of the St. Paul Police Department and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). These records provided information on all misdemeanors recorded by the St. Paul Police Department and all felonies recorded by the Minnesota BCA during the two year follow-up period. These records do not provide information on most misdemeanors committed outside of the city of St. Paul. However, most study participants reside in St. Paul and most misdemeanor activity prior to intake occurred within the city. Tables 7 and 8 provide information on the number of charged offenses for each respondent during the follow-up period.¹²

¹¹ Chi Square test of significance = .285 with 3 df p=N.S.

¹² One comparison group respondent died during the follow-up period and is excluded from this analysis.

TABLE 7
Charged Offenses During Two Year
Follow-Up Period and Cumulative Total

STATUS	Charges During 1st Year				Charges During 2nd Year				Cumulative Total ¹³			
	CAP		Non-CAP		CAP		Non-CAP		CAP		Non-CAP	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No Charges	95	76.6	40	74.1	97	78.2	41	75.9	81	65.3	31	57.4
1 Charge	11	8.9	6	11.1	9	7.3	5	9.3	14	11.3	7	13.0
2 Charges	2	1.6	1	1.9	6	4.8	3	5.6	6	4.8	4	7.4
3 Charges	4	3.2	0	.0	5	4.0	1	1.9	4	3.2	2	3.7
4 Charges	4	3.2	4	7.4	2	1.6	3	5.6	3	2.4	5	9.3
5 or More Charges	8	6.4	3	5.7	5	4.0	1	1.9	16	12.9	5	9.3
Total	124	100.0	54	100.0	124	100.0	54	100.0	124	100.0	54	100.0

¹³Because some clients were charged with offenses during one year and not another, the cumulative total is not a simple sum of figures in each row. The cumulative total includes the total number of all charges over a two year period.

TABLE 8
Summary of Charged Offenses During Two-Year Follow-Up Period¹⁴

	CAP Service Clients		Non-CAP Comparison Group	
	N	%	N	%
No Charged Offenses	81	65.3	31	57.4
1 or More Charged Offenses	43	34.7	23	42.6
Total	124	100.0	54	100.0

Tables 7 and 8 show that approximately 65 percent of the CAP clients, compared to 57 percent of the comparison group participants, had no new charges during the two-year follow-up period. These differences are again in the predicted direction, although not statistically significant. Information on convictions during the follow-up period is presented in Tables 9 and 10.

¹⁴ Chi Square test of significance = 1.01, df=1, p=.315 (NS)

TABLE 9
Convictions During Two Year Follow-Up
Period and Cumulative Total

STATUS	Convictions During 1st Year				Convictions During 2nd Year				Cumulative Total ¹⁵			
	CAP		Non-CAP		CAP		Non-CAP		CAP		Non-CAP	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No Convictions	99	79.8	41	75.9	104	83.9	44	81.5	90	72.6	34	63.0
1 Conviction	12	9.7	8	14.8	13	10.5	6	11.1	16	12.9	11	20.4
2 Convictions	5	4.0	2	3.7	5	4.0	3	5.6	6	4.8	6	11.1
3 Convictions	3	2.4	1	1.9	1	.8	1	1.9	5	4.0	0	.0
4 Convictions	1	.8	1	1.9	1	.8	0	.0	3	2.4	2	3.7
5 or More Convictions	4	3.2	1	1.9	0	.0	0	.0	4	3.2	1	1.9
Total	124	100.0	54	100.0	124	100.0	54	100.0	124	100.0	54	100.0

¹⁵ Because some clients were convicted of offenses during one year and not another, the cumulative total is not a simple sum of figures in each row. The cumulative total includes the total number of all convictions over a two year period.

TABLE 10
Summary of Convictions During Two Year Follow-Up Period¹⁶

	CAP Service Clients		Non-CAP Comparison Group	
	N	%	N	%
No Convictions	90	72.6	34	63.0
1 or More Convictions	34	27.4	20	37.0
Total	124	100.0	54	100.0

Tables 9 and 10 show that approximately 73 percent of the CAP clients, compared to 63 percent of the comparison group participants, had no convictions during the follow-up period. Stated differently, 37 percent of the comparison group participants compared to 27 percent of the CAP clients were convicted of new offenses during the two year follow-up period. While these differences are again in the predicted direction, they are not statistically significant.

Offense Type

As indicated, court record searches for new offenses committed by CAP client and comparison group participants were conducted at one and two years following initial interviews with study participants. Table 11 provides information on the number of convictions of each type at one year, two years and the cumulative total.

¹⁶ Chi Square test of significance = 1.464, df = 1, p=.20 (NS)

TABLE 11
Number and Types of Convictions During Two-Year Follow-Up Period

		One Year After Intake				Two Years After Intake				Cumulative Convictions			
		CAP		Comparison		CAP		Comparison		CAP		Comparison	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Felony	0	116	94.0	49	89.0	118	95.0	52	96.0	112	90.0	47	87.0
Convictions	1	5	4.0	4	7.0	6	5.0	1	2.0	9	7.0	3	6.0
	2+	3	2.0	2	4.0	-	-	1	2.0	3	2.0	4	7.0
Total		124	100.0	55	100.0	124	100.0	54	100.0	Note 1		Note 2	
Gross	0	122	98.0	55	100.0	123	99.0	52	96.0	121	98.0	52	96.0
Misdemeanor	1	2	2.0	-	-	1	1.0	2	4.0	3	2.0	2	4.0
Convictions	2+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		79	100.0	33	100.0	79	100.0	33	100.0	Note 3		Note 4	
Misdemeanor	0	107	86.0	46	84.0	111	90.0	47	87.0	101	81.0	41	76.0
Convictions	1	7	6.0	6	11.0	6	5.0	4	7.0	9	7.0	7	13.0
	2+	10	8.0	3	5.0	7	6.0	3	6.0	14	11.0	6	11.0
Total		124	100.0	55	100.0	124	100.0	54	100.0	Note 5		Note 6	

Notes 1 - 6 are contained in Appendix 1. They describe the specific offenses committed by study participants.

The table shows that 90 percent of the CAP clients, compared to 87 percent of the comparison group participants, had not been convicted of a felony after two years of follow-up. Ninety-eight percent of the CAP clients, compared to 96 percent of the comparison group participants, had not been convicted of a gross misdemeanor after two years of follow-up. Eighty-one percent of the CAP clients, compared to 76 percent of the comparison group participants, had not been convicted of a misdemeanor after two years of follow-up. Overall, a slightly higher percentage of CAP clients had no new convictions within each offense category when compared to comparison group participants. These results are in the predicted direction, but they are not statistically significant.

Welfare Benefits

Information about the receipt of welfare benefits was also gathered at intake and during the 6 and 12 month follow-up interviews. The table below presents this information for CAP clients and comparison group participants who provided this information at each data collection point.

TABLE 12
Receipt of Welfare Benefits At Intake, Six-Months and Twelve Months¹⁷

	Intake				Six Months				Twelve Months			
	CAP Clients		Non-CAP Comparison		CAP Clients		Non-CAP Comparison		CAP Clients		Non-CAP Comparison	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Received Welfare Income	22	28.0	10	30.0	22	28.0	13	39.0	20	25.0	12	36.0
Did Not Receive Welfare Income	57	72.0	23	70.0	57	72.0	20	61.0	59	75.0	21	64.0
Total	79	100.0	33	100.0	79	100.0	33	100.0	79	100.0	33	100.0

¹⁷ Reported only for persons where welfare information was available at all three time points.

Table 12 shows that 28 percent of the CAP clients, compared to 30 percent of the comparison group participants, were receiving welfare benefits at intake. At six months, 28 percent of the CAP clients, compared to 39 percent of the comparison group participants, were receiving welfare benefits. At 12 months, 25 percent of the CAP clients, compared to 36 percent of the comparison group participants, were receiving welfare benefits. Although these differences are not statistically significant, the trend is in the predicted direction, that is, a larger percentage of comparison group participants than CAP clients were receiving welfare benefits 12 months after the initial interview.

Probation Officer Follow-up

The probation officers of CAP clients and comparison group participants were asked to participate in interviews at 6 and 12 months following admission to the study. Probation officers were asked to rate their clients' attitudes and behaviors in a number of areas including ability to keep appointments, attitude toward probation, commitment to staying out of trouble, personal appearance, compliance with probation terms, attitude toward probation officer, acceptance of the consequences of actions, willingness to seek help from probation officer, willingness to seek help from other services, and follow-up on agreements with probation officer. Rating results appear in Table 13.

TABLE 13
Average (Mean) Ratings by Probation Officers of Client
Attitudes and Behaviors at Six and Twelve Months

Respondents Used The Following Scale

6	5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

CATEGORY	Mean Score At 6 Months ¹⁸		Mean Score At 12 Months ¹⁸	
	CAP Clients N=122	Comparison Groups N=47	CAP Clients N=86	Comparison Groups N=32
Ability to keep appointments with you	3.24	3.34	3.36	3.16
Attitude towards being on probation	3.21	3.15	3.58	3.38
Committed to staying out of trouble with the law	3.88	3.68	4.00	3.97
His/her personal appearance	3.59	3.67	3.87	3.63
Compliance with conditions of probation	3.17	3.15	3.50	3.19
Attitude towards probation	3.38	3.40	3.84	3.38
Being able to accept the consequences of his/her actions	3.20	3.26	3.66	3.31
His/her willingness to seek help from you	3.00	2.94	3.14	3.03
Following through on agreements with you	3.09	3.09	3.36	3.19

¹⁸ Difference of Means tests on each item show no significant differences between CAP clients and Comparison Group participants at either 6 or 12 months.

Table 13 shows that CAP clients and comparison group participants were rated similarly by probation officers during both the 6 and 12 month follow-up periods. While differences that appear in the table are not statistically significant, the 12 month mean ratings of CAP clients were higher on each measure than the 12 month mean ratings of comparison group participants. In addition, the table shows that the mean ratings for CAP clients showed improvement on each measure over the rating period while the comparison group did not show consistent improvement. Again, the tendency is in the predicted direction, despite the lack of statistical significance.

Conclusions

The follow-up study of misdemeanor offenders randomly assigned to a treatment condition (the Community Assistance Program) or no treatment (the Comparison Group participants) shows that persons receiving Community Assistance Program services are more likely than those in the control group to get additional education or vocational training and slightly more likely to increase their wages or get and maintain jobs. There are no statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of their receipt of welfare benefits, work with probation officers, or commission of new offenses; although modest differences between the two groups are in the predicted direction. The findings suggest that the Community Assistance Program could be effective in promoting some lifestyle changes that may later have an impact on criminal behavior.

Data related to offense history show that 37 percent of the comparison group participants compared to 27 percent of the CAP clients were convicted of new offenses during the two year follow-up period. While these differences do not reach statistically significant levels during the time period of this study, it is possible that a longer period of follow-up would detect greater differences in criminal behavior between the two groups.

Discussion of Goals

The introduction to this report listed eight goals of the Community Assistance Program. This section briefly summarizes the way in which the program has addressed each of these goals. The summary draws from the research study (which examined two of the goals directly and in detail), from the computerized record system maintained by the Wilder Foundation, and from other sources.

Goal 1 - To serve 1,300 adult clients by June 30, 1986.

By the end of June, 1986, 2,380 clients had been served by one or more components of the Community Assistance Program. The majority of these clients were referred from the courts following one or more criminal convictions.

Goal 2 - To improve the system of service delivery to adult misdemeanor offenders.

The development of the Community Assistance Program has directly resulted in two changes within the service delivery system. First, it led to a change in the way in which probation officers are assigned to misdemeanor cases. Prior to CAP's existence, the supervision of misdemeanor clients held a secondary priority with Court Unit Probation Officers because of the attention given felony cases and the large number of clients to be supervised. After the CAP program began, however, many misdemeanor cases were assigned to a single probation officer. This resulted in a more highly focused and specialized service, which ensured increased compliance with the Judges' expectations for treatment. Second, the program led to the permanent placement of probation officers within the CAP facility itself, so that the services offered to CAP clients could be complete and well coordinated.¹⁹

The effects of these changes have not been formally evaluated. Nonetheless, they demonstrate the county's commitment to providing necessary services to misdemeanor offenders. In addition, probation officers have suggested that misdemeanor offenders now receive closer supervision and more adequate treatment than prior to the existence of the Community Assistance Program.

¹⁹ Memo to Rod Johnson, CAP program director from Robert Hanson, Director of Adult Probation and Parole Division, Ramsey County Community Corrections Division, September 5, 1986.

Goal 3 - To lower recidivism rates among Community Assistance Program clients.

The follow-up study of misdemeanor offenders randomly assigned to a treatment condition (the Community Assistance Program) or no treatment (the Comparison Group Participants) shows a tendency for less recidivism among CAP clients than among Comparison Group Participants, although this tendency is not statistically significant. It is possible that a longer period of follow-up would detect greater differences in criminal behavior between the treatment and the control group.

Goal 4 - To demonstrate that offenders served in the program are functioning better in the community than offenders not receiving program services.

Data related to community functioning show that persons receiving Community Assistance Programs services are more likely than those in the control group to get additional educational or vocational training and somewhat more likely to increase their wages or get and maintain jobs. Differences in other areas, although not statistically significant, show trends in the predicted direction. That is, CAP clients may be less likely to use welfare and more likely to maintain more responsible relationships with probation officers than are persons in the control group. The findings suggest that the Community Assistance Program has some effectiveness in enhancing the educational development of correctional clients, in increasing the employability of previously convicted misdemeanor offenders and in promoting life style changes that may later have an impact on criminal behavior.

Goal 5 - To provide a substantial proportion (70 percent) of service hours in group treatment or multiple treatment units.

During the period from April, 1981, to June, 1986, the program provided 52,517 hours of client service. Of that total number of hours, 41,488 hours were provided in group or multiple treatment units. Thus the percentage of total service hours provided in group or multiple treatment modes represents approximately 79 percent of all program service hours. This is 9 percent greater than the stated program goal specified at the beginning of the program.

Goal 6 - To provide services to women and minority corrections clients in at least the same proportion to their presence in the adult probation system.

During the past five years, the Ramsey County adult corrections programs have, on average, included 21 percent women and 31 percent minority clients.

During the same time period, 30 percent of the Community Assistance Program clients were women and 37 percent of all clients served were minority. The minority composition includes 24 percent Black, 9 percent Hispanic, 1 1/2 percent Asian, 1 1/2 percent Native American and 1 percent other minorities. Goal 7 - To provide services at flexible times to accommodate as many corrections clients as possible with at least thirty-three percent of all client service hours after 5:00 pm.

Of the 52,517 service hours provided by the Community Assistance Program between April, 1981 and June 30, 1986, 22,950 hours of service (43.7 percent) were provided after 5:00 pm.

Goal 8 - To develop the program facility as a Community Corrections Center by providing space for groups and individual participants for corrections-related training, meetings and programs.

Information on facility usage by outside groups was examined for fiscal years 1982-83, 1983-84, and 1984-85. During the time period, July, 1982, through June, 1983, 1700 people were served through 291 meetings, representing 25 different correctional service groups. Between the period, July, 1983, and June, 1984, 2,823 individuals were provided with meeting areas for 561 meetings, representing 18 different groups of users. During the period, July, 1984, through June, 1985, 3,787 individuals attended 804 meetings, representing 20 different correctional groups. (A listing of various groups who have used the CAP facilities is presented in Appendix II.)

Final Considerations

One of the most difficult tasks in conducting this study was obtaining accurate criminal history records for the participants. Although somewhat reliable information on felonies exists within the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, there was no central, accurate source of misdemeanor arrests and convictions in Ramsey County at the time this study was conducted. These records had to be supplied and collated from information available from the St. Paul Police Department and the Ramsey County Courts. Because much of this information was incomplete and contradictory, our confidence in its accuracy is not as high as we would like. Recent efforts to computerize misdemeanor court records, however, will greatly facilitate future research of this type.

A second area of difficulty in conducting the study resulted from the mobility of participants in both groups. Residential changes among study participants made it very difficult to keep track of each person over a relatively long period of time (i.e., 12 months or more) and resulted in the loss of some information.

A third important consideration in assessing program impact is related to the uniformity of program elements over time. During the study period, some services were added, subtracted and/or modified to meet unanticipated needs of offenders and the courts. For example, co-ed problem solving groups were initially offered. These groups were later modified and divided into separate programs for men and women to better meet individual needs of the clients. A Women Offenders Program began in the later half of the study period to meet the needs of women who had a pattern of criminal offenses and who had exhibited a self-destructive lifestyle. A Men's Domestic Abuse Program was also developed later in the study period for men coming through the court system for an assault against their partner. Counseling services, including Family Counseling, continued to be offered on a limited basis individually to clients who did not fit into the other programs. Civil/Legal Counseling was eliminated since there was not a demand for the service.

Two other programs were also developed. A Women's Domestic Abuse Program was started for women who were involved in abusive relationships. Petit Theft Groups were offered for women who shoplifted, but had a limited criminal history. Clients referred to these two programs however, were not included in the study.

A fourth factor to be considered in reviewing the research results is the potential significance of various changes in Ramsey County's procedures for assigning clients to probation officers. While the study was in progress, changes in the method of probation officer assignment resulted in somewhat more individualized attention to participants in both the comparison group and the study group. This may mean that correctional clients in both groups (rather than those in the CAP group only) received a higher level of service than would have been available before the study began. It is possible that this had the effect of increasing the likelihood of more successful outcomes for all study participants and reducing the likelihood of seeing measurable differences between the experimental treatment and control conditions.

A fifth and final consideration concerns the original design of the Community Assistance Program as a set of diverse services focusing attention on correctional clients over a long period of time. As the program has developed and responded to the needs of staff and clients in the correctional system, the program has become highly specialized and has developed many short term and highly focused programs. For example, a Children and Adolescent Program was started for children of clients from violent homes. A Support Group for Women Leaving Prostitution began for women who are currently, or have been, involved in prostitution. Men's Theft Groups were also added for men who shoplift and commit other property crimes, but have limited criminal histories. Parenting Groups were also added to work with those who have had a history of abusing children and those who are at risk of doing so in the future. Although these services were not available to clients during the study period, they underscore the basic shift in program direction within CAP during the study period. Clearly, evaluation of individual program components is more appropriate with this type of program design. Therefore, individual evaluations of each of CAP's service components have been initiated. The results of the first of these studies will become available in 1988.

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX I

Cumulative Convictions and Types of Crimes: Notes for Table 11

Note 1

CAP Client Felony Convictions-Cumulative

Burglary	4
Larceny	2
Motor Vehicle Theft	2
Forgery	8
Stolen Property	2
Narcotics	1
Damage to Property	<u>1</u>
Convictions	20

Note 2

Comparison Group Felony Convictions-Cumulative

Rape	1
Burglary	1
Larceny	2
Forgery	7
Stolen Property	1
Damage to Property	<u>1</u>
Convictions	13

Note 3

CAP Client Gross Misdemeanor Convictions-Cumulative

Prostitution-	
Commercialized Vice	1
Traffic-DWI	<u>2</u>
Convictions	3

Note 4

Comparison Group Gross Misdemeanor Convictions-Cumulative

Prostitution/	
Commercialized Vice	1
Traffic-DWI	<u>1</u>
Convictions	2

Note 5

CAP Client Misdemeanor Convictions-Cumulative

Assault	2
Larceny	21
Motor Vehicle Theft	2
Stolen Property	1
Damage to Property	4
Narcotics	2
Liquor Violation	1
Obstructing Police	1
Obstructing Judiciary	8
Public Peace	3
Traffic-DWI	7
Invasion of Privacy	7
Other Traffic and	
Motor Vehicle Violations	<u>9</u>
Convictions	68

Note 6

Comparison Group Misdemeanor Convictions-Cumulative

Assault	3
Larceny	6
Prostitution	
Commercialized Vice	1
Disturbing Public Peace	1
Traffic-DWI	1
Stolen Property	1
Damage to Property	1
Flight and Escape	1
Obstructing Judiciary	1
Invasion of Privacy	1
Other Traffic and	
Motor Vehicle Violations	<u>6</u>
Convictions	23

APPENDIX II

APPENDIX II
Agencies and Programs Using CAP Facilities

Alcoholics Anonymous	Ramsey County Community Corrections:
Bremer House	-Management and Supervision Meetings
Chrysalis	-Domestic Relations
Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter	-Community Services Unit
Minnesota Association of County Probation Officers (MACPO)	-Juvenile Division
Minnesota Association of Women in Criminal Justice (MAWCJ)	-Volunteers in Corrections
Minnesota Community Corrections Assn.	Ramsey County Corrections Advisory Board
-Executive Committee Meetings	Ramsey County Council on Abuse
-Board Meetings	Ramsey County Family Violence Coalition
-Training Sessions	Ramsey County Human Services
Minnesota Corrections Association	-Child Protection Unit
Minnesota Department of Corrections	-Ramsey County Chemical Dependency Advisory Group
-Management Team Meetings	Reentry Services, Inc.
-Ombudsman of Corrections	The Saint Paul Foundation
-VOCA Grant Team	St. Paul Intervention Project
People Working With Men Who Batter (PWMMWB)	St. Paul Urban League
Port of Rochester	St. Paul Youth Services Bureau
Project Remand, Inc.	Washington County Court Services