

TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES TO STREET CRIME

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SAMPLE
OF ARRESTED DENVER OPIATE ADDICTS

A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE FINDINGS
OF 282 ARRESTED OPIATE ADDICTS IDENTI-
FIED FROM 522 INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING
METHADONE DETOXIFICATION SERVICES AT
DENVER CITY JAIL DURING 1972.

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ACQUISITIONS

JERRY VARELA, TASC DIRECTOR
1737 GILPIN STREET
DENVER, COLORADO

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SUBMITTED BY:

THOMAS A. GIACINTI
PROF. PAUL KATSAMPES
CLAUS TJADEN
DENVER ANTI-CRIME COUNCIL
AND
JAMES C. WEISSMAN
TASC EVALUATION ANALYST

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INTRODUCTION

On May 8, 1973, the Denver Anti-Crime Council acted favorably upon the TASC (Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime) drug treatment proposal. The staffing process has been initiated, and on September 5, Jerry Varela was selected as TASC Director.

In an effort to provide TASC with preliminary baseline data, the Denver Anti-Crime Council undertook a data collection project in the spring of 1973. In 1972 a total of 522 individuals booked into Denver City Jail voluntarily requested methadone detoxification services. With the cooperation of the Denver Police Department and the Denver Sheriffs' Department, the records of 282 of the 522 individuals were analyzed, and some of the highlights of that research effort follow:

Demographic Characteristics

The vast majority of the sample (81.2%) is male. Racially, 41.9% are black, 30.0% are Spanish surname, 27.8% are Anglo, and 0.4% are American Indian.

	<u>RACE</u>	
	N	%
BLACK	116	41.9
SPANISH SURNAME	83	30.0
ANGLO	77	27.8
AMERICAN INDIAN	1	0.4

The age of the subjects range from fifteen (15) to fifty (50). The modal group (50.1%) consists of 19-25 year olds and the median age is 25.8 years. Only 23.9% of the sample is over 30 years old, a full 76.1% being under 30 years of age.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

AGE GROUP	N	RELATIVE %	CUMULATIVE %
15 - 18	15	5.3	5.3
19 - 25	131	46.9	52.2
26 - 30	67	23.9	76.1
31 - 35	40	14.1	96.2
36 - 50	27	9.8	100.0

First Arrest Data

Two out of every three subjects (66.6%) recorded their first arrest prior to age 18. The majority (53.4%) experienced their first recorded arrest during the ages of 16-18. Only 13.5% show first arrest at age 22 or older.

AGE AT FIRST ARREST

AGE GROUP	N	RELATIVE %	CUMULATIVE %
7 - 15	37	13.2	13.2
16 - 18	150	53.4	66.6
19 - 21	55	19.8	86.4
22 - 25	25	8.9	95.3
26 - 44	12	4.6	100.0

With respect to initial drug arrest, the age distribution differs substantially. The modal category is 18 21 (45.5%), but the majority (51.4%) recorded their first drug arrest at age 22 or older.

AGE AT FIRST DRUG ARREST

AGE GROUP	N	RELATIVE %	CUMULATIVE %
NO DRUG ARREST	10	3.5	3.5
13 - 18	56	19.5	23.0
19 - 25	151	64.5	87.5
26 - 50	63	22.5	100.0

ARREST DATA

Arrests were grouped for analytical purposes under the headings of drug arrests, theft arrests, burglary arrests, robbery arrests, assault arrests, prostitution arrests, sexual assault arrests, and public order arrests. The measure of Impact Crime arrests combined burglary, robbery, sexual assault, and assault arrests. Below are the compilations of those figures.

DRUG ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	1,459	95.7
CONVICTIONS	224	44.7

THEFT ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	692	71.3
CONVICTIONS	223	44.3

BURGLARY ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	480	172	61.0
CONVICTIONS	157	86	30.5

ROBBERY ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	238	128	45.4
CONVICTIONS	66	51	18.1

ASSAULT ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	438	108	38.3
CONVICTIONS	123	27	14.2

PUBLIC ORDER ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	375	146	51.8
CONVICTIONS	191	99	35.1

FEMALE PROSTITUTION ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	116	17	31.9
CONVICTIONS	UNK.	12	23.8

IMPACT CRIME ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	927	226	80.1
CONVICTIONS	271	132	46.8

TOTAL ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

	TOTALS	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS
ARRESTS	4,513	282	100.0
CONVICTIONS	1,303	257	91.1

DISCUSSION

Scrutiny of this data would seem to indicate that for this population of arrestees voluntarily requesting detoxification services at Denver City Jail in 1972, a substantial degree of criminal behavior can be found in their backgrounds. In the ensuing months TASC will screen many similar arrestees and attempt to place the appropriate candidates into the TASC treatment system. By identifying and treating opiate users involved in the criminal justice process, TASC seeks to arrest the documented cycle of drug use and repeated criminal behavior.

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