

There may be several reasons for the apparent success of this program. From the data collected here and information from previous research, three reasons seem of paramount importance.

First, the caseloads of the DDAP caseworkers are extremely low in comparison to normal probation officers. The DDAP workers average about 10 cases each. Regular probation officers in major urban areas have caseloads ranging from 50 to 150. Smaller caseloads typically result in more intensive supervision, and more intensive supervision means that caseworkers are constantly on top of things with regard to their clients. Indeed, with small caseloads, they can spend more quality time with their clients *in the field* (e.g., in their homes, on the street corners, at school) rather than endless hours in an office doing paperwork, on the phone, and doing other bureaucratic chores.

Second, DDAP is a program that is out of the mainstream of the juvenile justice system; that is, it is a true alternative rather than one of many bureaucratic extensions of the system. This means that normal bureaucratic restrictions do not generally apply. For example, the qualifications for being a caseworker with DDAP are not as strict as one might find within the juvenile justice system (e.g., age restrictions, educational requirements, arrest records, "street" experience, etc.). From casual observations of some of these caseworkers, this researcher was impressed with their dedication and passion to helping youth. Moreover, the backgrounds of these workers were similar to the backgrounds of some of their clients (e.g., similar race, neighborhood of origin, language, etc.).

Third, the physical location of DDAP seemed to this observer user friendly and lacked the usual macho appearance of the formal system. There are no bars, no concrete buildings, no devices for screening for weapons as one enters the building, no cells for lockdown, and so on. Further, the DDAP workers are not officers of the court with powers of arrest and the usual accoutrements of such occupations (e.g., badges, guns).

There could also be a possible fourth explanation, but one we can only speculate on at this time because we lack the data to draw such a conclusion. It could be that given the low caseloads, DDAP caseworkers are more likely than regular probation officers to be on top of the case, that is, to be in constant contact with the youth and thus be able to nip in the bud potential problems. Also, some police officers, when facing a possible arrest situation and learning that the youth is a DDAP case (presuming the officer knows about DDAP), may be in a position to contact the caseworker, who might be able to persuade the officer that the situation could be handled without a formal arrest. We have no way of knowing whether this occurs with any degree of regularity. Even if it did, such a procedure may be a positive sign because youths from more privileged backgrounds are often treated this way by the police if it is believed that someone in authority can handle the youth informally. Many youths have been saved the stigma of formal juvenile processing by such intervention by significant adults in their lives.

Since this evaluation was completed, DDAP has expanded into several new locations, notably in Baltimore; Washington, D.C.; and Philadelphia. An evaluation was conducted on the program in Philadelphia, also showing positive results (Feldman and Jubrin, 2002).

Evidence-Based Practices

the Rand Corporation conducted a study of what it called "evidence-based" programs that address the problem of gangs and youth violence. The programs they reviewed had been subjected to rigorous evaluation research (Greenwood, 2010). Space does not permit a complete discussion of each of these programs, so we will merely list them here. They are divided into the following categories:

- **Proven programs**—These are programs that have been subjected to rigorous evaluations that showed positive results. They include such programs as the Nurse Family Partnership, Functional Family Therapy, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, Aggression Replacement Training, and Multisystemic Therapy.
- **Proven strategies**—These include a group of generic strategies that have been shown via meta-analysis of evaluations to be successful in reducing recidivism. Among these are 25 specific strategies that include cognitive behavioral programs and various diversion programs.
- **Promising programs**—These are what the Rand study calls "brand name programs" that have been shown to be successful but have not been replicated. These include a total of 16 programs such as the Seattle Social Development Project (noted earlier) and Family Integrated Transitions.

The Rand study also included a list of programs that have been proven to be ineffective. Some examples include D.A.R.E., Guided Group Interaction, boot camps, intensive probation, Scared Straight, regular surveillance-oriented parole, and deterrence programs (intervention dramatizing the negative consequences of certain kinds of behavior).

BROAD-BASED NATIONAL STRATEGIES

Addressing the delinquency problem will require a national strategy; the problem is not just local in nature. More than 20 years ago, criminologist Elliot Currie (1989) suggested five general categories for a national strategy to address the general problem of crime. These are just as relevant today; the nine tenets detailed earlier urge similar reform.

1. **Early educational interventions**—These would include programs such as Head Start, based on the assumption that delinquency is related to poor school performance and dropping out, which in turn are related to a lack of preparedness for school, especially among lower-class minorities.
2. **Expanded health and mental health services**—Such services would focus on high-risk youths and include prenatal care and postnatal care. This is based on evidence that the most violent youths suffer from childhood traumas of the central nervous system, exhibit multiple psychotic symptoms, and have also experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse (see also Dryfoos, 1990).