

DTAP: Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison

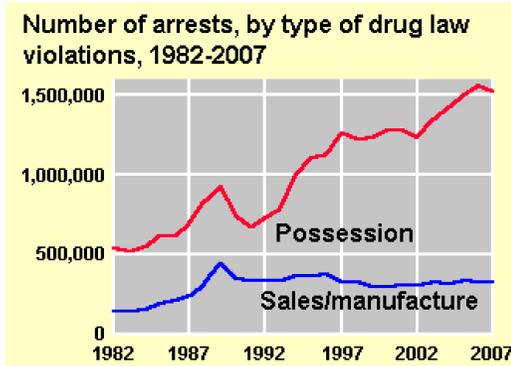
Policy Analysis

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Theory Evaluation

Recidivism in the United States is a major problem. The Bureau of Justice Statistics showed that “**66% prisoners** released across 24 states in 2008 were arrested within **3 years**, and 82% were arrested within 10 years.”

There are many more possession crimes than those of dealers yet are still charged as criminals even though they are addicts who need help.



Sources: Leonardo Antenangeli. (2019). *Recidivism of prisoners released in 24 states in 2008: A 10-year follow-up period (2008–2018)*. Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Graph: Enforcement. Bureau of Justice Statistics. (n.d.).

Implementation

Participants must be willing and want to participate in rehabilitation. They have the choice to not participate, or after entering the program, if they decide to leave, they finish the rest of their sentences defined by the court.

There are other eligibility criteria that must be met and if they are they are flagged by the District Attorney. “To be eligible to participate, defendants must be 18 years or older, currently charged with a felony, and have at least one prior felony. Defendants must also be addicted to drugs and in need of substance abuse treatment; the addiction should be a **contributing factor** in their criminal activities” (Youth.gov).

Sources: Drug treatment alternative to prison (DTAP). *Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison*. <https://youth.gov/content/drug-treatment-alternative-prison-dtap>.

Need Evaluation

DTAP’s system uses **structure, intervention, and flexibility** to meet nonviolent drug offenders where they are at in order to help them succeed towards goals of rehabilitation (Crime Solutions).

The intentions of DTAP are to reduce recidivism because once addiction is involved in the Criminal Justice System it is a repetitive cycle when drugs are the main factor behind the criminal activity.

This program also falls more in line with the intentions of prisons, one of those being rehabilitation, which really is not met within our current system (Fourth Purpose, 2019).

Sources: Fourth Purpose. (2019). 4 purposes of incarceration. *Fourth Purpose*. <https://4thpurpose.org/4-purposes/>.
Drug treatment alternative to prison (DTAP). *Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison*. <https://youth.gov/content/drug-treatment-alternative-prison-dtap>.

Continue and Expand

It is only available to the New York population now, but this policy analysis suggests that the policy should be continued and expanded.

There are a lot of pieces that allow this program to happen, District Attorney’s, the DTAP board, rehabilitation facilities. If it is expanded, it does require many positions to help things run smoothly.

It would provide more jobs within the Criminal Justice System; it did reduce recidivism by 15% comparatively to control groups **and saved \$47,836 per participant** allowing less money needed for overcrowded prisons and more being poured back into the state or helping pay to expand this program into other parts of the country (Zarkin, et al., 2005).

Sources: Zarkin, Gary A., Laura J. Dunlap, Steven Belenko, and Paul A. Dynia. 2005. “A Benefit–Cost Analysis of the Kings County District Attorney’s Office Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (DTAP) Program.” *Justice Research and Policy* 7(1):1–25.

Outcomes and Impact

Drug use in the United States is a large issue, from the war on drugs, the opioid epidemic, etc. It becomes difficult to seek help or often afford help, but many times drug users end up in the Criminal Justice System. “**53.4% of inmates** meet the criteria for drug abuse or dependence.” and more than 80% have used hard drugs (Belenko, et al., 2013).

One study done showed there was a **15% decrease** in recidivism rates (47% to 32%), and when looked at next to the cost efficiency could make a significant difference in incarceration and the amount of money spent simply on prisons in general (Dynia, & Sung, 2000).

Decreasing the recidivism rates is another goal of the prison system we have, deterrence. Preventing future crimes is a major goal of the Criminal Justice System that is not being achieved.

Sources: Belenko, S., Hiller, M., & Hamilton, L. (2013). Treating substance use disorders in the criminal justice system. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 15(11), 414. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-013-0414-z>

Cost Efficiency

“The comparison group incurred \$124,995 in criminal justice costs compared to \$36,441 incurred by all DTAP participants (completers and noncompleters). This translates into DTAP benefits (or cost savings) of \$88,554.” (Zarkin, et al. 2005).

DTAP saved **\$7.13 million dollars** within 6 years for just around 150 participants translating to just under \$50,000 per participant.

Sources: Zarkin, Gary A., Laura J. Dunlap, Steven Belenko, and Paul A. Dynia. 2005. “A Benefit–Cost Analysis of the Kings County District Attorney’s Office Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (DTAP) Program.” *Justice Research and Policy* 7(1):1–25.