



Program Evaluation Summary

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Peoria, St. Clair counties initiate Redeploy Illinois youth programs

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Redeploy Illinois programs, which provide community-based services in lieu of incarceration for non-violent juvenile felony offenders, have been successfully initiated in Peoria and St. Clair counties.

The Redeploy Illinois Public Act 093-0641, which took effect Dec. 31, 2003, offers counties funding for community-based services including education, recreation, community service, crisis and health intervention, and alternative forms of detention, for non-violent youth who would otherwise be committed to the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC).

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention research suggests that non-violent youth are less likely to be involved in subsequent delinquent behavior if they remain in their communities and receive appropriate services that

address their underlying needs. Community-based options for juvenile offenders also are generally less costly than institutional care in correctional facilities.

Redeploy Illinois programs are being implemented at four sites in Illinois: Macon County, the 2nd Judicial Circuit (serving Crawford, Edwards, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne, and White counties), Peoria County, and St. Clair County.

By accepting funds to provide community-based services to delinquent youth, Redeploy sites are obligated to reduce the number of youth IDOC commitments by 25 percent from the average number of commitments for the previous three years. The programs also must reduce juvenile recidivism for Redeploy Illinois participants, and reduce the level of disproportionate minority confinement.

This *Program Evaluation Summary* describes an evaluation of Peoria County and St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois programs. The evaluation was supported by a grant awarded to the Authority by the Illinois Department of Human Services and conducted by faculty from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Researchers evaluated each program's first year of operation with data available through April 2006.

Peoria County

Program development

The official start date for Redeploy Illinois was March 2005, but the actual delivery of services began July 2005. The program utilized six staff, including a clinical supervisor, an assessment worker, and four case managers.



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Peoria County’s successful program implementation and operation supplied community-based counseling, treatment alternatives, and services for juvenile offenders who otherwise would have been incarcerated.

Program implementation

In May 2005, potential Redeploy Illinois program participants were selected from among juvenile probationers in Peoria County. Qualifications for selection included non-violent youth with an elevated risk for IDOC commitment whose parents consented to their involvement in the program. After initial participant selection, probation officers continued to identify new probation participants in their caseloads. Referrals to the program also included new cases at the discretion of the Juvenile Court judge. From June 2005 to March 2006, though 61 youth had been officially enrolled in the Redeploy Illinois program, a total of 68 youth received services, seven having been referred by the Children’s Home Association of Illinois, a local social service agency. Of these, 83 percent were black and 82 percent were male.

Services provided

All Redeploy Illinois participants were placed for 21 days in the Youth Farm, a private residential facility, and received psychological assessment and drug screening. To set goals for the youth and family, all participants received an individualized family service plan provided by the Children’s Home Association of Illinois. The plan was based on intensive interviews, observations, and research into the individual’s school, mental health, and social and family history gathered from schools, hospitals, family members, and relevant individuals.

All juveniles participated in aggression replacement training, which uses a curriculum to teach pro-social behavior, anger control, and moral reasoning. Each participant was assigned a caseworker from the Children’s Home Association of Illinois, who had contact with the youth at least three times per week. Caseworkers conducted curfew checks and school visits, provided intensive case management, and offered services such as competency building, life skills, counseling, and mentoring.

Figure 1 depicts the number of Redeploy Illinois participants engaged in the types of services available. Most youth received multiple services. The average length of time youth were in the program was 179 days, and 20 cases had been successfully discharged from the program at the end of the evaluation period.

Figure 1

Number of youth participants in services of Peoria County Redeploy Illinois Program

Type of service	Number of participants
Individual counseling	67
Family counseling	56
Psychological evaluations	25
Drug treatment	32
Anger replacement therapy	37
Service to family	59
Community supervision	30
Collateral contacts and referrals	67
Total	68

Program alignment with the Act

The Redeploy Illinois Act sets two goals for counties utilizing its funds for programs. One goal is that the county limit its commitments to 25 percent of the level of commitments from the average number of juvenile commitments for the past three years. The average number of juvenile commitments to IDOC from Peoria County for the years 2001 through 2003 was 78. In 2005, after implementation of the Redeploy program, the number of commitments fell by 37 percent to 49, well below the 25 percent reduction required.

Another goal set by the Act is to reduce the level of disproportionate minority confinement. The percentage of minority youth in Peoria County’s program was higher than the percentage of minority youth committed to IDOC in 2005. This suggests that Redeploy Illinois in Peoria County may have an impact on disproportionate minority confinement.

St. Clair County

Program development

The Redeploy Illinois program in St. Clair County began in July 2005. The St. Clair County Youth Coalition, consisting of more than 100 community stakeholders and youth service providers, oversaw the program. The Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois, a local social service agency, provided program delivery and implementation. Other agencies also offered services, including the Lessie

Figure 2

Number of youth participants in services of St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois Program

Type of service	Number of participants
Multi-systemic therapy	9
Functional family therapy	9
Aggression replacement therapy	6
Domestic violence	16
Program for reshaping adolescent sexual repression	2
Individual therapy	10
Victimization counseling	3
Mental health	29
Substance related	41
Education/workforce training	18
Recreation therapy	17
Supervision/monitoring	20
Total	37

Bates Davis Neighborhood House, Kid’s Hope United, and Cahokia Park United Methodist Church. A court liaison was hired to assist youth and their families during court proceedings and make service referrals.

The successful implementation of St. Clair County’s Redeploy Illinois program was due in part to the working relationship existing between the two key stakeholders—St. Clair County Youth Coalition and Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois.

Program implementation

From July 2005 to April 2006, 37 participants, 70 percent of whom were male, 52 percent of whom were black, and 46 percent of whom were white, were accepted in the St. Clair program. Unlike Peoria County, other youth not officially in the Redeploy program but referred to it by probation or other agencies (not court-ordered), benefited by being allowed to utilize Redeploy services.

Services provided

All youth referred were required to undergo a 30-day assessment, during which they were generally remanded to

custody in the St. Clair County Detention Center. Each youth was matched with a Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois caseworker within 24 hours of referral to the Redeploy Illinois program. The caseworker completed the assessment process by gathering information relating to each participant’s school, mental health, social, and family history from relevant sources and assessment tools.

To set goals for the youth and family, each participant received a case plan provided by Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois. After 30 days, assessment of the youth and the case plan were submitted to the judge to determine whether the youth would be accepted into the Redeploy program.

More than 30 different services were available to participants. *Figure 2* depicts the number of Redeploy Illinois participants engaged in certain types of services available. The majority of youth received multiple services, some within the same type of service.

Services included multi-systemic therapy, an intensive, community-based treatment that helps families address indicators of potentially serious antisocial behavior in their child; functional family therapy, a prevention and intervention program for youth with maladaptive behaviors; and aggression replacement training, using a curriculum to teach youth pro-social behavior, anger control, and moral reasoning.

Six cases were successfully discharged and three were unsuccessfully discharged from the program at the end of the evaluation period. Cases successfully discharged complied with all program recommendations and requirements.

Program alignment with the Act

The Illinois Department of Human Services allowed St. Clair County to use a baseline of 90 juvenile commitments, the number of commitments in 2004, rather than the average number of commitments to IDOC for the past three years. Because the St. Clair program had not completed a full state fiscal year of operation to compare with IDOC commitment data, researchers could not determine whether the program met this goal.

Recommendations

Following is a summary of recommendations provided by evaluators of the Peoria County and St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois programs.

Planning and implementation

Potential pitfalls await sites that are not ready at the beginning of the program funding period. Without time for planning, sites will not be prepared to begin intake and assessment in a short time frame. All Redeploy Illinois sites should continue to develop connections and increase program stability. Key administrative staff should be retained, and a program leader should be designated. This individual should be a motivator and innovator, and guide day-to-day operations, foster communication, and serve as a base of support.

Successful Redeploy Illinois sites should give recognition to their program staff and agencies, and share their success stories and practices. Each Redeploy site should measure program performance through internal and external evaluations, and should continually update job descriptions and offer training. The sites should consider how to sustain the Redeploy Illinois program if state funding is no longer provided. Finally, sites should agree on the program's target population as guided by the Redeploy Illinois Public Act.

Services

When appropriate, Redeploy Illinois sites should use services deemed effective or promising, but should take steps to avoid the modification of program components by service providers, and other inconsistencies in program delivery. When current strategies seem unsuitable for the program population, other evidence-based strategies should be considered.

IDOC commitments

Redeploy Illinois sites should share IDOC commitment data with the board overseeing Redeploy Illinois and with external evaluation teams on a quarterly basis. In addition to meeting the IDOC reduction goal of 25 percent, sites should track the program's impact on long-term behavior, including recidivism, technical violations, and resulting sanctions on disproportionate minority confinement, and on actual cost savings.

Redeploy recidivism

Sites should examine factors that contribute to both the success and failure of program participants. Staff members should discuss barriers to program service delivery and participation problems at the referral stage. Periodic checks need to be made of juvenile and adult records of those who complete the program to evaluate its success. Additionally, further research is needed to examine data

on Redeploy Illinois participants as compared to court-involved juveniles.

Disproportionate minority confinement

To reduce the incarceration of minorities, a large proportion of Redeploy participants should be minorities, and their numbers in the program should continue to be monitored.

Cost savings

Cost savings realized by Redeploy Illinois need to be based on a review of the number of juvenile commitments to IDOC, the length of time of commitments, and the costs of commitments, including costs of evaluation and treatment services.

Conclusion

Peoria County's program met goals outlined in the Redeploy Illinois Public Act regarding reductions in IDOC commitments, appeared to lower disproportionate minority confinement ratios, and exceeded the goal of achieving a 25 percent reduction in IDOC commitments. St. Clair County's program also appears to be on track to achieve the 25 percent IDOC commitment reduction. The Redeploy Illinois programs in the two counties made changes in the juvenile justice system which indicate positive outcomes for juveniles and their families.



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The Peoria County and St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois evaluation was conducted by Gaylene S. Armstrong, Ph.D., Todd A. Armstrong, Ph.D., and Vince J. Webb, Ph.D.

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