

The Compiler

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

Fall 1996

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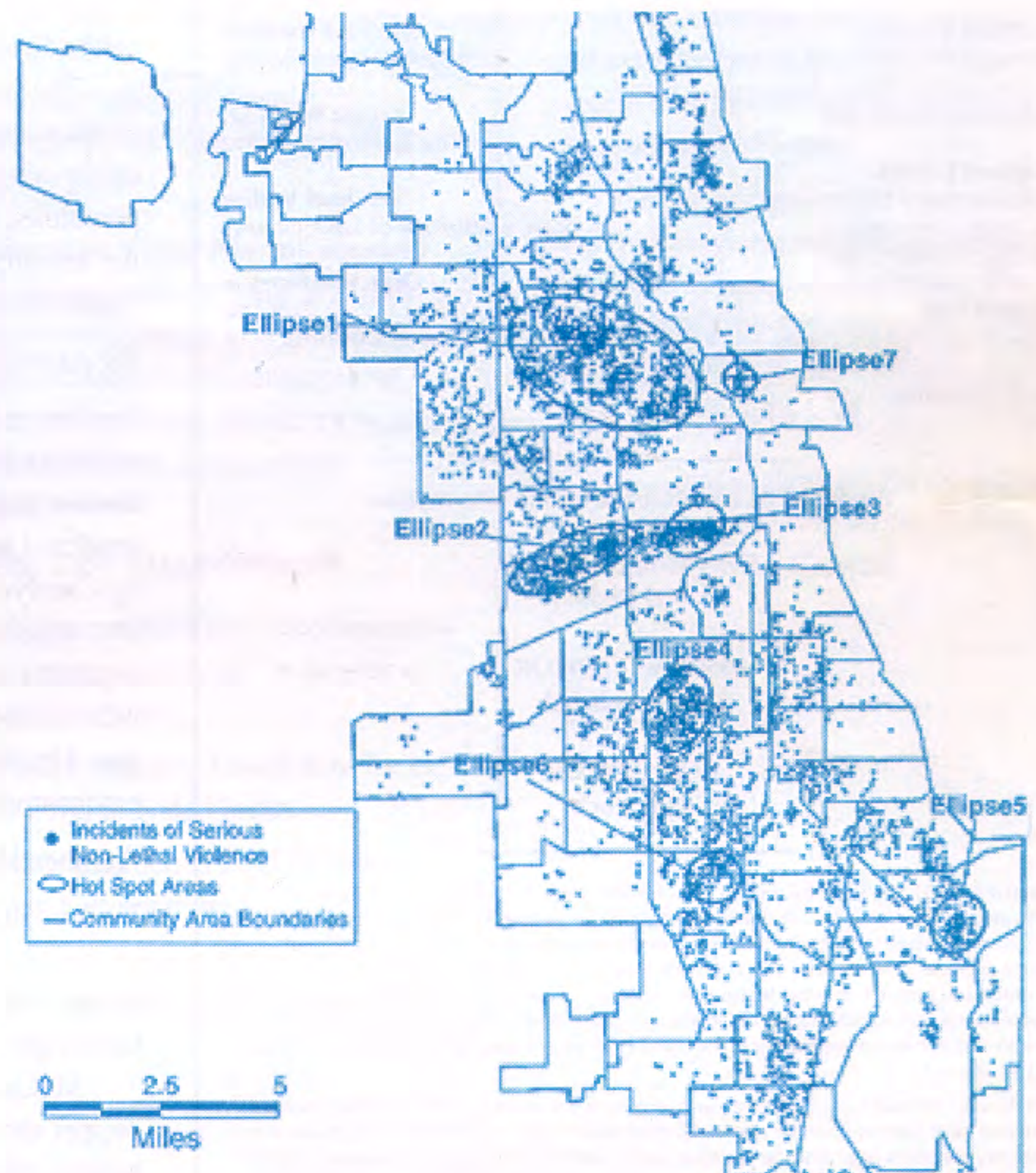
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Developed by the Authority using Chicago Police Department data, this map shows "Hot Spot Areas" of gang-motivated violence in Chicago between 1987 and 1994.

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Created in 1983, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is a state agency dedicated to improving the administration of criminal justice. The Authority works to enhance the information tools and management resources of state and local criminal justice agencies, and it serves as a statewide forum for criminal justice coordination, planning and problem solving. It also is responsible for research, information systems development and administration of federal anti-crime funds. The Authority's specific powers and duties are spelled out in the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act [20 ILCS 3930/1 et seq.].

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is governed by a 15-member board of state and local leaders from the criminal justice system, plus experts from the private sector. Authority members help develop priorities and monitor their progress. The agency's day-to-day work is carried out by a full-time professional staff working out of the Authority's Chicago office.

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Authority seeks block grant proposals

The Authority is seeking requests for proposals from law enforcement agencies that were not funded directly by the federal government under the Local Law Enforcement Grant Program.

The Authority will distribute about \$1.1 million in federal block grant money, out of the \$24 million total that Illinois received for the 1996 fiscal year. Most of the block grant money was directly distributed to jurisdictions by the federal government based on a formula that considered population and crime rates. Areas that qualify for funding include the hiring of additional officers, overtime pay, equipment and crime prevention programs.

Domestic violence risk assessment

The National Institute of Justice has awarded the Authority a two-year grant for a risk assessment study on domestic violence in Chicago. The study will be a collaboration of Chicago medical, public health and criminal justice agencies and will be directed by Carolyn Rebecca Block, Ph.D., a senior research analyst at the Authority.

The participants will seek to identify factors that place women abused by a male intimate partner in danger of life-threatening injury or death. The findings will be used to give field-level personnel, such as police officers and clinical staff, information for developing collaborative strategies to identify and intervene in potentially life-threatening intimate violence situations.

Firearms study

The Joyce Foundation has approved a two-year grant of \$72,753 to the Authority to analyze the relationship in Chicago between firearm homicides and firearm availability at the neighborhood level and by specific types of firearms. The study will be directed by Carolyn Rebecca Block.

Based in Chicago, the Joyce Foundation supports people and organizations working to improve the quality of life in the Midwest, particularly for people with fewer resources and opportunities. The foundation focuses on education, employment, environment, gun violence, money and politics, and culture.

Authority takes crime dog to the state fair

Visitors to this year's Illinois State Fair may have felt a little safer with a 37-foot "McGruff the Crime Dog" watching over the event. The cold-air balloon was an eye-catching and popular feature at the Authority's exhibit at the fair, which ran Aug. 9-18.

McGruff also starred in an Authority-produced video and in puppet shows that ran six times daily during the fair — with a helping hand from Steve Finnegan of Finnegan's Rainbow of Fun. Additionally, children and families had Polaroid portraits taken with McGruff and Authority staff distributed approximately 10,000 "Play it Safe" balloons.

The Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council gave a demonstration of vehicle glass etching as a deterrent to vehicle theft. The exhibit included a car door and window glass etched with the vehicle's identification number. A popular feature was an exhibit

identifying the "top ten" stolen vehicles in Illinois.

The council also sponsored a car stripping demonstration on Aug. 17. The demonstration illustrated to some 400 to 500 spectators how quickly a vehicle can be stolen and dismantled by auto thieves.

Other highlights included self-defense demonstrations, which were conducted four times each day by David and Judy Smith of the Kifaru Academy of Martial Arts in Rochester. Representatives of the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault distributed information and invited children to "decorate a hand" to signify taking a pledge against violence.



Photo by Candice Kane

McGruff the "Crime Dog" stands tall at the Authority's state fair exhibit. Token Daniels hands out balloons.

Criminology conference set for Chicago

The annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology for 1996 will be held at the Downtown Marriott Hotel in Chicago from Nov. 20-23. The conference will offer approximately 450 panel sessions and six plenaries will be held on topics ranging from criminological theory to drug policy.

In a related note, Carolyn Rebecca Block has been elected as an executive counselor of the ASC. She will serve a three-year term beginning at the close of the 1996 annual meeting.

New publications available from the Authority

The Authority has recently published the *Street Gangs and Crime* research bulletin. The Authority's Research and Analysis Unit analyzed patterns and trends in gang crime activity using the best data available in Illinois. The data capture information on every gang-related homicide from 1965 to 1994, as well as every nonlethal gang-related criminal incident from 1987 to 1994 recorded by the Chicago Police Department.

While Chicago may not necessarily be representative of other communities in Illinois, the analysis provides a framework for understanding street gang crime in greater detail than ever before. Among the findings:

- Lethal street gang violence has increased in recent years;
- The risk of becoming either a victim or offender in gang-related homicide peaks between the ages of 15 and 19;
- Street gangs tend to specialize in either violence or entrepreneurial activities, and most street gang violence involves intergang conflicts; and
- The age of offenders in gang-related homicide and nonlethal drug offenses is declining.

Other new publications available from the Authority:

- ◆ *Illinois Strategy to Control Drug and Violent Crime FFY 96, June 1996*
- ◆ *Illinois Probation Intake Study, July 1996*
- ◆ *A Review of Incarcerated Illinois Class 4 Felony Offenders: Are Alternative Sanctions Appropriate? July 1996*
- ◆ *Results of the 1995 Illinois Drug Use Forecasting Study, July 1996*
- ◆ *The Implementation and Impact of Illinois PreStart Program: A Final Report, July 1996*

For copies, please contact the Authority at 312/793-8550.

Turnbaugh honored by IABC

Kristi Turnbaugh, public information officer at the Authority, was recently honored by the Chicago chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators for her feature writing for the winter/spring 1995 issue of *The Compiler*. The issue focused on alternatives to incarceration in Cook County.

For this year's IABC/Chicago Spectra competition, 127 entries were received; Turnbaugh's award of merit was one of only 23 given out. Another 25 entries received an Award of Excellence. Judging was done by communicators in San Francisco, Dallas and St. Louis. The competition included submissions from some of the largest corporations, consultancies and agencies in the Chicagoland area. ■

The violence of street gangs

The gang is a conflict group. It develops through strife and thrives on warfare.

In its struggle for existence a gang has to fight hostile groups to maintain its play privileges, its property rights and the physical safety of its members. Its status as a gang among gangs, as well as in the neighborhood and the community, must also be maintained, usually through its prowess in a fight.

Gang warfare is usually organized on a territorial basis. Each group becomes attached to a local area which it regards as peculiarly its own and through which it is dangerous for members of another gang to pass.

— From *The Gang*, by Frederic M. Thrasher, 1927

Thrasher's landmark study of Chicago street gangs in the 1920s illustrates that the problem is not a new one on the urban landscape. Delinquency, property crime and violence are well documented in Thrasher's study of 1,313 gangs, which were conservatively estimated to have some 25,000 members.

Patterns of gang activity have hardly changed in 70 years. With few exceptions, most gangs continue to be ethnic minorities and, often, recent immigrants. Illegal enterprise continues to be a major activity — with drug dealing replacing bootlegging. And territory remains an integral part of a gang's identity.

What has changed dramatically is the level and scope of

Much of the information in this article was taken from the Chicago Homicide Dataset, and the *Street Gangs and Crime* research bulletin, written by researchers Carolyn Rebecca Block, Ayad Jacob and Antigone Christakos at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

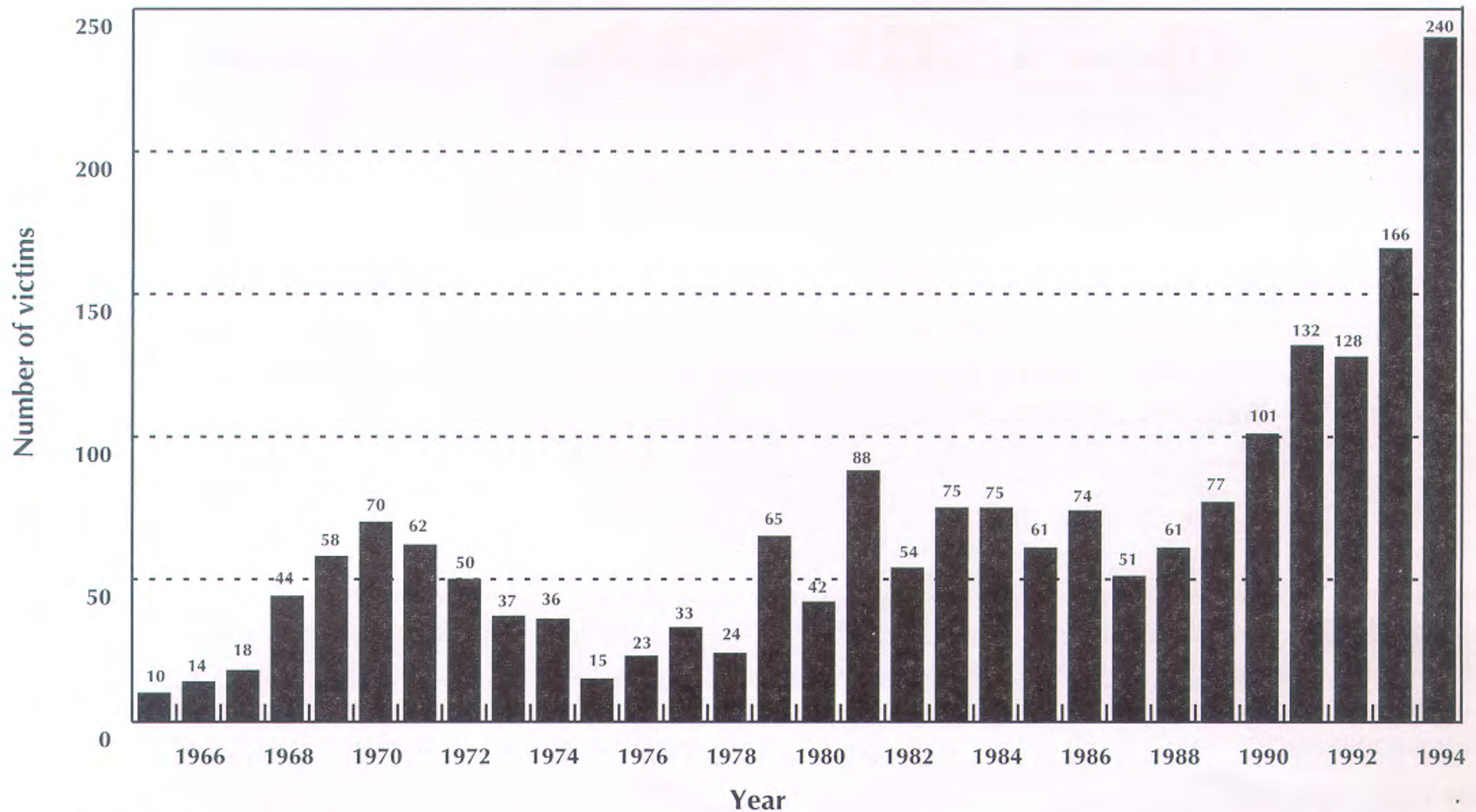
violence. The gang battles today are increasingly fought with powerful semiautomatic weapons fired recklessly by younger and younger shooters. These weapons have raised the stakes of gang warfare and taken a sad toll on innocent bystanders.

Another recent change to the picture is that gangs are no longer confined to urban areas. In a 1995 survey in Illinois by the Institute for Intergovernmental Research, 197 of the 229 responding law enforcement agencies reported having gang problems.

The extent of lethal gang violence in Chicago can be seen through statistics compiled by researchers at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. The Chicago Homicide Dataset has been compiled in close cooperation with the Chicago Police Department and contains detailed information on all homicides in the city from 1965 to the present. Authority researchers have also documented the pattern of all gang-related criminal offenses in Chicago from 1987 to 1994.

According to the Homicide Dataset, the number of gang-related killings did not exceed 100 in a given year until 1990. But the violence escalated rapidly in the early 1990s; in 1994, 240

Gang-motivated homicides in Chicago, 1965-1994



Source: Chicago Homicide Dataset

gang-related killings were recorded in Chicago. The number of street gang homicides increased almost 30 percent from 1992 to 1993, and jumped nearly 45 percent from 1993 to 1994.

Violence among gangs is responsible for an increasing proportion of the homicides committed in Chicago and contributed significantly to the overall increase in homicides. In 1987, incidents of gang homicide accounted for 7 percent of all homicides, but by 1994 gang homicides accounted for 26 percent of homicides.

Much of the violence in the early 1990s was attributable to rivalries among some of the largest African-American street gangs in the city. The Black Disciples and the Black Gangster Disciples battled over territory, and intra-gang conflicts broke out among various factions of the Vice Lords. Violence also increased among Hispanic street gangs, such as the Latin Kings and Latin Disciples.

Increasing role of firearms in lethal attacks

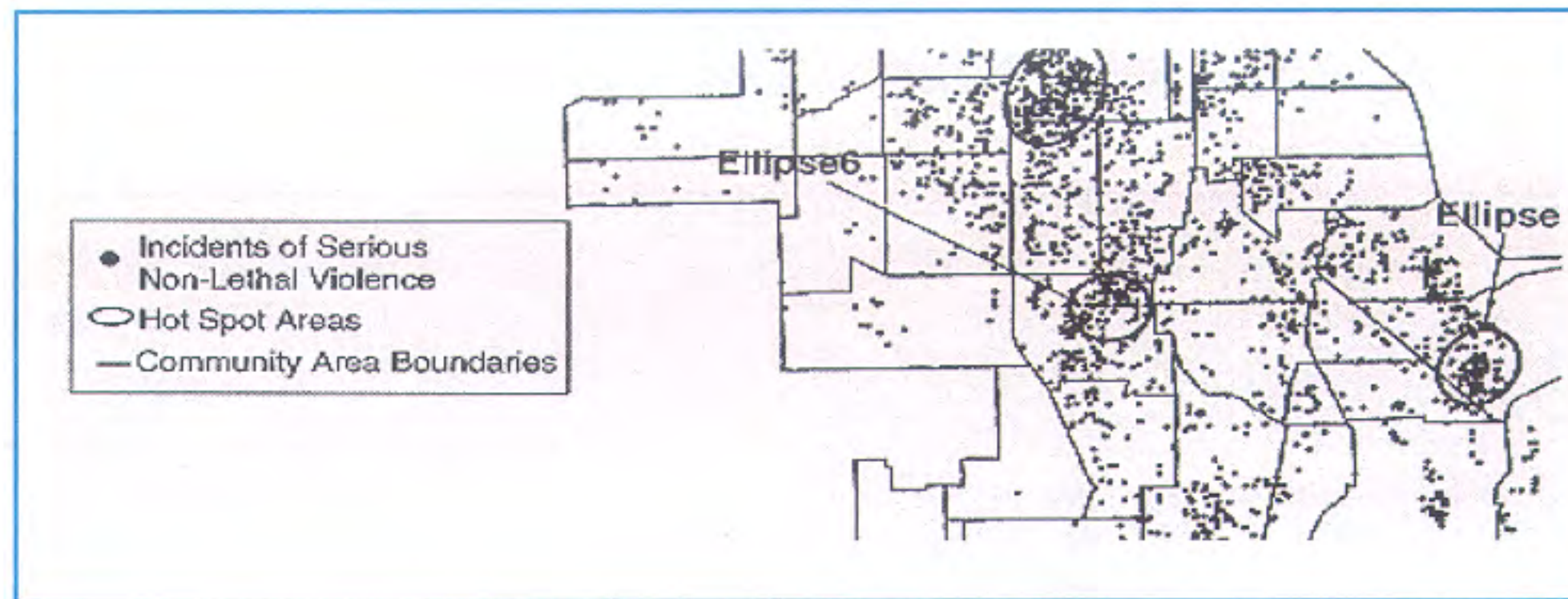
Guns played a prominent role in most gang assaults. Between 1987 and 1994 in Chicago, firearms were used in 96 percent of all street gang homicides, 51 percent of aggravated batteries and 70 percent of aggravated assaults. An automatic or semiautomatic weapon was used in 47 percent of street gang-related ho-

micides. Of the 240 gang-related homicides in 1994, all but eight were committed with firearms.

According to *the Street Gangs and Crime* research bulletin, during most of the 30-year period covered by the Chicago Homicide Dataset the use of semiautomatic or fully automatic firearms was relatively rare in street gang homicides. The weapon most frequently used was a handgun, usually a .38 or lower caliber. Beginning in 1991, however, the weapon of choice began to change, and most of the huge increase in deaths from 1990 to 1994 is attributed to the use of semiautomatic and automatic weapons. From 1987 to 1994 the use of semiautomatic or automatic weapons in street gang-related homicides jumped from 11 to 150.

The research also shows that the age of offenders involved in street gang killings is declining. Over the 30 year period of the Homicide Dataset, 29 offenders between the ages of 10 and 14 were involved in street gang homicides. But of these, 25 of the homicides, or 86 percent, occurred between 1991 and 1994. The data suggests, according to the researchers, that the greater use of semiautomatic and automatic weapons has contributed to the increase in lethal attacks by younger street gang offenders.

More than 75 street gangs were identified as being involved at least once in the 63,141 street gang-related criminal offenses



Maps depicting “Hot Spot Areas” of gang-related violence are part of the Early Warning System, which was developed by the Authority to help police and communities identify and address crime problems.

in Chicago from 1987 to 1994. But responsibility for the bulk of those offenses rested with a small number of large gangs. The Black Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords and Latin Kings were responsible for more than half of Chicago’s street gang offenses during that time.

Early warning system

To help police and other agencies better address the gang problem, the Authority developed two tools for identifying and predicting gang violence. The first tool is the GeoArchive, a database of community and law enforcement information that can be used to plot gang activity. The other tool is the Spatial and Temporal Analysis of Crime software package. STAC locates clusters of criminal activity by automating such analytical functions as time-of-offense data analysis and manual pin mapping. Used with mapping technology, the GeoArchive and STAC help create a computerized pin map that can be used for law enforcement planning and strategy.

Together, these tools make up the Early Warning System for Street Gang Violence. The system is designed to help identify hot spots of gang activity and provide information that will assist with community, problem-oriented policing. Ideally, the information will help prevent a further escalation of violence through the use of crisis intervention and dispute mediation involving community resources and law enforcement.

The Early Warning System is currently helping community policing efforts in the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction Project, which is featured in this issue of *The Compiler*.

Also examined in this issue is a project at the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office that uses long-term investigations to go after upper-echelon gang leaders. Attorney General Jim Ryan discusses the work of the Governor’s Commission on Gangs,

and points out the need for a comprehensive approach to gangs that combines tough law enforcement with prevention and intervention measures. The feature stories conclude with a profile of the Homework Hangout project in Decatur, an after-school program that provides an alternative to gangs and drugs. ■

—Daniel Dighton

The street gang

The Chicago Police Department defines a “street gang” as an ongoing organization, association or group of three or more people, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more criminal acts. A gang is further defined as having a common name or common identifying sign, symbol or specific color apparel displayed, and members who individually or collectively engage in, or have engaged in, a pattern of criminal activity.

Program uses team approach to reach hard-core gang members

Rate of increase in violence is reduced in Chicago's Little Village

By Daniel Dighton

Armed with 10 gallons of paint from the local alderman's office, a half-dozen gang members dip their rollers and swab over the graffiti defacing nearly every fence and garage in an alley near Sacramento Avenue and 24th Street in Chicago's Little Village.

The graffiti, which is essentially territorial markings and largely the work of "shorties," or the younger gang members, was not done by an opposing gang. The teenagers mixing the white and brown paint in the alley on this overcast July morning are members of the Latin Kings, and the spray-painted words and symbols are their own. A police officer standing nearby wryly points out one youth painting over his own name.

The event was one of several periodic graffiti "paint-overs" arranged by an unlikely team made up of two Chicago police officers, three Cook County adult probation officers, a professor from the University of Chicago, and five community youth workers, some of whom are former gang members themselves.

These are the core members of the Gang Violence Reduction Project, which this summer concluded its fourth year under a federal grant administered by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. The University of Chicago's role will be phased out in January, and organizers view this period as a transitional one, hoping that the program will be maintained by local government agencies and community organizations.

Problem solving approach to gang violence

The driving force behind the Gang Violence Reduction Project is Dr. Irving Spergel, a professor in the School of Social Service Administration and the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago, who has studied gangs for nearly 40 years. The program is based on Spergel's belief that the best way to curb gang violence is by blending law enforcement and social ser-

vices into a problem-solving approach that targets hard-core gang members, generally those between the ages of 17 and 24 who have committed violent acts.

Since it began in July 1992, the Gang Violence Reduction Project has worked with more than 200 hard-core gang members in Little Village in an effort to reduce the level of gang violence in the area. The program helps gang members get access to social opportunities such as school, remedial education, job training and jobs.

It also attempts to connect gang members with community social services such as crisis intervention and personal and family counseling.

"We want to penetrate that world and move these kids away, and help them become productive citizens," Spergel said.

In concert with the social assistance is the effort to suppress violence, which includes gathering information on gang activity, closely monitoring and supervising targeted youths, and making arrests for criminal activity.



Photo by Daniel Dighton

Chicago Police Officer Ray Caballero, left, and Cook County Probation Officer Tim Flanagan watch a youth worker paint over gang graffiti on a garage door in Little Village.

Emphasis on community-oriented policing

Much of the work the police and probation officers do is community-oriented. Painting over graffiti or moving a group of kids off a street corner are activities that improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. Rather than just reacting to incidents, the police are getting involved with young people and trying to steer them away from crime.

"Here's cops helping guys stay out of trouble. Helping them



Photo by Daniel Dighton

A youth worker and a gang member paint over graffiti as part of the Gang Violence Reduction Project in Little Village.

get jobs, with school, playing softball, and busting them if need be. It's phenomenal," said Tom Fashing, a probation officer who has been with the project for two years.

"It helps these guys see we're not all bad. But if you're a criminal and you do a crime, we're still the police and you're going to go to jail," said Gene Schleder, a tactical unit police officer who, along with his partner, Ray Caballero, has been with the project from the beginning.

Since their job is geared toward prevention and working with the community, the police do not have arrest quotas. But that doesn't mean they are any less inclined to go after criminals and solve crimes. Caballero said the information they gather through their contacts with the probation officers and with people on the street makes them even more effective in making arrests. The two officers have arrested about 15 people on murder charges since the program's inception. "Without this program we never would have been able to do that," Caballero said.

Youth workers are essential ingredient

The community youth workers are perhaps the most unique and essential part of the program. They are the ones in direct contact with gang members, and who also work directly with the police and probation officers. They are likely to be the ones who help gang members get to job interviews or into training programs. Youth workers rounded up gang members for the graffiti paint-over and organized a softball game, with police supervision, between rival gangs. Despite recent killings involving the gangs, the softball game went well and everyone got

Gang project's team effort is unique

The close working relationship between the two police and three probation officers assigned full time to the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction Project is unprecedented in Chicago.

"The biggest key here has been the ability of the probation officers to communicate and work with the Chicago Police Department, along with the outreach workers and community and civic workers," said Tom Fashing, an officer with Gang Intervention Unit of the Cook County Adult Probation Department.

The probation officers are involved

"There's very few policemen that ever meet a probation officer."

— Sgt. Frank Hughes

in a lot of social service-related work and counseling. But they also carry weapons, perform law enforcement duties and back up the police. The two groups regularly exchange information, both informally on

the street and through regular meetings and reports.

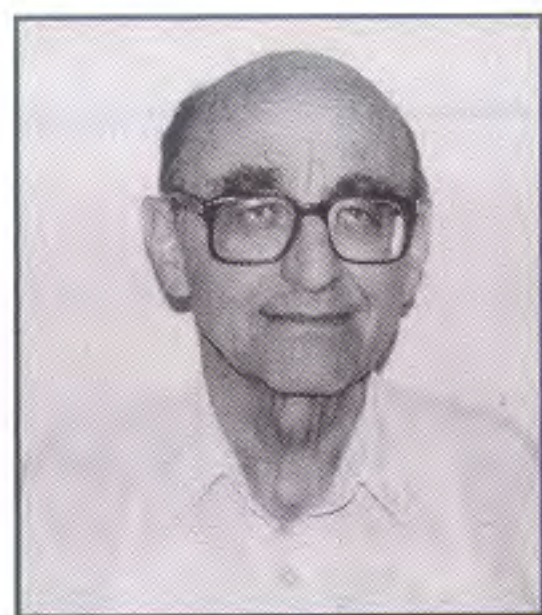
"It's helped us do our job better," said Tim Flanagan, the supervisor for the probation officers with the gang project.

"There's very few policemen that ever meet a probation officer," said Sgt. Frank Hughes, neighborhood relations sergeant with the Chicago Police Department and supervisor of the two tactical officers assigned to the gang project in Little Village. "I like the teamwork they have."

The level of cooperation and coor-

along, Spergel noted.

The youth workers, their supervisor and Spergel meet each week at Spergel's office at the University of Chicago to go over schedules, talk about any problems the workers are having and arrange special activities, such as the softball games. The group keeps in contact by phone virtually every day.



Spergel

Every two weeks the youth workers, Spergel and representatives from Neighbors Against Gang Violence meet with the police and probation officers in an office rented by the Probation Department on 26th Street in the heart of Little Village. The meetings typically focus on recent gang violence and other activity in the community. It is an opportunity to exchange information and compare notes.

At a recent meeting the youth workers said they expected a retaliation for a recent gang shooting. They also pointed out recent problems they have had in getting access to a school gymnasium that is supposed to be available for basketball on certain days during the summer. There also was talk of another softball game between the Two-Six and Latin Kings.

Ties to the community

All of the youth workers grew up in the community, and some used to be gang members. Two have college degrees. Their close relationship with the gangs and cooperation with police is a walk on a tightrope. It can be tricky balancing the link to law enforce-

ment while keeping the trust of gang members, and the arrangement does not always succeed. Workers have been fired from the project after a few months because they remained too close to the gangs and criminal activity, or because they became too close to the police and lost the trust of the gangs.

"All along, I've said this is the hardest part of the problem, this is the hardest job," probation gang unit supervisor Tim

"All these indicators show that there's been a statistically significant relative or absolute decline in gang violence."

— Irving Spergel

Flanagan said of the community youth workers.

As essential as they are to the program, the youth workers will be one of the most difficult elements to keep in the transition after the federal money runs out. Currently, the youth workers are supervised by Spergel and are paid an hourly wage through the project's federal funds. It is unclear where the

dination is enhanced by the fact that the officers do not have to meet arrest quotas, and the structure helps avoid rivalries that frequently exist between agencies, Hughes said.

The police officers have found that working with probation officers gives them more flexibility and more ways of reaching the gang members, said Gene Schleder, one of two tactical unit police officers assigned to the gang project. The coordination gives them more tools to control gang activity, such as enforcing curfews for youths on probation, information they would not be privy to without talking to probation officers.

"The whole idea of this thing is a team approach. We're hitting these guys from every angle we can,"

Schleder said.

Probation officers good fit for gang intervention

According to Flanagan, the dual role that probation officers have as social workers and enforcers of court orders makes them particularly well suited to working with gangs. They can apply different degrees of monitoring and supervision depending on the circumstances of a particular case and whether they are dealing with hardcore gang members or fringe members. Since they also serve as counselors and social workers, much of their work involves things like helping kids get back in school or find a job.

"I've always said probation is a real good fit for working with the gangs because we have some flexibility,"

Flanagan said.

One of the major snags in the team approach of the gang project is the division between adult and juvenile probation that exists in Illinois. Confidentiality laws prohibit the sharing of information on juveniles — youths under the age of 17. Adult and juvenile probation officers may have cases with the same family, but they don't work together. There also is the fact that the younger kids who are increasingly involved in serious and violent crimes will soon be adults. So coordination between adult and juvenile probation officers early on makes sense, Fashing said.

"We need legislation so that we can have some kind of mutual ground to service these kids," he said. ■

— D.D.

money will come from to pay them after January.

One problem with the transition is that programs at community social agencies, such as Neighbors Against Gang Violence in Little Village, are geared more toward prevention and intervention. They tend to target a younger age range and focus more on families.

“If we lose the youth workers then it’s going to go back to straight law enforcement. We would go back to tactical teams and having quotas for arrests,” Schleder said.

Little Village

Located southwest of Chicago’s Loop, Little Village is predominately made up of Mexican immigrants. It is home to two major gangs, the Latin Kings, with about 1,200 members, and the Two-Six, which has about 800 members. According to Spergel, about one third of the members in each gang are hard-core — meaning they are heavily involved in gang activity, which often involves violence. The rivalry goes back at least 15 years, and together, the two gangs account for about 70 percent of the serious gang violence in the area.

The Latin Kings are the largest and oldest Hispanic street

Gang-related offenses

The Chicago Police Department determines whether an offense was street gang-related based upon the motive of the offender. An incident is street gang-related if the evidence indicates that the action grew out of a street gang function. Gang membership by itself is not enough. Police associate the following functions with gangs.

- Representing: Refers to displays of gang identification or alliance, such as hand signals, clothing and language.
- Recruitment: Offenses relating to recruiting members for a street gang, including intimidating a victim or witness.
- Extortion: Efforts to compel membership or to exact tribute for the gang.
- Turf violation: Offenses committed to show disrespect for another gang’s territory.
- Prestige: Offenses committed either to glorify the street gang or to gain rank within the gang.
- Personal conflict: Conflicts involving leadership or punitive action within the rank and file of a gang.
- Vice: Activities generally involving the street-level distribution of narcotics by street gang members.
- Retaliation: Acts of revenge for offenses against the gang by rival gang members.

“If we lose the youth workers then it’s going to go back to straight law enforcement. We would go back to tactical teams and having quotas for arrests.”

— Chicago Police Officer Gene Schleder

gang in Chicago; they have a presence in virtually every Hispanic neighborhood in the city. The Kings have traditionally been more violent than the Two Six, who, although they are responsible for an increasing amount of violence, have in the past been more prone to commit property crimes.

According to Spergel, a lot of gang members may use and sell drugs — mostly marijuana and powder cocaine from Mexico. But drug trafficking has apparently not been a major gang activity, and gang violence has not stemmed from competition for drug markets. The rivalry in Little Village, an area dominated by modest incomes and a bustling business district of small shops and restaurants, is based on traditional issues of territory and personal egos.

“They want attention,” Spergel said, on why young people turn to gangs. “It’s the only place they can get some esteem. They’ve screwed up in other areas. They are isolated, and they would like to be connected.”

Violent rivalries

Confrontations between the gangs can be fierce and deadly. Between them, the two gangs accounted for 44 of the 63 gang-related homicides in the area from 1987 through 1994. While the Latin Kings were responsible for most of the serious violence in the area, the proportion attributed to Two-Sixers has been steadily increasing, rising from 7.5 percent of the total in 1987 to 25 percent in 1994, according to data compiled by Authority researchers.

Still, Spergel has been encouraged by what the project has accomplished thus far. Although homicides and assaults with firearms have continued to escalate in the area, the violence has increased at a lower rate since the project started. Gang-related violence in Little Village has increased at a lower rate compared to other areas of the city, according to police data compiled by

Turn to Project, page 16

Personal experience helps youth workers relate to gang members

By Ben Hulse

The lives of Arturo Bracho and George Roque ran parallel, then went off into opposite directions, and then converged once again. Before the two became community workers in the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction Project, one was an academic success story and the other a gangbanger. Now, Bracho and Roque, both long-time Little Village residents, act as a team of job/school/emotional/family life counselors to members of the Two-Six street gang, sharing a love for their community and a mission to keep their friends from being sent to prison or killed.

Bracho's family moved to Little Village during his preteen years; Roque's family came when he was a toddler. Bracho, as a result, experienced less of the youth gang culture than did Roque, who was steeped in it from early on. While Bracho settled into his new existence in Chicago and was performing well in school, Roque was already taking a keen interest in gang life.

George Roque

"I always thought it looked like an exciting lifestyle," said Roque, 20. "I saw the older guys making money, driving nice cars, the girls hanging out around them. They would tell me, 'One day you're gonna be one of us,' and I believed them. I started telling my friends that I wanted to be a Two-Six."

By the end of eighth grade in 1990, Roque and a group of his friends had founded the Harding branch of the Two-

Six — at the time one of the youngest sections of the street gang. Roque took to gang life with a vengeance: "I lived the life of a gangbanger for three years.

"I lived the life of a gangbanger for three years. ... For three years I went nowhere, got kicked out, messed up my future."

— George Roque

When I went on to Kelly [High School], I wouldn't ever go to class. I would just hang out and party with my boys, and we'd get high and drink with the girls. For three years I went nowhere, got kicked out, messed up my future."

Roque's life changed when he was involved in a confrontation with a group of the rival Latin Kings gang. "All my friends ran on me ... just one of my boys stayed. I thought I was going to get killed." The incident was enough for his mother to pack him off to his relatives in Kansas. "What she didn't tell me is that it was a one-way ticket," Roque laughed. When he returned after six

months, his life had turned around. He had spent his time working and thinking about the direction of his life, but crucially, he was introduced to church.

"My relatives brought me to church with them, and at first I didn't think much of it. But then, after sitting and listening, I began to wonder if it was worth losing my life for the gang. God opened up my eyes. He saved me. I decided that when I went back to the neighborhood, I would tell my friends about God, and what He taught me."

Roque stayed true to his pledge and immediately began working in Christian youth outreach efforts in Little Village, which eventually led him to the University of Chicago's Gang Violence Reduction Project. He found that the street worker position was an incomparable forum for speaking on his beliefs to his old friends.

Arturo Bracho

Bracho, 23, stayed on the straight-and-narrow during his teenage years, resisting the lure of the Two-Six, graduating from high school and continuing on to a political science degree from Loyola University's seminary. Many of his friends were gang members, and he went back to Little Village to be a living example of their potential for success. He had been recruited for the Gang Violence Reduction Project by Javier Avila, a friend at Loyola and now supervisor of the street workers. "At first they had me doing interviews, but I found myself going into Little Village to find the guys

rather than wait for them to come to me. When a street worker position opened up, it was the next step." Bracho said that his college education doesn't distance him from his old friends, who are now his caseload.

Roque usually handles 10 to 15 cases per month, mostly 16- and 17-year-olds; Bracho numbers his cases from 15 to 20, primarily older and more influential gang members. Casework defies simple definition, so the two gave examples. "A mother or father may ask a street worker to take care of a problem they're having. They see us as counselors, so they give you a call. Something that happens a lot is a kid is under house arrest, but he skips out. They'll say, 'He don't listen to me, and he could do five years.' So I go out there and try to talk to him and warn about the consequences," said Bracho.

Making a difference

Alternatively, Roque said, a Two-Six looking to get a job, continue his education, or get a ride to court will seek out the street workers for assistance. A street worker can spend days taking one of his "cases" from business to business, putting together a resume and filling out applications. Both are full of success stories about helping get jobs or GEDs for seemingly hopeless cases.

Roque enrolled one of his friends, a Two-Six, in the GED high school equivalency program from which Roque will graduate this year: "Everybody thought he would never change — his mother, the guys, everybody. But now he's in school and he's got a job at Trak Auto. By not giving up on him I made a difference."

As counselors-at-large, the street workers find themselves dealing with dozens more gang members each month in a less-involved manner. "Maybe I'll run into a guy on the street, and I'll pull over and talk to him. Maybe his mom's trippin' on him or something. We'll go on for a half-hour or so, talking about his problems and how to deal with them," Bracho said. In more serious situations, street workers refer gang members and their families to other community resources.

The Two-Six street workers also coordinate graffiti paint-outs, weekly basketball games at a local gym and outings to Six Flags Great America. In cooperation with the police, social workers and Latin King street workers, they also or-

"Our purpose is to keep down the violence. Also, we try to encourage the guys to be prepared for later in life when the gang stuff is over."

— Arturo Bracho

ganized two intergang softball games in the last year. Roque routinely brings Two-Sixers to church services with him. The street workers frequently confer with neighbors in large community meetings and join in program meetings every two weeks at the Little Village probation office.

Close ties to the community

Roque and Bracho attribute much of their success to their knowledge of the community. They know their "cases" personally — many are friends or even relatives — they know the ins-and-outs of the gangs, and they know what is acceptable and what is crossing the line. Roque replaced a street worker who became infamous for riding around in squad cars with the tactical officers, according to project director Irving Spergel. Roque recalled that this street worker lost his credibility with the Two-Six for, among other offenses, informing police of the locations of weapons caches.

The current street workers still find themselves repairing the damage these breaches of trust did to relations between the project and the gang members. They, too, walk a fine line between affiliating too closely with the gang and being identified with the police. Neither sees much personal danger so long as

"Folks" and "People"

Most street gangs belong to one of two broad alliances, the "Folks" and the "People." The alliances developed in prisons during the 1970s as gang members sought protection by building coalitions.

Most gang rivalries pit gangs of one alliance against those of another. But there are occasionally rivalries within alliances and also within gangs. The People gangs wear their identifiers on the left side; an earring in the left ear, a left pant leg rolled up, hats with visors to the left side. Gangs that belong to the Folks alliance wear their identifiers on the right side.

More than 100 gangs have been identified within the Chicago area. Among the gangs that belong to the People alliance are the Latin Kings, the Vice Lords and the Black P Stones. Gangs that belong to the Folks include the Black Gangster Disciples, the Maniac Latin Disciples and the Two-Six.

Turn to Workers, page 16

Specialized gang prosecutions unit formed in Cook County

State's attorney's office targets upper echelon gang leaders through long-term investigations

By Daniel Dighton

Top gang leaders are a lot like corporate executives and military commanders. They give the orders but they don't do the dirty work. That, explains Cook County prosecutor Mike Smith, is what makes them so difficult to catch and put behind bars.

"A lot of time they're not going to be the ones pulling the trigger. They'll be calling the shots," he said.

But a new specialized gang prosecutions unit formed by Cook County State's Attorney Jack O'Malley is targeting those upper-echelon gang leaders. Through long-term investigations coordinated with various local, state and federal agencies, the unit plans to demonstrate to gangland CEOs that they are not untouchable.

"They're sophisticated criminals, and a long-term investigation lets you go after and catch and prosecute sophisticated criminals," said Smith, a deputy supervisor with the State's Attorney's gang unit.

\$1.1 million grant

Launched in the spring, the project is being supported this year by a \$275,000 federal grant administered by the Authority. The program is expected to receive federal funding for four years. Cook County will contribute about \$96,000 a year to the project.

The special gang unit has three full-time prosecutors with extensive experience working with gangs. The new unit is an independent adjunct to the office's Gang Prosecution Unit, which was formed in 1981 to deal with more traditional street-level gang crimes and has 19 prosecutors of its own.

The special unit is set up to investigate and prosecute highly complex criminal activities such as narcotics trafficking and money laundering. Investigations will use

state-of-the-art intelligence gathering techniques and tools, such as wire taps and other surveillance measures.

The unit also plans to go after the assets of gang leaders. By depriving gang leaders of money and material possessions gained through drug dealing and other illegal activities, they take away their prestige in the community and some of the glamour of being a gang member, Smith said. "It hurts them a great deal. It cuts their legs out from under them," he said.

Coordination with other agencies

Cases designated for long-term investigations are referred from a variety of sources, including the Gang Prosecution Unit, the state's attorney's narcotics unit and police. The unit also works closely with the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Internal Revenue Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

"It's a very good team because we draw from a lot of different resources," Smith said.

Police intelligence is a critical source of information for long-term investigations. Prosecutors work closely with the Chicago Police Department, especially the department's gang unit. "We're as good as the police officers that are

out on the street," Smith said. "They make our whole case. They're the ones that start it and they're the ones that keep it going."

"It takes patience," Smith said of the investigations. "The knee-jerk reaction a lot of times would be to act immediately on a lot of this information. The payoff can be a lot better if you hold off and let your information get up the ladder." ■



Photo by Daniel Dighton

Prosecutor Mike Smith in front of mug shots of convicted gang members in the office of the Cook County State's Attorney's Gang Prosecutions Unit.

Governor's Commission on Gangs

Attorney General Ryan: State must adopt coordinated approach to gang problem

By Daniel Dighton

After testimony from nearly 150 witnesses over the past year at public hearings and forums across the state, the Governor's Commission on Gangs is expected to issue a report this fall that balances a get-tough approach toward gang activity with the need for more intervention and prevention programs.

"I think our efforts in our state have been too fragmented. We have to have a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to gangs, and make it more of a priority, which is my intention, and, I know, the governor's intention," Attorney General Jim Ryan said.

Gov. Jim Edgar established the gang commission by executive order last December and named Ryan as chairman. Tasked with developing a coordinated strategy for attacking

street gangs, the fact-finding part of the commission's work included 16 public hearings, a youth forum on gangs and a two-day conference with witnesses and experts from Illinois and other states. The Authority presented the commission with a special research report on street gangs and crime.



Photo courtesy of Illinois Information Service

Attorney General Jim Ryan

The 35-member commission of federal and state prosecutors, police, educators, parents, clergy, health professionals, lawmakers and representatives of business and labor, developed recommendations in the areas of law enforcement and prevention and intervention programs. Ryan said he planned to present the governor with a balanced approach to fighting street gangs.

"My sense is that we have to do something different than we've done in the past. We have to be better organized, more focused, make it a greater priority, which the governor's done by appointing the commission," Ryan said.

Governor signs legislation

Last June, Edgar signed legislation drafted by the commission

establishing a witness protection program and imposing harsher penalties for gang leaders convicted of drug dealing. The legislation signed by Edgar also established mandatory reporting of any firearm-related incidents at public schools to law enforcement within 24 hours.

One of the problems encountered by police and prosecutors fighting gangs is that witnesses are reluctant to come forward out of fear of retaliation. The \$1 million pilot program to protect victims and witnesses who testify against gang members is designed to overcome that intimidation from the gangs. The program will run through June 1998. It will be evaluated by the Authority, and if it is deemed effective in prosecuting gang members it will be continued, Edgar said when he signed the law.

The legislation signed by Edgar also imposed a mandatory sentence of 15 to 60 years for gang leaders involved in certain drug-dealing operations. The previous penalty had been six to 30 years in prison.

Need for intervention and prevention

Ryan said more law enforcement legislation may come out of the final report, but attention also will be focused on prevention and intervention programs.

"One of the things that struck me is that we heard a consistent drumbeat for tough enforcement, tougher penalties. But we also equally were told at virtually every hearing, that we have to put more emphasis on prevention and early intervention."

One program in particular that has caught Ryan's attention is the Homework Hangout program in Decatur. The program provides a safe, structured environment for homework and other activities after school. It is primarily designed for at-risk children who live in high-crime and gang-infested areas (see box). Ryan recently presented the program with a \$25,000 grant.

"These kinds of intervention programs, mentoring programs, we have heard during these hearings, are as important as the get-tough approach," he said.

Ryan has repeatedly said that gangs pose the single greatest threat to public safety in Illinois. The commission's work, he said, takes a significant step toward addressing that threat.

"One thing that we gleaned from the hearings is that there is a great deal of concern across the state about this problem. And the problem is clearly getting worse, it's not getting better." ■

Decatur program gives kids an alternative to gangs and drugs

By Daniel Dighton

When Keith Anderson established an after-school tutoring and mentoring program to help a few children from his church, he never imagined that four years later he would have more than 100 students enrolled and a waiting list that just keeps growing.

"I think we started off with six kids from our congregation, and the next thing I knew it had mushroomed. That's all I had envisioned was just those six little kids," said Anderson, a meter reader for Illinois Power in Decatur.

Anderson designed Homework Hangout based on what several children told him they needed: a safe place to hang out and get help with their homework after school.

The program is supposed to run from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. But Anderson said he and his staff of 12 regular volunteers and assorted part-time helpers have a hard time getting the kids out the door before 9 or 9:30 p.m.

For kids who want help

Homework Hangout is designed for children in the first through 12th grades who can and want to do good work, but need some nurturing. The program is not just a place to get help with school work; it also provides a structured and supportive family-type environment to steer young people away from gangs and criminal activity.

"It's designed for kids who are sitting on the edge," Anderson explained. "They don't want to go the bad way, and if somebody is there to

help them go the good way, they would. This is not a program for bad kids. This is a program for kids who want some help," he said, adding that if a youngster doesn't put in the effort and try to do well, they have to leave the program.

The students are expected to complete their homework on time and show progress in school. Anderson keeps tabs on them through regular communication with their teachers. It is a structured environment, and rules must be followed. Good etiquette and proper English are required from the beginning of the homework period at 4 p.m., until the dinner period ends at 6:45 p.m.

After their meal, the students have structured activities, which include playing in the gym and rap sessions where they can talk about whatever is on their minds. During this period the pressure is off and they can revert to street slang in speaking. But at no time does Anderson tolerate cursing or anything that is racially derogatory.

"The youth are expected to change. You either change or you go. And the youth understand that," Anderson said.

Entering fifth year

Housed at the St. Thomas Community Center in Decatur, the program is going into its fifth school year and also has a smaller summer session.

One of the sponsors of Homework Hangout is Anderson's employer, Illinois Power. The utility company gave Anderson 18 months of paid leave to run the program. With that period coming to an end, Anderson is searching for other ways to keep the program going and take care of the administrative duties that require his time during the day.

"This is not a program for bad kids. This is a program for kids who want some help."

—Keith Anderson

He recently got some help with a \$25,000 grant from the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Another sponsor of the program is Decatur Memorial Hospital, which provides the meals every night.

For Anderson, the program is like an extended family. "It's a family atmosphere. We eat together. We study together." It seems there is little that Anderson doesn't do for students in Homework Hangout that he doesn't do for his own family. Not long ago he was walking down the aisles of a Kmart store with about 20 of his students. They were shopping for school clothes.

For more information on Homework Hangout, write or call Keith Anderson at Homework Hangout, P.O. Box 25212, Decatur, IL 62525; 217/872-2306. ■

Project, continued from page 10

the Authority.

Levels of violence and gang activity are measured through interviews with targeted gang members, community surveys and analysis of police data and court records. The information on the targeted gang members is also compared to a control group of gang members who are not involved in the project.

"All these indicators show that there's been a statistically significant relative or absolute decline in gang violence," Spergel said.

Model for other projects

The project has garnered a lot of media attention and has become the model for gang projects in Bloomington, Ill.; San Antonio, Texas; Mesa, Ariz.; Tucson, Ariz.; and Riverside, Calif. The five new projects, which have been around for about a year, are funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which is part of the U.S. Department of Justice.

One of the major challenges facing these projects is adapting Spergel's model to different gang and community structures. The five sites are vastly different geographically and in the makeup of their gangs compared to Little Village, said Jim Burch, program manager with OJJDP.

The Little Village model is located in a densely populated area with relatively good access to a variety of services. Places like San Antonio and Tucson may have six or seven gangs in a huge geographic area where services and police stations are spread out. Such factors make it difficult to determine who is responsible for what acts and what groups the project should focus on, Burch said.

Plans are being made to try the project in another area of Chicago. Though he acknowledged that it will be a significant challenge, Spergel thinks the project can be adapted to an area dominated by African-American gangs. "The big difference that I see now is the greater level of drug involvement in the black community," he said.

It remains to be seen if the tactics used in Little Village will work in an area where there are fewer legitimate job opportunities and drug dealing is an integral part of the gang culture. Spergel said, it would likely involve the same service-oriented approach, including the use of outreach workers and emphasizing coordination between agencies. A site has not been chosen for the next project.

Wherever Spergel goes, his mission with the gangs will stay the same. As he said, "We want them to stop killing each other, and we'll do it through any means possible." ■

Workers, continued from page 12

they keep their main objectives in mind. In the words of Bracho, "Our purpose is to keep down the violence. Also, we try to encourage the guys to be prepared for later in life when the gang stuff is over. Turning people in is not our job." Still, they are obligated to notify police of "hot spots" or intimations of violent activity, but Spergel said that the gang leadership accepts that function.

Neither is there an overt aim to induce their charges to leave the gangs. Many claim to want to leave, but the follow-through rate is very small. The street workers maintain that eventually, most kids will quit as they get too old for the gangbanger lifestyle. "These guys think they're gonna be in the gangs forever, but at around 23 the fun and games stops" as they are faced with taking responsibility for their families, said Benny Estrada, a street worker for the Latin Kings. But during the teenage years, he continued, "everybody wants to make a name for themselves."

Roque and Bracho profess strong faith in the mission of the project, and wish to stay with it until the end, whether that be early in 1997 or later. Roque argued, however, that the project has not met its potential. "We're at about 50-50," he said. "We could do better. People need to work closer — the community, the street workers and the cops."

Bracho, too, finds himself a little demoralized by the project's failures, which he attributes to a lack of will among many of the gang members. "I'll talk to a guy on the street, and he'll be talking about how he wants to get a job and make a future for himself. But you'll call him up to take him for an interview, and he'll be all 'I can't go,' or he won't be home. Some guys you can't do much for. They won't listen." ■

— Ben Hulse was a summer intern in the Authority's Office of Public Information.

Authority-led project focuses on criminal justice uses of the Internet

By Roger Przybylski

Recent years have seen significant changes in information processing and telecommunications technologies, profoundly changing the way the world does business. The emergence of networked computers, e-mail and electronic bulletin boards on a global scale, and now the Internet, have given us the power to share information like never before.

Early this year, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority began a project designed to help state and local criminal justice agencies harness the Internet. With support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the U.S. Department of Justice, the Authority is working with the University of Illinois at Chicago, Office of International Criminal Justice; the Elmhurst Police Department; and the Illinois Office of the Attorney General to design model Internet applications for the criminal justice community.

The Internet, an international network of local area networks tied together by a high-speed backbone of data connections, has the potential to provide almost anyone in the world with rapid access to unlimited varieties of data and information. It is radically altering how we think about accessing, disseminating and using information. Moreover, it has the potential to transform how public policy is made and implemented, and redefine the roles of individuals and organizations involved in the process.

The Internet is technically the successor to the Advance Research Projects

Agency Network (ARPANet), an early network of research labs, defense contractors, and government agencies that experimented in linking local area networks together. ARPANet was succeeded by the National Science Foundation Network (NSFNet), which grew to connect most university campuses in the United States.

Growth of the Internet

Since the mid-1980s, the Internet has grown phenomenally. As many as 900,000 host systems on nearly 7,000

It is currently estimated that there are more than 35 million users of the Internet, and that the number is increasing by 10 percent each month.

networks in 43 countries are connected to the Internet either directly or via some form of e-mail gateway. The High Performance Computing Act, signed into law in November 1991, invests \$2 billion in the telecommunications infrastructure that will expand access to the Internet even more. It is currently estimated that there are more than 35 million users of the Internet, and that the number is increasing by 10 percent each month. Clearly, today's information technologies are spreading to where they will soon be available to a significant portion of the population.

Despite the rapid growth of the Internet, the manner in which it will be used by state and local criminal justice agencies is not well defined. Simply gain-

ing the technology to access the Internet won't be enough to tap into its true power. Many issues that lie beyond hardware and technology need to be explored.

The Internet and criminal justice

Together, we are exploring how criminal justice agencies can establish a viable presence on the Internet. This includes identifying administrative, operational and information sharing activities that can be carried out on the Internet and modeling their graphic presentation and on-line application. Electronic publica-

tion of documents, menu driven access to statistical information, immediate access to time sensitive information, and the interactive exchange of information on-line are among the issues being explored. A survey of

criminal justice agencies in Illinois on their current and planned Internet access and use has also been completed.

This highly collaborative initiative will lead to the creation of innovative World Wide Web sites for each participating agency. More importantly, the project will demonstrate how criminal justice agencies can use the Internet to carry out their mission more efficiently and effectively. The Authority will electronically publish and nationally distribute a handbook based on project experiences.

Future issues of *The Compiler* will highlight more on the project's progress and products. ■

— Roger Przybylski is director of the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit.

Profiling career auto thieves

Council-funded research project at Western Illinois University looks at motives and methods of auto thieves

By Gerard Ramker

To gain a better understanding of vehicle theft, the Illinois Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council in 1995 funded a unique research project by two Western Illinois University professors. The project involved interviews with 50 career auto thieves incarcerated in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The research was based on the premise that three elements must be present for a criminal act to occur: the desire or motivation to commit it; the opportunity to commit it; and the ability to carry it out. By focusing on these three elements, the WIU professors set out to identify the motivational and conditional factors that tend to bring about the desire to commit auto theft, discover how potential thieves perceive opportunities to commit theft, and determine the range of abilities necessary to carry out the theft.

Profile of the career auto thief

The researchers reported that beginning career thieves were at a relatively advanced age — averaging 16.9 years — when they stole their first car. Not surprisingly, this was not their first crime. Slightly less than half of the sample admitted to gang affiliation, and they denied any connection between stealing cars and gang membership. Most surprisingly, the career auto thieves reported having stolen an average of 16 vehicles before they turned 18.

On average, career auto thieves reported that they had stolen 30 vehicles before their incarceration.

One-fourth of the sample reported

stealing more than 400 vehicles since turning 18 years old.

The researchers reported that career auto thieves are substantially more intelligent than the general prison population. A majority of the sample of thieves reported significant drug and/or alcohol abuse as a factor in motivating thefts.

Attitudes and motivations

The research data strongly suggested that obtaining money for various pursuits is the dominant reason why mature offenders commit auto theft, whereas excitement and peer pressure are as important to beginning offenders as getting money.

The researchers found that career auto thieves express a strong interest in cars, a recognition that there is a low risk of getting caught, and a recognition that certainty of punishment would be a deterrent to car theft.

How thieves identify their opportunities

The research data suggest that the ideal “target” for career thieves is a higher quality General Motors vehicle located in a quiet middle/upper-middle class suburban neighborhood. The preferred time is night, when vehicle owners are asleep. The data also suggested that career offenders avoid targeting hard-to-steal foreign and domestic cars and those likely to be alarmed.

Career car thieves are slightly more likely to operate with a partner than alone, however they tend to operate as independent contractors rather than as

members of auto theft “rings” or street gangs.

Although career auto thieves are likely to break into the cars they intend to steal, it is unlikely that they would be carrying a weapon, since most consider auto theft as a “nonviolent crime.” Most thieves emphatically say that they do not engage in carjacking, and they depict carjackers as a “different breed” of thieves. The researchers found that career motor vehicle thieves are typically nonviolent criminals who focus on easy, nonconfrontational car theft opportunities.

Because there are so many easy opportunities for theft, a perceived low risk of getting caught, and an apparently ready market for stolen cars and parts, car theft ranks among the most desirable of criminal enterprises for career thieves.

The thief’s required abilities

The WIU researchers’ interviews revealed that car theft is generally a “low tech” enterprise for career motor vehicle thieves. Relatively little expertise is required to successfully carry out rapid, low-risk thefts. In most situations, a screwdriver is the only tool required to break into and start a targeted vehicle. The majority of career thieves have the ability to easily disarm or defeat most alarms and anti-theft devices currently in use.

Most alarm systems and anti-theft devices currently on the market are ineffective in preventing or deterring the determined auto thief. Those career

The researchers found that career auto thieves express a strong interest in cars, a recognition that there is a low risk of getting caught, and a recognition that certainty of punishment would be a deterrent to car theft.

thieves who bother to take the time and trouble to challenge alarms and anti-theft devices find them easy to disarm or defeat. Some devices might be effective in motivating would-be thieves to move on to easier targets, thereby displacing crimes as opposed to deterring them.

Recommendations

The researchers suggested three strategies for combating vehicle theft:

- Identify and divert beginning car thieves. Diversion may take the form of highly organized programs, intense probation supervision, residential group homes, or incarceration. Most important is that beginning career car thieves should be physically "kept off the streets" as much as possible.
- For mature career thieves, the frequency and certainty of punishment must be greatly increased. Law enforcement task forces that specifically focus on career offenders may be the most workable, cost-effective strategy to accomplish this goal.
- Those career thieves who are identified as among the most prolific at stealing cars must be incapacitated for longer periods of time.

The WIU researchers recommended four strategies for lessening the opportunities for car theft:

- ◆ Eliminate street parking, especially at night in high theft areas. Drivers should park vehicles in private garages, controlled parking facilities, or secured and patrolled lots.

- ◆ Law enforcement should try to eliminate the monetary return

for stolen cars or their parts. Chop shops and otherwise legitimate businesses which buy and sell stolen cars and parts must be closed.

- ◆ Potential "targets" should be equipped with effective anti-theft devices.
- ◆ Education within law enforcement agencies should provide the information that career auto thieves are not connected with gangs per se. Law enforcement should try to infiltrate and break up auto theft enterprises.

Making theft more difficult

The WIU researchers also recommended several "target hardening" strategies to deter vehicle thefts:

- Replace standard keyed door locks with digital coded locks.
- Build in hardened steel frames around all windows.
- Install shatterproof glass in all windows and in the windshield.

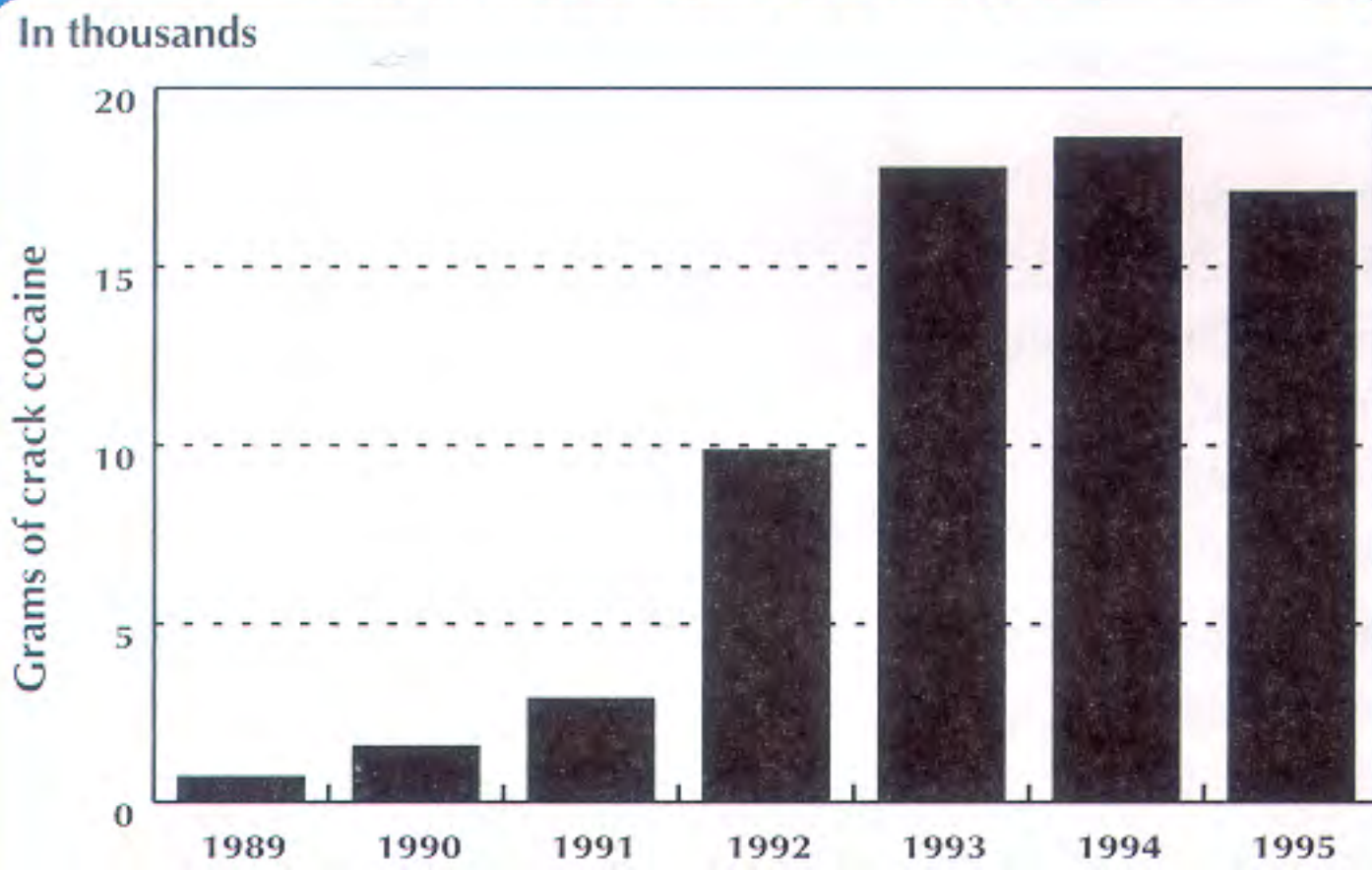
- Remove ignition systems from steering columns or install steel collars around existing steering column ignitions.
- Install a coded digital means to start vehicles to eliminate keys altogether.
- Install hidden auto ignition cut-off switches.
- Install hood locking mechanisms.
- Require vehicle owners in high theft areas to park in secure public or private garages or lots.
- Require vehicle owners in high theft areas to equip vehicles with anti-theft devices.

The Council is sharing the findings and recommendations of the research project with law enforcement and insurance industry officials.

For further information about the WIU research project, please contact Dr. Clyde Cronkhite, Chairman, Department of Law Enforcement Administration, Western Illinois University, (309) 298-1038. ■

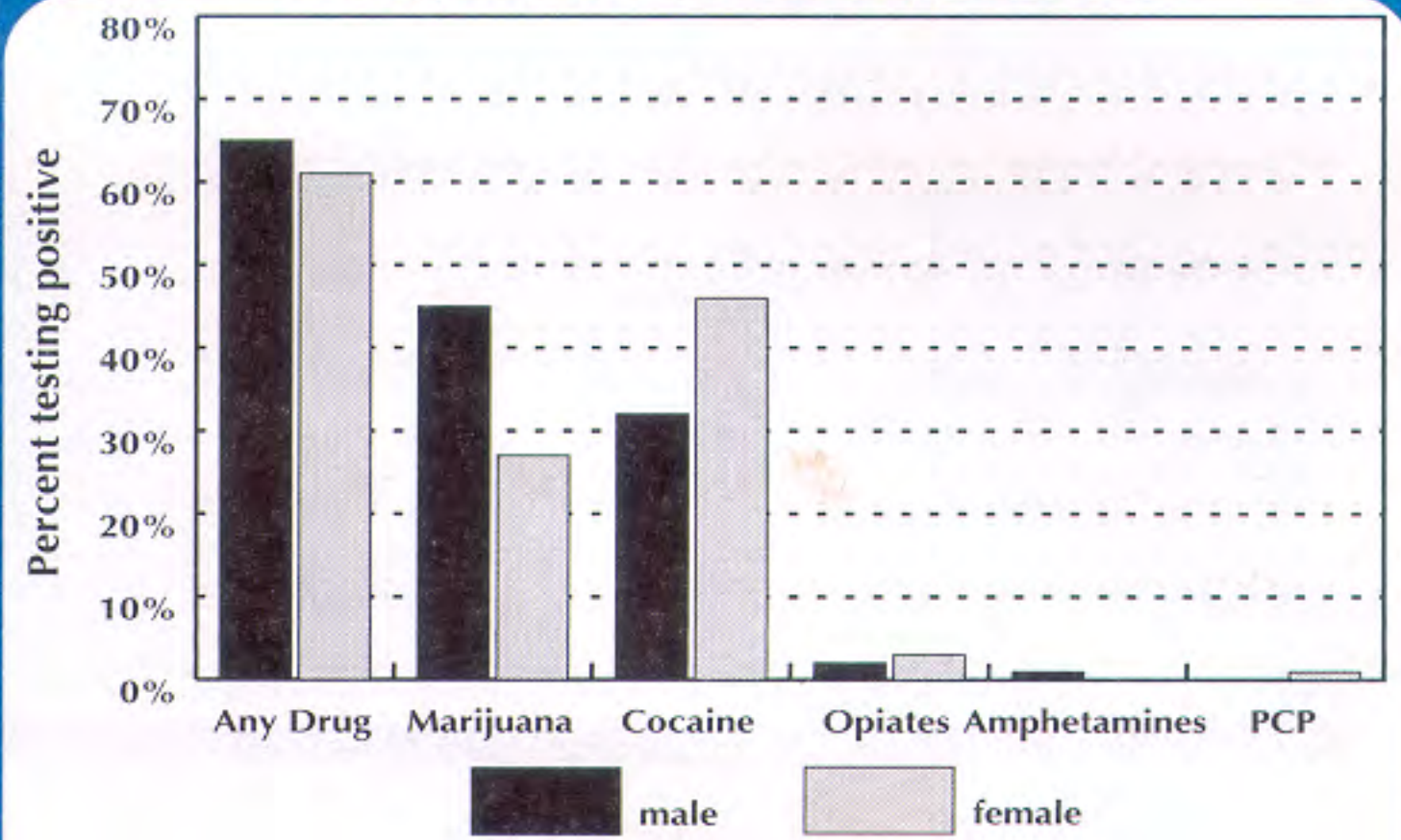
— Gerard Ramker, Ph.D., is program director for the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council.

Quantity of crack cocaine seized in Illinois outside of Chicago



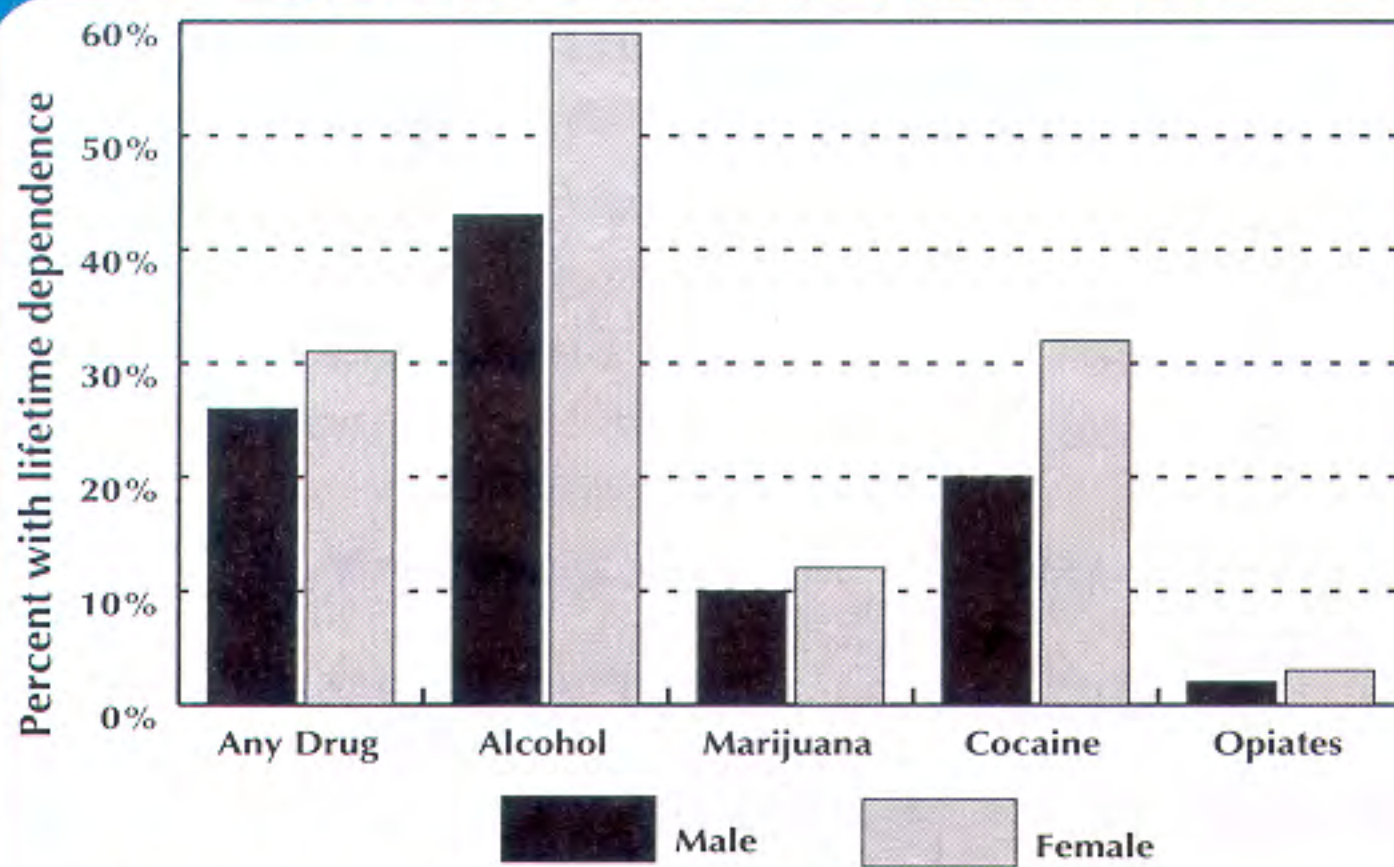
Source: Illinois State Police

Percent of arrestees in Illinois outside Chicago testing positive for illicit drugs in 1995



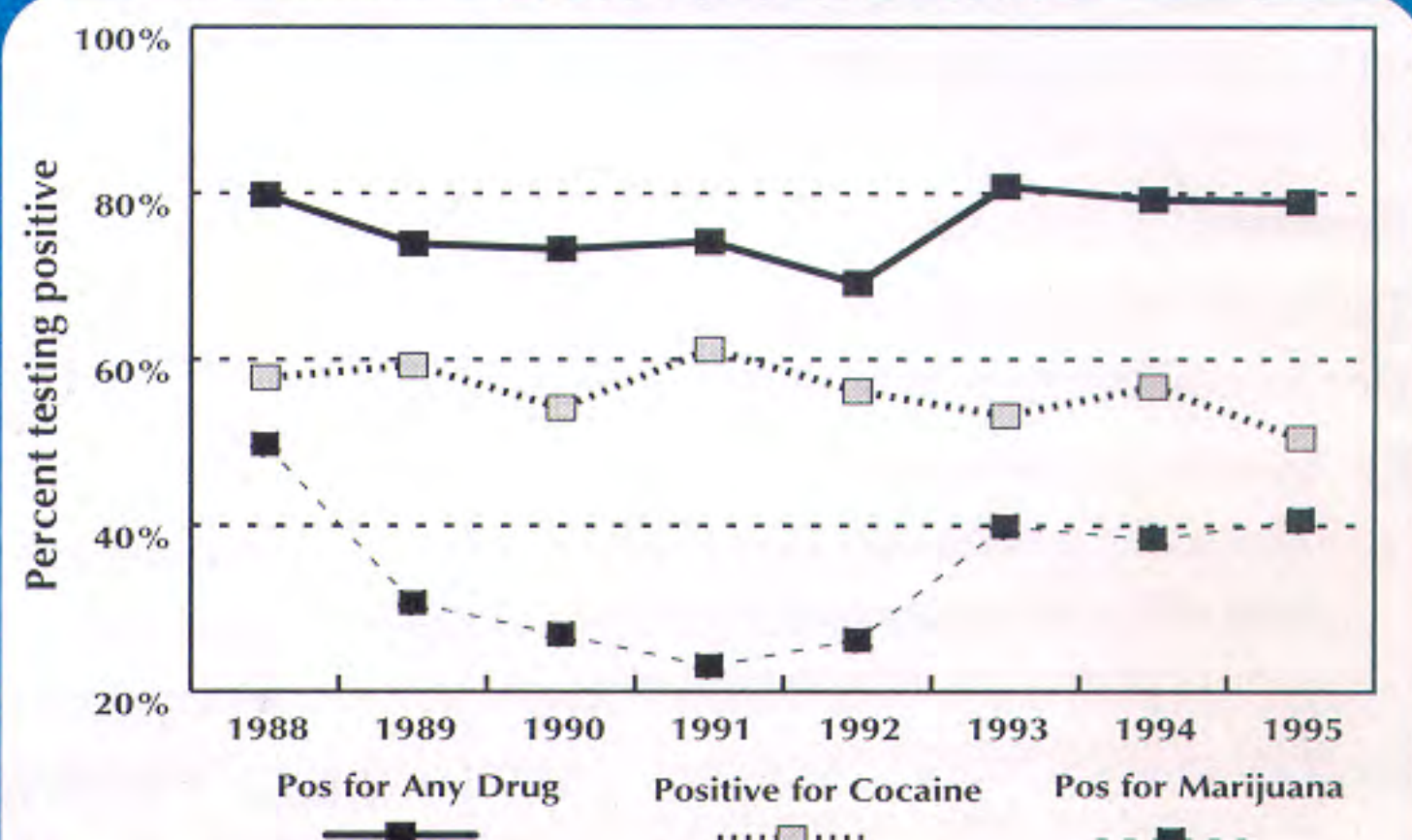
Source: Illinois Drug Use Forecasting Project

Percent of arrestees in Illinois outside Chicago diagnosed with lifetime drug dependence



Source: Illinois Drug Use Forecasting Project

Percent of arrestees in Chicago testing positive for illicit drugs



Source: Chicago Drug Use Forecasting Project



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