

# The Compiler

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

Fall 1999

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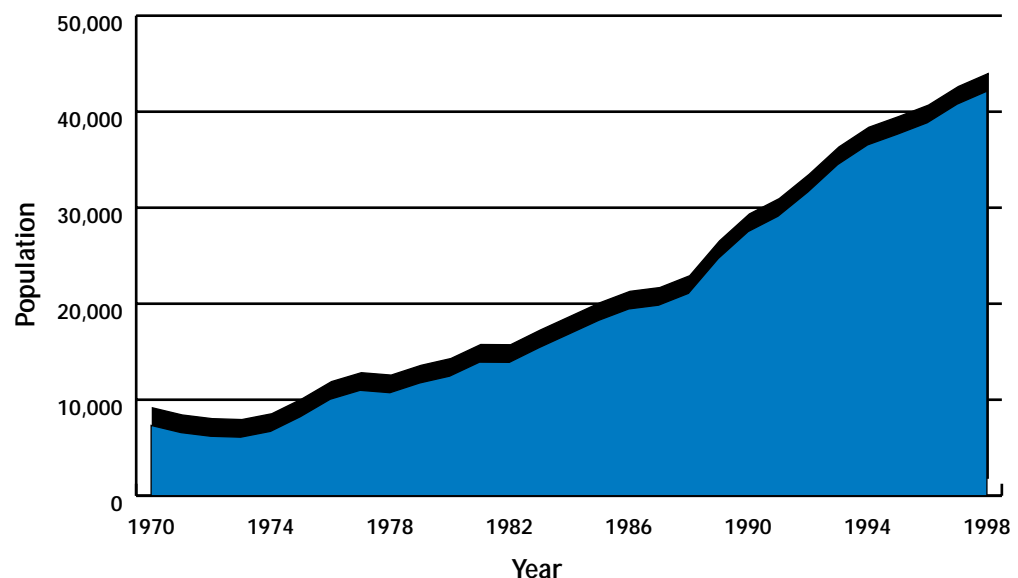
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## A generation of change: 30 years of criminal justice in Illinois

As we look forward to 2000, it seems appropriate to take a brief look back at the justice system over the past generation. Whether or not you view all the changes of the last 30 years as progress, it must be agreed that the period has brought considerable change — in policing, corrections, victim services, and in the courtroom. Some of these changes have been relatively minor, while others have had far-reaching impact. Some changes

have affected adults, others juveniles, and still others have applied to both. This issue of *The Compiler* looks back at the last 30 years in criminal justice and some of the steps that have been taken to address the concerns and needs of a changing society. Much more has taken place in criminal justice than space allows us to include here. But it is hoped that this look gives some perspective on where we have been, and where we are heading as we enter a new millennium.

Illinois' prison population



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

THE COMPILER is published quarterly by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

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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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Printed by authority of the State of Illinois, November 1999. Printing order number: 00-044. Number of copies: 6,500. ISSN 1059-6569. Printed on recycled paper with soybean-based ink.

## Research unit receives awards

The Authority's Research and Analysis Unit received two awards at the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) conference in November. The 1999 Philip Hoke National Award for Excellence in Analysis was presented for: "Trends in Illinois drug arrests," a *Trends and Issues Update* by David Olson and Robert Bauer; and for "The Nature and Extent of Family Violence Reporting," by Jennifer Hiselman, Erica Morrow, Karen Levy McCanna, and Andrea Carr.

JRSA is a national organization of state criminal justice planning and research agencies.

## Doster appointed to motor vehicle council

Gov. George H. Ryan appointed Kankakee Police Chief William Doster to the Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council in September. Doster has served as chief of police in Kankakee since July 1994. He retired from the Illinois State Police in 1993, after 23 years of service as director of the Division of Criminal Investigation, assistant deputy director of Forensic Science and Identification and assistant deputy director of the Illinois State Police Academy. Also during his tenure with ISP, Doster received the Governor's Award for Valor. He is active in many community organizations in Kankakee, and has been honored by the NAACP and the Illinois Department of Human Rights for his efforts in community relations.

## ISU associate director named

Steve Prisoc was named associate director of the Authority's Information Systems Unit in October. Formerly director of information services at the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, Prisoc has 15 years of experience in the field of criminal justice information systems. Prisoc also is a board member and immediate past president of the National Association for Justice Information Systems.

## Boehmer elected to National Criminal Justice Association board

Robert Boehmer, the Authority's general counsel, was elected to the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) Board of Directors in July. The association is a Washington, D.C.,-based special interest group that represents states on crime control and public safety issues. The 17-member board provides oversight of NCJA activities.

The organization plays a vital role in informing Congress and federal agency officials of state positions on federal policy and legislative proposals. Over the years, NCJA has lead successful efforts to influence legislative action on criminal justice issues, including preserving the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance formula grant program.

## The Authority on line

The Authority's redesigned Web site [www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us) is a tremendous tool for Internet users in search of community crime

statistics, criminal justice research of a state and national scope, or news about state and federal grants. In addition to providing easy access to the latest criminal justice news, the site provides information from the Authority's three main areas of operation: research, information systems, and federal and state grants.

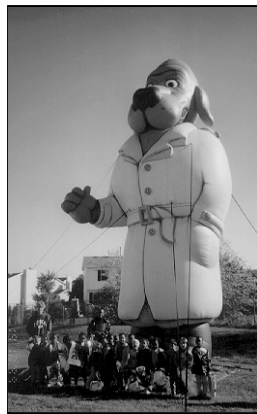
The site also includes Authority meeting notices, agendas, and meeting materials, notice of upcoming training courses, seminars, and conferences, and downloadable Authority research publications.

Criminal Justice DataNET is the most recent addition to the site. The Authority collects, maintains, and updates a variety of criminal justice data to support its research and evaluation efforts. A Web-based clearinghouse of these data, the DataNET allows users to research broad issues facing the criminal justice system or simply examine crime trends in a specific Illinois city, county, or regional area. The database allows users to display data in a variety of graphs and tables, and to download data into a spreadsheet for further analysis.

Currently, offense data from the ISP uniform crime reporting program are available from 1983 through 1998 on each of Illinois' 102 counties. Future datasets will include arrests, felony court case filings, adult and juvenile probation caseloads, Illinois Department of Corrections admissions, juvenile delinquency petitions, and other criminal justice data.

### McGruff on tour

The Authority's 30-foot McGruff the Crime Dog balloon was a hit at the YWCA of McLean County's "Protect our Children Fair" in October. The balloon, which is available from the Authority for crime prevention-related events, made 13 appearances during the summer and fall.



### Authority receives grant for gun crime study

The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics has awarded the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit a grant to study gun crime offenders in Illinois. The \$91,575 grant, a cooperative project with the Illinois State Police's Bureau of Identification, will examine the criminal histories of persons arrested for gun-related crimes in Illinois during 1998. The grant will allow criminal history records to be accessed in an "on-line" environment for the first time for research purposes. This capability will support future research endeavors. The study will be completed in August 2000.

### VOI-TIS grant designation received

The Authority recently received about \$30 million for the Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-In-Sentencing (VOI-TIS) incentive grant program. The designation was received from the

U.S. Department of Justice for federal fiscal year 1999, which began Oct. 1, 1999.

VOI-TIS incentive grants provide funding to states to build or expand correctional and juvenile detention facilities and secure confinement space for offenders. VOI-TIS funds also are allocated toward construction of additional bed space for violent juvenile offenders at the local level.

### Call for papers – *Journal of Correctional Best Practices*

The American Correctional Association is seeking submissions for the first edition of the *Journal of Correctional Best Practices*. Scheduled for publication in August 2000, the issue will focus on youthful offenders in adult correctional systems. Submissions should be 20 to 40 pages, typed and double spaced, and include charts, graphs, and references. Style guidelines referenced in the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Fourth Edition, should be followed. In addition, an abstract of 300 words or less should accompany the paper. Call Mike Kelly, (800) 222-5646, ext. 1930, or e-mail [mkelly@aca.org](mailto:mkelly@aca.org) for more information.

### Victims' rights bill "Melissa's Law" enacted

Legislation was passed in August extending the statute of limitations on sexual assault crimes for victims, including those who were under 18 years old at the time of the offense.

For victims at least 18, the statute of limitations under the new law, dubbed "Melissa's Law," is 10 years, if the victim files a report within two years after the offense was committed. If the victim is a minor at the time of the offense, and if the perpetrator is a family member, prosecution must commence within 10 years of the victim turning 18 years of age. In cases where the offender is not a family member, if the victim is under 18 at the time of the offense, the statute of limitations is 10 years, as long as the victim reports the offense before turning 21.

Melissa's Law eliminates a provision that stated a prosecution must begin within five years of the commission of the offense if the victim reported the criminal sexual assault or criminal sexual abuse within six months of its occurrence. The law takes effect Jan. 1, 2000.

### New law requires background checks for gun purchases

A new law requires ISP to perform federal background checks prior to the purchase or transfer of firearms in Illinois, a procedure the agency has been completing unofficially for several months.

The law requires ISP to complete an automated search of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System every time a licensed firearm dealer in Illinois makes a sale or transfer of a firearm. The law also names ISP the official point of contact for all criminal background checks needed to legally purchase a gun in the state. ■

# Significant criminal justice legislation, 1970 – 1999

statutes governing criminal laws and procedures have significantly changed in Illinois in the past 30 years, beginning with the creation of the departments of state police and corrections in 1970. Following are some of the more significant changes.

## 1970

- The Illinois Department of Law Enforcement and the Illinois Department of Corrections were created.

## 1971

- The Cannabis Control Act and the Illinois Controlled Substances Act became law, creating uniform systems for the control of the production, distribution and possession of those substances.

## 1972

- The Office of State Appellate Defender was created as an agency of state government to represent indigent persons on appeal in criminal cases.

## 1973

- The Unified Code of Corrections was enacted, drawing together widely scattered provisions regarding corrections into one law and, among other things, adopting a new sentencing scheme which removed penalty provisions from individual offenses and placed them in the new code.

## 1977

- The State's Attorneys Appellate Service Commission (later renamed the Office of the State's Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor) was formed to assist local prosecutors with criminal appeals.

- The Intergovernmental Drug Laws Enforcement Act, authorizing the creation of Metropolitan Enforcement Groups to provide cooperative enforcement of drug laws, went into effect.

## 1978

- Illinois' sentencing laws were completely revamped with the enactment of the Class X and determinate sentencing laws. Class X felonies are serious crimes, such as attempted first-degree murder, aggravated criminal sexual assault, and armed robbery, that carry mandatory prison sentences. Under determinate sentencing, the sentencing options judges have, and the sentence lengths they may impose, are narrowly defined by statute.

## 1982

- The Narcotics Profit Forfeiture Act was passed, enabling officials to confiscate profits seized from convicted drug traffickers.

## 1983

- The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority was created to improve the administration of criminal justice and coordinate and improve the way the criminal justice system uses information and information technology.

## 1984

- Illinois' Bill of Rights for Victims and Witnesses of Violent Crime — the state's first comprehensive law to ensure fair and compassionate treatment of crime victims — took effect.

- The Criminal Sexual Assault Act was enacted — the first major revision of sex crime laws since Illinois became a state. The new law made sexual assault gender-

neutral and expanded the crime to include other types of assault besides rape.

- The Uniform Disposition Reporting Act took effect, mandating statewide reporting and collecting of arrest, charge, disposition, and sentencing information.

## 1985

- The Illinois Department of Law Enforcement was renamed the Illinois Department of State Police.

## 1986

- The Illinois Domestic Violence Act was enacted. The law recognized domestic violence as a serious crime; clarified the responsibilities of law enforcement officers to provide immediate, effective assistance and protection for victims of domestic violence; and expanded the civil and criminal remedies for victims of domestic violence.

- Voters approved an amendment to the Illinois Constitution allowing judges to deny bail to suspects deemed a threat to the community. The law implementing this amendment was enacted in 1987.

## 1989

- Legislation was passed allowing police to eavesdrop on suspected drug dealers without the consent of any party to the conversation. The law was later expanded to allow eavesdropping for certain other violent offenses, weapons violations and street gang-related offenses.

## 1990

- The amount of good time credit that the director of the Illinois Department of Corrections could award to a prisoner was increased from 90 to 180 days. The additional 90 days may not be awarded to prisoners convicted of certain Class X and other serious offenses.

- The Illinois Department of Corrections was authorized to operate an impact incarceration program (or "boot camp") for certain offenders sentenced to prison. Persons completing the program have their sentences reduced to time served.

- The Drug Asset Forfeiture Procedure Act was enacted, establishing uniform procedures for the forfeiture of property under the Illinois Controlled Substances Act and the Cannabis Control Act, including nonjudicial forfeiture procedures and a formula for the distribution of forfeited assets.

## 1991

- The Electronic Home Detention Law became effective, describing who is not eligible to be placed in an electronic home detention program and providing basic operational guidelines for electronic home detention programs.
- The Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Council was created within the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. The Council, supported with funds from the insurance industry, was created to develop a statewide strategy to combat and prevent motor vehicle theft and to distribute grant awards to criminal justice agencies and businesses and civic organizations.
- The Illinois Uniform Conviction Information Act made conviction information on any individual's state-level criminal history record available to the public and established a policy for disseminating that information.

## 1992

- Voters approved an amendment to the Illinois Constitution, guaranteeing certain rights to crime victims. The Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Act was amended to implement the new constitutional amendment in 1994.

## 1994

- Metropolitan Enforcement Groups' allowable activities were expanded to include certain weapons violations and street gang-related offenses.
- A new law authorized the establishment of a multicounty statewide grand

jury with the authority to investigate, indict, and prosecute drug-related and money laundering activities. The law was later expanded to include unlawful firearms sales and transfers, street gang-related offenses, and computer offenses related to sexual exploitation of a child, juvenile prostitution, and child pornography.

## 1995

- Truth-in-sentencing was enacted in Illinois. The law required offenders serving a term of imprisonment for first degree murder to serve the entire sentence imposed by the court, and required certain other serious violent offenders to service 85 percent of their sentences. For reasons unrelated to the substance of the truth-in-sentencing law, Public Act 89-404, which included this provision, was declared unconstitutional by the Appellate Court of Illinois, Second District, in March 1998. The Illinois Supreme Court affirmed that decision in 1999. In response to the Appellate Court decision, the Illinois General Assembly reenacted truth-in-sentencing provisions in 1998.

- Illinois' Sex Offender Registration Laws were expanded to require registration of those persons identified by the courts as sexually dangerous and offenders convicted of certain offenses against adults, in addition to those persons already required to register as child sex offenders.

- The Illinois Violence Prevention Act of 1995 was enacted, creating an authority to coordinate statewide violence prevention efforts and develop a statewide plan that incorporates public health and public safety approaches to violence prevention in families, communities, and schools.

## 1996

- The Illinois State Police was authorized to deny a Firearm Owner's Identification Card, or revoke a previously issued card, for persons subject to an existing order of protection that prohibits them from possessing a firearm, or for persons

who have been convicted within the past five years of domestic battery, battery, assault, aggravated assault, violation of an order of protection, or similar offense in another jurisdiction, in which a firearm was used or possessed.

- The Child Sex Offender and Murderer Community Notification Law was passed, allowing law enforcement agencies to provide the community with information regarding registered child sex offenders.

## 1998

- The Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act became law. The law allows state authorities to indefinitely commit certain sex offenders to secure facilities after they have served their prison sentences and until they are no longer deemed sexually dangerous.
- The Juvenile Justice Reform Provisions of 1998 were enacted. The provisions overhaul the juvenile justice system in Illinois, adopting a balanced and restorative justice model for the state.

## 1999

- Gov. George H. Ryan's "15-20-life" proposal was signed into law, toughening sentences for criminals who use guns during the commission of a felony. Offenders receive an additional 15 years in prison if they are in possession of a firearm while committing certain felonies; an additional 20 years in prison if they discharge the weapon while committing the felony; and an additional 25 years to life if they intentionally discharge the weapon and cause great bodily harm or the death of any person. This law becomes effective Jan. 1, 2000.

- Legislation was enacted making it an offense to store or leave firearms where a minor under the age of 14 is likely to gain access and where the minor causes death or great bodily harm with the firearm. This law becomes effective Jan. 1, 2000.

— *By Robert P. Boehmer, general counsel to the Authority*

# Probation: 100 years and still growing

**P**robation has existed in Illinois for 100 years, and has long been the most common sentence given to criminal offenders across the nation. It is typically viewed as a cost-effective and reasonable alternative to prison for many offenders, with much greater potential for rehabilitation.

In 1998 in Illinois, 32,716 convicted adult felons were sentenced to probation, while 28,429 felons were sentenced to prison, according to the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC). The state adult probation caseload at the end of 1998 was over 84,000, while the adult prison population was about 41,000.

Nationally, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, over half of adult offenders under correctional supervision are on probation.

But despite its wide use and promise for reducing recidivism, probation has had to overcome a troubled past. It was long plagued by severe underfunding, a lack of statewide standards, and politicized, non-professional local offices. Probation over the past century has been criticized as an ineffective “non-system,” often so understaffed that supervision and treatment programs were virtually nonexistent.

Beginning in the 1970s, however, serious reform efforts brought sweeping changes that eventually transformed probation in Illinois. Today, it is still a county-based system, but with oversight and support services provided by the AOIC Probation Services Division. The state reimburses counties for about 40 percent of the total cost of probation in Illinois.

In the 1980s, statewide standards were implemented, particularly with regard to staff hiring, education, and training. A uniform system of record-keeping and data collection also was established, and AOIC was made responsible for program monitoring and

evaluation. Caseloads have been cut, and specialized programs with a broad range of services have been established for certain types of offenders.

As probation in Illinois enters its second century, administrators and policymakers are looking to improve supervision and treatment through better assessments of an offender’s risk to the community and by providing programs that address the motives behind offending. Within probation, there is a confidence that these methods offer the best chance of restoring offenders to useful lives in the community.

## Reform movement

Such optimism was hard to find 30 years ago. A very critical 1972 report from the John Howard Association made the point that probation “exists in name only in many counties throughout Illinois and in some does not exist at all.”

The report denounced the lack of statewide standards and the common practice of hiring of unqualified political appointees as probation officers. The report included a Chicago newspaper headline from 1954, which proclaimed, “Untrained, political appointees can’t do the job – probation services in Chicago and Cook County have been neglected for more than 30 years.” According to the 1972 report, “the newspaper story tells the story basically as it is today, statewide.”

Probation began in Illinois in 1899, when Cook County became the home of the first juvenile court in the world. The juvenile probation service was established in conjunction with the court. Legislation in 1911 expanded the use of probation to include adults.

Efforts to reform probation, particularly calls for the establishment of a statewide probation system, began as early as 1946, and they became more frequent in the 1960s.

Not long after the scathing report from the John Howard Association, the state probation professional association organized a forum to look at probation reform. The 1974 effort resulted in a position paper calling for a state/county system to be administered by a state Probation Commission and with funding split 50/50 between the state and counties.

But it would be another four years before the state legislature would approve any reform measures, and even then change came gradually. The first step was a law that took effect in 1979 providing a \$400 monthly subsidy for qualified probation personnel. The law also established the Probation Division within AOIC for administrative duties.

“Before reforms, the probation system was completely localized,” said Jim Grundel, assistant director for AOIC’s Probation Services Division. “There was no state data collection and there were no minimum qualifications for officers. There wasn’t even a requirement to have a high school education.”

The 1979 law gave the Probation Division authority to establish minimum qualifications for hiring and promotion of personnel, and for setting mandatory training. The Probation Division also was tasked with establishing a uniform record-keeping and data collection system, monitoring programs, and providing technical assistance to county probation departments.

Legislation enacted in 1984 further expanded the state’s role in probation services and called for the creation of a statewide system of case classification. The law also called for the intensive supervision programs to divert a larger number of select offenders from the overburdened prison system.

Subsequent legislation built on efforts to expand the state’s role in probation, improve and expand specialized programs, and to generally enhance the establishment of a uniform, statewide probation system.

Reimbursements to counties for probation services this year amount to \$64 million, representing 40 percent of total

*(Continued on page 14)*

# Rehabilitation competes with security issues in crowded prisons

By Daniel Dighton

Most of the past 30 years in corrections have been dominated by efforts to deal with a rapidly expanding prison population, which itself has reflected trends in society and politics.

But the period has not just been one of institutional expansion. The past three decades in corrections also have seen remarkable advancements in staff education and training, medical care, substance abuse treatment, and in rehabilitation and training programs.

In 1970, with an operating budget of \$65 million, there were six adult prisons holding about 7,000 inmates in Illinois. There was optimism that a newfound emphasis on rehabilitation of the offender would control inmate population growth by cutting down on recidivism. One example of the rehabilitative approach was that during the 1970s IDOC began referring to inmates as "residents."

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, rising crime rates led to a get-tough-on-crime attitude among the public and politicians. Early releases from prison and community corrections programs gave way to a prison building boom that has continued to the present.

"I think people got tired of crime, and they're willing to pay for it and build more institutions," said Leo Meyer, whose nearly 40-year career in Illinois corrections included serving as deputy director of adult institutions from 1981 to 1995.

Today there are more than 44,000 adult offenders housed at 26 prisons, nine work camps, three impact incarceration programs and 11 community correctional centers. Seven juvenile institutions hold nearly 2,200 offenders. The annual budget for corrections is over \$1 billion.

## Combining juvenile and adult corrections

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) was formed in 1970, bringing together adult and juvenile corrections. Previously, the Illinois Youth Commission handled juvenile offenders, while the Department of Public Safety oversaw adult prisons, fire prevention, narcotics control, criminology, and the state highway police.

In a special message to the General Assembly at the time, Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie explained that the new department encompassing both juvenile and adult corrections "was designed to spearhead a shift from a limited, punitive corrections program to one dedicated to rehabilitation and based on community involvement in the rehabilitative process."

The reorganization was based on recommendations from a task force on corrections that Ogilvie appointed in 1969. Peter B. Bensinger, who is now chairman of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, served as chairman of the task force and then became the first director of IDOC.

IDOC brought sweeping reforms to corrections in Illinois. Among other things, the reorganization introduced a new level of professionalism, with a strong emphasis on education and training

of staff. Administrative regulations that standardized policies and procedures for correctional institutions also were introduced.

Dan Bosse, who started in corrections as a guard in 1967 and was warden at Logan Correctional Center before his retirement last May, recalled a very decentralized prison structure under the Department of Public Safety. Before IDOC was created, Bosse said, each prison operated independently, with wardens setting their own policies and procedures. There was a small central office, but it gave little direction and exercised little control.

Meyer, who started his career in Illinois corrections as a psychologist in 1959, said that prior to the reorganization in 1970, wardens were political appointees of the governor. Very few people in corrections, including wardens, had college degrees, he recalled.

The new department of corrections introduced an era of vocational and educational program development. It also brought professionalism to the field of corrections in Illinois, vastly improving the education and training of correctional personnel. "Training is probably one of the biggest changes I've seen," Bosse said.

## Training academy

A training academy was established in the early 1970s and today it provides a six-week course for new guards. There is additional follow-up and specialized training.

But before the academy, Bosse said, the only training available was at the

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*Daniel Dighton is a public information officer with the Authority.*

Stateville Correctional Center, which provided a couple of weeks of classroom instruction and on-the-job training until guards were transferred to another prison.

By 1978, IDOC was operating 10 prisons. Director Charles J. Rowe's message in that year's annual report called for major capital improvements for a prison system that had been neglected for 150 years, and whose buildings were deteriorating. The report itself was entitled "Overcoming 150 Years of Neglect."

Director Rowe also said the state needed smaller facilities to make it easier to handle the more dangerous offenders that were coming into the system. There were now more than 10,600 inmates in Illinois' prisons, an increase of about 50 percent in eight years.

## Population surge

In 1978, already facing crowded conditions, IDOC projected the prison population to grow to 16,000 by 1988. But the introduction in 1978 of determinate sentencing and Class X felonies, both of which set longer sentences for most serious offenses, caused the inmate population to soar beyond expectations.

There were 16,000 inmates in the system by the end of 1984, and by the end of 1988 there were more than 21,000. The larger number of serious felony offenders and the longer terms of determinate sentencing combined to add more inmates to the population and keep them in the system longer.

The rapid growth of the prison population continued in the late 1980s and through most of the 1990s. A tremendous surge in the number drug offenders sentenced to prison, beginning in 1989, had a major impact on the inmate population.

In 1970 there were only about 200 drug offenders in prison in Illinois, representing about 3 percent of the total prison population. By 1983 there were still only 534 drug offenders among a population of more than 15,000 inmates. But the crack cocaine phenomenon and stiffer drug penalties helped bring the drug offender population from under 2,000 in 1988 to over 4,600 in 1990.

Between 1988 and 1994 the prison population increased 73 percent, before growth started to slow somewhat. The enactment of truth-in-sentencing in 1998, however, will further boost prison population growth. Truth-in-sentencing requires offenders who commit first-degree murder to serve 100 percent of their sentence and those who commit certain other violent offenses to serve at least 85 percent of their sentence.

## Focus on security, control

The philosophy in corrections, which in the 1970s and 1980s was leaning toward inmate rehabilitation and a more permissive atmosphere, now places more of an emphasis on security and inmate control, Bosse said. In an effort to improve safety in institutions, "we've actually turned the clock back 30 years," he said.

In the past year IDOC has instituted several new policies aimed at increasing security and enhancing the safety of correctional staff. Among the changes are new limits on personal property, and the use of standardized clothing, consisting of "prison blues," for all inmates.

The biggest investment in security within IDOC, however, is the new Tamms Closed Maximum Security Correctional Center in far southern Illinois. The \$64 million, 500-bed, "super-max" facility is intended for inmates who are a threat to prison safety and security, such as gang leaders or inmates who have committed serious offenses while incarcerated. The prison began receiving inmates in March 1998.

"I think there's a definite trend in corrections to get more control in the institutions," Meyer, the former deputy director, said. "Tamms is probably the best controller they have. People don't want to go there."

## Revamping the parole system

The manner in which former inmates are released into the community changed significantly in the 1990s. During the 1980s the number of offenders leaving prison on supervised release was rising dramatically,

while the number of parole agents was declining. And there was a growing sentiment nationally that traditional parole was not effective in reducing recidivism.

Dwindling resources and doubts about the effectiveness of parole prompted Illinois to revamp its parole system and introduce PreStart in 1991. According to an evaluation of the program funded by the Authority, "PreStart was a response to the upward spiraling of costs associated with traditional parole supervision in Illinois and the unwillingness of the state to fund those costs."

PreStart was designed to address the problems of parole by shifting the emphasis for most offenders from surveillance to assistance. Its aim is to help offenders make the transition back to the community, primarily through referrals for community services. PreStart consists of two phases. The first phase involves pre-release education programs. The second phase relies on post-release referrals to community service centers.

In February 1999 there were 193 parole agents supervising more than 30,800 offenders on mandatory supervised release in Illinois, according to IDOC's Human Services Plan for fiscal years 1998-2000.

IDOC has been pushing to increase the number of parole agents due to the growing number of offenders released into the community who require monitoring and supervision. And Gov. George H. Ryan, pointing to concerns for public safety, has directed more resources toward community supervision. This year's state budget includes \$2.7 million to hire 66 additional parole agents, and Ryan has proposed hiring 113 more parole officers next year.

The additional parole agents could be a double-edged sword, said Michael J. Mahoney, president of the Chicago-based John Howard Association, a prison watchdog group. Without more services in the community for offenders, the impact of the additional agents could simply be more offenders caught violating terms of their release and being sent back to prison. "What are these parole officers going to do



to help these people make a transition?" Mahoney asked.

More of an investment should be made in programs that have been proven successful, Mahoney said, such as drug rehabilitation, education, and job training in prison. After an offender's release from prison, work and housing are his most critical needs, he said.

"Illinois has some of the finest drug intervention programs in prisons," Mahoney said. "But we probably meet about 10 percent of the need."

These are some of the issues the correctional system in Illinois faces going into the next century. The inmate population has not only increased, but it has grown more violent and dangerous. Gangs continue to pose security problems in institutions. Also, an older, sicker population is emerging as a result of longer sentences, and this group will make greater demands on medical care and space.

Crowding is bound to be a lingering issue, even as the state pours more money into prison construction.

The alternative, which Mahoney advocates, is more investment in community programs such as job training and drug rehabilitation, and better use of supervision programs such as probation and PreStart. "We need a major new infusion of resources in the front end of the system," he said.

One of the primary challenges as IDOC sees it, is balancing public safety with the service needs of inmates, and to do so with limited resources. Seeking ways of providing a more effective continuum of services from prison to release into the community is one of the major goals outlined in the department's Human Services Plan. ■

# The cycles of response to juvenile delinquency

By Phillip Stevenson

**T**hose who work within the juvenile justice system constantly strive to improve their responses to juvenile delinquency. But how can we know that progress is being made? By looking at some of the issues that faced policymakers, juvenile justice professionals, and the public in the past three decades, we can get a sense of where we have been and, it is hoped, of where we are going. The following is an overview of some of the juvenile justice issues covered in the news during the last 30 years.

## The 1970s

### The problem

Increases in female delinquency received considerable attention during the 1970s. A report released by the United States Health, Education and Welfare Department revealed that from 1969 to 1970, delinquency among girls ages 10 to 17 rose twice as fast as delinquency involving boys. Locally, the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funded a survey of 3,100 adolescents throughout Illinois. This study, conducted by the Institute for Juvenile Research (at the time, part of the Illinois Department of Mental Health), showed levels of female delinquency were increasing in Illinois as well.

Violence in and around schools also received considerable media attention. The study by the Institute for Juvenile Research revealed that youths who felt alienated from school were 41 percent more likely to have experienced violence than those who felt they fit in.

### The response

In the 1970s, several programs were in place that addressed the needs of young females wanting to get past their involvement with gangs and delinquency. House of the Good Shepherd, The Mary Bartelme Home, and Broader Urban Involvement in Leadership Development (BUILD) were just some of the programs that were designed with the young female offender in mind.

House of the Good Shepherd was a residential treatment center for teenage girls in Chicago. The goal of Good Shepherd was to improve girls' self-image, improve their communication and cooperative skills, and eliminate their acceptance of failure. Education played a pivotal role in the rehabilitation of the girls. At intake, teachers prepared individual assignments after reviewing a girl's strengths and weaknesses. Coursework concentrated on one major study block at a time.

The Mary Bartelme Home is another example of a rehabilitative center designed for the young female offender. Girls at Bartelme received counseling, special education, and job training, and two-thirds went to public school. The girls had the freedom to come and go, but had a week-day curfew of 10 p.m. To foster independence, the young women received

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weekly and monthly allowances for personal use.

BUILD was another agency whose mission was to work with young female offenders. This privately supported agency worked with dropouts through tutoring and its general equivalency degree program. In addition, BUILD offered job skills training to help young women get off the streets.

Few programs focused on violence in schools in the 1970s. One that did was Project Step-up. The goal of the program was to help students find alternatives to negative behavior. During the mid-1970s, Project Step-up provided an on-site staff person at four high schools in Chicago.

Several innovative juvenile justice system programs for first-time juvenile offenders were started in the 1970's. In the Chicago suburbs of Hinsdale and Deerfield police were using peer pressure to fight juvenile delinquency. Youth jury programs were employed, allowing a juvenile's peers to determine the appropriate punishment for minor offenses committed by first time offenders.

Statewide, the Unified Delinquency Intervention Services (UDIS) program was established. A \$1.5 million federal grant was awarded to the Department of Children and Family Services for UDIS to help divert delinquent youth from the juvenile justice system to community based rehabilitation programs. The program's chief goal was a 35 percent reduction in the number of youths sent to the Department of Corrections. Other priorities for UDIS were the development of rehabilitation services for teenage boys in predominately African-American neighborhoods and getting 13 year olds who have been involved in serious offenses into rehabilitation programs.

## The 1980s

### The problem

A study by the Institute for Juvenile Research revealed that, among adolescents surveyed, almost all had engaged in behavior that could have brought them to the attention of police by the time they were

18. Most behaviors constituted status offenses, but a significant number of moderately serious offenses were reported. Thirteen percent admitted taking part in a robbery, 40 percent admitted keeping stolen goods, and 50 percent admitted shoplifting. Analysis of the data resulted in the projection that one-third of all Illinois juveniles had at some point in their lives committed at least one serious offense. In addition, this study revealed that juvenile delinquency was not solely a big city problem – teens in the suburbs, small towns, and rural areas of Illinois engaged in delinquency at about the same rate as Chicago youths.

From the mid-1970s into the 1980s, media focused often on a “get tough” response to juvenile crime. This attitude was becoming common nationwide in response to community outrage over violent crime committed by youths. The awareness that juveniles convicted of serious violent offenses served relatively short sentences fueled public outcry for tougher punitive measures.

### The response

In the 1980s, considerable media coverage was given to more punitive responses to juvenile crime. Automatic transfer laws were introduced in 1982 and 1985. Starting in 1982, youths ages 15 years and older who were accused of first-degree murder, aggravated criminal sexual assault, and armed robbery with a firearm had their cases transferred to criminal court. In 1985, youths ages 15 and older who were accused of drug and weapon offenses on, or within 1,000 feet of, school property also had their cases automatically transferred to criminal court.

The 1980s also saw the Illinois Supreme Court uphold the state's Habitual Juvenile Offender Act. This act could only be used if a juvenile had been found delinquent twice of a felony and the third adjudication was for a crime that was among a list of 11 mostly violent offenses. If a juvenile offender was convicted under this Act, he or she remained in IDOC custody until they reached 21 years of age,

although good time credit could be earned and applied toward an earlier release.

## The 1990s

### The problem

Increases in the rate of violent crime committed by teenagers dominated the headlines in the 1990s. From 1985 to 1991, the number of homicides committed by boys ages 15 to 19 increased 154 percent nationally. From 1982 to 1991 the juvenile arrest rate for murder rose 93 percent, for aggravated assault 72 percent,

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and for sexual assault 24 percent. Many researchers predicted the trend of increasing levels of juvenile violence would continue. Their arguments relied on either the increase in the number of juveniles entering their crime-prone years (i.e., more youths, more youth crime) or the existence of juvenile “superpredators.”

For the most part, local juvenile crime trends during the early 1990s were consistent with national trends. For example, Woodford and Tazewell counties both saw dramatic increases in levels of juvenile offending. During the first six months of 1995, the number of juvenile cases being handled by the Woodford County State's Attorney's Office exceeded the previous year's total. But it wasn't just increases in frequency of juvenile crime that concerned those in Woodford County, it was

the degree of seriousness, and the young age of the offenders. Tazewell County had similar concerns in the mid-1990s. Handling a nine-year-old Class X felon was one of the issues facing Tazewell County law enforcement.

Illinois also renewed its focus on female delinquency in the early to mid-1990s. Nationally, the frequency of violent offenses by young females increased 49 percent from 1991 to 1994. Illinois saw a less dramatic increase. From 1984 to 1994, the frequency of female delinquency in the state increased just less than six percent.

But all the news was not bad. Peoria County experienced a 43 percent decrease in the total number of juvenile arrests from 1993 to 1995. For some crimes, the decrease was even greater. Arrests of juveniles for theft decreased nearly 53 percent and burglary arrests decreased 73 percent. Law enforcement in Peoria County attributed the decline in juvenile arrests to greater community involvement, specifically neighborhood watch groups, and increased patrolling during special events and in high crime areas.

### The response

“Getting tough” on juvenile crime continued to be a pervasive theme in the 1990s. The list of offenses that would result in a juvenile being automatically transferred to criminal court was expanded. Starting in 1990, juveniles 15 and older who committed a felony in furtherance of gang activity and had a prior felony adjudication were automatically transferred to criminal court. Also in 1990, 15- and 16-year-old juveniles who committed certain drug offenses on or within 1,000 feet of public housing or school property were automatically transferred to criminal court. Starting in 1995, juveniles aged 15 years and older who were charged with aggravated vehicular hijacking automatically were transferred to criminal court. Finally, starting in 1995, juveniles aged 13 years and older who were charged with first degree murder committed during a criminal sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual assault, or aggravated kidnapping (exclud-

ing minors charged through accountability) were automatically transferred to criminal court. But these weren’t the only ways a juvenile could end up in criminal court. In addition to the automatic transfer provisions, there are discretionary, presumptive, and mandatory waivers that resulted in a juvenile’s case being tried in criminal court.

During the 1990s, although there was a focus on “get-tough” responses to juvenile crime, there also was the acknowledgment that “getting-tough” was not the complete answer. A debate emerged over the responsibility of the parents of juvenile offenders. Symposia held throughout central Illinois focused on how communities could help adults become better parents and provide children with better role models. In other parts of the state, punishing the parents of juvenile offenders was suggested as an answer to juvenile crime.

The prevention of juvenile crime also received a financial boost during the 1990s. In 1995, Gov. Jim Edgar approved the creation of the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority. Among other things, the agency was created to plan, coordinate, provide funding for, and evaluate juvenile violence prevention programs.

### Heading into 2000

The Juvenile Justice Reform Provisions of 1998, effective Jan. 1, 1999, changed the purpose and policy of Illinois’ juvenile justice system. No longer is the response of the system driven by the notion of “best interests of the child.” Instead, holding the juvenile accountable for the delinquent behavior, building competency in the delinquent child, and protecting the community are the guiding principles.

The legislature appropriated \$33.2 million for programs and services connected to the new law. The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts received \$5.3 million, most of which is for new probation officers to reduce caseloads and staff new programs. Of the \$5.3 million, Cook County Juvenile Probation received \$500,000 for seven community-based in-

tervention programs. The Illinois Department of Public Aid received \$8.5 million for Medicaid reimbursement to counties for a portion of residential placement expenses. The Illinois State Police received \$3.2 million for the development of the juvenile criminal history records system. The Department of Human Services (DHS) received \$13.2 million, of which \$5.6 million was used to fund Community for Youth projects. DHS also increased funding for the Teen Responsibility Education Achievement Caring Hope (REACH) program by \$2.7 million, and Unified Delinquency Intervention Services by \$1.6 million.

### Conclusion

While a review of newspaper articles is an imperfect method of historical analysis, it is a revealing exercise. As much as things have changed, they have remained the same. Violence in our schools is not a new phenomenon and we continue to seek ways to make schools safer for our children. The increase in the number of young females being brought to the attention of the juvenile court also continues to be a concern. The debate over the appropriate response to juvenile delinquency continues.

But progress has been made in the battle to understand and respond to juvenile delinquency. Programs that were innovative in the 1970s, such as youth juries, continue to be used. Programs that focus on violence in and around our schools continue to improve. Recent research has identified both risk and protective factors for juvenile crime. Delinquency prevention strategies that reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors hold promise. In addition, the state of program evaluation has reached a point where juvenile delinquency researchers have been able to identify prevention and intervention programs proven to be effective over time and in various settings. ■

# From fingerprints to rap sheets, updating the criminal history records system

By Gerard Ramker

The single most important information source for the criminal justice system is the database of criminal history record information maintained by the Illinois State Police (ISP). At virtually every key point in the system, critical decisions are made that, in part, must take into account the defendant's prior criminal record. Tens of thousands of paper and electronic "rap sheets" are transmitted by ISP everyday to patrol cars, dispatchers, state's attorneys, judges, probation departments, circuit court clerks, and others throughout Illinois and elsewhere. Increasing numbers of citizens, prospective employers, licensing authorities, and others are accessing these records as well.

The Illinois Law Enforcement Commission (ILEC), the Authority's predecessor, and the Authority have greatly influenced the development of criminal history record information (CHRI) in a number of ways. This article highlights some of these major accomplishments affecting CHRI.

## Automation

When six members of George "Bugs" Moran's gang were gunned down in Chicago on Valentine's Day in 1929, Americans were outraged. The public wanted its government to do more about the increasing trend in violence. The public uproar about the case and crime in general led to various legislation including passage of a bill by the Illinois legislature on July 2, 1931 which created the state

Bureau of Identification to, among other things, function as a repository of arrest and fingerprint information. In the St. Valentine's Day Massacre case, police were able to identify the killers through their fingerprints.

In its first year of operation, BOI obtained 30,000 fingerprint cards of arrested criminals. In June of 1932, the state's first rap sheets materialized, and by the end of World War II, the number of stored records had skyrocketed.

The 1960s brought a declaration of "War on Crime" which included, among other things, the establishment of the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA). LEAA established a variety of grant programs and encouraged states to develop comprehensive plans to wage their battles at the state level. LEAA's National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service established a major funding program to develop and implement computerized criminal history systems at the state level. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, between 1972 and 1980, the LEAA spent more than \$40 million on the program nationally.

ILEC, which was created to administer LEAA programs in Illinois, awarded a number of grants to ISP in the 1970s and 1980s to automate criminal history processes. Automation efforts included the creation of microfilm and microfiche records and file systems, and eventually initiated the computerization of records.

Using funds available since 1988 through the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance program, and through the National Criminal History Record Improvement Program

(NCHIP) established by the Crime Control Act of 1990, the Authority continues to support the automation of CHRI, focusing on improving the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of information. Under the 1990 law, states must allocate at least 5 percent of Byrne funds for the improvement of criminal history records until certain goals are met. Since 1992, Illinois has been implementing an improvement plan that includes regular CHRI audits by the Authority.

The Authority, ISP, Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC), and representatives of local criminal justice agencies and courts developed Illinois' improvement plan. The plan, which follows Bureau of Justice Assistance guidelines published in 1991, must ensure that 95 percent of current records are accurate and complete.

These federal funds have been used to help automate disposition reporting and eliminate record processing backlogs. Significant amounts of funds also have been awarded to assist in local agency training and user documentation efforts and to enhance ISP's computer storage capability.

The single largest portion of federal dollars devoted to CHRI in the 1990s supports the use of automated fingerprint technology known as livescan. This equipment, which is now operational in dozens of sheriff's offices, police departments, IDOC facilities, and other agencies throughout Illinois, improves the quality of information entered into the state system and reduces the time required to fingerprint and identify offenders.

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The Bureau of Identification now reports maintaining criminal history records for more than 3 million people, and receives about 400,000 new arrest fingerprint cards annually.

## Quality assurance

LEAA required states to develop formal CHRI plans that addressed how states would ensure the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of CHRI. One aspect of the Illinois plan was a regular audit of the information by an independent agency. The first such audit was conducted in 1980. The Authority's statutory mandate is to, "act as the sole, official, criminal justice body in the State of Illinois to conduct annual and periodic audits of the procedures, policies, and practices of the State central repositories for criminal history record information to verify compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing such information."

General revenue funds supported the Authority's audits until its budget was reduced in 1992. Since that time, the Authority has carried out more limited assessments using Byrne program funds. The Authority has carried out 12 audits since 1979. These audits have helped test CHRI policies and, consequently, served to assist the targeting of federal funds on particular problem areas. The audits also have spurred improvements through regulatory and legislative action.

In addition to systematic audits, the CHRI plan called for ISP to carry out a program of internal data quality control audits. The plan also established the process and procedures for record subjects to review and challenge the accuracy and completeness of their criminal history records.

The Authority's statutory mandates, developed in part to more effectively administer the CHRI plan, include a number of other powers and duties involving criminal history records:

- To monitor the operation of existing criminal justice information systems in order to protect the constitutional rights and privacy of individuals about whom crimi-

nal history record information has been collected (20 ILCS 3930/7(e));

- To provide an effective administrative forum for the protection of the rights of individuals concerning criminal history record information (20 ILCS 3930/7(f));
- To issue regulations, guidelines, and procedures which ensure the privacy and security of criminal history record information consistent with state and federal laws (20 ILCS 3930/7(g)); and
- To act as the sole administrative appeal body in the state of Illinois to conduct hearings and make final determinations concerning individual challenges to the completeness and accuracy of criminal history record information (20 ILCS 3930/7(h)).

## Mandatory reporting

In September 1983, Gov. James R. Thompson signed the Uniform Disposition Reporting Law, which amended the Criminal Identification Act. This Authority-formulated initiative requires arresting agencies in Illinois to submit fingerprint cards and charge information within 24 hours for all persons arrested for felonies and/or Class A and B misdemeanors. The same reporting laws require state's attorneys and circuit court clerks to report final charging and final disposition information to ISP. County sheriffs and the Illinois Department of Corrections also are required to submit information on offenders sentenced to their custody.

Prior to the disposition reporting law's Jan. 1, 1984, effective date, the Authority convened a series of working groups, which recommended forms and procedures for reporting such information, and resolved various technical issues related to linking arrests to court cases. The Authority also developed and distributed advisories on the new law to criminal justice agencies in the state.

Under other statutes, police agencies in Illinois are required to submit certain information on juveniles taken into police custody for specified offenses. Provisions of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998, effective Jan. 1, 2000, expand this

reporting requirement to cover more of offenses and will include not only charge and adjudication information, but informal "station house adjustments" as well. The Authority has participated in a multi-agency task force establishing forms and procedures for these new reporting requirements.

## Public access

In 1987, the Illinois General Assembly approved the Uniform Conviction Information Act (UCIA), which was eventually signed into law by Gov. Thompson. Since the law took effect on Jan. 1, 1990, all Illinois citizens, private businesses, and state and local governments have access to conviction records maintained by ISP. Up to that point, only certain governmental agencies and private organizations, such as those involved in child care, had access to varying levels of criminal history information.

## The future

The critical role criminal history record information plays at various stages in the justice system has not diminished over time. The nature and extent of prior involvement with the justice system is universally accepted as vital information at bond, charging, probation condition setting, sentencing, correctional classification, and a host of other decision points in the process. Consequently, there is a continuing need to assess the accuracy and completeness of this information, and ensure that it is readily available to these officials. There also is a growing need to ensure that, as an information product, CHRI is meeting the needs of the adult and juvenile justice systems. An area of growing concern in the information age is how CHRI is or should be integrated with other justice information systems to eliminate duplicate or redundant data entry. Given its history and statutory mandates, the Authority has been and will continue to be the best forum for discussion and resolution of these kinds of criminal history record information issues. ■

# Audit helps improve criminal history records in Cook County

For criminal record checks to be effective, the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) database must contain all arrest and disposition information. In September, the Authority released the report "Criminal History Records Audit: Disposition Reporting in Cook County," which looked at the reporting of 1996 arrests and final court dispositions from Cook County to the Illinois State Police (ISP).

Auditors found that 51.7 percent of all reportable Cook County dispositions were not added to rap sheets. All types of dispositions, including 43.1 percent of guilty findings, were not added for crimes ranging from property and drug offenses to serious bodily harm. Auditors found three major reasons why dispositions were not added to rap sheets: 1) the arrest was not added; 2) tracking numbers were inaccurate and incomplete; and 3) statute citations were inaccurate and incomplete.

## Ad hoc committee

The Authority's Ad Hoc Committee on Disposition Reporting met recently to address the issues identified in the audit that impede disposition reporting and the overall completeness of criminal history records. "The audit identified serious problems in meeting the need for complete criminal history informa-

tion," said Ad Hoc Committee chairman Michael J. Waller. "The good news is that Cook County reporting agencies and the Illinois State Police are working closely together to address these problems in a timely manner," he said.

## Current initiatives

The ISP and the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County are implementing a plan to acquire dispositions from past cases that were not previously added to rap sheets. The ISP has created a computer program that should allow information submitted by the circuit clerk to pass new program edits and increase disposition postings. Based on these changes, the clerk's office is resubmitting dispositions to the ISP on felony cases dating back to 1980.

Also, the ISP has conducted an analysis of its files to determine whether there are trends within the data that point at problems with specific charges, arresting agencies, tracking numbers, and other data elements. Furthermore, the ISP has introduced a tracking system for determining which dispositions were rejected; from which circuit clerk's offices, and when they were sent back for correction. A help desk for local agencies to request assistance in locating disposition information is also being implemented.

New initiatives also are being taken at the local level. The Cook County Sheriff's Office is implementing the Criminal Ap-

prehension Booking System (CABS) which is an electronic booking system using livescan fingerprinting technology. More than 100 suburban Cook County police departments should be reporting arrests electronically by early 2000. The CABS system enables agencies to report fingerprints and photographs to the ISP and receive a quick response for positive identification of arrested persons. Most responses occur in 30 minutes or less.

The Cook County Information Committee, chaired by Circuit Clerk Aurelia M. Pucinski, is developing a plan to implement audit recommendations. The plan, which is expected to be completed in December 1999, will address three major issues: 1) how to insure complete arrest reporting; 2) how to produce accurate and complete tracking numbers; and 3) how to guarantee standardized usage of statute citations.

## Improvements expected in follow-up audit

Authority staff are in the planning stages for the next audit, which is expected to show improvements in disposition reporting as a result of the collaboration taking place. "The hope is that their efforts pay dividends in terms of better arrest and disposition reporting," Chairman Waller said. "The entire justice system operates more effectively based on sound, complete criminal history information." ■

— *By Sharyn Adams, research analyst with the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit*

## Probation, continued from page 6

cost of probation in Illinois, according to the AOIC Probation Services Division.

More than 100,000 adult and juvenile offenders are on probation in Illinois, supervised by 70 single- or multi-county probation departments.

Among the responsibilities of the Probation Services Division are the review

and approval of annual probation plans from local departments; collection and analysis of statewide probation data; administration of probation hiring and promotion policies; and the monitoring and evaluation of probation programs to ensure compliance with state standards. Programs around the state that are monitored include:

- Adult Investigation and Supervision,
- Intensive Probation Supervision, and
- Specialized programs for DUI, sex offenders, drug offenders, and domestic violence offenders. ■

— *By Daniel Dighton and Aurora Aguilar, Office of Public Information*

# Response to family violence improves with increased awareness

By Erica Morrow

Not so long ago, violence in the home was seen as a private, family issue, and not of concern to criminal justice professionals. As a result, abused women and children were ignored or not considered victims of criminal behavior. Only in the last few decades have social and political movements exposed the prevalence of physical and sexual abuse of women and children by other family members. These movements have created demands for corrective action and have generated increased interest in family violence research. Of initial concern was child abuse, and later, efforts to end other forms of family violence.

## Landmark report

In 1962, a group of medical doctors identified and recorded evidence of repeated, multiple bone fractures suffered by abused children and published an article on “battered child syndrome.” The publication of this article generated greater public awareness of child abuse and also fostered further research on child abuse by social scientists. Research on other forms of family violence such as intimate partner violence and elder abuse, however, is even more recent.

The seriousness and prevalence of intimate partner violence was called to attention by the women’s movement of the 1970s, and continued with the creation of hotlines and emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence. Civil procedures for obtaining restraining orders

also were developed. However, many victims reported that their abusers were almost never arrested, prosecuted, or sentenced. They also felt unprotected and further victimized by the courts and police. It was not until 1986 that Illinois began to criminalize domestic abuse through the establishment of the Domestic Violence Act. This law helped provide greater assistance to battered women, which has primarily come in the form of batterers’ treatment programs for abusers and shelters for women and their children.

In 1972, the first domestic violence service programs in Illinois were established in Carbondale and Urbana. By 1982, 21 programs were operating across the state. These programs were established to not only assist victims of domestic violence with protection, but also to educate women on their options, counsel them, and provide emotional support.

## Coalition established

In 1978 the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) was established. ICADV has assisted in program development, the distribution of grant funds received from state agencies, and the overall education of practitioners who deal with domestic violence issues. Since its inception, ICADV has lobbied for victim rights; provided education and training for domestic violence staff and volunteers; and participated in statewide efforts to develop both local family violence coordinating councils and a protocol for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges.

Since 1978, the number of individuals supported through ICADV members

has increased substantially. Between 1982 and 1998, the number of clients utilizing ICADV-affiliated programs rose from about 7,000 to nearly 82,000, said ICADV Director Cheryl Howard.

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## Training

Training among practitioners in the criminal justice system changed over the last few decades. The new approach reflected the experiences of police who saw that taking no action did not prevent further calls for assistance and put the victim in greater jeopardy. Therefore, instead of trying to advise the victim and offender or foster reconciliation as they had in the past, many police departments in Illinois favored arrest in these types of cases. Although arresting the offender is not mandatory by Illinois law, officers are mandated to take other action if no arrest is made.

In 1993, the Illinois Supreme Court approved a plan to establish Family Violence Coordinating Councils. The councils

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are able to use data reported to the state to analyze the needs of their communities and even compare the needs of neighboring communities with their own. The state council is committed to developing local councils at the judicial circuit level. The local councils advocate the prevention of family violence through strengthened services; comprehensive systems coordination and protocol development; public education and professional training; and information exchange.

## Lack of data

Because the issue of effective domestic violence data collection has only recently been addressed, little data exists to accurately describe family violence. The Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council's Data Collection Committee was established to enable the collection and analysis of existing family violence data and to identify and recommend strategies for the collection of other data which will more fully describe family violence in Illinois. The committee initiated the data collection project to expand and improve the quality of Illinois' family violence data. As part of this effort, Authority staff wrote a report that provides a description of the nature and extent of family violence in Illinois using existing statewide data, identifies gaps in these data, and recommends strategies to address them.

Although several states are attempting to collect and analyze family violence data, there has not been an attempt to integrate data from all sources. Illinois is the first state to collect family violence data from criminal justice agencies, as well as health and social service agencies, and combine the data into a comprehensive report. The result is a multidisciplinary approach to the analysis of family data in Illinois. As a result of this collaborative effort, policymakers and practitioners should be able to better address the problem of domestic violence. ■

# Victims' rights, services on rise with diligent advocacy

By Cristin Monti

When Dora Larson's 10-year-old daughter Vicki was raped and killed in 1979, Larson knew her life would never be the same. What she didn't know was that she was about to embark on a career devoted to assisting other crime victims.

A 15-year-old boy, who previously had been convicted of numerous sex offenses, was sentenced to life in prison for Vicki's death. Larson's ordeal led to her involvement in grassroots child advocacy efforts in her southern Illinois community. In 1985, she founded Protecting All Children Together (PACT), nationally recognized for its initiatives in fighting for tougher laws against sex offenders. She left PACT in 1997 to become coordinator of the new Victims' Services Unit of the Illinois Department of Corrections.

While Larson attests to having a positive experience with the court system, assistance provided today by the victims' services unit and other agencies was not available to her when she needed it 20 years ago. After the court's disposition in her daughter's case, Larson and her family were left on their own to pick up the pieces.

"When you are victimized, your whole world is shattered," she said. "Most of the time victims are law-abiding citizens who do everything by the rules. The loss of control is such an overwhelming feeling."

The IDOC victims' services unit was created in 1997 to provide information, assistance, and support to crime victims, including corrections employees who are victimized by prisoners in the workplace. Larson advocates putting the needs of victims before those of the perpetrators. "We'd been taking care of inmates for over 100 years," she said. "We thought it was time to take care of the victims."

Larson's two-person office assists more than 100 victims a month by phone and in person. They work with corrections officials to end harassing phone calls and letters to victims from perpetrators in prison. They also prepare clients for court proceedings, accompany them to court, and translate legal jargon. In addition, the unit collaborates with other agencies, including the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) and the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV), to accommodate the varied needs of its clients.

## Early victims' advocacy efforts

The victims' rights movement started to gain momentum in the mid-1970s. Advocates believe growing public awareness of social inequalities fueled efforts to assist victims in the community.

The Illinois Coalition of Women Against Rape, now known as the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault, was formed in 1977. ICASA advocates legislative reform and works for the elimination of oppressions that promote sexual violence. The coalition also allocates state and federal funds to sexual assault crisis centers, which enables the centers to hire advocates, counselors, and educators. In addition,

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ICASA has overseen the development of specialized services to meet the needs of children, teens, males, and adult survivors of child sexual abuse.

Victim service funding efforts began surfacing in the mid-1970s. In 1975, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration provided funds for prosecutor-based victim/witness programs in Illinois. Funding to support rape crisis centers and other victim service agencies dramatically increased when the Victims of Crime Act passed in 1984 and the Violence Against Women Act passed in 1995. Administered in Illinois by the Authority, these federal funds are used to support victims' service providers, while also helping to define advocacy service requirements and standards in Illinois. State general revenue funds also are used to support these programs.

When resources became available in 1982, ICASA opened 12 rape crisis centers in Illinois. Today 31 such service providers exist throughout the state. Sexual assault victim advocates say that while funding has increased to assist crime victims, a lack of education and public awareness continues to hinder efforts that lead to justice. The tendency to overlook victims' experiences contributes to underreporting of rape, and low arrest, prosecution, and conviction rates in sexual assault cases, said ICASA Director Polly Poskin, a victim advocate for more than 20 years.

"There has been a reluctance to protect and understand victims' rights in a criminal justice system that values the rights of the defendant over the rights of the victim," Poskin said. "As long as a positive outcome still hinges on her word against his, and we look at the victim's state of mind or her decisions as opposed to looking at the perpetrator's behavior, I think we will continue to minimize her reality."

### **Sexual assault victim advocacy**

Improving the way rape is responded to by law enforcement and in the courts is at the forefront of sexual assault victim advocacy efforts. Conveying to others in the criminal justice system that sexual assault

victims handle their plights in an individualized manner presents an ongoing challenge to the victims' rights movement. Because each victim handles trauma in his or her own way, advocates push for a victim-centered environment that allows individuals the time they need before contacting authorities, and control over their fate once they do.

Legislation was passed in August to extend the statute of limitations on sexual assault crimes for victims. Dubbed Melissa's Law, House Bill 329 extends the statute of limitations to 10 years after the date of the offense, or 10 years after the

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**"There has been a reluctance to protect and understand victims' rights in a criminal justice system that values the rights of the defendant over the rights of the victim."**

— *Polly Poskin*

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victim turns 18 if the victim is a minor at the time of the offense and if the perpetrator is a family member. While the statute extends the amount of time for prosecution, minors whose offenders are not family members are required to file a report with law enforcement before turning 21, and adults are required to report the offense within two years of the incident. The law takes effect Jan. 1, 2000.

"We have to stand firm on the victim's right to determine when to proceed (with criminal action)," Poskin said. "Otherwise, this person who has just had her choices taken away, who has lost control of her own life and body, is suddenly thrown into a position where others are making the decisions for her, and we can't allow that to happen."

In recent years, law enforcement officers have been more responsive to the role advocates play in assisting sexual assault victims, Poskin said. In addition, more efforts have been made toward counseling and public education standards that are uniform across the state.

### **Domestic violence victim advocacy**

The Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence was created in 1978, providing services to another segment of the victim population. Emergency shelters, educational initiatives, and programs that provide legal assistance and child advocacy have been designed and implemented by ICADV throughout the state.

In the past decade, a growing number of domestic violence victims have been using services available in their communities, especially programs that put advocates in the courthouse to assist those seeking orders of protection, ICADV Director Cheryl Howard said. Also, as the criminal justice system became more effective in handling domestic violence cases, advocates saw a rise in the number of women who fled to emergency shelters, she said.

Assisting domestic violence victims who are chemically dependent, have severe economic problems, who do not speak English, or have difficulty understanding the court system also is becoming more common for service providers. "Advocates have had to develop many additional skills to work around these issues," Howard said. "They have become very creative about knowing all the resources available in their local communities."

Domestic violence workers changed their strategy in the 1980s, swaying the focus from increasing the number of shelters in Illinois to stepping up education and prevention efforts. "We realized that no matter how many people we could serve in shelters, it wasn't going to end domestic violence in the long run," Howard said. "Women couldn't live in shelters forever."

## Trends in victims' services

Aside from a growth in the sheer number of programs and types of services available to crime victims, heightened coordination between service providers and law enforcement may be the most obvious trend in victim advocacy over the past two decades.

Collaborative efforts in victim services include a 24-hour crisis hotline established by ICASA in Chicago in 1998. Also, the Authority designed and implemented the InfoNet database in 1997, in collaboration with ICADV and ICASA, to improve the quality of victim service data in Illinois, facilitate and standardize data collection, and provide an integrated means of communication for victim service agencies. Advocates hope the information collected can be used to develop programs that further meet the needs of victims in the state.

When the Illinois Domestic Violence Act passed in 1986, advocates quickly learned that to take advantage of the laws it created, they had to coordinate their actions with police, prosecutors, and the courts – especially when attaining orders of protection.

But, like Poskin, Howard believes a reluctance exists within the criminal justice system, particularly in the courts, to become educated about the impact domestic violence has on victims and their children.

“Judges will sentence a perpetrator in criminal court for domestic battery and then turn around in civil court and grant him joint custody,” she said. “They look for what is in the best interest of the child and see that the father has more money. They do not understand that these perpetrators manipulate the situation, often going to civil court to get back at the mother.”

Providing restitution to crime victims in a timely manner represents another weakness in the system, advocates say. The Crime Victims Compensation Act was passed in 1973 to provide financial compensation to victims and their families for

funeral expenses, medical bills, counseling, and to offset lost earnings. Restitution also is a right under the Illinois Bill of Rights for Victims and Witnesses of Violent Crime, enacted in 1984. But service providers argue that a more expeditious process of attaining that compensation is needed for citizens to benefit from these laws, and to restore a sense of safety.

“Who buys the lock for the little lady on welfare whose house was broken into?” Larson asked. “And once she gets that lock, who is going to put it in for her? I just don’t think we’ve done enough to make victims feel safe again.”

## Increasing awareness

The victims' services unit and other agencies also aim to increase public awareness of the options victims have when a crime is committed against them. Larson said many victims do not know they can register with the Prisoner Review Board to be notified when their perpetrators will be set free.

Advocates agree that prosecutors and law enforcement officers have become more responsive to victims with each passing decade. Larson also believes mass media has begun to show more compassion for crime victims, noting that viewers see less television news footage of body bags being removed from crime scenes than in past years, and that the names of sexual assault victims no longer are published in newspapers.

Larson painfully recalled the way reporters and television cameramen exploited her and her family in the days that followed her tragedy. “After word got out that Vicki was murdered, a news crew drove right up our front yard,” Larson said. “Our neighbors ran over and pounded on the van to get them to leave.”

In an effort to sensitize reporters, Larson recently spoke of her experience as a crime victim before a gathering of the Illinois Press Association. She hopes television cameras will continue to be barred from the courtroom, since court

proceedings often provide the only time victims are fully protected from the media.

With the increase in community support, crime victims have grown more likely to seek help from outside sources. Howard said the rise in the number of cases referred by the Department of Children and Family Services alone has had a significant impact on her agency's workload. While more money has been allocated to accommodate the increase in needed services, advocacy programs still struggle to cover operating and infrastructure expansion costs.

“We have received money for special projects but programs are having trouble getting resources to pay rent, electricity, and basic salaries,” Howard said. “We have a hard time keeping bilingual people on our Latina project because other agencies pay more.”

## Looking to the future

Advocates predict continued and stronger collaboration between victim service agencies, law enforcement, the judiciary, and the community. In addition, Howard said advocates hope for more efforts aimed at specialized populations, such as deaf advocacy, services for women with mental illness, and senior citizens suffering elder abuse. Workers also have started to join forces with advocates in the medical field.

“The work that has been done for victims has been so positive, but we still have a long way to go to really make sure we've taken care of them right from the start,” Larson said. “There is always room for improvement.” ■

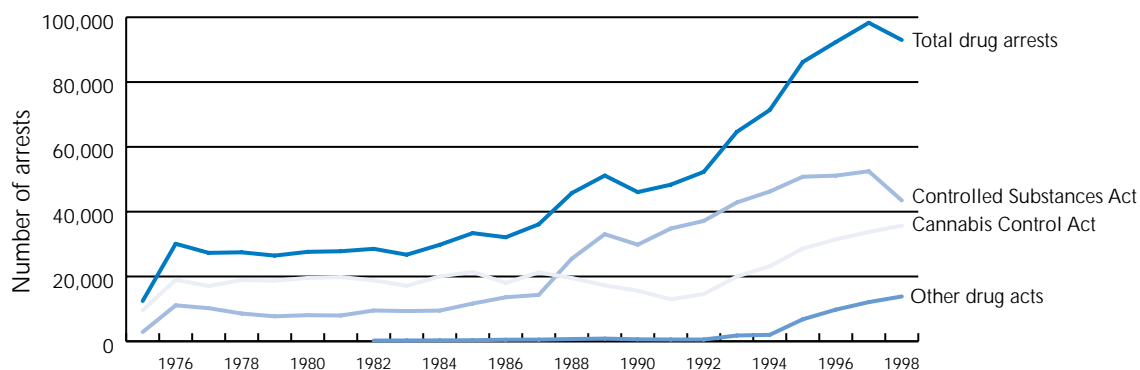
# 30 years of advancements in criminal justice technology

Tremendous advancements have occurred in the use of technology for criminal justice, particularly in the areas of communication and information systems. Following are some highlights of the past three decades.

- In 1976, the Criminal Justice Information Systems (CJIS) division of the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission signed an agreement with Hewlett Packard to lease an HP3000 minicomputer to test hardware and software and develop the Correctional Institutions Management Information System (CIMIS).
- In the late 1970s, police and prosecutors started using facsimile machines to transfer copies of fingerprints and criminal history information. A statewide telefacsimile network was developed in 1977, and upgrades in 1986 allowed users to transmit high-resolution digital images over standard telephone lines.
- Criminal history records have been stored on the central Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system since 1976. The system was redesigned in 1987 by the Illinois State Police to improve the accuracy and completeness of state rap sheets.
- In 1981, the Authority implemented the Police Information Management System (PIMS). The system was installed for on-site testing at the Joliet Police Department. PIMS eventually would allow police managers to determine personnel needs for shifts and beats, measure officer response times, and analyze crime activity.
- As a result of growing trends toward regional crime data access, the Regional Justice Information Service, a multi-agency data processing system based in St. Louis, Mo., was implemented in southwestern Illinois. REJIS was first utilized in 1982 by law enforcement agencies in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties to access criminal records from across state lines, and to combat criminal activity near the Mississippi River.
- The Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984 included the first federal computer crime law creating new offenses for improperly accessing information stored on computerized files.
- The Justice Assistance Act of 1984 was passed to aid state and local criminal justice initiatives. Designated to oversee the act in Illinois, the Authority allocated funds to computerized information and workload management systems for state's attorneys, sheriffs, and police agencies statewide.
- Also in the mid-1980s, the Chicago Police Department made efforts toward an automated system for filing and identifying fingerprints. The Automated Fingerprint Identification System was implemented in 1987 to help law enforcement agencies identify suspects quickly and accurately by matching fingerprints stored in a database with those found at the scene of a crime.
- In 1988 the Authority implemented the Area-wide Law Enforcement Radio Terminal System (ALERTS) to provide police with faster, more accurate, and more complete data transmission than voice radio. The Authority developed the in-car system to make mobile technology feasible for law enforcement agencies that could not otherwise afford it. The system allows access to the statewide Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS) and the FBI's National Crime Information Center, as well as car-to-car communications. Today, the Authority serves more than 300 ALERTS users.
- Advancements in forensics technology were seen in the early 1990s. The FBI created Drugfire, a computerized gun cartridge identification system, in 1992. In 1995, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms developed the Integrated Ballistics Imaging System, allowing examiners to analyze bullets and cartridges.
- Computer crimes increased with the onset of technological advancement, especially in the 1990s. The Internet Criminal Activity Unit was launched in 1997 by the Illinois Attorney General's Office to investigate on-line child exploitation. The unit collaborates with the multi-agency Internet Child Exploitation Task Force to combat Internet crime in the state. The Illinois State Police have implemented their own Computer Crimes Investigation Unit, staffed by specially trained investigators. ■

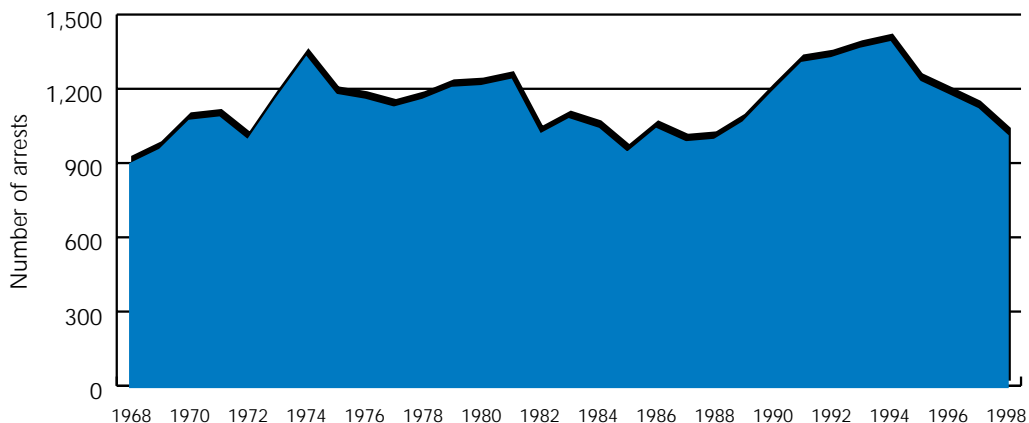
— *By Cristin Monti, Office of Public Information*

### Arrests for violations of Illinois' drug laws



Source: Illinois State Police

### 30 years of murder in Illinois



Source: Illinois State Police

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