

A Look at Homelessness in Alaska

Homelessness, and its impact on individuals, families, and society, is an issue of growing concern both nationally and in Alaska. In the U.S., about 1,594,000 individuals used an emergency shelter or transitional housing, or both, between October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008. On a single night in January 2008, the U.S. homeless population was estimated at 664,000 according to this annual Point-In-Time (PIT) count. These figures are part of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) "2008 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress" released in July 2009. HUD also reports that although the overall homeless rate was down one percent in 2008 from the prior year, the number of people in families using homeless shelters increased by 9 percent, a possible reflection of the effects of the current recession.

"Homelessness" is defined in the United States Code, Chapter 119, Subchapter I, §11302, "General definition of homeless individual":

... the term "homeless" or "homeless individual or homeless person" includes—

1. an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and
2. an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is —
 - A. a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare

hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);

B. an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or

C. a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

In 2008, Alaska ranked tenth among the 50 states in concentration of homeless people, with 0.24 percent of the total state estimated to be homeless (Table 1). Oregon was number one with 0.54 percent, Nevada number two at 0.48 percent, Hawaii was number three at 0.47 percent, and California was fourth ranked with 0.43 percent. Homelessness in the U.S. is concentrated in urban areas. But from September 2007 to September 2008, the number of homeless nationally in suburban and rural areas rose from 23 percent of the homeless population to 32 percent.

It is important to note that most homeless counts rely on homeless agency participation—which varies year to year. Any counts of homelessness are estimates. Each count is a snapshot of a given moment and reflects data collected for individuals at a particular time.

Who are the homeless in the U.S.?

Of the 1,594,000 homeless who used

Table 1. States with Highest Concentrations of Homeless People, 2008

Estimates of homeless persons as a percentage of state's total population.

Rank*	State	Homeless population	
		N	% of total population
1	Oregon	20,653	0.54 %
2	Nevada	12,610	0.48
3	Hawaii	6,061	0.47
4	California	157,277	0.43
5	Washington	21,954	0.34
6	New York	61,125	0.31
7	Colorado	14,747	0.30
8	Michigan	28,248	0.28
9	Florida	50,158	0.27
10	Alaska	1,646	0.24

* Rank is based on the number of homeless persons as a percentage of the state's total population.

Source of data: 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development

emergency shelter or transitional housing between October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008:

- 32% were homeless persons in families.
- 68% were homeless individuals.
- 64% of homeless adults were male.
- 62% of the homeless were a minority.
- 43% had a disability.
- 40% of all these individuals were between 31 and 50 years old.

Table 2. Subpopulations of Homeless Persons, by Type, Anchorage and Alaska, January 2009

	Anchorage						Alaska (includes Anchorage)					
	Sheltered ¹		Unsheltered ²		Total		Sheltered ¹		Unsheltered ²		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Chronically homeless	207	7.4 %	46	29.3 %	253	8.5 %	312	7.3 %	78	23.9 %	390	8.5 %
Chronic substance abuse ³	347	12.4	52	33.1	399	13.5	554	13.0	84	25.7	638	13.9
Victims of domestic violence	140	5.0	7	4.5	147	5.0	312	7.3	15	4.6	327	7.1
Veterans	190	6.8	25	15.9	215	7.3	257	6.0	37	11.3	294	6.4
Severely mentally ill	243	8.7	22	14.0	265	8.9	453	10.6	51	15.6	504	11.0
Unaccompanied youth (under 18 years)	45	1.6	0	0.0	45	1.5	115	2.7	6	1.8	121	2.6
Persons with HIV/AIDS	17	0.6	4	2.5	21	0.7	26	0.6	4	1.2	30	0.7
Total number of homeless	2,805		157		2,962		4,256		327		4,583	

Note: Percentages are calculated by averaging all available data points. This approach, a moving average, provides a clearer picture of the long-term trends in the homeless population. Veteran's Affairs homeless count was not included in this count, but generally adds 10 to 20 individuals to the count. Some homeless individuals are members of more than one subpopulation. Not all individuals were members of a subpopulation.

1. *Sheltered homeless* includes individuals living in emergency shelters, transitional shelters, living with extended family and/or friends, or temporarily living in motels.
2. *Unsheltered homeless* includes individuals living in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or on the street.
3. *Chronic homeless* is defined by the federal government as either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, or (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. A *disabling condition* is a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, a serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. An *episode of homelessness* is a separate, distinct, and sustained stay on the streets and/or in a homeless emergency shelter.

Source of data: "Anchorage Homeless Count—January 2009: Preliminary Count w/o Data from VA" and "Alaska Total Homeless Count—January 2009," Alaska Housing Finance Corporation

Estimates of subpopulations of the homeless based on the nationwide single-night January 2008 PIT count show:

- About 15% were veterans.
- Almost 13% were recent victims of domestic violence.
- Nearly 26% were persons with severe mental illness.
- 37% were persons with chronic substance abuse issues.
- 2% were unaccompanied youth under age 18.
- 4% were persons with HIV/AIDS.

The chronically homeless are another subpopulation. The federal definition of chronically homeless used by HUD states that a chronically homeless person is:

...either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

To be considered chronically homeless, a person must have been on the streets or in emergency shelter (i.e., not in transitional or permanent housing) during these stays.

The nationwide 2008 PIT count estimated that:

- About 19% of the *total homeless population* (individuals and families) are chronically homeless.
- About 30% of homeless *individuals* are chronically homeless.

The number of chronically homeless remained about the same from 2007 to 2008 nationally.

Who are the homeless in Alaska?

Based on the January 2009 single-night count, Alaska's homeless number 4,583 persons. (The total state population in July 2008 was estimated at 679,200.) This figure includes individuals who meet HUD's definition of homeless, as well persons temporarily housed in a motel or with family/friends:

- 93% (4,256 persons) were "sheltered," which includes living in emergency shelters, transitional shelters, with extended family and/or friends, or temporarily in motels.
- 7% (327 persons) were "unsheltered," which includes living in a place not meant for human habitation such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or on the street.
- Among the sheltered, 57.5% were households with children.
- Among the unsheltered, 23.5% were households with children.

This 2009 count (including sheltered and unsheltered persons) showed the following figures for homeless subpopulations (Table 2):

- Almost 9% are chronically homeless.
- Nearly 14% have chronic substance abuse issues.
- Over 7% are victims of domestic violence.
- About 6% are veterans.
- Approximately 11% are severely mentally ill.
- Nearly 3% are unaccompanied youth under the age of 18.
- Less than 1% have HIV/AIDS.

Table 3. Alaska Homeless Counts 2007–2009

Area	2007	2008	2009
Anchorage	1,653	2,199	2,962
Fairbanks	171	280	428
Kenai Peninsula Borough	191	153	166
Mat –Su Borough	127	95	472
City of Juneau	232	203	403
Homer	62		
Bethel	28		
Rest of state	190	381	152
Total homeless count	2,654	3,311	4,583
Anchorage population	282,375	284,994	—
Alaska population	674,510	679,200	—

Source of data: Alaska Homeless Counts, 2007, 2008, 2009, compiled and reported by Alaska Homeless Management Information System, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation; Population estimates from Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, <http://laborstats.alaska.gov/>

Where are the homeless in Alaska?

In 2009, the January single-night homeless count across the state showed the highest number of homeless was in Anchorage, with 2,962 homeless persons—nearly 65 percent of the state's total homeless population. The next highest number was in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough with 472 persons, followed by Fairbanks North Star Borough with 428 homeless, the City of Juneau with 403 homeless individuals, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough with 166 homeless. The number of homeless persons increased from 2007 to 2009 in all the above areas, with the exception of the Kenai Peninsula Borough. (See Table 3.)

Who are the homeless in Anchorage?

According to the January 2009 count, Anchorage, the state's most populous city, had 2,805 persons who were sheltered

Please see Homelessness, page 4

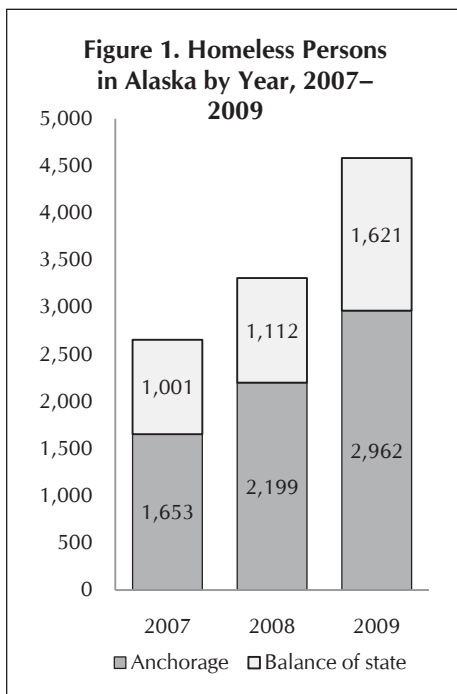
Table 4. Homeless Persons, by Family Status, Anchorage and Alaska, January 2009

	Anchorage						Alaska (includes Anchorage)					
	Sheltered ¹		Unsheltered ²		Total		Sheltered ¹		Unsheltered ²		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Persons in households without children	1,167	41.6 %	132	84.1 %	1,299	43.9 %	1,808	42.5 %	250	76.5 %	2,058	44.9 %
Persons in households with children (adults & children)	1,638	58.4	25	15.9	1,663	56.1	2,448	57.5	77	23.5	2,525	55.1
Total number of homeless	2,805		157		2,962		4,256		327		4,583	

Note: Percentages are calculated by averaging all available data points. This approach, a moving average, provides a clearer picture of the long-term trends in the homeless population. Veteran's Affairs homeless count was not included in this count, but generally adds 10 to 20 individuals to the count. Some homeless individuals are members of more than one subpopulation. Not all individuals were members of a subpopulation.

1. *Sheltered homeless* includes individuals living in emergency shelters, transitional shelters, living with extended family and/or friends, or temporarily living in motels.
2. *Unsheltered homeless* includes individuals living in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or on the street.

Source of data: "Anchorage Homeless Count—January 2009: Preliminary Count w/o Data from VA" and "Alaska Total Homeless Count—January 2009," Alaska Housing Finance Corporation



Homelessness

(continued from page 3)

homeless, and 157 who were unsheltered. (Anchorage's total population in July 2008 was estimated to be 284,994.) The count included households with and without dependent children:

- Over 25% of all homeless households in Anchorage had dependent children.
- There was a 49% increase in households with dependent children from 2008 to 2009.

A survey for HUD of Anchorage homeless persons over the period October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008 showed that of *sheltered persons in families*:

- 73% were female.
- 55% were under the age of 12.
- 29% were American Indian or Alaska Native.
- 20% were White.
- 18% were Black or African American.
- 21% were between the ages of 18 and 30 years.
- 16% were between the ages of 31 and 50 years.
- 34% stayed in shelters or transitional housing for 1 to 3 months.

Data for *individuals in shelters* show:

- 80% were male.
- 42% were American Indian or Alaska Native.
- 39% were White.
- 13% were Black.
- Over half (55%) were between the ages of 31 and 50 years.

- 27% were between the ages of 51 and 61 years.
- 68% stayed in shelters or transitional housing for a week or less.

Anchorage's homeless subpopulations include sheltered and unsheltered persons. (See Table 4.) According to the January 2009 count of Anchorage's homeless population:

- Nearly 9% are chronically homeless.
- Over 13% have chronic substance abuse issues.
- Approximately 5% are victims of domestic violence.
- Close to 7% are veterans.
- About 9% are severely mentally ill.
- Close to 2% are unaccompanied youth under the age of 18.
- Less than 1% have HIV/AIDS.

Single-night homeless counts from 2007, 2008, and 2009, both statewide and in Anchorage, show a definite rise in the overall number of homeless. (See Figure 1.) In 2008, more than 20 percent of sheltered and unsheltered individuals in Anchorage, and nearly 19 percent of persons statewide met the definition of chronically homeless. However, the 2009 January count showed a drop in chronic homelessness to about 9 percent both in Anchorage and statewide.

Members of the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness have looked at this decrease in the percentage of the chronically homeless. Coalition members have suggested that factors for the difference in the rates for 2008 and 2009 may include: 1) temporary closure of some supportive housing resources in 2008 which contributed to a rise in numbers for that year, and 2) in 2009, the increasing number of chronically homeless mentally ill persons who are in the judicial and correctional systems, rather than in the community at large. Homeless service providers also suggest that earlier intervention with the homeless may be having an effect and that because episodes of homelessness may be fewer or farther apart in time, fewer number of homeless meet the definition of "chronically homeless" (see page 2 for the federal definition).

The Anchorage School District (ASD) tracks the number of homeless students in grades Kindergarten through 12, and uses the definition of homeless children and youth found in the 1987 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act which was reauthorized in January 2002 through the No Child Left Behind Act. The term "homeless children and youths" is defined in Title VII, Subtitle B of the McKinney-Vento Act:

[Homeless children and youths

Table 5. Homeless Students Enrolled in Anchorage School District, 2004–2009

Year	Total student population	Homeless students	
		N	% of total student population
2004–05	49,454	1,052	2.1 %
2005–06	49,589	1,767	3.6
2006–07	49,068	1,637	3.3
2007–08	48,457	1,752	3.6
2008–09	48,440	2,010	4.1

Note: Anchorage School District defines *homeless* according to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Assistance Act of 2001. ASD has improved its identification process since the 2004–2005 school year, resulting in a significant percentage increase in 2005–2006.

Source of data: Anchorage School District, 2009

include] ...individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...and includes (i) children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement...(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and (iv) migratory children....

The percentage of homeless students in Anchorage has risen steadily from 3.3 percent in the school year 2006–2007 to 3.6 percent in 2007–2008, to 4.1 percent for 2008–2009. This translates to a total of 2,010 homeless students in 2008–2009. (See Table 5.)

Most recently, statistics on the homeless in Anchorage were collected at the July 31, 2009 Project Homeless Connect coordinated by the Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness. Project Homeless Connect is a "one-day, one-stop event to provide housing, services, and hospitality in a convenient one-stop model directly to people experiencing homelessness in Anchorage" (www.anchoraghomeless.org/project-homeless-connect). The day-long event provided services to 646 individuals:

- 62% were male.
- 53% were Alaska Native as identified by Alaska Native Regional Corporation.
- 25% were White.
- 7% were Black or African American.

Table 6. Homeless Persons by Year, Anchorage and Alaska, 2007–2009

	2007			2008			2009		
	Sheltered ¹	Unsheltered ²	Total	Sheltered ¹	Unsheltered ²	Total	Sheltered ¹	Unsheltered ²	Total
Anchorage	1,521	132	1,653	2,097	102	2,199	2,805	157	2,962
Balance of state (excluding Anchorage)	942	59	1,001	1,020	92	1,112	1,451	170	1,621
Alaska total	2,463	191	2,654	3,117	194	3,311	4,256	327	4,583

Note: Percentages are calculated by averaging all available data points. This approach, a moving average, provides a clearer picture of the long-term trends in the homeless population. Veteran's Affairs homeless count was not included in this count, but generally adds 10 to 20 individuals to the count.

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Source of data: "Anchorage Homeless Count—January 2009: Preliminary Count w/o Data from VA" and "Alaska Total Homeless Count—January 2009," Alaska Housing Finance Corporation

- 22% reported being homeless more than one month and up to six months.
- 24% reported having slept the previous night in "a place not meant for human habitation."
- 21% reported a chronic substance abuse issue.
- 17% reported a mental illness.
- 26% had a physical disability.
- 23% of the females stated they had been victims of domestic violence.

The Alaska Council on the Homeless, the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (there are regional coalitions across the state), the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, HUD, and the Anchorage Coalition on Homelessness are among the agencies looking at ways to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to homeless individuals and families. The Alaska Council on the Homeless, a state entity established in 2004, adopted a "10 Year Plan to End Long Term Homelessness in Alaska" in May of this year. To assist regional areas of the state, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation is working with local coalitions to develop their own "10 Year Plans" that will interface with the State Council's "Plan."

As part of the State Council's "10 Year Plan," a program is in development through Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to provide rental assistance to another group that has been identified as being at risk for

Faculty News

Dr. Sharon Chamard has been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor and awarded tenure in the Justice Center in the UAA College of Health and Social Welfare. Dr. Chamard holds a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from Rutgers-Newark and has been a Justice Center faculty member since 2003.

homelessness: persons with disabilities who are being discharged from correctional facilities. In addition, the Alaska Council on Homelessness reports data from the Department of Corrections indicating that overall about 8,000 persons are released from state correctional facilities each year with "no identified housing arrangement."

The Municipality of Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services published an "Overview of Homelessness in Anchorage, Alaska" in July 2009 which includes statistics from specific shelters in Anchorage. In examining shelter numbers from January through June 2009, the report found that AWAIC (Abused Women's Aid in Crisis) and Clare House were operating over capacity, but other Anchorage shelters

Justice Center Research Overview

The Justice Center has launched a new monthly publication, *Justice Center Research Overview*. These brief papers cover a specific justice-related topic and provide a snapshot of the most recent information. Recent *Overviews* include:

- Batterer Intervention Programs (BIPs)
- Violent and Property Offenses in Anchorage, 2003–2007
- Victim-Suspect Relationship in Sexual Assault Cases Reported to Law Enforcement: Alaska and National Data
- Sex Offender Registries and Notification Programs
- Violent and Property Offenses in Anchorage, 2003–2008

The *Research Overviews* are available online at <http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/overview/index.html>. If you would like to receive an electronic copy monthly by e-mail, please send an e-mail to justiceresearch@uaa.alaska.edu.

were not. The Municipality has also issued a 2008 redraft of Anchorage's "Ten-Year Plan on Homelessness," and Anchorage Mayor Dan Sullivan recently released a "Mayor's Strategic Action Plan" on chronic public inebriates and related issues of homelessness.

National, state, and local agencies continue to collect data on the homeless, the causes and prevention of homelessness, and explore ways to assist those individuals and families experiencing homelessness.



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Editor: Barbara Armstrong
Editorial Board: Allan Barnes, Sharon Chamard,
Ron Everett, Pamela Kelley, Alan McKelvie,
Brad Myrstor, Deborah Periman, Marny
Rivera, André Rosay
Typesetting and Layout: Melissa Green

Justice Center, André Rosay, Director

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University of Alaska Anchorage
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(907) 786-1810
(907) 786-7777 fax
ajjust@uaa.alaska.edu
<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/just/>

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Victim Service Training Needs: State Victim Assistance Academy

André B. Rosay

State Victim Assistance Academies offer coursework and training in victimology, victims' rights, and victim services designed to meet the needs of victim service providers and allied professionals. These state programs are modeled on National Victim Assistance Academies presented by the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and are specifically tailored to the needs of individual states. Currently, 36 states, including Alaska, receive federal funding to assist with planning and presenting State Victim Assistance Academies.

With the help of both state and federal funding, Victims for Justice, a community-based crime victim service organization located in Anchorage, began in 2008 to develop a plan for a State Victim Assistance Academy for Alaska. An important first step in the development of a State Victim Assistance Academy is to conduct a needs assessment survey to identify the most important training needs to address in coursework. In this short article, we present the results of a

needs assessment survey conducted by the Justice Center in partnership with Victims for Justice.

A convenience sample of 153 individuals working in the area of victim assistance was conducted. Most respondents indicated that they worked for victim service agencies (41%) and/or health and human service agencies (35%). Ten to fifteen percent of respondents also indicated that they worked for law enforcement agencies, educational agencies, and/or medical agencies. Forty-three (30%) of respondents were from Anchorage and 46 (32%) were from hubs and villages off the road system. Over half (66%) of the respondents had five or more years of victim services experience, and 30 percent had more than fifteen years of experience.

The survey asked respondents to indicate both basic and advanced training needs for 40 different subject areas. The most often noted basic training needs included identity theft (46%), internet crimes (42%), the impact of media on crime victims (40%), community justice (38%), hospital/legal

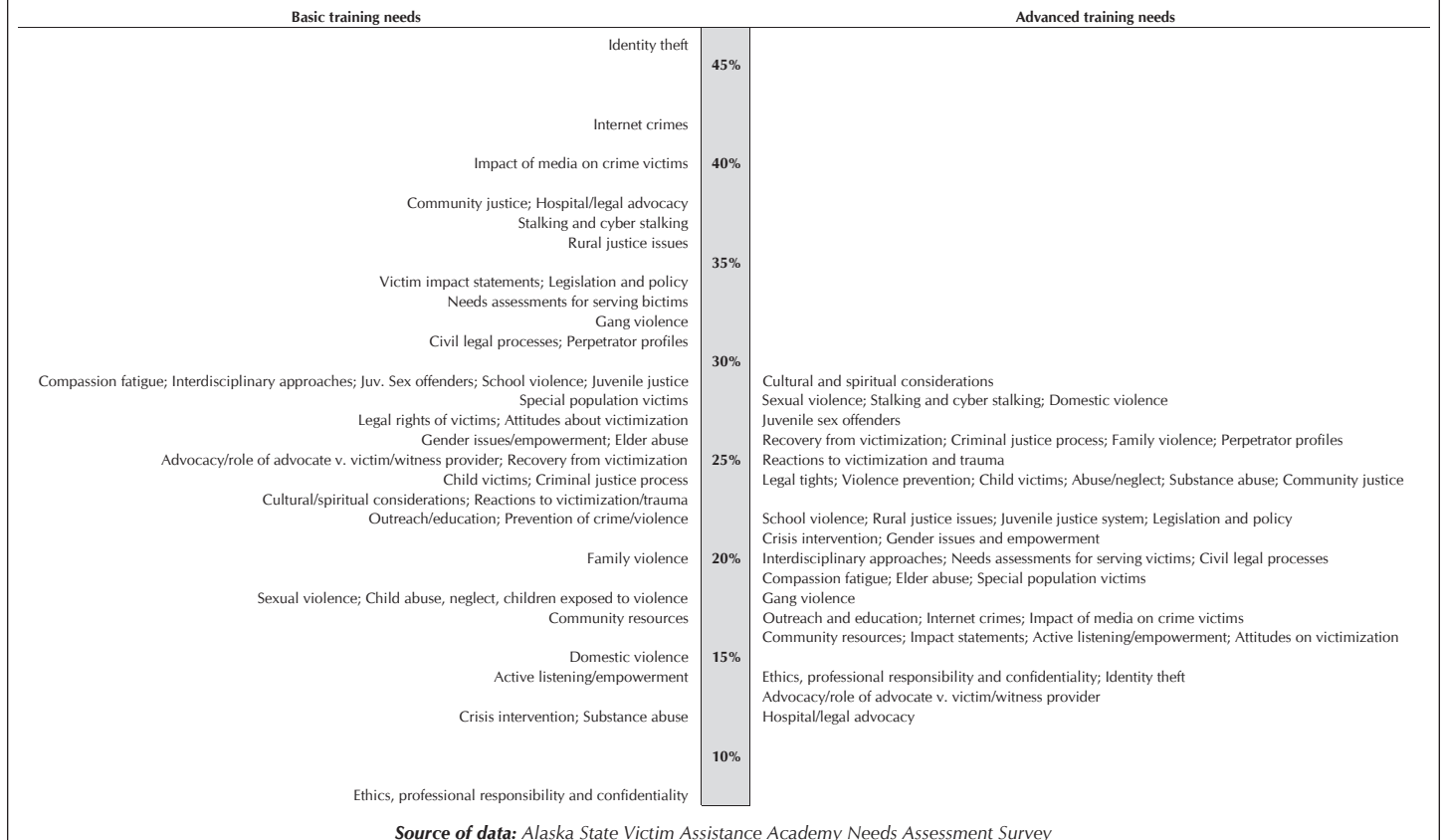
advocacy (38%), stalking and cyber stalking (37%), and rural justice issues (36%). The most often noted advanced training needs included cultural and spiritual considerations (29%), sexual violence (28%), stalking and cyber stalking (28%), domestic violence (28%), juvenile sex offenders (27%), recovery from victimization (26%), the criminal justice process (26%), perpetrator profiles (26%), family violence (26%), and reactions to victimization and trauma (25%). Four topics were noted as important for both basic and advanced training by over 25% of respondents. These four topics included stalking and cyber stalking, juvenile sex offenders, recovery from victimization, and perpetrator profiles.

Results from this survey will influence the development of the Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy. The first Academy is planned for summer 2010. Readers interested in the Academy should contact Victims for Justice (www.victimsforjustice.org).

André Rosay is Director of the Justice Center.

Figure 1. Basic and Advanced Training Needs

Percent of respondents indicating need.



Source of data: Alaska State Victim Assistance Academy Needs Assessment Survey

Drug use
(continued from page 1)

in the month preceding the offense for which they were currently jailed, and were they under the influence of drugs/alcohol at the time they committed the offense for which they were now serving time. In addition, respondents provided their perceptions of the drug/alcohol intoxication of victims.

The Association Between Drug Use and Criminal Offending

The correlation between drug/alcohol use and crime is well established and not in dispute among either criminal justice practitioners or researchers. Regardless of the data sources used, drug use is shown to be associated with criminal offending. Consider, for example:

- A recent analysis of NSDUH data published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration revealed that 60 percent of those arrested for a serious crime in the past year also used at least one illicit drug; the comparable figure for illicit drug use for those who were not arrested for a serious crime in the past year was 13 percent.

- Data from the SISFC show that 32 percent of state prisoners and 26 percent of federal prisoners committed their offense under the influence of drugs. Roughly half

of each group (56% and 50% respectively) reported using drugs within a month of their arrest.

- According to SILJ data, 28 percent of convicted individuals incarcerated in local jails were under the influence of drugs at the time of their offense; 54 percent used drugs within a month of their arrest.

- NCVS data show that one in four victims of violent crime reported that the person who attacked them was under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

However, the fact that drug use and criminal offending are correlated does not necessarily mean that they are causally related. In fact, there is a consensus among researchers that there is no empirical support for a direct causal relationship between drug use and criminal behavior. The connection between drug use and crime is much more complex.

The challenge for researchers is to document this complexity and develop empirically verifiable explanations for the drug use-crime connection. Just how the information collected by the ADAM program can contribute to this effort is outlined below.

ADAM

Funded by the National Institute of Justice, the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program was a national, multi-site drug monitoring research platform designed

to collect detailed information on alcohol/drug use behaviors among those booked into local jails and charged with violation of at least one local or state criminal statute. (Those who were charged exclusively for federal offenses, as well as those booked into a facility for non-criminal violations, were not eligible for inclusion in the study.) Researchers at each site entered local jails for 14 consecutive days four times a year to conduct face-to-face interviews. Anchorage was an ADAM site from 1999 to 2003.

ADAM collected six broad categories of information: (1) arrest and charge information, (2) demographics, (3) drug/alcohol use, (4) drug/alcohol dependence and abuse, (5) drug market information, and (6) urine sample analyses. Arrest and charge information was obtained from official booking documents. All demographic, drug use, and drug market information was self-reported by arrestees.

Much of ADAM's utility for the study of the drug use-crime connection is not due to its sample population, its collection of lifetime, past-year, and past-month drug use data, or even the information it collects about the extent to which offenders were under the influence of illicit drugs when they committed crimes. (The NSDUH, MTF, NCVS, SILJ, and SISFC studies include all or some of these information categories.)

Please see *Drug use*, page 8

Figure 1. ADAM Drug Use Calendar

Sample data included for purposes of illustration.

CALENDAR												COUNT PRIOR TO 12 MONTHS	
Oct 2002	Nov 2002	Dec 2002	Jan 2003	Feb 2003	Mar 2003	Apr 2003	May 2003	Jun 2003	Jul 2003	Aug 2003	Sep 2003		
Halloween	HOLIDAYS	HOLIDAYS	New Year						4th of July				
	birthday	HOLIDAYS			son's birthday					wife's birthday			
		OTHER EVENTS		beer festival				anniversary	lost job				
H1 1	H2 1	H3 1	H4 1	H5 1	H6 1	H7 1	H8 1	H9 1	H10 1	H11 1			
S1 1	S2 15	S3 1	S22 1	S23 2	S24 2	S25 2	S26 1	S27 1	S28 1	S29 2	S30 1	S31 2	S32 3
S4 1	S5 16	S6 1	S33 0	S34 1	S35 0	S36 0	S37 0	S38 0	S39 1	S40 1	S41 0	S42 1	S43 1
S7 0	S8	S9	S44	S45	S46	S47	S48	S49	S50	S51	S52	S53	S54
S10 1	S11 20	S12 0	S55	S56	S57	S58	S59	S60	S61	S62	S63	S64	S65
S13 0	S14	S15	S66	S67	S68	S69	S70	S71	S72	S73	S74	S75	S76
S16 0	S17	S18	S77	S78	S79	S80	S81	S82	S83	S84	S85	S86	S87

Drug use levels used in the calendar are based on the number of days per week that the arrestee had 5 or more drinks of alcohol or used any drugs:

0 = none; 1 = 1 day/week (1-7 days/month); 2 = 2-3 days/week (8-12 days/month); 3 = > 3 days/week (13-30 days/month)

Source: Arrestee Drug Use Monitoring Program questionnaire

Drug use

(continued from page 7)

Rather, ADAM's unique contribution was the use of a calendaring methodology to capture detailed month-by-month information on the intensity of drug use by arrestees for the entire 12-month period preceding their arrest. Because of its use of drug use calendars, ADAM was unique in its ability to capture critical information on individual drug use patterns prior to the crime event that precipitated an arrest. This data collection strategy enables researchers to better contextualize crime incidents and to examine the drug use-crime connection developmentally, as a dynamic process.

From a methodological standpoint, the use of a calendar is beneficial because it improves the reliability and validity of retrospective data. Calendaring accomplishes this by helping respondents to accurately recall events through the use of visual cues and related life events, and to sequence events over time. Researchers have successfully gathered drug use data going back as far as five years using this technique.

The ADAM drug use calendar (see Figure 1) was administered to all arrestees who reported using illicit drugs within the past year. At the outset, respondents were asked to note significant life events in the calendar—for example, religious holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and major happenings in their life that occurred in the past year. These significant life events were then used as reference points by respondents to aid with recall of their drug/alcohol use. Arrestees were first asked if they had used a particular drug in a particular month, then if they responded in the affirmative, they were asked to provide their best estimate of the frequency of their drug use (see Figure 1 for use level definitions). Interviewers then recorded an arrestee's use level for each month. Interviewers worked through the calendar from top to bottom, from left to right. Arrestees were asked about each drug singly and in sequence.

In addition to providing self-reported drug use, arrestees were also asked to provide a urine sample. (Across the four-year period 2000–2003, an average of 86.4 percent of arrestees who were asked for a urine sample provided one.) These urine samples were immediately sent to an independent laboratory for enzyme multiplied immunoassay testing (EMIT), a technique designed to detect the presence of drugs or drug metabolites in urine. Separate immunoassays were designed to detect one particular drug or class of drugs. Although the ADAM program tested for ten drugs in all, this article focuses on arrestees' use of four of the five

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Male Arrestees in ADAM Project Compared with 2000 U.S. Census Data for Anchorage

Age	Male arrestees in ADAM project, 2000–2003		2000 Census data for Anchorage Municipality	
	Range	Mean	See notes for basis of figures.	
	18–59 years	30.8 years	N	Percent
Race				
	N	Percent	N	Percent
White	511	47.4 %	64,042 ¹	77.0 %
Black or African American	152	14.1	4,900 ¹	5.9
Alaska Native or American Indian	332	30.8	4,843 ¹	5.8
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Island	25	2.3	617 ¹	0.7
Asian	19	1.8	3,701 ¹	4.4
Other	40	3.7	1,839 ¹	2.2
Multiracial (2 or more races) *	—	—	3,236 ¹	3.9
Total	1,079		83,178¹	
Hispanic origin				
No	1,060	92.3 %	78,977 ¹	94.9 %
Yes	88	7.7	4,201 ¹	5.1
Total	1,148		83,178¹	
U.S. citizenship				
No	39	3.4 %	—	—
Yes	1,118	96.6	239,005 ²	91.8 %
Total	1,157		—	—
Highest educational attainment				
High school or GED	553	47.8 %	19,731 ³	24.6 %
Vocational or trade school	118	10.2	— ³	
Some college or 2-year associate's degree	228	19.7	29,317 ³	36.5
Four-year college degree or higher	36	3.1	23,681 ³	29.5
No degree	223	19.3	7,569 ³	9.4
Total	1,158		80,298³	
Current work status				
Full-time (35+ hours/week)	485	41.9 %	62,429 ⁴	71.1 %
Part-time	91	7.9		
Active military	1	0.1	7,073 ⁵	7.3
Employed but out due to	12	1.0	5,328 ⁴	6.1
Seasonal work, not working	90	7.8		
Unemployed, looking	293	25.3	13,201 ⁴	15.0
Unemployed, not looking	94	8.1		
Full-time homemaker	8	0.7	—	—
In school only	11	0.9		
Retired	3	0.3	—	—
Disabled for work	64	5.5		
Other	6	0.5		
Total	1,158		88,031⁶	
Current legal marital status				
Single, never married	713	61.6 %	32,052 ⁷	32.2 %
Divorced	177	15.3	11,102 ⁷	11.2
Legally separated	41	3.5	1,768 ⁷	1.8
Widowed	16	1.4	1,217 ⁷	1.2
Married (including common law)	210	18.2	50,493 ⁷	50.7
Other *	—	—	2,862 ⁷	2.9
Total	1,157		99,494⁷	

* Category not included in ADAM statistics.

- Figures for age and Hispanic origin based on 2000 U.S. Census figures for males in the Anchorage Municipality aged 18–59 years (N = 83,178).
- In U.S. Census data, U.S. citizenship is not broken down by sex. Hence, figures given here represent all U.S. citizens, both male and female, in 2000 U.S. Census, representing 91.8% of the total Anchorage Municipality population (N = 260,283).
- Figures for highest educational attainment based on 2000 U.S. Census figures for males in the Anchorage Municipality over 25 years of age (N = 80,298).
- Figures for current work status (except active military) based on 2000 U.S. Census figures for males in the Anchorage Municipality aged 16–59 years (N = 87,851).
- Figures for active military status based on 2000 U.S. Census figures for males in the Anchorage Municipality 16 years of age or older (N = 97,287).
- Total for current work status based on 2000 U.S. Census figures for males in the Anchorage Municipality aged 16–59 years plus males on active military status of 60 years or older.
- Figures for current legal marital status based on 2000 U.S. Census figures for males in the Anchorage Municipality 15 years of age or older (N = 99,494).

Source of data: ADAM data; 2000 U.S. Census

Table 2. Percentage of Drug-Using Male Arrestees Charged with at Least One Offense, 2000–2003

Year	N	Average number of charges	Felony	Violent offense	Property offense	Driving under the influence (DUI)	Drug/all	Traffic	Probation/parole violation	Bench warrant
2000	345	1.53 charges	38.3 %	28.4 %	24.1 %	15.1 %	3.5 %	15.9 %	21.7 %	13.9 %
2001	320	1.58	35.9	30.3	21.6	17.5	5.6	18.1	15.9	12.8
2002	280	1.73	30.0	37.9	22.5	18.6	6.8	16.8	15.4	6.4
2003	213	1.71	31.0	28.6	19.2	14.1	8.0	20.7	15.5	17.8

Source of data: ADAM data

drug categories specified by the National Institute on Drug Abuse for routine workplace drug testing, commonly referred to as the “NIDA-5” panel: marijuana, cocaine (both crack and powder), methamphetamine, and heroin (opiates). (The fifth NIDA-5 drug is phencyclidine (PCP).)

ADAM Sample

The sample of arrestees examined here is limited to adult males who reported using one or more of the following illicit drugs within a year of their arrest: marijuana, crack cocaine, powder cocaine, methamphetamine or heroin. Table 1 provides a demographic portrait of this sample.

Age. Respondents in the sample were typically young. The three most frequent ages reported by this group of arrestees were 19 years (5.4% of the entire sample), 20 years (6.1%), and 21 years (5.8%). The average age was 30.8 years. Because the study was limited to adults, the youngest members of the sample were 18 (4.6%); the oldest respondent was 59 years of age.

Race/Ethnicity. A preponderance of arrestees (47.4%) characterized themselves as White; nearly a third (30.8%) reported Alaska Native/American Indian ancestry; one in every seven described themselves as Black or African American. Slightly more than two percent reported Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander heritage; less than two percent identified themselves as Asian; and slightly less than four percent indicated some other racial group membership. In excess of 90 percent of the sample was non-Hispanic. More than 95 percent claimed American citizenship.

Educational attainment. The data presented in Table 1 reveal significant educational deficits among male arrestees in Anchorage. Nearly one-fifth of the sample had not earned a high school diploma or equivalent degree. An additional 48 percent of the sample had earned a high school diploma or GED, but had gone no further in their formal educational careers. One in ten reported completing some form of

vocational training. Nearly 20 percent of the sample reported having some college education or two-year associate degree. A scant three percent of the sample had attained a four-year college degree or higher.

Employment. Only half of the sample were active participants in the labor market. More than 40 percent of the sample were able to work, but were not employed on the day of arrest. Notably, one out of every five of those who were unemployed had dropped out of the workforce entirely, having quit looking for work. Among those able to work, but not working, were small numbers of homemakers (0.7%), full-time students (0.9%), and retirees (0.3%). Just over five percent of the sample was unable to work due to some form of disability.

Marital status. Nearly two-thirds of the sample (61.6%) reported their marital status as *single, never married*. Approximately 18 percent of the sample was married (including common law marriage) on the day of arrest; another 18 percent were separated or divorced. Just over 1 percent of the sample was widowed.

Overall, the demographic composition of the adult male arrestees differed greatly from that of the overall population of adult males residing in Anchorage. Minority group members were disproportionately represented in the adult male arrestee population. This pattern is particularly striking for Alaska Natives, who represent approximately 30 percent of the adult male arrestee population, but less than 6 percent of all adult males in the city. African Americans were also disproportionately represented in Anchorage’s adult male arrestee population, as were those of Hispanic background.

Arrestees also demonstrated notable human and social capital deficits when compared to the general adult male population. Those booked into jail were twice as likely to not have earned at least a high school diploma or equivalent degree. They were roughly one-tenth as likely to have completed a four-year college degree or higher. Compared to the general adult male population, arrestees were much less likely

to be active participants in the labor force. Fully half of the arrestee sample was not working on the day of their arrest. (Eight percent of the sample had dropped out of the workforce entirely, reporting their work status as “unemployed, not looking for work.”) Finally, arrestees were much less likely to be married than adult males more generally.

Criminal Offending

Detailed information for the three most-serious charges leveled against each arrestee was obtained from booking records and charge documents. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the seven offense categories most often observed.

In general, drug-using male arrestees were booked into jail for non-violent misdemeanors and other low-level violations (see Table 2). More than half (54.7%) of all adult males booked into jail in Anchorage were charged with a single offense, just over a quarter (27.8%) were charged with two offenses, and 17.5 percent of were charged with three or more. Approximately a third of all arrestees were accused of felonies. Between a quarter and a third were booked into jail for one or more violent offenses, and roughly one-fifth were arrested for at least one property crime. One out of every six arrestees was jailed for violating the terms of their probation or parole. In excess of 15 percent of male arrestees were booked into jail for driving under the influence. A substantial number of arrestees were jailed because a bench warrant had been issued for their arrest (most frequently for failing to appear in court). Notably, only about five percent of this sample of drug users were arrested for committing a specific drug or alcohol offense.

Arrestee Drug Use

Urinalysis results

The results of the EMIT screening results

Please see *Drug use*, page 10

Drug use

(continued from page 9)

for marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin are presented in Table 3. These data depict the prevalence of use for each of these drugs at the time of arrest (see Table 4 for EMIT detection periods for each drug).

Marijuana was the most common illicit drug used by Anchorage’s male arrestee population, with more than half of all male arrestees testing positive in 2003. Approximately a fifth of men booked into the Anchorage jail tested positive for cocaine. Less than ten percent tested positive for heroin (or other opiates—see note at bottom of table), and roughly one percent tested positive for methamphetamine.

In addition to illustrated overall prevalence rates, the data presented in Table 3 also show a pattern of increased drug use among male arrestees for each of the four drugs examined. Between 2000 and 2003 the percentage of arrestees testing positive for marijuana increased 41.8 percent, the percentage testing positive for cocaine increased 21.1 percent, the percentage testing positive for heroin (or other opiates) increased 125 percent, and the percentage testing positive for methamphetamine increased by 400 percent (though, importantly, the base rate was very small).

Self-reported drug use

Table 5 presents arrestees’ self-reported use for each of the five drugs of interest at four points in time. From left-to-right, the table presents the percentage of the sample that used at least one of the five drugs at least once in their lifetime, in the past year, in the past month, and in the past week. These data demonstrate two empirically distinct drug use patterns. The first is what might be termed the “hierarchy of preference.” Marijuana is, by far, the most frequently used drug among adult male arrestees who

Table 3. Percentage of Male Arrestees Testing Positive for Drug Use, 2000–2003

Year	Total sample	Arrestees providing urine sample		Marijuana	Cocaine	Methamphetamine ¹	Opiates ²
		N	% of total				
2000	595	493	82.9 %	36.3 %	21.3 %	0.2 %	3.2 %
2001	559	464	83.0	37.2	19.6	0.8	4.7
2002	437	394	90.2	49.2	19.2	1.5	4.1
2003	323	291	90.1	51.5	25.8	1.0	7.2

Note: ADAM makes use of enzyme multiplied immunoassay testing (EMIT) to detect the presence of drugs or drug metabolites in urine samples. Each immunoassay is designed to detect one particular drug or class of drugs.

- To ensure a positive test for methamphetamine, EMIT screens testing positive for amphetamines are subjected to a confirmatory gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) test.
- A positive EMIT screen indicates only the presence of morphine and/or opiate metabolites. The use of opiates other than heroin (for example morphine or codeine) cannot be ruled out.

Source of data: ADAM data

use drugs. Among those who used drugs in the past year, more than 97 percent reported using marijuana at least once in their lifetime. Between half and two-thirds of drug users reported using powder cocaine at least once. Slightly fewer had used crack cocaine. Roughly a third of drug-using arrestees had used methamphetamine on at least one occasion; about one in every seven had experience with heroin.

Drug use over time

We come now to the examination of arrestees’ drug use patterns for the year preceding their arrest. The data presented here come from the drug use calendars administered to all arrestees who reported using illicit drugs within 12 months of their arrest. For each month in the preceding year, arrestees were

asked to provide their best estimate of their drug use level (“0”=*No drug* use, “1”= drug use on 1–7 days of the month, “2”= drug use on 8–12 days of the month, “3”=drug use on 13–30 days of the month). Figure 2 presents the average use level for each drug, for each month preceding arrest.

On average, the marijuana users demonstrated the highest average use levels, surpassing even heroin users (except for the

Table 4. Drug Testing: Cutoff Levels and Detection Periods for Urinalysis

Drug	Cutoff level ¹	Detection period ²
Cocaine	300 ng/ml	2–3 days
Marijuana	50 ng/ml	7 days (infrequent use) 30 days maximum (chronic use)
Methamphetamine	300 ng/ml	2–4 days
Opiates	300 ng/ml	2–3 days

- The cutoff level is the amount of the drug below which the amount is considered undetectable and the result is negative; measured in nanograms per milliliter.
- The detection period is the number of days after ingestion during which the drug can be detected in the body.

Source: ADAM 2000 Annual Report

Table 5. Self-Reported Drug Use by Male Arrestees, 2000–2003

	Lifetime	Past 12 months	Past 30 days	Past week
Marijuana				
2000	96.8 %	85.7 %	68.7 %	59.7 %
2001	97.5	89.4	74.4	61.5
2002	97.9	92.5	74.6	63.2
2003	99.1	91.5	76.1	63.4
Powder cocaine				
2000	64.6 %	33.3 %	20.0 %	13.0 %
2001	57.2	22.2	14.4	10.0
2002	62.9	27.5	13.6	8.6
2003	63.8	26.8	16.4	8.9
Crack cocaine				
2000	54.8 %	37.6 %	27.5 %	22.9 %
2001	40.9	26.3	20.0	15.0
2002	45.7	27.5	19.6	14.3
2003	52.6	31.0	22.5	19.2
Methamphetamine				
2000	37.4 %	7.8 %	3.7 %	1.4 %
2001	26.3	5.6	3.1	2.5
2002	31.1	8.6	3.2	1.1
2003	34.3	8.0	2.3	1.4
Heroin				
2000	17.1 %	4.9 %	2.9 %	1.7 %
2001	14.7	3.8	2.8	2.5
2002	14.3	3.9	1.8	2.9
2003	15.0	2.8	0.9	0.9

Source of data: ADAM data

month of arrest when the average use level for heroin was highest). Crack cocaine users recorded the third-highest average use level, although by the month of arrest they had closed the gap on marijuana and heroin users. Powder cocaine and methamphetamine users had the two lowest average use levels.

The data presented in Figure 2 also show that average use levels increased for all five drugs. Relative to the other illicit drugs examined, marijuana demonstrated the most stable use pattern. Between months 12 and 1 before arrest, there was a 21.8 percent increase in the average use level for marijuana—a substantial increase to be sure. However, the average use levels for powder cocaine, methamphetamine, crack cocaine, and heroin increased by 122 percent, 99 percent, 75 percent, and 55 percent respectively over the same time span.

But these increases in drug use levels did not occur gradually or in a linear fashion. Instead, they accelerated rapidly in a short period of time. After remaining stable for most of the year, arrestee drug use levels grew exponentially in a period of about 90 days prior to arrest. In fact, nearly all of the observed increases in drug use levels over the 12-month period were compressed into this small 90-day window of time. Notably, this pattern appeared for every drug, not just one or two of them.

Did this pattern apply to all (or nearly all) arrestees, or was the sharp increase due to only a select few? To address this question, calendar data were used to calculate the percentage of arrestees who experienced an increase in their drug use level from month to month. These data are presented in Figure 3. These data show that for each drug, there was a marked increase in the number of users whose use intensified in the year leading up to their arrest. For all drugs except powder cocaine the increase was particularly pronounced within 90 days of arrest.

Taken together, these data presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3 suggest that it was a limited group of arrestees who experienced dramatic increases in their drug use levels in the weeks immediately preceding arrest, and that it was this group that was largely responsible for pushing up the overall sample averages.

Summary and Discussion

Using data collected in Anchorage for the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring program (ADAM), this article has presented preliminary findings of a developmental study of the drug use-crime connection. Results showed an explosive increase in arrestee drug use approximately 90 days prior to arrest. Importantly, this pattern of increased use was

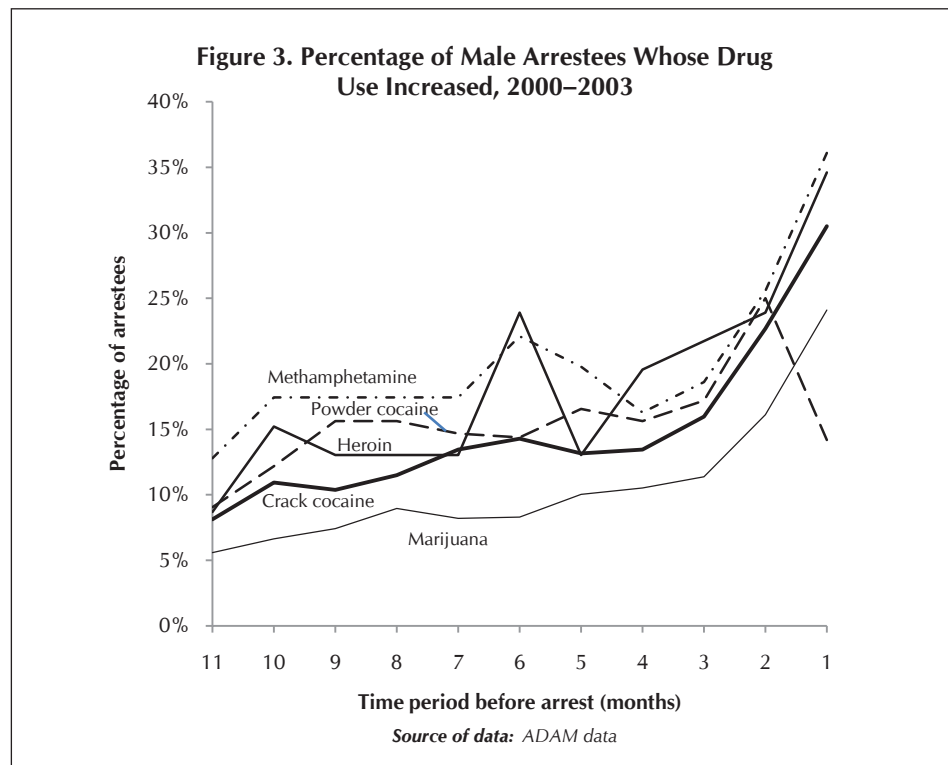
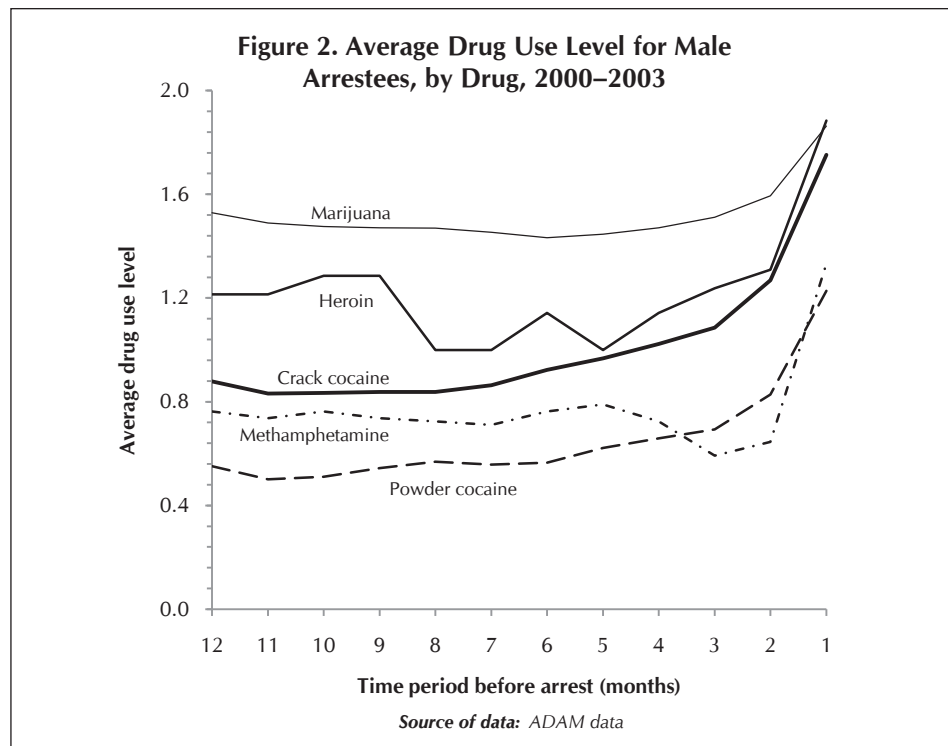
observed for all five illicit drugs examined, not just a few. Further analysis showed that much of the growth in arrestee drug use was likely due to an intensification of use by a relatively small cadre of individuals, rather than a uniform increase in drug use for all arrestees.

How do these findings contribute to our understanding about the relationship between drug use and crime?

Because this study is ongoing, it is

premature to make any firm declarations about the significance of this research. With that caveat in mind, I would like to highlight some potential contributions. First, this research demonstrates that there is substantial variation in the frequency of drug use over time among illicit drug users. This straightforward (and seemingly self-evident) finding provides an important

Please see *Drug use*, page 12





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Drug use

(continued from page 11)

contrast to a great deal of existing research that, due to its emphasis on cross-sectional correlations between drug use and criminal offending and comparisons between “users” and “non-users,” implies invariance in drug use over time. The data presented here suggest that perhaps rather than focusing simply on drug use per se, those who seek to understand the drug use-crime connection

should expand their perspective to include the frequency of drug use as well. In addition, this study shows that for roughly one in five arrestees, increases in drug use levels were not gradual or linear; they were sudden, and the magnitudes of the increases in drug use levels were exceptionally large. Related to this are the results pointing to the 90-day window preceding arrest, when drug use levels began their steep incline. This may be a period of particular importance in the development of individuals’ drug use

trajectories. Finally, this research highlights the potential utility of using the calendar data collected by the ADAM program for advancing research on the drug use-crime connection.

For more information on ADAM, see the *Annual Report 2000: Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring* release in 2003 and available at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/193013.pdf>.

Brad A. Myr Stol is an Assistant Professor with the Justice Center.