

3-10-2011

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# Can financial incentives reduce juvenile confinement levels? An evaluation of the Redeploy Illinois program

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## ABSTRACT

*Purpose:* Assessments of ongoing fiscal restructuring of juvenile justice system processes and the impact such restructuring has on juvenile incarceration rates are limited. When impacts of fiscal restructuring efforts have been assessed, researchers have focused on systemic, macro level changes in incarceration rates but avoided more focused, micro level impacts. This study fills this knowledge gap by examining the recent implementation of the Redeploy Illinois program in two pilot sites. In the Redeploy Illinois program, financial incentives were provided to select counties to develop community based alternatives to incarceration. The goal was to alleviate over reliance on state funded residential facilities for evaluation and confinement purposes.

*Methods:* Agency data were analyzed using qualitative methods to examine the effects of this change. *Results:* Results of this study demonstrated that counties participating in the pilot test of the Redeploy Illinois program were able to reduce their levels of juvenile commitment to the state. Peoria County exceeded their reduction benchmark for all but two years, and St. Clair County well exceed their reduction benchmark for all full calendar years subsequent to implementation.

*Conclusions:* Findings are consistent with the limited literature exploring fiscal restructuring efforts designed to reduce county levels juvenile commitments.

## Introduction

After decades of supporting “get tough” criminal justice policies that extended into the juvenile sector, policymakers have become increasingly supportive of balancing offender accountability with rehabilitation through initiatives that focus on enhancing community based, non-incarcerative options for youth. These efforts stem in part from a recent trend toward the reexamination of state juvenile justice system fiscal structures. Many states operate under funding configurations that inadvertently encourage local jurisdictions to utilize residential placement for youth as their primary adjudication option. Frequently, the state funds these juvenile correctional facilities and local jurisdictions are either not charged, or only charged a small fee to cover confinement costs. The impacts of such a financial structure within states have resulted in a high utilization rate of these incarceration facilities in many jurisdictions and underdevelopment or complete lack of community based treatment options for youth. More recently, a handful of states have challenged this over reliance on state funded facilities by revamping the manner in which funding for their juvenile justice system is allocated.

As a recent Justice Policy Institute report underscores, “several states have altered the fiscal architecture of their juvenile justice systems to reduce the inefficient, ineffective and sometimes damaging affect of state systems that make it cheaper to send youth to state secure care” (Tyler, Ziedenberg, & Lotke, 2006, p.1). A myriad of approaches are being explored by these states. Some states have provided monetary incentives to develop locally based community alternatives to incarceration, while other states have simply increased costs for secure incarceration to the local jurisdictions. Still other approaches have included both of these avenues. For example, California has increased the previous confinement costs to counties from a modest monthly charge of twenty five dollars per youth to a minimum of one hundred and fifty dollars per youth. Further, California's policy now also includes a sliding scale based on offense severity that increases the confinement cost as offense severity decreases. Comparatively, through Pennsylvania's Act 148 (1976), counties in the state of Pennsylvania are reimbursed for most of the costs associated with providing community based services for youth, but are required to pay forty percent of confinement costs. Regardless of approach, this trend among states

demonstrates that policymakers are beginning to not only rethink their approach to juvenile justice, but also the funding streams for the system operation.

Tyler et al. (2006) outlined the impact of different approaches to the fiscal restructuring of the juvenile justice system that were implemented in five states. In four states – Pennsylvania, California, Wisconsin and Ohio — a mix of fiscal restructuring decisions and financial incentives resulted in decreased youth confinement levels. As noted in Tyler et al.'s report, with the implementation of Act 148, Pennsylvania experienced a 24 percent drop in secure placements between 1981 and 1984. California saw a 52 percent decrease in their incarcerated youth population during a period in which its juvenile crime rate fell 31 percent (1996–2003). Between 1995 and 2006, Wisconsin experienced a significant drop with Milwaukee notably reducing commitments to state facilities by 74 percent. Finally, Ohio reduced their commitments by 31 percent between 1992 and 2004. At the time of Tyler et al.'s report, Illinois was only in the preliminary stages of program implementation and unable to provide a full accounting of their program effects. Here, the approach taken by Illinois in this financial restructuring process through their Redeploy Illinois initiative is more fully discussed by presenting the results from a process and outcomes evaluation at two of Illinois' four pilot sites. The findings here are based on the first year of program implementation at these two sites in which financial incentives were provided in an attempt to decrease youth confinement levels and increase community based services for youth.

In the balance of this manuscript, the specific rationale for the development of the Redeploy Illinois initiative and its potential benefits is presented. This discussion is followed by a brief review of empirical studies examining similar program initiatives. Third, a description of the two Redeploy Illinois sites including the youth population served and services provided is presented. Fourth, results evaluating whether the primary goals of the Redeploy Initiative were achieved during the first year of program implementation is presented. Finally, policy implications and recommendations for this and similar initiatives that seek to implement systemic changes through fiscal restructuring and financial incentives that will reduce confinement of serious juvenile delinquents are discussed.

### *Rationale for the redeploy Illinois initiative*

The impetus for the development of Redeploy Illinois stemmed from the lack of community based alternatives for juvenile delinquents at the county level. This gap in services is interrelated with the over reliance of counties on Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) residential facilities for both the evaluation of juveniles in pre-adjudication stages, and as a placement option. Each year approximately 1,800 youth are committed to the IDOC at a cost to the state of over one hundred million. Nearly 25 percent of the youth are sent to IDOC for a short term commitment (thirty to ninety days) including stays for the completion of a pre-adjudication court evaluation or needs assessment. Given that counties can easily acquire confinement and evaluation services through IDOC (financed by state level funding), incentives to develop the much needed local community based alternatives are non-existent.

In response to this problem, Illinois legislators supported Public Act 093–0641 (2003) which mandated the Redeploy Illinois initiative and associated funding for select counties. The Illinois Department of Human Services directed funding to the pilot sites via a designated oversight authority. With this funding, pilot sites were expected to develop sustainable community based alternatives that resulted in a minimum 25 percent reduction in IDOC commitments as compared to their average number of commitments in the previous three years. Failure to meet this goal held negative financial ramifications for the county. The added value for developing these community based alternatives was the increased potential for a reduction in juvenile delinquency rates within the county as a result of more effective rehabilitation services.

### *Community based alternatives as a promising approach for reducing recidivism*

The economic impetus for developing community based alternatives is bolstered by the potential for positive impacts on youth delinquency. Not only does evidence suggest that the development of community based alternatives will reduce initial incarceration at a macro level, they also have the potential to have a positive

impact on youth behavior and reduce long term recidivism at the individual level. Research demonstrates that delinquent behavior is more likely to decrease if youth remain in their communities and are provided with appropriate rehabilitation services that are responsive to their underlying needs as compared to receiving residential (i.e., out of home) placement sanctions (Dembo, Wareham, & Schmeidler, 2005; Lipsey, 1992).

Jurisdictions that have few community based alternatives to incarceration must rely on the treatment services and evaluation capacity that exists within residential facilities. This is unfortunate given that research has found more favorable effects for community based rehabilitation programming as compared to rehabilitation programming in residential juvenile facilities. Differences in success rates between these two settings have been attributed to factors beyond population differences to include a lack of therapeutic integrity in residential correctional facilities (Emery & Marholin, 1977; Lipsey, 1992; Littell, Popa, & Forsythe, 2008; Quay, 1977; Welsh & Zajac, 2004), less effective or ineffective programs poorly implemented in residential correctional facilities (Lipsey, 1992; Van Voorhis, Cullen, & Applegate, 1995), a more criminogenic, non-family based environment less conducive to individual change and pro-social behavior (Henggeler, Schoenwald, Borduin, Rowland, & Cunningham, 1998; Moretti, Odgers, & Jackson, 2004; Myers et al., 2000; Tolan, Guerra, & Kendall, 1995), and an entire lack of services that leaves many of the multidimensional needs of youth in custody unaddressed upon their release to the community (Mulvey, Steinberg, Fagan Cauffman, Piquero, Chassin, Knight, Brame, Schubert, Hecker, & Losoya, 2004; Young, Dembo & Henderson, 2007).

In one of the most extensive meta-analyses completed on treatment for juvenile delinquents, Lipsey (1992) examined aspects of various types of programs (e.g., dosage, treatment modality) as well as the methodological aspects of 443 studies on this topic (e.g., sample size, attrition, outcome measures). Overall, Lipsey found support for juvenile rehabilitation programs such that juveniles who received some form of treatment fared better than juveniles in control groups with respect to recidivism. More directly related to the focus of this manuscript, Lipsey's results demonstrated that treatment in custodial institutions was less effective than treatment in alternative settings. Lipsey

cautioned that the higher dosage of treatment, and larger amounts of meaningful contact typically provided within community settings, or conversely the lack of treatment that occurs in practice within institutionalized settings, may have been at the root of these differences.

The benefits of a community based setting also include increased opportunity for the integration of a youth's family into programming and the overall treatment plan. Researchers have found that a multi- component, multi-contextual approach that intervenes at family, school, and peer levels and allows flexibility in application is superior to more narrowly focused treatment efforts (Henggeler et al., 1998; Holmbeck, Greenly, & Franks, 2003; Moretti et al., 2004; Myers et al., 2000; Tolan et al., 1995; Weisz & Hawley, 2002). When the juvenile's family is embraced and not excluded, the potential to address family risk factors, establish behavioral expectations, and set clear, consistently reinforced rules is also increased. As a result, it is reasonable to expect improvements including increased pro-social behaviors and reduced delinquent behaviors (Austin, Macgowan, & Wagner, 2005). Fiscal restructuring that facilitates the development and implementation of community based sanctions for juvenile delinquents facilitate this more promising, multi-pronged treatment approach.

### *Developing community based alternatives to incarceration for juveniles*

The quantity and quality of studies evaluating programs that seek to retain juveniles in community based treatment as opposed to incarceration is growing. Community based programs vary greatly but often include some form of intensive programming in combination with probation supervision or judicial oversight. The primary goal of these alternatives is to divert youth who would otherwise face residential placement into supervision and specialized programming in their local communities. When used with appropriate populations, community based treatment has resulted in reduced levels of recidivism for youth, and decreased incarceration rates (Bohnstedt, 1978; Coumarelos, 1994; Coumarelos & Weatherburn, 1995; Fendrich & Archer, 1998; Patrick & Marsh, 2005).

As states proceed with financial restructuring of their juvenile justice system,

reduced prevalence of incarceration among youth and reduced incidence of youth delinquent behavior as measured by recidivism levels are both notable goals. To consider the impact of restructuring decisions on these goals, especially when pursued through the support of developing community based alternatives to incarceration, it is pertinent to attend to the systemic juvenile justice system changes made, the specific programs developed, and the program's target population. Further, an objective evaluation of the program's impact is pivotal in providing constructive feedback to the sponsoring agency.

Of the states that have engaged in fiscal restructuring, Ohio has been most prominent with respect to an evaluation of their efforts. Ohio's statewide effort, called RECLAIM Ohio, was first implemented in 1993. These efforts focused on reducing juvenile commitments and increasing the use of community based alternatives. Prior to RECLAIM Ohio, the state and county funding for juvenile offenders was not linked in a strategic manner, thus in considering juvenile justice options, counties viewed state funded institutional commitments for youth as a "free" option to them (Miller & Liotta, 2001). In other words, counties seemingly had an economic incentive to send their youth to the state facilities, or at minimum, a disincentive to develop alternatives to incarceration. Through the RECLAIM Ohio initiative, funding that was previously used to support the operation of the juvenile institutions was pooled. In turn, these monies were divided among counties who made the decision to allocate funding to either treating a youth locally or sending them to a state institution for a fee (approximately \$140 per day). A contingency plan did exist if a county exhausted their allocations that allowed for the commitment of serious offenders with these expenditures covered by the state (Tyler et al., 2006).

According to Moon, Applegate, and Latessa's (1997) evaluation of RECLAIM Ohio, the initiative aimed to provide better care for incarcerated juveniles, and increased community based options for treatment. In evaluating the first year impact of RECLAIM Ohio, Moon et al. matched the nine counties in which the initiative was initially piloted with nine non-RECLAIM Ohio counties based on population density, proportion African American, crime rate and geographical proximity. A comparison of the commitments to institutions between the two groups of counties indicated RECLAIM OHIO pilot counties did



not significantly reduce their rate of commitments during the first year. However, additional analysis determined RECLAIM Ohio counties experienced a significant increase in institutional commitments for more serious (Felony one) offenders, and a decrease in less serious (Felony four) offender commitments. In other words, while the raw numbers of admissions did not change, the population admitted to juvenile facilities was increasingly comprised of more serious offenders. In assessing the second program goal of increasing the available services for youth, Moon et al. (1997) concluded that nearly all of the counties increased services but noted that “a mere increase in program options may not benefit the youths or increase community safety” (p.452). Thus, to an extent RECLAIM Ohio provided support for making systemic changes to existing state fiscal structures supporting the juvenile justice system; however, Moon et al.'s study did not delve into the more substantive issue of the individual level effectiveness of the alternatives. The importance of considering the specific alternatives to incarceration that are developed in local communities and the behavior of youth participating in these alternatives can not be understated. Diverting youth to local programming will only be a responsible decision in the long term if the programs that are developed in lieu of incarceration are guided by best practice principles and target the appropriate population.

### *The redeploy Illinois program*

The Redeploy Illinois program supports a community based alternative to incarceration where locally based sites are required to develop a sustainable strategy that reduces commitments to IDOC. Counties participating in the pilot test of the Redeploy Illinois program received state funds to develop community based services for youth diverted from incarceration in IDOC facilities. In return for these funds, counties were expected to reduce their commitments to IDOC by at least 25 percent. As part of participation in the pilot test, counties were required to provide evidence based treatment programming for youth and increased services linkages.

While efforts to expand diversion programs across the country are in many cases both commendable and notable, these programs may result in net widening rather

than truly diverting youth from incarceration. Without simultaneously monitoring incarceration trends, or having a benchmark for reduction efforts, the program may actually expand the population base served rather than divert offenders from incarceration. Redeploy Illinois directly addresses this challenge by computing a benchmark for each jurisdiction. With this benchmark, Redeploy Illinois is expected to result in positive systemic changes evidenced by a reduction in incarceration levels as a result of targeting appropriate populations. Furthermore, through the development of community based alternatives consistent with evidence based practices, the program is expected to have positive youth behavioral changes as a result of implementing promising programs. .

This study is based on official data from multiple sources including the Illinois Department of Correction and County agencies as well as semi-structured interviews with program stakeholders. The systemic and individual level changes that resulted from the Illinois Redeploy program are assessed by examining: 1) the program impact on commitments to IDOC, 2) the provision of services to youth diverted into the community, and 3) the program impact on probation violations. The comparison of the impact of the program on commitments to IDOC will be examined in two ways. First, levels of commitments will be examined within each county over time including an examination of the type of commitments made. Second, following Moon et al. (1997) counties will be matched with a comparison county based on geographical location, population and housing density, levels of juvenile delinquency, and percentage of the population that is under eighteen. Data from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau will be used to determine the county that is the best match for each program site.

### *Program sites*

The two program sites varied in their approach to the utilization of Redeploy Illinois funding. Differences were primarily with respect to the youth considered for inclusion in the program, type of programming developed, and whether staff positions were added to facilitate the program.

### *Peoria county<sup>1</sup>*

Peoria County's Redeploy Illinois program focused on utilizing their funding to target two groups of juveniles: current juvenile probationers assessed to be at high-risk for commitment to the IDOC, and juveniles before the Court who would have previously been sent to IDOC for an evaluation. Funding was utilized with juveniles from the high-risk probationers group to have their probation services augmented by an intensive level of community based services that included mentoring, counseling, and guidance. Other funding was used to place juveniles from the evaluation group in a county based residential program for twenty-one days at the "Youth Farm" campus where they received a comprehensive assessment to aid in prescribing individualized services upon release. No additional staff were added.

### *St. Clair county<sup>2</sup>*

The St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois program utilized their funding to focus on providing expedited assessment of newly referred, high risk youth, who were adjudicated to probation with Redeploy Illinois services. This Redeploy Illinois caseload included combined intensive monitoring, case management and evidence based programming through enhanced linkages with existing mental health, substance abuse and vocational services. Evidence-based services were also expanded and/or implemented within the community through the addition of treatment slots and addition of programs. St. Clair County also developed a court community liaison position that assisted youth by providing immediate as well as ongoing access to Redeploy Illinois services.

### *Characteristics of redeploy Illinois youth.*

Characteristics of youth referred to Redeploy Illinois are presented in Table 1. A total of eighty-two youth were referred into Redeploy Illinois in Peoria County and thirty-three youth were referred into Redeploy Illinois in St. Clair County during the period of this study. Based on data provided by the respective Juvenile Probation Departments, demographic and legal characteristics of these youth were examined using descriptive statistics. As demonstrated in Table 1, the typical youth referred into the Redeploy

Illinois program in Peoria County was a fourteen year old, African American male arrested for a property offense. In St. Clair County, the typical youth was a male, approximately fifteen years of age arrested for a violent crime. Both African American and Caucasian youth were almost equally represented in the program. In Table 1, offense type refers to the offense that resulted in the youth's initial involvement with Redeploy Illinois.

Given the somewhat larger size of St. Clair County in comparison to Peoria County, one might anticipate a significantly larger number of referrals from that county. Yet, as demonstrated in Table one, Peoria County had nearly twice the number of referrals into their Redeploy Illinois program. Based on our discussions with stakeholders, the most likely explanation of this difference is due to the sources of referral and delays in court processing of identified youth. Peoria County selected youth for referral into Redeploy Illinois from both new referrals into the justice system as well as through the identification of high risk youth who were currently on probation caseloads and at risk of IDOC placement in the future. In comparison, St. Clair County only included new referrals to court. St. Clair County staff also noted that while they did not have a finite number of Redeploy Illinois treatment slots, staff wanted to maintain a manageable caseload size. Obviously, an unwillingness to accept or encourage additional referrals into the program is somewhat at odds with the goal of reducing residential placement of youth.

## **Results**

### *Redeploy Illinois impact on IDOC commitments*

Results of the examination of program impact on IDOC commitment levels will first be examined within each site including an analysis of the types of commitments made. This examination is followed by a comparison of each program site with their matched county. Following the lead of prior research by Moon et al. (1997), this second comparison allows for more robust conclusions attributable to the Redeploy Illinois initiative since the matched counties will account for other confounding effects not measured within the program sites.

Table 2 displays the number of commitments to the IDOC from Peoria County between 2001 and 2009. These data allow for an evaluation of the impact of the Redeploy Illinois program on change in IDOC commitment levels before and after its implementation. The data are based upon information provided by the respective County Juvenile Probation Departments and verified with data from the IDOC. Section 16.1 paragraph C from Public Act 093–0641 (2003) which mandates the Redeploy Illinois program states “the county or group of counties shall agree to limit their commitments to 75 percent of the level of commitments from the average number of juvenile commitments for the past 3 years.”

The average number of juvenile commitments to IDOC from Peoria County for the years 2001, 2002, and 2003 was 72.33 commitments per year.<sup>3</sup> A 25 percent reduction from this average is 54.25 commitments per year. In all but two years subsequent to the implementation of the Redeploy Illinois program, commitments from Peoria County to IDOC have been below this benchmark commitment level.

Table 3 displays the total youth admitted to the IDOC from St. Clair County beginning with calendar year 2001 continuing through December 2009 for which data was most recently available. Since the St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois program began in August 2005, the first data row for 2005 (row five in Table 3) contains youth admitted to IDOC subsequent to the onset of Redeploy Illinois in St. Clair County. The second data row for 2005 (row six in Table 3) contains youth admitted to IDOC prior to the existence of the program. Data illustrate a large increase in IDOC admissions between 2003 and 2004, immediately prior to the onset of the Redeploy Illinois initiative, which according to County Juvenile Probation Department data also coincided with the increased use of probation in the county. Both trends may result from a response to the overall upward crime trend in St. Clair County experienced during this period. As a result of their upward trending crime rate, St. Clair County reached an agreement with the Illinois Department of Human Services, the oversight agency administering the program funding, to utilize the ninety commitments that occurred during 2004 as a baseline instead of the average of the number of commitments during the prior three years as specified by the Act. In all full subsequent calendar years, commitments were substantially below the benchmark goal. In fact, had St. Clair County been subject to

meeting a benchmark similar to Peoria County - a 25 percent decrease from the average of the prior three full calendar years (50.25 commitments) – they would met this goal for each full calendar year.

**Table 1**  
Characteristics of Redeploy Illinois Youth

Characteristic	Peoria County (N=82)	St. Clair County (N=33)
Male (%)	81.7	69.7
Race (%)		
African American	82.7	51.5
Caucasian	12.3	45.5
Bi-racial	3.7	3.0
Hispanic	1.2	0
Average Age, Mean (SD)	13.83 (1.3)	15.2 (.8)
Offense Type (%)		
Person/ Violent Crime	37.3	42.4
Property Crime	54.2	36.4
Drugs	1.2	9.1
Other4	7.2	12.1

**Table 2**  
Commitments to IDOC from Peoria County

	% reduction from 3 year baseline	Peoria County		
		Total	Evaluations	Full
2009	-28.1%	52	3	49
2008	-18.4%	59	2	57
2007	-29.5%	51	2	49
2006	-18.4%	59	0	59
2005	-40.5%	43	5	38
2004	-44.7%	40	5	35
2003	---	70	24	46
2002	---	85	25	40
2001	---	62	22	40

Note: In Peoria County, the Redeploy Illinois program was implemented in January 2004.

**Table 3**  
Commitments to IDOC from St. Clair County, January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2009

	% reduction from baseline	St. Clair County		
		Total	Evaluations	Full
2009	-87.8%	11	0	11
2008	-87.8%	11	0	11
2007	-88.9%	10	0	10
2006	-66.7%	30	6	24
August to December 2005	-11.1%	40	28	21
January to July 2005	---	44	22	13
2004	---	90	66	24
2003	---	60	41	19
2002	---	51	39	12
2001	---	35	20	15

Note: In St. Clair County, the Redeploy Illinois program was implemented at the beginning of August 2005.

### *A Closer examination of commitment trends*

In considering the reductions noted above, it is important to understand the manner in which these reductions were achieved as insight to their sustainability. Commitments to IDOC included full commitments and commitments for evaluation purposes. Full commitments are those in which youth were sentenced directly to IDOC by a juvenile court judge for a specified term based on the offense committed. Full commitments included initial commitments for a delinquent offense, recommitment for delinquent offenses subsequent to release on parole, and commitments for a new offense while on parole.

Evaluation commitments ranged from stays of forty-five to eighty- four days. The

purpose of admission to IDOC for a court ordered evaluation is to obtain an assessment of the youth's risks and needs, and to develop referral to appropriate treatment services. Ostensibly, youth sent to IDOC for evaluation are relatively serious offenders.

It should also be recognized that the evaluation commitment may be regarded by some criminal justice actors as an important option that is not adjudication, but indirectly can act as a punishment mechanism for youth. As such, the court may regard evaluation commitments as appropriate for cases in which a youth does not warrant a full commitment, but are more serious than those youth who typically remain in the community. In other words, it may be a “scared straight” option for the court.

Full commitments to IDOC from the Peoria County Juvenile Court from 2001 to 2003 averaged 42 commitments per year. After Redeploy Illinois implementation in 2004, full commitments by the Peoria County Juvenile Court to IDOC averaged 47.83 commitments per year. This statistic corresponds to an increase of 5.83 full commitments a year (+ 13.88 percent). Peoria County Juvenile Court IDOC commitments for an evaluation averaged 23.67 commitments per year between 2001 and 2003. Between 2004 and 2009, commitments for evaluations averaged 2.83 commitments per year. This corresponds to a reduction of 20.84 commitments for evaluation per year (– 88.04 percent).

In St. Clair County, full commitments to IDOC between 2001 and the onset of Redeploy Illinois in August 2005 averaged 18.4 commitments per year. From August 2005 through 2009, full commitments decreased to an average of 17.11 commitments per year or a decrease of 1.29 full commitments (– 7.01 percent). From 2001 to midyear 2005, St. Clair County Juvenile Court commitments to IDOC for an evaluation averaged 41.78 commitments per year in the same time period. Subsequent to the onset of Redeploy Illinois, the annual commitments dropped to an average of 22.67 evaluation commitments corresponding to a reduction of 19.11 commitments (– 45.74 percent). Taken together, these results indicate that the reduction in commitments to IDOC by both of these two urban jurisdictions is largely driven by a reduction in the number of commitments for court evaluations and not by a reduction in full commitments.

While these relatively robust decreases in commitments are promising, assumptions of success that are attributable to financial restructuring and incentives would be less meaningful absent a comparison with other counties in the state. Global comparisons of these counties to all other counties in the state who would be subject to the same laws, political pressures and/or policy changes, indicate the decreases in the level of commitments that occurred within these two jurisdictions are unique. The structure of the population base in the state of Illinois results in a common stratification of counties across four general groups distinguishing Cook County (Chicago) and collar counties (the immediate area surround Cook County) from other urban counties and rural counties. Examining available publicly Illinois Department of Corrections aggregated trend data for the rate of youth court commitments from these four groups in addition to the overall rate for the State of Illinois indicates a stable or upward trend (significantly so for rural counties) between 2003 to 2004. The exception is the trend for urban counties which would include the effects of the three Redeploy Illinois initiatives, one of which - Peoria County – is examined here.

Following Moon et al. (1997), an alternative method of comparison is matching the counties with the Redeploy Illinois program to other like counties without the program based on similar characteristics such as geographical proximity, population density, proportion of the population that is African American, and crime rate. This matched comparison posed a challenge within the State given its compositional structure. We opted to match based on priority of geographical proximity by choosing a county adjacent to the Redeploy site, with secondary considerations of population density and percentage of the population that was under 18 based on the publicly available 2000 U.S. Census data. Consequently, Tazewell served as a comparison for Peoria County; Madison County served as a comparison for St. Clair County.

Table 4 displays the number of commitments to IDOC from Tazewell County between 2001 and 2009. The three year base line average for Tazewell County was 7.67 total commitments for the years 2001, 2002, and 2003. The average number of commitments in the years 2004 to 2009 was 16. This represents an increase of 8.33 total commitments per year (over a 100 percent increase). Full commitments to IDOC



from the Tazewell County Juvenile Court from 2001 to 2003 averaged 5.33 commitments per year. After Redeploy Illinois implementation in 2004 in Peoria County, full commitments by the Tazewell County Juvenile Court to IDOC averaged 15.83 commitments per year. This statistic corresponds to an increase of 10.5 full commitments a year (over a 100 percent increase). Tazewell County Juvenile Court IDOC commitments for an evaluation averaged 2.33 commitments per year between 2001 and 2003. Between 2004 and 2009, commitments for evaluations averaged two commitments per year. This corresponds to a reduction of 0.33 commitments for evaluation per year (-14.2 percent).

**Table 4**  
Commitments to IDOC from Tazewell County

	% reduction from 3 year baseline	Tazewell County		
		Total	Evaluations	Full
2009	+ 30.4%	10	0	19
2008	+ 95.6%	15	1	16
2007	+ 136.7%	18	1	17
2006	+ 160.7%	20	1	19
2005	+ 108.6%	16	3	13
2004	+ 121.6%	17	6	11
2003	---	10	3	7
2002	---	9	3	6
2001	---	4	1	3

Table 5 displays the total youth admitted to the IDOC from Madison County beginning with calendar year 2001 continuing through the end of calendar year 2009. For Madison County, the data from 2004 is used as the baseline data, similar to the St. Clair County benchmark. In Madison County, full commitments to IDOC between 2001 and 2004 averaged 20.25 commitments per year. From 2005 to 2009, full commitments were increased to 21 commitments per year or an increase of 0.75 full commitments (+3.7 percent). From 2001 to 2004, Madison County Juvenile Court commitments to IDOC for an evaluation averaged 17.25 commitments per year. From 2005 to 2009, commitments for evaluation decreased to an average of 12.8 commitments per year which corresponds to a reduction of 4.45 commitments per year (-25.8 percent).

When examining the two comparison counties (Tazewell and Madison), there is an overall increase in full commitments and a decrease in commitments for evaluation following the implementation of Redeploy Illinois in Peoria and St. Clair Counties. While this trend is similar for Peoria and St. Clair Counties, the increase in full commitments is substantially greater in the comparison counties than in the counties with Redeploy Illinois. For example, there was over a 100 percent increase in full commitments in Tazewell, while there was only a 13.88 percent increase in full commitments in Peoria County. Additionally, the reduction in commitments for evaluation in Tazewell County was only 14.2 percent compared to an 88.04 percent decrease in Peoria County. Thus, some similarity in trends with comparison counties did exist; however, the amplitude of these effects appear to have been magnified by the Redeploy Illinois initiative.

### *Services provided to youth diverted to communities*

This next section explores the types of services that were received by youth involved in the Redeploy Illinois program. Some overlap in services offered to program participants existed with youth involved in traditional supervision activities; however, specific data on traditional caseloads were not available. Evidence that supplementary services were received by these youth exists as a result of acknowledging the funding source for the service. A number of these services were directly funded using by Redeploy Illinois monies and therefore only available to program participants. In addition to added services, more in-depth supervision occurred. The high number of contact hours expected with the participating youth was made possible by reducing the size of caseloads for staff.

### *Peoria County*

Upon admission to Redeploy Illinois in Peoria County, Assessment Therapists completed an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for each youth. The IFSP was based on intensive interviews, observations and research into the individual's school, mental health, social and family history and included information gathered from schools, hospitals, family members and other relevant individuals. Specialized caseworkers

utilized the IFSP to set goals for the youth and their family, and monitor progress towards the stated goals. Case management strategies included three weekly contacts with the youth, and the referral of family and youth to community resources and other services. An average of one hundred hours of service per month for youth on a caseload was expected, however, data were not available to verify this assumption.

Competency building and life skills were provided through the individualized contacts with the youth each week and through family meetings and activities. These skill sets were designed to teach the youth positive peer interactions, manners, decision making, and relationship building. Caseworkers provided mentoring, counseling services and were responsible for referrals to and linkages with other services such as individual and family counseling, substance abuse treatment, and Anger Replacement Training (Goldstein & Glick, 1994).

Services provided to Peoria County Redeploy Illinois youth is summarized in Table six. Data is comprised of all youth who received or are receiving treatment through the Redeploy Illinois program in Peoria County for which data on treatment services were available (N=68). In Table 6, the counseling categories, the psychological evaluations, and Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART) conform to the descriptions noted earlier. Psychological evaluation services were provided to youth as ordered by the court or through twenty-one day commitments to the Youth Farm. For Peoria County, the substance abuse services category includes evaluations for drug treatment, but not referrals to in-patient or out-patient services. Service to the family includes transportation to probation appointments and other services. Community services/recreation includes volunteer activities the youth participated in and other recreational activities including attending sporting events or participating in sports, and other pro- social activities. Collateral contacts and referrals include communication on behalf of the youth with anyone that the youth is already involved with (i.e. probation officers, churches, and other community agencies) and contacts with agencies on behalf of the youth in order to refer the youth for services.

### *St Clair County*

Over thirty different types of services were received by the youth participating in

the St. Clair County Redeploy Illinois program. Evidence based services provided to the youth in the program included Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), and Aggression Replacement Training (ART) each of which were funded by Redeploy Illinois. Functional Family Therapy is described by the program developers as an outcome-driven prevention/intervention program for youth who have demonstrated the entire range of maladaptive behaviors and related syndromes. FFT requires as few as eight to twelve hours of direct service time for commonly referred youth and their families, and generally no more than twenty-six hours of direct service time for the most severe problem situations. Multi-systemic Therapy is described by its developers as an intensive family- and community-based treatment that addresses the multiple determinants of serious antisocial behavior in juvenile offenders. The major goal of MST is to empower parents with the skills and resources needed to independently address the difficulties that arise in raising teenagers and to empower youth to cope with family, peer, school, and neighborhood problems. In addition, a variety of additional individualized service linkages were made to counseling, psychological evaluations, substance abuse evaluations/ drug screens, electronic monitoring, emergency youth shelter, therapeutic recreational services and tutoring services on an as needed.

**Table 5**  
Commitments to IDOC from Madison County

	% reduction from baseline	Madison County		
		Total	Evaluations	Full
2009	-27.3%	32	9	23
2008	-36.4%	28	10	18
2007	-20.5%	35	15	20
2006	-31.8%	30	10	20
2005	0.00%	44	20	24
2004	---	44	21	23
2003	---	31	17	14
2002	---	40	10	30
2001	---	35	21	14

**Table 6**  
Services provided to Redeploy Illinois Youth, January 1, 2005 through April 30, 2006

Type of Service	Peoria (N = 68)	St. Clair (N = 33)
Individual counseling	67 (98.53%)	10 (30.3%)
Family counseling	56 (82.35%)	9 (27.3%)
Psychological evaluations/ Mental health services	25 (36.76%)	24 (72.7%)
Substance abuse services	32 (47.06%)	---
Aggression Replacement Training	37 (54.41%)	6 (16.7%)
Service to family	59 (86.76%)	6 (16.7%)
Community services/ recreation	30 (44.12%)	12 (36.3%)
Collateral contacts and referrals	67 (98.53%)	---
Education/Workforce Training	---	6 (16.7%)
Faith based groups/DCFS	---	8 (24.2%)

The number of St. Clair County youth linked with each of these services is indicated in column three of Table 6. Many youth received referrals to multiple service providers especially for the counseling, mental health and substance abuse services categories. For example, the agency providing mental health screenings differed from the referrals to clinicians; therefore two services linkages within these categories were technically possible. To allow for the most conservative estimate of the impact of

Redeploy Illinois on service provision for these youth, we only allow the youth to be counted once within each category presented in Table 6. For example, even if the youth was referred to multiple types of Community services/ Recreation such as referrals to both art therapy and the YMCA, the youth was only counted once in the Community services/Recreation category. Moreover, these data only include programs or services for which it was definitively evident that funding from the Redeploy Illinois initiative alone were utilized. From the data, it is clear that Redeploy Illinois funding supported psychological evaluations and mental health services, community services/recreation, and counseling (both family and individual).

*Redeploy Illinois impact on probation violations*

At the time of data collection for this evaluation, only a very small number of youth in St. Clair County had completed the Redeploy Illinois program making any conclusions on the individual behavior of the youth regarding this program premature. Consequently, the focus here will only be on the impact of Redeploy Illinois on recidivism from Peoria County. Specifically, explored are the technical violations and IDOC commitments of the Redeploy Illinois youth participants.

**Table 7**  
 Technical Violations occurring post Redeploy Illinois referral – Peoria County: June 1, 2005 – March 31, 2006

Technical Violation Rationale	Frequency
Failure to attend probation appointments and failure to attend treatment	6 (43%)
Failure to attend probation appointments	2 (14%)
Failure to attend probation appointments and failure to comply with school rules	1 (7%)
Run away	3 (21%)
Failure to complete placement	1 (7%)
Not specified	1 (7%)
Total	14

*Technical violations*

The assessment of technical violations is based on data provided to the evaluators

in April 2006. These data include information on technical violations occurring between January 1, 2005 and March 31, 2006 (the date of the last violation in the database). It is important to acknowledge that some technical violations may not have been included in the database as a result of reporting or recording error. Among the group of youth assigned to the Redeploy Illinois program since inception (N= 82), twenty-seven technical violations were incurred as of March 31, 2006. Of these violations, fourteen violations occurred after referral into the Redeploy Illinois program.

Among the fourteen technical violations occurring after referral to the Redeploy Illinois program, five (36 percent) were incurred by youth who were referred to Redeploy Illinois, but never entered into the program. Two violations (14 percent) occurred after referral, but prior to entry into the program. Seven violations (50 percent) occurred after the program began. There are two primary reasons a youth may be referred, but not enter the program or have delayed entry: first, if a youth is referred to Redeploy Illinois but is amidst court processing of a secondary case, enrollment activities may be withheld until the second case is resolved since outcomes of the second case may conflict with assignment to the Redeploy Illinois program. Youth may also be referred but never enter the program when the agency is unable to enroll the referral. Difficulties in enrollment are primarily a result of the youth family's reluctance to participate in the program or the direct reluctance of the youth. Table 7 describes the rationale for each of the probation violations incurred.

Technical violations are of particular concern to programs such as Redeploy Illinois that divert offenders from residential placement at the state level to community based alternatives, especially when the number of youth participating in community based alternatives exceeds the reduction in commitments to state facilities. Disproportionate rates of technical violations can erode the initial successful reductions in commitments to the state. To examine the relationship between technical violations and commitments to IDOC, Table 8 presents the number of commitments to IDOC by offense type for Redeploy Illinois youth eventually committed and for all youth not in Redeploy who were committed to IDOC occurring during 2004.

Table 8 demonstrates that there were a total of thirteen commitments among those youth referred to the Redeploy Illinois program. Contrasting the percentage of

commitments by offense type suggests that differences exist in the types of offenses for which the two groups of youth are committed to IDOC. The largest differences between the groups are for property offenses, and violation of probation (VOP) for either a new crime or technical violation. It appears that the Redeploy Illinois program limits the percentage of offenders committed to IDOC for property offenses. The percentage of IDOC commitments from Redeploy Illinois youth for property offenses is 15 percent, while the percentage of IDOC commitments in 2004 for property offenses is 25 percent. While methodological limitations are recognized, results of this analysis are suggestive that those in Redeploy Illinois program are at an increased risk for technical violations. As noted above, probation violations based on technical violations are of particular concern when the number of juveniles eventually committed, approach the number of youth initially diverted.

Caution must be used when basing policy inference on results presented in the above tables. To illustrate, when comparing the two groups included in the above tables, it is important to realize that the percentages from the Redeploy Illinois youth are based on only thirteen cases. Therefore, these percentages are heavily influenced by the behavior of single individuals. Nonetheless, the above information is important and can help to contextualize the functioning of the Redeploy Illinois program to date. Strong conclusions require additional data collection over a more extended period of time.

**Table 8**  
 Number and Percent of Commitments by Offense Type – Peoria County: June 1, 2005 – March 31, 2006

Offense Type	Redeploy	IDOC 2004
Property	2 (15%)	11 (25%)
Person	2 (15%)	4 (9%)
Sex		2 (5%)
VOP New Crime	2 (16%)	12 (27.3%)
VOP Technical Violation	6 (46%)	16 (36%)
Total	13	44

Note: VOP represents Violation of Probation.

## Discussion

The Redeploy Illinois program aims to reduce juvenile incarceration levels

through fiscal restructuring, specifically by providing counties with financial incentives for the reduction of commitments to state funded residential facilities. Results of this study show that counties participating in the pilot test of the Redeploy Illinois program were able to reduce their levels of juvenile commitment to the state. Peoria County exceeded their reduction benchmark for all but two years and St. Clair County well exceed their reduction benchmark for all full calendar years subsequent to implementation. This finding is consistent with the prior literature exploring the impact of fiscal restructuring efforts designed to reduce county levels commitments of juveniles to state facilities (Moon et al., 1997; Tyler et al., 2006). The importance of these reductions are contextualized among a number factors including sustainability, increased provision of services, the impact of the program on the long term behavior including recidivism levels of the youth, and the resulting technical violations incurred by program participants and resulting sanctions.

For fiscal restructuring efforts such as the Redeploy Illinois program to be sustainable, these efforts must involve benchmarks that acknowledge the influence of overall juvenile delinquency levels on the tendency of counties to commit youth to state facilities. As evident through this evaluation, an approximate 25 percent reduction from prior levels of juvenile confinement was obtained during the first full year of the Redeploy Illinois program at the two of the pilot sites evaluated. This rapid reduction was encouraging, especially given its sustainment. We must remain cognizant that levels of commitments to IDOC are influenced by juvenile justice system policy and by overall juvenile delinquency rates. Upward trends in juvenile delinquency may result in an increased number of cases which call for a sentence including placement in a residential facility. Fiscal restructuring efforts such as the Redeploy Illinois Program should consider this factor and develop flexible benchmarks that are tied in part to measures of the jurisdiction's delinquency level or crime rate.

The sustainability of fiscal restructuring efforts focusing on diverting juveniles from state operated residential facilities into the community is also influenced by differences in the length of sentence among juveniles placed in state facilities. These analyses demonstrated that the most notable reductions made in confinements were made through a reduction in pre-adjudication court evaluations. The potential influence



of these reductions on IDOC costs are less than the influence of a reduction due to a decrease in full commitments to IDOC. Full commitments are typically incarcerated in IDOC for longer periods of time. Benchmarks based on a reduction in the number of juveniles committed to state facilities alone may result in a reduction in cost that is less than anticipated when counties, as would be expected, divert offenders that would be spending relatively short periods of time in the state facility. To address this issue, fiscal restructuring efforts should create benchmarks tied to the actual number of days the commitments spent in state facilities. Program benchmarks tied to the length of time that commitments to state facilities actual reside in those facilities will result in more sustainable fiscal restructuring efforts.

As noted earlier, only a small number of youth had completed the Redeploy Illinois program at each site and for those who have completed the program, an insufficient amount of time had elapsed for a robust evaluation of a sustained impact on the youth's behavior; however, initial indications can be interpreted here for one site. Given that both sites were found to have implemented evidence based programs and were providing significant service linkages, expectations for a sustained reduction in recidivism among Redeploy Illinois participants was reasonable. That said, it is important to be cautious given that it is not possible to comment on a sustained reduction in recidivism among Redeploy Illinois participants was reasonable. That said, it is important to be cautious given that it is not possible to comment on the actual exposure levels and fidelity of those evidence based programs. Preliminary data demonstrated that technical violations comprised an important percentage of commitments from among those who had been referred to Redeploy Illinois within Peoria County and could be expected to impact St. Clair County as the youth progress through the program.

Technical violations may be contributed to by the rigors of the Redeploy Illinois program; however, it is also possible that the technical violations incurred by those referred to Redeploy Illinois would also be incurred if those individuals were on traditional probation caseloads. While the preliminary nature of these results suggest that they should be approached with caution, it is reasonable to suggest that existing sites and counties planning to implement a similar program should carefully consider processes impacting risk for technical violations. In particular, the active participation of

those youth referred to Redeploy Illinois services is critical. Redeploy Illinois sites and similar programs may benefit from consideration of the process through which some youth are successfully referred to services to inform barriers to participation in services for other youth. This discussion would be followed by efforts to further reduce these barriers beyond those already taken in Illinois such as provision of transportation to families.

It is important to note that the importance of the impact of the Redeploy Illinois program on risk for technical violations is closely linked to a consideration of the target population for the Redeploy Illinois program. If Redeploy Illinois is not used strictly as a diversion program where all those in Redeploy Illinois would have otherwise been incarcerated in IDOC, increased risk for technical violations becomes a more important consideration in the actual gains made. Among those participating in the Redeploy Illinois program in the Peoria county site, program participation is not limited to those diverted from IDOC, including current high risk probationers. Subsequent to the implementation of the Redeploy Illinois program in Peoria county, commitments to IDOC decreased by about thirty-two cases per year. In contrast, over a ten month period there were 82 referrals into services established with Redeploy Illinois funding. This demonstrates that in Peoria County, the Redeploy Illinois program is much larger than the size one would anticipate if it were comprised only of those diverted from incarceration in state facilities.

Unfortunately, a clear understanding of the extent to which Redeploy Illinois services impact the behavior of participants and influence probation violations and other criminal justice system sanctions is limited by the availability of data during this evaluation. Strong statements regarding the impact of the Redeploy Illinois program on the behavior of participants will require data describing the behavior of those participants over extended periods of time.

In conclusion, the Redeploy Illinois program is intended as a means to accomplish fiscal restructuring within a subsection of the juvenile justice system in Illinois. This restructuring through the provision of financial incentives is designed to result in significant reductions in the utilization of state funded confinement options for juvenile delinquents. Through the pilot test of this program, sites were provided funding to develop

evidence based, community based alternatives to incarceration in advance of the program year with the expectation that the sites (i.e., county) would reduce their confinement levels to a predetermined benchmark. This evaluation finds the overall goal of reducing confinement levels was achieved. These reductions were primarily achieved by reducing pre-adjudication evaluation commitments, which may not be indicative of a sustainable reduction in confinement levels. Furthermore, initial reductions are marred by a relatively high rate of non-delinquent technical violations which may countervail long-term reductions in confinement levels of youth. This underscores the importance of considering the target population and the actual composition of the program participants and monitoring these groups in similar endeavors. Moreover, while the emphasis that has been placed in the academic literature on developing community based programs is valid, this study also demonstrates that additionally local jurisdictions are also in need of community based assessment and evaluation services.

## **Acknowledgements**

This project was supported by a grant awarded to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority by the Illinois Department of Human Services. Points of view or opinions, findings and conclusions contained within this document are those of the evaluators and, as such; do not necessarily reflect or represent the official position or policies of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, the Illinois Department of Human Services or St. Clair and Peoria counties.

## **Notes**

1. Peoria County, Illinois is the 11th largest county and encompasses approximately 629 miles of land in western Illinois with a population estimate of 183,433 residents. The county is comprised of four primary cities including Peoria, West Peoria, Chillicothe, and Elmwood with an additional eleven villages and twenty townships. It is a mix of urban and rural areas. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, a significant proportion of the population in Peoria County resides in

urban areas (84.99 percent).

2. St. Clair County, Illinois is the 9th largest County in the State of Illinois consisting of 22 townships that include both rural and urban areas. The county is typically considered part of the St. Louis, MO metropolitan area and sustains a population of over 256,000. The jurisdiction contains communities that can only be described as high risk for a variety of social problems. Specifically, East St. Louis is recognized as one of the most distressed communities in the nation currently facing poverty, lack of employment opportunities, and high crime rates including juvenile crime rates.

3. Peoria County began its Redeploy Illinois program on May 1, 2004.

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