

U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs  
National Institute of Justice



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*Research Prospectus*

National  
Institute of  
Justice

expanding horizons  
rethinking justice

*Building Knowledge*  
about crime & justice

breaking the  
cycle

creating tools  
understanding the nexus

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2000

U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs  
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The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

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The 2000 Research  
Prospectus of the  
National Institute  
of Justice

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*Building Knowledge*  
about crime & justice



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November  
1999

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## Director's Message

Celebrations in honor of NIJ's 30th anniversary and the approaching new century and millennium mark a natural time for the Nation to reflect on where we've been and where we're going in developing a better understanding of crime.

Here at the National Institute of Justice, we recall key milestones in our journey to build a body of knowledge about crime and justice: understanding about criminal careers, the connection between drugs and crime, the relationships between child maltreatment and subsequent criminal behavior, and the development of better tools for law enforcement, such as soft body armor, to name just a few.

Passage of the Crime Act of 1994 marked another milestone for NIJ. In the last 6 years, we've made progressive inroads in our knowledge about violence against women, community policing, police and corrections officer stress, court-based supervision of drug offenders, and policing technology.

The next 30 years will offer new opportunities for leadership at the national level and new challenges for researchers. Topics about which we now know very little are ripe for further investigation. Transnational crime, cybercrime, and new ways to measure police performance are examples that come to mind.

To usher NIJ into the millennium, our annual Research and Evaluation Conference (scheduled for July 2000) will showcase four volumes of essays that will explore the past and the future. The collection resounds with ideas that will challenge us in the future: (1) The continuities and changes in the nature of crime, (2) changes in the boundaries of criminal justice organizations, (3) changes in decision making and discretion, and (4) measurement and analysis of crime and justice. The distinguished authors and editorial board reflect these new, broad intellectual perspectives.

Also in the coming year, NIJ and the Justice Department's Office of Policy Development are collaborating on an initiative to critically assess the state of affairs in key issues of concern for the future. The "21st Century Crime Policy Initiative" is exploring the following areas: fairness, effectiveness, and public confidence in the criminal justice system; sentencing and corrections; and technology and crime. NIJ will host a series of meetings throughout 2000 to address the policy challenges of these issues and explore the costs and tradeoffs that the public and policymakers should consider as they make policy choices.

NIJ hopes that by launching a national discussion about the issues of the day, researchers, politicians, policymakers, and practitioners will experiment, debate, and arrive at new policies to meet the emerging challenges.



Jeremy Travis  
Director

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## Contents

NIJ's Mission . . . . .	2
Fiscal Resources. . . . .	3
Addressing Strategic Challenges. . . . .	5
Rethinking Justice . . . . .	5
Understanding the Nexus . . . . .	6
Breaking the Cycle. . . . .	6
Creating the Tools . . . . .	7
Expanding the Horizons. . . . .	9
Participating in NIJ Projects and Programs . . . . .	10
Investigator-Initiated Research. . . . .	10
Directed Solicitations. . . . .	10
Communicating Results to the Field . . . . .	13
Electronic Dissemination . . . . .	13
Information Clearinghouse . . . . .	13
Conferences and Seminars. . . . .	13
Strategic Planning Meetings . . . . .	14

## NIJ's Mission

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), a component of the Office of Justice Programs, is the research and development agency of the U.S. Department of Justice.

NIJ was created by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended, to support research, evaluation, demonstration programs, development of technology, and both national and international information dissemination.

Specifically, the Act directs NIJ to:

- Sponsor special projects and research and development programs to improve and strengthen the criminal justice system to reduce and prevent crime.
- Conduct national demonstration projects that employ innovative or promising approaches for improving criminal justice.
- Develop new technologies to fight crime and improve criminal justice.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of criminal justice programs and identify promising new programs.
- Recommend actions that can be taken by Federal, State, and local governments as well as by private organizations to improve criminal justice.

- Carry out research on criminal behavior.
- Develop new methods to prevent crime and reduce delinquency.

Passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Crime Act) infused the Institute with new research and development priorities.

To respond to the directives outlined in the Crime Act, NIJ has launched major activities, many in partnership with Crime Act offices<sup>1</sup> established by the Department of Justice and in partnerships with other Federal agencies and private foundations.

Priorities identified by the Crime Act include:

- Community policing.
- Violence against women.
- Sentencing and corrections.
- Court-based supervision and services for drug offenders.
- New technologies.

The NIJ portfolio of work in progress now includes more than 907 research, science and technology development, and program development projects. NIJ's R&D awards in fiscal year 1999 totaled more than 273, representing an investment by the Institute of nearly \$82 million.

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<sup>1</sup>Crime Act offices are the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the Violence Against Women Grants Office, the Corrections Program Office, and the Drug Courts Program Office. For details about NIJ activities in conducting research and evaluation under the Crime Act, see *Criminal Justice Research Under the Crime Act—1995 to 1996*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 1997 (NCJ 166142). View or download a copy through the National Criminal Justice Reference Service's World Wide Web site at <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/166142.pdf> or obtain a copy by contacting the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000, 800-851-3420, e-mail [askncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto:askncjrs@ncjrs.org).

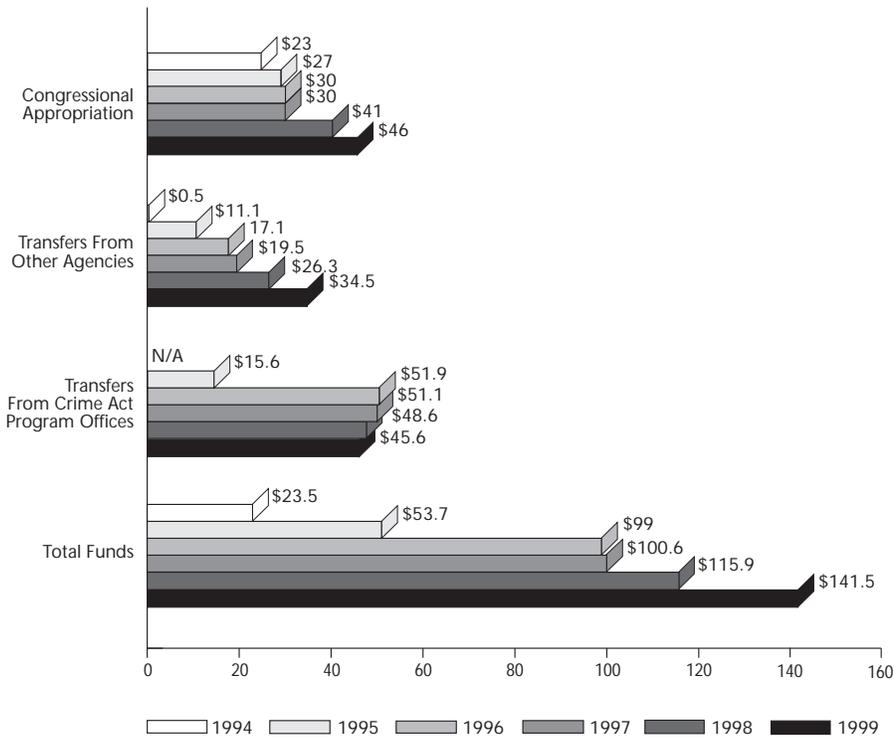
## Fiscal Resources

The Institute's appropriated budget has fluctuated significantly, from a high of \$115 million in fiscal year 1974 to a low of \$22.9 million in fiscal year 1994 (current dollars).

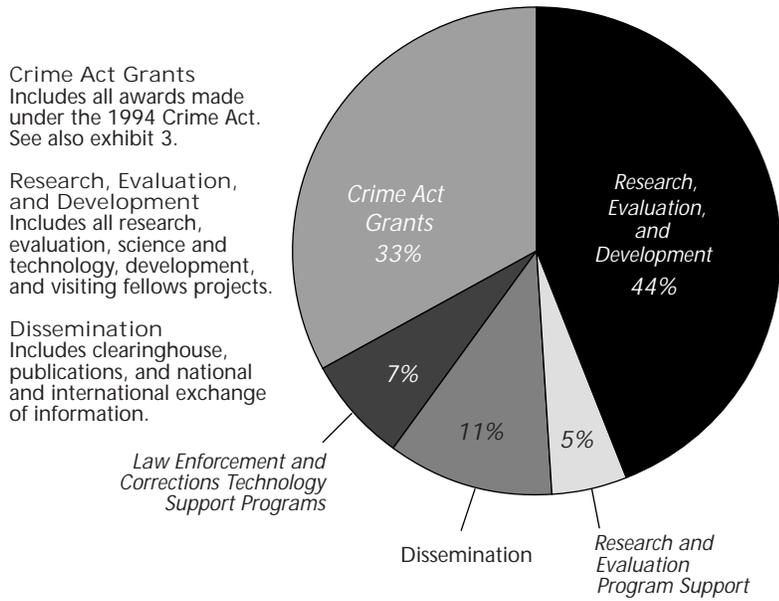
In fiscal year 1999, Congress appropriated \$46.1 million for core NIJ operations, augmented by transfers of funds from other Federal agencies and from

Crime Act offices (see exhibit 1). Much of NIJ's current research portfolio is supported by those transfers, which fund jointly planned research and evaluation projects. For example, NIJ awards made in fiscal year 1999 with transferred Crime Act funds accounted for 33 percent of total expenditures by the Institute that year (see exhibit 2).

**Exhibit 1: Sources of NIJ Funds, in Millions, FY 1994-99**



**Exhibit 2: Allocation of NIJ Funds as a Percentage of Total Expenditures,\* FY 1999**



\*Total expenditure of \$116 million includes NIJ's base appropriation plus funds transferred from other agencies.

## Addressing Strategic Challenges

NIJ conducts business through multiple approaches: research and evaluation activities; identification of innovative programs and effective policies; and support for technology development, demonstration programs, and improvement of research infrastructure.

Much of the Institute's work is guided by five strategic challenges:

- Rethinking justice and the processes that create just communities.
- Understanding the nexus between crime and its social context.
- Breaking the cycle of crime by testing research-based interventions.
- Creating the tools and technologies that meet the needs of practitioners.
- Expanding horizons through interdisciplinary and international perspectives.

### Rethinking Justice

NIJ seeks to foster a national dialog on the justice system with the goal of understanding, conceptually and empirically, where it is now and what directions it will take in the 21st century.

Several activities are underway to achieve this goal. One of the newest is called COMPASS, which stands for Community Mapping, Planning, and Analysis for Safety Strategies. The COMPASS initiative has four key components: (1) the development of a data infrastructure, (2) the convening of an interagency policy group, (3) the use of data to pinpoint problems and highlight

potential solutions, and (4) the evaluation of targeted interventions based on the data infrastructure.

COMPASS will develop a data infrastructure on community characteristics that will contain such extant automated data as employment statistics, land use data, hospital records, drug use profiles, gun tracing information, and arrest and victimization statistics. The central database will be supplemented in various ways, for example, with surveys of teens or with asset mapping, that will render rich details about the community's needs.

Policymakers and researchers will query the database using both traditional statistical techniques and geographic information systems (GIS) to determine the relationship between crime and other social factors. GIS provides a visual picture of the spatial relationship between crime and its precursors, which can be used to pinpoint possible solutions and can be confirmed by more traditional techniques.

An interagency policy group composed of local officials (such as the mayor, chief of police, school superintendent, and leaders of social service agencies) is working with a research partner to analyze data and develop appropriate programmatic and policy responses.

The local research partner plays a key role in COMPASS implementation by collecting and analyzing information and helping design interventions that effectively respond to a community's crime problem.

The first site to be selected, Seattle (selected in September 1999), will

receive up to \$1 million in financial and in-kind assistance for the implementation of the initiative, which will be coordinated by the mayor's office.

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## Understanding the Nexus

Several NIJ programs illustrate the effort to understand the nexus between crime and social conditions: ADAM (the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring program), Violence Against Women and Family Violence program, and the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods.

ADAM. Through this program, NIJ has transformed and expanded the former Drug Use Forecasting program, which for more than 10 years interviewed and drug-tested booked arrestees at various sites nationwide.

ADAM provides local and State drug policymakers, courts, law enforcement agencies, treatment providers, and prevention specialists with program planning and policy information that can be used to conduct local research and evaluation projects and to inform local policy decisions about drug abuse. The program is now in place in 35 sites. Pending approval by Congress and the President, increased funding will expand ADAM to encompass 75 cities.

Violence Against Women and Family Violence Program. Compared to other criminal justice topics, the body of scientific evidence about the nature, causes, and incidence of violence against women and family violence is fairly limited. NIJ's extensive portfolio of research and evaluation in this area contains both projects funded solely by NIJ and projects funded through interagency partnerships. The research will continue to build knowledge about the

effectiveness of the criminal justice system's response to family violence.

Project on Human Development in Chicago. Understanding the complexities of family, peer, and neighborhood influences on criminal behavior is the goal of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods. Now in its 5th of 8 years, the project is leading to answers about both group and individual behavior in a social context as it examines how individual personalities, family relationships, school environment, and type of community interact over time to contribute to delinquency, criminal behavior, and prosocial development.

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## Breaking the Cycle

When research uncovers the connections between crime and social conditions—as it did with the connection between drug abuse and subsequent criminal behavior—NIJ then experiments with programs and policies that attempt to break the linkages.

Among several efforts related to breaking the cycle of drug abuse and crime are two that are focused on offenders. One, the Breaking the Cycle program, is examining the hypothesis that drug testing of arrestees, mandatory treatment, and other interventions provided to offenders with a history of illicit drug use will reduce their drug abuse and criminal behavior. The hypothesis is being tested in three adult and two juvenile court systems around the country.

The other, the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) program, which NIJ supports in partnership with the Corrections Program Office, focuses on incarcerated offenders. Several past evaluations of corrections-based

substance abuse treatment efforts indicate that significant reductions in recidivism rates are possible among chronic abusing felons.

NIJ's portfolio of RSAT grants is evaluating a number of different types of drug treatment services to incarcerated inmates to determine how effective the programs are in helping offenders break out of their cycle of drug abuse and criminal behavior.

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## Creating the Tools

One of NIJ's missions is to develop, test, and evaluate new and transferable techniques, practices, and technologies that address practitioners' needs. To ensure that criminal justice practitioners will benefit from its investments, NIJ regularly consults with approximately 100 practitioners and policymakers who are members of the Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Advisory Council (LECTAC). NIJ then translates the LECTAC recommendations into a cohesive research and development agenda.

Projects that create tools for practitioners include ones that are looking for technology to improve communication so jurisdictions can talk to one another, technology to detect concealed weapons, alternatives that will make high-speed pursuit safer, and improved computer-based training methods.

DNA. One tool—the use of forensic DNA techniques—has already made a fundamental impact on the way law enforcement investigations are conducted. DNA testing is making it possible to convict many more criminals and exonerate innocent suspects earlier.

NIJ is overseeing direction of the National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence, which was established by Attorney General Janet Reno to recommend courses of action and means to improve the use of DNA technology in the investigation of criminal cases.

Crime Mapping. Mapping is another tool that is reshaping the way public safety agencies do business. It allows communities to look at their problems

## Crime Mapping Research Center

Crime mapping permits exploration of spatial and temporal dimensions of crime and enhances the ability to see crime in the context of other social forces, such as income distribution, health care, transportation systems, and demographic patterns.

The researchers and technical specialists in NIJ's Crime Mapping Research Center serve State and local law enforcement and corrections practitioners through:

- Research, including fellowships, staff-conducted research, and grants.
- Evaluation of current and best practices.
- Development of training programs, a national geocoded data archive, and new analytic software.
- Information, technical assistance, and instructional components involving hands-on training workshops, conferences, a Web site, and a listserv.

and formulate potential solutions in new ways. NIJ established the Crime Mapping Research Center in 1996 as a partnership between NIJ's Office of Research and Evaluation and Office of Science and Technology (see Crime Mapping Research Center). The Center is headquartered at NIJ in Washington, D.C., and coordinates its efforts with the National Law Enforcement and

Corrections Technology Center (see National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center).

Standards Development. NIJ pioneered the development of some of the technologies and product standards that are now commonplace in criminal justice—for example, soft body armor and advances in the use

## National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center

NIJ's National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) system focuses on specific technologies within a linked web of centers serving law enforcement, corrections, and other criminal justice professionals.

NLECTC consists of a national headquarters (in Rockville, Maryland) and four regional centers (in Rome, New York; Charleston, South Carolina; Denver, Colorado; and El Segundo, California) that are colocated with an organization or agency specializing in at least one specific area of research and development.

NLECTC provides assistance and information on:

- Specific products and technology developments.
- How to assess technology needs and transfer technology.
- Where to get more information about specific types of technology.

Each regional center has its own local advisory committee that provides input from State and local agencies.

NIJ also supports the Border Research and Technology Center in San Diego, California, which focuses on developing and enhancing border research and technology, and the Office of Law Enforcement Technology Commercialization in Wheeling, West Virginia, which evaluates technologies for commercialization and promotes such opportunities with manufacturers and technology developers.

The newest addition to the NLECTC system is the National Center for Forensic Science in Orlando, Florida, which will draw upon the expertise of its host facility, the University of Central Florida, and focus on arson and explosives research.

The NLECTC Web page, JUSTNET, can be accessed at <http://www.nlectc.org>.

of DNA science in forensics. The development of standards and the testing of equipment against these standards will continue to be a major part of NIJ's science and technology program.

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## Expanding the Horizons

NIJ is committed to looking beyond traditional boundaries—both geographic and intellectual—to develop a full understanding of crime and justice issues. Criminal enterprises and activities have extended their reach beyond national borders, presenting new challenges for criminal justice systems around the world. It is becoming more common for crime emanating from other countries to touch American lives.

International Center. To respond to the globalization of crime, the National Institute of Justice created the International Center in 1997. The Center fosters dialog among American researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers and their counterparts in other countries.

The mission of the International Center is fourfold: to stimulate, facilitate, evaluate, and disseminate both national and international criminal justice research and information.

Specific activities include:

- The International ADAM program, a partnership among criminal justice organizations in a number of countries that is providing a framework for global assessment of drug use and for strengthening nations' drug control policies and their coordination.
- The International Visiting Fellowship program.
- The International Visitor program, which in 1998 hosted 117 visitors from 34 countries.
- The United Nations Crime and Criminal Justice program, which links 14 research organizations through annual meetings and an electronic network.
- Research partnerships between U.S. and foreign-based researchers.

Multidisciplinary Partnerships. NIJ also expands its horizons through its many multidisciplinary partnerships in research, evaluation, and technology. The wider research community of educators, public health specialists, engineers, and psychologists, for example, are contributing their paradigms and insights into what works in criminal justice.

Many fields touch criminal justice. Research that starts as social or forensic science often evolves to include epidemiology, technology, geography, psychology, life-course studies, and prevention research, and NIJ is taking advantage of these natural collaborative efforts.

Some of NIJ's research partners include scientists and policymakers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the National Institutes of Health; and the U.S. Departments of Defense, State, Transportation, and Commerce.

## Participating in NIJ Projects and Programs

NIJ makes its research interests known through competitive solicitations that are announced on the NIJ Web page (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>) and in the *Federal Register* and the *Commerce Business Daily*. Information also is available from the DOJ Response Center at 800-421-6770.

As a science agency, NIJ is firmly committed to a competitive process awarding grants and contracts to researchers, laboratories, and supporting organizations.

Successful applicants for NIJ funds must demonstrate to independent peer review panels that (1) the gap in knowledge they propose to fill is critical to understanding crime and justice and is highly relevant to policy, (2) the proposed research design is rigorous, and (3) the proposed researchers are highly qualified to execute that design within a reasonable budget.

NIJ's staff-conducted research program must meet these same rigorous standards of peer review, budget review, and policy relevance.

NIJ's extramural research program consists of two types of funding strategies: solicitations for investigator-initiated research and directed, or specific, research.

Each year, NIJ publishes a list of awards made during the fiscal year (see *NIJ Awards in Fiscal Year 1999*, NCJ 179016) and a list of ongoing grants made during previous years (see *NIJ Research Portfolio, 4th Edition*, NCJ 179017).

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### Investigator-Initiated Research

Researchers may propose their own study concepts in NIJ's open competition for grants, called "Investigator-Initiated Solicitations." These solicitations conceptualize broad criminal justice themes for investigators to consider, including both the social sciences and the physical sciences, but virtually any criminal justice topic may be proposed.

Typically, grants under this type of solicitation range between \$25,000 and \$300,000 and last for 1 to 2 years.

NIJ actively encourages applicants from a broad variety of disciplines so that the resulting research reflects different approaches to the challenges of crime and justice.

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### Directed Solicitations

NIJ identifies specific areas of interest in its "Directed Solicitations." Often, NIJ's directed solicitations are developed in partnership with another Federal agency with a related interest in the topic. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has partnered with NIJ on solicitations directed at violence against women.

The amount of funds available for solicitations varies from year to year and depends on decisions made by Congress regarding NIJ's appropriations.

After enactment of the 1994 Crime Act, the Department of Justice decided it would evaluate and conduct basic

research on each of the major Crime Act initiatives to help guide policy and practice in the future (see “Crime Act

Initiatives” and exhibit 3). Many of NIJ’s directed solicitations are linked to Crime Act initiatives.

## Crime Act Initiatives

NIJ’s research agenda related to the Crime Act has focused on violence against women, drug courts, sentencing, corrections, and policing and law enforcement.

**Violence Against Women.** NIJ is supporting an extensive portfolio of basic research and program evaluation on issues ranging from arrest policies and rural domestic violence to child victimization and batterer intervention. A large proportion of the portfolio is funded in collaboration with other Federal agencies.

**Courts, Sentencing, and Corrections.** NIJ’s ongoing partnership with the Department of Justice offices created with passage of the Crime Act has been especially productive. The commitment of NIJ and the Corrections Program Office, for example, to enhance local research capacity by building researcher-practitioner partnerships has generated numerous researcher-practitioner teams. These teams are working to improve models to predict institutional capacity, develop techniques to estimate the health-care needs of corrections populations, validate correctional classification instruments, and develop standard research protocols to determine the effectiveness of varied drug treatments.

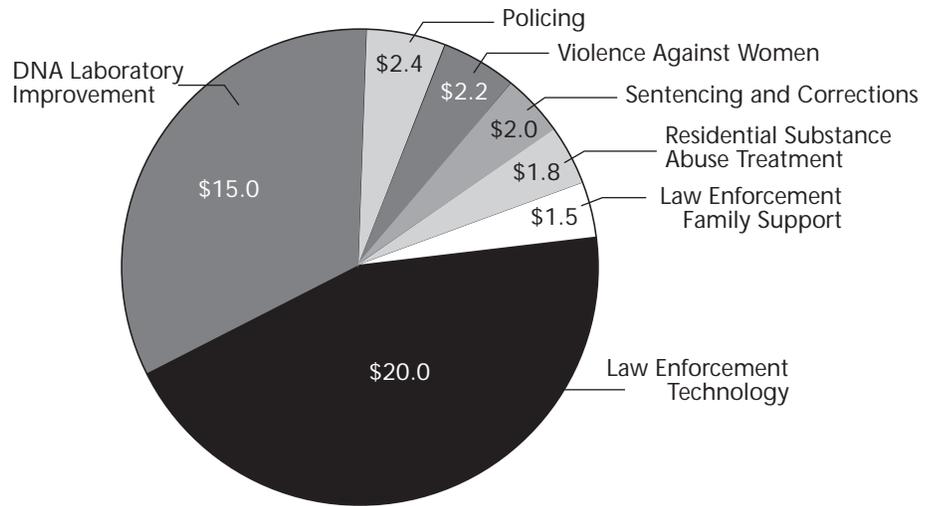
Additional grants funded under the Violent Offender Incarceration/Truth-in-Sentencing Program (Title II, subtitle A) include examinations of the impact of changes in State sentencing practices. The RSAT program, which has provided an extensive set of both process and outcome evaluations of the correctional drug treatment programs, also is funded through the program. The RSAT program contributes to understanding about the kinds of programs implemented, the clients served, and barriers to implementation. The outcome evaluations will examine the extent to which participation in drug treatment has a positive effect on postrelease outcomes.

The Drug Court Program Office and NIJ continue to cooperatively fund several evaluations of drug courts. Projects are underway in almost 20 sites. The evaluations are documenting the development of this type of court and creating a foundation for subsequent outcome evaluations. Furthermore, they are developing a conceptual model for describing this judicial innovation.

**Policing and Law Enforcement.** NIJ’s Corrections and Law Enforcement Family Support Program, created by Title XXI of the Crime Act, is supporting research, evaluation, and demonstration programs to reduce job-related stress and its consequences for law enforcement and corrections personnel and their families.

The Crime Act has supported a significant investment in research and evaluation on and development of new technology to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, including funds to improve State-operated DNA laboratories and technology and techniques for responding to domestic counterterrorism.

**Exhibit 3: Allocation of NJ Crime Act Funds by R&D Area, in Millions, FY 1999**



## Communicating Results to the Field

Congress has directed NIJ to disseminate findings from its research, development, and demonstration activities to policymakers and practitioners at all levels of government, to the research community, and to the general public.

NIJ uses a variety of mechanisms to fulfill this congressional mandate: the World Wide Web, traditional print media, videotapes, conferences, and a clearinghouse of information—the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

To contribute to the national dialog on the justice system, NIJ will publish a series of volumes, called Criminal Justice 2000, that will foster greater understanding, both conceptually and empirically, of the state of our knowledge and the directions it will take in the 21st century.

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### Electronic Dissemination

Electronic means of communicating have come to play a larger role in NIJ's communications strategy, with NIJ's Web page as its central component. (See "NIJ Online Resources.") Visitors to the Web page can get information about funding opportunities, browse through and download publications, and learn more about NIJ's programs and products.

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### Information Clearinghouse

In conjunction with the other agencies within the Office of Justice Programs, NIJ disseminates findings (via electronic means and traditional mechanisms)

through the Nation's largest clearinghouse of information. The National Criminal Justice Reference Service maintains an electronic library of more than 145,000 abstracts of documents related to crime and justice and features a sophisticated online search engine.

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### Conferences and Seminars

NIJ provides a number of opportunities each year for personal contact and exchange of information among the various criminal justice professions. For example, dialog between researchers and practitioners is fostered at an annual Research and Evaluation Conference, which typically draws more than 800 participants to learn more about findings of NIJ-supported research, and an annual Science and Technology conference, which showcases developments in the physical sciences related to crime and justice. Hundreds of police managers, crime analysts, geographers, and researchers also attend NIJ's annual crime mapping research conference, which features numerous panels and workshops conducted by leading experts.

In addition, NIJ representatives exhibit at approximately 175 conferences a year, answering questions and distributing reports and other research and evaluation material.

In 2000, NIJ will continue its popular Research in Progress seminars and Perspectives on Crime and Justice lectures. At the Research in Progress seminars, researchers describe their

## NIJ Online Resources

NIJ Web Page:  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>  
**Funding opportunities, publications, programs, and products**

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS):  
<http://www.ncjrs.org>  
**Information clearinghouse for the Office of Justice Programs**

Justice Technology Information Network (JUSTNET):  
<http://www.nlectc.org>  
**Technology programs and products**

JUSTINFO.NET:  
<http://www.justinfo.net>  
**Forum that works with the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network**

National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD):  
<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/nacjd>  
**Information about data collections from NIJ-funded studies**

NIJ Crime Mapping Research Center:  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/cmrc>  
**Online site for information about crime mapping**

PAVNET Online:  
<http://www.pavnet.org>  
**Partnerships Against Violence Network (PAVNET)**

Other useful electronic sources: **JUSTINFO**, the bimonthly free online newsletter from NCJRS, is delivered via e-mail. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to [listproc@ncjrs.org](mailto:listproc@ncjrs.org) and in the body of your message, type "subscribe justinfo," and your name.

ongoing projects and present preliminary findings. The Perspectives on Crime and Justice lecture series brings nationally recognized scholars to Capitol Hill to discuss research perspectives on the challenges of contemporary crime and justice issues policymakers face.

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## Strategic Planning Meetings

To help shape NIJ's research, development, and evaluation agenda, NIJ sponsors a number of planning meetings each year. In 1999, for example, more

than 50 researchers, administrators, and practitioners from all over the country attended a meeting to delineate successful, collaborative, and interdisciplinary responses to child abuse. The meeting was cosponsored by NIJ, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Such strategic planning meetings help NIJ stay in touch with the researchers, practitioners, and policymakers who are in daily contact with the people and issues of the criminal justice system.

For more information about the National Institute of Justice and to obtain an electronic version of this report, please visit NIJ's World Wide Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj/nij> or contact:

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