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TASC, Inc.

1500 North Halsted, Chicago, Illinois 60622 (312) 787-0208

TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Special Clients) is a statewide, not-for-profit agency that links various service systems through a unique system of client case management. Through TASC, a variety of populations in need of special services can find the help they need. Most TASC clients are substance abusers in need of treatment.

TASC is the only agency that provides substance abuse assessments and recommendations for the Illinois courts, and it is the preeminent authority regarding the effect of substance abuse on state systems. In recent years TASC has expanded its services outside of the substance abuse field to include programs for HIV-affected persons and youth involved in the child welfare system.

WHAT TASC DOES:

- Assessment to identify the nature and extent of the individual's presenting problem
All clients receive AIDS risk reduction information during assessment
- Specialized Service Planning that takes into account the client's ancillary service needs
- Treatment Readiness and Placement into an appropriate treatment facility
- Monitoring of the individual's progress for the courts or other referral source

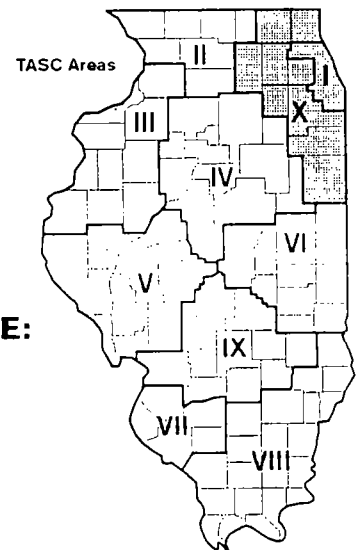
WHERE TASC OPERATES:

Offices throughout the state serve all 22 judicial circuits in Illinois

POPULATIONS SERVED IN COOK AND THE COLLAR COUNTIES:

Individuals who have demonstrated a need for treatment or other services, including:

- Adult offenders
- Juvenile offenders
- Elementary, junior high and high school students
- SSI recipients whose disability is substance abuse
- HIV-affected persons
- Youth involved in the child welfare system



NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY TASC STATEWIDE:

- More than 63,000 assessed since 1976
 - 6,248 adult offenders assessed in FY 1992
 - 3,599 DUI offenders assessed and placed in FY 1992
 - 1,212 adolescents assessed in FY 1992
 - 2,057 SSI recipients served in FY 1992
 - Case management services provided to 420 HIV-affected persons in FY 1992
 - HIV-prevention education provided to 15,018 individuals in FY 1992
 - 215 child welfare clients served in FY 1992
-

Illinois TASC

A Leader in Substance Abuse Intervention Technologies

TASC was initiated on a national level by the federal government in 1972 to examine the problems of drug abuse and criminal behavior. The TASC mission is to reduce the criminality of the drug-dependent offender by improving the rehabilitative aspects of treatment and criminal justice. There are currently 178 TASC programs operating in 23 states and one territory.

Illinois TASC was founded in 1976 by Melody M. Heaps, who still serves as the agency's president. Illinois TASC has quickly become a model intervention program for the state and for other TASC programs nationwide. It is the only agency that provides substance abuse assessments and recommendations for the Illinois courts, and it is the preeminent authority regarding the effect of substance abuse on the judicial and other public systems. In recent years TASC has expanded its case management services outside of the substance abuse field to include programs for HIV-affected persons and youth in the child welfare system.

In the criminal justice system, TASC has trained judges, state's attorneys, public defenders, criminal justice planners, federal and state probation and parole staffs, and is on the faculty of the National Judicial College. TASC provides training to allied external systems on topics ranging from HIV education to pharmacology. TASC also offers training and technical assistance to communities that are starting their own TASC or other substance abuse intervention programs.

Several members of TASC's staff are experts in issues related to substance abuse and the criminal justice system. Melody Heaps travels extensively to participate in panel discussions or to deliver speeches regarding intervention strategies for substance-abusing offenders. She is a board member and past president of both the National Consortium of TASC Programs (NCTP) and the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association (IADDA). Among her many additional memberships and affiliations, she serves on the Advisory Council of the Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (DASA) and the Illinois Governor's Task Force on Prison Crowding, and is a technical assistant to the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD). She has also served as a national consultant to the National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Office of Treatment Improvement.

Ethel Mull, TASC's vice president of operations, is also an active member of many allied organizations and serves on the Illinois Governor's Child Welfare Action Group. Additional TASC staff deliver training seminars and presentations each year.

Getting tough with treatment

More than one-fourth of probationers in Illinois are under court order to participate in drug or alcohol treatment. Experts say many more could use help. Finding the resources to provide the needed treatment, and making it part of a meaningful punishment, remain daunting tasks.

By Jeffrey Austin

Talk to just about anyone in any branch of the criminal justice system in Illinois, and ask what is driving the ever-increasing number of offenses, arrests, court caseloads, and prison admissions. One word is sure to come up in every conversation—drugs.

In 1990, there were 47,242 arrests for drug offenses in Illinois, 33,234 in Chicago alone.

In 1988, 15 percent of all prison admissions in Illinois were for drug-related cases; in 1991 that figure had grown to 28 percent.

Statistics from the Illinois Department of Corrections show that the number of drug offenders in Illinois prisons has risen from 1,700 in 1988 to nearly 5,200 in 1991.

At the end of September 1992, the state's adult inmate population stood at 31,018—150 percent above design capacity. Approximately 18 percent of these prisoners were serving time for drug-related crimes.

Effects on probation

The arrest and imprisonment numbers are so compelling that the effects of increased drug law enforcement on Illinois' other "correctional" system—probation—often are overlooked. While more people have been arrested and sent to prison for drug offenses, more drug-involved offenders have also been added to the state's already crowded ranks of probationers.

Of all adults sentenced for probationable offenses in Illinois in 1991 (those which do not carry a mandatory prison sentence), about

65 percent were sentenced to probation. At the end of 1991, the total active adult probation population in Illinois was 74,846.

While available statistics cannot say with certainty how many of these probationers are substance abusers, 23 percent of offenders sentenced to probation in Illinois were charged with drug offenses, according to a 1990 survey by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts.

The same AOIC survey found that about 26 percent of all probationers were ordered by the court to participate in drug or alcohol treatment, while an additional 9 percent were ordered to be evaluated for treatment.

Most experts agree, however, that the percentage of Illinois probationers in need of some type of treatment is much higher than the percentage ordered to treatment by the courts. Probation officers themselves estimated that 38 percent of all probationers in 1990 were in need of drug and/or alcohol treatment, an estimate considered to be conservative by others.

Nationwide, more than half (53 percent) of all felony probationers were determined to be drug abusers, according to a 1990 report by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics. Fewer than 40 percent were ordered by the court to participate in treatment.

Adding muscle to treatment

Walking the line between social service and corrections, probation has often been per-

ceived as soft on criminals. Drug treatment and other programs to help offenders on probation are easily targeted as a legacy of failed liberal policies. But probation officials are working hard to change that image. Increased personal supervision for certain cases, frequent mandatory drug testing, the use of electronic monitoring, and other measures are adding some muscle to treatment and rehabilitation programs.

"Offenders who do best under probation supervision have a combination of strict surveillance and service," said Arthur J. Lurigio, associate professor of criminal justice at Loyola University of Chicago. "The most recent evaluations of intensive supervision programs show that offenders that had services attached to their probation period, and received services, did better with respect to rearrest."

"What we know from national research is that incarceration does not do anything to eliminate addicts' addictions. It only means that they come out at a higher level of addictive behavior," said Melody Heaps, president of Treatment Alternatives for Special Clients at the July 1992 meeting of the Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections. "We're not suggesting that you can just open the door and everybody goes into treatment," Ms. Heaps said. "We're saying that you can put something in place that can become an exit with controls. And that when they're in the community, sanctions can be put into place—with treatment—that really begin to monitor what is going on."

More than a slap on the wrist

TASC is a not-for-profit agency that serves as a liaison between the courts, the drug treatment community, and drug-abusing offenders. TASC provides case management services to clients with a variety of social, welfare, and health needs. Treatment programs in which TASC places probationers are licensed by the state and have the reputation of sometimes being tougher than doing time.

"Going through TASC was harder than any jail or prison time I ever served," a successful TASC client named Kim told the task force. "Prison was only a place that took

away my freedom for a while and I'd be right back doing the same thing.

"Facing prison for the third time, I decided that if I went back to this madness, it would never end," she said. "It would be a vicious cycle until my addiction was treated.

"[The third time] they offered me a gift; they offered me two years. They had never offered me two years—it was always eight, 10, and I'd do four. So the two years was a gift. I could have done six months easy and come right back doing the same thing—I didn't want that," she said.

While the treatment programs chosen by TASC are tough on their clients, just being accepted by TASC is also tough. In 1991 the agency screened 5,400 prospective clients statewide. Only 2,169 were found to be acceptable candidates for treatment, and only 1,487 were placed into treatment programs.

"We reject two-thirds of everybody we see," Ms. Heaps said. "Mostly because their attitudes stink. They're not serious. They are people who are trying to game us."

Community-based treatment

Turning down close to 4,000 requests for help a year may sound hard-hearted, but treatment providers are still too few and the waiting lists are too long. Statistics from the John Howard Association indicate that approximately 160 inmates at the Cook County Jail had been sentenced to probation with residential drug treatment, but were still awaiting placement at the end of September.

"There just aren't enough treatment facilities out there, so you have to make a choice on who you're going to send," said Robin D. Leaf, of the Cook County Adult Probation Department. "There is a six- to eight-week time lag when TASC is asked to perform an assessment, then a wait of about another month before a bed can be available in a given treatment program," she explained.

Ms. Leaf is director of Project Safeway, a new program developed by the probation department in partnership with TASC, the Safer Foundation, and other community agencies. The program stresses community involvement in providing a "full service" model of probation that addresses the wide range of probationers' needs, including drug

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—Melody Heaps, President
Treatment Alternatives for Special Clients

treatment, education and vocational training, parental and life management skills, and counseling on health and nutrition.

There are about 1,000 people on probation in the neighborhood, according to Ms. Leaf. About 700 probationers are involved in Project Safeway. The average client is a black male, about 24 years old, on probation for a drug offense (usually a possession or manufacturing and delivery charge). Most do not have a high school diploma or GED, and are unemployed or underemployed.

"We find health issues in general are a big issue," Ms. Leaf said. "Education is a big issue—they may have learning disabilities. Our clients have a multitude of problems. It's not just as simple as getting them off drugs, although that's often where you have to start."

The West Side Association for Community Action is one local organization that is involved in helping probationers back into community life. The association is made up of service providers in the Lawndale neighborhood and also includes interested individuals, church leaders, and politicians.

In addition to working with local organizations to provide much-needed help for probationers, Project Safeway requires probationers with community service sentences to give something back to the community by participating in neighborhood clean-up programs. Probationers have worked with community residents to clean up and replant vacant lots throughout the neighborhood in which Project Safeway operates.

"The community is getting very involved," said Dr. Lurigio. "I'm extremely impressed with how much input they have had and how they are involved through their work on the advisory board. I think we've only just seen the beginning of this program."

Intensive drug program

Sharing Project Safeway's offices on South Kedzie Street are the officers responsible for monitoring probationers on Cook County's home confinement, Intensive Probation Supervision, and Intensive Drug Abuser programs.

The Cook County IDAP, funded in part by a \$112,208 federal grant awarded by the Authority, is one of several newly established programs. The Authority awarded additional grants to similar programs in Champaign, DuPage, Kane, Madison, McHenry, Sangamon, and St. Clair counties (see page 14). The programs, while not identical, are modeled after the Intensive Probation Supervision program in that they provide for increased monitoring of selected offenders. Like Project Safeway, IDAP in Cook County takes advantage of community resources in the Lawndale area for drug treatment and education.

Federal funds for IDAP are provided through the Anti-Drug Abuse Act. Each program is also supported by matching funds provided by the various counties.

Probation officers working in the program are trained in recognizing the symptoms of substance abuse and in implementing intervention techniques. Probationers in Cook County's IDAP are subject to three phases of supervision and drug screening, each progressively less intensive and dependent on successful completion of the preceding phase.

"IPS and IDAP have a direct presence in the neighborhood," Dr. Lurigio said. "I think that's good for probation too, because that improves its image with law enforcement agencies—letting the police know that we [in probation] are not just behind-doors social workers, but that we're also out on the street." ■

Substance abuse: *Its impact on the criminal justice system*

By Daphne Bailie
TASC, Inc.

Day after day, you read the same bad news about increased crime rates, clogged court dockets, overcrowded jails and prisons, and insufficient resources to respond to these issues. While there are many causes for these enormous problems, there is one factor that has compounded the rest: drug abuse.

Drug-related crime has caused a crisis in the Illinois criminal justice system. The number of individuals arrested for drug charges and drug-related offenses has increased dramatically since the mid-1980s. During 1990, more than 47,000 people were arrested in Illinois on drug charges alone.

But this figure does not fully reflect the scope of the drug problem, as a majority of persons arrested for offenses other than drug charges have used illicit drugs immediately prior to their arrest.

Quarterly drug testing conducted in Cook County's night bond court has revealed that over the past five and a half years, 74 percent of felony arrestees have consistently tested positive for an illicit drug at the time of their arrest — and this figure does not consider those under the influence of alcohol.

Among the 4,265 male arrestees tested (voluntarily and anonymously) since 1987, 57 percent have used cocaine within 48 hours prior to their arrest, and 64 percent have used an illicit drug other than marijuana.

While aggressive policing has resulted in increased arrests of drug offenders, this does not attack the core of the problem: the addiction that leads offenders to commit drug offenses and other drug-related crimes.

Prison overcrowding

Illinois' prison population has doubled in the past 10 years. Our communities have enacted and enforced stricter drug laws, and as a result have filled all the state's jails and prisons to overflowing. The state has built 14 new prisons in 15 years — and still the justice system is overwhelmed because of the dramatic increase in drug-related crime.

Three major factors, in combination, have led to the extremely overburdened justice system that Illinois faces today. First, cocaine has enticed record numbers of users into the worlds of drug addiction and crime. Crack cocaine use is spreading throughout the state and is introducing a new generation to cocaine. Studies show that addicts today are being ini-

tiated into the drug culture earlier, are developing addictions at an earlier age, and are abusing a greater variety of drugs than ever before.

Many users, particularly in Chicago, continue to show a preference for freebasing cocaine. Freebased cocaine is much purer and more potent and therefore more intensely addictive than even crack. Current data suggest that continued high drug use, freebasing, crack, and China White trends are only going to continue. Meanwhile, abuse of other drugs, such as heroin and other opiates, has not diminished.

A second cause for overcrowding is the heavy emphasis that law enforcement has placed on apprehending drug users and dealers, particularly those trafficking in the cocaine markets. This has increased the number of offenders entering the system at the front end and has caused a backlog in the jails and courts.

When convicted, the costs of incarcerating these offenders has risen astronomically: in 1984, Illinois spent \$8.15 million to incarcerate drug offenders. By 1991, that number had increased to \$83 million.

Third, enhancements to the determinant sentencing laws require significantly longer sentences for possession of smaller quantities of illicit drugs, partic-

ularly cocaine. Because of determinant sentencing, more offenders are being sentenced to prison than ever before, but the building of new prisons cannot keep up with the influx of new prisoners. Consequently, offenders are being released far before their sentence is over, simply to make room for the new prisoners.

These factors combined — more drug users plus a more aggressive arrest policy plus determinant, non-discriminating sentencing of many addicts — have led to the worst prison and jail crowding that Illinois has ever experienced.

Drugs and crime

There is an undeniable and well-documented relationship between drug addiction and crime. Addicts commit many types of crimes to support their

addictions and they do not restrict themselves to drug sales as the sole means of generating an illegal income.

The majority of crimes committed by addicts are nonviolent and mainly involve attaining money to support their addictions. They typically either sell drugs themselves or commit property offenses such as theft, shoplifting, con games, burglary and prostitution in order to obtain money to support their addictions.

Research also shows that addiction drives crime. When addicts are in periods of remission, they commit far fewer crimes than during periods of active addiction.

The problem with incarceration without addressing the causes of the criminal behavior is that immediately following the incarceration period, addicts continue to be addicts and



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resume their previous criminal lifestyles in order to feed the insatiable needs of their addictions. They then end up cycling through the courts again and for some, prison, as well.

Planning response

While interdiction efforts may temporarily delay the supply of drugs into certain areas, they do nothing to reduce the demand for illicit substances. Demand reduction can only be accomplished through prevention and treatment.

Clearly, it is difficult to stop an offender's pattern of criminal behavior without addressing the addiction that led to that behavior. Until the addiction is treated, the addict's criminal activity will continue.

The law enforcement and treatment communities need each other to solve this problem. In Illinois, there is a history of mutual understanding and cooperation between the criminal justice system and community-based treatment. Illinois is far ahead of other states in having the systems in place to respond to the problem of the drug-addicted offender. TASC Inc (Treatment Alternatives for Special Clients) is the state's designated agent to conduct substance abuse assessments and recommendations for the Illinois courts. Since 1976, TASC has screened defendants charged with probationable offenses to determine their eligibility and readiness for treatment, and has placed and monitored them in treatment.

Through TASC, certain offenders are placed into treatment as a condition of their sentence.

As a liaison between the courts and community-based treatment programs, TASC obliges addicted offenders to get the help they need. TASC's screening is tough: more than half of the defendants referred to TASC are either ineligible or unacceptable because they have a history of violence, are hostile or uncooperative, or lack recognition of their problem and therefore are not ready to deal with it.

Going through TASC is no cakewalk. Treatment is tough and much more demanding on the addicted offender than simple incarceration. Treatment requires addicts to confront their addiction, recognize the negative consequences of their addiction, take responsibility for their behavior, and work to make positive changes via group and/or individual counseling, job training, skills development, and education. Residential treatment entails a full day's schedule of labor (cooking, dish-washing, maintenance work, etc.), counseling, schooling and job training.

And treatment works. It is much more effective than simple incarceration in reducing the levels of crime and addiction. Research has shown that the degree of improvement increases with the length of stay in treatment. Some outcome research has shown that 75 percent of addicts entering a treatment program show significant decreases in rates of criminal

activity and drug use. A study that compared treated addicts with non-treated addicts post-incarceration showed that addicts who went through treatment: committed fewer crimes; used fewer drugs and used them less often; were more likely to be gainfully employed; and were less likely to be re-arrested than their non-treated counterparts.

Graduated sanctions

The drug/crime problem is complex and requires a number of creative solutions that will control costs and maintain community safety while continuing to take a tough stand against crime.

Melody Heaps, president of TASC, says that the battle against substance abuse should be fought with a balanced attack, combining supply reduction efforts with equal attention to demand reduction. "The way to do that in the criminal justice system," she says, "is to develop graduated sanctions for certain nonviolent, addicted offenders."

Graduated criminal justice sanctions would target certain addicted, nonviolent offenders and would meld together strong, tough sanctions and treatment. Heaps explains, "A menu of sanctions and services can be developed depending upon the specific needs of the system and the needs presented by the addicted offender. For some offenders, house arrest by electronic monitoring coupled with urine monitoring will be required. Other offenders might be sentenced to intensive out-

patient treatment combined with urine monitoring and intensive probation supervision. For still others, there would be outpatient treatment during the day, urine monitoring and work release." She adds, "In every program, there must be an after-care component with strong linkages to services once treatment is completed."

A fundamental consideration of the graduated sanctions approach is that failure to comply with these sanctions be met firmly and aggressively through increasingly stronger sanctions and ultimately, incarceration.

Criminal justice experts, substance abuse treatment professionals and even the media have long championed treatment and strong, effective, community-based sanctions as sound strategy for handling the nonviolent substance-abusing offenders who are overburdening the court system. "Treatment, in conjunction with intensive supervision," says Heaps, "is a practical, efficient, safe, and cost-effective alternative to incarceration for certain defendants."

Treatment cost

Statistics show that community-based treatment is more cost-effective than incarceration. The cost of processing the average offender through prison in Illinois is \$36,452, while probation costs, with outpatient

and drug monitoring included, are \$9,863. Furthermore, when an addict goes through treatment and stops committing crimes, the substantial cost of future arrests, prosecutions and sanctions are saved. A study conducted in 1986 by Dr. Victor Tabbush at UCLA reported that for every dollar of funds spent for a drug treatment service, \$11.54 in social costs is saved.

When treatment is not available, the state pays for offenders to remain in jail while they wait for treatment — sometimes as long as six months or more, at taxpayers' expense. If addicted offenders are released on bond while waiting for treatment, they are likely to continue to commit crimes to support their untreated addiction. Without available treatment, the criminal justice system becomes more backed up and less effective.

What is needed

The per capita cost of the graduated sanctions approach is less than that of incarceration. However, lack of treatment availability is a persistent problem.

The current treatment system, administered by the Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, is already providing treatment for some 6,000 criminal justice clients per year. There is an acute shortage

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of treatment slots, particularly residential beds, that has created waiting lists of up to six months or more.

Statutory changes are also needed, says Heaps. "Determinant sentencing has placed a lot of people in prison who would be better served — and whose communities would be better served — if they were in treatment." Specifically, Heaps says, the statute that allows certain defendants to petition for treatment via TASC would have to reduce its restrictions somewhat for certain drug possession charges.

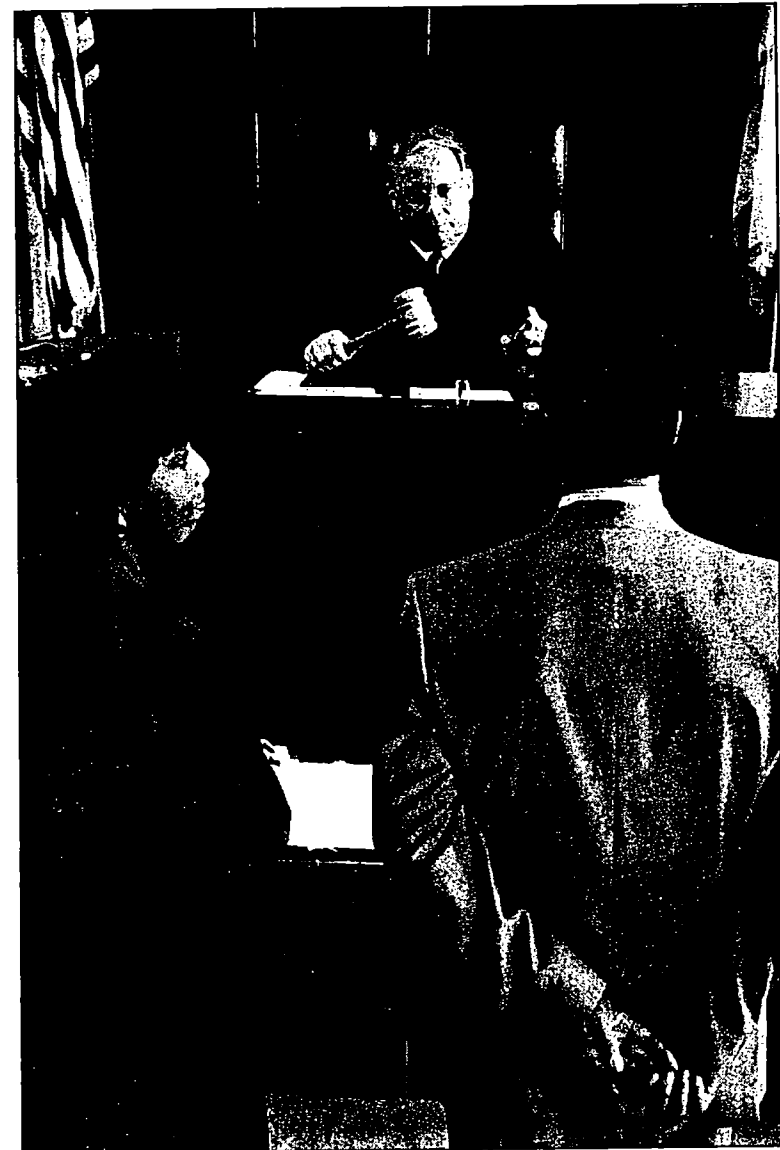
Ultimately, Heaps says, what is needed is equitable distribution of funds to fight the drug war. "Policing and interdiction efforts are vital, but they are only half of the equation. Without a balanced approach that

includes prevention, intervention and treatment, police efforts are rendered much less effective."

Still, there are those who believe that treatment under any circumstances is an easy way out. Is it seen as a pass to "get out of jail free?" Those who have been through the program say it isn't.

"Going through TASC was harder than any jail or prison time I ever served," says one former TASC client. "Prison was only a place that took away my freedom for a while and then I'd be right back doing the same thing.

"When I was facing prison for the third time, I decided that if I went back to this madness, it would never end. It would be a vicious cycle until my addiction was treated."



Our already overcrowded jails are not the only answer to crimes involving substance abuse. A statewide organization, Treatment Alternatives for Special Clients, screens and monitors non-violent, probationable offenders for more cost-effective solutions.

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One by One

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