

CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY DISPOSITION ALTERNATIVE

2004 Final Report to the Legislature

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chemical Dependency Disposition Alternative (CDDA) codified in RCW 13.40.165, became effective July 1, 1998. This disposition alternative provides local juvenile courts with a sentencing option for chemically dependent youth, allowing judges to order youth into treatment instead of confinement. RCW 70.96A.520 requires that:

“The department shall prioritize expenditures for treatment provided under RCW 13.40.165. The department shall provide funds for inpatient and outpatient treatment providers that are the most successful, using the standards developed by the University of Washington under section 27, Chapter 338, Laws of 1997.” In addition, “ the department shall, not later than January 1 of each year, provide a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the success rates of programs funded under this section.”

To comply with this legislation, an outcome evaluation is being conducted to support the annual reports to the Governor and Legislature. The current report describes the results from the 6- and 12-month evaluation of the CDDA program. The final report containing the 18-month outcome data will be presented in the January 2004 report to the Governor and Legislature.

The CDDA outcome evaluation compares recidivism, substance abuse, and other measures of success between CDDA-sanctioned, non-CDDA-sanctioned, and Drug Court youth. Outcomes are compared at 3, 6, 12, and 18 months from the date CDDA eligibility is determined. Recruitment for the CDDA outcome evaluation occurred between January 1999 and June 2001. A total of 403 youth from 8 counties were recruited into the outcome evaluation. Of these youth, 165 were in CDDA, 53 were in a Drug Court, and 185 were in neither CDDA nor Drug Court. The study is not a treatment versus no treatment study since 68% of youth in the Comparison group received some substance abuse treatment services.

Results from the 6- and 12- month assessment revealed that:

- Youth in all three groups demonstrated significant decreases in the number of different types of drugs used, use of marijuana, and truancy.
- Youth in CDDA and Drug Court received more intensive treatment services than youth in the Comparison group.
- Committable youth in CDDA had better outcomes than those not in CDDA. Committable youth in CDDA:
 - were less likely to be incarcerated
 - were detained fewer days
 - used fewer types of drugs
 - used less marijuana

- were more likely to be enrolled in school or to have graduated from school or to have earned a GED.
- Locally sanctioned youth in CDDA and Drug Court were less likely to be incarcerated than locally sanctioned youth not in CDDA or Drug Court.
- Further study, with longer follow up periods on the differences between committable and locally sanctioned youth, youth in CDDA and Drug Court, and youth receiving treatment compared to those receiving no treatment is needed to determine the optimal means of treating juvenile offenders with substance use problems.