

# Drugs, Crime and Justice

## Evaluating Linkages and Developing Models to End Demand



Abt Associates is changing and saving lives through **rigorous research and analyses, data-driven creativity, and distinctive, results-oriented answers** to many of the drug, crime and corrections issues facing the nation. Our research supports law enforcement, communities and other stakeholders in evaluating programs for reducing crime, drug use and trafficking; preventing prostitution; mentoring at-risk youth and addressing the needs of incarcerated individuals and prison releasees to increase positive outcomes.

Abt Associates offers research expertise in criminology, criminal justice and addictions. Our teams analyze trends and emerging issues in crime, drug use and drug markets; apply pioneering methods to evaluate the effectiveness of programs to treat offenders and minimize recidivism; use advanced and Abt-original data systems designs to maximize clients' monitoring and information capabilities, and provide corrections reporting and outcome assessments. The results of our work help policymakers, practitioners and funders decide the best ways to resolve many of today's drug, crime and corrections issues.

### Specialties

#### Drugs and Crime Research

- Trends in drug use among arrestees
- Estimates of prescription drug diversions
- Trends in hate crimes
- Estimates of heavy drug users
- Methamphetamine abuse and enforcement
- National incident-based reporting systems

#### Program and Policy Evaluation

- Prescription drug monitoring programming
- Community correction operations and programming
- Prostitution demand reduction
- Mentoring programs for at-risk youth
- Prisoner re-entry program
- Effectiveness of special law enforcement task forces



#### Corrections Reporting and Outcome Evaluations

- Corrections reporting
- Federal probation and pretrial outcomes and statistics
- Recidivism and corrections outcomes

#### Our Team

Our team includes experts in research and program evaluation methodology, substance use disorders, drug and sex trafficking, mental health, criminal justice populations, policies and programs, violence prevention, juvenile justice and at-risk youth. Other members of the team have advanced training in the social sciences, public health and the humanities.

#### Abt Associates' Work in Drugs, Crime and Justice

##### Estimating Drug Use Patterns Across the Country

Abt provides law enforcement and other stakeholders estimates of local and regional drug use patterns, using biological markers (urinalysis) for a unique bi-annual survey for the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). This is the only federal survey that uses urine samples to test arrestees for the presence of a number of illegal substances, linking the test findings to information provided in the arrestees' interviews. Arrestees are a population not captured in other general population surveys. Abt has collected drug use data for ONDCP since 2007, continuing a program begun by the National Institute of Justice with Abt in 2000.

### **Estimating the Quantity of Painkiller Prescription Diversions to Illicit Use by “Doctor Shoppers”**

To determine the extent of opioid medications diverted to illicit use by “doctor shoppers,” Abt conducted a study, funded by NIDA. The study—the first of its kind—revealed that 4.3 million prescriptions for painkillers were obtained by individuals seeking prescriptions for the same drugs from different physicians. Abt’s study was published in the PLOS ONE.

### **Determining Disparities in ADHD Treatment in the U.S.**

The use of amphetamine medications to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in the U.S. varies widely from state to state and even more dramatically from one county to another. This was the finding of a recent study by Abt. The NIDA-funded study was published in the November 2013 issue of Psychiatric Services. It is the first study to estimate treatment rates using prescription records of individual.

### **Sharing Information on Local Initiatives Aimed at Combating Prostitution**

Abt launched a website to provide comprehensive information about the nearly 1,000 local U.S. initiatives aimed at preventing prostitution by stopping men from buying sex. The site offers a forum for sharing best practices, lessons learned and how to start or improve similar initiatives. Prior to the website’s development, Abt conducted a nationwide assessment of sex trafficking demand-reduction efforts for the National Institute of Justice.

### **Evaluating Linkages to HIV Primary Care in Jails**

This Special Program of National Significance was a collaboration between Abt Associates and the Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University. The Emory-Abt Evaluation and Support Center supported the multi-site evaluation of the effectiveness of innovative methods for linking persons living with HIV/AIDS who are incarcerated in jails or have been recently released from prison to primary medical care and ancillary services in their communities.

### **Assessing Linkage to Care for Recently Released Prison Ex-Offenders**

Abt and Rhode Island’s Miriam Hospital are assessing the level and adequacy of linkage to HIV care for HIV-positive prison releasees. The study is examining the effects of the variation in local resources and relationships among criminal justice and public health systems, and comparing different strategies for improving a systems-wide, multi-agency approach to delivering HIV care to criminal justice populations.

### **Improving Information on America’s Prisons and Jails**

The National Correctional Reporting Program is a longstanding program operated by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) that gathers information on all offenders in America’s thousands of prisons and jails. This extensive dataset is created each year and contains detailed information on all offenders as they move through the criminal justice system. Unfortunately, over the last decade, the number of states that contributed data to the system declined significantly, and in 2010, BJS retained Abt to revitalize and redesign the program to meet a number of other policy-relevant purposes. In its first year, the program has brought in new state systems as well as developed analytic strategies to improve BJS’s utilization of the data.

### **Developing a Model to Improve Federal Community Corrections**

Abt has an ongoing project for the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, Office of Parole and Probation, to use federal data on incarceration, assessed needs, treatment, supervision conditions and arrests to create a model to better understand factors affecting the success or failure of federal offenders under community supervision. Data are assembled for all 96 federal districts on each offender as he/she leaves incarceration or is placed on probation, and all subsequent activity is tracked. This task required the creation of one of the most sophisticated databases in existence in justice research, linking multiple criminal justice sources of information from a variety of agencies at the offender level.

### **Contact**

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**Abt Associates** is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms and one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 40 countries.

