

Assessment of Educational Needs for Missouri  
Drug Court Practitioners

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Ann Wilson  
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Coordinator  
Office of State Courts Administrator  
Jefferson City, Missouri

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## **Abstract**

Operational drug courts in Missouri are expanding at a fast pace. The need for educational and training opportunities for drug court professionals has, therefore, increased. There are several national educational programs available to drug court staff, however, there is only one annual training conference available to practitioners within the state. Limited state and local funding resources do not allow practitioners to attend national training on a regular basis, if at all. The availability of meaningful educational programs at the State level is necessary for drug court practitioners to develop in their knowledge about the drug court programs and increase the success of the participants in the programs. Also, educational programs at the state level will be more affordable for practitioners to attend than relying on national training programs.

The goal of this project is to determine the educational needs of Missouri drug court practitioners in order to enhance the performance of participants in the drug court programs. Training and educational programs that are commonly needed by drug court practitioners to gain general knowledge include topics such as planning or operation of a drug court, drug testing protocols, understanding addiction, and confidentiality issues. Other educational programs assist the practitioners in becoming more efficient and effective in the drug court operations such as, sanctions and incentives, developing resources, evaluation, and ethics. Objectives that can be tested through this project relate to the desire of practitioners to attend training and to determine if the lack of financial resources hinder training attendance. Therefore, the testable objectives of this project:

- Are drug court practitioners willing to attend drug court educational programs that can enhance the performance of the participants in the drug court program, and
- Are drug court practitioners able and/or willing to pay for drug court education programs.

The research methodology used for the project was through a survey that was mailed to drug court practitioners within the State of Missouri (see appendix B). The distribution list included drug courts that were operational as well as those in the planning stages. Respondents were given two (2) weeks to return the survey.

The needs assessment survey provided sufficient information about the educational needs of Missouri drug court practitioners. The response rate alone (85%) indicated that many of the practitioners felt training and education in the drug court field was important. The responses pertaining to the training topics indicated that several program-enhancing topics were selected at a high rate (indicated by a response of 70 or above). The goal of this project was met. The testable objects indicated that a high percentage (93%) of respondents would be willing to attend training but only 41% indicated they would be able to pay for the training.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this project are that drug court practitioners have a great willingness and desire to attend state training and education programs that will be able to develop or enhance their drug court programs. Among the most highly rated topics are best practices in adult drug court, sanctions and incentives in adult drug court, and best practices in drug court treatment. Those topics that rated the lowest include building a drug court team, step-by-step planning of an adult drug court, and step-by-step planning of a juvenile drug court. Since the willingness to attend training is high but the ability to pay for it is not, free or low cost training will need to be provided around the state. The recommendations for free or low cost training is to utilize a training grant received by the Office of State Courts Administrator through the U. S. Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office to provide training and educational programs based upon the responses to the survey.

## **Introduction**

### Operational Problem

The number of drug courts in Missouri has expanded rapidly over the last few years, but the beginnings were slow. Jackson County (Kansas City area) implemented the first drug court in Missouri and began operations in 1993. The second drug court, in rural Lafayette County, Missouri, began operations in 1996. In 1998, drug court legislation, with the support of the Supreme Court, was introduced and passed in Missouri that enabled drug court operation around the state. At the time the law became effective only 8 drug courts were operating in the state. The support of the Supreme Court for this program development gave judges the ability and willingness to support and implement drug courts in their communities. Currently, there are 42 operational drug courts with another 40 plus in the planning stages.

Many of the early drug court programs were developed by visiting other operational drug courts and through the gathering of national information on programs around the country. The Office of State Courts Administrator also provided assistance in planning and implementing the drug court programs. As time passed, more of the drug court programs received planning grants from the Drug Courts Program Office. Some of the drug court staff were able to attend the National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conferences and, beginning in 1999, the Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference.

Many of the drug court team members have been able to take advantage of annual training programs offered through national and state associations as well as through federally funded training programs. However, staff turnover and the changing needs of the drug court participants make it necessary for drug court practitioners to attend educational programs throughout the year.

## Specific Program Evaluated

The increase in the number of drug courts around the state has caused some concern with the state legislature and some of the “older” operational drug court professionals. While the implementation of new drug court programs is a positive change toward trying to make a difference in local communities, there are questions about the true nature of the program operations. The national drug court standards include key components of operation that outline program elements that should be in place to be a fully functioning drug court. The standards include<sup>1</sup>:

1. Drug courts integrate alcohol and other drug treatment services with justice system case processing
2. Using a nonadversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants’ due process rights
3. Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the drug court program
4. Drug courts provide access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitation services
5. Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing
6. A coordinated strategy governs drug court responses to participants’ compliance
7. Ongoing judicial interaction with each drug court participant is essential
8. Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of programs goals and gauge effectiveness
9. Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective drug court planning, implementation, and operations

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<sup>1</sup> “Defining Drug Court: The Key Components,” (January 1997) iii - iv.

10. Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court effectiveness

It is only assumed that the drug court programs currently operating around the state are aware of the key components of drug courts. Key component number nine (9), promoting interdisciplinary education, is critically important to assure that the other key components are followed in order to provide for continued program success. This project has been designed to determine the educational needs of drug court practitioners in the planning and implementation stages of drug court operation. The overall intent is to determine the educational needs and provide training programs that meet those needs. It is anticipated that through these educational programs, the drug courts around Missouri will be able to provide better programming to drug court participants and better meet the needs of their communities.

#### Context

For the last three (3) years, the Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals (MADCP) has held an annual training conference for drug court practitioners. During the development of the agenda for each year's conference, assumptions were made regarding the type of training that should be provided. There were only comments from the previous year's attendees (except for the first conference) on the evaluation forms to identify training needs of the participants.

The conferences have been successful over the years, based upon the attendance and the evaluations received from the participants. However, the development of the training agenda was normally created by two (2) or three (3) persons and based upon what they perceived to be the need of the rest of the state's drug court practitioners.

In 2000, the University of Missouri – Columbia, School of Social Work, conducted a process evaluation on fourteen (14) drug court programs around the state.<sup>2</sup> The format of the evaluation was based upon the national key components of drug court standards. The evaluation identified several areas of drug court operation that did not meet the national standards. Included in the evaluation report was the need for continuing education for drug court practitioners. The researchers from the University noted that some of the other areas of non-compliance with the national standards were based on the need for education in those areas.

Based upon the findings in the process evaluation and the knowledge of previous statewide drug court conferences, the need for additional training of drug court practitioners has been evidenced. This project has been designed to identify the educational needs of drug court practitioners and a plan has been developed to provide training based upon those needs.

### Significance of the Program

Although this project is focused on the needs assessment survey and analyzing the results of the survey, the ultimate intent is to provide meaningful educational programs to drug court practitioners around the state. A training grant was received by the Office of State Courts Administrator from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Drug Courts Program Office in September 2001. The Educational Needs Assessment of Drug Court Practitioners is the first goal identified in the grant. The survey will provide Missouri drug court professionals a unique opportunity since no other state has conducted such a survey. The budget for the training grant includes funds to provide five (5) regional education programs to 70 drug court practitioners at each location. Curricula will be developed for the training topics that

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<sup>2</sup> “Multi-Jurisdictional Enhancement for Missouri Drug Courts,” University of Missouri – Columbia, School of Social Work, (2001), iii.

scored 70 or above on the needs assessment survey and will be presented to the drug court professionals in regional training sessions.

Besides the need to provide meaningful educational programs to drug court practitioners in order to develop the best drug court program possible, another issue that provides focus for this project is funding. In 2001, the Missouri legislature passed a bill creating a Drug Court Coordinating Commission that is charged with distributing funds to drug court programs. A Drug Court Resources Fund will be established with state general revenue funds and other funds as available. In order to assure that the programs requesting funding are operating drug court programs based on the national standards; policies, procedures and state standards will need to be established by the Commission. Some of the programs currently operating are not following national standards for drug court operation primarily in the area of justice system and community collaboration. Educational programs are an important element to provide the knowledge about national standards and to assure that drug courts are meeting them.

#### Goals and Objectives of the Project

The goal of this project is to determine the educational needs of Missouri drug court practitioners in order to enhance the performance of participants in the drug court programs. Training and educational programs that are commonly needed by drug court practitioners include topics such as planning or operation of a drug court, drug testing protocols, understanding addiction, and confidentiality issues. Other educational programs assist the practitioners in becoming more efficient and effective in the drug court operations such as, sanctions and incentives, developing resources, evaluation, and ethics. Enhancement of the drug courts is important for practitioner's continuing education, therefore, the testable objectives of this project include:

1. 90% of drug court practitioners are willing to attend drug court educational programs, and
2. 25% of the drug court practitioners are able and/or willing to pay for drug court education programs.

Once drug court programs have been operating for over a year, many practitioners in the programs conduct business as usual and fail to acknowledge that the program may not be working to its fullest potential. Educational programs are intended, in these situations, to provide new knowledge to the practitioners to see if they might be able to enhance their program outcomes.

Practitioners that are either in the early development of their program or that are in the planning stages will be able to take advantage of educational programs that will be developed based upon their needs. It is anticipated that with the attendance at statewide drug court training programs the new and planned program professionals will be able to make better decisions about program process in order to achieve better outcomes of their program participants.

This paper will include a review of relevant literature that defines some of the educational needs of drug court practitioners, training topics that are relevant to meet those needs, survey design and methods to best educate adults. After a review of the relevant literature, a description of the research methodology is included followed by the findings, conclusions and appendices.

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

A review of the literature led to information on drug court education, therapeutic jurisprudence, survey design, drug treatment educational programs, and adult education. All of the literature focusing on drug courts supports and recommends the need for on-going education in substance abuse, team building and community resource development. While drug courts

have only been around for thirteen (13) years<sup>3</sup>, the expansion and transfer of knowledge has grown at a considerable pace.

Many publications were reviewed regarding the need for drug court education, however, there was nothing found that indicated a statewide survey of educational needs had ever been conducted. Talking with state drug court coordinators around the country, persons at the Drug Courts Program Office, and persons at The American University that serves at the national drug court clearinghouse for information, it was discovered that no educational needs assessment has been conducted of drug court practitioners on a statewide basis.

### Drug Court Education

According to “Defining Drug Courts: The Key Components” developed through the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office, key component number nine (9) states, “Attendance at education and training sessions by all drug court personnel is essential.”<sup>4</sup> The key component continues to comment on the need for interdisciplinary training in order to maintain a high level of professionalism and achieve the best possible program outcomes.

Another publication included information from a survey of drug court judges that asked, “What are the six most important characteristic[s] of an effective drug court judge?”<sup>5</sup> The most frequent response was “the ability to be empathic or to show genuine concern.” But the most notable and second most frequent response was “knowledge about drug addiction and pharmacology”.<sup>6</sup> This survey of judges strengthens the belief for interdisciplinary education.

Both publications stress the need for drug court team and practitioner training. The greater knowledge the judges, prosecutors and defense attorneys have about addiction, relapse

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<sup>3</sup> The first drug court was established in Miami, Florida in 1989.

<sup>4</sup> “Defining Drug Court: The Key Components,” (January 1997) 35.

<sup>5</sup> Sally L. Satel., MD, “Observational Study of Courtroom Dynamics in Selected Drug Courts,” *National Drug Court Institute Review*, vol. 1, issue 1 (Summer 1998) 51.

<sup>6</sup> Satel 51.

and treatment the better responses they will make when determining the fate of a drug court client. On the same hand, the greater knowledge treatment providers and social workers have about the criminal justice system and the court process, the better they will understand responses that the system makes about criminal behavior.

The drug court movement is a new phenomenon in the justice system. The first drug court was established in Miami, Florida in 1989. According to Kevin Sherin and Barry Mahoney, “One of the clear lessons learned from attempts to introduce major innovations in American courts is that a significant amount of time and energy must be invested in education and training both before and during program implementation.”<sup>7</sup> It is oftentimes difficult for professionals to get together to attend educational programs. An important part of drug court, however, is based upon team involvement and interaction.

The drug court team membership should always include certain practitioners, however other team members vary by community. For instance, an adult drug court team, at a minimum, should consist of the judge, prosecutor, public defender, treatment provider, probation officer, and a coordinator. Some of the drug court programs have included other members such as a law enforcement officer, a county commissioner, a private citizen, a court clerk, and others that the team feels are important for the drug court operation. In all cases, the team consists of persons with varied professional backgrounds and knowledge about each field represented on the team. It is because of this fact that one publication notes, “The greater number of players in drug court systems increases the need for team meetings and interdisciplinary education.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Kevin M. Sherin., M.D., M.P.H. and Barry Mahoney, LL.B., Ph.D., “Treatment Drug Courts: Integrating Substance Abuse Treatment with Legal Case Processing,” (1996), 32.

<sup>8</sup> Jeff Tauber and C. West Huddleston, “Development and Implementation of Drug Court Systems,” National Drug Court Institute, (May 1999), 6.

Training is also necessary so drug court team members will understand their role in drug court. The roles are different than in regular court and treatment processes. “One of the essential steps in an implementation plan includes education, orientation, and/or training of all of the participants as to their expected roles and participation.”<sup>9</sup>

Drug court programs incorporate the justice system and treatment into a single model for dealing with adults, children, and families. The justice system does not usually know much about treatment or drug testing, nor does treatment usually know much about the justice system. In order for the drug court programs to work best, it is important for each practitioner to understand the philosophy and practice of the team members. Previous cites have indicated the need for treatment professionals to understand the justice system. There is the same need for the justice system to understand treatment practices and protocols. “Training in substance abuse issues is essential for judges and persons providing services to court involved children and families.”<sup>10</sup> A publication on substance abuse treatment for drug courts talks about the drug court as a “paradigm shift” in previously established methods of functioning. The document continues to state that, “Treatment-based drug courts represent a shift in the paradigm operations of key participating systems, and therefore, inherently require cross-training among the systems’ personnel.”<sup>11</sup>

Drug testing is one of the foundations for accountability in the drug court. New drug testing methods and procedures are developed on a regular basis. It is important that the entire team understand the drug court protocols and what the test results indicate. The implications of

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<sup>9</sup> John Goldkamp, “Justice and Treatment Innovation: The Drug Court Movement A working Paper of the First National Drug Court Conference, December 1993,” (October 1994), 10.

<sup>10</sup> “Drugs – The American Family in Crisis: A Judicial Response 43 Recommendations,” Juvenile and Family Court Journal, Vol. 46, No. 1, (Winter 1995), 51.

<sup>11</sup> “Substance Abuse Treatment Planning Guide and Checklist for Treatment-Based Drug Courts,” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (1997), 17.

drug testing policies should be communicated through training and education for all drug court team members.<sup>12</sup>

### Therapeutic Jurisprudence

The term therapeutic jurisprudence has been used over the last several years to define the events that occur when the judicial system changes to meet the needs of the user of that system. Interestingly, in the Notre Dame Law Review authors noted, “To date, therapeutic jurisprudence literature and debate have been confined almost exclusively to academic circles. In the meantime, the DTC [drug treatment court] movement has run its course almost entirely devoid of contributions from academia.”<sup>13</sup> While a variety of processes and cases have been involved in this new manner of doing business in the courts, drug courts have been the strongest model and longest lasting of therapeutic jurisprudence. “After years of trying to process more cases more efficiently, and still facing backlogs, several jurisdictions have decided to change their focus.”<sup>14</sup> The author continues to describe the change of the court’s role in drug court programs and, while continuing to grow, still leaves some court jurisdictions wondering if this new process is overstepping their judicial authority.

A later published article identifies therapeutic jurisprudence as an approach which “explores the role of the law in fostering therapeutic or antitherapeutic outcomes.”<sup>15</sup> The article continues to discuss a variety of innovations that fall into the category of therapeutic jurisprudence. A comment supporting the drug court programs states, “Drug Treatment courts

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<sup>12</sup> Jerome J. Robinson., M.F.S., T.C., S.C., M.T. and James W. Jones, Ph.D., D.A.B.C., D.A.B.F.E., “Drug Testing in a Drug Court Environment: Common Issues to Address,” (May 2000), 13.

<sup>13</sup> Hon. Peggy Fulton Hora, Hon. William G. Schma, and John T. A. Rosenthal, “Therapeutic Jurisprudence and the Drug Treatment Court Movement: Revolutionizing the Criminal Justice System’s Response to Drug Abuse and Crime in America,” 74 Notre Dame Law Review, (January 1999), 102.

<sup>14</sup> Pamela Casey, “Court-enforced Drug Treatment Programs: Do They Enhance Court Performance?” The Justice System Journal, vol.17, Number 1, (1994), 118.

<sup>15</sup> David Rottman and Pamela Casey, “Therapeutic Jurisprudence and the Emergence of Problem-Solving Courts,” Corrections Forum, (Spring 2000), 27.

are the best known example of a court for which therapeutic jurisprudence arguably provides the underlying legal theory.”<sup>16</sup>

Another article addresses the issue of prior court innovations stating that either judicial administrators or court managers normally implement the innovations. However, regarding drug court implementation the authors state, “. . .what makes the recent innovations in the management of drug caseloads significant is the dynamic and often nontraditional premises upon which they are founded and the judicial activism they represent.”<sup>17</sup>

Many believe that the reason drug courts have been so successful is because the judge is usually the one who gets the programs into their jurisdiction and the other key players to be supportive of the drug court. Even at the beginning of the drug court movement, evaluators and other professionals noted the significance of the judicial involvement and what that meant for the success of the programs. “The judge has much more involvement in supervising drug court offenders than just placing an individual in a probationary or diversionary program for drug treatment. The resulting treatment experience has the authority of the judge at its center and is anchored squarely in the context of the criminal process.”<sup>18</sup>

Not only are drug courts attempting to stop the cycle of substance abuse and continuation of crime, they are trying to show the community that they are responsive to the needs of the community. “Therapeutic jurisprudence is effective, in part, because it promotes the legal procedures and judge-to-litigant interactions that the public experiences as fair and just.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Rottman and Casey, 29.

<sup>17</sup> Caroline S. Cooper and Joseph A. Trotter, Jr., “Recent Developments in Drug Case Management: Re-engineering the Judicial Process,” The Justice System Journal, Vol. 16, Number 3 (1994), 97.

<sup>18</sup> John S. Goldkamp, “Justice and Treatment Innovation: The Drug Court Movement A Working Paper of the First National Drug Court Conference, December 1993,” (October 1994), iii.

<sup>19</sup> David B. Rottman, “Does Effective Therapeutic Jurisprudence Require specialized Courts (and Do Specialized Courts Imply Specialist Judges)?” Court Review: The Journal of the American Judges Association, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (Spring 2000), 26.

The link between therapeutic jurisprudence and educational programming is made in the National Institute of Justice Journal which states, “Educational programs may offer judges an effective and efficient forum for exploring the concept of therapeutic jurisprudence.”<sup>20</sup>

Most of the literature reviewed on therapeutic jurisprudence was aimed toward criminal court processes. While juvenile and family court systems have inherently been more therapeutic in their handling of cases, there is always room for improvement. According to an article in the Juvenile and Family Court Journal, “Each community should establish a formal structure that brings in principal child and family serving systems into active collaboration for comprehensive response to its alcohol and other drug problems.”<sup>21</sup>

### Survey Design

The design of the survey is important in order to maximize the number of surveys returned and to achieve the greatest validity of the data received. The layout of the survey and the language of the questionnaire can determine the likelihood that respondents will provide answers to questions in the same manner.<sup>22</sup> The importance of this points to the validity of the survey instrument.

Several design elements are mentioned in a textbook on social research that is important to note. Numbering of questions is important in order to compile the data that is received on the survey. Surveys are not supposed to look cramped on the page, while the use of white space allows persons to respond more easily to the survey. Also, the varied type styles on a survey help the respondent to determine the difference between an instruction and a question.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> David Rottman and Pamela Casey, “Therapeutic Jurisprudence and the Emergence of Problem-Solving Courts,” National Institute of Justice Journal, (July 1999), 17.

<sup>21</sup> “Drugs – The American Family in Crisis: A Judicial Response 43 Recommendations,” Juvenile and Family Court Journal, Vol. 46, No. 1, (Winter 1995), 11.

<sup>22</sup> Don A. Dillman., Scot Caldwell, and Mary Gansemer, “Visual Design Effects on Item Nonresponse to a Question About Work Satisfaction That Precedes the Q-12 Agree-Disagree Items,” (August 25, 2000), 1.

<sup>23</sup> Earl Babbie, “Survey Research,” The Practice of Social Research, Fourth Ed., 205.

## Drug Treatment Educational Programs

A New England Regional Conference, sponsored by the State Justice Institute (SJI), was held in 1993 for state judicial educators, judges and other court personnel. The attendees at the conference discussed the components of an effective training program for treating drug-involved offenders. The majority of recommendations from the group for future training programs included training judges, court personnel and probation officers on substance abuse issues and improved coordination among agencies in the criminal justice and treatment fields.<sup>24</sup> The conference was held during a time when only twelve drug courts existed around the country. The importance of this proceeding is that it is still relevant eight years later.

## Adult Education

A final area for review relates to the focus of the educational programs. All of the persons involved with the drug court training and education will be adults. The persons conducting the training must be knowledgeable about adult education and may need to be involved in some type of faculty development course.

Many books and manuals have been written on adult education, but three generalizations can be drawn from all of them that reflect the needs of the adult learner. First, the adult learner brings prior experience to the training.<sup>25</sup> When conducting training for teams, it is important to state to the audience that the training will be a review for some of the team members but new information for others. This is important to validate a team member's knowledge about the subject to the team.

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<sup>24</sup> "A Regional Conference on Effective Treatment for Drug-Involved Offenders: A Training of Trainers Programs for State Judicial Educators, Judges, and Other Court Personnel," (May 10-11, 1993), 26-28.

<sup>25</sup> Louis Phillips, Ed.D., "Advanced Faculty Development Seminar, (June 19-20, 1999), 1.

Second, the adult learner needs to be actively involved in the training.<sup>26</sup> This involvement may be mental involvement or participation in an activity. Adults need to know early in the training, “what’s in it for me?”<sup>27</sup> If the training does not address these items, the audience doesn’t pay attention to presenter.

The third need is many times overlooked in training sessions. Everyone has a learning style and a learning mode. There are four (4) learning styles that are identified. The first is diverger. This person takes things in through concrete information and processes it reflectively. Working in groups and brainstorming is a preference for this individual. The second is the assimilator. This person takes information it puts it into logical form. Lectures are the preference for this learning style along with the time to think things through. The third learning style is the converger. A converger wants to find practical application for the information received. Experimentation and simulations is their learning preference. Finally, the fourth learning style is an accommodator. Learning through hands-on experience is important for this person. This is also the problem-solver and action-oriented person. The best learning environment for this individual is through task driven group assignments.<sup>28</sup>

The importance of the learning styles lies in the variety of the teams. The teams are made up of a variety of individuals with the different learning styles. The way teams process information and work together is dependent upon how they take in information. The success of team work involves an understanding and appreciation of the different learning styles of its’ members.

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<sup>26</sup> Phillips 1.

<sup>27</sup> Phillips 1.

<sup>28</sup> David A. Kolb., “Learning Style Inventory,” (1999), 7.

## **Methodology**

### Research Design

The general research design for this project is social scientific description. Based upon the definition of this design, the educational needs of drug court practitioners will be identified and generalized to all drug court practitioners around the state in a descriptive format. The most amenable research method for this type of research design is through survey research. An educational needs assessment survey of drug court practitioners was designed to identify what educational needs drug court practitioners desired along with information about those practitioners that would be useful for further analysis. The other information that was deemed appropriate to capture regarding the drug court practitioners included: profession, location in the state, type of drug court, operating versus planned drug court programs, previous drug court training attended, willingness to attend training, and ability to pay the cost of training.

### Instrumentation

A survey of drug court practitioners was distributed statewide to determine if drug court education is desired and, if it is, what programs would best meet their needs. The survey included demographic information on each respondent in order to determine the role of the practitioner, the type of drug court in which they practice and how long they have been part of the drug court team. A distinction was made as to whether the practitioner is part of an operational drug court or one in that is in the planning stages. Past educational program attendance was important to determine the level of need of many of the practitioners. As previously stated, several of the drug court teams and individual practitioners have attended national and state educational programs for drug courts. The training topics listed on the survey were based upon the national standards, from evaluations gathered at Missouri drug court

conferences, from national training programs approved by the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office and from information learned from the literature review.

### Survey Pre-test

In order to test the survey instrument, it was sent to the ten (10) members of the Board of Directors of the Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals, the St. Louis City family drug court planning team and the Clay County adult drug court planning team. In all, 36 surveys were distributed and 20 were returned. The survey instrument was changed based upon the information and responses received from the 20 individuals. Changes to the survey included: adding the estimated time it will take to complete the survey, adding case manager to the list of professions, underlining instructions listed after some of the questions, adding descriptive information to some of the items under previous training, and changing the listing of possible training sessions from a list to a table format.

### Sampling

A survey was mailed to individuals that are part of a drug court team. In order to determine current team members and addresses for some of the members, an e-mail message was sent to all drug courts requesting the names and addresses of the team members. Many of the drug courts responded but some did not. While no sampling was intended, a natural sampling did occur since some of the drug courts did not respond to the message. It was important that each drug court practitioner have the opportunity to respond to the survey because it will determine the importance they place on drug court education.

### Data Collection

Surveys were sent to 208 drug court practitioners during the first two weeks of October with a return date of October 19, 2001. A large number of surveys were received by the October 19 deadline, however, the need to have a later cut-off date for this project was determined to be

in the best interest of the data analysis. In all, 177 surveys were received by October 31, 2001 and included in the analysis giving an overall response rate of 85%. Seven (7) additional surveys were returned after October 31, however they were not used in the analysis of data. They will be used for the purpose of the training grant.

### Coding of Data and Statistical Procedures

As the surveys were returned, the responses were entered into a spreadsheet using Excel. The survey instrument was designed for easy entry into the spreadsheet. Each survey response was entered into one row of the spreadsheet. The profession category was listed in full according to the response checked or included in the “other” category. The rest of the responses were shortened to either the first letter of the response (i.e., y for yes or n for no) or a common abbreviation for the response (i.e., ‘nw’ for northwest or ‘se’ for southeast). Numeric characters were used to code prior training programs attended as well as the training topics desired. The training topics were numbered from 1-42 and a number 1 was used to indicate the topic was checked ‘yes’ on the survey. If a response on the survey was left blank, a blank was also left in that cell in the spreadsheet.

The data was easily sorted to determine the numbers of responses by profession, persons working with operational or planned drug courts, those that attended previous training, and types of training desired by the respondents. Cross tabulations were also completed on the overall types of training desired, types of training desired by profession as well as by operational or planned drug courts. Determining the overall types of training desired was important in order to identify what training topics would be most desired by the total respondents. Not all of the training topics would be able to be presented over the next couple of years, therefore, a priority of topics to provide in educational programs was necessary for practical purposes.

It was assumed that there would be a difference in desired training topics between operational drug court teams and those in the planning stages. The difference in the number of responses in each of those categories requires a percentage of desired topics to be determined. The percentages could then be compared to determine if the assumption was valid.

Drug court teams are made up of a variety of practitioners with different professional backgrounds. Many professions have internal training in their agencies that may be beneficial or desired by only that profession. Determining the desired training topics by profession assisted with the decision whether some training would be best suited in an individual agency or if the various professions as a whole desired it. Percentages of training topics for each profession will be required in order to make comparisons of the desired training topics.

#### Obstacles Encountered

Obstacles that were encountered during the project included the collection of drug court professionals' names and addresses. Many staff change in the course of drug court operation as well as during the planning stage. Several drug court team members previously listed were no longer associated with the drug court. The collection of this information was at the mercy of many judges and drug court administrators. An e-mail message was sent to all presiding judges, all chief juvenile officers and drug court professionals not included in the two aforementioned groups requesting names and addresses of all practitioners on the drug court teams. Using the number of drug courts in the operational and planning stages (82) and multiplying that by five (5), the approximate number of practitioners per team, a possible 410 surveys could have been disseminated around the state. That number is nearly double the number of surveys actually distributed. As previously mentioned, a sample of the population was not intended, however a naturally occurring sample did take place. In sampling practices, a 50% population sample still exceeds validity standards.

## **Findings**

The data collection instrument used for the survey provided a wealth of information for analysis. The information provided in this section includes the most helpful data for purposes of this project. Future analysis of this data may be conducted for other purposes and is specifically identified in the conclusion section. Analysis of the survey data provided some interesting and unexpected results. The data analysis in this section includes response rate, response by profession, response by location in the state, response by operational versus planned drug courts, and previous training attended.

### Response Rate

A response rate of 85% was achieved for this project. Overall out of a total of 208 educational needs surveys for drug court practitioners distributed, 177 persons responded. Seven (7) additional surveys were received after the responding period deadline that was not included in the data analysis. Including the additional surveys, the overall response rate would be just over 88%. According to Earl Babbie in The Practice of Social Research (1986), he indicates that an acceptable response rate of a mail survey over 70% is very good.<sup>29</sup> While the author begins with a 50% success rate and progresses by 10% until 70%, a response rate over 80% must be excellent.

### Response by Profession

The largest number of responses was received from judges and probation officers. Each of the two professions returned 29 responses resulting in 33% of all returned surveys. The six professions returning the most surveys were judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, treatment

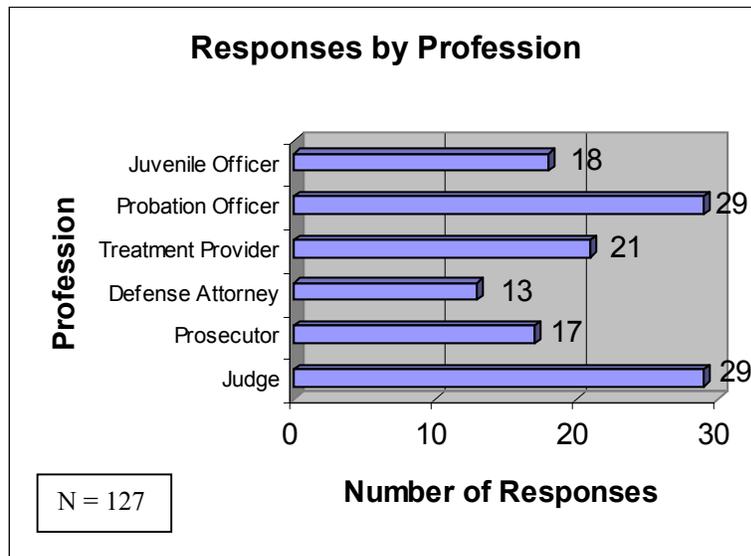
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<sup>29</sup> Earl Babbie, "Survey Research," The Practice of Social Research, Fourth Ed., 221.

providers, probation officers, and juvenile officers. The six professions made up an overall response rate of 71%.

The following illustration indicates the professions that responded most frequently to the survey. The incidence of responses by profession include: juvenile officers at 10%, probation officers at 16%, treatment providers at 12%, defense attorneys at 7%, prosecutors at 10% and judges at 16%.

**Illustration 1**



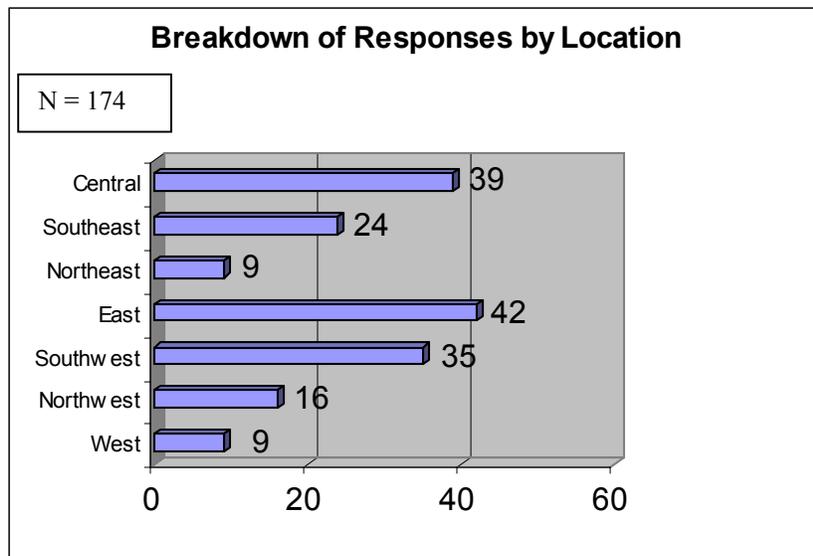
Responses from all other professions included:

- law enforcement at 3%
- Division of Family Services Workers at 3%,
- health professionals at 2%
- case managers at 2%
- drug court administrators at 6%
- evaluators at 3%
- court clerks at 2%
- educators at 2%
- guardian ad litem at 1%,
- attorneys for the juvenile officer at 1%
- state agency staff at 3%.

### Response by Location in the State

Further demographic information indicated that responses were received more frequently from the Southwest, East, and Central portions of the State. Responses from those areas of the state resulted in 66% of all responses. A comparison of the results from responses from the various locations around the state was made to the number of drug courts in the operational or planning stages in the same areas. The areas of the state where there are actually planned and operational drug courts, in descending order from most to least, are Southeast, East, Southwest, Northwest and Northeast (a three-way tie), Central and West. The central region had the greatest proportional response rate of 87% when compared to the other areas of the state. Illustration 2 indicates the breakdown of responses by their location around the state.

### **Illustration 2**



### Response by Operational versus Planned Drug Court

In response to the question about the type of drug court operating or planned, the survey indicated there were 116 adult, 74 juvenile and 33 family. The numbers of drug court type

totaled more than the total number of responses because 47 of the respondents work with more than one type of drug court. The number of responses from persons that indicated family drug court was significant because only three family drug courts are currently operating in the State. However, there are several family drug courts in the planning stages which is evidenced by the responses.

Persons responding to the survey that indicated they were part of an operational drug court was 81% and those that were part of a drug court in the planning stages was 35%. Again, some of the practitioners are part of both categories. The information indicating the date the drug court began operation, how long the practitioner had been part of the drug court team and the implementation of a planned drug court were for further information but not used for complete data analysis. However, analysis was completed on the number of persons that are part of an operational drug court program who were not part of the original drug court team. There were 41 persons out of 143 that were not part of the original drug court team as indicated by their answer to how long they had been part of the operational drug. This number represents 28% of the total operational drug court practitioners that responded to the survey. This percentage is actually lower than expected, but could indicate that either the new drug court team members did not respond to the survey or did not receive a survey.

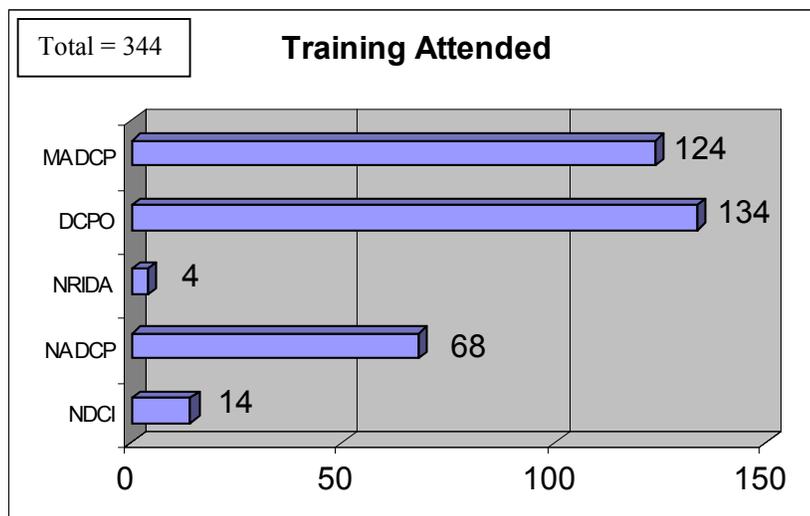
### Training Attendance

Surprisingly, 123 or 69% of all respondents have attended some type of drug court training. Just over 33% of those that had attended training had received a federal planning grant or planning initiative through the Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office. Even with so many respondents indicating they had already attended training on drug courts, 165 or 93% stated they would be willing to attend a one or two day special topic workshop in their

region of the state. With such a high percentage still willing to attend additional training, it most likely indicates that drug court operations is a complicated effort that requires continued education for the practitioners.

The information found in Illustration 3, describes the number of respondents that have attended some type of drug court training. The training listed includes the annual conference hosted by the Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals (MADCP), the planning initiatives that are funded through the Drug Courts Program Office (DCPO), the annual conference hosted by the National Rural Institute on Drug Abuse (NRIDA), the annual conference hosted by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), and the practitioner training series provided by the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI).

**Illustration 3**



The training data reveals that 31% of the respondents had not attended any drug court training programs. Further analysis of this data was conducted using cross tabulations to compare operational and planned drug courts with their previous training experience. The analysis indicates that 28% of operational drug court team members had not attended any drug

court training. Even further analysis indicates that 46% of the operational drug court practitioners that were not part of the original drug court team have not attended any drug court training. The indication of training received by planned drug court team members showed that only 26% of the practitioners had not attended any drug court training. The information that is found in this data provides an even clearer picture of the need for continual educational programs for all drug court practitioners, including those that are part of an operational drug court program.

#### Ability to Pay for Training

While the numbers indicated that the majority of the respondents were interested in attending training, only 41% said the agency they worked for would be able to pay for their attendance at the training. Comparing the profession of those that indicated they could pay the costs to those that said they could not pay the cost, there was no difference between the two groups.

#### Training Topics by Profession

Looking at a cross section of data for the training topics and profession, there is no significant difference in the selections. There was a difference, however between the selections made by practitioners that were part of an operational drug court versus those that were in the planning stages. All of the significant differences, using a percentage of 20% or more difference, were in the team-training category. The topics that were noted to have the greatest difference included: building a drug court team-for planned drug courts, team building-for operational drug courts, sanctions and incentives in adult drug courts, sanctions and incentives in family drug courts, best practices in adult drug court programs, best practices in family drug court programs,

and on-site visit to state operational family drug court. The closest percentages between operational and planned drug court responses were in the treatment topic area.

The number of overall responses for planned drug court respondents was 855, which totals 13.79 responses per person. The number of overall responses for operational drug court respondents was 1847, which equals 12.91 responses per person.

### Testable Objectives Analyzed

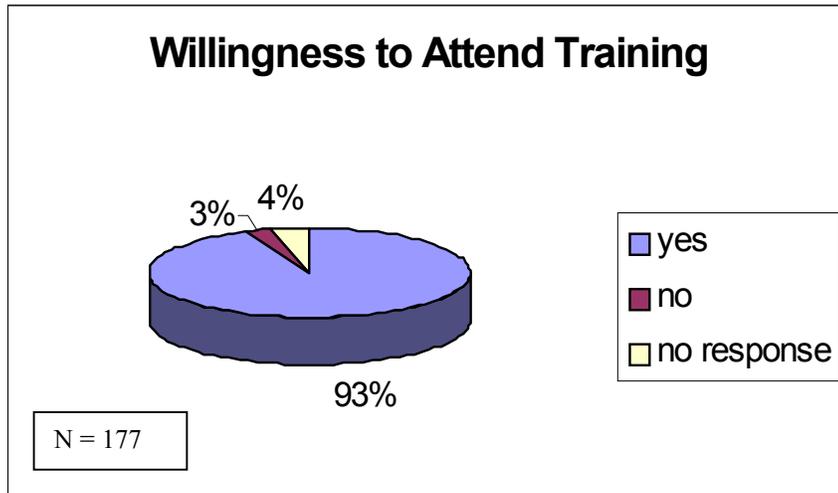
The primary testable objectives of the project were:

1. 90% of drug court practitioners are willing to attend drug court educational programs, and
2. 25% of the drug court practitioners are able and/or willing to pay for drug court education programs.

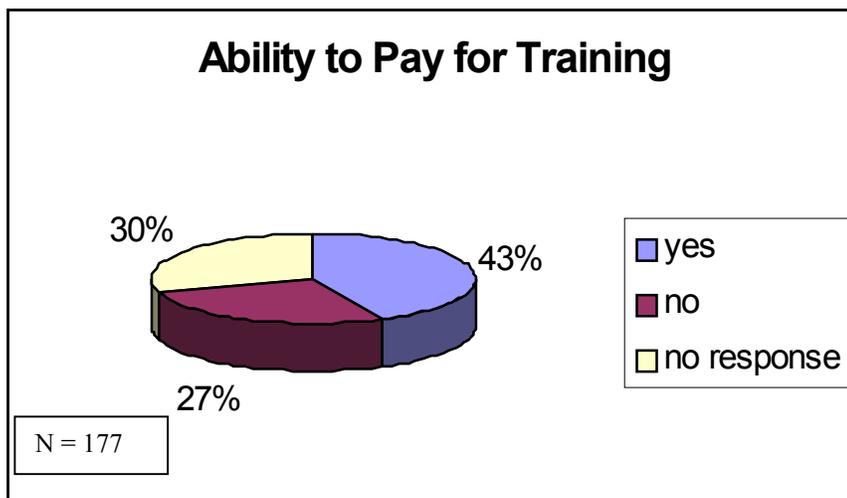
The willingness of drug court practitioners to attend training was met with a significant percentage (93%) responding positively to the question. The ability to pay for training was greater than expected (41%) but was still low compared to those desiring training. The number of persons not responding to the question about the ability to pay was 28% of all responses. This is a greater number that indicated no to the question (25%). Several people wrote comments next to this question that indicated they weren't sure if the agency would be able to pay or not. Much of this uncertainty is due to the dire budget years Missouri has been having. Many state budgets, especially in the executive branch, have cut all of the staff training dollars in order to meet the percentage budget cuts required by the Governor.

Illustration 4 shows the number of respondents who stated they were willing to attend drug court training. Illustration 5 shows the variance of respondents that had the ability to pay or willingness to pay for the drug court training program.

**Illustration 4**



**Illustration 5**



**Conclusions**

Summary of Findings

The data received from the Educational Needs Assessment Survey for Drug Court Practitioners will be useful for future training programs developed for drug court practitioners. The information clearly showed that the persons responding to the survey desired additional training and provided specific topics they desired to have included in educational programs.

There was no significant indication that the various professionals were interested in different types of training. On the contrary, practitioners indicated that their desires for specific training topics were the same. Information collected did, however, show that drug court practitioners in the operational drug courts and those in the planning stages had some variance on the training topics. The practitioners that were in the planning stages of drug court development desired more basic educational programs such as planning a drug court, the key components of drug court and developing the drug court team. Drug court practitioners in the operational stage selected training sessions that were more advanced such as drug testing protocols, finding community and funding resources, case management, and confidentiality issues. It is also noted that while training is greatly desired by the majority of the respondents, the majority will not be able to pay for that training. This is important to note in order to develop either inexpensive training programs or ones that can be presented free of charge.

An interesting and somewhat surprising finding was the high number of respondents (69%) who had attended some type of drug court training, yet 93% of the respondents were still interested and willing to attend training. Some assumptions can be drawn from these responses.

One of the assumptions is that drug courts are a complex method in which to process cases through the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems. Due to the complexity of the process, the practitioners feel it is necessary to learn additional information about drug court case processing and the pieces that fit into that processing (i.e., drug testing, case management, sanctions and incentives, etc).

Another assumption is that the training that was previously received by some of the respondents did not meet all of their needs in drug court education. Some of the training programs that were marked as attended are very specific about planning a drug court or specific

practitioner training. A broader scope of training may be one of the desires of the respondents. This was evidenced by the high number of criminal justice professionals that desired training on a variety of treatment topics.

All in all, the responses from the surveys have provided information that can be used over the next couple of years. Decisions for future drug court training and statewide conferences will be made based upon the survey data. The information provided by this survey can also be useful for other states that want to develop their own survey or training programs for drug court professionals. There is no known survey of this kind in the United States that has been administered on a statewide basis.

#### Comparison of Findings

Through the literature review for this project, there was no discovery of an educational needs assessment survey for drug court practitioners in any of the material. It is possible that a local or statewide survey was conducted but never published in a format that would have been locatable in a library or on the Internet. During a recent meeting of state drug court coordinators and federal and national agency representatives, it was discovered that Missouri is the only state in the nation that has conducted a statewide educational needs assessment survey for drug court practitioners. The states represented at the meeting were interested to learn about the survey outcomes in order to develop a similar survey for their use. Many were in the process of coordinating a statewide conference and believed that the Missouri survey would be a benefit to their state. A copy of the survey and the results from the Missouri respondents has now been distributed to most states around the country.

The national training programs and conferences that have been developed in the past have used a cross-section of practitioners from around the United States to develop curriculum

and program content. However, there has not been a national survey completed by operational or planned drug court practitioners in order for them to identify what they believe to be their educational needs. While a national survey could be a challenge, it is always important to validate assumptions of what people want in the way of educational programming with what they actually prefer.

### Recommendations

Now that the survey is completed and analyzed, there are several recommendations that are appropriate. The recommendations include:

1. Developing educational curriculum and programs for drug court practitioners,
2. Promoting out-of-state educational opportunities for drug court staff,
3. Administering an educational needs assessment survey every two (2) years,
4. Providing on-going educational programs for drug court practitioners,
5. Developing a network of drug court practitioners that can present training sessions, and
6. Developing a network of drug court practitioners that can provide mentoring for other drug court professionals.

Educational programs and curriculum should be developed to meet the needs of the drug court practitioners. Through the grant received by the Office of State Courts Administrator from the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Courts Program Office (DCPO), this recommendation can be a reality. The opportunities provided by the grant include establishing a curriculum development committee to design specific training programs for drug court practitioners. Once the curriculum is developed, funding is available to provide five (5) regional training sessions to 70 drug court practitioners at each site. The first regional training will be held in April 2002 in Springfield, Missouri. The training program is part of the overall Missouri Association of Drug

Court Professional's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. A scholarship application was distributed inside the conference registration announcement. This will allow persons to be able to attend the conference as well as have part of the 2 ½ day program funded. The majority of the 36 concurrent training sessions and three (3) plenary sessions are based upon the responses to the needs assessment survey. There will also be a drug court graduation held one evening during the conference so that interested persons can attend the ceremony. Drug court graduation was one of the training topics listed on the survey and 62 persons responded they would be interested in that training. Experiencing a drug court graduation along with the ability to ask questions after the ceremony is completed is one of the best ways in which to learn about that topic.

Another training program has been proposed for the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association fall training conference that will be held in October 2002. Many professionals, including drug court professionals, already attend this training conference, but many others will be able to benefit from the program agenda. The belief is that this would be a good forum to present the training sessions specifically requested through the needs assessment survey by juvenile and family drug court practitioners. The program agenda will include the following topics: sanctions and incentives in juvenile drug courts, sanctions and incentives in family drug courts, best practices in juvenile drug courts, club drugs, screening and assessment for drug courts, co-occurring disorders, fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effect, finding community-based resources, finding funding resources, and evaluation practices in drug courts. A similar scholarship application and policy will accompany the registration brochure for this conference that was distributed with the drug court conference.

The second recommendation is to promote out-of-state educational opportunities for drug court staff. The National Drug Court Institute (NDCI) and the National Council of Juvenile and

Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) provide excellent training for drug court professionals on a regular basis. The grant from the DCPO includes scholarship funding for twenty (20) professionals to attend training through NDCI and the NCJFCJ over the next two (2) years. The selection criteria for scholarship recipients include persons that are part of the core drug court team, persons who have never attended national drug court training, and person that represent a diverse practitioner type and location around the state. The scholarship funds also do not include judicial personnel because the Office of State Courts Administrator currently provides scholarships to those persons. The scholarship application and policy was sent to non-judicial drug court practitioners in February 2002. It's anticipated that the people allowed to attend this out-of-state training will have greater knowledge and be able to better serve the clients in their drug court programs.

The next recommendation is to administer a comparable needs assessment survey every two (2) years. The reason for the frequent administration of the survey is due to the turnover of drug court staff and due to the constant development of new drug court programs. This recommendation may be more difficult to achieve due to staffing shortages at the Office of State Courts Administrator, however, it is one that will be kept in mind for future purposes.

Another recommendation is to provide on-going educational programs to drug court practitioners. This recommendation will be achieved for the next two (2) years during the Drug Courts Program Office grant period. However, other avenues of training must be found or developed after the two (2) years is past.

One possibility to provide on-going education would be to incorporate drug court practitioner training into training programs already offered by lead agencies (i.e., Department of Corrections, Office of Prosecution Services, Public Defender System, Division of Family

Services, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, etc) that have practitioners involved with the drug court programs. Some minimal drug court training is already being provided at some of the individual agencies, however, with further administration of a needs assessment and analysis of that assessment, by practitioner type, a much more focused training program could be provided at the agency level. Training on drug court topics could also be conducted for persons that are providing the training programs within the agencies in order to assure the appropriate message is being presented.

The fifth recommendation is to develop a network of drug court practitioners that can present training sessions across the state. This training could even be provided at an agency level either at the central training site or in regional offices. The trainers in the network could conduct training within their own agency. In order to assure the best training experience for the participants, the practitioners that are interested in conducting training programs would need to be screened. The screening would include previous successful training experiences and those who have a certain number of years of experience in the drug court setting. A train-the-trainer program would need to be developed that would not only include adult learning styles theory and training methods but would also include core curriculum instruction so the message that is delivered to the participants is what is intended at the state level.

One of the obvious problems that could be encountered with the fifth recommendation is the time involved in this training effort. If drug court practitioners are used as trainers, they may not be available on a regular basis to conduct the training. Either a large network of practitioners would need to be developed or a long-term schedule would need to be determined.

The last recommendation is to develop a network of drug court practitioners that can provide mentoring for other drug court professionals. This would allow a network of drug court

practitioners to act as mentors for drug courts that are in the planning stages or that are operational but are having difficulty with some aspect of their program. The drug court mentor network is important for practitioners that need to discuss issues related to their field with someone else in their field. As an example, public defenders sometimes have a difficult time understanding their role in the drug court program and as part of the drug court team. Drug courts are supposed to be non-adversarial, however, public defenders are, by the State Public Defender System official opinion, an advocate for their client. Working through this issue is best left to a public defender that has been part of an operational drug court that can mentor the newer public defender on their role in the program. There are other times, however, when it is important for a practitioner in one field to talk with persons in a different field. While many discussions occur between professionals in a common field, many don't have the contact information of persons that could help them with specific issues.

Several recommendations have been made that provide for additional training programs. Much of the curriculum for the educational programs is currently included in the annual Missouri Association of Drug Court Professional's conference. In order not to overlap other educational programs, the annual conference of the Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals could include training for drug court teams as well as new advances in the drug court movement. This would be helpful for all of the drug court programs across the state, especially if the practitioners received most of their training at their individual agencies. The annual conference may be the only chance the team will have to work together and further their collaboration and develop their team building skills.

### Recommendations for Change

Prior to sending out future surveys, there are changes to the survey that would provide more standardized and additional information. A state map outlining the areas of the state would assist respondents in selecting a specific area. On the recent survey, some of the practitioners may identify themselves with a certain area of the state based upon their agency provider areas. This may not be consistent between various agency locations. Instead of asking how long a person had been part of an operational drug court team; the question would provide better information if it asked the respondent if they were part of the drug court during the planning stages. The question regarding a planned drug court program's implementation date would be eliminated because it is of no value. The training topics may need to be revised in the future due to new developments in the drug court field or additional needs at the state level

An enhancement to the survey would be to include some regional meetings or forums where the drug court practitioners could attend and provide additional feedback about educational programs and the content of those programs. With several practitioners in a room together, brainstorming about topics could be utilized with additional needs coming to light.

The survey does not include any descriptions of the topics listed and respondents could make assumptions about the content of the topics. The content could also be understood differently by different individuals. The lack of topic description could lead an individual to attend the training and not receive the information they had anticipated.

### Implications for Future Study

Five topic areas will be discussed in this section on implications for future study of drug court educational programs and other programs using the drug court model. The ideas listed are

all possibilities, but would each take a lot of work to analyze, prepare foundation studies and, if found viable, to implement. The topics include:

1. Development of a Missouri Drug Court Institute with an evaluation component
2. Development of drug court education within the core curriculum of Missouri Law School programs
3. Gaining legislative support for drug court education
4. Development of educational standards and certification for drug court practitioners
5. Use of the drug court model for future case processing standards

Future studies related to the drug court educational needs assessment survey could include an assessment of the viability of a Missouri Drug Court Institute. This would be a system for educational programs to be provided to those working in the drug court field. One benefit to developing a Missouri Drug Court Institute would be enhancing drug court program outcomes due to a better-educated and more knowledgeable drug court staff. One hypothesis that is expected is that a more knowledgeable staff would provide better programming to drug court clients leading to greater success in the program. If drug court clients were more successful in the program, it would offset the cost of developing educational programs.

An outcome study of the Missouri Drug Court Institute would provide information to determine whether or not the educational programs had any impact on the operation of the drug court treatment program. Both a pre-test and post test could be used to gather information about the practices of the various professionals in the drug court programs before the training program and six (6) months after the training program. A concurrent study or process evaluation would need to be completed during the same time frame, prior to receiving the educational program and six (6) months after the training. With the practitioner pre and post-test results along with the

process evaluation, a determination would be made whether the drug court program actually had any changes due to the education of the practitioner(s) or not. An outcome evaluation of the program participants would also need to be completed prior to the educational program and one (1) year after the educational program to determine if the outcomes of the drug court participants were better after the drug court practitioner(s) attended training. The study of the Missouri Drug Court Institute would be a longitudinal study over several years in order to equate any positive outcomes on the actual educational programs.

The second implication for future study would be the inclusion of drug court curriculum in the core courses of law school programs in Missouri. Consider the possibilities if law schools began to include studies on drug court programs and other alternative programs in their core curriculum. Future defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges would have a clearer understanding of drug court treatment programs and the impact alternative programs have on communities. This is not a completely new concept. Currently, some of the drug court judges and defense attorneys provide educational programs on drug courts through the Missouri Bar Association and the University Law Schools for continuing legal education credit. Also, while there have not been any changes to the Missouri Constitution, there have been several changes, as previously described, to the Missouri State Statutes pertaining to drug court program operations. If the law schools in Missouri want to provide quality educational programs for the future attorneys in the state, then keeping up-to-date with new trends and legal processes should be part of the programs. There are several courses that could include instruction on drug court treatment programs. Criminal law is the obvious class followed by juvenile and family law classes.

The third implication for future study would be to gain legislative support through funding drug court educational programs. In order to sustain quality drug court programs around the state, funding needs to be provided for drug court practitioner education. The general assembly is interested in funding successful programs. If a study, like the process and outcome evaluation described for the development of a Missouri Drug Court institute, was conducted and educational programs were shown to provide greater success to drug court participants, the general assembly would probably provide funding for drug court educational programs.

The fourth implication for future study would be to develop standards and certification requirements for drug court practitioners. There has been some discussion, but no action, about the need to provide special training and require special certification for drug court treatment providers. The need for this is evidenced by evaluation results from programs in Missouri as well as around the country. Drug court substance abuse treatment programs are much more intense and more in-depth than regular substance abuse treatment. Since drug court programs use a holistic approach to treating participants, an additional requirement of the drug court treatment provider is to identify, through assessments, all of the needs of their clients. If the clients are determined to have additional treatment needs, other than substance abuse treatment, it is the responsibility of the treatment provider to link the client with the needed services. This is a broader role than substance abuse treatment providers normally play with their non-drug court clients. The treatment provider, however, is not the only drug court team member that has a different role. All of the drug court team has a specified role in order to provide the best services and assistance necessary for the greatest success of the drug court participants. Even the idea of all drug court professionals working together on a cooperative team is a new idea for most. Not all practitioners are able to work on a team, nor do some want to work as a team. It is

this reason that drug court practitioners need to receive on-going specialized training in the drug court field and become a certified drug court practitioner.

The final implication for future study takes a broad based approach to development of drug court treatment programs as well as other alternative programs provided within the judicial system. During the literature review of publications pertaining to therapeutic jurisprudence, several references were found that referred to drug courts as a non-traditional approach to justice. One reference even talked about judicial activism in developing the drug court programs.<sup>30</sup> Using the foundation that drug court programs are a new non-traditional approach to jurisprudence and that judges need to be pro-active in the development of these programs; maybe the use of the drug court model could be utilized in all cases processed within the court system. Specialized court programs have been developed for persons with mental illness (Mental Health Courts), for cases involving domestic violence (Domestic Violence Courts), and for cases involving youth who skip school (Truancy Courts), just to name a few. Instead of providing all of the specialized courts, justice may be better served if all cases processed through the courts were screened, assessed, and persons were provided an array of services to address their needs. There is a reason that people appear in court and it is not usually a good situation. If the judiciary provided a system of services for persons appearing before the court, there could be a much more effective judicial system.

Finally, it is hoped that this project will be useful to other states regarding drug court educational programs with the planning and implementation of training programs for drug court practitioners, and to provide other ideas of what could be, in the future.

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<sup>30</sup> Caroline S. Cooper and Joseph A. Trotter, Jr., "Recent Developments in Drug Case Management: Re-engineering the Judicial Process," The Justice System Journal, Vol. 16, Number 3 (1994), 97.

## Appendices

Appendix A Survey instrument testing

Appendix B Final instrument materials

Appendix C Results of Survey

Appendix D Missouri Drug Courts map

## Appendix A

### Survey Instrument Testing

# Fax

**To:** MADCP Board

**From:** Ann Wilson

**Fax:**

**Pages:** 5

**Phone:** 573-526-8848

**Date:** April 10, 2002

**Re:** Attached survey

**CC:**

**Urgent**     **For Review**     **Please Comment**     **Please Reply**     **Please Recycle**

● **Comments:** Attached is an educational needs assessment survey for drug court practitioners and the cover memo that will go out with the survey. I would like you to complete the survey as a test of the instrument. You may also make copies and ask other team members to complete the survey as a test. I'll probably need to make revisions to the survey based upon the ease of completion for the testers.

The purpose of this survey is two-fold. One, I'm working on a research paper as part of the Court Executive Development Program and need this information for my paper. Second, I received word on Thursday that I received the training grant from the Drug Courts Program Office. As part of the grant, I have to conduct a needs assessment survey of drug court practitioners. I also have money for training of the practitioners – for state and national programs. As an aside, this will also provide good information for the state conferences (which I can pay for some of the practitioners to attend!)

You're welcome to either fax this survey to me, at the number listed, or bring it to the Board meeting on Friday.

AS ALWAYS, THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!!



**SUPREME COURT OF MISSOURI**  
**OFFICE OF STATE COURTS ADMINISTRATOR**

2112 Industrial Drive  
P.O. Box 104480  
Jefferson City, Missouri  
65110

**MICHAEL L. BUENGER**  
ADMINISTRATOR  
**DAVID S. COPLEN**  
DIRECTOR OF  
ADMINISTRATION  
AND BUDGET  
**NANCY GRIGGS**  
DIRECTOR OF  
COURT SERVICES

PHONE (573) 751-4377

**JIM ROGGERO**  
DIRECTOR OF  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**LINDA EVANS**  
DIRECTOR OF JUDICIAL  
DEPARTMENT EDUCATION  
**GARY WAIT**  
DIRECTOR OF JUVENILE AND  
ADULT COURT PROGRAMS

FAX (573) 751-5540

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Drug Court Practitioners

**FROM:** Ann Wilson

**RE:** Education survey

**DATE:** September 15, 2001

Enclosed is a survey for drug court practitioners that are working in an operational drug court or are in the planning stages of development. The purpose of the survey is to collect information on educational needs of all practitioners for future state conferences as well as regional training opportunities.

It is important that feedback from all disciplines is received in order to provide the best continuum of educational programs. The training categories are divided into three (3) sections- team training, treatment topics, and general topics-but the categories are not intended to exclude any practitioner from selecting training in each area. If someone on the team failed to receive a survey, please make a copy.

Thank you for taking time to complete and return this survey. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me. You may fax it or mail to me by October 1, 2001 at:

Ann Wilson  
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Coordinator  
Office of State Courts Administrator  
P.O. Box 104480  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65110  
FAX: 573-522-6086  
PHONE: 573-526-8848

## Needs Assessment Survey For Drug Court Practitioners

Thank you for completing this survey. Your response is very important to the on-going educational needs of drug court practitioners.

***Please check the response that most accurately describes you:***

1. Profession

Judge    Prosecutor    Defense attorney    Treatment provider    Probation officer  
 Juvenile Officer    Law enforcement officer    DFS worker    Health professional  
 Other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of drug court operating or planned (check all that apply)    Adult    Juvenile    Family

3. What part of the state best describes the location of the operational or planned drug court:

West    Northwest    Southwest    East    Northeast    Southeast    Central

***Please provide information for the following:***

4. Are you part of an operational drug court?    yes (*answer questions 4a & 4b*)    no (*go to question 5*)

4a. When did the drug court begin operation? \_\_\_\_\_

4b. How long have you been part of the drug court team? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you part of a drug court in the planning stages?    yes (*go to question 5a*)    no (*go to question 6*)

5a. If an implementation date has been determined, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you been to any training for drug courts?    yes (*go to question 6a*)    no (*go to question 7*)

6a. Please check all training programs you have attended, and indicate how many times attended:

<input type="checkbox"/> National Drug Court Institute Practitioner Training	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> National Rural Institute of Drug Abuse Conference	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal planning grant or planning initiative workshops	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please identify) _____	Number of times _____

Appendix B Would on-going, year-round educational programs for drug court teams and practitioners:

- a. Be of interest to you?                    \_\_\_yes            \_\_\_no
  - b. Be something you would attend (if the topic was relevant to you)?   \_\_\_yes    \_\_\_no
  - c. Be paid for by your agency?                    \_\_\_yes            \_\_\_no
8. Would you be willing to attend 1 or 2 day special topic workshops in your region of the state if it were offered?  
\_\_\_yes            \_\_\_no

***The following list includes some of the training topics that may be available for drug court teams and practitioners. Please check all that you would be interested in attending.***

Team training

- 1. \_\_\_ Building a drug court team – for planned drug courts
- 2. \_\_\_ Team building – making the team stronger
- 3. \_\_\_ Drug Court 10 key components – putting them into practice
- 4. \_\_\_ Sanctions and incentives in adult drug courts
- 5. \_\_\_ Sanctions and incentives in family drug courts
- 6. \_\_\_ Sanctions and incentives in juvenile drug courts
- 7. \_\_\_ Confidentiality in drug court environments
- 8. \_\_\_ Step-by-step planning of an adult drug court
- 9. \_\_\_ Step-by-step planning of a juvenile drug court
- 10. \_\_\_ Step-by-step planning of a family drug court
- 11. \_\_\_ Best practices in adult drug court programs
- 12. \_\_\_ Best practices in juvenile drug court programs
- 13. \_\_\_ Best practices in family drug court programs
- 14. \_\_\_ Drug court graduation
- 15. \_\_\_ On-site visits to state operational adult drug court programs.

### **Team Training continued**

16. \_\_\_ On-site visits to state operational juvenile drug court programs.
  17. \_\_\_ On-site visits to state operational family drug court programs.
  18. \_\_\_ Other topics (please list): \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **Treatment topics**

19. \_\_\_ Drug testing – best practices
  20. \_\_\_ Drug testing – types of testing
  21. \_\_\_ Drug testing – facts and fiction of positive test results
  22. \_\_\_ Club drugs
  23. \_\_\_ Detoxification modalities
  24. \_\_\_ Best practices in drug court treatment
  25. \_\_\_ Cultural competency
  26. \_\_\_ Screening and assessment for drug courts
  27. \_\_\_ Co-occurring disorders
  28. \_\_\_ Other topics (please list): \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **General topics**

29. \_\_\_ Grant writing techniques
30. \_\_\_ Finding funding resources
31. \_\_\_ Finding community-based resources (non-funding issues)
32. \_\_\_ Fetal alcohol syndrome/fetal alcohol effect
33. \_\_\_ Developing drug court alumni associations
34. \_\_\_ Evaluation practices in drug courts
35. \_\_\_ Collecting data in the drug court environment

**General Topics continued**

36. \_\_\_ Selling the drug court program to the community

37. \_\_\_ Developing contracts for services

38. \_\_\_ Monitoring the drug court treatment program

39. \_\_\_ Ethics for judges and attorneys in a drug court setting

40. \_\_\_ Ethics for treatment providers in a drug court setting

41. \_\_\_ Case management in drug courts

42. \_\_\_ Other topics (please list): \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please return the completed survey by October 1, 2001 to: Ann Wilson at fax number 573-522-6086**

**THANK YOU**

## Appendix B

### Final Survey Instruments



**SUPREME COURT OF MISSOURI**  
**OFFICE OF STATE COURTS ADMINISTRATOR**

2112 Industrial Drive  
P.O. Box 104480  
Jefferson City, Missouri  
65110

**MICHAEL L. BUENGER**  
ADMINISTRATOR  
**DAVID S. COPLEN**  
DIRECTOR OF  
ADMINISTRATION  
AND BUDGET  
**NANCY GRIGGS**  
DIRECTOR OF  
COURT SERVICES

PHONE (573) 751-4377

**JIM ROGGERO**  
DIRECTOR OF  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
**LINDA EVANS**  
DIRECTOR OF JUDICIAL  
DEPARTMENT EDUCATION  
**GARY WAIT**  
DIRECTOR OF JUVENILE AND  
ADULT COURT PROGRAMS

FAX (573) 751-5540

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Drug Court Practitioners

**FROM:** Ann Wilson

**RE:** Educational survey

**DATE:** October 9, 2001

Enclosed is a survey for persons that are working in an operational drug court or are in the planning stages of development. The purpose of the survey is to collect information on educational needs of all drug court practitioners for future state conferences as well as regional training opportunities. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

It is important that feedback from all disciplines is received in order to provide the best continuum of educational programs. The training categories are divided into three (3) sections-team training, treatment topics, and general topics-but the categories are not intended to exclude any practitioner from selecting training in each area. If someone on the team failed to receive a survey, please make a copy so they may respond to the survey.

Thank you for taking time to complete and return this survey. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me. Please fax it or mail to me by October 19, 2001 at:

Ann Wilson  
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Coordinator  
Office of State Courts Administrator  
P.O. Box 104480  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65110  
FAX: 573-522-6086  
PHONE: 573-526-8848

## Educational Needs Assessment Survey For Drug Court Practitioners

Thank you for completing this survey. Your response is very important to the on-going educational needs of drug court practitioners. This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

***Please check the response that most accurately describes you:***

1. Profession

Judge     Prosecutor     Defense attorney     Treatment provider     Probation officer  
 Juvenile Officer     Law enforcement officer     DFS worker     Health professional  
 Case Manager     Other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of drug court operating or planned (check all that apply)     Adult     Juvenile     Family

3. What part of the state best describes the location of the operational or planned drug court:

West     Northwest     Southwest     East     Northeast     Southeast     Central

***Please provide information for the following:***

4. Are you part of an operational drug court?     yes (*answer questions 4a & 4b*)     no (*go to question 5*)

4a. When did the drug court begin operation? \_\_\_\_\_

4b. How long have you been part of the drug court team? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you part of a drug court in the planning stages?     yes (*go to question 5a*)     no (*go to question 6*)

5a. If an implementation date has been determined, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you been to any training for drug courts?     yes (*go to question 6a*)     no (*go to question 7*)

6a. Please check all training programs you have attended, and indicate how many times attended:

<input type="checkbox"/> National Drug Court Institute Practitioner Training (i.e., judge, prosecutor, Coordinator, etc., usually in Williamsburg, VA)	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> National Rural Institute of Drug Abuse Conference	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal planning grant or planning initiative workshops (i.e., team training at 2 or 3 locations around the country and team travel is paid/reimbursed)	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference	Number of times _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please identify) _____	Number of times _____

7. Would on-going, year-round educational programs for drug court teams and practitioners:

a. Be of interest to you?                    \_\_\_yes            \_\_\_no

b. Be something you would attend (if the topic was relevant to you)?   \_\_\_yes    \_\_\_no

c. Be paid for by your agency?                    \_\_\_yes            \_\_\_no

8. Would you be willing to attend 1 or 2 day special topic workshops in your region of the state if it were offered?            \_\_\_yes            \_\_\_no

*The following list includes some of the training topics that may be available for drug court teams and practitioners. Please check the 'Yes?' box to the right of the topic that you would be interested in attending.*

<b>Team Training</b>	<b>Yes?</b>	<b>Treatment Topics</b>	<b>Yes?</b>	<b>General Topics</b>	<b>Yes?</b>
Building a drug court team – for planned drug courts		Drug testing – best practices		Grant writing techniques	
Team building – for operational drug courts		Drug testing – types of testing		Finding funding resources	
Drug Court 10 key components – putting them into practice		Drug testing – facts and fiction of positive results		Finding community-based resources (non-funding issues)	
Sanctions and incentives in adult drug courts		Club drugs		Fetal alcohol syndrome/fetal alcohol effect	
Sanctions and incentives in juvenile drug courts		Detoxification modalities		Developing drug court alumni associations	
Sanctions and incentives in family drug courts		Best practices in drug court treatment		Evaluation practices in drug courts	
Confidentiality in drug court environments		Cultural competency		Collecting data in the drug court environment	
Step-by-step planning of an adult drug court		Screening and assessment for drug courts		Selling the drug court program to the community	
Step-by-step planning of an juvenile drug court		Co-occurring disorders		Developing contracts for services	
Step-by-step planning of an family drug court		Other topics (please list)		Monitoring the drug court treatment program	
Best practices in adult drug court programs				Ethics for judges and attorneys in a drug court setting	
Best practices in juvenile drug court programs				Ethics for treatment providers in a drug court setting	
Best practices in family drug court programs				Case management in drug courts	
Drug court graduation				Other topics (please list)	
On-site visit to state operational adult drug court					

<b>Team Training (cont.)</b>	<b>Yes?</b>				
On-site visit to state operational juvenile drug court					
On-site visit to state operational family drug court					
Other topics (please list)					

**Please return the completed survey by October 19, 2001 to: Ann Wilson at fax number 573-522-6086**

**THANK YOU**

## Appendix C

### Survey Results

## Educational Needs Assessment Survey For Drug Court Practitioners Responses

**208 surveys were mailed to drug court practitioners, 177 responses were received (85% response rate). 7 persons did not complete the educational interest section. 7 additional responses were received after the deadline date and were not included in this analysis.**

Thank you for completing this survey. Your response is very important to the on-going educational needs of drug court practitioners. This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

***Please check the response that most accurately describes you:***

1. Profession

**29**\_Judge **17**\_Prosecutor **13**\_Defense attorney **21**\_Treatment provider **29**\_Probation officer  
**18**\_Juvenile Officer **6**\_Law enforcement officer **5**\_DFS worker **3**\_Health professional  
**3**\_Case Manager **33**\_Other (list) **10 drug court administrators; 5 evaluators; 4 clerks; 2 educators; 2 guardian ad litem; 2 private citizens; 2 attorney for the juvenile officer; 1 ADA/CPS administrator; 1 community service director; 1 department of mental health, alcohol and drug abuse; 1 school official; 1 social worker; 1 interim drug court coordinator;**

2. Type of drug court operating or planned (check all that apply) **116** Adult **74**\_Juvenile **33**\_Family

3. What part of the state best describes the location of the operational or planned drug court:

**9**\_West **16**\_Northwest **35**\_Southwest **42**\_East **9**\_Northeast **24**\_Southeast **39**\_Central

***Please provide information for the following:***

4. Are you part of an operational drug court? **143** yes (*answer questions 4a & 4b*) **33**\_no (*go to question 5*)  
**1 no response**

4a. When did the drug court begin operation? \_\_\_\_\_

4b. How long have you been part of the drug court team? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you part of a drug court in the planning stages? **62**\_yes (*go to question 5a*) **93**\_no (*go to question 6*)  
**22 no response**

5a. If an implementation date has been determined, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you been to any training for drug courts? **123** yes (*go to question 6a*) **52**\_no (*go to question 7*)  
**2 no response**

6a. Please check all training programs you have attended, and indicate how many times attended:

**14**\_National Drug Court Institute Practitioner Training (i.e., judge, prosecutor, Coordinator, etc., usually in Williamsburg, VA) Number of times **14**\_

**41**\_National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference Number of times **68**\_

**2**\_National Rural Institute of Drug Abuse Conference Number of times **4**\_

**59** Federal planning grant or planning initiative workshops (i.e., team training at 2 or 3 locations around the country and team travel is paid/reimbursed) Number of times **134**

**78** Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals annual conference Number of times **124**

Other (please identify) \_\_\_\_\_ Number of times \_\_\_\_\_

7. Would on-going, year-round educational programs for drug court teams and practitioners:

- a. Be of interest to you? **151** yes **16** no **10** no response
- b. Be something you would attend (if the topic was relevant to you)? **161** yes **7** no **9** no response
- c. Be paid for by your agency? **72** yes **45** no **50** no response

8. Would you be willing to attend 1 or 2 day special topic workshops in your region of the state if it were offered? **165** yes **5** no **7** no response

*The following list includes some of the training topics that may be available for drug court teams and practitioners. Please check the ‘Yes?’ box to the right of the topic that you would be interested in attending.*

<b>Team Training</b>	<b>Yes?</b>	<b>Treatment Topics</b>	<b>Yes?</b>	<b>General Topics</b>	<b>Yes?</b>
Building a drug court team – for planned drug courts	<b>20</b>	Drug testing – best practices	<b>83</b>	Grant writing techniques	<b>52</b>
Team building – for operational drug courts	<b>71</b>	Drug testing – types of testing	<b>74</b>	Finding funding resources	<b>68</b>
Drug Court 10 key components – putting them into practice	<b>77</b>	Drug testing – facts and fiction of positive results	<b>93</b>	Finding community-based resources (non-funding issues)	<b>63</b>
Sanctions and incentives in adult drug courts	<b>95</b>	Club drugs	<b>63</b>	Fetal alcohol syndrome/fetal alcohol effect	<b>46</b>
Sanctions and incentives in juvenile drug courts	<b>65</b>	Detoxification modalities	<b>40</b>	Developing drug court alumni associations	<b>50</b>
Sanctions and incentives in family drug courts	<b>57</b>	Best practices in drug court treatment	<b>98</b>	Evaluation practices in drug courts	<b>81</b>
Confidentiality in drug court environments	<b>68</b>	Cultural competency	<b>50</b>	Collecting data in the drug court environment	<b>55</b>
Step-by-step planning of an adult drug court	<b>12</b>	Screening and assessment for drug courts	<b>82</b>	Selling the drug court program to the community	<b>69</b>
Step-by-step planning of an juvenile drug court	<b>14</b>	Co-occurring disorders	<b>71</b>	Developing contracts for services	<b>32</b>
Step-by-step planning of an family drug court	<b>33</b>	Other topics (please list)		Monitoring the drug court treatment program	<b>59</b>
Best practices in adult drug court programs	<b>101</b>			Ethics for judges and attorneys in a drug court setting	<b>62</b>
Best practices in juvenile	<b>64</b>			Ethics for treatment	<b>37</b>

drug court programs				providers in a drug court setting	
Best practices in family drug court programs	<b>53</b>			Case management in drug courts	<b>78</b>
Drug court graduation	<b>62</b>			Other topics (please list)	
On-site visit to state operational adult drug court	<b>46</b>				
<b>Team Training (cont.)</b>	<b>Yes?</b>				
On-site visit to state operational juvenile drug court	<b>30</b>				
On-site visit to state operational family drug court	<b>36</b>				
Other topics (please list)					

**Please return the completed survey by October 19, 2001 to: Ann Wilson at fax number 573-522-6086**

**THANK YOU**

## **Survey Responses to other educational topics**

### **Team Training**

No additional topics listed

### **Treatment Topics**

Female Offenders

Treatment of other family members-how to get them included

Dual diagnosis

Criminal thinking

Crisis intervention

Criminal conduct and substance abuse treatment

Dealing with resistive client

Job description

Treatment approaches that are effective

Street names for drugs

Developing a referral [book] for collateral services (66)

Relapse prevention

Criminal thinking

Role of 12-steps (AA/NA)

The role of group therapy in treatment

Education of team members on the disease concept

Client motivation

Drug court mentoring-graduates of drug court mentor new enrollees

### **General Topics**

Educational implications (SO4, IDEA, Alternative programs)

Standard policy and procedure for drug courts

Accessing Byrne Block grant and other state funds

Housing alternatives for drug court clients

Medical services for drug court clients

### **Other Comments**

- I have been to several conference and workshops in my life. I have been to some of the conferences and workshops pertaining to drug court. I do not find these very beneficial to my participation in drug court. When the drug court was started, there were certain promises made to me to insure that we would protect the rights of the people in drug court. Over the time that the drug court has been operating, I have found that there is a continual effort made to erode the rights of the people in drug court and to make the drug court an arm of the prosecutor's office and law enforcement. I had high hopes for drug court but I do not see my continued support of drug court as long as judges and prosecutors continue to make this a

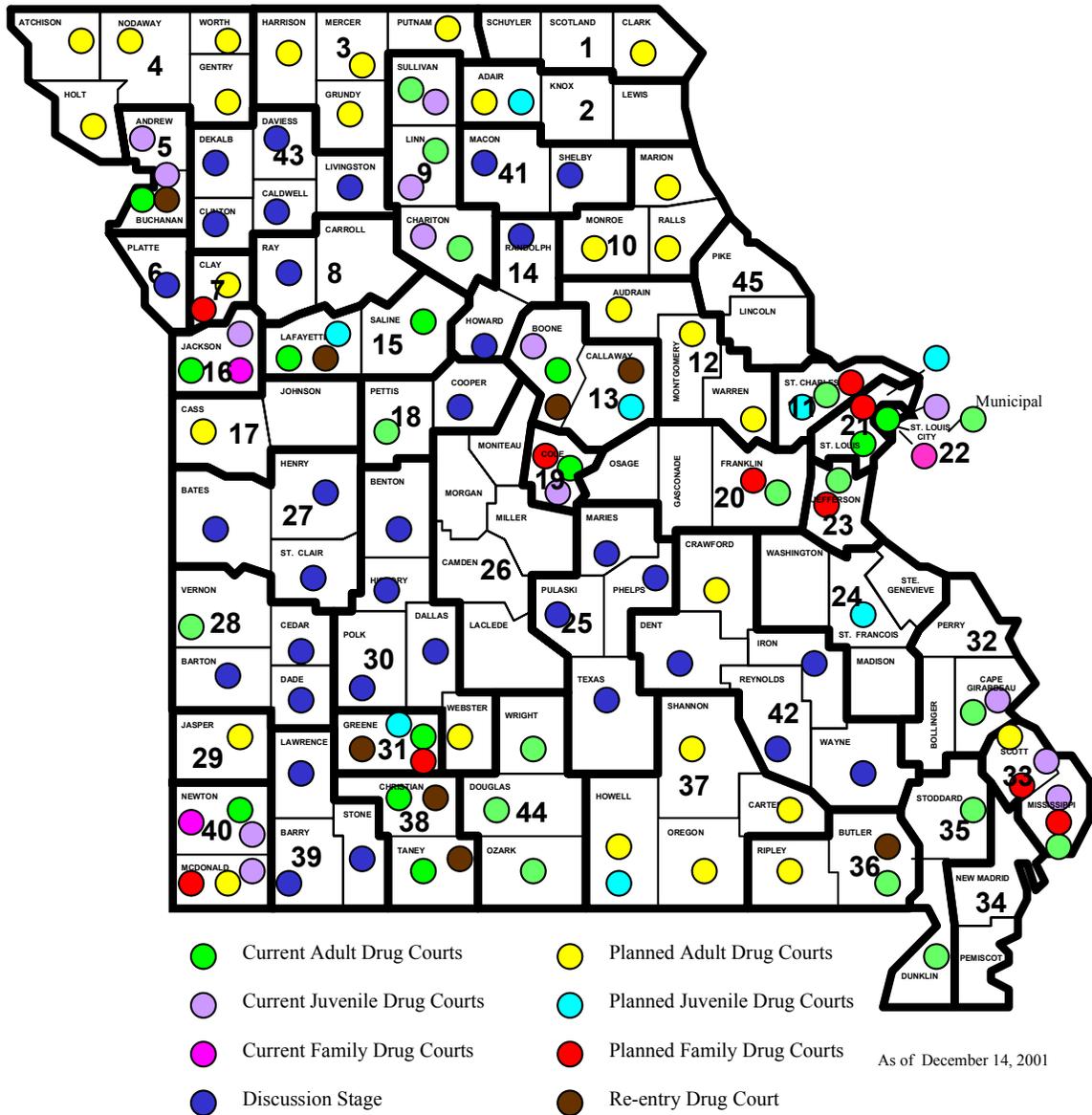
post-plea program, attempt to place a law enforcement officer on the drug court team, and to treat the people in drug court as children. I have been forced to listen to counselors go on and on about who the people in drug court are dating and having sex with and been forced in to discussions where some of the drug court team feels they have a right to dictate to these people who they date even when this involves fathers or mothers of their children. I do understand the need to have structure in these people's lives. But, I do believe that we should have limits. The people in our drug court are adults and should be treated as such. Perhaps the counselors and probation officers could benefit from having a program where they could learn that defense attorneys do continue to have attorney/client privilege with their clients even after they are in drug court and that the attorney is a bond to ensure that each client's rights are protected. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

- Something I think might be helpful would be a bull session attended by few than all the drug court teams in the state – possibly 3-6 teams. I'd like to hear what practices have been the most successful; also, what practices have flopped. What works, what doesn't work. Open up the floor to questions and statements.

## Appendix D

Missouri Drug Courts map

# MISSOURI DRUG COURTS



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