

History and Function of Drug Courts Essay

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Drug courts were first established in Miami in 1989 and have continued to grow today. Over the past twenty-four years, drug courts have provided a treatment-orientated approach to help defendants with drug-related crimes. The constant interaction of the drug court provides the needed structure for participants to maintain their involvement in the program. Understanding the overall goals of the [drug court](#) and the outcomes of participants in the drug court program are the key factors in measuring the success of the drug courts.

To begin, drug courts were established in Miami in 1989 during the “war on crime” era. According to Cooper (2003), “the immediate goals of the drug court were to reduce the [recidivism](#) rate of these defendants while they were awaiting disposition of their cases, reduce the failure to appear at trial rate, and provide at least some level of treatment services” (p. 1672). During the “war on crime” era, criminal rates were escalating and courts were overflowing with case loads and the drug court was implemented in order to find another way to help solve the drug problems with select offenders. Additionally, “the primary purpose of the Miami drug court was, therefore, not therapeutic, although it clearly had therapeutic elements, but, rather to promote public safety and more effective judicial supervision of defendants while awaiting trial” (Cooper, 2003, p. 1672). Providing a safe sanction for offenders as well as the community was an efficient solution to control the

caseloads of drug offenders and ensure the safety of the community.

After the development of the drug court in Miami, rising drug crimes were able to be more controlled as well as getting the drug offenders supervision and help through the co...

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