



HOPE PROBATION

Transcript of Television News Coverage
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KITV-4 6PM NEWS (Same at 10pm)

Paula Akana: In Hawaii, the vast majority of felons are put on probation instead of jail. Many of them end up on drugs but remain free even after frequently testing positive for drugs or missed appointments.

Shawn Ching: Now, a state judge is trying to prove that getting tougher on probationers can save money and prevent crime in the long run.

Akana: As KITV's Daryl Huff explains, the first results of the test called "Hope Probation" are promising.

Darryl Huff: 24-year-old Landon Young is on probation for domestic violence. He's about to spend 15 days in prison for missing just two drug test appointments.

Landon I realize now how seriously I should take this.

Huff: Young is one of about four dozen high risk and domestic violence probationers on whom judge Steven Alm is keeping a tight reign. The idea is to force them to solve their problems.

Judge Steven Alm: The idea is to have swift and sure consequences for violations of probation.

Huff: That sounds obvious but it's a big change from traditional probation, which often lets even drug-addicted probationers stay free for years. For every felon in prison or on parole, there are five other felons on probation in the community and people in the justice system say that it is not uncommon for a probationer to rack up dozens and dozens of violations before a judge seriously considers putting them back in prison.

Alm: The idea that something really bad may happen next year or the year after is not a way to change behavior.

Huff: That's why Landon Young was arrested soon after missing his appointments.

Alm: You're committing a felony each time you use drugs and unless somebody is dropping some cash on you out of the blue there may well be crimes being committed to pay for those drugs and that's the concern.

Huff: After a year, Hope Probationers are doing much better. The group tested positive for drugs 21 percent of the time before they started the program and now test positive only a little less than four percent of the time. The courts system now wants more money to cover all high risk probationers. Daryl Huff, KITV-4 Island Television News.